



Convention Workbook
Reports and Overtures

2010

64th Regular Convention
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Houston, TX • July 10–17, 2010

Name of delegate _____

Home address _____

Convention address _____

For reporting errors in registration listings, see last page of this workbook.
For ongoing convention information, check www.lcms.org/convention.

Preface

This 2010 *Convention Workbook* comes to you in three volumes. (1) This volume contains a listing of delegates and floor committees; reports from the Synod's officers, boards, and commissions; overtures submitted by congregations, district conventions and boards, official conferences, faculties, boards, and commissions; the texts of Commission on Constitutional Matters opinions from the past triennium (plus a few extra); and the reports, documents, and opinions produced by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations since the 2007 convention. (2) The second smaller volume contains a report of the results of the nominating ballot for President and vice-president elections and also the report of the Committee for Convention Nominations of its slates of nominees for all other offices to be filled by election by the convention. (3) The third volume is the report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance, certainly one of the focal points of the coming convention.

The names of the more than twelve hundred voting delegates and several hundred advisory delegates and representatives to the convention have been carefully processed according to the bylaws governing their selection. From these names, the President of the Synod has appointed nine floor committees to facilitate the business of the convention. Each of the dozens of reports and the hundreds of overtures submitted to the convention has been assigned to one of these committees to review in preparation for the convention. From these the floor committees will propose resolutions for convention action.

The overtures that have been submitted have been processed the following manner:

- Each was reviewed, its source validated as an entity entitled to submit business to the convention, and grouped according to subject matter.
- In cases of identical or very similar overtures, the first to be received was processed and printed, and the names of other entities submitting like overtures were listed immediately following.
- Some overtures that were submitted have not been published because they contained subject matter not allowed by bylaw (Bylaw 3.1.6.2 [b] and [c]). Such overtures have been referred to the appropriate district presidents.
- Overtures received after the March 6 deadline may be accepted for convention consideration and printed in the first issue of *Today's Business* if their content is adjudged to be of overriding importance and urgency and not adequately covered by documents already before the convention.
- The first numeral of the number ascribed to each overture and report identifies the floor committee that will be responsible for preparing a proposed action for convention consideration.

Member congregations, ordained and commissioned ministers, and lay delegates wishing to comment regarding any reports or overtures in this Convention Workbook may do so by sending a signed letter (in triplicate) to the Secretary of the Synod (1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122). Letters must be sent at least seven weeks prior to the convention to allow time for forwarding to the appropriate floor committee for its consideration.

May God bless our coming together for our Synod's convention in Houston, Texas, that ours will be a good and productive time together as "One People—*Forgiven*."

Raymond L. Hartwig, *Editor*

[Note to delegates: Bring all three volumes of this Convention Workbook with you to the convention, as they contain valuable resource material that will be referred to repeatedly during the course of the convention.]

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REGISTERED DELEGATES AND REPRESENTATIVES

A. Voting and Advisory Delegates

Atlantic District

Voting Ordained

Craig, Russell J; 9 LEXINGTON CT, VOORHEESVILLE, NY 12186-9557
Fleischmann, John George; 119 OCEAN AVE, CTR MORICHES, NY 11934-3421
Griffin, Marvin A; 21921 102ND AVE, QUEENS VLG, NY 11429-1611
Haberer, David E; 120 GATES AVE, BROOKLYN, NY 11238-1905
Lecakes, Derek G; 2089 PLUM ST, SCHENECTADY, NY 12309-5818
Mather, Elwood E; 25 CASTLE HIGH RD, MIDDLETOWN, NY 10940-6788
Rethinasamy, Elwin Johnson; 1110 150TH ST, WHITESTONE, NY 11357-1746
Taylor, Dien Ashley; 4360 BOYD AVE, BRONX, NY 10466-1804
Wackenhuth, David G; 186 COUNTRY VILLAGE LN, EAST ISLIP, NY 11730-3708
Young, John Michael; 1410 ROUTE 52, FISHKILL, NY 12524-1620

Voting Lay

Albrechtsen, Henry; 136 ELM ST, SCHENECTADY, NY 12304-1204
Booth, Carol; 11943 7TH AVE, COLLEGE POINT, NY 11356-1005
Bowman, Lois; 39 EUCLID AVE, APT 2C, HACKENSACK, NJ 07601-4550
Cawley, Jan; 13 REVERE RD, MONROE, NY 10950-6956
Charon, William; 20 MEADOWFIELD LN, GLEN COVE, NY 11542-1644
Cincimino, Joseph; 27 BLACKFOOT TRAIL, SHOREHAM, NY 117896
Davies, Roy; 47 EGMONT CT, DELMAR, NY 12054-6722
Keating, Raymond; 55 UNION AVE, CTR MORICHES, NY 11934-3331
Ko, Eliza; 6005 264TH ST, LITTLE NECK, NY 11362-2523
Olson, DuWayne H; 135 LINDERMAN AVE, KINGSTON, NY 12401-5327

Advisory Ordained

Zwernemann, James C; 322 TOWN ST, EAST HADDAM, CT 06423-1386

Advisory Commissioned

Butts, Lu Juana R; 41 DARWOOD PL, MOUNT VERNON, NY 10553-1201

California/Nevada/Hawaii District

Voting Ordained

Bestul, John C; 10785 CARVER DR, CUPERTINO, CA 95014-3608
Conrad, Daniel E; 10328 ROAD 256, TERRA BELLA, CA 93270-9722
Dubke, Dallas D; PO BOX 726, RED BLUFF, CA 96080-0726
Francisco, Thurman O; 3094 WATERFALL DR, ATWATER, CA 95301-4746
Haas, Mark W; 2675 CLAY ST, PLACERVILLE, CA 95667-4678
Kliewer, Mark A; 3225 N HIGHLAND DR, WINNEMUCCA, NV 89445-3905
Krueger, Edwin A; 2937 BROWNING AVE, CLOVIS, CA 93611-3428
Lau, Shiu Ming; 88 S BROADWAY, UNIT 3107, MILLBRAE, CA 94030-3074
Molyneux, Daniel R; 2075 DOVER AVE, FAIRFIELD, CA 94533-2346
Reese, David Allen; 1 ENCINA PL, PITTSBURG, CA 94565-6548
Rose, David R; 1290 BIG VALLEY RD, LAKEPORT, CA 95453-9619
Rowe, Daniel; 2102 SUMMIT DR, PASO ROBLES, CA 93446-1827
Sauer, David Michael; 1033 BEGIER AVE, SAN LEANDRO, CA 94577-3023
Scherer, Henry A; 387 QUAIL DR, WOODLAND, CA 95695-5873
Schlensker, Daniel A; PO BOX 650, CRESCENT CITY, CA 95531-0650
Shimkus, William E; 2733 TERRACE DR, HONOLULU, HI 96822-1709
Smith, Aaron Rosales; 842 S MARY AVE, SUNNYVALE, CA 94087-1165

Voting Lay

Davis, Rufus J; 1271 PALOU AVE, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94124-3332
Edwards, Ross; 317 RAMONA RD, PORTOLA VALLY, CA 94028-8138
Huggins, Charles; 39857 GRANITE RIDGE LN, BASS LAKE, CA 93604-9775
Keith, Scott L; 1101 E MUSSER ST, CARSON CITY, NV 89701-4334

Kramer, Timothy J; 23 RAVENWOOD LN, NAPA, CA 94558-6729
Maxner, Marilyn A; 1670 VIA CASOLI, MONTEREY, CA 93940-6409
Pauling, David; 4252 RIGEL AVE, LOMPOC, CA 93436
Pierce, Myrtle J; PO BOX 903, BODFISH, CA 93205-0903
Schultz, David W; 19353 ROYAL AVE, HAYWARD, CA 94541-3647
Scott, James; 841 DORA AVE, UKIAH, CA 95482-3708
Standley, Lois M; 10067 KERN RIVER CT, RANCHO CORDOVA, CA 95670-2711
Thompson, Pamela J; 2701 LACY LN, SACRAMENTO, CA 95821-6003
Ullerich, Waldo W; PO BOX 331194, KAHULUI, HI 96733-1194
Weber, Roy A; 6 MEADOWVIEW DR, OROVILLE, CA 95966-9230
Williams, Byron; 14745 ROSEY RIDGE CT, SONORA, CA 95370-8521
Yamabe, Brian; 225 MORRENE DR, CAMPBELL, CA 95008-1721
Yow, Jesse; 5178 DIANE LN, LIVERMORE, CA 94550-3503

Advisory Ordained

Kabel, James A; 911 ST ANDREWS WAY, EAGLE POINT, OR 97524-9028

Advisory Commissioned

King, Janis D; 1375 BONITA BAHIA, BENICIA, CA 94510-2405
Rawlins, Cheryl L; 36133 FANSHAWE ST, FREMONT, CA 94536-4663
Spiva, Cynthia L; 12016 SANDY RIVER CT, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93311-9313

Central Illinois District

Voting Ordained

Barth, Robert L; PO BOX 197, NEW BERLIN, IL 62670-0197
Bishop, Daniel John; PO BOX 49, ARENZVILLE, IL 62611-0049
Hopfensperger, Bryan L; 109 E CHURCH ST, WASHBURN, IL 61570-9480
Karsten, Wilfred L; 2025 5TH ST, MOLINE, IL 61265-4649
Laux, John A; 1960 E JOHNS AVE, DECATUR, IL 62521-3105
Long, Barry Albert; 908 W HANSSLER PL, PEORIA, IL 61604-2738
Meyer, Rollie J; 17684 1ST AVE, LOUISVILLE, IL 62858-3001
Miller, Mark A; 1024 S 4TH ST, PEKIN, IL 61554-4510
Mohr, Michael W; PO BOX 190, STRASBURG, IL 62465-0190
Olander, Charles P; PO BOX 199, NEW HOLLAND, IL 62671-0199
Radtke, Thomas G; 7 WILDWOOD RD, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62704-4359
Rempfel, Marlin R; 2721 KEN RAY DR, QUINCY, IL 62301-6119
Sharp, John W; 2401 COUNTY ROAD 400 N, BROADLANDS, IL 61816-9722
Speers, David R; 5088 E 1400TH AVE, ALTAMONT, IL 62411-2836
Steinbeck, Allen L; 7 BROOKWOOD DR, NORMAL, IL 61761-4011
Strom, Terry Alan; 701 E FLORIDA AVE, URBANA, IL 61801-5950
Wendorf, Kevin C; 1180 E 1000 NORTH RD, ONARGA, IL 60955-7646

Voting Lay

Bliese, David; 15874 N 2300 EAST RD, MERNA, IL 61761-9556
Breitenfeld, Scot; 3111 S MYRA RIDGE DR, URBANA, IL 61802-7063
Ehmen, Larry D; 735 MCKEE DR, QUINCY, IL 62305-4701
Garbe, Ernst; 1661 N 2200TH ST, DIETERICH, IL 62424-3422
Hume, Del; 5500 W RACHAEL DR, PEORIA, IL 61615-3057
Jahns, Robert C; 1131 MEADOW LN, COLONA, IL 61241-9661
Jordan, John; 134 W ORLEANS ST, PAXTON, IL 60957-1427
King, Phil; 435 W PLACHER CT, CHILLICOTHE, IL 61523-1124
Magelitz, Danny E; 202 LOCUST, MEREDOSIA, IL 62665-7173
Mahler, Theodore W; 7502 DEER RUN RD, PLEASANT PLNS, IL 62677-3878
Morgan, Robert; 1804 S LOWELL AVE, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62704-4042
Piercy, Bernie; 300 WESTMINISTER RD, GERMANTOWN HILLS, IL 61548-8335
Putnam, Matthew; 2531 E PRIMROSE LN, ALTAMONT, IL 62411-3508
Snedeker, Ted; PO BOX 177, MARSHALL, IL 62441-0177
Switzer, Charles D; 7002 STARROUTE RD, OAKLEY, IL 62501-7054
Thomas, Clarence D; 14145 E 100 NORTH RD, HEYWORTH, IL 61745-9085

Wycoff, Steve; RR 1 BOX 191, MODE, IL 62444-9721

Advisory Ordained

Weseloh, Melvin L; 109 FENWAY DR, DECATUR, IL 62521-5609

Advisory Commissioned

Mickley, Ralph E; 2409 MONTECELLO CT, PEKIN, IL 61554-8387
Milas, Martha Jane; 1109 FOOTHILL DR, CHAMPAIGN, IL 61821-5620
Yagow, Daniel Paul; 1812 OAK PARK DR, CHAMPAIGN, IL 61822-5275

Eastern District

Voting Ordained

Agne, Paul Chris; 15 PORTER AVE, SILVER CREEK, NY 14136-1130
Bauch, Alan J; 69 MORROW AVE, LOCKPORT, NY 14094-5014
Cobb, Kenyatta T; 29 WESTON AVE, BUFFALO, NY 14215-3329
Eckstrom, Cory J; 49 HAMLIN ST, CORTLAND, NY 13045-1706
Engler, Thomas E; 33 COLONIAL DR, HAVERTOWN, PA 19083-3204
Gaertner, Brennan; 9444 NORTHGATE DR, ALLISON PARK, PA 15101-1917
Goodwin, Eric A; 158 EAST AVE, HILTON, NY 14468-1318
Haeussler, Karl W; 456 OLD FALLS BLVD, N TONAWANDA, NY 14120-3108
Lehmann, Charles Ray; 1019 COVE RD, ACCIDENT, MD 21520-2015
Litke, Arthur E; 108 ARDEN DR, GLENSHAW, PA 15116-1602
Mandile, Anthony B; 238 REESE ST, SCRANTON, PA 18508-1449
Morris, Robert S; 300 N MAIN ST, WELLSVILLE, NY 14895-1037
Mugnolo, William F; 102 HOPE AVE, NEWARK, NY 14513-1309
Spittel, Douglas H; 535 N NEVILLE ST, PITTSBURGH, PA 15213-2812
Sprehe, Ronald R; 8292 COLE RD, COLDEN, NY 14033-9742
Vogeler, R Peter; 3229 UPPER MOUNTAIN RD, SANBORN, NY 14132-9104

Voting Lay

Bolles, Daniel M; 22 1ST ST, SOUTH DAYTON, NY 14138
Carlson, Claire; 5282 OAKRIDGE DR, HAMBURG, NY 14075-4050
Christensen, Mark; 30 THE CMN, LOCKPORT, NY 14094-4002
Evans, Jenn; 25 PERSHING AVE UPPR, LANCASTER, NY 14086-2013
Gerdes, Kurt; 38 VALLEY RD, GEORGETOWN, WV 26505
Heinz, Teresa; 3698 EMERSON RD, CUBA, NY 14727-9415
Heitsch, Ronald; 356 HOLLY LN, NEW CASTLE, PA 16105-1570
Herbst, Mark; 4427 RIDGE RD, LOCKPORT, NY 14094-9731
Lambrecht, Mark; 482 TRUE HICKORY DR, ROCHESTER, NY 14615-1322
McFadden, Joel; 411 RENNARD DR, EXTON, PA 19341-1724
Miller, Jerry D; 101 CARLISLE DR, PITTSBURGH, PA 15223-1012
Nash, Garrett; 56 GROVE ST, WILKES BARRE, PA 18702-4840
Smith, Robert W; 268 RAPALEE RD, HIMROD, NY 14842-9777
Tresch, Jennifer J; 260 ARGONNE DR, KENMORE, NY 14217-2434
Walz, Nathan J; 946 CAFFERTY HILL RD, ENDICOTT, NY 13760-8918
Young, Tammy S; 109 HARVEY LN, SAXONBURG, PA 16056-8609

Advisory Ordained

Jacobi, Frederick C; 85 INDEPENDENCE DR, ORCHARD PARK, NY 14127-3424

Advisory Commissioned

Heggemeier, Lyle M; 179 SELBORNE CHASE, FAIRPORT, NY 14450-3241

English District

Voting Ordained

Bacon, Paul E; 6803 N CAMPBELL AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60645-4679
Braden, Mark P; 1824 N FRANKLIN ST, DEARBORN, MI 48128-1073
Elsner, James L; 10305 E 550 S, HUDSON, IN 46747-9604
Ernst, Michael S; S79W15273 FOXBORO PL, MUSKEGO, WI 53150-7722
Forss, Eric Charles; 515 W HIGHLAND RD, APT E7, HOWELL, MI 48843-1173

Gipson, Russ W; 1873 N CREEK CIR, ALPHARETTA, GA 30009-2353
Hardy, Jamison J; 123 HOOVER LN, McMURRAY, PA 15317-3325
Hearn, Fredrick C; 3909 E TANGLEWOOD DR, PHOENIX, AZ 85048-7350
Hoag, Douglas E; 2707 DOUGALL RD, JOLIET, IL 60433-1734
Jastram, Daniel N; 1320 HARTFORD AVE, SAINT PAUL, MN 55116-1623
Laesch, Theodore L; 6731 BLOSSOM VIEW DR, FLORIS-SANT, MO 63033-5110
Lutz, Gregory Robert; 3021 ROCKWELL BLVD, WINDSOR, ON N9E 2A6 CANADA
Mirtschin, Neville; 3159 LAWRENCE AVE E, TORONTO, ON M1H 1A1 CANADA
Pezzica, Daniel W; 6600 N CLINTON ST, FORT WAYNE, IN 46825-4916
Rutter, David A; 22134 COLONY ST, ST CLR SHORES, MI 48080-2025
Stieve, John W; 68 W ALISO DR, GREEN VALLEY, AZ 85614-4225
Tauscher, Robert W; 1279 MIDLAND AVE, BARBERTON, OH 44203-4715
Zimmerman, Luke T; 806 MARSHALL DR, CARLISLE, PA 17013-1662

Voting Lay

Bauch, Ray; 2 SAN MARCO CT, PALM COAST, FL 32137-2104
Beach, Charles W; 620 N LAKE RD, STANTON, MI 48888-9749
Bruer, Armin E; 1935 HINDHEAD RD, MISSISSAUGA, ON L5J 1N8 CANADA
Bussing, William; 5255 RYMOOR DR, SYLVANIA, OH 43560-1888
Casanova, Donald; 2921 MOUNT ZION AVE, JANESVILLE, WI 53545-1338
Cherry, Bradley S; 1302 W COYOTE TRL, BENSON, AZ 85602-8035
Duffy, Jane E; 510 EDGEWOOD AVE, WESTMONT, NJ 08108-2227
Ehlert, Robert L; PO BOX 973, ARLINGTON HTS, IL 60006-0973
Fischer, Robert H; 80 N PORTAGE PATH, # A612, AKRON, OH 44303-1144
George, Carol H; 2238 S SHORE DR, ERIE, PA 16505-2144
Lagemann, Paul W; 407 ARCADIA CT, FORT WAYNE, IN 46807-2003
Lasenby, Doug J; 1671 Modeland Rd, Sarnia, ON N7T 7H4 CANADA
Rabe, John; 1674 PAWNEE ST, LINCOLN, NE 68502-4663
Rocha, John D; 35 MESA VISTA CT, SAN RAMON, CA 94583-2135
Sanders, Neal E; W165N9487 LEXINGTON DR, MENOMONEE FLS, WI 53051-1448
Trendle, Ralph; 8054 STUDEBAKER AVE, WARREN, MI 48089-2308
Van Ewyk, James J; 404 S ARDMORE AVE, VILLA PARK, IL 60181-2926
Yoder, Roger W; HC 20 BOX 75, EARP, CA 92242-9701

Advisory Commissioned

Frunk, Eva M; 10311 PARKLANE CT, HALES CORNERS, WI 53130-2248

Florida-Georgia District

Voting Ordained

Burmeister, Scott E; 10607 ORANGE GROVE DR, TAMPA, FL 33618-3938
Czaplewski, Daniel P; 1621 NE 56TH ST, FT LAUDERDALE, FL 33334-5848
Eichinger, Eric Todd; 2727 S GROVE ST, EUSTIS, FL 32726-7302
Fields, Andrew T; 808 MARSTEVAN DR NE, ATLANTA, GA 30306-3286
Fuqua, Thomas Kent; 8343 DANBURY LN, HUDSON, FL 34667-6527
Goff, Dennison J; 6155 RIVERLAKE BLVD, BARTOW, FL 33830-7754
Haupt, Benjamin Douglas; 600 S ENOTA DR NE, GAINESVILLE, GA 30501-2470
Heidle, Michael K; 2714 STAPLES AVE, KEY WEST, FL 33040-3982
Hopkins, John Richard; 105 PARKVIEW RD, SAVANNAH, GA 31419-9671
Jones, John R; 1050 NW 4TH ST, BOCA RATON, FL 33486-3428
Kindle, Gary F; 1509 KYRA AVE, SEBRING, FL 33872-2711
Marshall, Frank T; 1503 CARBONDALE DR N, JACKSONVILLE, FL 32208-1514
McPherson, Daniel Patrick; 433 DRIFTWOOD RD, N PALM BEACH, FL 33408-4811
Moore, Jeffery C; 510 LAKE AVE, ORLANDO, FL 32801-3913
Prugh, Daniel Russell; 2928 NW 6TH DR, GAINESVILLE, FL 32609-0904
Redmann, Kenneth Paul; 2300 LUTHER RD, PUNTA GORDA, FL 33983-2611
Schulz, Mark E; 4452 ARGYLE LN, TALLAHASSEE, FL 32309-9611

Snider, Brett N; 18 SERIEMA PL, PALM COAST, FL 32164-4411
Thurau, Michael R; 13010 FOREST DR, SEMINOLE, FL 33776-2509
Townsend, Larry W A; 71 OAKMONT CT, HAMPTON, GA 30228-5594

Voting Lay

Anton, William R; 5909 FALCONPARK CT, LITHIA, FL 33547-5833
DeKarske, Ron; 5500 STONEHAVEN LN, SARASOTA, FL 34233-3348
Flanagan, Michael B; 490 SW BLUFF DR, FORT WHITE, FL 32038-5036
Gaik, William H; 775 YATES CIR, CLARKESVILLE, GA 30523-1322
Geiger, Diana; 10341 BOYNTON PLACE CIR, BOYNTON BEACH, FL 33437-2660
Howard, Fredrick; 1436 ROSETREE CT, CLEARWATER, FL 33764-2833
Ingersoll, James R; 4037 CONWAY PLACE CIR, ORLANDO, FL 32812-7986
Jones, Steve; 7306 WILD OAK LN, LAND O LAKES, FL 34637-7839
Jugar, Ellen W; 2634 SMOKETREE CT NE, ATLANTA, GA 30345-1543
Junge, Barbara; 10850 N BAYSHORE DR, MIAMI, FL 33161-7450
Miers, Sharlene; 4870 GOPHER CIR, MIDDLEBURG, FL 32068-6448
Oberdeck, Alan M; 792 S STEEL BRIDGE RD, EATONTON, GA 31024-8133
Pancake, Matthew; 1610 BOTTLEBRUSH DR NE, PALM BAY, FL 32905-2417
Rodriguez, Bernadene; 13680 SW 33RD CT, DAVIE, FL 33330-4690
Schaefer, Lois; PO BOX 104, OXFORD, FL 34484-0104
Sesko, Robert; 49 PINE AIRE CIR, LAKE PLACID, FL 33852-6115
Shaw, John; 3544 SABAL SPRINGS BLVD, N FT MYERS, FL 33917-2077
Snider, Mark; 8855 COURTYARD LN, GROVELAND, FL 34736-8897
Spinks, Larry; 50 OLD IVY RD, STOCKBRIDGE, GA 30281-2129
Van Matre, Joyce D; 5803 HERONPARK PL, LITHIA, FL 33547-3811
Young, Steve; 3212 PERIGRINE FALCON DR, PORT ST LUCIE, FL 34952-3013

Advisory Ordained

Besalski, Robert C; 10521 NW 36TH PL, GAINESVILLE, FL 32606-5078
Glick, Dennis W; 2404 MAVERICK WAY, THE VILLAGES, FL 32162-5102
Seaman, Gerald W; 736 SILVERWOOD DR, LAKE MARY, FL 32746-4917

Advisory Commissioned

Borth, Elizabeth L; 11101 OAKSHORE LN, CLERMONT, FL 34711-5409
Lustila, Gerald John; 1411 E PRIVATE DR, LAKELAND, FL 33813-1857
Niermeier, Arthur H; 531 TAHITI DR, LAKE WALES, FL 33859-6933
Rau, Christian W; 5800 DENVER ST NE, ST PETERSBURG, FL 33703-1847
Wegner, Jeffrey S; 5148 LAVAL DR, ORLANDO, FL 32839-6900
Zobel, Glen F; 1913 OAKDALE LN S, CLEARWATER, FL 33764-6469

Indiana District

Voting Ordained

Ahlemeyer, Eric M; 4381 S STATE ROAD 135, VALLONIA, IN 47281-9716
Brege, William R; 6541 E 750 N, OSSIAN, IN 46777-9631
Carstens, Gary J; 6760 S 25 E, PENDLETON, IN 46064-9588
Eggold, Thomas A; 915 NELSON ST, FORT WAYNE, IN 46802-4130
Fausel, Charles Allen; 8311 NOTTINGHAM PKWY, LOUISVILLE, KY 40222-5539
Feuer, Michael O; 1224 LAUREL ST, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46203-1908
Fichtner, L. Joe; 211 CAPERIOLE PL, FORT WAYNE, IN 46825-8309
Horn, Jeffrey Paul; 1349 S RANDOLPH ST, GARRETT, IN 46738-1970
Kendall, Chad D; 631 W COMMERCIAL AVE, LOWELL, IN 46356-2221
Kolaskey, Richard K; 9900 CENTRAL AVE, DILLSBORO, IN 47018-7453
Krupski, Philip J; 7830 SOFTWOOD CT, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46239-8700
Miller, Timothy P; 1600 S HEATON ST, KNOX, IN 46534-2318
Mueller, David R; 2723 N 700 W, RENSSELAER, IN 47978-7435
Ouелlette, Dennis E; 5437 E COUNTY ROAD 750 N, PITTSBORO, IN 46167-9275
Raebel, Jared; 15495 S. 900 W, WANATAH, IN 46390

Salemink, Raymond Jeffrey; 111 LANGLEY DR, ELLETTSVILLE, IN 47429-1623
Spira, Paul J; 5526 INDIANA AVE, FORT WAYNE, IN 46807-3034
Stube, John C; 8811 SAINT JOE RD, FORT WAYNE, IN 46835-1037
Stuckwisch, Jeffrey L; 41 N COUNTY ROAD 600 E, SEYMOUR, IN 47274-9581
Truelsen, Christopher David; 2406 E MARKET ST, NEW ALBANY, IN 47150-1512
Wenig, Thomas; 229 PLAZA DR, EVANSVILLE, IN 47715
Wiist, David E; 2451 STRINGTOWN RD, EVANSVILLE, IN 47711-3374
Witten, David M; 839 HILLTOP RD, DANVILLE, KY 40422-1140
Wollman, Andrew J; 19579 SUN VALLEY BLVD, GOSHEN, IN 46528-7792

Voting Lay

Bieberich, Dwight; 1831 BRAEMAR DR, FORT WAYNE, IN 46814-9364
Brock, Jim; 7044 W STIRRUP LN, COLUMBUS, IN 47201-8804
Claybourn, James; 513 COFFEETREE LN, EVANSVILLE, IN 47712-3007
Hawk, David; 2814 BAYWOOD TRL, FORT WAYNE, IN 46845-1970
Jenkins, Ronald; 9007 ARTHUR COFFMAN RD, GREENVILLE, IN 47124-9653
Jensen, Robert; 231 CARNOUSTIE CT, SCHERERVILLE, IN 46375-2919
Jones, Jeannette K; 377 KINGS TRACE DR, BEREА, KY 40403-8752
Karner, Maggie S; 220 S STRADLING RD, MUNCIE, IN 47304-4261
Kyler, Patrick; 9497 E US 30, PIERCETON, IN 46562-9767
Matzke, Robb; 19017 HOMINY ROCK LN, BORDEN, IN 47106-9020
Palmer, Jonathan E; 7593 W OAKWOOD CT, NEW PALESTINE, IN 46163-9667
Pflugshaupt, Robin; 5625 N US HIGHWAY 35, HAMLET, IN 46532-9705
Pienta, David; 455 ELIZABETH ST, GREENCASTLE, IN 46135-7860
Piper, Glen; 1101 CORTLAND DR, VALPARAISO, IN 46383-4469
Rahe, John A; 204 HILLVIEW DR, AURORA, IN 47001-1624
Richeson, Mark W; 222 N BROOKFIELD DR, LAFAYETTE, IN 47905-7630
Scheumann, Michael; 13720 BRUNSON RD, HOAGLAND, IN 46745-9702
Schultz, Robert A H; 1335 WESTBROOK DR, CROWN POINT, IN 46307-8204
Short, Randy D; 9223 ROTHMAN RD, FORT WAYNE, IN 46835-9759
Shutters, David; 898 SLEEPY HOLLOW PL, GREENWOOD, IN 46142-3725
Smith, David; 119 NILES AVE, MISHAWAKA, IN 46544-2505
Steele, Richard; 825 PHILLIPS LN, SEYMOUR, IN 47274-3019
Stephens, Kelly M; 134 11TH ST, TELL CITY, IN 47586-1906
Wilbur, Fred; 700 QUAILS RUN APT B3, LOUISVILLE, KY 40207-4179

Advisory Ordained

Nichols, Jerrold L; 6704 COVINGTON CREEK TRL, FORT WAYNE, IN 46804-2870
Thoelke, Hermann Lothar; 763 TRENTON ST, CROWN POINT, IN 46307-5213

Advisory Commissioned

Behmlander, Todd G; 1701 NORTHBROOK CT, SEYMOUR, IN 47274-4801
Cunningham, Sara Ann; 2655 CALAVERAS DR, VALPARAISO, IN 46385-5380
Ernest, Erica C; 1825 GREENSTONE DR, NEW HAVEN, IN 46774-2223
Johnson, Pamela D; 6051 S EATON AVE, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46259-1300
Johnson, Paul W; 6051 S EATON AVE, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46259-1300
Koenemann, Darin D; 7314 COUNTRY HILL DR, FORT WAYNE, IN 46835-9408
Mielke, Jon A; 13608 TUSCON PASS, FORT WAYNE, IN 46814-8865
Schaeckel, Norbert; 9122 N 450 W, DECATUR, IN 46733-7847
Schilf, Kenneth M; 5005 BLUM DR, FORT WAYNE, IN 46835-3421
Schwantz, Richard G; 1931 S TYLAND BLVD, NEW HAVEN, IN 46774-1551
Truwe, Gary M; 1834 ZINNIA DR, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46219-2845

Iowa East District

Voting Ordained

Bollhagen, Karl C; 816 2ND AVENUE DR SE, HAMPTON, IA 50441-2409
Brase, Mark H; 710 W TYLER AVE, FAIRFIELD, IA 52556-4049

Halvorson, Mark W; 920 FAIRVIEW DR, MARION, IA 52302-4607
Johnson, Daniel S; 1600 S CENTER ST, MARSHALLTOWN, IA 50158-5919
Killian, Edward J; 256 S HACKETT RD, WATERLOO, IA 50701-1660
Larson, Kurt Russell; 4416 WARREN ST, DAVENPORT, IA 52806-4339
Otto, Mitchell E; 1025 20TH AVE, CORALVILLE, IA 52241-1342
Sears, Gary L; PO BOX 66, CONROY, IA 52220-0066
Sterle, Roger D; 211 LOBECK AVE, READLYN, IA 50668-7778
Woltemath, Douglas M; 311 3RD AVE, ATKINS, IA 52206-9758
Young, Victor P; 805 WASHINGTON AVE, LOWDEN, IA 52255-9539
Zimmer, David C; 513 ACRE ST, GUTTENBERG, IA 52052-9654

Voting Lay

Flathers, Kurt L; 327 MYRA PL, CLINTON, IA 52732-5440
Gahring, David; 7057 14TH AVE, KEYSTONE, IA 52249-9651
Huck, Thomas; 1850 FAIRVIEW AVE, WAVERLY, IA 50677-9127
Jurgemeyer, Karon J; 22950 170TH ST, ROCKWELL, IA 50469-8669
Knox, Jennifer L; 144 LOBDELL RD, WATERLOO, IA 50701-1102
Kraus, Daniel R; 2640 WISCONSIN AVE, DAVENPORT, IA 52806-6795
Mark, John T; 3909 SHADY OAKS DR, MARION, IA 52302-5933
McCorkle, John R; 3115 SAINT ANNE DR, DUBUQUE, IA 52001-3950
Meyer, Wayne; 2686 H AVE, WILLIAMSBURG, IA 52361-8534
Morey, Russell; 1397 OLD HIGHWAY 34, MT PLEASANT, IA 52641-8316
Schanbacher, Barb; 2353 WILLOWBROOKE LN, IOWA CITY, IA 52246-1835
Winter, Dennis D; 21566 260TH ST, HUBBARD, IA 50122-8438
Wolken, Nate M; 608 S JOHNSON ST, IOWA CITY, IA 52240-4839

Iowa West District

Voting Ordained

Brandt, Edward Earl; PO BOX 207, UTE, IA 51060-0207
Buchholz, Gordon A; PO BOX 256, DOW CITY, IA 51528-0256
Burcham, Ronald D; 8301 AURORA AVE, URBANDALE, IA 50322-2301
Dietrich, Chadric Allen; 3012 270TH ST, ROCKWELL CITY, IA 50579-7513
Dunbar, Jon M; 605 N CHURCH ST, ALGONA, IA 50511-1708
Henderson, Allen W; 1004 N 31ST PL, FORT DODGE, IA 50501-2920
Kaldahl, Paul E; 815 6TH ST SW, SPENCER, IA 51301-6255
Keuning, Jeffrey Michael; 313 MARSHALL ST, DEXTER, IA 50070-1037
Kieser, Stephen Wayne; 1727 555TH ST, STORM LAKE, IA 50588-7763
Meyer, Donald J; 5290 C AVE, MARCUS, IA 51035-7034
Miller, Alan Jay; 424 W 6TH ST, GLIDDEN, IA 51443-1066
Peterson, Donald E; PO BOX 260, LAKE VIEW, IA 51450-0260
Sherrill, Nathan A; 170 NICHOLAS ST, COUNCIL BLFS, IA 51503-4634
Shorey, Ralph Chester; 14 W 37TH STREET PL, SIOUX CITY, IA 51104-2106
Standfest, Michael R; 295 SPRUCE LN, BOONE, IA 50036-7365
Stoll, Steven E; 29014 LAKE AVE, HINTON, IA 51024-8578
Watt, Jonathan Charles; 800 N SUMNER AVE, CRESTON, IA 50801-1349
Wegner, Peter C; 612 45TH ST, WEST DES MOINES, IA 50265-3819

Voting Lay

Albrecht, Larry D; 1124 VALLEY VIEW DR, IDA GROVE, IA 51445-1713
Eisenbacher, Joe M; 410 E 3RD ST, CARROLL, IA 51401-2927
Fann, Allen; 405 E 21ST ST, ATLANTIC, IA 50022-2843
Feilmeier, Jill; 2440 230TH ST, EARLY, IA 50535-7530
Fokken, Joe; 200 E 39TH ST, APT 208, S SIOUX CITY, NE 68776-3680
Lehrman, Kevin; 109 S WATER ST, GOLDFIELD, IA 50542-5005
Loux, Michael W; 203 N IOWA AVE, EAGLE GROVE, IA 50533-1725
McGinley, Michael; 2121 GREENE ST, APT 37A, ADEL, IA 50003-1649
Otto, Virdene; 5929 120TH ST, GALVA, IA 51020-8503
Peterson, Michael; 408 N 4TH AVE, LOGAN, IA 51546-1130
Puhrmann, Paul; 4234 H AVE, CLEGHORN, IA 51014-7012
Reents, Marvin G; 2370 MAPLE AVE, CLARINDA, IA 51632-4558

Schroeder, Marilyn N; 1828 14TH ST, BOONE, IA 50036-1611
Schulz, Mark G; 6568 320TH ST, HARTLEY, IA 51346-7656
Segebart, Mark; 1820 350TH ST, VAIL, IA 51465-7518
Shaltanis, Dennis; 2401 NW PLEASANT ST, ANKENY, IA 50023-9024
Struecker, Steve; 204 160TH ST, WEST BEND, IA 50597-8528
Zierke, David J; 48486 305TH ST, HAWARDEN, IA 51023-8034

Advisory Ordained

Kramer, Herman W; 222 HARRISON ST, LAKE VIEW, IA 51450-7347

Advisory Commissioned

Fick, Jeffrey A; 619 W LOCUST ST, OGDEN, IA 50212-2056

Kansas District

Voting Ordained

Becker, Dale Andrew; 13307 JEWELL RD, OFFERLE, KS 67563-9227
Domanski, David Anthony; 522 5TH ST, OSWEGO, KS 67356-2104
Eichler, Mark P; 2915 RIO VISTA DR, EMPORIA, KS 66801-5874
Gruoner, David F; 202 CHURCH ST, LINN, KS 66953-9527
Harmon, Thomas E; 2731 N CRANBERRY ST, WICHITA, KS 67226-1622
Heath, Timmothy W; 402 CHEYENNE DR, HOLTON, KS 66436-8393
Hovel, LeRoy K; 8108 DEARBORN DR, PRAIRIE VLG, KS 66208-4825
Johnson, Thomas R; 1757 N MYERS CIR, MULVANE, KS 67110-9201
Mease, Van Edward; 804 N 18TH ST, LEAVENWORTH, KS 66048-1100
Meyer, Seth A; 703 26TH AVE, CANTON, KS 67428-8860
Panzer, Justin A; 1600 N BUCKEYE AVE, ABILENE, KS 67410-1540
Rather, Ronald Steven; PO BOX 141, McFARLAND, KS 66501-0141
Rostek, Wayne F; 1110 NIXON DR, NORTON, KS 67654-1130
Schmidt, Michael John; 705 5TH ST, NATOMA, KS 67651-9744
Schotte, Michael L; 40307 NE 40TH AVE, PRESTON, KS 67583-8572
Scroggins, Troy D; 2265 SW ROTHER RD, TOPEKA, KS 66614-6040
Trost, Edward Wm; 26799 W SHADOW CIR, OLATHE, KS 66061-8443

Voting Lay

Adams, Terry; 930 N HOLLY DR, LIBERAL, KS 67901-5513
Alley, James; 324 W 5TH AVE, GARNETT, KS 66032-1326
Copley, Don D; PO BOX 157, HUMBOLDT, KS 66748-0157
Culbertson, Ken; 6026 304TH RD, ARKANSAS CITY, KS 67005-5491
Duesing, Wes; 713 SHAWNEE ST, HIAWATHA, KS 66434-2135
Gehrke, Stevin; 1036 HARTLAND DR, LAWRENCE, KS 66049-3712
Hackerott, Ruth; 801 KANSAS AVE, PHILLIPSBURG, KS 67661-2534
Hall, Darrell; 16005 CEDAR ST, BASEHOR, KS 66007-9736
Hammond, Steve; 16625 W 146TH ST, OLATHE, KS 66062-2543
Hiesterman, Dale; 301 W 1ST ST, WASHINGTON, KS 66968-1827
Jorns, Jim; 3031 CONROW DR, MANHATTAN, KS 66503-2460
Linderer, Russel; 720 KANSAS ST, LARNED, KS 67550-3009
Luna, Marcie; 6714 N HYDRAULIC ST, PARK CITY, KS 67219-1411
Meisinger, David; 444 LYNNS LN, McPHERSON, KS 67460-3916
Obermeyer, Jeremy; 304 ADAMS ST, GYPSUM, KS 67448-9062
Sammis, Michael; 11110 W 117TH ST, OVERLAND PARK, KS 66210-3893
Walter, Lester; 211 N MAIN ST, SYLVAN GROVE, KS 67481-8104

Advisory Ordained

Krause, Thomas P; 11556 CARTER ST, OVERLAND PARK, KS 66210-2924

Advisory Commissioned

Limback, Jane L; 4153 RAINBOW BLVD, KANSAS CITY, KS 66103-3110

Michigan District

Voting Ordained

Astrowski, Leonard A; 1787 S MAIN ST, FAIRGROVE, MI 48733-9574
Bagnall, George Steve; 21173 SUFFOLK ST, CLINTON TWP, MI 48035-2775
Bookshaw, John A; 408 W BELLEVUE ST, BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307-1310

Bush, John L; 25177 ALICIA ST, BROWNSTOWN, MI 48134-9424
Cloeter, Erik K; PO BOX 10, CLIO, MI 48420-0010
Davenport, Dean Marvin; 14175 FARMINGTON RD, LIVO-NIA, MI 48154-5422
Dodge, David A; 207 SOUTH ST, UNION CITY, MI 49094-8312
Doenges, Joseph C; 415 N 9TH ST, SAINT CLAIR, MI 48079-4847
Duncan, Randall S; 34449 MARINA CT, WESTLAND, MI 48185-1490
Eilers, Gregory J; 4515 2ND ST, PORT HOPE, MI 48468-7703
Eisinger, Alan P; 43681 PERIGNON DR, STERLING HTS, MI 48314-1928
Fenske, Shawn D; 42651 LONI DR, STERLING HTS, MI 48313-2458
Ferguson, Jack D; 4869 W COUNTY HIGHWAY 638, HAWKS, MI 49743-9758
Frechette, Jeffrey D; 12930 COBBLESTONE DR, STERLING HTS, MI 48313-1157
Frusti, Todd I; 706 W FLINT ST, DAVISON, MI 48423-1010
Goers, Michael M; 300 VISSER ST, SPRING LAKE, MI 49456-2063
Hessler, William W; PO BOX 242, BRIDGEPORT, MI 48722-0242
Lassanske, Dennis L; 3042 CHAPEL CT, MUSKEGON, MI 49441-3751
Loest, Mark A; 1220 S MUELLER RD, SAGINAW, MI 48601-9457
Love, Mark W; 10 GIBALTAR DR NE, ROCKFORD, MI 49341-7703
Mahlburg, Steven Christopher; PO BOX 307, TAWAS CITY, MI 48764-0307
Mandley, Jason L; 22000 COUNTY ROAD 452, HILLMAN, MI 49746-9547
Neuendorf, Donald O; 411 PINE BRAE ST, ANN ARBOR, MI 48105-2743
Pape, Richard E; 864 E LIBERTY ST, MILFORD, MI 48381-2053
Parent, Raymond D; 22159 GRAND RIVER AVE, DETROIT, MI 48219-3228
Poellet, Dean R; 956 RIVERVIEW CT, WILLIAMSTON, MI 48895-9579
Reed, David H; 307 RUTH ST, AUBURN, MI 48611-9463
Ritter, Donald A; 4136 LAKESHORE RD, BOYNE CITY, MI 49712-9676
Roth, Michael J; 3460 KEDZIE ST, SAINT JOSEPH, MI 49085-9488
Salminen, Bryan R; 767 E DIVISION ST, CADILLAC, MI 49601-2013
Schaedig, Michael W; 3345 FOREST RD, HARRISON, MI 48625-8714
Schulz, Charles R; 6007 S MIAMI ST, YPSILANTI, MI 48197-9729
Siefert, Gary L; 15 CREST DR, BATTLE CREEK, MI 49017-3317
Sikora, Edward Anthony; 1180 W HERBISON RD, DE WITT, MI 48820-8308
Smith, Kelly Dalton; 7790 JEFFERSON RD, BROOKLYN, MI 49230-9796
Sommerfeld, Scott G; 4988 BIG BASS DR, HUDSONVILLE, MI 49426-8608
Starke, Stephen P; 1704 AMELITH RD, BAY CITY, MI 48706-9337
Stowe, Douglas John; 2666 CAMPBELLGATE DR, WATER-FORD, MI 48329-3120
Todd, Kelly D; 5245 HADLEY RD, GOODRICH, MI 48438-9640
Walsh, Jeffrey B; 5836 ELMWOOD ST, MONROE, MI 48161-3912
Wilhelm, Jeffrey Michael; 319 W CASS ST, GREENVILLE, MI 48838-1767
Zagore, Robert M; 1003 S MAPLE ST, TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684-4025

Voting Lay

Arego, Douglas A; 5964 SHORE ORCHID DR, GAYLORD, MI 49735-8953
Arends, Herman J; 3555 N COCHRAN RD, CHARLOTTE, MI 48813-9704
Azzam, Kathy; 6098 STAGECOACH TRL, OSCODA, MI 48750-8737
Barcey, Scott; PO Box 133, MAPLE CITY, MI 49664
Billig, William G; 7260 MUSTANG DR, CLARKSTON, MI 48346-2622
Bluemer, James; 8115 GEDDES RD, SAGINAW, MI 48609-9562
Brechtelsbauer, Doug F; 3105 N GERA RD, REESE, MI 48757-9704
Cushway, Ritch R; 2021 6TH ST, BAY CITY, MI 48708-6795
Deeg, Robert; 700 E MAIN ST, SEBEWAING, MI 48759-1620
Ducharme, Willard C; 12959 LASALLE LN, HUNTINGTN WOODS, MI 48070-1045
Dunnick, Michael R; 2095 TRUMAN ST, CONKLIN, MI 49403-9532
Durham, Karen E; 1394 W ALBAIN RD, MONROE, MI 48161-9520
Elliott, Larry C; 723 N RIVER AVE, ALMA, MI 48801-1732
Gerring, Norman J; 764 CLOVERLAWN BLVD, LINCOLN PARK, MI 48146-4322
Heimsoth, Jeremy E; 503 LAMBERT DR, SAINT JOHNS, MI 48879-2409

Hula, Daniel; 17 W OAK ST, SAND LAKE, MI 49343-9554
Hutfilz, Jim; 71 E LAKESHORE DR, HOPE, MI 48628-9727
Klinger, Donna; 551 JEFFERSON ST, HUDSON, MI 49247-1114
Klumpff, Marlin K; 2340 TAYLOR RD, TECUMSEH, MI 49286-9733
Knox, Jeffrey A; 2487 CASTLE RD, NORTH BRANCH, MI 48461-8707
Langan, Michael; PO BOX 35, CHIPPEWA FALLS, WI 54729-0035
Markum, Sandra; 1728 BRIDGEWATER DR, SUPERIOR TWP, MI 48198
Mill, Jon E; 3005 W 5 MILE RD, SAULT S MARIE, MI 49783-9266
Miller, Mark; 122 SYDELLE AVE, KALAMAZOO, MI 49006-4340
Miller, Wayne E; 5845 HARRINGTON RD, CROSWELL, MI 48422-8995
Moore, Eric S; 14875 BAINBRIDGE ST, LIVONIA, MI 48154-3646
Paehlke, Glenn A; 21 CHATEAUX DU LAC, FENTON, MI 48430-9140
Pillsbury, Paul E; 7175 N NOFFKE DR, CALEDONIA, MI 49316-8805
Poliski, Lee A; 51805 OXFORD CT, NEW BALTIMORE, MI 48047-4362
Quitmeyer, Frederick C; 42176 CRESTVIEW CIR, NORTHVILLE, MI 48168-2205
Richardson, Ted H; 310 N 1ST ST, BRIGHTON, MI 48116-1207
Scanlon, James; 339 COX RD, SAINT CLAIR, MI 48079-5258
Scheck, Barbara C; 12717 LAKESHORE DR, GRAND HAVEN, MI 49417-8637
Schnelz, Gene; 30965 TANGLEWOOD DR, NOVI, MI 48377-4538
Slaten, Mark F; 2425 APPLEWOOD DR, LAPEER, MI 48446-9013
Sterns, Fred; 6974 MONAGHAN POINT RD, ALPENA, MI 49707-8806
Strunk, Luke; 417 WALNUT ST, WATERVLIET, MI 49098-9347
Thorn, Helen; 4901 N SAGINAW ST, FLINT, MI 48505-3511
Tritten, John R; 11660 MORTON RD, MANISTEE, MI 49660-9530
Van Cott, Edward; 11407 DOROTHY ST LOT 93, LOWELL, MI 49331-9659
Wulff, John; 3131 GEMINI DR, STERLING HTS, MI 48314-3175
Zauel, Norm; 61756 SUNNYBROOK CT, WASHINGTON, MI 48094-1150

Advisory Ordained

Kleimola, Dale M; 424 ANDERSON ST, APT 1, MILAN, MI 48160-1676

Advisory Commissioned

Braun, Bruce Neal; 2061 W WILLIAMS CIR, WESTLAND, MI 48186-9340
Ernst, Timothy L; 1655 SUN PRAIRIE DR, SAINT JOSEPH, MI 49085-9431
Hoch, Robert M; 21164 MASTERS DR, MACOMB, MI 48044-1361
Locke, George M; 4297 FOREST BRIDGE DR, CANTON, MI 48188-7918
McDonald, Deborah M; 14844 INKSTER RD, REDFORD, MI 48239-3015
McDonald, Ian K; 14844 INKSTER RD, REDFORD, MI 48239-3015
Pickelmann, Henry M; 4762 BIRNBAUM DR, BAY CITY, MI 48706-9496
Pickelmann, Jonathon H; 5059 WEISS ST, SAGINAW, MI 48603-3752
Priehs, Warren W; 35656 ELECTRA DR, STERLING HTS, MI 48312-3953
Roth, Leslie D; 683 EASTGATE DR, FRANKENMUTH, MI 48734-1201
Schallhorn, Mark B; 4301 UNDERHILL DR, FLINT, MI 48506-1533
Schallhorn, Vicki L; 4301 UNDERHILL DR, FLINT, MI 48506-1533
Schiefer, Mark T; PO BOX 144, RICHVILLE, MI 48758-0144
Schumacher, James Lee; 3464 CLOVER LN, BAY CITY, MI 48706-3333
Sheldon, David Alan; 42994 NEBEL TRL, CLINTON TWP, MI 48038-2456

Mid-South District

Voting Ordained

Becker, Paul Frederick; 2020 MALVERN DR, KINGSPORT, TN 37660-5093
Clausing, Dean F; 6207 TIMBER LAKE DR, PINE BLUFF, AR 71603-7734
Gierke, John Peter; 1640 HIGHPOINT DR, CONWAY, AR 72034-6099
Hoover, Curt Ray; 2027 SPRING MEADOW CIR, SPRING HILL, TN 37174-9273
McMinn, Theodore David; 3950 VERBLE SHERRELL RD, COOKEVILLE, TN 38506-7675
Seaton, Robert G; 2825 JULIAN DR NE, CLEVELAND, TN 37312-5442

Sonntag, Donaldo; 623 KINKADE PL, LOWELL, AR 72745-9716
Stuckwisch, Allen D; 2305 CROSS HILL RD, FORT SMITH, AR 72908-9176
Tews, David E; 1405 OKLAHOMA ST, HORSESHOE BND, AR 72512-4055
Walter, James Carl; 7807 EVERGREEN DR, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72227-5909
Weldon, Robert F; 173 CYNTHIA LYNN DR, BOWLING GREEN, KY 42103-6009
Willadsen, Joshua J; 90 SPRING VALLEY DR, OAKLAND, TN 38060-3411

Voting Lay

Beyer, Albert; 3 TELON LN, HOT SPRINGS, AR 71909-7329
Clifton, Jeremy T; 3323 BLACK OAK CIR, CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415-5425
Davis, Mike; 2 TSALA DR, CHEROKEE VLG, AR 72529-1612
Hall, John T; 2366 CAIRO BEND RD, LEBANON, TN 37087-7431
Lowitzer, James D; 1414 STATESBORO DR, COLLIERVILLE, TN 38017-8615
MacDowell, Michael; 1018 GREAT OAKS DR, HOPKINSVILLE, KY 42240-5108
Mancuso, Thomas G; 477 COUNTY ROAD 109, EUREKA SPGS, AR 72631-9170
Mundt, Fred D; 104 WALDEN RIDGE DR, CROSSVILLE, TN 38558-6603
Pearson, Arthur L; 13610 ABINGER DR, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72212-3708
Snelling, David; 61 ABBEY RD, RUSSELLVILLE, AR 72802-1017
Vester, Ray E; 54 SMITH VESTER RD, STUTTGART, AR 72160-5596
Wadsworth, Steve; 1193 LUDLOW CT, MORRISTOWN, TN 37814-1696

Advisory Ordained

Herd, Clifford Leroy; 832 BELVOIR CREST DR, CHATTANOOGA, TN 37412-2010

Advisory Commissioned

Morris, Wendy Elaine; 2837 CALL HILL RD, NASHVILLE, TN 37211-7926

Minnesota North District

Voting Ordained

Bohler, Steven W; 800 WASHINGTON AVE, CROOKSTON, MN 56716-2318
Coop, Gregory S; 115 VILLAGE GREEN LN, MORA, MN 55051-1145
Dare, Paul W; 1624 CALVARY HILL LN, SAINT CLOUD, MN 56301-5119
Frank, Steven J; 521 9TH AVE, MADISON, MN 56256-1134
Hahn, David Gordon; 13792 127TH AVE, MILACA, MN 56353-3737
Hanson, Mark; PO BOX 198, SABIN, MN 56580-0198
Hormann, David L; 601 PEARL ST, CLOQUET, MN 55720-1219
Lee, Kirk E; 609 S DOUGLAS AVE, PARKERS PRAIRIE, MN 56361-4926
Neubauer, James Howard; 402 BIRCH AVE, PARK RAPIDS, MN 56470-1793
Pollock, Benjamin Daniel; 205 S MAIN AVE, ODESSA, MN 56276-3001
Porter, Marty L; 300 MAPLE ST, SAUK CENTRE, MN 56378-1223
Robson, Kevin D; 6055 COSMOS RD, BAXTER, MN 56425-9778
Scheer, Joshua Verlin; 31 3RD ST NW, BAGLEY, MN 56621-8738
Stauty, Donald M; 7606 RICE RIVER RD, VIRGINIA, MN 55792-8042
Stohs, Delton G; PO BOX 98, CALLAWAY, MN 56521-0098
Trinklein, Robert A; 416 W BIRCH ST, SAINT JOSEPH, MN 56374-9419
Wagner, Donald R; PO BOX 446, ELBOW LAKE, MN 56531-0446
Weber, Karl A; 31957 COUNTY HIGHWAY 61, OTTERTAIL, MN 56571-9630

Voting Lay

Anderson, Brad K; 70484 CSAH 27, KIMBALL, MN 55353-2702
Behm, Alix E; 2217 COUNTRY CLUB DR NE, WILLMAR, MN 56201-2162
Brehmer, David L; 905 4TH AVE N, SAUK RAPIDS, MN 56379-2211
Cochran, Ron W; 215 4TH ST NW, GLENWOOD, MN 56334-1151
Dawkins, Leon E; 711 N UNION AVE, FERGUS FALLS, MN 56537-2119
Deustchmann, Charles D; 20252 STATE 226, PARK RAPIDS, MN 56470-5026
Ecker, David L; 411 W BROADWAY, BROWNS VALLEY, MN 56219-7026
Glockzin, Calvin D; 40478 PEQUOT DR, BROWERVILLE, MN 56438-4602
Hagen, Kelly J; PO BOX 982, MOOSE LAKE, MN 55767-0982
Hepola, Keith; 40867 430TH AVE, PERHAM, MN 56573-8941

Jensen, Jeff J; PO BOX 135, ODESSA, MN 56276-0135
Kading, Marvin; 15145 127TH ST SE, SAINT HILAIRE, MN 56754-9775
Keske, Allan R; 13342 290TH AVE NW, ZIMMERMAN, MN 55398-8648
Lauber, Darrell H; 32340 LAPLANT RD, GRAND RAPIDS, MN 55744-5957
LaVoie, Randy M; 36477 203RD AVE, CLARISSA, MN 56440-1003
Menze, Daniel H; 4124 EMERSON RD, DULUTH, MN 55803-8311
Ohlde, David; 42927 ENGSTROM BEACH RD, DENT, MN 56528-9121
Spilde, Lillian G; 1839 WILTON HILL RD NW, BEMIDJI, MN 56601-5870

Advisory Ordained

Neumann, Wilbur F; 17922 DAYSPRING DR, PARK RAPIDS, MN 56470-6042

Advisory Commissioned

Peterson, Sheila K; 214 AVENUE D, CLOQUET, MN 55720-1513

Minnesota South District

Voting Ordained

Andrix, Donald L; 16980 COUNTY ROAD 31, NYA, MN 55368-9542
Bramstedt, Terrill F; 509 WHITEWATER WAY, ELGIN, MN 55932-9737
Briel, Steven C; 17425 83RD AVE N, MAPLE GROVE, MN 55311-1755
Fritsch, Lyle H; 125 1ST ST E, STEWARTVILLE, MN 55976-1220
Gauthier, Gerald Anthony; 38559 730TH ST, LAKEFIELD, MN 56150-3480
Girard, Steven Douglas; 109 3RD ST SE, MADELIA, MN 56062-1821
Griffin, Benjamin T; PO BOX 489, COTTAGE GROVE, MN 55016-0489
Klatt, Gary H; 819 N CEDAR ST, LUVERNE, MN 56156-1320
Klein, Brent A; 2113 JOHNSON ST, NORTHFIELD, MN 55057-3536
Mathews, Michael William; PO BOX 116, WALDORF, MN 56091-0116
Moore, Richard A; 272 KNOPP VALLEY DR, WINONA, MN 55987-1355
Nelson, Eric Matthew; 118 MAPLE ST N, LESTER PR, MN 55354
Noren, Mark A; 700 WESTERN ST, ANOKA, MN 55303-2001
Queck, Thomas J; 611 MORRISON AVE S, ANNANDALE, MN 55302-3303
Radtko, David E; 63888 240TH ST, GIBBON, MN 55335-2001
Reimers, Russell D; 1669 40TH ST, CEYLON, MN 56121-1143
Rinne, Rex A; 4721 ADAIR CT, CRYSTAL, MN 55429-3562
Rusert, Nathan J; 413 N 1ST AVE W, TRUMAN, MN 56088-1016
Schmiege, Donald R; 11906 RIVER HILLS CIR, BURNSVILLE, MN 55337-3314
Scoles, Brian R; 678 JOHNSON PKWY, SAINT PAUL, MN 55106-4731
Wessel, Loel A; 503 W FREMONT ST, SPRING VALLEY, MN 55975-1733
Wheeler, Steven James; 9633 XERXES CIR S, BLOOMINGTON, MN 55431-2462
Woodford, Lucas V; 209 BLUEJAY AVE, MAYER, MN 55360-2111
Zahrte, John C; 23210 PARK ST, EXCELSIOR, MN 55331-3144

Voting Lay

Anderson, James; 5497 CROSSANDRA ST SE, PRIOR LAKE, MN 55372-2513
Bauer, Mark E; 1657 10TH AVE, GRANITE FALLS, MN 56241-1023
Berner, Gene; 7914 QUINCY ST NE, SPRING LAKE PARK, MN 55432
Bode, Howard; 1586 250TH ST E, FARIBAULT, MN 55021-8229
Breitbarth, Neal D; 2579 STELLA CT, FAIRMONT, MN 56031-3316
Dahl, Steven D; 3104 HAMLINE AVE N, ROSEVILLE, MN 55113-1612
Dahle, Leon A; 407 4TH ST NW, MORRISTOWN, MN 55052-5099
Ellinghuysen, Norbert A; 25707 COUNTY ROAD 29, LEWISTON, MN 55592-4241
Grimm, Hiram; 12985 COUNTY ROAD 41, COLOGNE, MN 55322-9603
Haagenson, Bea; 2917 42ND AVE S, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55406-1819
Hauschildt, Norman E; 31553 570TH AVE, WALTHAM, MN 55982-7633
Heintz, Donald H; 37876 120TH ST, DUNDEE, MN 56131-1341
Kroehler, Phyllis L; 44205 220TH ST, ARLINGTON, MN 55307-9437
Kruse, Kenneth R; 19690 KENWOOD AVE, WABASSO, MN 56293-1243

Laue, Herman W; 8080 WOODLAND TRL, ROCKFORD, MN 55373-9478
Malotky, Charlotte W; 8975 ISLAND VIEW RD, WACONIA, MN 55387-9605
Mathwig, Mark A; 111 3RD ST S, BROWNTON, MN 55312-9306
McCollum, Carl; 137 CHEETAH LN, MANKATO, MN 56001-8651
Mussell, Ray; 10924 COUNTY RD 30, PLAINVIEW, MN 55964
Olson, Carol R; 11297 BEECHWOOD LN, WOODBURY, MN 55129-9403
Post, David H; 80240 360TH AVE, OKABENA, MN 56161-3042
Preus, Christian; 17330 COUNTY ROAD 24, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55447-1210
Reimnitz, Joel; 2610 HALSTEAD LN, MOUND, MN 55364-9401
Schriber, Cynthia P; 4528 MAJESTIC OAKS PL, EAGAN, MN 55123-3076

Advisory Ordained

Natzke, William J; 3412 42ND ST NW, ROCHESTER, MN 55901-4185
Pragman, James H; 117 BARTHOLOMEW LN, MANKATO, MN 56001-4393

Advisory Commissioned

Gustin, Kristopher L; 819 ELM ST W, NORWOOD, MN 55368-9697
Kloetzke, Scott William; 1021 GLENHILL RD, SHOREVIEW, MN 55126-8115
Pfeiffer, Cletus Ralph; 5615 23RD AVE NW, ROCHESTER, MN 55901-2123
Roth, David M; 14728 CHERRY CT NE, PRIOR LAKE, MN 55372-1137
Roth, Jeanine S; 14728 CHERRY CT NE, PRIOR LAKE, MN 55372-1137
Zum Hofe, Allen W; 96 SOUTH DR, APT 304, CIRCLE PINES, MN 55014-3350

Missouri District

Voting Ordained

Below, Mark G; 1031 WINTER PARK DR, FENTON, MO 63026-5690
Boisclair, David R; 4121 BEGG BLVD, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63121-3103
Bradt, Lawrence Nolan; 735 GETTINGER ST, STE GEN- EIVIEVE, MO 63670-1901
Breite, Douglas C; 2811 THOMAS DR, CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO 63701-2137
Etzler, Andrew Robert; 612 E TARR ST, CENTRALIA, MO 65240-1734
Finney, Adam Christopher; 706 S HIGHLAND ST, VANDA- LIA, MO 63382-2145
Griffin, Gary W; 304 SYCAMORE ST, LOCKWOOD, MO 65682-8352
Hagan, Robert Lee; 105 S BILTZ DR, CONCORDIA, MO 64020-8341
Henrickson, Charles M; 4749 MELISSA JO LN, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63128-3921
Kotila, Aaron Paul; PO BOX 276, ROSEBUD, MO 63091-0276
Kurowski, Peter M; 602 CRYSTAL LN, CALIFORNIA, MO 65018-2074
Loy, David W; 2365 W AUBURN ST, BOLIVAR, MO 65613-3207
McCracken, Garry A; 1307 BOONE ST, TROY, MO 63379-2213
Mille, Timothy Charles; PO BOX 85, BLACKBURN, MO 65321-0085
Newman, Drew A; 1606 LYNN RD, EXCELSIOR SPG, MO 64024-9613
Otto, Craig Douglas; 1124 NE CLUBHOUSE LN, LEES SUM- MIT, MO 64086-3063
Poppe, Leonard B; 21037 ROTERMUND AVE, LINCOLN, MO 65338-2731
Rall, Ronald Dean; 6949 PERNOD AVE, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63139-2117
Roeglin, Matthew David; 1841 CHARLESTON ESTATES DR, FLORISSANT, MO 63031-1059
Runk, Patrick; 806 WALFIELD CT, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63141-6082
Scharff, Kim L; 202 N PINE ST, NORBORNE, MO 64668-1125
Sievers, Kenneth W; 5840 HUNTER BROOK CT, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63129-4824
Stolle, Gary D; 15805 E 45TH PL S, INDEPENDENCE, MO 64055-5213
Wachter, Keith D; 643 ZUMWALT CROSSING, O FALLON, MO 63366-4424
Woerth, Warren R; 2025 EL LAGO DR, ARNOLD, MO 63010-4113
Wollenburg, Alan J; 104 LINDA DR, SIKESTON, MO 63801-4610
Woolery, Nathan P; 1702 BLUESTEM CIR, CAMERON, MO 64429-8215
Zimmerman, Darrell W; 13259 BONROYAL DR, DES PERES, MO 63131-1904

2010 Convention Workbook

Voting Lay

Alewel, Elton; 1070 NE COUNTY ROAD CC, CONCORDIA, MO 64020-8112
Bertram, William P; 546 LINDSEY LN, FARMINGTON, MO 63640-3606
Bohlmann, Harold; 4362 VENTURA PLACE DR, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63128-3158
Chegwidden, Gary; 2036 HONEYSUCKLE LN, JEFFERSON CTY, MO 65109-5818
Cook, Jeff; 469 BLUFF MEADOW DR, ELLISVILLE, MO 63021-5993
Craig-Meyer, Jeff; 2013 CONGRESS ST, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63118-1603
Densford, Stephen G; 35 LONGWOOD DR, UNION, MO 63084-4421
Dieterichs, Bill; 14379 CEDAR SPRINGS DR, CHESTER- FIELD, MO 63017-5733
Dittmer, Rob; 957 S LAFAYETTE AVE, MARSHALL, MO 65340-2616
Edwards, Kevin; 815 SW SHORTHORN DR, GRAIN VAL- LEY, MO 64029-9025
Garoutte, Michael; 403 LAKEVIEW LN, CARL JUNCTION, MO 64834-9201
Hale, Tom; 26 CENTRE ST, DEARBORN, MO 64439-9146
Howell, John; 310 S 3RD ST, WELLSVILLE, MO 63384-1510
Jump, Brad; 338 SWEET GUM LOOP, MARSHFIELD, MO 65706-7318
Kern, Frank J; PO BOX 768, ROLLA, MO 65402-0768
Knoernschild, Timothy; 18564 ARNETT RD, SEDALIA, MO 65301-0758
Koch, Clemens; 904 POCAHONTAS AVE, PALMYRA, MO 63461-1318
Miller, Greg; 1604 FAHRPARK CT, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63146-4765
Oebermann, Robert A; 806 DEANDELL CT, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63135
Palisch, Matthew E; 1563 COUNTY ROAD 614, JACKSON, MO 63755-7657
Rauh, Charles; 2511 PCR 206, PERRYVILLE, MO 63775-8889
Ronsick, Glenn; 1043 PEARVIEW DR, SAINT PETERS, MO 63376-2268
Sanders, Clifford; 2395 COUNTY ROAD 4046, HOLTS SUM- MIT, MO 65043-1786
Saugstad, Dennis; PO BOX 68, WESTON, MO 64098-0068
Schlichting, Robert; 233 LAKEWOOD DR, FROHNA, MO 63748-9105
Seider, Gary; 19501 N BERTLEE DR, CENTRALIA, MO 65240-3876
Theilen, David; 9817 WINSLOW PL, KANSAS CITY, MO 64131-3270
Thomas, William; 883 PEGGY CT, PEVELY, MO 63070-2922

Advisory Ordained

Dissen, David V; 211 HILLVIEW ST, CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO 63703-6327
Hoyer, Martin O; 19083 HOBBS RD, BARNETT, MO 65011-3618
Lange, Robert E; 1605 LITTLETON CT, FENTON, MO 63026-3014
Weiss, Matthew K; 5101 DIXON DR, GODFREY, IL 62035-1419

Advisory Commissioned

Beerman, John; 6181 WALKENHORST RD, CONCORDIA, MO 64020-7231
Brackman, James E; 45 LITTLE CREEK LN, SAINT CHARLES, MO 63304-7402
Buchholz, David Allen; 6609 N CAMDEN AVE, KANSAS CITY, MO 64151-1998
Cohrs, Richard Paul; 3750 MAJESTIC CT, SAINT CHARLES, MO 63303-1911
Frank, David J; 808 SW STONEHENGE ST, BLUE SPRINGS, MO 64015-6227
Geisler, Ralph L; 734 MEMOIR LN, MANCHESTER, MO 63021-7038
Gerdes, Drew D; 5225 S MORNING GLORY LN, BATTLE- FIELD, MO 65619-8217
House, James L; 8 BUCKWOOD CT, FENTON, MO 63026-3154
List, Patsy L; 916 GANDOLF WAY, EUREKA, MO 63025-1061
Lubben, William H; 1024 GLENFORD CT, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63122-6929
McDonnell, Ruth Ericka; 3615 FOREST DALE DR, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63125-4213
Palisch, Theodore Herman; 10117 ZENITH CT, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63123-7420
Rice, Denise L; 835 LA BONNE PKWY, MANCHESTER, MO 63021-7056
Robinson, David Preston; 10934 CEDARBERRY PL, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63123-7251

Montana District

Voting Ordained

Grayl, Samuel J; 3194 LILY DR, BOZEMAN, MT 59718-6088
Nelson, Matthew E; 57 MARTHA RD, COLUMBIA FLS, MT 59912-4440
Sandersfeld, Vernon G; 405 S 4TH ST, HAMILTON, MT 59840-2736

Schreibeis, Howard D; 205 S CENTER AVE, MILES CITY, MT 59301-4401
Stinnett, Eric A; PO BOX 57, STANFORD, MT 59479-0057
Wendt, Ryan David; 2342 S 45TH ST W, BILLINGS, MT 59106-3864

Voting Lay

Anderson, Robert A; 111 GLENWOOD AVE, GLENDIVE, MT 59330-2809
Delgado, Michal; 35663 DUBLIN GULCH RD, ST IGNATIUS, MT 59865-9212
Hein, Gregg A; 2916 BELVEDERE DR, BILLINGS, MT 59102-3717
Martin, Mitchell; 420 27TH AVE NE, GREAT FALLS, MT 59404-1521
Mayer, Betty J; PO BOX 306, SALMON, ID 83467-0306
Roseleip, Gerald L; 129 EASTSIDE RD, DEER LODGE, MT 59722-9422

Advisory Ordained

Thompson, Richard L; 5028 CHEYENNE TRL, BILLINGS, MT 59106-9617

Nebraska District

Voting Ordained

Awe, Michael A; 508 S ELM ST, TILDEN, NE 68781-4708
Bloom, Jeffrey L; 2001 S 11TH ST, LINCOLN, NE 68502-2215
Dickmander, Jon M; 311 W 5TH ST, BRULE, NE 69127-3521
Ernstmeyer, Jeffrey Wade; PO BOX 42, ELWOOD, NE 68937-0042
Fouts, Bart J; 1364 ROAD 5600, HEBRON, NE 68370-1052
Gierke, Timothy J; 2012 PHELPS AVE, FREMONT, NE 68025-4522
Gruhn, Michael V; 211 E 7TH ST, LEXINGTON, NE 68850-2101
Hale, Philip Wesley; PO BOX 306, BANCROFT, NE 68004-0306
Hannemann, Mark T; 5090 S 175TH CIR, OMAHA, NE 68135-3456
Harre, Richard D; 1149 EASTRIDGE DR, SEWARD, NE 68434-1329
Jank, Roland A; 6928 FLORENCE BLVD, OMAHA, NE 68112-3414
Kenitz, Terry William; 5104 DOUGLAS ST, PONCA, NE 68770-7019
Kuhfal, David Paul; 109 F ST, NELIGH, NE 68756-1643
Letcher, Kurt Russel; 2404 E 26TH RD, POLK, NE 68654-1702
Niemeier, Craig K; 1653 WORMS RD, SAINT LIBORY, NE 68872-2906
Rathjen, Jonathan Christopher; 515 ALDEN DR, AUBURN, NE 68305-3012
Sparling, Patrick R; 3352 36TH AVE, COLUMBUS, NE 68601-1436
Stuckwisch, Gregory L; 347 S SHAWNEE, WAUNETA, NE 69045-4559
Volzke, Gregory R; 13115 W 70TH ST, JUNIATA, NE 68955-2138
Wagner, Timothy Wayne; 315 N 10TH ST, BEATRICE, NE 68310-3014
Whitson, Craig E; 1320 SUNRISE DR, SEWARD, NE 68434-1357
Williams, D George; RR 1 BOX 125B, AINSWORTH, NE 69210-9700
Ziegler, Karl P; 4405 ANCHOR MILL DR, BELLEVUE, NE 68123-1169

Voting Lay

Baden, Marvin; RR 1 BOX 126, DESHLER, NE 68340-9799
Banks, Don R; PO BOX 364, IMPERIAL, NE 69033-0364
Beyer, Peggy; 72430-567T AVE, DAYKIN, NE 68338
Butterfield, Ron; PO BOX 682, STANTON, NE 68779-0682
Carlson, Paul; 603 E KILDARE DR, ONEILL, NE 68763-1143
Cook, Warren; 110 W 4TH ST, WAYNE, NE 68787-1917
Fry, Kevin W; PO BOX 35, EWING, NE 68735-0035
Hennings, Verle; PO BOX 85, FUNK, NE 68940-0085
Hiebenthal, Rodney R; 2166 O STREET RD, MILFORD, NE 68405-8404
Hilgenkamp, Ronald; RR 1 BOX 155, ARLINGTON, NE 68002
Knorr, Dave E; 63488 712 TRL, HUMBOLDT, NE 68376-7060
Naber, Gilbert O; 2206 ROAD 13, WACO, NE 68460-9146
Phillips, Matthew; 1441 W CADEMON CIR, LINCOLN, NE 68523-7209
Ritter, Bruce K; 621 BRIDGER RD, LINCOLN, NE 68521-3265
Shrader, Harvey A; 39320 HIGHWAY 2, RAVENNA, NE 68869-3195
Sorenson, Brian; 5305 COUNTRY VIEW LN, PAPILLIAN, NE 68133
Stadler, Andy; 2861 LINDEN DR, COLUMBUS, NE 68601-1862
Trusty, Steven M; 1375 ROLLING HILLS LOOP, COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA 51503-8552
Uden, Loren H; 1203 E 5TH ST, HASTINGS, NE 68901-5520
Van Velson, Glenn M; 714 STEWART AVE, NORTH PLATTE, NE 69101-0801
Warneke, Kent M; 2100 SKYLINE DR, NORFOLK, NE 68701-2583
Watt, Dorian; PO BOX 74, WOOD RIVER, NE 68883-0074
Werner, Donald E; 661 S 85TH ST, OMAHA, NE 68114-4205

Advisory Ordained

Hoke, James L; 6711 SUMNER ST, LINCOLN, NE 68506-1546

REGISTERED DELEGATES AND REPRESENTATIVES

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Advisory Commissioned

Bader, Donald L; 15117 T CIR, OMAHA, NE 68137-2446
Brauer, Robert David; 625 INDIANA ST, UTICA, NE 68456-6090
Dehning, Mervin Waine; 236 PARKSIDE LN, LINCOLN, NE 68521-2779
Leckband, Paul R; 1606 SKYLINE DR, NORFOLK, NE 68701-2666

New England District

Voting Ordained

Batchelder, David A; 51 HAKALA DR, NEW IPSWICH, NH 03071-4013
Butler, James E; 6 CRAWFORD ST, RANDOLPH, MA 02368-1513
Harper, Walter J; 47 QUAKER RIDGE RD, BETHEL, CT 06801-1253
Knapp, Timothy D; 69 TEELE RD, BOLTON, MA 01740-1117
Kotila, Joel David; 8 MAPLE ST, TERRYVILLE, CT 06786-5220
Krieger, Timothy O; 1655 BOULEVARD, WEST HARTFORD, CT 06107-2502
Lanphar, Ralph Robert; 101 EAST ST N, SUFFIELD, CT 06078-1905
Liebich, Jonathan A; 330 CHURCH ST, HEBRON, CT 06248
Pekari, Jeremy R; 5 WAYNE RD, PEABODY, MA 01960-1011

Voting Lay

Brooks, Jerry; 27 GREENTREE DR, WATERFORD, CT 06385-4100
Foote, Eric R; 225 FIRST PARISH RD, SCITUATE, MA 02066-3834
Gollenberg, Gary; 159 WOODS WAY DR, SOUTHBURY, CT 06488-1912
Haupt, Richard; 63 TUTHILL ST, WEST HAVEN, CT 06516-2536
Hergert, David; 111 SHEFFIELD RD, WALTHAM, MA 02451-2322
Martin, Theodore A; 15 LAUREL LN, WOLCOTT, CT 06716-2235
Middlebrook, Gert; 35 FERN ST, BURLINGTON, VT 05408-2617
Otte, Frederick; 135 ROSEDALE AVE, MANCHESTER, NH 03103-6438
Schneeloch, William; 6 DUANE ST, WESTFIELD, MA 01085-2704

Advisory Commissioned

Palkewick, Nathaniel Alan; 8 OLD BRIDGE RD E, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT 06812-3209

New Jersey District

Voting Ordained

Bartels, Mark L; 474 W MAIN ST, ROCKAWAY, NJ 07866-3730
Herring, Robert G; 222 SKYLANDS RD, RINGWOOD, NJ 07456-2905
Huneke, Paul R; 57 PARMLY RD, TINTON FALLS, NJ 07724-2845
Rockett, Dennis; 129 GLASGOW TER, MAHWAH, NJ 07430-1635
Weatherell, Joseph P; 321 WINSOR ST, BOUND BROOK, NJ 08805-1953

Voting Lay

Chedister, Kyle N; 140 N LIVINGSTON AVE, LIVINGSTON, NJ 07039-2100
Hergenham, William C; 612 E PASSAIC AVE, BLOOMFIELD, NJ 07003-4418
Naumowicz, Stephen J; 16 DOGWOOD DR, NEWTON, NJ 07860-2504
Stelling, Diane; 352 RODNEY RD, WYCKOFF, NJ 07481-2829
Visbeck, Raymond C; 560 SMITH DR, PT PLEASANT, NJ 08742-5431

Advisory Ordained

Prauner, Gregory; 155 LINWOOD AVE, RIDGEWOOD, NJ 07450-2623

Advisory Commissioned

Doring, Lois R; 28 MUSCONETCONG AVE, STANHOPE, NJ 07874-2936

North Dakota District

Voting Ordained

Douglas, Kirk D; PO BOX 118, GWINNER, ND 58040-0118
Eckstein, Thomas Robert; 902 9TH AVE NE, JAMESTOWN, ND 58401-6503
Heller, Toby H; PO BOX 189, BEULAH, ND 58523-0189
Johnson, Charles E; PO BOX 674, COOPERSTOWN, ND 58425-0674
Ramey, Scott A; PO BOX 37, ROLLA, ND 58367-0037
Rothchild, Daryl G; 525 17TH ST SW, MINOT, ND 58701-3523

Voting Lay

Eidbo, Robert; 1101 10TH ST S, MOORHEAD, MN 56560-3664
Klebe, Ronald; 1251 82ND ST NE, WILLOW CITY, ND 58384

Krause, Charles; 16640 88TH ST SE, HANKINSON, ND 58041-9463
Kreklaui, Mark A; 103 N 5TH ST, DRAYTON, ND 58225-4412
Weisenberger, Ken W; 980 EATON DR, DICKINSON, ND 58601-3456
Wolff, Ted; 10040 371ST AVE, FORBES, ND 58439-9047

North Wisconsin District

Voting Ordained

Alberts, Andrew W; PO BOX 100, ATHENS, WI 54411-0100
Barnes, Ryan Edmond; 600 KELLER AVE S, AMERY, WI 54001-1252
Cota, Shane Robert; 8903 SAINT JOHNS RD, SURING, WI 54174-9706
Danner, Joel Stephen; N2965 LOKEMOEN RD, MERRILL, WI 54452-8791
Heinlein, Dale V; 154 CEDAR ST, PARK FALLS, WI 54552
Hulke, Steven A; 104 FORD RD, MARQUETTE, MI 49855-9428
Kleinschmidt, Travis Ryan; W8089 COUNTY ROAD A, SHA-WANO, WI 54166-5944
Kline, Steven G; 3852 CHURCH VIEW CT, GREENLEAF, WI 54126-9497
Koeller, Martin E; 107 OAKRIDGE CT, COMBINED LOCKS, WI 54113-1260
Mathey, Michael J; N8938 BIG TWIN LAKE LN, PICKEREL, WI 54465-9722
Mischnick, Mark R; PO BOX 868, LAND O LAKES, WI 54540-0868
Roser, Timothy W; 1225 MAIN ST, JUNCTION CITY, WI 54443-9729
Schram, Michael J; 201 E WALL ST, BOWLER, WI 54416-9746
Schultz, Gary G; 1709 SUNNYVALE LN, WAUSAU, WI 54401-8824
Siegel, Calvin E; E19675 STATE HWY 27, FALL CREEK, WI 54742
Steckling, Larry L; 1111 11TH AVE W, ASHLAND, WI 54806-2846
Walter, Jody Roger; 203 1ST AVE S, FREDERIC, WI 54837-8919
Welch, Daniel J; PO BOX 292, THORP, WI 54771-0292
Wenger, Timothy E; 2310 11TH ST S, WISC RAPIDS, WI 54494-6305
Woebeking, Paul S; 497 N WASHINGTON ST, MONDOVI, WI 54755-1211

Voting Lay

Beck, John; 1000 CHAPEL ST, MARSHFIELD, WI 54449-1273
Bratz, Sandra; 5915 CORONADO DR, WESTON, WI 54476-3534
Erb, Tom L; W 2740 OLD 22 RD, CECIL, WI 54111
Hoeft, Donald; 3287 MILL RD, GREENLEAF, WI 54126-9331
Hoffman, Jerry; 461 S MAPLE ST, ELLSWORTH, WI 54011-9166
Johnson, Leonard C; 3253 FERN CT, EAU CLAIRE, WI 54703-1190
Mellem, David; 1609 PONDEROSA AVE, GREEN BAY, WI 54313-6060
Miller, Karl; 2350 ADOBE RD # 103, THREE LAKES, WI 54562
Nordwig, Greg; N5620 COUNTY ROAD D, LEOPOLIS, WI 54948-9713
Oehlerking, Larry; 827 LEONARD ST, IRONWOOD, MI 49938-1529
Otto, Jeff; 8923 SUNSHINE DR, TOMAHAWK, WI 54487-8857
Page, Harold; 213 S VICTORY ST, FALL CREEK, WI 54742-9426
Pokela, Martin D; E 4363 E-T RD, TRAUNIK, MI 49891
Reed, Emily; PO BOX 13, MATTOON, WI 54450-0013
Riske, Arnold; 5203 SHEEDER RD, EAU CLAIRE, WI 54701-8726
Schradle, Shawn P; 104 OAK DR, CLAYTON, WI 54004-9141
Slatton, Raymond J; 631 NORTH AVE, APT 6, ANTIGO, WI 54409-2382
Telschow, Dennis; F1711 COUNTY RD N, EDGAR, WI 54426-9648
Timm, Craig; 150 10TH ST N, WISC RAPIDS, WI 54494-4546

Advisory Ordained

Jank, Orville J; 3826 HENRY ST, WAUSAU, WI 54403-2225

Advisory Commissioned

Lilienthal, Sue Ann; 4845 WOODLAND CT, PLOVER, WI 54467-9573
Maroszek, Gina M; 2702 N 96TH AVE, WAUSAU, WI 54401-9757

Northern Illinois District

Voting Ordained

Anderson, Dustin Lee; 422 COLE ST, MARSEILLES, IL 61341-1687
Baerwolf, Phillip Andrew; 406 JOHNSON ST, EAST DUNDEE, IL 60118-2306
Balla, David Paul; 2711 LINDGREN TRL, AURORA, IL 60503-6254
Buss, Allan R; 1025 9TH AVE, BELVIDERE, IL 61008-5013

Davies, Brian; 607 W BELVIDERE RD, GRAYSLAKE, IL 60030-4134
Ehrhard, Jacob William; 115 W DELAWARE ST, DWIGHT, IL 60420-1307
Estby, Cory A; 11468 N 11000E RD, GRANT PARK, IL 60940-5067
Ficken, Paul D; 511 W ROCKTON RD, ROCKTON, IL 61072-1640
Gallup, Roger B; 2624 OAK ST, RIVER GROVE, IL 60171-1647
Gawura, Eric R; 3305 BATLEY ST, ELGIN, IL 60124-4319
Geis, William S; 505 S PARK RD, LA GRANGE, IL 60525-6112
Graul, Robert W; 835 WESTERN AVE, NORTHBROOK, IL 60062-3448
Greve, Johnny Vernon; 9811 ARTHUR RD, ALGONQUIN, IL 60102-9639
Hawkins, Daniel D; 343 WILDWOOD DR, NORTH AURORA, IL 60542-3017
Hudak, David P; 202 E SCHAUMBURG RD, SCHAUMBURG, IL 60194-3517
Larson, Thomas W; 523 SAINT JOHNS RD, WOODSTOCK, IL 60098-2728
Menet, David Michael; PO BOX 550, WALNUT, IL 61376-0550
Mueller, Charles S; 479 PINTAIL CT, BLOOMINGDALE, IL 60108-5410
O Donnell, Lance Armstrong; 2500 W BRYN MAWR AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60659-5104
Pfortenhauer, Paul Jay; 4930 DOUGLAS RD, DOWNERS GROVE, IL 60515-3818
Richy, John M; 8659 SAYRE AVE, BURBANK, IL 60459-2259
Riordan, Steve G; 4121 WOLF RD, WESTERN SPRGS, IL 60558-1451
Schauer, Richard V; 7900 BELLE RIVE CT, TINLEY PARK, IL 60477-4587
Schulz, Mark Carl; 3 STECK CT, BOLINGBROOK, IL 60440-9001
Teller, Daniel J; 25963 W STEEPLEBUSH LN, ROUND LAKE, IL 60073-5213
Therwanger-Tatone, Harold L; 4343 N CLARENDON AVE APT 2517, CHICAGO, IL 60613-6504
Udockong, Michael D; 245 E 138TH ST, DOLTON, IL 60419-1060
Wahl, Harold Irvin; 18530 WALTER ST, LANSING, IL 60438-3241

Voting Lay

Allen, Jennifer; 611 WOOD ST, DEKALB, IL 60115-4032
Bruns, Ruby; 1117 EASTVIEW RD, ROCKFORD, IL 61108-4127
Gardner, Marilyn F; 1630 MADISON ST, EVANSTON, IL 60202-2036
Ginder, Robert C; 1013 SOMMERSET CT, APT D, ELGIN, IL 60120-7178
Hannenberg, Richard C; 219 WOODLAND RD, HIGHLAND PARK, IL 60035-5052
Hansen, Dale A; 7273 N 16000E RD, GRANT PARK, IL 60940-5272
Harms, Elvin; 609 S FOREST AVE, BATAVIA, IL 60510-2771
Heller, Jeffrey; 1124 TYRELL AVE, PARK RIDGE, IL 60068-1647
Heyer, Howard; 90 BEECH AVE, WAUKEGAN, IL 60087-4054
Hoger, David R; 3648 174TH CT APT 10D, LANSING, IL 60438-1465
Holtzen, Byron B; 5226 CARPENTER ST, DOWNERS GROVE, IL 60515-4520
Howes, Kenneth; 5409 OTTO PL, OAK LAWN, IL 60453-1647
Johnson, Gary D; 18928 PLEASANT HILL RD, CHADWICK, IL 61014-9114
LeBlanc, Toniann; 1168 GERINGER RD, ALGONQUIN, IL 60102-1814
Leise, William G; 10316 LARAMIE AVE, OAK LAWN, IL 60453-4617
Marti, Wayne A; 3122 N 250 EAST RD, CLIFTON, IL 60927-7239
Meyer, Dennis; 2055 BROOKDALE LN, PALATINE, IL 60067-7507
Nelson, Chris A; 213 STILLWATER CT, OSWEGO, IL 60543-8047
Pitkus, Andrea; 1239 DEERFIELD PKWY, APT 202, BUF-FALO GROVE, IL 60089-2609
Prell, Paul A; 16W740 90TH ST, WILLOWBROOK, IL 60527-6003
Reinert, Kenneth J; 14980 DURKEE RD, HARVARD, IL 60033-9766
Ryden, R William; 10761 W LA PORTE RD, MOKENA, IL 60448-9284
Schumacher, Ken; 26W210 HARRISON AVE, WHEATON, IL 60187-2505
Stanton, Keith; 725 ALAMO DR, FREEPORT, IL 61032-2910
Svebakken, Gene L; C/O LUTH CHILD & FAM SER, 7620 MADISON ST, RIVER FOREST, IL 60305-2101
Trefitz, Henry; 2174 POINTE BLVD, AURORA, IL 60504-7569
Whitby, Marguerita; 102 S DERBYSHIRE LN, ARLINGTON HTS, IL 60004-6712
Willis, Arthur; 2728 DEBRA LN, HOMEWOOD, IL 60430-1535

Advisory Ordained

Otten, Walter D; 9044 SHERIDAN AVE, BROOKFIELD, IL 60513-1628

Advisory Commissioned

Bimler, Richard W; 336 W HAMPSHIRE DR, BLOOMING-DALE, IL 60108-2504
Cook, June M; 9424 PINE ST, MOKENA, IL 60448-9313
Gibbons, Thomas Allen; 529 S PARK ST, ROSELLE, IL 60172-2218
Laabs, Jonathan C; 116 CAMBRIAN CT, ROSELLE, IL 60172-4782
Laabs, June M; 116 CAMBRIAN CT, ROSELLE, IL 60172-4782
Neumann, Karla Rae; 46 VANTROBA DR, GLENDALE HTS, IL 60139-2711
Piel, Paul F; 2331 STEWART LN, WEST DUNDEE, IL 60118-3351
Schilling, Scott D; 91 CHATEAU DR, DYER, IN 46311-2152
Septeowski, Dawn I; 282 W 18TH ST, LOMBARD, IL 60148-6144
Steltenpohl, Gayle F; 110 BEACON DR, BELVIDERE, IL 61008-4003
Steltenpohl, William M; 110 BEACON DR, BELVIDERE, IL 61008-4003
Wille, Melvin; 327 PRAIRIEVIEW DR, OSWEGO, IL 60543-7540

Northwest District

Voting Ordained

Ancira, Mario E; 4214 69TH AVENUE CT E, FIFE, WA 98424-3652
Bohren, Dennis M; 1440 SE 182ND AVE, PORTLAND, OR 97233-5009
Cutler, Robert E; 2352 N GLENFIELD WAY, MERIDIAN, ID 83646-1295
Frerichs, Paul C; 15654 SW FARMER WAY, SHERWOOD, OR 97140-8919
Gehrke, Wilbur L; 2150 ELM AVE, REEDSPORT, OR 97467-1135
Gratz, William H; PO BOX 396, CLARKSTON, WA 99403-0396
Heuser, Mark E; 10213 NE 58TH ST, VANCOUVER, WA 98662-5693
Huelle, Denis Emil; 1340 LAKEHURST DR NW, BREMER-TON, WA 98312-2122
Knepper, Grant A; 997 NE HOOD ST, HILLSBORO, OR 97124-2518
Lassman, Ernie V; 7056 35TH AVE NE, SEATTLE, WA 98115-5917
Latham, Mark E; 1128 POPLAR ST, BUHL, ID 83316-1636
Morner, Dennis D; 8100 ARCTIC BLVD, ANCHORAGE, AK 99518-3003
Pacilli, Dino F; 21916 95TH PL S, KENT, WA 98031-2464
Pagel, Peter; PO BOX 1280, LA PINE, OR 97739-1280
Reese, Kerry D; 12618 47TH DR SE, EVERETT, WA 98208-9624
Reinke, Gerald R; 290 7TH ST, IDAHO FALLS, ID 83401-4757
Schauer, Kenneth E; PO BOX 615, REPUBLIC, WA 99166-0615
Schmidt, John D; PO BOX 99967, TACOMA, WA 98496-0967
Schomburg, Dell B; 514 NW MORNING CREST PL, SUBLIM-ITY, OR 97385-9630
Schroeder, Todd Eric; 5 ZINNIA CT, PASCO, WA 99301-3271
Wagley, Doug; 9821 N NEZ PERCE CT, SPOKANE, WA 99208-9342
Zimmerman, David Paul; 7003 S 132ND ST, SEATTLE, WA 98178-5028

Voting Lay

Bowes, Brian M; PO BOX 214, OKANOGAN, WA 98840-0214
Corder, Timothy L; 5325 S 14TH E, MOUNTAIN HOME, ID 83647
Daly, James E; 215 HIRSCHBECK HTS, ABERDEEN, WA 98520-5745
Eilers, Lewis; 3471 E 3600 N, KIMBERLY, ID 83341-5211
Goertzen, Deborah; 610 WILLOWLAWN RD, YAKIMA, WA 98908-8057
Harris, Loyd E; 8907 196TH ST SW, EDMONDS, WA 98026-6329
Holl, Carroll; 278 GRANGEVILLE SALMON RD, GRANG-EVILLE, ID 83530-5120
Hoover, David C; 6755 SW WILSON AVE, BEAVERTON, OR 97008-5504
Knight, John; 237 MARR CT N, MONMOUTH, OR 97361-1357
Luffberry, Randall J; 263 S ALASKA ST, PALMER, AK 99645-6335
Muller, Ronald; 375 UNION AVE SE, UNIT 2, RENTON, WA 98059-5168
Nicholson, Brian E; 21831 FRAGER RD S, KENT, WA 98032-4805
Pederson, Marvin; 4710 E 41ST AVE, SPOKANE, WA 99223-1286
Rasmussen, Jon; 1193 E ENNIS CT, LA CENTER, WA 98629-5472
Schilling, David; 4563 E 75 N, RIGBY, ID 83442-5905
Schliebe, Darald; 732 C ST, GEARHART, OR 97138-4010
Schneider, Philip; PO BOX 897, ORTING, WA 98360-0897
Smith, Clark; 215 W 52ND AVE, EUGENE, OR 97405-9573
Steinmeyer, Donald; 7047 NW PUDDINGSTONE LN, SIL-VERDALE, WA 98383-9340
Wahl, Sheila; 21232 S RICHARD CT, OREGON CITY, OR 97045-8625
Watt, Rex; 1409 MYERS DR, FERNDALE, WA 98248-8993

Wolffmueller, Charles; 1083 SW IRONWOOD DR, GRANTS PASS, OR 97526-6901

Advisory Ordained

Warren, William W; 2563 BROOKSTONE LOOP, ANCHOR-AGE, AK 99515-2714

Advisory Commissioned

Fossum, Robert B; 2275 SW 188TH CT, ALOHA, OR 97006-3047
Seim, Daniel N; 33495 SW RIEDWEG RD, CORNELIUS, OR 97113-9651
Uma Shankar, Kanagasabai; 2194 SE MINTER BRIDGE RD, HILLSBORO, OR 97123-5100

Ohio District

Voting Ordained

Adamson, Terrance Sean; 133 CENTRAL DR, AMHERST, OH 44001-1601
Beaumont, Donald P; 30540 WILLOWICK DR, WILLOWICK, OH 44095-3745
Davidson, John C; 420 SELLS RD, LANCASTER, OH 43130-8733
Dobbins, Dennis L; 3554 SURRY RIDGE WAY, DAYTON, OH 45424-8007
Habrecht, Richard A; 2414 KIMBERLY DR, TOLEDO, OH 43615-2741
Herbolsheimer, James A; 14224 DETROIT AVE, LAKEWOOD, OH 44107-4472
Linthicum, Eric R; 1342 ASTER PL, CINCINNATI, OH 45224-3208
Luecke, David S; 9419 MISTY OAKES DR, BROADVIEW HTS, OH 44147-3125
Oliver, Harold H G; 6967 MOORFIELD DR, CINCINNATI, OH 45230-2223
Phillips, Michael A; 2120 LAKEWOOD AVE, LIMA, OH 45805-3171
Riley, Jimmy K; 467 W JACKSON ST, PAINESVILLE, OH 44077-3147
Schlueter, Paul R; 7978 STATE ROUTE 38, MILFORD CTR, OH 43045-9722
Schroeder, Marc D; 503 BRANDON CT, COLUMBUS, OH 43213-3483
Strawn, James C; 22881 MONROE ST, ARCHBOLD, OH 43502-9486
Wartick, Kent G; 931 E MAIN ST, KENT, OH 44240-2548
Weist, James D; 8619 SUGAR TREE DR, NOVELTY, OH 44072-9615

Voting Lay

Albers, Dwaine; 2071 VALENTINA LN, NEWARK, OH 43055-6150
Aumick, Robert; 596 DAWN RD, MADISON, OH 44057-3251
Baker, Luke D; E 363 ST RT 108, HOLGATE, OH 43527
Billings, Will; 899 GRANDSTONE CT, LEBANON, OH 45036
Duncan, Thomas; 311 N CLEVELAND ST, CHAGRIN FALLS, OH 44022-2517
Engelmann, William C; 26855 COOK RD, OLMSTED FALLS, OH 44138-1413
Gibson, Timothy; 18845 RANGE LINE RD, BOWLING GREEN, OH 43402-9750
Hofener, Mark D; 4427 WOODWAY AVE, PARMA, OH 44134-1159
Kress, Joseph; 4238 QUAIL HOLLOW CIR, CUYAHOGA FLS, OH 44224-5123
Krone, Stephen; 28651 BASSETT RD, WESTLAKE, OH 44145-2916
Noyd, Jamie; 60 WOODLAWN AVE, APT 4, FORT MITCH-ELL, KY 41017-2733
Rathje, Arnold O; 31550 CHESWICK PL, SOLON, OH 44139-1208
Rausch, Carl A; 13212 COUNTY ROAD L, NAPOLEON, OH 43545-6573
Shenton, Robert E; 9033 TARTAN FIELDS DR, DUBLIN, OH 43017-8873
Strelow, David C; 1261 MAPLE LEAF CT, SIDNEY, OH 45365-3465

Advisory Ordained

Weiss, Donald E; 7903 WHITE CAP LN, HOLLAND, OH 43528-9174
Wilson, Kevin Alan; 12030 STATE ROUTE 736, MARYS-VILLE, OH 43040-9550

Advisory Commissioned

Cheadle, Deanna Lynn; 268 WARD RD, CHILLICOTHE, OH 45601-9266
Reisenbichler, Audrey Ann; 1284 SAND TRAP CT, LOVE-LAND, OH 45140-6043
Reisenbichler, Robert Dean; 1284 SAND TRAP CT, LOVE-LAND, OH 45140-6043

Oklahoma District

Voting Ordained

Bersche, Mark L; 826 3RD ST, ALVA, OK 73717-2814
Burger, Mark M; 220 N SEMINOLE AVE, CLAREMORE, OK 74017-8425
House, Thomas Wendell; PO BOX 65, HOOKER, OK 73945-0065

McMullin, Clinton R; 4109 NW 61ST ST, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73112-1342
Nehrenz, David R; 902 CAREY DR, NORMAN, OK 73069-4545
Rains, W R; 11908 SUNDANCE MOUNTAIN RD, OKLA-HOMA CITY, OK 73162-1521
Thompson, David Brooks; 1428 W MINNESOTA AVE, CHICKASHA, OK 73018-2954
Wilke, John Michael; 2732 W PENSACOLA ST, BROKEN ARROW, OK 74011-6108

Voting Lay

Backhaus, Walter E; 923 W INDUSTRIAL RD, GUTHRIE, OK 73044-6045
Barfield, Johnny; 6535 E 74TH ST, TULSA, OK 74133-3022
Clay, Robert B; 21251 E HIGHWAY 28A, CHELSEA, OK 74016-3454
Henschel, Shirley; 7320 NW 114TH ST, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73162-2703
Hollrah, Gene; 3019 EAGLE LN, ENID, OK 73703-3018
Hrnciar, Jerry; 5603 NW REBECCA TER, LAWTON, OK 73505-3124
Joecks, Norman J; 319 E HIGHWAY ST, HOLDENVILLE, OK 74848-4059
Piel, Martin R; 24201 BLACKJACK, PERRY, OK 73077-8426

Pacific Southwest District

Voting Ordained

Brinkley, David R; 5213 HUNTLEY ST, UNIT 50, SIMI VAL-LEY, CA 93063-3577
Bruning, Edward V; PO BOX 91449, HENDERSON, NV 89009-1449
Burkee, Jonathan Robert; 1023 FIELDBROOK CT, IMPERIAL, CA 92251
DeVore, Gregory D; 1570 PHOENIX DR, BEAUMONT, CA 92223-7814
Duerr, Kerwin L; 1636 W CRIS AVE, ANAHEIM, CA 92802-2418
Ermeling, Vernon F; 5802 N CHARLOTTE AVE, SAN GA-BRIEL, CA 91775-2411
Gibson, Michael E; 6802 SPICKARD DR, HUNTINGTN BCH, CA 92647-5656
Hayes, Michael Edward; 7909 5TH ST, DOWNEY, CA 90241-2203
Hiller, Robert M; 15021 VARSITY ST, APT C, MOORPARK, CA 93021-1562
Jennings, Matthew Hamilton; 58318 YUCCA TRL, YUCCA VALLEY, CA 92284-6066
Jones, Douglas D; 1161 WALPEN DR, SAN DIEGO, CA 92154-2947
Keil, David Daniel; 24021 DEL AMO RD, RAMONA, CA 92065-4122
Kindschy, Lowell Bryce; 3240 SANDY LN, SANTA YNEZ, CA 93460-9767
Manning, Mark L; 2710 N GAFF ST, ORANGE, CA 92865-2417
Page, James William; 755 N MACLAY AVE, SAN FER-NANDO, CA 91340-2138
Perling, R John; 436 S BEVERLY DR, BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90212-4402
Pierce, Earl J; 771 RIVERFRONT DR, BULLHEAD CITY, AZ 86442-6416
Puls, Kenton A; 711 N FOWLER ST, BISHOP, CA 93514-2617
Rhode, Jeremy David; 34381 CALLE PORTOLA, CAPO BEACH, CA 92624-1076
Rivkin, Dominic James; 32224 ZION WAY, WINCHESTER, CA 92596-8783
Schloeman, Karl E; 1216 E SETTLERS CIR, COTTONWOOD, AZ 86326-4701
Schmidt, Michael John; 4551 E HUNTER CT, CAVE CREEK, AZ 85331-3204
Schmidt, Troy M; 8875 S ASH AVE, TEMPE, AZ 85284-3046
Schoenback, Donald E; 5905 W BLUE SKY DR, PHOENIX, AZ 85083-6503
Shaltanis, Joel A; 380 W BASELINE RD, CLAREMONT, CA 91711-1751
Skopak, Jeffrey Eric; 10629 E RALPH ALVAREZ PL, TUC-SON, AZ 85747-5888
Springer, Jeffrey D; 11070 LORENE ST, WHITTIER, CA 90601-2608
Terhune, Paul C; 1419 E DALTON AVE, GLENDORA, CA 91741-3139
Umberhaur, Rexford E; 716 W OAK AVE, EL SEGUNDO, CA 90245-2010
Wiley, Don C; 1032 S FILLMORE AVE, RIALTO, CA 92376-7850
Willweber, Paul Luther; 6836 EASTON CT, SAN DIEGO, CA 92120-2909
Zeile, John C; 28850 S WESTERN AVE, RANCHO PALOS VERDE, CA 90275-0803

Voting Lay

Anderson, Chuck; 25037 N 44TH AVE, PHOENIX, AZ 85083
Anderson, Kathi A; 6971 WINE RIVER DR, LAS VEGAS, NV 89119-4618
Anderson, Robert R; 5357 RUDISILL ST, MONTCLAIR, CA 91763-3326
Barnes, Nathan C; 104 BAYCREST CT, NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92660-2923
Biber, Richard H; 5001 W FLORIDA AVE, SPC 314, HEMET, CA 92545-3839

REGISTERED DELEGATES AND REPRESENTATIVES

xi

Bradley, JoAnn; 40 HOLLEY LANE, BLYTHE, CA 92225
Fahncke, Daniel; PO BOX 310, HEREFORD, AZ 85615-0310
Goetz, Ed; 3700 S APACHE RD 7, APACHE JUNCTN, AZ 85119
Greenbecker, Bill; 1419 E MICHELSON ST, LONG BEACH, CA 90805-4849
Hays, Donald K; 16241 VALLEJO ST, VICTORVILLE, CA 92395-3695
Holman, Howard L; 826 E ALDER ST, BREA, CA 92821-6655
Hronec, Kathryn; 67 VIA COSTA VERDE, RANCHO PALOS VERDE, CA 90275-4880
Hutson, Susan; 1945 COYOTE RD, PRESCOTT, AZ 86303-5351
Kler, Michael A; 9025 MEADOWRUN CT, SAN DIEGO, CA 92129-3301
Lichtsinn, Robert; 18162 SANTA CECILIA, FOUNTAIN VLY, CA 92708-5602
Mabb, Wayne; 6213 CLOVERLY AVE, TEMPLE CITY, CA 91780-1602
Martin, Paul; 30998 GREENSBORO DR, TEMECULA, CA 92592-6054
Marting, Lou; 27581 CENAJO, MISSION VIEJO, CA 92691-1419
Mather, Sharon; 1775 OHIO AVE, UNIT 416, LONG BEACH, CA 90804-1564
Mathiowetz, Dan; 1834 BRABHAM ST, EL CAJON, CA 92019-4103
McAlexander, Cynthia; 5413 EL CARRO LN, CARPINTERIA, CA 93013-1515
McDonald, Andrea M; 13726 W MONTEBELLO AVE, LITCH-FIELD PK, AZ 85340-7381
McGowan, Donald; 16114 PLACID DR, WHITTIER, CA 90604
Nash, Dennis B; 14359 REDWING DR, MORENO VALLEY, CA 92553-4974
Pollard, George; 555 GARTEL DR, WALNUT, CA 91789-2009
Powers, Michael E; 1015 E GRANDVIEW AVE, SIERRA MADRE, CA 91024-1526
Reimnitz, Patrick; 18502 MANSEL AVE, REDONDO BEACH, CA 90278-4643
Roepke, Gary D; 10125 LASAINE AVE, NORTHRIDGE, CA 91325-1509
Sorenson, Dale M; 791 WOODLAWN AVE, APT B, CHULA VISTA, CA 91910-8538
Theel, Judith M; 3580 N WELLS ST, KINGMAN, AZ 86409-3044
Wampole, Kurt; 5589 SYCAMORE AVE, RIALTO, CA 92377-3913
Wyneken, Robert; 6923 MURIETTA AVE, VAN NUYS, CA 91405-4116

Advisory Ordained

Brockmann, James E; 2152 N STOCKTON PL, MESA, AZ 85215-2641
Durkovic, John G; 2620 FOREST LK, SANTA ANA, CA 92705-6924
Kusel, Ronald J; 3520 LADOGA AVE, LONG BEACH, CA 90808-2952
Manske, Charles L; 19 SPINNAKER, IRVINE, CA 92614-7062

Advisory Commissioned

Blake, Kyle; 855 S TAOS WAY, ANAHEIM, CA 92808-2373
Brandt, Paul M; 6117 E JANICE WAY, SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85254-2538
Gummelt, Michael W; 19851 CITRONIA ST, CHATSWORTH, CA 91311-5602
Klipfel, Sanna L; 2841 WHITE PEAKS AVE, N LAS VEGAS, NV 89081-2437
Klitzing, Rachel; 8 COSENZA, IRVINE, CA 92614-5344
Robson, Wendell L; 2414 W COMSTOCK DR, CHANDLER, AZ 85224-1729
Sims, Carolyn C; 27042 PINJARA CIR, MISSION VIEJO, CA 92691-4444
Smallwood, Carol J; 9126 CARL LN, GARDEN GROVE, CA 92844-2217
Wooster, Larry D; 43727 CAREFREE CT, LANCASTER, CA 93535-5691

Rocky Mountain District

Voting Ordained

Bestian, Brian R; 2926 SUNSTONE DR, FORT COLLINS, CO 80525-9077
Christensen, Trenton David; 421 W 7TH ST, JULESBURG, CO 80737-1003
Kachelmeier, Brian L; 1501 44TH ST, LOS ALAMOS, NM 87544-1933
Lucero, Dennis F; 3105 E WHILEAWAY CIR, COLORADO SPGS, CO 80917-3521
Manweiler, John; 322 E 680 S, IVINS, UT 84738-5058
Melius, Jared; 13438 CLAYTON ST, THORNTON, CO 80241-1336
Meyer, Michael W; 3120 IRVING ST, DENVER, CO 80211-3632
Piepkorn, Gary A; 8168 NEW MEXICO 206, PORTALES, NM 88130-9757
Rhode, Paul G; 2828 MOUNTAIN VIEW AVE, LONGMONT, CO 80503-2313
Schmidt, Edward H; 652 E 5TH ST, RIFLE, CO 81650-2908
Shearier, Jeffrey E; 2523 S EAGLE ST, AURORA, CO 80014-2426
Stoltenow, Bradley R; 7691 S UNIVERSITY BLVD, CENTEN-NIAL, CO 80122-3144

Thomas, Steven Craig; 507 S 3RD ST, LAMAR, CO 81052-3212

Voting Lay

Doak, Trey; 1009 S CLARKSON ST, DENVER, CO 80209-4303
Dreher, Kent; 17601 WCR 10, BRIGHTON, CO 80603
Giovannetto, Jamie; PO BOX 271027, LOUISVILLE, CO 80027-5018
Goetsch, Dave; 21135 MOUNTAIN VILLAGE DR, ECKERT, CO 81418-4207
Hoffmann, Gary J; 3860 W 66TH AVE, ARVADA, CO 80003-6410
Kaiser, Michael; 6204 SNOWHEIGHTS CT, EL PASO, TX 79912-3802
Lipke, Bill; 7913 COUNTY RD, ALAMOSA, CO 81101
McEwen, Gerald; 5581 W COUNTY ROAD 8E, BERTHOUD, CO 80513-9614
Morrison, Douglas; 516 SPLENDOR VIEW CIR, MIDVALE, UT 84047-1330
Pugh, Donald E; 39606 COUNTY ROAD 16, HOLYOKE, CO 80734-9550
Soukup, Larry; 15169 CHIMNEY ROCK RD, NATHROP, CO 81236-9705
Tobias, Damon; 34 MELCOR DE CANONCITO, CEDAR CREST, NM 87008-9429
Wolfer, Dale; 1447 PINERIDGE LN, CASTLE ROCK, CO 80108-8213

Advisory Commissioned

Bower, Kristine E; 1135 ASH ST, BROOMFIELD, CO 80020-1217
Brandenburger, Corey James; 3171 W 8565 S, WEST JORDAN, UT 84088-9647
Burkee, Jeffrey R; 3705 HOYT ST, WHEAT RIDGE, CO 80033-5755
Busacker, William P; 67 MANILLA DR, DRAPER, UT 84020-5110
Hammons, Cynthia Jo; 7930 S 965 E, SANDY, UT 84094-0218
Kaspar, Neal Arnold; 503 RIVERVIEW DR, GRAND JCT, CO 81507-1413
Palmreuter, Kenneth R; 23138 TIMBER SPRING LN, PARKER, CO 80138-8791

SELC District

Voting Ordained

Biber, Paul R; 766 CHEVRON DR, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63125-5206
Schuschke, Gary Steven; 166 NORTHSHORE CIR, CASSEL-BERRY, FL 32707-3324
Telloni, John L; 1034 IRVINGTON AVE NE, MASSILLON, OH 44646-4424
Vinovskis, Waldemar R; 68 WILLOW ST, MACUNGIE, PA 18062-1014

Voting Lay

Bartlett, Noel S; 3921 W VALLEY DR, FAIRVIEW PARK, OH 44126-1733
Hoehnke, Ronald E; 1820 MARQUETTE AVE, S MILWAU-KEE, WI 53172-2318
McAllan, George; 177 WALNUT CREST RUN, SANFORD, FL 32771-7987
Sadlon, Bruce R; 37 SAW MILL RD, WARREN, NJ 07059-5103

Advisory Ordained

Cahill, Christopher T; 656 WOOSTER ST, LODI, OH 44254-1326
Dzuovcick, Andrew J; 566 OAK RIDGE RD, CLARK, NJ 07066-2124
Hoyer, Paul M; 301 WASHINGTON AVE, LAKE MARY, FL 32746-3507

South Dakota District

Voting Ordained

Althoff, Albert F; 322 CHURCH AVE, GREGORY, SD 57533-1519
Anderson, Robert L; 504 BUCKHORN DR, CUSTER, SD 57730-1140
Ascher, Christopher Duane; 6205 W WESTMINSTER DR, SIOUX FALLS, SD 57106-0582
Bagnall, Michael R; PO BOX 308, WESSINGTON SPG, SD 57382-0308
Christopher, Thomas D; PO BOX 126, ALEXANDRIA, SD 57311-0126
Grams, Craig N; PO BOX 348, GROTON, SD 57445-0348
Kanitz, Kim A; 100 S DILLMAN AVE, REVILLO, SD 57259-2107
Nour, Nabil Subhi; PO BOX 158, ARMOUR, SD 57313-0158
Redhage, Daniel Todd; 420 IOWA ST, CENTERVILLE, SD 57014-2158
Urbach, Jon Bradford; 803 N GRAND AVE, PIERRE, SD 57501-1605

Voting Lay

Brandt, Ervin E; 40992 301ST ST, AVON, SD 57315-5441
Clemens, Michal; 6004 E POWDER HOUSE CIR, SIOUX FALLS, SD 57110-7468
Haar, James R; 203 N HENRY ST, TRIPP, SD 57376

Haeder, Daryl; 107 ORDWAY AVE SW, HURON, SD 57350-1725
Nelson, Stuart; 194 SOUTHSORE DR, MINA, SD 57451-3000
Plucker, Prentice; 45907 276TH ST, CHANCELLOR, SD 57015-5767
Snow, William F; 440 7TH AVE NE, WATERTOWN, SD 57201-1863
Stier, Mary Jo; PO BOX 224, ONIDA, SD 57564-0224
Sutton, Albert; 1680 ZINNIA ST, RAPID CITY, SD 57703-6279
Zirpel, Dennis M; 207 W 5TH, PRESHO, SD 57568

Advisory Ordained

Nix, Matthew William; 6205 N PURPLE MARTIN AVE, SIOUX FALLS, SD 57107-1120

Advisory Commissioned

Ockander, Marli M; 4512 E 42ND ST, APT 114, SIOUX FALLS, SD 57110-4432

South Wisconsin District

Voting Ordained

Bender, Peter C; 4200 ELMWOOD RD, COLGATE, WI 53017-9702
Benning, Mark W; 1524 JENNIFER ST, TOMAH, WI 54660-3260
Berg, John M; 824 WISCONSIN AVE, SHEBOYGAN, WI 53081-4030
Bramstadt, Allen H; 1085 PROSPECT AVE, N FOND DU LAC, WI 54937-9777
Crane, Brian Trevor; 37 N 3RD ST, HILBERT, WI 54129-9597
Fish, Jack D; 876 LANCE DR, TWIN LAKES, WI 53181-9271
Fisher, Joseph M; 616 MEADOWBROOK DR, WEST BEND, WI 53090-2418
Hendrickson, Marion Lars; 211 CURTIS ST, ARLINGTON, WI 53911-8522
Huesmann, Bernhard J; 2280 EDGEWOOD DR, GRAFTON, WI 53024-9501
Jabs, Frederick K; 6502 S BUSINESS DR, SHEBOYGAN, WI 53081-8988
Kilps, William R; 3504 PIERCE CT, TWO RIVERS, WI 54241-1858
Koch, Aaron A; 3840 W LAYTON AVE, GREENFIELD, WI 53221-2038
Krueger, Thomas I; 2520 S 68TH ST, MILWAUKEE, WI 53219-2613
Meier, Mark Raymond; PO BOX 346, POY SIPPI, WI 54967-0346
Myers, Larry W; 3305 S GLEN PARK RD, NEW BERLIN, WI 53151-4468
Peckman, Paul H; N65W14452 REDWOOD DR, MENOMONEE FALLS, WI 53051-5170
Peperkorn, Todd A; 2044 24TH AVE, KENOSHA, WI 53140-4604
Quinn, Daniel B; 5435 SUNSHINE LN, RACINE, WI 53402-2076
Raabe, Richard G; 2420 N LEFEBER AVE, WAUWATOSA, WI 53213-1220
Rajek, Cory J; 2940 MINERAL POINT AVE, JANESVILLE, WI 53548-3297
Rohde, Brian D; 3242 COUNTY ROAD G, OXFORD, WI 53952-9598
Schubert, Jeffery S; W310N4932 OLD STEEPLE RD, HART-LAND, WI 53029-8529
Schueler, Dennis R; 528 BAUER ST, WISC DELLS, WI 53965-1701
Thomas, Steven E; N8529 FRONT ST, BURNETT, WI 53922-9636
Torkelson, Daniel T; 308 NORTH AVE, WATERTOWN, WI 53098-2320
Wenger, Eric R; 830 VIOLET LN, OREGON, WI 53575-3320
Wieting, Kenneth W; 5789 N ARGYLE AVE, GLENDALE, WI 53209-4345

Voting Lay

Behrens, Jeffrey A; 3010 W KAY DR, SHEBOYGAN, WI 53083-4333
Beilke, Richard; 120 DEBBIE CT, WAUKESHA, WI 53189-7609
Bellis, Tim; 731 S 34TH ST, MILWAUKEE, WI 53215-1107
Beyer, Alan; 400 HILLCREST DR, BEAVER DAM, WI 53916-2422
Buss, Myron; 824 LINDEN RD, KOHLER, WI 53044-1453
Carroll, Charles E; 3057 N RICHARDS ST, MILWAUKEE, WI 53212-2155
Duveneck, Paula; W924 PINE RD, SHEBOYGAN, WI 53083
Eaton, David A; 3335 4TH AVE, RACINE, WI 53402-3727
Georgeson, Maynard; 2908 W ACRE AVE, FRANKLIN, WI 53132-9313
Gohr, Phillip F; 280 N MOUNTAIN DR, MAYVILLE, WI 53050-1470
Haupt, Dan; 6309 WOODINGTON WAY, MADISON, WI 53711-3162
Himsel, Christian R; 1125 W FAIRY CHASM RD, MILWAU-KEE, WI 53217-1687
Jaeger, John G; S1081 OLSON LN, COON VALLEY, WI 54623-8016
Johnson, Lowell; N5121 LUECK LN, PRINCETON, WI 54968-8361
Martin, Greta; 8411 OLD GREEN BAY RD, PLEASANT PR, WI 53158-2700

McCauley, Don R; S2303 HORKAN RD, REEDSBURG, WI 53959-9709
Meyer, Paul G; N 5546 KATHRYN DR, PLYMOUTH, WI 53073
Nowicki, Robert M; 405 N CAPRON ST, BERLIN, WI 54923-1141
Olson, Joseph L; 4740 N HOLLYWOOD AVE, WHITEFISH BAY, WI 53211-1036
Phillips, Michael H; 2631 OAKWOOD CIR, OSHKOSH, WI 54904-8467
Raebel, David A; 8405 W CHEYENNE ST, MILWAUKEE, WI 53224-4845
Ritter, John; PO BOX 178, SULLIVAN, WI 53178-0178
Schuette, Kathy; 611 2ND ST, KIEL, WI 53042-1122
Schultz, Gwenith B; 832 E CENTERWAY ST, JANESVILLE, WI 53545-3140
Simpson, Larry; 2560 SUNSET DR, BELOIT, WI 53511-2355
Tamminga, David P; W 7792 NORTH STAR RD, PARDEE-VILLE, WI 53954
Zbytyniewski, Cindy A; 432 CROSSROAD CT, GRAFTON, WI 53024-1189

Advisory Ordained

Suellflow, John G; 1406 FOX LN, GRAFTON, WI 53024-9702

Advisory Commissioned

Bellin, Willard H; 2601 OLE DAVIDSON RD, RACINE, WI 53405-1440
Brown, Aimee Claire; 2050 HURON CIR, APT G, GRAFTON, WI 53024-9371
Eberhardt, Mary E; 1826 17TH AVE, GRAFTON, WI 53024-2033
Haas, Walter D; 1800 W MANGOLD AVE, MILWAUKEE, WI 53221-5063
Johnson, Stephen P; 2115 CARDINAL CT, WAUKESHA, WI 53186-2610
Jording, David C; W5159 NATURES WAY DR, SHERWOOD, WI 54169-9605
Kohrs, Ralph L; 3360 BERMUDA BLVD, BROOKFIELD, WI 53045-2661
Ladendorf, Gene W; 865 W AUTUMN PATH LN, BAYSIDE, WI 53217-1605
Meinzen, Philip E; 802 BARBERRY PL, WEST BEND, WI 53095-4546
Mercier, Gary L; 749 HOMESTEAD TRL, GRAFTON, WI 53024-1160
Stapleton, Michael Ray; 336 OMAHA AVE, NEENAH, WI 54956-5050
Toerpe, Craig S; 12800 N LAKE SHORE DR, MEQUON, WI 53097-2418
Wolff, Jennifer; 4000 W RIVERS EDGE CIR, APT 2, BROWN DEER, WI 53209-1128

Southeastern District

Voting Ordained

Alms, Paul Gregory; PO BOX 187, CATAWBA, NC 28609-0187
Baldinger, Timothy L; 900 SUNNYVIEW CIR, MATTHEWS, NC 28105-2801
Bitely, Rodney E; 8060 KIWI LN, MECHANICSVLLE, VA 23111-4617
Bohlmann, Timothy Paul; 100 MAPLE AVE, WAYNESBORO, VA 22980-4607
Denninger, John R; 7209 TRAPPERS PL, SPRINGFIELD, VA 22153-1333
Drosendahl, John Charles; 101 N MARTIN RD, GOLDSBORO, NC 27530-7790
Johnson, John Foster; 1306 VERMONT AVE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20005-3607
Less, Keith G; 108 CEDARWOOD DR, GALENA, MD 21635-1527
May, Jacob T; 547 WYTHE CREEK RD, APT 4A, POQUOSON, VA 23662-1522
Naumann, Terrance A; 10405 JOHNSON DR, KING GEORGE, VA 22485-2118
Olson, Thomas L; 1540 GOLF COURSE RD, COLUMBUS, NC 28722-5424
Ramey, John Mike; 2625 MERRICK WAY, ABINGDON, MD 21009-1159
Sandeno, Timothy E; 2926 FOXHALL RD, CHARLESTON, SC 29414-6739
Schafer, Stephen B; 2001 OLD FREDERICK RD, CATONSVILLE, MD 21228-4119
Sharp, James Thomas; 3409 BANK ST, BALTIMORE, MD 21224-2302
Simon, Henry A; 2402 CHESTNUT TERRACE CT, ODENTON, MD 21113-0738
Smith, Andrew D; 118 26TH AVE NE, HICKORY, NC 28601-1438
Speaks, Keith A; 5068 OAK GARDEN DR, KERNERSVILLE, NC 27284-9593
Stano, Lester P; 436 WINTER WALK DR, GAITHERSBURG, MD 20878-7809
Wagner, Preston E; 2304 WELSH TAVERN WAY, WAKE FOREST, NC 27587-6689
Wiechmann, Ralph E; 42811 DELPHINIUM CIR, LEESBURG, VA 20176-6849

Voting Lay

Boraas, Russel L; 15843 GREENWOOD CHURCH RD, MONTEPELIER, VA 23192

Boyd, William R; 49 SCALYBARK TRL, CONCORD, NC 28027-7548
Drew, Robert; 1125 COLUMBUS DR, STAFFORD, VA 22554-2030
Ellis, Michael D; 6095 RIPLEY RD, LA PLATA, MD 20646-4620
Ernest, John; 2399 EAGLE WOOD DR, MOUNT AIRY, MD 21771-8731
Hansen, Lewis P; 300 SOUTH CAROLINA AVE, PASADENA, MD 21122-5444
Hink, Frederick; 29707 JANETS WAY, EASTON, MD 21601-4791
Hirt, Robert L; 106 MEROWE CT, CARY, NC 27513-1703
Isenhower, David; 505 2ND AVENUE DR NE, CONOVER, NC 28613-2010
Lang, John F; 900 CLOISTERS DR, FLORENCE, SC 29505-3606
Lerch, Charles; 409 IVY CHURCH RD, TIMONIUM, MD 21093-4420
Mason, James M; 218 SARATOGA LN, NEW BERN, NC 28562-4860
McDaniels, Janis; 310 APPLE RIDGE RD, GREENSBORO, NC 27406-5270
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Nolte, John; 2814 CHEVY CHASE CIR, JEFFERSON, MD 21755-8007
Owen, Neely; 536 PANTOPS CTR, # 115, CHARLOTTESVLE, VA 22911-8665
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Scherer, Arthur W; 11 COLGATE CT, CATONSVILLE, MD 21228-5131

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Hillhouse, Roberta S; 3920 MOUNT OLNEY LN, OLNEY, MD 20832-1124
Jasion, Tina G; 2501 DERBY DR, FALLSTON, MD 21047-1207

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Ehrichs, Randal Gene; 5001 SHARON DR, PANAMA CITY, FL 32404-7333
Ertl, James A; 1625 ANNETTE ST, NEW ORLEANS, LA 70116-1322
Karle, John Eric; 305 ROYAL ST, NATCHITOCHEs, LA 71457-5708
Lofthus, David J; 1605 MASON SMITH AVE, METAIRIE, LA 70003-5013
Marshall, Ulmer; 7210 BLAKELEY FOREST BLVD, SPANISH FORT, AL 36527-4006
Miller, Charles R; 111 ORCHARD DR, LAKE CHARLES, LA 70605-4441
Pellom, Warren R; 9250 PLANTATION RD, OLIVE BRANCH, MS 38654-1679
Ramsey, McNair; 176 DEEPWOODS CIR, VALLEY GRANDE, AL 36701-0415
Rhoads, Dennis E; 509 RONIE ST, HATTIESBURG, MS 39401-3951
Rosser, Edward K; 3213 BROOKHILL CIR, BIRMINGHAM, AL 35210-4269
Ruland, Warren J; 210 COUNTY ROAD 482, HANCEVILLE, AL 35077-8161
Thies, Daniel E; 5733 LORING DR, MILTON, FL 32583-1615

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Brown, Jorge E; 310 BRANDT LN, PASS CHRISTIAN, MS 39571-3925
Casamento, Vincent J; 2103 OAKMONT ST, MONROE, LA 71201-3516
Graham, Robert; 2616 CRESTWOOD RD, MARRERO, LA 70072-5818
Heinicke, Robert S; 8206 LI FAIR DR, PENSACOLA, FL 32506-4356
Henke, Gary D; 1028 LOUISIANA AVE, BOGALUSA, LA 70427-4025
Lampert, Arthur; 4085 MAIN ST, ANACOCO, LA 71403-3639
Loucks, Thomas; 131 WEDGEWOOD DR, BONIFAY, FL 32425-1300
Ludgood, Marva; 1301 DUNNAWAY DR, MOBILE, AL 36605-3647

Marshall, Donna; 123 TROTMAN DR, OZARK, AL 36360-1552
Mundinger, Gerhard H; 161 AUTUMN WOODS DR, MADI-SON, MS 39110-8255
Noon, Thomas M; 903 CEDAR CREST DR, BIRMINGHAM, AL 35216-5357
Parham, Marie; 25 LARKSPUR LN, WESTWEGO, LA 70094-5715
Toepke, Ival L; 195 LAURINDA DR, HARVEST, AL 35749-9310

Advisory Ordained

Cooper, Adam; 2320 FARRELL CIR, GULFPORT, MS 39507-2221

Advisory Commissioned

Behrens, Calvin Marvin; 21196 LOWE DAVIS RD, COVING-TON, LA 70435-5808

Southern Illinois District

Voting Ordained

Baue, Frederic W; 908 BROWNELL AVE, SAINT LOUIS, MO 63122-3202
Gehrke, Matthew John; 21A CIRCLE DR, COTTAGE HILLS, IL 62018-1120
Girardin, Mark E; 814 E CALUMET ST, CENTRALIA, IL 62801-4553
Kirby, Peter Nathan; 509 S BROAD ST, CARLINVILLE, IL 62626-2113
Kumm, Michael L; 27 WILLOW LN, MILLSTADT, IL 62260-1064
Laufer, Ralph E; PO BOX 7, RENAULT, IL 62279-0007
Mayes, Theodore E; 2032 HAMILTON ST, MURPHYSBORO, IL 62966-1522
Mueller, Timothy P; 15516 STATE ROUTE 127, NASHVILLE, IL 62263-2374
Walther, Michael P; 432 CHAPEL DR, COLLINSVILLE, IL 62234-4369
Weedon, William C; 6969 W FRONTAGE RD, WORDEN, IL 62097-2431
Willig, Mark S; 934 WILLIAM ST, CHESTER, IL 62233-1737

Voting Lay

Ascher, Clifford; 123 WHITE PINE AVE, O FALLON, IL 62269-2509
Blotevogel, Walter D; 239 W KELL ST, WORDEN, IL 62097-1025
Decker, Wayne; 1211 LEHMEN DR, CHESTER, IL 62233-2545
Erdmann, Larry L; 9382 BALDWIN RD, BALDWIN, IL 62217-1614
Fesser, Glenn C; 31057 E 9TH RD, MORRISONVILLE, IL 62546-6030
Glaub, Frank; 815 N ALMOND ST, CARBONDALE, IL 62901-1206
Harriss, Mark E; 4517 STONE CHURCH RD, ADDIEVILLE, IL 62214-1531
Koester, Dale J; 3 SUGAR LN, COLLINSVILLE, IL 62234-6811
Muskopf, Wayne D; 41 KIMBERLIN LN, BELLEVILLE, IL 62220-2719
Neunaber, Neil; 124 ILLINI LN, WOOD RIVER, IL 62095-3382
Rowden, Anna; 21806 LYNN LN, CARLYLE, IL 62231-5452

Advisory Ordained

Nicely, Douglas A; 514 W SOUTH ST, MASCOUTAH, IL 62258-1921

Advisory Commissioned

Bowers, Sandra J; PO BOX 284, HAMEL, IL 62046-0284
Fark, Terry G; 1 SCENIC VIEW LN, MURPHYSBORO, IL 62966-4755
Klein, Dave R; 11 EDGEWOOD LN N, CENTRALIA, IL 62801-3708

Texas District

Voting Ordained

Andrajack, Joseph P; 7106 PACE ST, AMARILLO, TX 79108-5848
Barz, Mark D; 1311 SUMMIT CRK, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78258-1912
Bauer, Allen J; 2227 CYPRESS RUN DR, SUGAR LAND, TX 77478-5289
Bernet, Ernest Walter; 1201 SE 25TH AVE, MINERAL WELLS, TX 76067-6731
Dankis, Mark J; 2503 DONNER PATH, ROUND ROCK, TX 78681-2235
Davis, John F; 5968 WHISPERING LAKES DR, KATY, TX 77493-2279
Dinger, Timothy J; 1300 SHADOWDALE ST, BRIDGE CITY, TX 77611-2220
Dorsey, Curtis Rhodes; 1000 TEXAS ST, SULPHUR SPGS, TX 75482-4254
Etzel, Russell Alvin; 4115 BLALOCK RD, HOUSTON, TX 77080-1413
Fraker, Donald D; 1107 RIVER ROCK, NEW BRAUNFELS, TX 78130-2410
Gonzalez, Eloy Steven; 2505 W NORTHGATE DR, IRVING, TX 75062-3264
Hasskarl, Leif R; PO BOX 247, LEXINGTON, TX 78947-0247

Heckmann, John Mark; 1110 COUNTY ROAD 341, GATES-VILLE, TX 76528-4374
Herbert, Scott Edward; 405 LOS SANTOS DR, GARLAND, TX 75043-3002
Holaday, Robert W; PO BOX 805, ALAMO, TX 78516-0805
Jennings, Kevin M; 4934 EIDER DR, CORPUS CHRISTI, TX 78413-2395
Kaiser, Paul Matthew; 508 S WELLS ST, EDNA, TX 77957-3741
King, Jeffrey W; 10210 FM 1935, BRENHAM, TX 77833-0100
Knippa, William B; 12505 RED MESA HOLLOW, AUSTIN, TX 78739-7535
Lowrey, George W; 4400 W ARKANSAS LN, ARLINGTON, TX 76016-6337
Lubke, Lewis Lynn; 11869 FM 1813, IOWA PARK, TX 76367-5227
Mann, James K; 105 REGINA CT, THORNDALE, TX 76577-5381
Meyer, Jonathan F; 16507 DOVER CLIFF CT, CROSBY, TX 77532-5217
Mittelstadt, Richard Alan; PO BOX 214, EDEN, TX 76837-0214
Pase, Robert J; 2825 EMERSON PL, MIDLAND, TX 79705-4202
Price, James Michael; PO BOX 304, CRAWFORD, TX 76638-0304
Quail, David C; 2100 TICKNER ST, CONROE, TX 77301-1341
Rogers, Charles Fred; 8371 FM 314 N, BROWNSBORO, TX 75756-6124
Salminen, Jon D; 2322 COLLEEN DR, PEARLAND, TX 77581-5413
Schmidt, John Erich; 1572 COUNTY ROAD 211, GIDDINGS, TX 78942-5939
Schneider, Jack A; 1309 W COLLINS CIR, WYLIE, TX 75098-6668
Schroder, David N; 4008 PALOMAR LN, AUSTIN, TX 78727-2948
Sohns, Stephen J; 19618 ENCHANTED OAKS DR, SPRING, TX 77388-6134
Truwe, Gregory R; 14210 BOXDALE ST, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78217-1414
Tutwiler, Danny W; 2708 VIRGINIA PKWY, MCKINNEY, TX 75071-4916
Wiesenborn, Mark R; 5315 MAIN ST, HOUSTON, TX 77004-6810

Voting Lay
Bade, Milton; 12523 COUNTRY ARBOR LN, HOUSTON, TX 77041-7280
Berk, Walter L; 1101 GLEN OAK DR, BURLESON, TX 76028-6269
Brueggemann, Scott; PO BOX 555, FRISCO, TX 75034-0010
Coleman-Foster, Robert; 9707 CALVERTON DR, SUGAR LAND, TX 77498-5123
Cornman, Donald J; 17203 ASH BUTTE DR, HOUSTON, TX 77090-2201
De Young, Mark; 11901 SWEARINGEN DR, APT 75, AUSTIN, TX 78758-2254
Deterling, Gary; 3610 ACORN WOOD WAY, HOUSTON, TX 77059-3741
Doederlein, Tommy; 1309 COUNTY ROAD R, LAMESA, TX 79331-1853
Emley, David; 3409 LISBON DR, WACO, TX 76706-4213
Frazor, Henry; 3610 COLOSSEUM WAY, GRAND PRAIRIE, TX 75052-7002
Fritsche, Richard H; 34 TIBURON DR, THE HILLS, TX 78738-1556
Glover, Michael; PO BOX 2354, ALBANY, TX 76430-8015
Highsmith, Roy A; 805 N BEAL ST, BELTON, TX 76513-2610
Huber, Wally; 7317 NORTHAVEN RD, DALLAS, TX 75230-3215
Janhsen, Henry; 8801 RED WING RD, AMARILLO, TX 79119-2635
Jones, Bernard C; 2004 BABB ST, COPPERAS COVE, TX 76522-3301
Jones, Paul; 5014 GRACE DR, GARLAND, TX 75043-1754
Juhl, Gary A; 12615 PINE WARBLER, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78253-5712
Jurk, Robert; 1584 COUNTY ROAD 105, GIDDINGS, TX 78942-5770
Karle, Fred G; 8100 N 23RD ST, MCALLEN, TX 78504-9685
Kieschnick, Rebecca Rivers; 904 E MARKET ST, SINTON, TX 78387-2921
Knebel, Mark; 21418 FONES RD, TOMBALL, TX 77377-5831
Martino, Bill; 3623 QUIETTE DR, AUSTIN, TX 78754-4937
McCully, Kim; 17410 W SINGLE ROSE CT, CYPRESS, TX 77429-6707
Midgett, Garland H; 3540 GRANDE DR, LA GRANGE, TX 78945-5943
Moerbe, Ed H; 5407 BENT TRL, DALLAS, TX 75248-2034
Moerbe, Janet; PO BOX 641, LA PRYOR, TX 78872-0641
Parker, Travis; 107 LEISURE LN, WHITEHOUSE, TX 75791-3707
Porter, Gerald; 1231 FM 251 N, ATLANTA, TX 75551-8400
Rudel, James; 1124 TOBOLA ST, ROSENBERG, TX 77471-3816
Schaefer, Charles; PO BOX 123, ROANS PRAIRIE, TX 77875-0123
Schmedthorst, Lee Roy; 181 PR 3863, POOLVILLE, TX 76487
Schuetze, Howard; 3826 SOUTHPORT DR, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78223-3424
Weinhold, David R; 1119 LEHMAN ST, HOUSTON, TX 77018-1347

Wottrich, Jean; 2903 BLUEBERRY LN, PASADENA, TX 77502-5446
Yosko, Michael; 6580 HOWE ST, GROVES, TX 77619-5136

Advisory Ordained
Joeckel, David B; 1719 S PECAN ST, ARLINGTON, TX 76010-4360
Kieschnick, John H; 1050 CAYMAN BEND LN, LEAGUE CITY, TX 77573-9048
Linderman, James R; 4701 INDIAN WELLS DR, AUSTIN, TX 78747-1407
O Shoney, Glenn R; PO BOX 84, WALBURG, TX 78673-0084

Advisory Commissioned
Bangert, David J; 326 RIVER BIRCH TRL, GARLAND, TX 75040-1163
Black, Sarah Louise; 903 KIMBERLY RD, AMARILLO, TX 79111-1436
Landfried, Elizabeth A; 11006 SAGE HOLLOW DR, AUSTIN, TX 78758-4235
Liebenow, Mark R; 3015 FLOWER HILL DR, ROUND ROCK, TX 78664-6301
McClain, Leann E; 107 TOMAHAWK, LA GRANGE, TX 78945-5337
McClain, Mark A; 107 TOMAHAWK, LA GRANGE, TX 78945-5337
Ryan, Richard D; 3302 FLEETWOOD DR, AMARILLO, TX 79109-4520
Vandercook, James L; 612 BURCHSHIRE LN, WYLIE, TX 75098-5334

Wyoming District

Voting Ordained
Cain, Paul J; 910 IDAHO AVE, SHERIDAN, WY 82801-2733
Garwood, Ronald M; 4938 VISTA WAY, CASPER, WY 82601-6917
Grams, Jeffery Wallace; 2218 BROADWAY, SCOTTSBLUFF, NE 69361-1970
Shields, Scott L; 1041 EVERGREEN WAY, ROCK SPRINGS, WY 82901-4103
Temme, Marvin L; 221 LUPINE DR, TORRINGTON, WY 82240-3504
Zill, Marcus T; 1062 BANOCK DR, LARAMIE, WY 82072-6905

Voting Lay
Campbell, Kiley; PO BOX 11742, JACKSON, WY 83002-1742
Fink, Richard A.; 8130 GEARY DOME RD, EVANSVILLE, WY 82636
Mischnick, Ronald; 1631 TOLUCA AVE, ALLIANCE, NE 69301-2253
Peterson, Edwin B; 1142 OLIVE RD, POWELL, WY 82435-9241
Staehr, Keith L; 700 ADAMS ST, KIMBALL, NE 69145-1807
Steffens, Kenneth R; 2462 CORONADO CT, SIDNEY, NE 69162-2414

Advisory Ordained
Paul, Gerald August; PO BOX 722, THAYNE, WY 83127-0722

Advisory Commissioned
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Schultz, Ronald, St. Louis, MO
Temme, Marvin, Torrington, WY

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Vogel, Larry, St. Louis, MO

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Board
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Kieschnick, Gerald B., St. Louis, MO
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Krueger, Larry G., St. Louis, MO

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Diekelman, William, St. Louis, MO

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Hartwig, Raymond L., St. Louis, MO
Rosin, Walter L., Shawano, WI

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Kuchta, Thomas, St. Louis, MO

Legal Counsel
Strand, Sherri, St. Louis, MO

Parliamentarian
Young, Len, Blue Springs, MO

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Rhodes, Charles, St. Louis, MO

Concordia Technology
Koehn, Myron, St. Louis, MO

General Services
Fiedler, David, St. Louis, MO

Human Resources
Rhoden-Kimbrough, Val, St. Louis, MO

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Whaley, John H., Livermore, CA

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Foerster, Robert, Williamsville, NY

Florida-Georgia District
Wipperman, Stephen, Lake Worth, FL
Brink, Mark, Ocoee, FL

Indiana District
Robinson, Geoffrey, Fort Wayne, IN

Iowa District East
Rothchild, Dean F., Cedar Rapids, IA

Iowa District West

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Gerken, Mark, Fort Dodge, IA

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Bobzin, John C., Concordia, MO
Gehrke, Dennis, St. Louis, MO

Montana District
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Nebraska District
Rockenback, Mark, Seward, NE
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New England District
Macke, Alvin, Lebanon, CT

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Sharpe, William, Fargo, ND

North Wisconsin District
Longmire, Ken, Shawano, WI
Lueck, Dwayne, Wausau, WI

Northwest District
Dinger, Jonathan, Pocatello, ID
Reinke, Langdon J., Salem, OR

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Kurth, Richard E., Maple Heights, OH

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Pacific Southwest District
Farley, Barbara, Lakewood, CA
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Doughty, Robert, Albuquerque, NM

South Dakota District
Gayken, Randy, Sioux Falls, SD

South Wisconsin District
McMiller, Daniel, Waukesha, WI
Raasch, Randolph H., Cedarburg, WI

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Brauch, Gilbert M. F., Hickory, NC

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Davis, Warren H., Pensacola, FL

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Scarr, Timothy, Nashville, IL
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Hirsch, John M., Round Rock, TX
Seifert, Vanessa, San Antonio, TX

Wyoming District
Hill, John E., Casper, WY

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Franke, Matthew, Bolling AFB, DC
Hokana, Steven, Fort Leavenworth, KS
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MISSIONARIES
Groh, Jorge, Miami, FL
Houge, Claude, Kenya
Mahsman, David, Wittenberg, Germany
Strohschein, Ed, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong

C. Special Representatives

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Committee for Convention Nominations
Benke, Judith, Bayside, NY
Brashear, Kermit, Omaha, NE
Carter, James, Arlington Heights, IL
Craft, Frank, Gering, NE
Garbe, Ernest, Dieterich, IL
Herman, Dennis, Fort Wayne, IN
Hollrah, Gene, Enid, OK
Karle, John E., Natchitoches, LA
Melchert, Michael, Waconia, MN
Michael, Jr., Gerhard C., Orlando, FL
Schumacher, Warren, Hillsboro, OR
Schurb, Ken, Moberly, MO
Snow, Bill, Watertown, SD
Tietjen, Walter C., Elk Grove, CA
Turner, Steven, Algona, IA
Vinovskis, Waldemar, Macungie, PA
Voss, Dennis L., Osseo, WI

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synodical Structure and Governance
Greene, Bob, Georgetown, TX

CONVENTION FLOOR COMMITTEES

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS:

C = Chairman; SVP = Synod Vice President; DP = District President; VOM = Voting Ordained Minister; VL = Voting Layperson; AOM = Advisory Ordained Minister; ACM = Advisory Com-missioned Minister

DISTRICT ABBREVIATIONS:

AT = Atlantic; CI = Central Illinois; CNH = California-Nevada-Hawaii; EA = Eastern; EN= English; FG = Florida-Georgia; IE= Iowa East; IN = Indiana; IW = Iowa West; KS= Kansas; MI = Michigan; MDS = Mid-South; MNN = Minnesota North; MNS = Minnesota South; MO = Missouri; MT = Montana; ND = North Dakota; NEB = Nebraska; NE = New England; NI = Northern Illinois; NJ = New Jersey; NOW = Northwest; NW = North Wis-consin; OH = Ohio; OK = Oklahoma; PSW = Pacific Southwest; RM = Rocky Mountain; SD = South Dakota; SE = Southeastern; SELC = SELC; SI = Southern Illinois; SO = Southern; SW = South Wisconsin; TX = Texas; WY = Wyoming

Committee 1: MISSIONS

C: Ken Hennings (TX)
DP: Vice chair: Randy Golter (RM); David Stechholz (EN); Chris Wicher (EA)
VOM: Matthew Nelson (MT); Nabil Nour (SD); Ron Rall (MO); Rex Rinne (MNS)
VL: Charles Carroll (SW); Jim Jorns (KS); Joel McFadden (EA)
ACM: Jeff Fick (IW)

Committee 2: DISTRICT AND CONGREGATIONAL SERVICES

C: Keith Kohlmeier (KS);
DP: Vice chair: Carl Krueger (SELC); Barrie Henke (OK); Dale Sattgast (SD)
VOM: Lee Hagan (MO); Wilfred Karsten (CI); Jeff Schubert (SW); Michael Walther (SI)
VL: Kyle N. Chedister (NJ); Marvin Kading (MNN); Andrea McDonald (PSW)
ACM: Bruce Braun (MI); Eva Fronk (EN)

Committee 3: THEOLOGY AND CHURCH RELATIONS

C: Jon Diefenthaler (SE)
DP: Vice chair: Bob Newton (CNH); Terry Cripe (OH); Terry Forke (MT)
VOM: Jon Dunbar (IW); Thomas Eckstein (ND); Andrew Fields (FG); Scott Sommerfeld (MI)
VL: Gregory Miller (MO); Damon Tobias (RM); Jesse Yow (CNH)
AOM: John Kieschnick (TX)
ACM: Sara Cunningham (IN)

Committee 4: ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

C: Don Fondow (MNN)
DP: Vice chair: John Wille (SW); Ken Lampe (MDS); Brian Saunders (IE)
VOM: Mike Ernst (EN); W. R. Rains (OK); John Zeile (PSW)
VL: George McAllan (SELC); Ronald Mischnick (WY); Mark Richeson (IN); Robert Smith (EA)
ACM: David Frank (MO); Jonathan Laabs (NI)

Committee 5: SEMINARY AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

C: Kurt Schultz (SO)
DP: Vice chair: Ray Mirly (MO); Jim Baneck (ND); David Maier (MI)
VOM: Dan Eggold (IN); McNair “Tony” Ramsey (SO); Mark Schulz (NI); James Strawn (OH)
VL: Herman Arends (MI); Rebecca Kieschnick (TX); Donal “Lucky” Pugh (RM)
AOM: Jonathan Dinger (NOW)
ACM: LuJuana Butts (AT)

Committee 6: HUMAN CARE

C: David Benke (AT)
DP: Vice chair: Herbert Mueller, Jr. (SI); David Bueltmann (CI); Jim Keurulainen (NE)
VOM: Mark Hannemann (NEB); Benjamin Haupt (FG); Steve Hulke (NW); William Knippa (TX)
VL: John Hall (MDS); Diane Stelling (NJ); Gene Svebakken (NI); Dennis Winter (IE)
ACM: Sheila Peterson (MNN)

Committee 7: ECCLESIAL MATTERS

C: Lane Seitz (MNS)
DP: Vice chair: Paul Sieveking (IW); Richard Boche (WY); Dan May (IN)
VOM: Allan Buss (NI); Bill Lowrey (TX); Henry Simon (SE); Edward Trost (KS)
VL: R. Neely Owen (SE); Gene Schnelz (MI); Glenn Van Velson (NEB)
AOM: Randy Raasch (SW)
ACM: Rachel Klitzing (PSW)

Committee 8: SYNOD STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

C: Larry Stoterau (PSW)
SVP: Vice chair: David Buegler (OH)
DP: Joel Hoelter (NW); Bill Klettke (NJ); Paul Linnemann (NOW)
VOM: Ron Burcham (IW); John Gierke (MDS); Daniel Teller (NI)
VL: David Hegert (NE); David Schilling (NOW); Kent Warneke (NEB)
AOM: James Pragman (MNS)
ACM: Sally Hiller (SE)

Committee 9: ELECTIONS

C: Russ Sommerfeld (NEB)
DP: Vice chair: Dan Gilbert (NI); Greg Walton (FG)
VOM: James Ertl (SO); Mark Kliewer (CNH); Daniel Torkelson (SW)
VL: Jane Duffy (EN); Dave Mellem (NW); Daniel Menze (MNN)
ACM: Wendell Robson (PSW)

Committee 10: NOMINATIONS (Elected by Districts)

(Committee 10 Legend: C = Chairman; O = Ordained Minister; L = Layperson)

C: Warren Schumacher (NOW)
O: Vice chair: Gerhard Michael, Jr. (FG); John Karle (SO); Ken Schurb (MO); Walter Tietjen (CNH); Steven Turner (IW); Waldemar Vinovskis (SELC); Dennis Voss (NW)
L: Judith Benke (AT); Kermit Brashear (NEB); James Carter (NI); Frank Craft (WY); Ernest Garbe (CI); Dennis Herman (IN); Gene Hollrah (OK); Michael Melchert (MNS); Bill Snow (SD)

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First Vice-President
Rev. Dr. William R. Diekelman (2010)

Second Vice-President
Rev. Dr. Paul L. Maier (2010)

Third Vice-President
Rev. Dr. John C. Wohlrabe (2010)

Fourth Vice-President
Rev. Dr. Dean W. Nadasdy (2010)

Fifth Vice-President
Rev. Dr. David D. Buegler (2010)

Secretary
Rev. Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig (2010)

Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer
Dr. Thomas W. Kuchta (2010)

Presidents Emeriti
Rev. Dr. Ralph A. Bohlmann
Rev. Dr. Robert T. Kuhn

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Secretary: Rev. Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig (2010)

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Rev. Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig (2010)
Rev. Dr. Jeffery Schrank (2010)
Rev. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick (2010)
Dr. Robert T. Kuhn (2013)
Chaplain Donald Muchow (2013)

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Mr. Roy Schmidt (2010)
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Dr. Thomas W. Kuchta (2010)

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Mr. Ronald Schultz, Chief Administrative Officer

Legal Counsel
Thompson Coburn LLP

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(Members were elected at the 2009 District Conventions)

Atlantic: Judith Benke
Calif.-Nev-Hawaii: Dr. Walter C. Tietjen
Central Illinois: Ernest Garbe
Florida-Georgia: Dr. Gerhard C. Michael, Jr.
Indiana: Dennis Herman
Iowa West: Rev. Steven Turner
Minnesota South: Michael Melchert
Missouri: Dr. Ken Schurb
Nebraska: Kermit Brashear
North Wisconsin: Rev. Dennis L. Voss

Northern Illinois: James Carter
Northwest: Dr. Warren Schumacher
Oklahoma: Gene Hollrah
SELC: Rev. Waldemar Vinovskis
South Dakota: Bill Snow
Southern: Rev. John E. Karle
Wyoming: Frank Craft

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Vice-Chairman: Dr. Jon T. Diefenthaler (2012)
Secretary: Rev. William R. Klettke (2012)

Program Committee: Dr. Jon T. Diefenthaler (2012)
Rev. Randall Golter (2012)
Rev. William R. Klettke (2012)
Rev. Keith E. Kohlmeier (2012)
Dr. Larry A. Stoterau (2012)

Ex-officio: Rev. Dr. William Diekelman (2010)
Rev. Dr. Raymond Hartwig (2010)
Rev. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick (2010)

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Executive Director: Charles E. Rhodes
Synodical Accounting, Director: Rosalito Silva
Tax Reporting, Director: Karen Sansone

Concordia Technologies
Interim Executive Director: Myron Koehn
Technology Services Delivery Interim Director: Joel Rivers
Business Services Delivery Interim Director: Peter Sandoval

General Services
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Business Services, Director: Gene Weeke
Facilities Management, Director: Barbara Knehans
Information Services, Manager: David Berner
Purchasing, Director: Mike Magee
Travel and Meeting Planning, Director: Lynne Marvin

Human Resources
Executive Director: Val Rhoden-Kimbrough

Internal Audit
Executive Director: Joann P. Spotanski

International Center Chaplain
Chaplain: Vernon Gundermann

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Director: Larry Lumpe
Archives and Library, Assoc. Director: Rev. Marvin A. Huggins

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Rev. Dr. Raymond Hartwig (2010)
Eunice Hausler (2009)
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Dr. Cameron MacKenzie (2013)
Dr. Scott Meyer (2009)
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Loans & Real Estate, Sr. Vice President: Larry Crume
Marketing & Customer Support, Sr. Vice President: Glenn Mahnken
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Strategic Ministry Planning, Vice President: David Kuerschner

Demographic Services: Vice President: Jane Absheer
Laborers for Christ, Vice President: Dan Baker

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Randall Peterson (2009)
Richard Robertson (2009)
Sandy Thompson (2009)
David Wuenscher (2010)
Ron Meyer

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Vice President & Corporate Counsel: Jonathan D. Schultz

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Robert Beumer (2013)
David Domsch (2010)
Rev. Michael Ernst (2010)
Elaine Graft (2013)
Robert Knox (2010)
Ruth Koch (2010)
Karol Selle (2013)
Dr. Gene Edward Veith (2010)
Rev. Vernon Gundermann
Ex-officio: Dr. Thomas W. Kuchta

President's Representative:
Ex-officio: Dr. Thomas W. Kuchta

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Joint Seminary Fund Development, Vice President: Paul Kienker
KFUO Development, Vice President: Dorothy Kaestner
Marketing/Communications, Senior Vice President: Terry Whittle
Gift Planning Services, Senior Vice President: Terry Gerdts
Trust Admin./Customer Support, Senior Vice President: Tom Angus

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Richard Peters (2011)
Cynthia Potter (2009)
Roger Prigge (2011)
Dr. Mark Sheldon (2013)
Allan Voss (2013)
Non-Voting: Dr. Thomas Kuchta (2010)

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Concordia Plans
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Plan Administration, Vice President: Linda A. Olsen
Products & Services, Vice President: Trevor E. Holland

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F. Mark Kuhlmann (2010)
Thomas McCain (2011)
George F. Nolde III (2010)
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Mark E. Schmidtke (2012)
Rev. Fred Schroeder (2010)
Ronald M. Wolf (2011)
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Ex-officio: Rev. David Callies
President's Representative: Rev. David Callies

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 Ceretha Cartwright (2013)
 Rev. Samuel Cosby (2013)
 Jonathan Cleveland (2013)
 Rev. Michael Johnson (2010)
 Janis McDaniels (2010)
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 Mission Networking Director: Rev. Quentin Poulson

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 Candace Mueller (2010)
 Dr. Charles S. Mueller, Jr. (2010)
 Rev. Kevin Vogts (2010)
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 Executive Director: David L. Strand
 Director, Public Affairs and Media Relations: Vicki Biggs
 News and Information, *The Lutheran Witness*, and *Reporter*:
 Interim Executive Editor: David L. Strand

KFUO AM & FM Radio Stations

Radio Executive Director: David L. Strand
 Broadcasting Director: Dennis Stortz
 Chief Engineer: (Contracted)
 FM Program Director: James Connnett
 AM Program Director: Charles Rathert

Board for District and Congregational Services

Chairman: David Bruns
 Vice Chairperson: K. Allan Voss
 Secretary: Natalie Sabol
 Board: David Bruns (2010)
 Carla Claussen (2010)
 Rev. Jonathan Coyne (2013)
 Rev. Juan Gonzalez (2010)
 Jill A. Hasstedt (2013)
 Ida L. Mall (2013)
 Natalie Sabol (2010)
 K. Allan Voss (2013)
 William Cochran
 Interim Executive Director:
 Children's Ministry and
 Family Ministry Director: Dr. Judith Christian
 School Ministry Director: Mr. William Cochran
 Stewardship Ministry Director: Rev. Wayne Knolhoff
 Youth Ministry Director: Rev. Terry Dittmer

Board for Pastoral Education

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 Board: Dr. Gillian Bond (2010)
 Rev. Steven Briel (2010)
 Richard P. Cohrs (2013)
 Dr. Gerhard Freche (2010)
 Rev. Thomas Krause (2010)
 Dr. Richard Schaefer (2010)
 Rev. Kenton Wendorf (2013)

Executive Director: Rev. Dr. Glen Thomas
 Council of Presidents' Representative: Rev. Paul Sieveking
 President's Representative: Rev. Dr. William Diekelman
 Advisory Members: Dr. Kurt Krueger
 Dr. Thomas Kuchta
 Rev. Dr. Dale Meyer
 Rev. Dr. Dean Wenthe

Colloquy Committee for the
 Pastoral Ministry: Rev. Dr. William Diekelman
 Rev. Dr. Dale Meyer
 Rev. Dr. Ray Mirly
 Rev. Dr. Glen Thommas
 Rev. Dr. Dean Wenthe

Board for Human Care Ministries

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 Vice Chairman: John W. Edson
 Secretary: Dr. Peggy Beyer
 Board: Dr. Peggy Beyer (2010)
 Paul Crumb (2010)
 John W. Edson (2010)
 Rev. David Fischer (2010)
 Dr. Jean Garton (2010)
 Dr. Robert Miles (2013)
 Rev. Bernhard M. Seter (2013)
 Rev. Gregory Smith (2010)

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 Districts/Congregations Director: Rev. Carlos Hernandez
 Social Ministry Organizations Director: Barbara Below

Disaster Response Director:
 Director of Operations: Rev. Glenn F. Merritt
 Dennis Fangmann
 Communications Services Director: Al Dowbnia
 Asia Regional Director: Darin Storkson
 Executive Pastoral Assistant: Rev. Dr. Albert Collver
 Associate Executive Director: Rev. John A. Fale
 Life/Health Ministries Director: Maggie S. Karner
 Executive Director, LCMS National
 Housing Support Cooperation: L. Marie Kienker

Board for Mission Services

Chairman: Kermit Almstedt (2013)
 Board: Rev. Dr. Paul Anderson (2010)
 Roger Buck (2013)
 Rev. Eloy Gonzalez (2010)
 Rev. Dr. Philip Kuehnert (2013)
 Linda Reiser (2013)
 Gen. John Shaud (2010)
 Rev. John F. Temple (2013)
 Virginia Von Seggern (2010)

Executive Director: Rev. Dr. Thomas Zehnder
 Associate Executive Director,
 International Mission Team: Rev. David Birner
 Associate Executive Director, Planning
 & Administration Mission Team: Kurt Buchholz
 Associate Executive Director,
 National Mission Team: Rev. Dr. Robert Scudieri
 Associate Executive Director,
 Missional Education: Rev. Dr. Daniel Mattson
 Associate Executive Director,
 Development Services: Jeffrey Craig-Meyer
 Africa Regional Director: Rev. Dr. Paul Mueller
 Asia Regional Director: Rev. John Mehl
 Eurasia Regional Director: Rev. Brent Smith
 Great Lakes Urban Ministry
 Regional Director: Rev. Tom Eggold
 Latin America Regional Director: Rev. Dr. Jorge Groh
 Northeast Regional Director: Rev. Dr. David Born

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 Rev. Dr. Armand Boehme (2010)
 Kirk Farney (2013)
 Dr. Jean Garton (2013)
 Rev. Dr. Charles Gieschen (2010)
 Peter Hessler (2010)
 Rev. Walter Lehenbauer (2013)
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SYNOD REPORTS

R1-8

LCMS Convention 2010 Report of the President

Part I

I. Introduction and Thoughts on Convention Theme

ONE People—*Forgiven*

This is the theme of our 2010 Synod convention. It follows and fits nicely with the themes of the previous two conventions, “ONE Mission—*Ablaze!*” and “ONE Message—*Christ*.”

Together, these three themes comprise our Synod’s vision endorsed by the 2004 convention—“One Message, One Mission, One People.” The 2010 theme reminds us that as ONE People we are blessed by God through His Word and Sacraments to carry out the ONE Mission He has given, to proclaim throughout the world the ONE Message of forgiveness and eternal life in Jesus Christ. By the grace of God, that is happening throughout The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, faithfully and fruitfully.

In notes on Eph. 4:17–32, the section that includes the convention theme verse, *The Lutheran Study Bible* comments, “Paul describes the new life that results from the Gospel. Yet, the Law also continues to apply because of our sinful nature. As Luther explains the Ten Commandments in the Catechism, the Law both forbids sinful behavior (‘shall not’) and urges good works (‘shall’). As we inevitably fail to live up to such demands, *forgiveness preserves and restores the harmony of the Church*” (emphasis mine).

The apostle Paul sounds a similar theme also in Col. 3:12–14, “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

“How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!” says Psalm 133. “It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron’s beard, down upon the collar of his robes. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows His blessing, even life forevermore.”

When we live out and demonstrate the God-given unity that we have in faith, it is a wonderful thing to behold and a true joy to experience. Just as Aaron was consecrated to God’s service by anointing with oil, so the unity God gives us sets us apart as one people in His service. The apostle Peter tells us, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light” (1 Pet. 2:9).

The apostle Paul writes, “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:3–6).

While it sometimes seems that we have a long way to go in our Holy Spirit-driven quest to “stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel” (Phil. 1:27), positive signs abound in our midst. The key is relationships between and among penitent sinners, who confess and repent of sin and receive with thankful hearts the precious words of absolution: “Your sin is forgiven!” Those relationships are rooted firmly in the forgiveness extended to us by God

through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ—forgiveness then freely extended to and received from our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The grace of God in Christ moves us to be in conversation with one another, celebrating our areas of agreement and oneness, and working on those matters where we have not yet achieved complete harmony. In a number of ways our time together in convention will focus on our unity in Christ. Beginning with Sunday morning’s prayer service and continuing throughout the week, we will have opportunity to speak and to hear words of confession, absolution, and forgiveness.

May God continue richly to bless us as ONE People—*Forgiven!*

Our Progress toward Unity as ONE People

From time to time it is important to ask ourselves and one another how we are progressing as brothers and sisters in Christ regarding our unity as ONE People. Are we in fact making “every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” as God directs through the words of the apostle Paul?

The 2007 Synod convention declared that discord among us “has been and is hindering the mission and is disheartening to God’s people” (Res. 4-01A). The convention asked that the Synod’s Council of Presidents (COP) and Board of Directors (BOD) “initiate a specific plan for the sake of the whole church to restore harmony in our Synod.” It directed that the COP and BOD call a summit to prepare a strategy to that end. A committee from those two groups has been appointed and is working on a response to that resolution. Their progress report, which I believe you will find very helpful, is published elsewhere in this *Convention Workbook*. It is essentially descriptive in nature. I look forward to the next phase of the report, which will be prescriptive, and I anticipate that the steps suggested will prove productive in restoring greater harmony in our Synod.

Examples of Personal Steps toward Reconciliation

In addition to this written report, the president presents a verbal report during the early part of the convention. Part of that report will be the sharing of examples of personal steps toward reconciliation. Every time I am faced with my own shortcomings and sinfulness, I thank God for His forgiveness and for the forgiveness I receive from fellow brothers and sisters in Christ who have been hurt, offended, or negatively affected in any other way.

In addition, the 41 members of the Council of Presidents (35 district presidents, five vice-presidents, and the president of the LCMS) have been invited to share during the convention video clips of their own personal experience with confession, repentance, and absolution. It is my hope and prayer that these stories and testimonies will set the tone for a spiritually meaningful and enriching convention experience. We gather together as ONE People—*Forgiven!*

II. A Few Matters of Importance during the Past Triennium

Ablaze! and *Fan into Flame*

The *Ablaze!* movement, an initiative to reach with the Gospel 100 million people by the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and *Fan into Flame*, the campaign to raise \$100 million in support of the specific objectives of *Ablaze!*, were adopted by our Synod’s convention in 2004. Updated information on the progress of both endeavors is included in the report of the Board for Mission Services.

My observations are that the efforts of those congregations, individuals, and districts who are participating in these initiatives have been greatly blessed in the process. For various reasons, a number of congregations and individuals have chosen not to participate in either

Ablaze! or *Fan into Flame*. Some have cited theological objections, others more practical matters, as their reasons for nonparticipation. I have listened to these concerns and have deep respect for those who have expressed them.

For several years, written theological responses to the theological objections have been publicized by the Board for Mission Services. One very good resource is “*Ablaze!: Strategy and Structure*” written by Dr. Daniel L. Mattson, Associate Executive Director, LCMS World Mission. One portion of Dr. Mattson’s document is particularly noteworthy:

Not only did the 2004 convention accept the goal of attempting to touch the lives of 100 million people with the good news of Jesus, but it took upon itself additional goals of establishing 2,000 new LCMS congregations by 2017 (2004 Resolution 1-05A) to expand cross-cultural work at home and abroad (2004 Resolution 1-01A) and to raise \$100 million to enable the LCMS to carry out the mission work it needed to do (2004 Resolution 1-04). Perhaps the most significant goal of all was the convention’s resolution that every LCMS congregation and institution should grow in its understanding of itself as a mission outpost, as a community of believers in the midst of a wilderness of unbelief, prepared to go out into that wilderness to share the life-giving Good News of Jesus. (2004 Resolution 1-02)

In 2007, I asked four Synod leaders to review *Ablaze!* materials and to share their perspectives with the Synod. Here is their statement:

We are committed to and engaged in mission and outreach and are eager to be a resource for the entire church in sharing the Gospel. Following a review of the *Ablaze!* initiative we do not find anything in it to be inconsistent with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. To be sure, while some might raise legitimate questions about certain points not included in this initiative, as well as about certain exegetical details, we feel that the materials prepared by the Board for Missions sufficiently answer these concerns.—Dr. L. Dean Hempelmann, Dr. Dale A. Meyer, Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger, Dr. Dean O. Wenthe

One fairly common practical objection is to the suggestion that LCMS and our partner church folks should go to the *Ablaze!* Web site and record the Gospel witness given. Over 10 million people have already actually done so! However, since the movement’s inception, I have expressed my own feeling that this process is cumbersome and that most evangelical, confessional, Lutheran people who share the Gospel with someone else are not generally in the habit of telling about it. On the other hand, there are some very moving and exciting stories submitted by ordinary people who have had extraordinary experiences in verbalizing their faith!

With all this in mind, I have asked the executive director of the Board for Mission Services to address the concerns of those who are not involved in *Ablaze!* or *Fan into Flame* in an effort to invite sincerely and encourage evangelically broader participation in these efforts.

In the meantime, the goals of *Ablaze!* remain on target for the future mission of the LCMS. Sharing the Gospel, planting new churches, and revitalizing existing congregations to be mission outposts are foundational for our mission to the world. Pledges and contributions to the *Fan into Flame* campaign in support of these goals have exceeded \$55 million at the time this report is being written. The extension of the duration of this campaign being requested at this convention by the Board for Mission Services will help ensure that we are putting forth our best effort for the extension of kingdom work.

Critical Targets for Synod

This past biennium I worked with Synod leaders to establish targets for our working together on behalf of and for the good of the Synod. The following memorandum to the Synod released January

2010 Convention Workbook

28, 2009, provides the details of this cooperative and collaborative working agreement.

Memorandum

To: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
From: Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, LCMS President
Date: January 28, 2009
Re: Mission and Ministry Emphases

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, through whom alone we have forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation!

The purpose of this memorandum is to announce three mission and ministry emphases that will serve as “critical targets” guiding the work of the national church boards, commissions, departments, and Synod-wide corporate entities until the time of the national Synod convention next year. These emphases are:

1. Revitalizing existing LCMS congregations;
2. Planting new mission congregations; and
3. Enhanced focus on stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.

These emphases have been developed through a collegial and collaborative process involving the Synod’s Senior Leadership Forum (the executive directors and presidents of the boards, commissions, departments, and Synod-wide corporate entities), the Council of Presidents, and the Synod’s Board of Directors. Although all of these targets have already been addressed by units of our national church offices in St. Louis in notable ways, in order to enhance and focus these efforts, cross-unit work teams are being formed to address these emphases in even more significant ways between now and June 30, 2010.

While not neglecting other areas of responsibility, the boards, commissions, departments, and Synod-wide corporate entities are being asked to give substantive attention to these targets and to prioritize precious human and fiscal resources to address these important ministry emphases. The LCMS Board of Directors has pledged to prioritize the resources for which they are responsible to do the same. The work teams in each of these areas will be held accountable for progress in addressing these targets over the next sixteen months.

Special thanks are due to all who have been and will be involved in this multilateral process. By God’s grace, we are taking another important step forward as One People, engaging in the One Mission of reaching people with the One Message that Jesus Christ is the only way to eternal salvation.

May God’s grace, mercy, and peace be with you.

Same-Sex “Marriage”

During the past triennium in our country, a number of incidents occurred related to our biblical and traditional understanding of marriage. In a number of states, proposals were offered that were designed to legalize same-sex marriage. As a result of significant effort and hard work on the part of many Christian individuals and groups in our nation, including the author of this report and others within the LCMS, those challenges to traditional marriage were defeated. To this very day, appeals are in process to overturn decisions made by voters in a number of states in support of traditional marriage.

Included in this report are two statements I issued on this topic, related to same-sex marriage activity in the states of California and Iowa:

Statement from the President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Response to California Supreme Court Ruling on Same-Sex “Marriage” June 24, 2008

The recent decision of the California Supreme Court legalizing same-sex “marriage” highlights the downward spiral of moral values that is becoming so prevalent in our culture. This most recent action

contravenes not only the Judeo-Christian values that have defined the moral compass of this great nation, but also the laws of nature and the natural reproductive process.

In the face of such moral decline, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has consistently upheld the Bible-based values that designate “marriage as the lifelong union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:2–24; Matthew 19:5–6)” (2004 LCMS Convention Resolution 3-05A, attached. All subsequent quotations are from this resolution). The LCMS has consistently held that “homosexual behavior is prohibited in the Old and New Testaments [of Holy Scripture] (Leviticus 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9–20; 1 Timothy 1:10) as contrary to the Creator’s design (Romans 1:26–27).”

As a Christian body in this country, the LCMS has the duty and responsibility to speak publicly in disagreement with this action of the California Supreme Court. In the present context we cannot be silent, since such silence “could be viewed as acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle.” Accordingly, we as a church body urge our leaders, members, congregations, and all Christians, “to give a public witness from Scripture against the social acceptance and legal recognition of homosexual ‘marriage.’”

While this occasion calls us to declare that homosexual behavior is both unnatural and sinful (see Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:24–27), we also recognize that it is necessary to respond to these “sexual sins with the same love and concern as all other sins, calling for repentance and offering forgiveness in the Good News of Jesus Christ when there is repentance.”

“The Gospel declares that Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2) and that Christ, who knew no sin, was made to be our sin so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). It is the church’s proper evangelical work to proclaim the reconciliation of the sinner to God in the death of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18–19) in a spirit of compassion and humility, recognizing that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus (Romans 3:23–24).”

Finally, we pray that all people, especially men and women properly united as husbands and wives, will honor God’s divinely ordained relationship of marriage. And we pray that all husbands and wives will “give thanks to God for the blessings of marriage, lead a chaste and decent life, and each love and honor one’s spouse.”

Statement from the President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Response to Iowa Supreme Court Ruling on Same-Sex “Marriage” April 6, 2009

Last Friday, marriage was redefined by seven judges for the entire state of Iowa and for the majority of Iowans because six couples had sued the state and demanded marriage licenses in 2005. The majority of Iowans wholeheartedly supported the 1998 Iowa Defense of Marriage Act, which sought to protect marriage between one man and one woman, yet the court’s decision on Friday overturned the ban on same-sex marriage.

This case in Iowa could affect other states and how they handle challenges to same-sex marriage, which has been the subject of court cases nationwide. Laws banning same-sex marriage in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and California already have been struck down by their respective state courts.

Marriage, as it was instituted by God between male and female, has existed since the beginning of time. Marriage between any beings other than one man and one woman changes the meaning of marriage designed by the Creator for the order of this world.

While members of the LCMS respect all people, we believe it is against the will of God and contrary to the moral fiber of our country to redefine marriage. Furthermore, society needs heterosexual marriages between men and women to thrive and succeed, as such unions remain the cornerstone in God’s design for the procreation and raising of children.

It is not acceptable to experiment with this generation of children by trying to muster up weak alternatives to biological mothers and fathers.

We call upon the citizens of this nation to bolster and strengthen the institution of traditional marriage, lest our society spiral uncontrollably into disorder and moral decay.

Though this occasion prompts the LCMS, once again, to declare that homosexual behavior is both intrinsically unnatural and sinful (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:24–27), we also recognize the need to respond to this behavior with the same love and concern we show for all other sins, calling for repentance and offering forgiveness in the Good News of Jesus Christ where there is repentance.

ELCA Churchwide Assembly Actions

Also on the topic of same-gender unions, I share this report on the actions taken by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in August 2009. Perhaps you’ve heard much of what transpired at that gathering and its implications, both for the ELCA and also for the relationship between the LCMS and the ELCA. My thoughts are reflected in the words of greeting that I addressed to the ELCA Assembly following their decisions regarding same-gender unions and the ordination of homosexual pastors living in “publicly accountable, monogamous, lifelong unions.” A complete draft of that address is included as Appendix I to this report.

In addition, I issued the following public statement regarding this matter:

Statement of the President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Response to Certain Actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The two largest Lutheran church bodies in the United States are the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) with 4.8 million members and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) with 2.4 million members.

On Friday, Aug. 21, [2009] the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America voted to open the ministry of the ELCA to gay and lesbian pastors and other professional workers living in “committed relationships.” In an earlier action, the assembly approved a resolution that commits the ELCA “to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships.”

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has repeatedly affirmed as its own position the historical understanding of the Christian church that the Bible condemns homosexual behavior as “intrinsically sinful.” It is therefore contrary to the will of the Creator and constitutes sin against the commandments of God (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9–20; 1 Tim. 1:9–10; and Rom. 1:26, 27).

Addressing the ELCA assembly on Saturday, Aug. 22, I responded to their aforementioned actions, stating: “The decisions by this assembly to grant non-celibate homosexual ministers the privilege of serving as rostered leaders in the ELCA and the affirmation of same-gender unions as pleasing to God will undoubtedly cause additional stress and disharmony within the ELCA. It will also negatively affect the relationships between our two church bodies. The current division between our churches threatens to become a chasm. This grieves my heart and the hearts of all in the ELCA, the LCMS, and other Christian church bodies throughout the world who do not see these decisions as compatible with the Word of God, or in agreement with the consensus of 2,000 years of Christian theological affirmation regarding what Scripture teaches about human sexuality. Simply stated, this matter is fundamentally related to significant differences in how we [our two church bodies] understand the authority of Holy Scripture and the interpretation of God’s revealed and infallible Word.”

Doctrinal decisions adopted already in 2001 led the LCMS, in sincere humility and love, to declare that we could no longer consider the ELCA “to be an orthodox Lutheran church body” (2001 Res 3-21A). Sadly, the decisions of this past week to ignore biblical teaching on human sexuality have reinforced that conclusion. We respect the desire to follow conscience in moral decision making, but conscience may not overrule the Word of God.

We recognize that many brothers and sisters within the ELCA, both clergy and lay, are committed to remaining faithful to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, are committed to the authority of Holy Scripture, and strongly oppose these actions. To them we offer our assurance of loving encouragement together with our willingness to provide appropriate support in their efforts to remain faithful to the Word of God and the historic teachings of the Lutheran church and all other Christian churches for the past 2,000 years.

Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Theological Implications of 2009 ELCA Decisions

To assist our Synod in addressing the practical matters of what effect the ELCA decisions and actions might have on ongoing working relationships between the LCMS and ELCA in areas of inter-Lutheran cooperation, I appointed a special task force to develop a theological statement regarding these matters. The members of this task force, appointed on Epiphany Day, Jan. 6, 2010, are Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, Dr. Dale Meyer, Dr. Dean Nadasdy, Dr. Samuel Nafzger, Rev. Larry Vogel, Dr. Dean Wenhe, and Rev. John Wohlrabe.

The letter of appointment is included as Appendix II and the Theological Statement itself is included as Appendix III to this report. I commend this statement for your careful consideration and study and believe it will provide helpful guidance to pastors, congregations, and inter-Lutheran agencies.

Sanctity of Life

Every year on Jan. 22, the anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in the United States, a March for Life is held in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital. In 2009, it was my humbling privilege to participate in person by preaching at a pre-March service at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Alexandria, Virginia, by offering the opening prayer at the pre-March kickoff event in the presence of a crowd estimated at between 200,000 and 300,000 people, and by walking in the March itself.

In 2009 and 2010 I issued the following statements:

LCMS President's Statement on Sanctity of Human Life Observance as LCMS Participates in 36th Annual "March for Life" January 16, 2009

Our recent national, state, and local elections have heightened concern among many Americans regarding issues surrounding the sanctity of human life. As they have done for the last 36 years, thousands of Americans in Washington, D.C., and millions more around the country will gather together this January 22 to participate in the March for Life. They do this in remembrance of an estimated 50 million unborn American children who have died since *Roe vs. Wade* tragically legalized abortion in America through all nine months of a pregnancy.

It is especially crucial this year that Americans speak loudly and clearly to our new federal administration to demonstrate that respect for life is a primary concern for millions of Americans. This year, involvement in the March for Life is expected to top 200,000 participants. This would represent the highest attendance ever of concerned citizens who value the morals and human rights upon which this country was founded.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), since its inception, has steadfastly proclaimed the miracle of human life from conception until natural death. As we march with other concerned Americans, we underscore our belief that Christ Jesus sanctified all human life by His birth, life, death, and resurrection for all mankind.

Our Synod is actively involved in a variety of domestic and international programs to support and encourage life "in the image of God," through the LCMS Board for Human Care Ministries, the LCMS Sanctity of Human Life Committee, Lutherans For Life, and the local

ministries of LCMS congregations across the country. Both in our church body and in society at large, the LCMS remains devoted to upholding the sanctity of human life and caring for those who are the most vulnerable and helpless among us.

Gerald B. Kieschnick, *President*
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Statement Issued for 37th Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* January 20, 2010

Friday, January 22, marks the 37th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision that altered how our nation had valued life for the previous 200 years. Abortion has caused nearly 51 million deaths since 1973, when medically assisted termination of a pregnancy was declared legal.

Yet this solemn anniversary also gives us reason to hope as throngs of people will converge on our nation's capital—as they have each of the past 37 years—to call for repeal of the *Roe v. Wade* decision.

We thank the LCMS Lutherans who will join an anticipated crowd of more than 200,000 pro-life marchers on this day to worship, to pray, and to share with the nation the truth of God's Word that life begins at conception. This year, their presence in Washington, D.C., is more important than ever as Congress considers health care legislation that could allow the use of taxpayer money to fund abortions.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has consistently affirmed and given thanks to God for the miracle of human life from conception until natural death and fought for its preservation. We have also taken action through international and domestic programs to demonstrate our care and compassion for those who live on the other side of the world, for our neighbor down the street, and for the unborn in the womb.

As we reflect on the significance of this day, we boldly profess our belief that Christ Jesus sanctified all human life by His birth, life, death, and resurrection for all mankind. Both in our church body and in society at large, the LCMS remains committed to upholding the sanctity of human life and devoted to caring for those who are the most vulnerable and helpless among us.

Gerald B. Kieschnick, *President*
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Resources for Assisting Parents, Pastors, Teachers, and Congregations

We live today in a world where biblical and traditional Christian values are threatened all around us. Some of the topics I've already addressed in this report deal with intrinsically sinful behavior that has become not only tolerated, but also accepted and condoned by society. Children and adults are exposed to temptations and troubles of many kinds. To speak and act in favor of living lives in accord with God's holy and revealed will and against sinful activity of all kinds requires courage. It also is our godly responsibility.

To assist in doing so, we have available today many resources produced both by agencies within and outside our beloved Synod. While providing an exhaustive listing of such resources is beyond the scope and purpose of this report, I do not hesitate to encourage our parents, pastors, teachers, and congregations to utilize the plethora of resources available on dating, marriage, divorce, depression, abuse, addiction, homosexual behavior, pornography, and a host of other subjects.

Materials and resources on these and other topics are available from sources that include but are not limited to Concordia Publishing House; the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations; family, school, stewardship, and youth ministries of the LCMS Board for District and Congregational Services; the LCMS Board for Human Care Ministries; Lutherans For Life; Ambassadors of Reconciliation; the National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families; and the Religious Alliance Against Pornography.

These agencies and organizations are dedicated to providing helpful information, many resources, and much material for addressing

the needs of children, adults, and families in dealing with the challenges of everyday living. As members and leaders of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, we have the privilege and responsibility to foster and embrace the virtue of sexual purity, to uphold the blessing of God’s design of marriage as a lifelong committed relationship between one man and one woman, to stem the growing tide of pornography in the United States, and in every way possible to strengthen the moral fabric of our society.

III. Church Relations Matters

Introduction

Art. III of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod lists as the first objective of the Synod that the Synod, under scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall “conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy.”

The President of the Synod is “the chief ecumenical officer of the Synod.” He is to “represent the Synod, in consultation with the appropriate board or commission, in official contacts with all partner churches by aiding, counseling, and advising them and by strengthening the relations with and among them.” He or his representative “shall represent the Synod in official contacts with other church bodies” (Bylaw 3.3.1.1.2).

During the past triennium a new position has been established in the office of the President to assist me in carrying out my constitutionally assigned responsibilities in the area of church relations—the position of Director of Church Relations, Assistant to the President. Called to fill this post was Dr. Samuel Nafzger, who began his service in this position on July 1, 2008. Dr. Nafzger had previously served for over 30 years as the executive director of the Synod’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations.

The President’s Church Relations Cabinet (PCRC)

The President’s Church Relations Cabinet exists as a special committee that I have established to assist me in overseeing and coordinating the Synod’s contacts with other churches. Chaired by the Director of Church Relations, the PCRC meets with me monthly. Serving as members of the PCRC are the First Vice-President of the Synod; the Secretary of the Synod; the Executive Director of the Board for Mission Services; the Associate Executive Directors of the Board for Mission Services (International Mission Team and Missional Education); the Executive Director of the Board for Human Care Ministries; the Senior Assistant to the President; and the Executive Director and Assistant Director of International Ministries of Lutheran Hour Ministries.

LCMS Partner Churches

The LCMS is in altar and pulpit fellowship (church fellowship) with 32 other Lutheran churches around the world. They are the following:

1. Argentina—Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina
2. Belgium—Evangelical Lutheran Church in Belgium
3. Brazil—Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil
4. Canada—Lutheran Church—Canada
5. Chile—Confessional Lutheran Church of Chile
6. Denmark—Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Denmark
7. England—The Evangelical Lutheran Church of England
8. France—Evangelical Lutheran Church—Synod of France

9. Germany—Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church
10. Ghana—Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana
11. Guatemala—Lutheran Church of Guatemala
12. Haiti—The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti
13. Hong Kong—The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod
14. India—India Evangelical Lutheran Church
15. Japan—Japan Lutheran Church
16. Kenya—Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya
17. Korea—Lutheran Church in Korea
18. Latvia—Evangelical Lutheran Church in Latvia
19. Lithuania—Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania
20. Mexico—Lutheran Synod of Mexico
21. Nigeria—The Lutheran Church of Nigeria
22. Papua New Guinea—Gutnius Lutheran Church
23. Paraguay—The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Paraguay
24. Philippines—The Lutheran Church in the Philippines
25. Portugal—Portuguese Evangelical Lutheran Church
26. Russia—Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia
27. South Africa—Free Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa
28. South Africa—Lutheran Church in Southern Africa
29. Sri Lanka—Lanka Lutheran Church
30. Taiwan (ROC)—China Evangelical Lutheran Church
31. United States—American Association of Lutheran Churches
32. Venezuela—Lutheran Church of Venezuela

My contacts with these churches are carried out primarily through the International Lutheran Council, for which I have served as chairman the past three years, and for which Dr. Nafzger has served as its part-time executive secretary since its organization in 1993.

The Synod has also had ongoing contacts during the past triennium with a number of other Lutheran churches around the world including, but not limited to, the following:

1. The Christian Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bolivia (member of ILC)
2. Malagasy Lutheran Church (Madagascar)
3. Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church
4. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan
5. Lutheran Church of Australia (member of ILC)
6. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania
7. Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus

Church Relations in the 21st Century

In addition, numerous contacts from other Lutheran church bodies around the world have been received throughout the past triennium. In each case, such church bodies have expressed appreciation and respect for the work of the LCMS in maintaining a biblical and confessional witness. They have also expressed a desire to develop a closer relationship with the LCMS. In many cases these churches are much smaller than the LCMS and often have not developed carefully articulated doctrinal positions or documents on the basis of which we in the LCMS could evaluate the possibilities for closer relationships.

Accordingly, I requested the Commission on Theology and Church Relations to provide counsel for how best to approach such church bodies in a way that honors their desire for a closer relationship with the LCMS while also recognizing the challenges we face in doing so with the limited fiscal and human resources available. The resultant counsel provided by the CTCR is a document titled “Church Relations in the 21st Century.” This document is included in the report of the CTCR and will hopefully be presented for convention consideration. I believe it will be very helpful in accomplishing the objective

of providing support and encouragement for other church bodies who desire to join us in our biblical and confessional work and witness.

50 Years of Mission Work in Korea

In 1958, four LCMS missionaries by the names of Paul Bartling, Maynard Dorow, Won-Jong Ji, and Kurt Voss arrived in Korea. Dr. Ji, from Korea, had just one year earlier completed his doctorate in theology from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Following the inauguration of Lutheran work in Korea, the Korean Lutheran Mission was organized and served as the functional governing body until 1971, when a Constitution and Bylaws were adopted and the Korean Lutheran Church came into existence. In this same year, the LCMS recognized this daughter church as an autonomous partner church, which two years later officially changed its name to Lutheran Church Korea (LCK).

Today, the Lutheran Church in Korea has 42 congregations, 53 pastors, and 5,060 baptized members. Through its work of conducting the Bethel Bible Study program, the LCK has led 450,000 individuals and 15,000 pastors through a concentrated study of Holy Scripture.

On Oct. 26, 2008, the Lutheran in Church Korea held a special service of celebration attended by over 1,700 guests. Representing the LCMS on this occasion were Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Nafzger as guests of the LCK. Dr. Nafzger, Director of Church Relations for the LCMS, brought greetings from the Synod, and LCK President Um presented to him a plaque for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which reads:

The congregations and members of the Lutheran Church in Korea present this plaque of appreciation to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with profound appreciation for sending four missionary families 50 years ago for the sake of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ in a country devastated by war. By God's grace, and as a result of that initiative, the Lutheran Church in Korea exists today. For this reason we give thanks to God first of all, and also [the Synod], in this 50th anniversary year of Lutheran mission work in Korea.

My report on the observance of this milestone of mission work in Korea serves as a reminder of the way God has richly blessed the efforts of the Synod in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ all over the world.

The International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg (ILSW)

In 2007, an agreement was signed on behalf of the LCMS Board for Mission Services, the LCMS Board for Human Care Ministries, and Concordia Publishing House (CPH) with the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (*Selbständige Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche* [SELK]). The LCMS, CPH, and the SELK subsequently established a not-for-profit German corporation called The International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg (ILSW). Prior to the formal organization of the ILSW, the agencies involved in its formation had purchased with a gift from the Central Illinois District LCEF a building known as the *altes Gymnasium* (old gymnasium, or high school). This building was built in 1564 and is located adjacent to the City Church (St. Mary's Church), where Dr. Martin Luther frequently preached. Dr. Wilhelm Torgerson, a SELK pastor, was asked to serve as the first director of the ILSW.

In August 2008, the LCMS Board of Directors requested a business plan for "the Wittenberg Project" for its November meeting. When such a plan was not prepared, the Board of Directors renewed its request for such a plan and asked me to become involved and "assist with church relations issues" connected with this project.

Following a February 2009 meeting with SELK Bishop Hans-Jörg Voigt in Wittenberg, I recommended to the LCMS Board of Directors that the Wittenberg Project be continued, but "only and explicitly as

a church-body-to-church-body project," and that the financial commitments to this project made by the LCMS agencies involved in the original development of this project be honored. At its May 2009 meeting, the LCMS Board of Directors, acting on the basis of my report and recommendation, made new appointments to the ILSW Supervisory Board and asked that it receive reports on this project at its regularly scheduled meetings.

Members from the U.S. serving on the ILSW Supervisory Board are Mr. Kermit (Butch) Almstedt, chairman of the LCMS Board for Mission Services; Dr. Thomas Kuchta, LCMS Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer; and Dr. Samuel Nafzger, Director of Church Relations, Assistant to the President, from the "LCMS, Inc.," and Dr. Bruce Kintz, President and CEO of Concordia Publishing House.

The ILSW Supervisory Board, at its July 2009 meeting, called Rev. David Mahsman to succeed Dr. Torgerson, who was about to retire, as the ILSW's new Managing Director. The ILSW Board also elected Dr. Nafzger to serve as its chairman, succeeding SELK Bishop Voigt.

Planning is presently under way for the development of a museum and visitor center in the *altes Gymnasium* (old gymnasium, or high school) to present the Gospel via Dr. Martin Luther's Christ-centered theology to thousands of visitors to Wittenberg each year. Rev. Mahsman has been asked to develop both a ministry plan and a business plan in time for the ILSW board's meeting in May 2010. This project offers to the LCMS and its partner church SELK an unprecedented opportunity for the proclamation of the Gospel rediscovered by the Great Reformer at a time and in the place where the eyes of the world will increasingly be focused as we near the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.

The Anglican Church in North America

In December 2009, I received a letter from the Most Reverend Robert Duncan, Archbishop and Primate of the newly established Anglican Church in North America. In this letter Archbishop Duncan, referring to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as "a natural ecumenical partner," suggested the initiation of a dialogue upon which a positive relationship with the Missouri Synod might be built. He wrote that he was therefore "respectfully requesting the beginning of discussions between our two Christian bodies which will hopefully result in greater understanding and future cooperation . . . an opportunity to talk to one another, share our beliefs, and enjoy a loving inter-church relationship."

Following consultation with the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, and having received its encouragement to respond positively to this proposal, I have asked the Director of Church Relations to work together with representatives from the CTCR and with the Anglican Church in North America to work out a plan for conversations between our two church bodies to take place. This is all in accord with the first objective of the Synod to "work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies" (LCMS Constitution Art. III).

The Anglican Church in North America held its Inaugural Assembly in Bedford, Texas, in June 2009. It united over 100,000 Anglicans in 700 parishes in 28 dioceses. It described its origins in this way:

Globally, regionally and locally, Anglicanism is in the process of reformation. Within the last decades, the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada have increasingly accommodated and incorporated un-Biblical, un-Anglican practices and teachings.

In the context of this widening theological gap, the existing geography-based organizational model of the Episcopal Church and Anglican Church of Canada became problematic for orthodox Anglicans. Orthodox parishes, clergy and dioceses that upheld Biblical authority and historic Anglican practice became isolated within their existing structures. (Quoted from the Web site for the Anglican Church in North America, <http://anglicanchurch.net>)

From the LCMS perspective, the discussions that will occur will be guided by Holy Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the positions of our Synod. Counsel and assistance will be sought from and provided by the President's Church Relations Cabinet and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations.

Conclusion

We pray that God will bless all of these relationships as we seek to strengthen them and to deepen our biblical and confessional unity in doctrine and practice with other Christians around the world, in accordance with our Lord's will as expressed in His High Priestly Prayer in John 17:20–23:

I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father; just as You are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. I have given them the glory that You gave Me, that they may be one as We are one: I in them and You in Me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

IV. 2007 Convention Resolutions Assigned to the President of the Synod

Following is a succinct summary of the 2007 convention resolutions directly assigned to the President of the Synod, together with a brief report of my actions in response:

Res. 2-04 To Create Position of Director for Strategic Development of Hispanic Ministries (DSDHM)

Resolved,

That the Synod in convention authorize the President of the Synod, working with the Board for Mission Services and the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Hispanic Ministry and in consultation with the National Hispanic Lutheran Convention, to appoint a Director for Strategic Development of Hispanic Ministries as soon as funding is available.

Action Taken:

Since the time of the 2007 Synod convention, funding has not become available for the position of Director for Strategic Development of Hispanic Ministries (DSDHM). Discussion was held by several members of the National Hispanic Lutheran Convention (NHLC) regarding the possibility of shared funding by Hispanic congregations. In addition, the staff of the Office of the President investigated possible sources of funding outside of the monies received for the unrestricted budget of the Synod. However, no solution for funding was found, and this position has not yet been filled.

Progress was achieved on the development of a job description for the DSDHM position through the work of the officers of the NHLC. Further work in this regard remains on the table until funding becomes available. An overture has been presented by the Board for Mission Services to this convention to again encourage the filling of this position.

Res. 2-08 To Celebrate Significant Synod Anniversaries

Resolved,

That Concordia Historical Institute, in consultation with the President's office, work to prepare a short monograph by late 2007

describing the history of Walther, Wyneken, and Loehe, prepared specially for educational institutions throughout the Synod (elementary schools, high schools, colleges, universities, seminaries), including suggestions to teachers and professors for incorporating teaching about the significance of these three men in their coursework or classes; and be it further

Resolved, That Concordia Historical Institute, in cooperation with the President of the Synod, shall be encouraged to prepare and administer a national conference to analyze the impact and relevance of Walther, Wyneken, and Loehe for Lutheranism in the United States today; and that this conference be coordinated with the opening of the new museum at the Synod's International Center, if at all possible.

Action Taken:

The Executive Director and subsequent Interim Executive Director of Concordia Historical Institute did consult with the President's Office in regard to the proposed monograph and potential national conference relevant to Walther, Wyneken, and Loehe. Permission was granted by the Office of the President to proceed with the monograph, if funding was available.

Initial plans were under development in relation to coordinating the national conference with the opening of the new museum. The Office of the President assisted CHI in gathering names of potential presenters for the potential conference and worked cooperatively with CHI in developing an agenda for the national conference. However, when the exact opening date of the museum became uncertain and CHI realized that it would not have funding available to sponsor a national conference, it was determined that a national conference would not be possible at this time.

Res. 2-09 To Initiate Planning for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Resolved,

That the Synod, under the auspices of the Office of the President, organize a celebration—an observance of this historic anniversary—inviting and involving to the greatest extent possible the participation of other worldwide confessional Lutheran churches.

Action Taken:

Discussions have been held with former members of committees who have been involved in the planning and execution of previous synodwide celebrations regarding processes followed in coordinating national, and potentially, international events. Conversations have also been held with members of the International Lutheran Council (ILC) with regard to a potential worldwide emphasis for this special anniversary.

In addition, a Confessional Leadership Conference is being sponsored by the CTCR, June 3–5, 2010, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, that will bring together international Lutheran leaders, including the ILC World Seminaries Conference and teachers of theology from LCMS seminaries, colleges, and universities. This conference will provide a venue to discuss appropriate ways to celebrate the 500th anniversary.

With the pending conversation of this summer conference with worldwide Lutheran leaders and in consideration of the potential changes in the structure of national Synod, it did not seem expedient to appoint a planning group at this time. However, following the meeting of worldwide Lutheran leadership this summer and after convention action on potential changes to the national structure at the Synod convention, it will be a priority to appoint an LCMS leadership team to plan on behalf of the LCMS, and in conjunction other global Lutheran leaders, a national and worldwide celebration for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Res. 3-01 To Declare Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with the American Association of Lutheran Churches

Resolved,

That the LCMS recognize The American Association of Lutheran Churches as a partner church and that the President of the Synod be responsible for implementing this relationship and for reconciliation.

Action Taken:

In response to this directive from the convention, the Presiding Pastor of the AALC and I appointed the LCMS/AALC Commission on Fellowship. The LCMS members of this commission are the Synod's First Vice-President, Dr. Bill Diekelman; the Executive Director of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, Dr. Joel Lehenbauer; the Secretary of the Synod, Dr. Raymond Hartwig; and Minnesota South District President, Dr. Lane Seitz. The AALC members of the Commission on Fellowship include AALC Presiding Pastor Franklin Hays; Administrative Assistant to the Presiding Pastor Fred Balke; and Commission on Doctrine and Church Relations Chairman Phillip Hofinga.

The Commission on Fellowship met regularly throughout the past triennium for prayer, study of church body practices, and discussion of the matters of concern identified by the convention. As a result of these meetings and conversations, two documents have been adopted by our church body representatives to address how our partnership will be implemented. Titled "Operating Agreement I" and "Operating Agreement II," these two documents, included as Appendix IV and Appendix V to this report, deal with movement of professional church workers and congregations between our two church bodies.

Positive relationships have been established among the members of the Commission on Fellowship and among numerous pastors from both church bodies. The Council of Presidents of the LCMS invited the leadership of the AALC and their "Regional Pastors" to attend a recent COP meeting. The AALC Regional Pastors had an opportunity to experience the work of the LCMS district presidents and to hear the opportunities and concerns related to their office. Relationships are developing in some LCMS circuits as local AALC pastors are invited by LCMS pastors and circuit counselors to attend circuit meetings.

The Commission on Fellowship is to be commended for their fraternal discussions and their development of these two documents. Through their faithful labors, a healthy mutually respectful relationship exists between most of the members of our two church bodies who have availed themselves of the opportunity to work together and to walk together.

Res. 3-02 To Encourage Confessional Study in Preparation for 2017

Resolved,

That the Synod President be directed to support and encourage this renewal in the study of the Lutheran Confessions through the official periodicals of the Synod.

Action Taken:

The resolves of Res. 3-02 are related to preparation for celebration of the Reformation in 2017, as stated "in preparation for the celebration of this anniversary." Res. 3-02 also addresses "the preparation of study resources" related to the Lutheran Confessions to "be made available for widespread use in order to enhance the worldwide confessional celebration of this historic anniversary." As such, this resolve closely parallels Res. 2-09, which addresses planning for the 2017 anniversary. As these preparations and documents continue to unfold in the days and years ahead leading to the 2017 celebration,

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I intend to wholeheartedly support and invite the use of these study resources, while encouraging a renewal in the study of the Lutheran Confessions. A specific article of such encouragement is currently scheduled for publication in *The Lutheran Witness*.

Res. 3-03 To Request the CTCR to Develop a Plan for Confessional Leadership

Resolved,

That the CTCR, in consultation with the Office of the President and our seminaries, coordinate fundamentally constructive and intentionally supportive efforts such as theological symposia, conferences, and other opportunities for study of confessional Lutheran theology, to uphold and nurture confessional Lutheranism.

Action Taken:

As referenced in my response to Res. 2-09, a Confessional Leadership Conference is being sponsored by the CTCR, June 3-5, 2010, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, that will bring together international Lutheran leaders, including the ILC World Seminaries Conference and teachers of theology from LCMS seminaries, colleges, and universities. This conference, which has been planned in consultation with the Office of the President, is focused on the intent of Res. 3-03, namely, "for study of confessional Lutheran theology, to uphold and nurture confessional Lutheranism."

As part of the meeting, ILC leaders will offer brief presentations on the state of Lutheranism in their respective areas of the world. In addition, presentations will be delivered by other representatives of world and North American Lutheranism, offering perspectives on the current state of our church tradition in light of various contemporary challenges, including the human sexuality decisions of 2009 in the U.S. and Sweden. Other presentations will focus on the work of the Holy Spirit in Lutheranism and the church catholic.

Res. 3-10 To Encourage Publication of Theological Literature

Resolved,

That the President of the Synod appoint a task force, in consultation with the President and Chief Executive Officer of Concordia Publishing House, to include professors from both seminaries and the Concordia University System, to establish a new Committee on Church Literature by June 2008, "for the purpose of providing meaningful input to Concordia Publishing House in identifying, promoting, and facilitating the publication of theological literature" (CW, p. 66) for use by members of the Synod, other Christians, and the public in general.

Action Taken:

As directed in Res. 3-10, in consultation with the President and CEO of Concordia Publishing House (CPH), the members of the Committee on Church Literature were appointed. The committee members are Rev. Allen Doering; Dr. Adam Francisco; Mrs. Janet George; Rev. Stephen Hower; Dr. Jenny Mueller-Roebke; Dr. Leo Sanchez; and Rev. Larry Stojkovic. An overview of the committee's work is included in the report submitted by CPH for inclusion in the *Convention Workbook*.

This overview reads, in part, "The committee met six times during the previous triennium, and has provided valuable advice and input to Concordia Publishing House, as it has reviewed the present publications of Concordia Publishing House during its meetings and offered advice and counsel for possible future publications." Further details on the progress and accomplishments of this committee are included in the convention report from Concordia Publishing House.

Res. 8-07S To Call Special Convention to Amend Synod Structure and Governance

Resolved,

That we as delegates of this convention direct President Kieschnick to meet with the Council of Presidents within the next 90 days, after consulting with our two seminary presidents, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, the Board of Directors, the Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer, other officers of the Synod, and the Commission on Constitutional Matters; and be it further

Resolved, That if President Kieschnick and two-thirds of the district presidents determine at that time to call a special convention, we stand ready to serve.

Action Taken:

Following the 2007 convention, after completing the consultations indicated in the resolution, I decided against calling a special convention. This decision was reported publicly to the Council of Presidents and others with whom I consulted. The delegates to the 2007 convention were also notified of this decision in a memorandum dated Sept. 17, 2007, which was made public to the church at large. The action taken in regard to Res. 8-07S is explained fully in that memo, a copy of which is provided in the paragraphs that follow.

MEMO

To: Delegates to the 63rd Regular Convention
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
From: Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President
Subject: 2007 Convention Resolution 8-07S
Date: September 17, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, through whom alone we have forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation!

Please allow me to express a sincere word of appreciation to you for serving as a delegate to the 63rd Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod this summer. I pray that your experience was spiritually beneficial and will continue to be fulfilling for you as we work together for the extension of the kingdom of God in time and for eternity.

This letter is to inform you officially that, after careful and prayerful consultation with various leaders and groups in the Synod as directed by Resolution 8-07S (a copy of which is included with this letter), I have decided not to call a special convention of the Synod in 2009. Instead of a special convention, the recommendations that will be forthcoming from the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) will be presented to and considered by the next regular convention of the Synod in 2010.

It is important to recall the general purpose of the BRTFSSG, which is essentially to study, seek input, and make recommendations for consideration by the Synod in convention regarding greatly needed amendments to the structure and governance of the Synod. Perhaps a few excerpts from my June 10, 2005, letter of appointment to task force members will be helpful in understanding the work assigned to the task force:

Our work together as a Synod should enhance and enable achievement of the mission that God has given His church, a mission clearly articulated in many places, including especially the first two objectives in Article III of our Synod's Constitution:

Article III. Objectives

The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall—

1. Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy;

2. Strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world;

The existence in our Synod of confusion and disagreement regarding our life and work, together with a growing conviction that the system of structure and governance we have created for ourselves throughout the past 158 years may no longer be ideal, led me to announce the formation of this task force, of which you are now a very important part. I believe the following excerpt from my March 1, 2005, Pastoral Letter to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is helpful in providing a rationale for your work:

Throughout our Synod's history, its system of structure and governance has been discussed and disputed, revised and reorganized, altered and amended. With honorable intentions, we continue attempting to enhance, simplify, clarify, or rectify the way we live and work together in carrying out the purposes of the Synod. Yet we still have significant confusion and disagreement about what the Synod really is, what it does, and how it most appropriately functions.

These issues concern me deeply. Under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, we must ensure that the Synod, a humanly designed organization, carries out all its objectives, especially the first one, to "Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10) ..." (LCMS Constitution Article III). Agreements on how we live and work together must not foster division, but serve to build unity.

The Synod in convention (2004 Resolution 7-02A) directed creation of a committee to be appointed by the President and Board of Directors to review matters regarding "officer and board responsibilities." That committee, with its special and limited focus, has been appointed and is to report to the 2007 convention of the Synod.

Recent events, however, have convinced me that more than this is needed. There is a great need for a thorough and fundamental review of what our Synod is, how it is organized, and how it functions. What was first created as an organizational system for a Synod made up of a small number of congregations now struggles to serve more than 6,150 congregations.

The question before the 2007 convention was whether to call a special convention of the Synod to consider the report and recommendations of the BRTFSSG in response to the "great need for a thorough and fundamental review of what our Synod is, how it is organized, and how it functions." As you recall, the convention declined to call a special session itself under the provisions of Art. VIII B 1 of the Synod's Constitution, opting by a large majority (76 percent) to consider a substitute resolution. Convention delegates then adopted by a vote of more than 70 percent substitute Res. 8-07S directing the President of the Synod, following the aforementioned consultations, to make the decision regarding the calling of a special session. A decision by the President of the Synod to call a special convention requires the consent of two-thirds of the district presidents, as stipulated by both Res. 8-07S and Art. VIII B 2 of the LCMS Constitution. The same constitutional article also requires that a special session, when called by the President and the district presidents, be called only in "cases of urgent necessity."

Prior to and during the consultations, I developed an extensive list of pros and cons on whether to call a special session of the Synod. I carefully and prayerfully considered and shared these pros and cons during the consultations:

Pros

- Res. 8-07S was adopted by a "super majority" of over 70 percent of the delegates, who indicated that should such a special convention be called, they would "stand ready to serve."
- Seasoned and experienced 2007 delegates would be in place at a special convention, while delegates to the 2010 convention would

be new and most likely inexperienced in the process of a Synod convention.

- Since we already know the identity of and contact information for the 2007 delegates, communication opportunities with them regarding task force recommendations are immediately available.
- There is a possible if not probable expectation among 2007 delegates that a special convention will be held.
- There exists an established trust level among the 2007 delegates that developed at the convention this summer.
- “Fresher” delegates at a special convention could devote their time and attention exclusively to structure and governance matters and would not need to consider other matters regularly brought before a Synod convention.
- A special convention, which would have been held in August 2009, would enable more time for planning the 2010 convention and for implementing any amendments to structure, governance, elections, etc. that would have been adopted by the 2009 convention.
- The Council of Presidents in February 2007 urged the Blue Ribbon Task Force to move forward with possible special convention plans rather than experience an unnecessary delay in implementing recommended changes to structure and governance of the Synod.
- Most current district presidents could provide leadership at a special 2009 convention. Any new district presidents elected at 2009 district conventions, to succeed those who retire or have term limits, would be less familiar with the history, the role of the COP in this process, the necessity and wisdom of task force recommendations, etc.
- Projected cost savings resulting from structural amendments adopted by a special convention in 2009 could be realized without further delay.

Cons

- Uncertainty exists regarding the thoughts and intentions of the 70 percent of delegates who voted for Res. 8-07S. (For instance, is the “urgent necessity” of a special convention perceived by the delegates, or are delegates counting on the Synod President and district presidents to make that determination?)
- The attrition of numerous 2007 delegates is certain, and there is uncertainty of the “readiness to serve” of those who would replace them.
- Personal scheduling conflicts could arise regarding a late summer convention that would affect the ability of delegates to attend.
- The possibility exists that special-convention delegates would not approve task force recommendations, resulting in unproductive time and financial expenditure.
- The criteria for determination of and concurrence regarding the “urgent necessity” of calling a special convention (Art. VIII B 2) are not definitive.
- Lack of consensus in the Synod of the urgent necessity for calling a special convention would not contribute to peace and harmony in the Synod.
- Because the task force intends to develop recommendations only after comprehensive consultation with local, district, and national Synod leaders, its progress and case statement are not yet fully enough developed and communicated to make a convincing case for the urgent need for a special convention.
- Time constraints and pressure to meet the deadlines for a special convention would make it more difficult for the task force to complete its task in a timely and thoughtful fashion.

- There would be less time to process feedback from the church at large regarding recommended amendments to the Synod’s structure and governance.
- Understandably, district presidents’ responses to the task force’s theological principles document is unknown, since it has not yet been thoroughly considered and discussed.
- Understandably, district presidents’ commitment to exercising leadership in acceptance of a special convention and approval of task force recommendations is unknown, since recommendations have not yet been articulated by the task force.
- The cost to districts and congregations for a 2009 special convention would be incurred in addition to the costs for the 2009 district conventions and the 2010 Synod regular convention.
- Logistics would be complicated in planning two Synod conventions in two years.

Accordingly, after giving careful and prayerful consideration to these pros and cons, I have communicated my recommendations to the Council of Presidents as follows:

- I have decided not to call a special 2009 convention of the Synod. In addition to the considerations noted above, the urgent necessity of amending the structure and governance of the Synod makes it critical to spend sufficient time, provide for clear communication, and seek adequate feedback in order to develop a clear consensus in the Synod on these important matters.
- The district presidents will not be asked to vote on this matter, since the president is not calling a special convention.
- Task force recommendations will be considered at the regular convention of the Synod in 2010.
- Prior to the 2009 district conventions, the delegates to the 2007 Synod convention should be surveyed by the task force for their input regarding proposed task force recommendations.
- The task force should meet with district boards of directors in late 2008 to review its report and recommendations and receive further input for task force consideration.
- The President of the Synod and the task force should present recommendations to the 2009 district conventions for discussion, Q&A, and feedback.
- The President of the Synod and the task force should conduct numerous regional caucuses for 2010 delegates and other district leaders after the 2010 delegates are elected and certified (late 2009 through early 2010).
- Regional caucuses would provide feedback to the task force from the 2010 delegates and district leaders in attendance, resulting in appropriate changes by the task force to its recommendations prior to the 2010 convention.
- After these caucuses, the 2010 delegates and district leaders should be surveyed regarding amended task force recommendations, thus providing valuable feedback for task force consideration in formulating its final report and recommendations to the 2010 convention.
- Participation in this process by 2010 delegates and other district leaders would allow them to offer significant input and would lead to greater consensus throughout the Synod regarding task force recommendations.
- The first 2–3 days at the beginning of the 2010 convention would be used to consider task force recommendations prior to regular convention activities, elections, other resolutions and business, etc.
- Decisions of the 2010 convention regarding bylaw amendments would be effective immediately, per the current bylaws regarding such amendments.

- Decisions of the 2010 convention regarding constitutional amendments would be effective only upon ratification by two-thirds of the congregations of the Synod, per the current constitutional requirement for amendments to the Constitution.

It is my belief, hope, and prayer that this process will avoid any appearance that recommendations of the task force are thoughtlessly or hastily made or in any way “forced” upon the Synod, and that the result will be greater understanding, agreement, consensus, harmony, trust, and lasting peace among us as we continue “vigorously to make known the love of Christ, by word and deed, within our churches, communities, and the world” (LCMS Mission Statement).

Though I did not request it, the Council of Presidents unanimously adopted a resolution in support of these decisions and recommendations, a resolution that was followed by extended applause from members of the Council.

Again, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I thank you for your service to our Lord Jesus Christ and His church through your participation in the convention this summer and through the various tasks and responsibilities that you will carry out during this triennium. Your willingness to “stand ready to serve” at a special session of the Synod, had one been called, reflects the churchmanship and character of the people of the LCMS, who have relied on the grace of God for the 160 years of our beloved Synod’s existence.

Also, thank you in advance for your anticipated response to the recommendations that will be proposed by the Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance in the survey that the task force will be sending you in the future. Your participation in that survey will be highly valued as this process unfolds. Please keep this process and the mission of the LCMS in your prayers.

May God’s grace, mercy, and peace rest upon us all as we vigorously proclaim the One Message: Christ—His Love Is Here for You!

Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

It should be noted that I ultimately called for the report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Structure and Governance to be delivered to my office by Oct. 15, 2009, in order to give the members of the Synod ample time to review the report prior to the 2010 Synod convention. The contents of that completed report then provided the content for presentation and discussion at the nine regional gatherings that were conducted during December of 2009 and January and February of 2010 in Denver, Detroit, Madison, Minneapolis, Boston, Newport Beach, Atlanta, Dallas, and St. Louis.

My response to the BRTFSSG Report is included in the *Convention Workbook* as a supplement to this Report of the President of the Synod—Part I.

Res. 8-13 To Amend Bylaws for Special Convention

Resolved,

That the following bylaws be added to Bylaw section 3.1:

PROPOSED WORDING

3.1.11 The business of any special session of the Synod (Constitution Art. VIII B) is limited to the specific stated purpose(s) for the calling of the special session.

3.1.11.1 The President of the Synod, in consultation with the Council of Presidents and the Board of Directors of the Synod, shall establish the specific provisions for any special session of the Synod such as “Reports and Overtures,” “Convention Committees,” “Pre-convention Publications,” “Convention Order,” and “Convention Communications,” including any required implementation timeframes.

Action Taken:

Since no special convention was called, no action was necessary or taken.

V. Conclusion

The past three years have been difficult for many people in many ways. Unemployment, stock market declines, shrinkage in value of retirement plans of many Americans, ongoing conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, the seemingly never-ending war against terrorism, the continued decline in many circles of traditional Judeo/Christian values, and many more challenges have impacted life in America and, thus, life in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The previous sections of my report have indicated in a number of places the lack of availability of adequate funding to accomplish what the delegates to the 2007 Synod convention, as well as other previous conventions, wanted to accomplish. Indeed, over the past 40 years the general trend of undesignated funding for national and international mission and ministry has been downward. Many congregations and districts have not been immune to this general trend, especially in the last few years, finding it necessary to reduce staff, cut back on mission and ministry, and, in general, tighten their belts.

At the same time, financial resources received by many other congregations, agencies, entities, institutions, and numerous districts of the LCMS have increased. And the response of LCMS members and congregations to numerous disasters around the world, particularly during the past triennium, has been quite generous.

Nevertheless, it is clear that spending at the national level of our Synod will either need to continue to be reduced or will need to be supported in ways other than dependence upon undesignated receipts from congregations through districts to national Synod. The work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance proposes a number of recommendations that will facilitate consolidation of national Synod ministry in a strategic and intentional manner. It is also clear that the work of national Synod will need to be supported by special gifts if even the basic work directed by Synod conventions past and present is to be accomplished.

All of this is to say that we are faced with finding new and better ways of more efficiently and effectively making known the love of Christ. It is my firm belief that this can be done while still remaining faithful to Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the faith of our fathers and forefathers. We must do so in ways that engage individuals, congregations, and groups of many kinds in the never-ending task and privilege of “declaring the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9).

My friends in Christ, this has never been more urgent than it is right now! Scripture warns us regarding the work of Satan: “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world” (1 Peter 5:8–9).

How true those words really are, even in current times. Reports of massacres and uprisings against Christians continue to sprinkle the news. A recent news article in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* described the brutal slaying of more than 120 people (“others put the number at about 200”) by “hundreds of Muslim herdsmen armed with guns and machetes” who “swept down on three Christian villages outside Jos in central Nigeria” in what was “apparently a revenge attack.” How horrible it is to realize that still today people suffer and die as a result of their commitment to Christ.

Not only around the world, but also here in America, the Christian faith and the Christian church, once widely accepted and even honored, have now in many places and many ways become unacceptable and even intolerable. While most of us in the LCMS are strangers to the horribly brutal persecution of Christians described in the article

referenced above, the truth is that such is not the case in other parts of the world and even in some parts of the U.S. And projections indicate things will become much more challenging for Christianity in the years to come.

Perhaps you've seen the same statistics that recently came to my attention. According to the report of which I speak, in 1970 there were 100,000 Muslims in America. Today there are over 9 million, and in 30 years there will be 50 million! At the current rate of growth, Islam will be the dominant religion of the world, already having surpassed the world's Roman Catholic population. The projected growth rate of this one non-Christian group reminds us of the urgency of our work in Christ's mission, namely the proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments. "For there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

All this is to say, simply but significantly, how critical it is for us as ONE People—*Forgiven* to be about the work God has called us to accomplish. We do so out of deep concern for the eternal welfare of every person for whom Christ died. We also do so for the sake of the Gospel and the survival of the Christian church, which at any time is only one generation from extinction.

It is only in response to God's love for us in Christ Jesus that we do whatever we do as His people. And we do what we do with fervent faith in the promise of God that He will build His church and "even the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

Be encouraged also by the promise of God in the words of James: "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To Him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet. 5:10–11).

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Appendix I

Address of LCMS President to ELCA Churchwide Assembly, August 22, 2009

Presiding Bishop Hanson, Members of the Assembly, Special Guests, Friends in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Over the years of my life and ministry, these words from St. Paul in 2 Corinthians 5 have become especially meaningful:

God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not counting mankind's sins against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:19–21, ESV)

What a blessing it is to know that our sin is forgiven, removed from us as far as the east is from the west, because of the atoning sacrifice of Christ on Calvary's cross. And what a humbling privilege and huge responsibility it is to know that God is making His appeal, through people like you and like me, people with feet of clay, that the world might be reconciled to God through faith in Christ.

I bring you these greetings on behalf of the 2.4 million members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at a difficult time in the world and in the church. Economic pressures bring great burdens. Strife finds its way into the LCMS, the ELCA, worldwide Lutheranism, and the Christian Church as a whole. Mankind's inhumanity to mankind manifests itself in global unrest and worldwide terrorism. Peace is often elusive, both in the world and in the church, as sin and Satan continue to rear their ugly heads in both venues.

Lutherans are no strangers to discord and divisiveness. The Lutheran church was born under such conditions. Yet we also know the path to concord, expressed in these rather straightforward words in The Formula of Concord, written during a notable time of doctrinal controversy and discord in the church. Hear these words from the Kolb-Wengert translation:

"For these controversies are not merely misunderstandings or semantic arguments, where someone might think that one group had not sufficiently grasped what the other group was trying to say or that the tensions were based upon only a few specific words of relatively little consequence. Rather, these controversies deal with important and significant matters, and they are of such a nature that the positions of the erring party neither could nor should be tolerated in the church of God, much less be excused or defended.

"Therefore, necessity demands explanation of these disputed articles on the basis of God's Word and reliable writings, so that those with a proper Christian understanding could recognize which position regarding the points under dispute is in accord with God's Word and the Christian Augsburg Confession and which is not, and so that Christians of good will, who are concerned about the truth, might protect and guard themselves from the errors and corruptions that have appeared among us."

The writers of this Formula pledged themselves, and I quote, "to the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments, as to the pure, clear fountain of Israel, which alone is the one true guiding principle, according to which all teachers and teachings are to be judged and evaluated." Discord can become concord when Christian individuals and Christian church bodies are faithful to the Holy Scriptures, which reveal the Gospel of God's grace, forgiveness, and salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

The very fact that I represent a denomination known as The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at an assembly of a denomination known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America bears witness to the fact that, sadly and regrettably, in spite of the Holy Word and mercy of our God, the Confessions affirmed by the constitutions of both our church bodies, and the faithful example of those who have gone before us, schisms remain, not only in the Christian Church, but also in the Lutheran church. We have doctrinal differences that separate us. That is no secret.

I speak these next words in deep humility, with a heavy heart and no desire whatsoever to offend. The decisions by this assembly to grant non-celibate homosexual ministers the privilege of serving as rostered leaders in the ELCA and the affirmation of same-gender unions as pleasing to God will undoubtedly cause additional stress and disharmony within the ELCA. It will also negatively affect the relationships between our two church bodies. The current division between our churches threatens to become a chasm. This grieves my heart and the hearts of all in the ELCA, the LCMS, and other Christian church bodies throughout the world who do not see these decisions as compatible with the Word of God, or in agreement with the consensus of 2,000 years of Christian theological affirmation regarding what Scripture teaches about human sexuality. Simply stated, this matter is fundamentally related to significant differences in how we understand the authority of Holy Scripture and the interpretation of God's revealed and infallible Word.

Only by the mercy of our almighty God does hope remain for us poor, miserable sinners. By His grace, through Word and Sacraments, the evangelical witness and authentic message of sin and grace, Law and Gospel, must resound to a troubled world so desperately in need of His love in Christ.

May God grant each of us sensitivity, humility, boldness, courage, faithfulness, and forgiveness as we continue to strive toward God-pleasing harmony and concord in what we believe, teach, and confess. We have much to accomplish in the mission our Lord Jesus has entrusted to us.

May God have mercy upon us all, and grant us His peace in Christ.

Appendix II

Appointment of Task Force on Theological Implications of ELCA Human Sexuality Decisions



January 6, 2010
The Epiphany of Our Lord

Dr. Joel Lehenbauer
Dr. Dale Meyer
Dr. Dean Nadasdy
Dr. Samuel Nafzger
Rev. Larry Vogel
Dr. Dean Wenthe
Rev. John Wohlrabe

Dear Brothers in Christ:

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ, Savior of the world and Lord of the universe, through whom alone we receive forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation!

On a number of occasions during the past few months I have responded in several ways to the decisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Churchwide Assembly this past summer regarding same-gender unions and ordination of homosexual pastors. These ELCA actions regarding issues of human sexuality, together with those proposed by the Lutheran Church of Sweden and other church bodies, have caused consternation and confusion in many Lutheran arenas around the world.

In my address to the ELCA Assembly I said, "The decisions by this assembly to grant non-celibate homosexual ministers the privilege of serving as rostered leaders in the ELCA and the affirmation of same-gender unions as pleasing to God will undoubtedly cause additional stress and disharmony within the ELCA. It will also negatively affect the relationships between our two church bodies. The current division between our churches threatens to become a chasm. This grieves my heart and the hearts of all in the ELCA, the LCMS, and other Christian church bodies throughout the world who do not see these decisions as compatible with the Word of God, or in agreement with the consensus of 2,000 years of Christian theological affirmation regarding what Scripture teaches about human sexuality. Simply stated, this matter is fundamentally related to significant differences in how we [our two church bodies] understand the authority of Holy Scripture and the interpretation of God's revealed and infallible Word."

In many ways, those words are proving to be prophetic. In the midst of the stress and disharmony within the ELCA, questions are being asked by LCMS District Presidents, parish pastors, Synod and congregational leaders regarding how to respond to ELCA decisions and inquiries from ELCA people, congregations, and pastors. In general, the questions might be summarized this way:

1. What are the theological and practical implications of belonging to a Lutheran church body when other church bodies that bear the name "Lutheran" are making decisions that are not in accord with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions?
2. What can be done to express properly and pastorally our concerns about the ELCA's obviously different and, from our perspective, unacceptable approach to biblical authority?
3. How should LCMS pastors, congregations, and individual members respond theologically and pastorally to contacts from ELCA pastors, congregations, and individual members, while being sensitive and welcoming, without being judgmental or appearing to be interested in "sheep stealing"?
4. On what theological basis can or should the LCMS continue to be involved in inter-Lutheran, cooperative ministry with the ELCA? Or is it theologically mandatory that we separate ourselves from such inter-Lutheran involvement?

These questions and my desire to help our congregations and pastors address this very important matter have resulted in this request for the development of a theological statement that addresses issues of biblical authority, especially in matters of human sexuality, from the perspective of our own identity as LCMS Lutherans. Production of such a statement should involve those charged with providing theological leadership in our Synod. As one of such theological leaders, I'm inviting you to address this important matter as a member of the Task Force on Theological Implications of ELCA Human Sexuality Decisions. In accomplishing the task set before you, feel free and be encouraged to seek input and counsel from others in the Synod, especially those whose ministries intersect in any way with ELCA individuals or agencies.

Here are some further considerations in this regard:

- World Lutheranism is facing a growing vacuum of confessional leadership.
 - o ELCA actions this summer revealed that the largest Lutheran church body in America is no longer able to confess an unambiguous biblical teaching, especially on a matter of significance and relevance in our country and throughout the world.
 - o The ELCA's action represents something deeper than disagreement over a single point of sexual ethics. It involves a failure to uphold the Confessions' confidence in and reliance upon the final authority of Holy Scripture.
- The urgent need for confessional theological leadership can be demonstrated in several ways.
 - o There have been significant numbers of contacts with the LCMS from:
 1. ELCA Lutheran individuals and congregation in the U.S.;
 2. Some ELCA dissenting groups (e.g., Lutheran CORE, Word Alone, STS);
 3. Lutheran church bodies outside the U.S. (e.g., Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, Lutheran Churches in Madagascar, several African countries, et al.).
 - o Member churches of the Lutheran World Federation have exhibited increasingly respectful recognition of the International

- Lutheran Council because of their awareness of the ILC's theological integrity, with which the LCMS is in full agreement.
- The LCMS is in a position to provide theological leadership, thus filling the vacuum in our country and world.
 - o Lutheran churches and leaders around the world are seeking closer relationships with the LCMS.
 - o Lutheran people in the United States are confused about what it means to be Lutheran.
 - o This identity crisis provides special opportunity for Gospel witness in a way that honors Christ and His church, speaking the truth in love in a gentle, sensible, understandable manner.
 - Questions are being raised within the LCMS about how we are to relate to the ELCA in current cooperative work, such as social service partnerships, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Services in America, and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.
 - o Our Synod's governing documents and "covenants of love" stipulate that we will participate in world relief activities for the alleviation of human suffering, "furthered through cooperation with Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lutheran Services in America ..."
 - o How does the ELCA action affect the future of the Recognized Service Organization relationships that our Synod has established with numerous inter-Lutheran Social Ministry Organizations?
- With these considerations in mind, here is my proposal:
- Establish a special task force to address concerns about 2009 ELCA Assembly decisions/actions (as well as ongoing LCMS-ELCA relationships). The task force would include:
 - o The presidents of our two LCMS seminaries—Dr. Dale Meyer and Dr. Dean Wenthe
 - o Two Synod Vice-Presidents—Dr. John Wohlrabe and Dr. Dean Nadasdy
 - o The two CTCR staff members—Dr. Joel Lehenbauer and Rev. Larry Vogel
 - o One representative from the Synod President's office—Dr. Samuel Nafzger
 - The task force will collaborate in the preparation of materials, perhaps drafted by CTCR staff:
 - o To address succinctly the understanding of confessional Lutheran identity at this time and "who we are" as a Synod in a transparent, invitational, and appropriate manner.
 - o To offer a brief, substantive, readable, understandable identification of and response to theological issues related to recent ELCA actions.
 - o To address theological questions and issues regarding cooperative work between LCMS and ELCA entities.

With this letter I am inviting you to accept my appointment to this task force, which I am asking to complete its work by March 15 or as soon thereafter as is possible, in any event in time for publication prior to the 2010 Synod convention. I have asked Joel Lehenbauer to serve as convener and coordinator of this task force. He will be in touch with you soon to establish an initial meeting date. Thank you for your willingness to accept this responsibility.

Please let me know should you have any questions or concerns about this assignment. Blessings in Christ to all of you!

Jerry Kieschnick
Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, *President*
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Appendix III

Statement of Task Force on Theological Implications of ELCA Human Sexuality Decisions

Theological Implications of the 2009 ELCA Decisions

Clarity and Compassion Regarding Sexuality and Scripture

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to recognize "lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships" and to authorize ordination into the pastoral ministry for individuals living in such relationships.¹ As the largest Lutheran denomination in North America, the ELCA's actions have led to significant controversy and confusion among Lutherans. Pastors, congregations, districts, and national leaders of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) have encountered questions regarding our Synod's position on matters pertaining to homosexuality, the appropriateness of cooperative relationships among our two church bodies, and what Lutheran identity means today.

The LCMS has consistently expressed its understanding that same-gender sexual activity is contrary to the Scriptures.² It has also joined together with the other 33 members of the International Lutheran Council in unanimously affirming that:

[T]he lifelong committed union of one man and one woman is the place the Lord intends for human sexuality to be lived out. Biblical passages which address the practice of homosexuality do so in terms of disapproval. Rooted in the Bible's witness and in keeping with Christian teaching through 2,000 years, we continue to believe that the practice of homosexuality—in any and all situations—violates the will of the Creator God and must be recognized as sin.³

While the current discord in Lutheranism and other Christian traditions regarding these questions is distressing in many ways, we believe this is also a time of opportunity. Many are asking not only what various churches teach and practice, but are also wondering about the theological implications of these beliefs and practices. In debates about homosexual issues, churches have an opportunity to testify to even more foundational truths and convictions, such as different understandings of biblical authority and also a different understanding of marriage. This is revelatory of something more than matters of sexuality and sexual behavior.

The question of the Bible's authority involves a variety of important issues such as divine and human authorship, inspiration, and matters relating to the proper interpretation of Scripture. While a brief statement such as this cannot fully address these many aspects of the authority of Scripture, one issue is particularly important in the immediate context. What is the moral authority of the Scriptures, given that they were written millennia ago? Answers, even among Christians, range from those who see practically no relevance to the Bible's direct moral assertions to those who see the Bible's doctrines (including its teaching about moral issues such as homosexuality) as having full and complete authority.

Some believe that the Bible's relevance to contemporary moral questions is not decisive, arguing that what the Bible says is culturally bound, conditioned by the limited understanding of its human authors. For this reason, it cannot be expected to address contemporary questions directly and with final authority. From this perspective, the Bible's references to homosexual conduct—which consistently condemn homosexual acts as sinful (e.g., Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:26–27; 1 Cor. 6:9–10)—are of limited relevance today. Those who take this position typically argue that the authors of Scripture did not understand homosexuality as people today have come to experience it. They assert that the biblical texts against homosexual activity only

condemn “abusive or coercive sexual behavior, or sexual behavior that expresses a rejection of God’s sovereignty” and not homosexuality *per se*.⁴ They maintain that the biblical authors did not understand, for example, that homosexual behavior stems from a disposition that people have not chosen, that homosexuality is “natural” to some individuals, or that homosexual individuals can have a fulfilling, committed sexual relationship with a person of the same gender.⁵ From this standpoint, the church’s moral guidance in matters of sexuality has only to do with couples (same-sex or otherwise) being faithful to each other. So long as differing moral perspectives on homosexual acts are held in good conscience, other Christians and the church ought to respect the validity of a variety of perspectives.⁶

The LCMS cannot and does not share this conclusion or the understanding of Scripture on which it is based. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the living Word of God, through His prophets and apostles. We affirm the infallibility of the Scriptures because they are “God-breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16 NIV)—that is, though they are written by men, God is their primary author and every word of Scripture is His word. Therefore they are not subject to all the same assumptions which apply to other ancient literature. We also hold the Scriptures to be understandable and truthful in their plain or simple meaning and that no other writing, understanding, or experience may call into question that meaning.⁷ In other words:

While the Biblical writers used terms current in the everyday parlance of their times, Biblical doctrinal formulations are not on that account culturally conditioned in the sense that they are provisional or tentative; in Spirit-taught words they express what God has revealed in a way that remains permanently valid and is for all times the only normative way of talking about the topic they treat.⁸

This view of scriptural authority leads us to affirm that where the Bible speaks clearly regarding matters of human values, conduct, or behavior, such teachings may not be denied or qualified, but must have continuing relevance in every era of the Church. Teachings contrary to the Scriptures must not be tolerated in the Church. For example, while some may debate whether the Bible specifically addresses the matter of same-sex attraction as it is understood and experienced today, nevertheless, the Bible plainly and simply forbids same-sex genital activity as contrary to the will of God. This biblical prohibition applies to every generation.

Moreover, the way we live out our sexuality must be understood in the context of what God, our Creator, has revealed in the Scriptures about marriage. The Bible reminds us that God created man and woman for one another. United in marriage, the two become one flesh in the sexual union which, according to God’s blessing, may also result in the procreation of children (Gen. 1:26–28; Gen. 2:18–25). Martin Luther calls marriage “the first of all institutions” for which God created man and woman to be different from one another, in order “to be true to each other, to be fruitful, to beget children, and to nurture and bring them up to the glory of God.”⁹ Such a view of marital sexuality can only be heterosexual in nature.¹⁰ The apostle Paul makes this very point in his references to “natural relations” as those between men and women, rather than same-gender sexual relationships (Rom. 1:26–27). It is noteworthy that the apostle’s teaching in Romans 1 is confirmed by the understandings of marriage and sexuality that are held by virtually all religions and cultures both today and historically. This affirmation of heterosexuality is indeed written on the human heart (Rom. 2:15).¹¹

In agreement, then, with 2000 years of Christian teaching, with the consensus of the vast majority of Christians today, and with virtually all cultural traditions and understandings regarding marriage, the LCMS believes and teaches that same-gender genital sexual

activity—in *every situation*—violates the will of our Creator and must be recognized as sin. The LCMS not only affirms the biblical view of marriage as the lifelong union of one man and one woman, it also teaches that unmarried men and women, regardless of their sexual inclinations, are called to live in sexual chastity and celibacy (see Matt. 19:10–12; 1 Cor. 7:8–9, 25–35). “The male-female duality as the created pattern of human fellowship requires of us fidelity to our sexual identity, a willingness to be male *or* female.”¹² The Bible’s teaching regarding sexuality and marriage is clear. When societal opinions change, or even if the social sciences claim contradictory views, the Scriptures must remain the final and determinative norm for Christian doctrine and practice.

In discussions regarding homosexuality in church and society, legitimate concern is raised over the ways homosexual individuals have often been excluded and even vilified by Christians. Our Lord’s intentional outreach to those who were marginalized and excluded during His earthly ministry is a reminder that the Scriptural judgments against homosexual behavior must not become the cause for hatred, violence, or an unwillingness to extend the Gospel’s promises of forgiveness and reconciliation to the homosexual or any person caught in sin’s traps. Homosexual sins, like heterosexual sins of adultery or promiscuity—or any sins in any area of life—are all atoned by Christ, who “came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10 ESV). Loving, compassionate recognition of the deep pain and personal struggles that same-sex inclinations produce in many individuals, families, and congregations may not be neglected in the name of moral purity. To do so is indeed hypocritical, for all have sinned (Rom. 3:23).

We therefore fully affirm the International Lutheran Council’s concern for the pastoral care of homosexuals:

[W]e declare our resolve to approach those with homosexual inclinations with the deepest possible Christian love and pastoral concern, in whatever situation they may be living. Though we affirm the demands of God’s Law without reservation, we Christians confess that the sins of the world have been forgiven through Christ’s suffering and death on the cross. As the redeemed children of God, we lead our lives as “saints and sinners” at the same time. We hope for full renewal and sanctification, but realize that these hopes are not completely fulfilled in this life. This applies to countless temptations. Our sinful condition calls for a lifetime of prayer and struggle.¹³

This same pastoral concern for those struggling with sin of any form is rooted in Scripture’s teaching that Jesus came that we might have life and have it in fullness (John 10:10). Our stance on homosexuality, therefore, is affirmative of human life as God’s gift. The healing voice of Jesus—Sacred Scripture—seeks to lead us into the richness of the life God intends for us. Prohibitions against adultery, homosexuality, and promiscuity of any sort are kind words, warning us against behavior that would diminish or destroy human wholeness. After all:

The heart, center, and ultimate message of the Bible is that God wishes to be gracious to sinners for Christ’s sake. Unless one hears this voice of the Gospel (Ap IV, 257, 274; XII, 39), that is, the voice from heaven speaking absolution to terrified consciences (AC XXV, 3; Ap XII, 99), the whole point and purpose of the Scriptures has been missed.¹⁴

Practical Implications of ELCA Decisions

What practical implications do these theological convictions have for us in the LCMS today? In particular, what do they mean for our relationships with brothers and sisters who are in the ELCA and with other Lutheran churches that have authorized ordination for individuals living in same-sex relationships? Most specifically and practically,

what do they mean for our involvement in inter-Lutheran cooperative relationships and activities with the ELCA?

We must first address an immediate result of the ELCA decisions. Contacts from ELCA individuals and congregations with LCMS congregations and officials have increased significantly since August 2009. Many are asking about the differences between the LCMS and the ELCA on sexuality issues. Others are considering or have decided to leave the ELCA. We will not encourage discord in the ELCA, but we cannot turn away from those who dissent from ELCA decisions regarding human sexuality. To do so would be to deny our own convictions. We will welcome ELCA Lutherans and congregations who consider membership in our churches and denomination and will encourage the cause of Confessional Lutheranism worldwide. This includes seeking to speak charitably and truthfully about the differences between our churches on scriptural authority and the implications this has for sexuality and other issues.¹⁵

A second result of ELCA decisions has been increasing questions from within the LCMS regarding the future of cooperative relationships between the ELCA and LCMS in inter-Lutheran agencies and organizations devoted to works of mercy and relief for those in need. In order to attempt to address this complex question, it is first helpful to recognize that cooperative efforts involving human care for those in need are based on the sharing of a common goal, not on complete doctrinal unity.¹⁶ This has been the understanding of the LCMS historically. The CTCR's report *Theology of Fellowship* summarizes this position as follows:

Our Synod should clearly recognize that, in cases of necessary work on the local, national, or international level, where the faith and confession of the church are not compromised, and where it appears essential that the churches of various denominations should cooperate or at least not work at cross purposes, our churches ought to cooperate willingly to the extent that the Word of God and conscience will allow.¹⁷

It may be helpful to identify two fundamental principles in this quotation from *Theology of Fellowship*. First, the church cannot compromise its faith and confession. The church's confession of faith is essential to its very existence, for the church's central purpose is proclaiming the Gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ and administering His sacraments. Indeed, the church, in its essence, is nothing more than "the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel."¹⁸

The second principle affirms circumstances in which churches "ought to cooperate" "to the extent that the Word of God and conscience will allow." That is, while we dare not compromise the confession of the Gospel, neither may we completely isolate from other Christian churches, as if we recognize no truths in common and share no common goals.

In light of these two principles, it has been the longstanding practice of confessional Lutheran churches to distinguish between joint participation by churches and church workers in Word and Sacrament ministry ("altar and pulpit fellowship" or *communio in sacris*) and cooperation between churches in matters of physical need (*cooperatio in externis*).¹⁹ To maintain such a distinction carefully and conscientiously prevents both compromise of the teachings of the Christian faith and disregard of human needs which can be addressed more effectively by groups working together than by individuals or churches working on their own.

Because of doctrinal differences, the LCMS is not now nor has it ever been able to be in a relationship of altar and pulpit fellowship with the ELCA. Nevertheless, we have engaged in many cooperative activities with the ELCA, nationally and locally, in order to meet

physical needs. These cooperative activities, however, are threatened by the sexuality decisions of the ELCA because, in some cases, the ELCA's new affirmation of same-gender relationships may contradict understandings or goals that have enabled cooperative activities in the past. As one example, the CTCR already in 2006 addressed the decision of an adoption agency to treat same-gender relationships as equal to marriage for adoptive purposes. The opinion states: "On the basis of the clear teaching of Scripture regarding homosexual behavior and about God's will and design for marriage and the family as foundational units for society as a whole, it is the express opinion of the CTCR that a policy of placing adopted or foster children into homosexual contexts would stand in opposition to the official doctrinal position of the LCMS."²⁰

In areas where we currently have working arrangements with ELCA congregations and entities, the status of those working relationships is dependent on policies and actions taken by the various entities from national to local levels. We do not believe the ELCA's recent sexuality decisions should necessarily or summarily end our work together in these agencies. However, we hope and expect that the leadership of such entities will respect the theological position of the Synod (including its position on same-gender sexual activity) and avoid any policies or decisions which would require us to cease our support and involvement in their activities.

We cannot dictate the exact direction(s) various cooperative relationships will take in the future, primarily because the nature of agreements between ELCA and LCMS congregations and entities varies on a case-by-case basis. Frank and serious discussion on this issue needs to continue on various levels so that convictions and beliefs are not compromised and that worthy projects, activities, and relationships between our church and others may continue wherever possible. We urge LCMS participants in such cases to make decisions about whether to continue involvement on the basis of the principles we have discussed. We also suggest the following questions for consideration in making these decisions:

Is the purpose of the joint work fully consistent with the positions, policies, and objectives of the Synod?

Do cooperative efforts imply doctrinal unity with the ELCA or endorsement of ELCA positions on same-sex relationships or other matters of disagreement with the LCMS?

Does the joint agency or organization distinguish itself as an entity from the churches that support it?

Are all the policies and programs of the organization consonant with the doctrinal position of the LCMS?

Do the individuals who lead the organization openly support and encourage efforts, positions, or policies which compromise the theological stance of the Synod?

We urge LCMS participants to answer such questions as these and to make decisions about whether to continue involvement on the basis of the principles we have discussed.

Lutheran Identity in a Time of Confusion

In a time of such controversy between Lutheran churches, even more important questions emerge.²¹ Who speaks for Lutherans today? If Lutheran churches are divided on issues of sexuality, does this mean sexual morality is an open question for Lutheran theology? In light of the Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to a dying world, what does it mean to be Lutheran today and does it really matter?

The assertions of this document may appear as only one voice in an intra-family argument unless we also address the matter of Lutheran identity. One way to reaffirm and to summarize what it is to be Lutheran Christians is by first respectfully recognizing two prominent

groups of fellow Christians in the world today: Evangelicals and Roman Catholics. Lutherans are Christians who stand in the middle between these two movements in the Christian church. We stand there, “in the middle,” affirming strengths of both although we cannot completely affirm all the teachings of either.

We stand together with Evangelical brothers and sisters in Christ—because evangelical means Gospel-centered.²² Evangelical Christianity understands the central truths that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:19); that Christ’s saving work is given freely, without cost, as sheer gift (Rom. 3:24); and that even the faith which receives this saving gift is freely given by the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 12:3; Eph. 2:8). Justifying faith in Jesus Christ, Messiah and Lord, results also in confidence in the Holy Scriptures, for there we hear His living voice and know Him as Lord and Savior by means of the prophets who promised His coming and the apostles He designated as witnesses to His life, atoning work, and teachings (2 Tim. 3:15; John 14:26; 10:35; and 2 Pet. 1:20–21). As evangelical Christians we are grounded in the Bible, God’s written and infallible Word. The Bible, and not human traditions (even laudable church traditions), provides final assurance about what is true and what the church is to believe and do.

We are also “catholic” Christians. We confess with Roman Catholics the ecumenical Creeds of the western catholic tradition. Catholic means universal and complete.²³ We believe that there is only one true faith and all who share it belong to Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:4–6). This one faith is faith in the triune God, who is only known through Jesus, the Son of God who reveals the Father and who sends the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). The Athanasian Creed calls this the “catholic” faith.²⁴ This means we cannot compromise doctrinal convictions, nor can we forget that all those who confess faith in the triune God are fellow Christians. The catholic faith is universal through the generations. As part of the church catholic we fully and simply believe Christ’s promises about Baptism (Mark 16:16) and the Lord’s Supper (Matt. 26:26–28).

Catholic wholeness means the Christian faith is intended for the whole of humanity—all eras, regions, and cultures. Christianity is not an American religion or a Western religion, but is for the whole world (Matt. 24:14). Similarly, evangelical conviction means that we are called to Christ’s mission, sharing His good news of salvation for all the world (Matt. 28:19). An understanding of the Christian faith that is both evangelical and catholic in character reaches out across languages, cultures, oceans, and continents, back through history, and forward into eternity, sharing the good news that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:19).

None of these teachings is a Lutheran discovery and no single one is unique to us. This does not make us *generic* Christians. We are *Lutheran* Christians, but not because we wish to preserve Luther’s name or institutions named after him. Rather, we are convinced of the validity and the necessity of an understanding of the Christian faith and life which is consonant with significant elements of both Evangelical and Roman Catholic teaching. The controversy over human sexuality is a case in point.

Across the spectrum of Christianity, including both Evangelical and Roman Catholic churches (as well as Christians from virtually every denominational tradition and throughout the world), church bodies and their leaders have declared their firm conviction that same-gender sexual relationships are contrary to God’s will.²⁵ Evangelical (and classical Protestant) leaders have emphasized that the contrary view contradicts the Scriptures. Roman Catholic (and Orthodox) churches have pointed out that the contrary view contradicts the

“Great Tradition” of Christian thought that has endured throughout millennia. As a Christian church body that seeks to be both evangelical and catholic, we are fully at home with this consensus and find in it a confirmation of Lutheran theology and identity.

The ELCA’s decisions stand in sharp contrast to this genuinely ecumenical Christian consensus. The foundational document for the ELCA’s controversial approval of same-gender genital sexual relationships describes itself as “a distinctly Lutheran approach” to human sexuality.²⁶ As Lutheran Christians, we find this claim to be deeply troubling. We have provided this brief overview of what we are convinced is an authentic Lutheran identity because we strongly disagree that “a distinctly Lutheran approach” to Christian teaching should separate us either from the evangelical consensus regarding the teachings of Holy Scripture about human sexuality or from the catholic tradition’s perspective on Holy Marriage and its belief in the incompatibility of openly homosexual activity with Christian life. It is necessary for Lutherans to maintain theological distinctiveness, such as the central focus on justification of the sinner by grace through faith, the Law-Gospel dynamic of pastoral care and preaching, Baptism’s gracious power to effect regeneration in faith, and the forgiving, bodily presence of our Lord in His Holy Supper. Such distinctiveness, however, is entirely based upon the Scriptures and fully consonant with the beliefs of the central tradition of Christian truth through the ages. That is, such beliefs—while hallmarks of Lutheran theology—are both evangelical and catholic. However, *any purported distinctiveness which minimizes biblical authority or isolates us from the church catholic’s consensus regarding homosexual activity is sectarian and a departure from what makes Lutheranism truly distinctive.*

This impacts the Gospel itself. A church body’s acceptance of homosexual activity promotes a false security about behavior and conduct which God has forbidden and from which He longs to redeem us. As such, it leads to a false gospel: to self-justification rather than that justification for repentant sinners which God has promised to all who trust in His forgiving mercy through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. We pray that our brothers, sisters, and friends in the ELCA, and any others who have departed from this *biblical and Christian* understanding, would reconsider—even now—their actions.

Lord God, bless Your Word wherever it is proclaimed. Make it a word of power and peace to convert those not yet Your own and to confirm those who have come to saving faith. May Your Word pass from the ear to the heart, from the heart to the lip, and from the lip to the life that, as You have promised, Your Word may achieve the purpose for which You send it; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

NOTES

1. ELCA 2009 Assembly Legislative Update (Aug. 21, 2009), page 1.
2. LCMS convention resolutions (e.g., 1973 Res. 2-04; 1983 Res. 3-14; 1998 Res. 3-21), CTCR reports (e.g., *Human Sexuality*, 1984; *The Creator’s Tapestry*, 2009), and public statements by the President (e.g., <http://www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=15618>) have unambiguously affirmed the understanding that same-gender sexual acts are contrary to the will of God, while at the same time expressing concern for the spiritual well-being of individuals with same-sex attractions.
3. “Same-Gender Relationships and the Church: A Statement from the International Lutheran Council” (ILC), meeting in Seoul, South Korea, August 31, 2009.

4. *Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies*, the ELCA, page 5, available online at <http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/JTF-Human-Sexuality/Report-and-Recommendation.aspx>.

5. *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, the social statement adopted by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, p. 20, for example, states: "On the basis of conscience-bound belief, some are convinced that the scriptural witness does not address the context of sexual orientation and lifelong loving and committed relationships that we experience today." <http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/JTF-Human-Sexuality.aspx>.

6. For example, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, page 19, states: "We further believe that this church, on the basis of 'the bound conscience' will include these different understandings and practices within its life as it seeks to live out its mission and ministry in the world."

7. See *A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles*, page 4, online at <http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/LCMS/astatement.pdf>.

8. Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS (CTCR), *The Inspiration of Scripture* (March 1995), page 18, online at http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/Inspiration_%20Scripture1.pdf. The report adds: "Inspiration gives the assurance that in the Bible we have sound doctrine imparted in Spirit-taught words, that the Biblical doctrinal formulations express the content of revelation in terms that dare not be discarded even when the range and function of language in theology is a matter of much discussion as it is at present" (page 18).

9. *The Large Catechism*, par. 207. From Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 414 (KW hereafter).

10. *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, p. 15, defines marriage without reference to any procreative intent: "Marriage is a covenant of mutual promises, commitment, and hope authorized legally by the state and blessed by God."

11. See also *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, Article XXIII, par. 7, referring to "natural affection": "This love of one sex for the other is truly a divine ordinance" (KW page 249).

12. CTCR, *Human Sexuality: A Theological Perspective*, page 33, online at http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/Human_Sexuality1.pdf.

13. ILC, "Same-Gender Relationships and the Church."

14. Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR), The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, *Gospel and Scripture: The Interrelationship of the Material and Formal Principles in Lutheran Theology* (November 1972), page 6, online at http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/gospel_scripture.pdf.

15. A recently adopted CTCR report, *Church Relations in the 21st Century* (p. 8), states: "With respect to developing relationships with individuals, congregations, groups, or entities from other church bodies, it is important to avoid either the actuality or the appearance of interference in the affairs and relationships of those church bodies. While the Synod seeks to encourage strong confessional theology and practice, it should do so in ecclesially responsible ways, without encouraging internal dissension or purposefully undermining prior relationships with other church bodies or groups."

16. The CTCR also addresses the issue of cooperative work in *Faith Active in Love: Human Care in the Church's Life* (1999), p. 27: "Christians can also organize to work together with Christians in other traditions and with non-Christians in caring institutions of society. . . . Such cooperation with others, either as individuals or in various social structures, need not compromise the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. Cooperative endeavors of this kind, when they do not compromise the proclamation of God's Word, can be simply the living out of love that springs from a living faith. However, when other individuals or communities advocate policies and programs that are contrary to the guidance given in the Scriptures, great care should be taken by Christians not to cooperate in ways that compromise the proclamation of God's Word." See also *Inter-Christian Relationships: An Instrument for Study* (1991), p. 24, www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/interchrel.pdf.

17. CTCR, *Theology of Fellowship* (1965), p. 43, online at www.lcms.org?5136. The Synod, in convention, formally adopted this report in 1967.

18. *Augsburg Confession*, Article VII, par 1, KW p. 42.

19. This distinction between *communio in sacris* (full sharing in all the sacred things between Christian churches) and *cooperatio in externis* (cooperating in external matters of human need) is worthy of some explanation. We cannot, for example, invite a minister to preach in our churches when he publicly disagrees with our doctrine. However, we may indeed work together with him in organizing relief efforts for people suffering from a tornado's devastation.

20. See "Placing Adopted Children into Homosexual Contexts," a 2006 opinion of the CTCR, online at www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=10096.

21. Debates over sexuality and scriptural authority involve much of Christendom. Decisions by the Episcopal Church in the United States, for example, have deeply divided not only that church body, but also Anglicans worldwide. Similarly, the ELCA's recent decisions have raised questions about Lutheran teaching, here and internationally. Not only has the International Lutheran Council felt constrained to address this, but also many churches of the Lutheran World Federation have publicly disagreed with the ELCA (and similar actions of the Church of Sweden).

22. The word *evangel*, from the Greek, simply means "good news" or "gospel."

23. "Catholic" also comes from the Greek, literally, "according to the whole," referring to the universality or wholeness of the church and its complete character. The Orthodox churches of the east share with western Christians a common heritage which includes the authority of Scripture, an appreciation for the early church Fathers, and affirmation of the teachings of the first seven ecumenical councils.

24. The Athanasian Creed asserts: "This, however, is the catholic faith: that we worship one God in trinity and the Trinity in unity," par. 3. See Kolb and Wengert, p. 24.

25. See, for example, "The Manhattan Declaration," <http://www.manhattandeclaration.org/the-declaration>.

26. *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, p. 1.

Appendix IV

The American Association of Lutheran Churches (TAALC) The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS)

OPERATING AGREEMENT I

THE MOVEMENT OF MEMBERS BETWEEN CHURCH BODIES

We join in thanking God for the altar and pulpit fellowship declared by our church bodies during their 2007 conventions. We implore the Lord of the Church to continue to strengthen the bond of fellowship and spirit of cooperation that exist among us as our church bodies cooperate in our efforts to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. We anticipate that positive relationships and cooperation will continue to increase as our pastors and laity are invited to participate in conferences and other gatherings of the partner church body (e.g., pastors' conferences, youth gatherings) and as representatives are invited to participate (excluding voting privilege) in common meetings (e.g., boards, commissions, councils).

The Protocol Document signed when fellowship was declared advocates the free movement of ordained ministers between our church bodies to participate in worship services and other activities. Ecclesiastical supervisors (district presidents or regional pastors) should be informed when a pastor of the partner church body has been invited by a congregation or other entity to lead or participate in such events.

The Protocol Document also recognizes that on occasion there will be movement of members between the official rosters of the partner church bodies due to necessity or personal interest. While the movement of large numbers of congregations and/or pastors is not anticipated, this Operating Agreement I will provide good order for such changes of official membership.

To facilitate good order, each church body will make its roster information readily available on an annual basis to the ecclesiastical supervisors of the partner church body, with up-to-date information provided upon request. Both church bodies also will identify those pastors on their rosters who were at one time rostered by the partner church body. In addition, a list of LCMS pastors removed for cause will be maintained by the LCMS Secretary and made available to the TAALC Presiding Pastor, who will also maintain and make available to LCMS ecclesiastical supervisors a list of TAALC pastors removed for cause.

MOVEMENT OF

A CONGREGATION'S MEMBERSHIP TO THE PARTNER CHURCH BODY

1. A congregation interested in moving its membership to the partner church body will inform (a) its ecclesiastical supervisor, (b) the president or presiding pastor of its church body, and (c) the president or presiding pastor of the partner church body. Any immediate obstacles to transfer of membership will be addressed at this time.
2. A meeting of the congregation and appropriate ecclesiastical supervisors will be arranged to provide opportunity for consideration of changes that would necessarily accompany change in church body membership.
3. The congregation will submit Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, and Bylaws to the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor of the receiving partner church body for approval.

4. Upon approval of the documents, reception into membership will follow the process established by the receiving church body for the reception of new congregations.
5. Upon the congregation's formal reception into membership, its new ecclesiastical supervisor will inform the appropriate authorities of both church bodies, which will complete the process for transfer of membership.
6. Movement of pastors serving congregations that transfer membership will be governed by the policies here following.

MOVEMENT OF

AN ORDAINED MINISTER'S MEMBERSHIP TO THE PARTNER CHURCH BODY

- (A) When a congregation or other calling entity expresses interest in calling a pastor who is on the roster of the partner church body:
 1. The congregation will make its interest known to (a) its ecclesiastical supervisor, who will inform (b) his counterpart in the partner church body and (c) the president and (d) the presiding pastor of the national church bodies. Their required approval will take into consideration the pastor's roster status/category and his record of service, including any former membership and service in the church body of the calling entity. Pastors under discipline will be regarded as not available for consideration until the matter has been resolved.
 2. Following approval, the pastor will be informed that a congregation or other calling entity of the partner church body has expressed interest in considering him for a call.
 3. If the pastor agrees to allow his name to be considered, his name and accompanying biographical and evaluative information will be provided by his ecclesiastical supervisor to the ecclesiastical supervisor of the calling congregation or entity.
 4. If the pastor receives the call, his ecclesiastical supervisor will be expected to discuss with him expectations and responsibilities that would accompany change in roster membership should he accept the call.
 5. If the pastor accepts the call, he will inform the ecclesiastical supervisor of the calling congregation or entity of his desire to apply for membership in the receiving church body. The ecclesiastical supervisor will provide a statement for the pastor's signature acknowledging his subscription to the Constitution of the receiving church body and testifying to his willingness to uphold its bylaws and other rules and regulations.
 6. Upon receipt of the signed statement, the ecclesiastical supervisor will authorize the installation of the pastor in accordance with the receiving church body's accepted forms and practices and will report the installation to his counterpart in the partner church body.
 7. Both ecclesiastical supervisors will provide official reports to their church bodies, which reports will finalize the movement of the pastor's membership from the one partner church body to the other.

- (B) When a rostered pastor who is interested in membership in the partner church body wishes to be considered for a call by a congregation or other calling entity of that church body:
1. Pastors under discipline will be regarded as not eligible for this process until all matters at issue have been resolved.
 2. A pastor in good standing who is interested in being considered for a call by a congregation or other calling entity of the partner church body must inform his immediate ecclesiastical supervisor, who will obtain from his counterpart in the partner church body any required forms.
 3. Upon completion of the forms by the pastor and, as necessary, his ecclesiastical supervisor, the pastor will request an appointment with the partner church ecclesiastical supervisor of the geographical area in which he resides in order to submit his forms.
 4. The partner church ecclesiastical supervisor will be responsible for interviewing the pastor and deciding whether and to what extent his name and information will be disseminated in the partner church body. He may discuss questions and concerns with the pastor's current ecclesiastical supervisor. He may obtain counsel from the president and/or presiding pastor of the church bodies.
 5. If the ecclesiastical supervisor agrees to make the pastor's name and information available for consideration for a call, he will provide the pastor's name to the congregations of his district or region as appropriate. If requested by the pastor, he will also make the name and accompanying information available to other ecclesiastical supervisors in his church body.
 6. Lists created for the purpose of circulating such names will be maintained and monitored by the ecclesiastical supervisors of each partner church body.
 7. Congregations who choose to call a name from this list will be required to follow the steps provided in Section (A) above, as appropriate.
- (C) When a rostered pastor is the called pastor of a congregation that moves its membership to the partner church body:
1. A pastor who is the called pastor of a congregation that moves its membership to the partner church body and who is interested in membership in the partner church body will inform his current and the receiving church body's ecclesiastical supervisors who in turn will inform the President and Presiding Pastor of the church bodies. Any obstacles to movement of membership will be attended to at this time.
 2. The receiving ecclesiastical supervisor will provide a statement for the pastor's signature acknowledging his subscription to the Constitution of the receiving church body and testifying to his willingness to uphold its bylaws and other rules and regulations.
 3. Upon receipt of the signed statement, the ecclesiastical supervisor will report its reception to pastor's former ecclesiastical supervisor in the partner church body. Both ecclesiastical supervisors will provide official reports to their church bodies, which reports will finalize the movement of the pastor's membership from the one partner church body to the other.

- (D) Other cases when a rostered pastor is interested in moving his membership:
- All other cases in which a pastor is interested in moving his membership to the partner church body will be handled by existing colloquy or reinstatement policies and practices, as appropriate.

This agreement signed on behalf of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and The American Association of Lutheran Churches by

Date: _____
Rev. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Date: _____
Rev. Franklin Hays, Presiding Pastor
The American Association of Lutheran Churches

Appendix V
The American Association of Lutheran Churches (TAALC)
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS)
OPERATING AGREEMENT II
ISSUES RESULTING FROM THE MOVEMENT OF
CONGREGATIONS/PASTORS BETWEEN ROSTERS

Operating Agreement I provides processes for the movement of congregations and ordained ministers between rosters of The American Association of Lutheran Churches and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. This Operating Agreement II provides detailed responses to ecclesiastical supervision, vacancy service and voting privilege issues associated with the movement of congregations and ordained ministers between rosters. Operating Agreement II, to which additional policy may be added as situations arise, intends to honor existing practices as articulated in the constitutions and bylaws of both church bodies.

- The following general principles apply in every case:
- Graduates from either church body's seminaries who have been declared qualified for service may receive first calls from either church body.
 - TAALC probationary pastors and LCMS vicars/interns may not hold a position of service in the partner church body until rostered as pastors.
 - A pastor of one church body who serves in a congregation of the other church body will be welcomed and encouraged to participate in activities in that church body.

- RE: ECCLESIASTICAL SUPERVISION**
- (A) When a congregation and its pastor determine to move their membership to the partner church body:
1. The congregation will continue to be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the pastor.
 2. Ecclesiastical supervision of the congregation and the pastor will be provided by the ecclesiastical supervisor of the church body where membership is currently held.
 3. Submission of official reports of membership transfer by ecclesiastical supervisors will finalize the movement of the

- congregation's and its pastor's memberships to the partner church body. Ecclesiastical supervision then becomes the responsibility of the ecclesiastical supervisor of the receiving church body.
- (B) When a pastor serves a multi-point parish that includes member congregations of both partner church bodies:
1. Each congregation will be subject to ecclesiastical supervision by its own church body.
 2. Each congregation will be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the work and conduct of the pastor according to the agreements that form the basis of the multi-point parish arrangement.
 3. Ecclesiastical supervision of the doctrine, life, and administration of the pastor of a multi-point parish will be provided by his ecclesiastical supervisor as determined by his own church body membership.
- (C) When a pastor provides temporary service to a congregation of the partner church body:
1. The congregation will be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the conduct of the pastor in his work.
 2. The pastor's ecclesiastical supervisor will provide supervision of his doctrine, life, and administration.

RE: TEMPORARY (VACANCY) SERVICE

- (A) When a congregation is interested in temporary service by a pastor of a partner church body:
1. The congregation will first inform its ecclesiastical supervisor of its interest in requesting temporary service from a rostered pastor of the partner church body.
 2. The ecclesiastical supervisor of the congregation will contact the ecclesiastical supervisor of the pastor to discuss his availability and suitability.
 3. Upon positive agreement by both ecclesiastical supervisors, the ecclesiastical supervisor of the congregation will advise the congregation regarding the pastor's availability.
 4. Pastors providing temporary service to congregations of a partner church body will honor and respect the policies and practices of the partner church body.
- (B) When a retired pastor is interested in making himself available to provide temporary service to congregations of the partner church body:
1. He will make his availability known to his ecclesiastical supervisor.

2. His ecclesiastical supervisor will discuss the pastor's availability and suitability with his counterpart in the partner church body.
3. Upon positive agreement, the ecclesiastical supervisor in the partner church body will make the pastor's availability known to his congregations.

RE: VOTING PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY

- (A) When a pastor provides temporary service to a congregation of the partner church body:
1. He continues to enjoy all due rights and privileges of membership in the church body of which he is a member but has no voting privilege in the partner church body.
 2. A congregation served on a temporary basis by a rostered pastor of the partner church body will not be entitled to a pastoral vote if it is not also being served by a rostered pastor of its own church body.
- (B) When a pastor serves a multi-point parish that includes member congregations of both partner church bodies:
1. Individual congregations of multi-point parishes that are comprised of congregations from both partner church bodies will be subject to their own church body's bylaws and regulations governing voting rights and responsibilities.
 2. Congregations in multi-point parishes whose pastors are rostered by the partner church body will not be entitled to a pastoral vote if they are not also served by a rostered pastor of their own church body.

A pastor will enjoy voting privilege only in the church body in which he is rostered.

This agreement signed on behalf of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and The American Association of Lutheran Churches by

Rev. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Rev. Franklin Hays, Presiding Pastor
The American Association of Lutheran Churches

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**The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance
Response of the President of the Synod
December 1, 2009**



Introduction

The work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance is now complete. Its recommendations are in a document posted on the Web site of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It will also be available in printed format. The task force has been dismissed, with my heartfelt thanks for its faithful and extensive work over the past four and one-half years.

The next step in the process of considering the task force's recommendations is the convening of nine regional gatherings across the Synod. Two will be held in December, four in January, and three in February. Invited to these gatherings are the voting delegates to the 2010 Synod convention, district presidents, district vice-presidents, five members of each district board of directors, and two commissioned minister advisory delegates to the Synod convention from each district. These elected leaders will have opportunity to ask questions regarding the task force report, offer suggestions about its content, and provide written responses for consideration by the convention floor committee chairman and vice chairman, who will be present at all nine regional gatherings.

These gatherings are being held instead of a special convention in 2009, which the 2007 Synod convention resolved the Synod president should consider. After seeking the counsel mentioned in that resolution and deciding not to ask for the special convention, I announced widely the plan to hold these regional gatherings, feedback from which will provide guidance for the floor committee as they begin their task of crafting resolutions for convention consideration.

This *Response of the President of the Synod* will be posted on the Synod's Web site and distributed to leaders throughout the Synod. Hard copies will be distributed to each attendee at the regional gatherings. I believe the Synod has a right to hear my thoughts, affirmations, concerns, and recommendations regarding the task force report, and I have a duty to share them in this response. These comments and observations about recommendations of the task force are presented in the order in which they appear in the six sections of the report.

The following excerpt from my March 1, 2005, Pastoral Letter to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is helpful in providing a rationale for the work of this task force:

"There is a great need for a thorough and fundamental review of what our Synod is, how it is organized, and how it functions. What was first created as an organizational system for a Synod made up of a small number of congregations (14) now struggles to serve more than 6,150 congregations."

The task force was asked to suggest a philosophy and form of structure and governance for the decades ahead that is "appropriately representative, incorporates sufficient checks and balances, and

is not cumbersome or excessively complex. It should facilitate maximum operating efficiency on behalf of and in support of the members and congregations of our Synod in accomplishing the mission of our Lord and His church."

As mentioned in my March 1, 2005, Pastoral Letter:

"Under Christ, our mission together must not be diminished by lack of understanding or agreement regarding our walking together in love as a Synod. The way we carry out our mission, which is God's mission, must be enhanced and supported by organizing and governing principles that are in harmony with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions."

With this brief introduction, I again express my sincere appreciation to the members of the task force for their diligent work and offer the following response.

Response of the President of the Synod to The Report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance

SECTION ONE: The Confessional Mission and Purpose

Included in this section are proposals to amend the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws. Approval of these recommendations would be very helpful, especially the inclusion of:

1. A statement in the Constitution regarding the truth of salvation alone by God's grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.
2. The Synod's Mission Statement—a wonderful, Gospel-based expression of why we exist.
3. Words in the Constitution that clarify and strengthen the Synod's confessional position.

SECTION TWO: The Local Congregation in Mission

This recommendation seeks to broaden and amplify the participation, voice, and support of congregations under the authoritative and powerful Word of God. It distinguishes between congregational (voting) and individual (associate) members of the Synod. It also removes the category of advisory members and grants voting privileges to commissioned ministers of religion. I am supportive of the recommendations in this section.

SECTION THREE: Congregations and Circuits

Of particular importance in this section are recommendations concerning restoration of circuits to the purpose for which they were originally intended, namely, "small ecclesial clusters of congregations for care, support, advice, ecclesiastical encouragement, service, coordination, and counsel toward the congregation's participation in God's mission." (BRTFSSG Report)

Because our circuits are so important for the health and wellbeing of congregations and ministers of the Gospel, I support the recommendations in this section. This includes support for amendment of the process of selecting circuit counselors, who are very helpful extensions of the office of district president in the important duty of providing evangelical ecclesiastical supervision, counsel, and care to the members of the Synod in each of its 35 districts.

SECTION FOUR: Congregations and Districts

Recommendations in this section include convening "a special task force to work in consultation with the Council of Presidents and the Synod's Board of Directors to submit to the next Synod convention a recommendation with respect to the function, number, and configuration of districts, including the impact on funding the national Synod." Current district configurations vary from 53 to 372 congregations, from 11,000 to 166,000 confirmed members, district budgets from \$570,000 to more than \$7,000,000, and annual

unrestricted remittances from districts to the national Synod from \$60,000 to nearly \$3,000,000.

Given these realities, I believe particular attention should be given in this study to the advantages or disadvantages of forming districts of more nearly comparable size, with more nearly equal capacity to provide services, ministry resources, and mission support to the congregations in their districts than currently is the case. This study would need to be conducted with great sensitivity to the tradition and history of each of the 35 districts of the Synod and with a clear intention to work cooperatively and collegially with each district in determining how best to utilize the human and fiscal resources entrusted by the people of God for work with, on behalf of, and beyond the congregations of our Synod.

Another recommendation in this section deals with the topic of commissioned ministers of the Gospel and their vote at district and Synod conventions. The main question is whether either the lay or pastoral vote should be subject to any reduction by the election of commissioned ministers from either category. While I favor granting the franchise to commissioned ministers, I am also sensitive to honoring our Synod's historic and deep respect for voting representation of both the laity and the clergy at district and Synod conventions.

Therefore, in addition to consideration of the task force recommendation of one associate member vote and one lay vote for each congregation at district conventions, I recommend consideration be given to the alternate proposal of establishing a separate category and specific process for election of commissioned ministers as voting delegates to district and Synod conventions. Doing so would retain the historic balance between lay and pastoral votes, while still allowing for the addition of convention franchise for our commissioned ministers.

The recommendations that congregations with a pastoral vacancy be entitled to one clergy and one lay voting delegate and that multiple-congregation parishes no longer share their lay vote among all the congregations involved in the partnership are worthy of positive consideration. The recommendation that congregations with more than 1,000 communicant members be entitled to two extra votes at district conventions received neither majority agreement nor majority disagreement from district convention respondents. It is not clear to me whether this proposal is a high priority for the congregations that would be afforded this privilege, and it does not appear to be contributing to a greater spirit of harmony in our Synod. Therefore I do not favor it.

SECTION FIVE: Congregations and National Regions

This section recommends establishment of five regions for the purpose of more effective representation of congregations across the Synod on the Praesidium and Board of Directors of the Synod. Only one Synod vice-president currently lives west of the Mississippi River. He lives in St. Louis, only 20 miles west of that river. Since regular visitation of all 35 districts by the Synod President is virtually impossible, I support this recommendation, which would enable congregations to nominate vice-presidents from their region.

This would facilitate more regular visitation of each district by a Synod vice-president whom the districts of each region play a significant role in electing. In addition, it would assist in the deepening of relationships between the Synod and the congregations in its districts. The creation of regions would also provide closer connection between congregations in each region and the Synod's Board of Directors by virtue of regional representation on that very important Board.

SECTION SIX: Congregations and the National Synod

Group One: National Convention Recommendations

A quadrennial cycle for circuit and district theological convocations and district and Synod conventions, the selection of national convention delegates from the previous year's district convention delegates, and the establishment of a fixed number of Synod convention delegates are worthy of positive consideration. While the specific number of national convention delegates recommended by the task force would result in significant cost savings to congregations, careful consideration should be given to whether 650 delegates would provide sufficiently broad representation of congregations to national conventions.

The process of allotting to each district a proportionate share of the fixed number of Synod convention delegates based on the district's percentage of the total congregations and communicants in the Synod is an excellent recommendation that I strongly support. It is a very fair and totally objective proposal that would provide unquestionably equitable representation for the congregations of our Synod. It would also eliminate the need for district boards of directors to exercise their Bylaw-given right of requesting the president of the Synod to grant "exceptions" for electoral circuits that do not meet Bylaw-prescribed parameters.

Providing consistency in terms of office and facilitating participation of virtually every congregation in the election of Synod President and First Vice-President are very important and worthy recommendations. The task force decided not to recommend consistency regarding term limits for district presidents. Some districts have no term limits, enabling district presidents to be elected to serve an unlimited number of three-year terms. Some have a limit of four terms, and still others have a limit of three terms. For the sake of consistency throughout the Synod, it seems appropriate that uniformity in this matter for all district presidents should be considered.

A change in the constituency of the Synod Board of Directors is a matter that deserves special attention and careful consideration. Under the task force proposal, there would be seventeen voting members on the board. Ten of them would be elected by the Synod convention as pastors and lay men or women from each of the five regions of the Synod. Two more voting members are the President of the Synod and one commissioned minister at-large, both also elected by the Synod convention. Those twelve elected members would then appoint five additional board members who have special expertise required by the board. Delegates should give careful consideration to whether this proposal adequately represents the Synod on its Board of Directors.

The process of development by congregations and districts of priorities and goals for the Synod is also worthy of support. Requiring more than a simple majority vote on doctrinal resolutions and statements would hopefully help achieve greater doctrinal unity and harmony in our Synod.

Group Two: National Structure Recommendations

The task force report summarizes the need for amendment of national Synod structure in these words: "In much of the feedback the task force received in the initial phase of listening to church leadership and the grassroots of the Synod, it became clear that the structure of the national Synod has evolved over the years into a complex and inefficient system that is perceived as unresponsive to the needs of the congregations. National programs, services, and initiatives are often redundant, especially when combined with 35 separate district efforts. Congregational involvement in national office goals is not always direct or clear. The current program board and commission

structure lacks accountability and is expensive to fund. Legal compliance and business oversight are often difficult to manage under the current structure.”

In order to enhance accomplishment of the mission of our Synod and to do so in a way that realizes greater stewardship of the dollars entrusted by the people of God, the task force recommends elimination of the seven program boards and two of the six commissions that currently exist. I support this recommendation because I believe it is necessary to achieve greater economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Here are a few realities:

1. Responding to a 40-year pattern of declining revenue from congregations through districts to national Synod, a number of boards have found it difficult to achieve a balanced budget, in some cases relying heavily on large bequests to fund regular programmatic expenses.
2. One program board has experienced expenditures greater than revenue by amounts totaling millions of dollars over the past several years alone.
3. Another board allowed and approved travel budgets for one fiscal year of several hundred thousand dollars.
4. Yet another program board discovered a significant over expenditure of its budget only after the departure of its former executive director.
5. Budget management and revenue coordination are quite complex with each program board and commission operating what essentially amount to separate operations.
6. Collaboration between and among boards is very difficult. In fact, some members of some boards or commissions do not even know that other boards and commissions exist.
7. Some program boards and commissions operate more efficiently than others. Yet executive directors spend significant time and other resources dealing with board or commission matters rather than directly accomplishing the work they are called to do.

These examples are cited with no intention of expressing disrespect or casting aspersions on board or staff members involved. The reality is that it is very difficult, if not impossible, for a board comprised of several individuals from across the nation who meet together as a board four times each year for approximately two days to have a clear and accurate picture of what really is happening in the ministry for which the board is supposed to provide oversight and direction.

To complicate matters further, executive directors of the program boards and commissions, while technically under the supervision of the Synod President, are effectively and primarily accountable to their respective program board or commission. This is understandable, since their program boards or commissions are responsible in our current system for recommending compensation increases and determining whether or not to renew the five year contractual relationship with their executive directors.

Supervision and accountability of employees of the Synod is very difficult under these current circumstances. Not one of the 35 districts of the Synod still operates under a system of structure and governance like the one just described. The task force is recommending that the Synod’s system of employee supervision and accountability catch up with that of its districts. I concur.

Having said all that, I believe it is my duty to call attention to the recommendation the task force has offered, namely, replacing the seven program boards and two commissions with a Commission on National Mission and a Commission on International Mission, both of which would be advisory to the Synod President. Under this recommendation, the senior staff members in each of these two departments

or offices would be directly accountable to a Chief Mission Officer, who would be accountable to the Synod President, who would appoint such officer with concurrence of the Board of Directors.

At issue here is how to honor the duty and responsibility of the office of the Synod President, who is charged with “the supervision regarding the doctrine and the administration of . . . all such as are employed by the Synod” (LCMS Constitution Art. XI B 1 b) while also actually improving the President’s ability to provide meaningful day-to-day supervision and coordination of Synod employees. This is especially important regarding daily supervision of employees of the Synod at the executive director or senior staff level.

Providing a remedy to the current problematic process would also effectively relieve employees of the current tension of being somehow or somewhat accountable to “two masters.” Under the current system, Synod leaders are realistically accountable to their respective program boards or commissions, as noted above. Essentially, there is a corresponding lack of actual accountability to any person at the LCMS International Center. The result is that the President of the Synod is given the responsibility for supervision and is ultimately responsible for actions of Synod employees, but lacks any real or practical ability to provide the supervision commensurate with the responsibility.

One observation is that while the task force proposal would certainly solve the current problem of supervision and accountability, it could be seen as concentration of excessive authority in the office of the Synod President. That is neither the task force’s intention nor my desire. My counsel to convention delegates, therefore, is to consider carefully whether such real authority of supervision and/or perceived centralization of power would be the result and if the latter, what alternative solution should be considered.

While personally and experientially convinced that the current system is inefficient and even problematic, I also believe that consolidation of the program boards and commissions in question into two boards (rather than two advisory commissions), namely, the Board for National Mission and the Board for International Mission, is worthy of consideration. In addition, assigning to the president the direct or indirect responsibility to supervise the day-to-day work of the employees of the Synod and allowing the president a method of intervention should either board violate the Constitution, Bylaws, or resolutions of the Synod, should be considered.

My primary concern in this matter is to improve the system that currently exists while also ensuring that the task force recommendation would properly and adequately satisfy my request and the Synod’s need for provision of appropriate checks and balances.

Group Three: National Issue Recommendations

This portion of the report includes recommendations regarding clarification of the Constitution over the Bylaws, consideration of a process that could lead to the renaming of the Synod, and the continued study of clergy certification. I agree with these recommendations, urging careful deliberation and emphasizing the importance of developing consensus throughout the Synod regarding these very significant matters.

Conclusion

It is my hope that this brief response to the task force report will be helpful for the Synod’s careful consideration of the recommendations contained in the report. It is my prayer that the work of the task force and the decisions ultimately made by the Synod in convention will result in a system of structure and governance for our beloved Synod that will result in greater efficiency and effectiveness in accomplishing the mission our Lord has given His Church.

Gerald B. Kieschnick, President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Entered into Rest

Ordained Minister

Abraham, Mark W
Ahl, Dennis C
Albers, Victor G
Albrecht, Paul G
Austermann, Harold W
Auw, Hugh C
Bartling, L Paul
Bartling, Walter J
Bartz, Herbert H
Batiansila, A E
Bauer, Benjamin T
Baumann, Herman E
Becker, Bernard H
Beese, Roger
Bendewald, Donald E
Beyer, Elmer E
Bickel, Kurt A
Bielefeldt, Walter F
Birner, Edward H
Bischoff, William H
Bleke, Earl H
Bode, Harold H
Boettcher, Donald L
Born, Charles H
Brandt, Maynard H
Brandt, Robert A
Brege, Clifford P
Bremer, Robert A
Bridges, H Lane
Brink, Kurt W
Brockhoff, Harold E
Bruening, George J
Brummett, Belvin R
Brunig, Robert A
Burget, Frank W
Burrack, Richard E
Bush, Leland Elwood
Cameron, Ivory C
Casaday, Barry L
Christensen, Kenneth Dean
Clark, Moses J
Clausen, Robert H
Clements, William K
Cloeter, O H
Cook, Edwin H
Costello, John M
Coyner, Conrad H
Croll, Gilbert M
Crosmer, Arthur J
Cross, Carl E
Cunningham, J Robert
Daniel, Theodore A
Danner, Bernard L
Deneke, Kenneth M
Dohrman, Thomas E
Draper, George L
Drevlow, Ferdinand A
Droege, Thomas A
Duttchen, Helmut Arthur
Ebeling, Henry C
Ebke, Richard C
Eckhardt, Eugene L

Eddleman, James L
Efraimson, Carl R
Elliott, Thomas Michael
Ellwanger, John P
Esala, Toivo A
Estok, Daniel Michael
Evans, Gene
Fajen, John H
Farina, Christopher L
Felten, Victor C
Fett, Larry C
Fiege, Calvin R
Firnhaber, Stuart F
Fitz, Edwin V
Frank, Paul L
Frederking, Martin A
Freed, John W
Freudenburg, Gerald V
Friedrich, Carl H
Friedrichs, Roland G
Fuerbringer, Kenneth P
Gade, Dwain M
Gehrke, Frederick H
Gerken, Erwin A
Gerlach, John W
Gieseke, Harold J
Giovenco, Joseph V
Glammeier, Thomas H
Glass, Donald P
Glock, Delmar J
Goebel, Richard F
Gorrell, Larry N
Graf, Philip J
Gremmels, Delbert W
Greninger, Frederick C
Grese, Everett G
Grotheer, Kurt V
Gruell, Eugene F
Grumm, A Lorenz
Guebert, Paul N
Haase, Donald R
Haertel, Robert N
Hager, Harry A
Hahn, Frederick F
Haldeman, Keith R
Hallman, Richard C*
Hallmann, James A
Hartfield, Alan R
Hartner, Harlan J
Hartwig, John D
Heckmann, Eugene E
Hedstrom, Roger F
Heino, Donald W
Heiserman, Harlan J
Helmert, Darrell D
Henderson, Samuel C
Hertwig, Frederick A
Hett, Roger W
Hillmer, Gerhardt R
Hillmer, Sigmund Walter
Hinz, Alfred J
Hinz, Frederick C
Hoard, Samuel L

Hobus, Robert A
Hoffschneider, Dale W
Holstein, Sylvester W
Hornig, Juraine J
Hoyer, Dwayne C
Huber, Roland W
Jaech, Emil G
Janssen, Ronald H
Jirovec, Dymann L
Johannes, Walter C*
Johnson, John Frederick
Johnson, Robert Rudolph
Jolliff, Bruce H
Jordening, Victor F G
Josupait, John W
Jungel, Ralph F
Juergensen, Eugene W
Keenan, Jack W
Kehrberg, Willard E
Kempff, Gerhard Frederick
Kerns, Russell R
Ketcher, Rodney E
Kiehl, Paul G
Kiihne, Keith K
Klattenhoff, Wilbur H
Klemz, Lyle E
Klenk, Elmer E
Klenz, Howard R
Klietz, Sheldon H
Knoke, Henry A*
Koch, David V
Koch, Glenn A
Koepke, Frank F
Korte, Carl E
Kovac, Walter J
Krampitz, David R
Krengel, George A
Krenning, William
Kretzschmar, Martin H*
Krieger, Eugene L
Krompart, Donald H
Krueger, Roy R
Krueger, Stephen C
Krupski, Otto F
Kuehnert, Richard E
Kuhlmann, Marvin E
Lang, Marcus T
Lange, William H
Langhans, C F
Larson, Clifford Grant
Larson, Elmer C
Last, David A
Lavcek, Emil
Lemke, Marlo D
Lieske, H William
Lindner, Ernest G
Loose, George A
Lowery, Joseph C
Lowmaster, William James
Macholz, Stanley G
Malotky, Raymond Paul
Mann, Herman Albert
Marg, George C

Marquardt, Oscar August
Marsh, William H
Maschke, Robert O
Mayer, Herman R
Mayer, Martin E
Mc Bride, Lorenzo
Mc Cain, Paul B
Mc Miller, Robert J
Meinzen, Luther W
Mendelman, G Holmes
Meschke, Mark William
Meyer, Donald E
Meyer, Erwin M
Miller, Harry F
Mohn, Truman P
Mowry, Timothy E
Moyer, John V
Mueller, Donald H
Mueller, Frederick L
Mueller, Howard E
Mueller, Raymond A
Mueller, Willard E
Muske, Clarence
Napier, Carl H
Niernmann, Walter H
O Connor, John Albert
Oberhaus, Paul R
Otte, Harold William
Payne, Carlton E
Pepoon, John Mark
Pera, Victor H
Peters, Edgar L
Peters, Edmund A
Peters, Edward F*
Petersen, Lorman M
Peterson, H LeRoy
Peterson, Paul K
Pflieger, Richard C
Piazza, Charles T
Plitt, Carvel V
Polk, John C
Popp, Kevin Paul
Potratz, Kenneth J
Prenzlow, Elmer J C
Prowatzke, Armin P
Radichel, James A
Raebel, Roger E
Rautenshilds, Arnolds G
Reckling, Michael John
Rehwalddt, Edgar F
Reimann, David K
Reimnitz, Elmer
Reinbolt, Raymond H
Reinhardt, Harold L
Richter, George J
Rico, Victor M
Riedel, E Paul
Riedel, Hubert W
Riehl, Karl W
Rimbach, James A
Robinson, Jack T
Roellig, Harold F
Romberg, David F

Rosen, Edgar R
 Ruff, Paul A
 Russow, Howard E
 Rutz, Karl W
 Saint Pierre, Rupert A
 Sallach, Mark L
 Scar, William A
 Schaadt, John P
 Schaller, Robert W
 Schedler, Walter F
 Schinnerer, Richard A
 Schkade, Raymond C
 Schmidt, Gerhard K
 Schmidt, Paul Ronald
 Schmidt, Robert A
 Scholz, Harry G
 Schrader, David L
 Schreiber, Richard J
 Schulte, Edward N
 Schultz, Dale E
 Schwane, Walter H
 Sellmeyer, John N
 Shippert, Paul
 Simmons, Charles F
 Simmons, Raymond L
 Simon, Henry E
 Smith, Charles O
 Smith, David L
 Smith, Guy Bragdon
 Sohn, Paul H
 Spilker, Timothy K
 Steffen, Lee W
 Stelmachowicz, Michael J
 Stoll, Henry L
 Strand, Jonathan Paul
 Strefling, Allen R
 Strohschein, Arnold Edward
 Stroming, Karl B
 Stuebe, Martin C
 Tassler, Melvin J
 Tensmeyer, Wilfried H
 Tetzloff, Richard D
 Tews, Thomas A
 Thies, John A
 Thomack, Alwin William
 Thompson, William E
 Thrun, Carl F
 Timler, Ferdinand R
 Tippin, Edward G
 Tonn, Randell E
 Ude, Donald E
 Udit, David Ramarack
 Uttech, William A
 Vajda, Jaroslav J
 Vehling, Arnold E
 Volmer, Alfred F
 Von Dielingen, Paul
 Wacker, David L
 Wagner, Charles E
 Wagner, Oswald F
 Wahlers, Lorenz F
 Wangerin, Jack D
 Wangerin, Norman P
 Wangerin, Walter M

Watson, Richard E
 Weinhold, Ralph
 Wendel, Rudy
 Wentzel, Ernest F
 Wenzel, Martin H
 Wesenberg, Henry C
 Wetzstein, W H
 Wilke, Donald C
 Wille, Julius G
 Williams, Edward R
 Williams, Matthew Ray
 Wiltenburg, Robert E
 Windisch-Graetz, Arnold
 Frederick
 Wolkenhauer, Richard H
 Wollenburg, George F
 Wong, Henry B
 Woods, Robert A
 Wraalstad, Orlin E
 Yoss, Joel R
 Zacharias, Edward H P*
 Zimbrick, Edward C
 Zimmerman, Leon E

Commissioned Minister

Abegglen, Steffani Marie*
 Albrecht, Lois E
 Arnholt, William H
 Atkinson, Janice Marie
 Bahn, Nicole Marie
 Bayer, Lester R
 Behrens, Ralph M
 Bellhorn, Elmer Louis*
 Berndt, Rosalie S
 Bernhard, Melvin George*
 Bleeke, Margaret L
 Bleeke, Ralph J
 Borchardt, Melvin A
 Borkenhagen, Martin H
 Bradley, Albert M
 Brill, Paul G
 Bruesehoff, Albert W
 Bueter, Arthur L
 Burger, H Eugene
 Clauss, Julian Henry
 Cleveland, Jonathan Dale
 Coburn, Wayne E
 Dietrich, Brian R
 Dobberfuhr-Dobbert, Alma M
 Dramstad, Harry
 Dube, Beverly J
 Dunk, William F
 Dunklau, Esther May
 Dunsmore, David Mark
 Ebert, Ernest R
 Eichinger, Diane J
 Eifert, Martin E
 Evans, Evelyn L
 Falcone, Garry Keith
 Farrelly, James J
 Fawcett, Carol Jean
 Foerster, Judy Ellen*
 Folkening, John I
 Freudenburg, Don L

Galchutt, Adeline
 Gandt, Karl O
 Garmatz, Robert W
 Garske, Herbert E
 Gastler, Oliver Bernard
 Gemmer, David P
 Gersmehl, Herold C
 Glaess, Herman L
 Goehring, Theophil M
 Golberg, Michael Carl
 Goldenstern, Clarence E
 Grabau, Herbert E
 Gresens, Wilmer E
 Grewe, Edwin A
 Gronewold, Wilbur E
 Hahn, James G
 Hartkopf, Walter H
 Hass, Vernon F
 Hauer, Walter O
 Heider, Louis H
 Heilman, Richard A
 Heimsoth, Gerald V
 Helmkamp, Barbara
 Helmkamp, Karl
 Henderson, Steven W
 Herka, Catherine M
 Hillert, Richard W
 Hink, Paul H
 Hoffmann, Elaine D
 Hoffschneider, Todd James
 Iseler, Janet Ann
 Jaeckel, Walter E
 Janzow, Ludwig E*
 Kahlfeldt, Carl Lynn*
 Kersten, Cherie L
 Kieschnick, Harold C
 Kimsal, Ronald F*
 Kirch, Glen W
 Kirksey, Daisy Bell
 Knippenberg, Sharon L
 Kostush, Elaine Lillian*
 Kramer, Stanley J
 Kratzer, Dorothy
 Kreyling, Arthur R
 Kuske, Wilmer G
 Kusmik, Cornell J*
 Langdon, Arthur R
 Leckband, Virgil E
 Lehrke, George J*
 Leinberger, Carolyn R
 Lindgren, Frederick Carl
 Ludwig, William E
 Luebke, Martin F
 Luepke, Eldor G
 Maas, Myra A
 Manz, Paul
 Marten, Milton E
 Mauch, Jeannine A
 Merz, Martin C
 Meyer, Elmer G
 Meyer, Frederick A
 Meyer, Gerhardt V
 Meyer, Richard A
 Meyer, Ruth L

Miessler, Merwyn L
 Moderow, Le Roy E
 Moncznik, Steven J
 Niedner, Norma Lee
 Nuechterlein, Herbert
 Olbeter, Carla Lynn
 Ollhoff, Jeanne A
 Paulos, Victor
 Pohlmann, Lawrence H
 Prokopy, Paul E
 Ramsey, David Allen
 Redeker, Sally M
 Reincke, J Neil
 Richter, Walter G
 Rittmueller, Walter H
 Rosenkotter, Arthur H
 Sales, Deborah Ann
 Sansbury, Richard W
 Sawyer, Cynthia R
 Schilf, Harry N*
 Schlesselman, Robert H*
 Schlichting, John Richard*
 Schlimpert, Edgar T
 Schmidt, Milton Albert
 Schmitz, Walter K
 Schnabel, Robert V
 Schoessow, Eugene E
 Schulz, Delphin L
 Schulz, Lawrence R
 Schutzler, Sharon Leigh
 Schwark, August C
 Seibel, Walter O
 Shoemaker, Mary Ann
 Sieger, Bruce W
 Siegmeier, Scott
 Sprehe, Raymond H
 Sprengeler, Elton F
 Springer, James A
 Stoppenhagen, Arnold C
 Suhr, Howard R
 Themer, Hugo D
 Thompson, Dolores*
 Timm, Donald C
 Timm, Timothy N
 Toepper, Marilyn A*
 Toso, Judith Ann
 Trautmann, Ruth C
 Ulmer, Orville K
 Warneke, Allard D
 Werling, Arthur C
 Wienke, Emilie Claire
 Winter, Ernest A
 Winterstein, Barbara R
 Woehr, David F
 Wolter, Arthur L
 Wolter, La June K
 Wolter, Martin T
 Wright, William R
 Wunderlich, Ernest O
 Wunderlich, Kenneth M
 Zeuner, John H
 Zorn, Glen R

*Deceased prior to March 14, 2007,
 but information received too late to
 be included in prior list.

R1-8-02

Commission on Doctrinal Review

According to the *Handbook*, the Commission on Doctrinal Review “exists to assist the President of the Synod in the exercise of his responsibility that all doctrinal content in its or any of its agencies’ materials be in accord with the Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions” (Bylaw 3.9.3). The primary work of the commission is to deal with prepublication appeals of decisions arising from the doctrinal review process, challenges to the doctrinal review certification of published items, and appeals of the challenges.

Accordingly, since the 2007 convention, the commission has:

- dealt with prepublication questions and appeals of doctrinal review decisions;
- dealt with post-publication challenges and appeals; and
- responded to inquiries of a doctrinal nature concerning certain publications.

The commission, praying for wisdom and guidance from the Lord, will continue to work to help maintain the doctrinal integrity of the Synod, as together we move forward as “One People—*Forgiven!*”

Dr. Walter A. Maier III, *Chairman*

R1-8-03

Report of the Praesidium

2007 Res. 1-11

In response to 2007 convention Res. 1-11, “To Continue Assessing LCMS Campus Ministry and Its Association with the ELCA,” the Praesidium of the Synod has consulted with the Council of Presidents and the National Campus Ministry Association and reports that there appear to be no joint ELCA/LCMS campus ministries in existence at this time.

2007 Res. 3-11

In response to 2007 convention Res. 3-11, “To Endeavor to Keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace,” the Praesidium and the Council of Presidents encouraged pastors to use the 2008–09 circuit Bible studies. Under the theme, *Faithful and Afire*, these nine studies focused on our commonly confessed articles of faith under the general title, “This We Believe, Teach, and Confess.” Bible study topics and authors for the year were as follows:

Month	Topic	Writer
September	Unity and Concord in the Church	Mark Brandt
October	Justification	Joel Biermann
November	The Authority of the Scriptures	John Wohlrabe
December	The Incarnation	Dean Wenthe
January	The Sanctity of Life	James Lamb
February	The Sacrament of Holy Baptism	Robert Preece
March	The Sacrament of Holy Communion	Art Just
April	The Resurrection of the Body	Jeff Gibbs
May	The Trinity	Randy Golter

For the year 2009–10, the circuit Bible studies have focused on “The Pastor as Steward.” Coming in 2010–11, the fifth year of

Faithful and Afire will be a series titled “The Pastor as Proclaimer.” Each annual series runs from September through May.

Beginning its fifth year in September 2010, the circuit Bible study series is funded by the 35 districts of the Synod. The studies are produced electronically and posted on the President’s Web page at www.lcms.org. A recent survey of districts revealed that approximately one-half of the Synod’s visitation circuits make regular use of the studies.

Dean Nadasdy, Fourth Vice-President
Secretary, LCMS Praesidium

R1-01

LCMS World Mission

Celebrating an Expanding Global Lutheran Missionary Community

Introduction to LCMS World Mission

Despite the recent social and economic difficulties in our globalized world and the unpredictable ruin that natural disasters bring into many people’s lives, God continues to faithfully fulfill His mission. We know the process of going into the world to “go and make disciples of all nations” is God’s sending, and He chooses to use His Church for proclamation of His free gift of salvation through Christ Jesus.

Whatever our life roles, we live as a missionaries—witnesses to God’s love in Jesus—reaching out, engaging people, and proclaiming the love of God through good deeds done and in words of Gospel spoken. God’s sending into the world was occurring long before we came along and will continue long after our efforts in mission are finished.

Today, we are thankful that He continues to bless the LCMS and the worldwide Lutheran missionary community with the resources to make a significant impact in the United States and around the world.

In partnership with you, LCMS World Mission is the global Gospel outreach of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Our ministry work is focused in three distinct and yet interconnected areas: International Mission, National Mission, and Ministry to the Armed Forces.

Working together with partner churches, mission-minded international and national organizations, districts, congregations, and many others, our global mission focuses on mission multiplication—*multiplying the number of believers sharing their faith through*

- Outreach;
- Church Planting and Mission Revitalization;
- Leadership Development;
- Strategic Mission Development; and
- Global Multiplication.

Introduction to *Ablaze!*

The global *Ablaze!* mission movement was conceived with the simple idea that each individual Christian is called by God to be a missionary in His service. Lutheran church bodies and organizations around the world have latched on to this idea and have united around the *Ablaze!* goal of sharing the Good News of Jesus with 100 million people by 2017—the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

It began as a vision of LCMS World Mission and was adopted and affirmed by the 2004 Synod convention. The three major *Ablaze!* goals adopted in Synod conventions are as follows:

1. *Share* the Gospel with 100 million unreached or uncommitted people, including 50 million in the United States, by 2017.

2. *Plant 2,000 new missions in the U.S. (and work with our partners toward another 3,000 in Africa, Asia, Eurasia, and Latin America).**
3. *Assist 2,000 LCMS congregations in mission revitalization.**

Celebrating Highlights of the Last Triennium

Partner Focus: Walking together in grace on the adventure of being partners in the Gospel

We intentionally concentrate on engaging and working with groups who are outside of the LCMS World Mission organizational structure. Partners include such entities as church bodies, missionary alumni, auxiliaries, Recognized Service Organizations, mission societies, LCMS districts, congregations, universities, and seminaries, as well as government agencies and nongovernmental organizations worldwide.

Outreach

Relationship-Building through English-as-a-Foreign-Language Teaching: GEO (globally engaged in outreach) long-term missionaries, international educators, and short-term individual and team efforts continue to expand as a vital component in working on the “green growing edge” of the church. As Christians are sent to teach people seeking English skills to advance their opportunities in the world, missionaries and teachers are able to engage people one-on-one. In time, mutual trust and relationships build, while students repeatedly see Christ’s love in the lives of these missionary teachers and hear about Christ in the classroom, a Bible study, a small group, and/or sharing casual social interaction. The partner churches and mission fields continue to increase their requests for missionaries and teachers. While many requests are filled, an ever-increasing number go unfilled and opportunities for relationship building and Gospel sharing go unmet. For example, the Asia region currently has 51 GEO long-term missionaries and has requested 75 for 2011, but in truth the region could easily benefit from 125 GEO missionaries!

Congregation Connect: Many LCMS members of all ages have expressed a desire to serve alongside the people who live in the mission field they are supporting. The Congregation Connect program was developed in partnership with Salem Lutheran Church, Tomball, Texas, to help provide congregations with a unique opportunity to link up with a mission need overseas for five years, focusing on mission, partnership, teams, relationships, and lay leadership. You can think of it as short-term teams with a long-term commitment. These mission relationships lead to faith-sharing opportunities.

Church Planting and Revitalization*

[*For updates on the *Ablaze!* Covenant Congregations and the Transforming Churches Network, see the National Mission section of this report.]

Rural and Small Town Mission: This new and expanded initiative is positioning to assist more intentionally the professional and lay leaders serving in rural and small town congregations—nearly half of all 6,000-plus LCMS congregations—in leading their congregation members in engaging their communities for Christ. A new missionary/catalyst will work in collaboration with Saint Paul Institute for Education, LCMS districts, the RSTM Task Force, the Transforming Churches Network, The 72—Partners on the Road, and many other resources in creating new training resource modules, offering leadership modules, and providing workshops in districts for outreach, revitalization, and church planting.

Sri Lanka Probationers: This program of church-planting vicars is not new in India and Sri Lanka, but God continues to bless and expand this church-planting vision of our partners, assisted in part by financial support from LCMS World Mission through the Jesus Is Lord Mission Society. In February 2008, 12 seminary students received their ordination from the informal seminary of the Lanka Lutheran Church. Since 2006, they had been serving their three-year “probation” as church planters in the most remote and needy parts of the central Sri Lanka mountains on the tea plantations. The Lord blessed their efforts, and they are starting new churches. In 2009, through *Fan into Flame* funds, the Lanka Lutheran Church is purchasing and constructing the first of eight mission stations that are needed for the current probationers to be ordained and reside in their pastorates.

Leadership Development

Uganda and Sudan Pastoral Leadership Training: Missionary Rev. Claude Houge of East Africa reports, “The missionaries are doing well and working hard with the Lutheran Church Mission in Uganda (LCMU) in training local leaders. Meeting with the LCMU leadership, we are always impressed at how this young church is growing because the leaders are so focused on outreach. We were joined by interim Assistant Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sudan, Rev. Jacob Bisi. He wanted to get to know the LCMU leadership. These two fairly young churches have much in common, and they can be supportive of one another. The overwhelming request from both churches is help with training! It’s hard to plant new churches without enough pastors or trained lay leaders. LCMS is funding several projects to help with this big need.” In late 2009, three graduates from the Leadership Training School were ordained as pastors in the LCMU. This brings the total number of ordained pastors to four!

The Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT) and Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots U.S.: The third class of students in the EIIT program graduated in December 2009, including David Sternbeck, the first Native American student to graduate from the program. He was ordained Dec. 13 at Makah Lutheran Church in Neah Bay, WA, where he is serving while planning to expand the ministry outreach of LAMP-U.S. (the Native American National Mission Affiliate) to other Native American communities on the Olympic Peninsula. As immigrant and ethnic populations continue to increase in the United States, this cutting-edge effort of training ethnic leaders for the various ethnic ministries within our church body is vital. This distance-education pastoral and deaconess training program is sponsored by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, with support from LCMS World Mission.

Lay Leadership Training in the Philippines: In spring 2008, Rev. Dr. Steven Oliver (missionary in Taiwan) and Rev. Carl Hanson (missionary in East Asia) taught a three-day lay training seminar for 67 participants in Baguio City. These elders, deacons, and evangelists of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP) gather twice a year as a large group, as well as weekly or monthly with their local supervisors, for ongoing Theological Education by Extension. Hanson wrote, “It was truly moving to meet these men who travel great distances on foot to remote villages and communities with the Gospel of God’s love and grace in Jesus Christ. The LCP has 92 churches, many of which are mission stations, and 26 ordained pastors. They have an *Ablaze!* goal to establish 100 new churches by the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017! The LCP’s rich history and experience in training lay leaders has already expanded beyond the Philippines as they have joined LCMS World Mission work in Cambodia to offer similar training there. As the church continues to grow in Asia, this

kind of partnership is key—not only for our ability to share the Good News of Jesus, but also to plant Lutheran churches in new areas!”

Training Educational Leaders in India: Retired LCMS educators David and Beth Hoepfner serve as education consultants in India and Sri Lanka. In early 2009, they wrote about a training experience in India. “We gathered two groups of teachers together to talk about teaching Bible stories. Around 100 primary teachers came to the first teacher training and about 70 came to the second one. Since these teachers have few resources, we taught them various ways to present Bible stories instead of simply reading them. Both groups said that they had never been invited to a conference like this, so we were encouraged to do more in the future.”

Strategic Mission Development

Partnerships for New Work in North Korea: On the Korean peninsula, we are working closely with the Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) and Agglobe Service International, a U.S.-based non-governmental organization, to develop humanitarian and agricultural projects for a series of collective farms in North Korea. Together with their LCK counterparts, LCMS missionaries have worked to generate support for these projects by developing partnerships with LCK congregations, LCMS congregations in Iowa, and the Church of All Nations in Hong Kong, as well as other groups such as the Missouri District and Lutheran Women’s Missionary League.

Expanding Evangelism in Georgia: Before 2009 came to a close, Rev. Jim Bloker, the evangelism specialist in Eurasia with LCMS World Mission, made a special trip to Georgia to help the ministry leaders think through how best to serve the people in Georgia and the surrounding countries on the borderlands of Europe and the Middle East. LCMS missionary to Georgia, Rev. Matt Heise, wrote, “Jim is a uniquely talented individual who forced our evangelists to think through how they structure their worship services, as well as giving them hints on how best to encourage people in the church to take responsibility and ownership. In a small church just beginning to sink roots into an ancient soil, Jim’s work was greatly appreciated. We hope to have him come back in mid-March to assist us further in our goal of doing mission in the land of Georgia.”

Deaconess Ministry Latin America: In spring 2009, deaconesses from more than nine countries connected at a regional conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina, sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina and Liga Misional de Damas Luteranas (an Argentinean organization similar to the LWML) with support from LCMS World Relief and Human Care and LCMS World Mission. For the first time, deaconesses and other women from Chile, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, Guatemala, Venezuela, Panama, and the Dominican Republic were provided opportunity for theological enrichment and networking. The LCMS partner churches in Panama and Venezuela and the Lutheran university in Brazil already offer deaconess training, and leaders in the Dominican Republic and Argentina are just launching their programs. A commitment emerged among all the women to forge cooperative ministries, with an understanding that together they could make a profound contribution to Lutheran outreach ministries throughout the region.

Expanding Ministry and Strategy in New York City: LCMS missionary and urban mission strategist Rev. Johnson Rethinasamy serves the New York City area through a partnership with the Atlantic District and is based at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Whitestone. In 2009, Immanuel started a satellite church location in Jamaica and another in the Bronx Psychiatric Center. Rethinasamy works with Pastor Alfred, who identified these sites and is now leading ministries.

Additionally, Pastor Leem, one of the area mission developers, was installed as an associate pastor of St. Peter, Brooklyn, NY. He also leads several small groups in Brooklyn, Queens, and Long Island. Another satellite location in Forest Hills is led by Mimi Wong. This group of young Taiwanese professionals comes together to learn and hear the Word of God with great eagerness and hunger for the Word! Four people were baptized from this group earlier this year.

Global Multiplication

Starting New Work in a Muslim-Majority Country: No fewer than five Lutheran church bodies, the Concordia University System, and other specialized ministries are working together to make a difference in the region. In January 2008, after a year of preliminary research, an area facilitator was asked to relocate to start work in this country that was once home to the early Christian church. Since then, eight additional workers have been trained and deployed to work in the areas of church planting, English as a Foreign Language, medical outreach, and university outreach. Lutheran sermons are beginning to be broadcast on Christian radio. Two LCMS partner churches, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England and the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany, have participated in the new initiative, and the first short-term team was deployed in September 2009. While the country must remain unnamed, the multiplying of people who link others in outreach is taking the LCMS and its partners to “places they have never been before.”

Missionary School in Latin America: In fall 2009 in Uruguay, the International Team leadership of LCMS World Mission met with leaders of partner churches from Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay to develop a pilot project for co-training missionaries that are/or will be serving in Latin America, as well as other parts of the world. This pilot project for “transcultural mission formation” is joining an ongoing project initiated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina, which started a school for missionaries four years ago. For 10 days this spring in Ciudad Del Este, Paraguay, LCMS and partner churches missionaries will attend the first joint training. Curriculum being jointly developed will include course work and fieldwork in the city of Ciudad Del Este each day.

Mission Responders Focus: Educate, encourage, and equip LCMS individuals, congregations, districts, and other entities to actively build the capacity of the LCMS to be a partner in reaching millions for Christ.

Through *Ablaze!*, LCMS World Mission is inviting every member of every LCMS congregation to be personally involved and to “own” the mission in one or more of the Seven Mission Responses: learn, pray, give, tell, send, go, and celebrate. In this past triennium, new and/or expanded resources, training, and events included the following:

- **Free Audio Bible Download:** LCMS World Mission and Faith Comes by Hearing have been pleased to offer free New Testament downloads in more than 311 languages. Any visitors to www.lcmsbibledownload.com can easily access and download the entire New Testament to their computers.
- **The 72—Partners on the Road:** Trained evangelism members of The 72 serve congregations on location for three to four weeks; assisting them to either begin, revitalize, or expand their local outreach ministry to reach the lost. Recently, The 72 began offering some weekend trainings and selected district-based representatives.
- **Short-term Teams:** The number of requested teams from partner churches and LCMS mission fields continues to grow.

Short-term team multimedia training curriculum has been developed in partnership with Lutheran Hour Ministries and LCMS World Relief and Human Care and is available online, free of charge.

- **Conversations of Hope.net:** A new online growing repository of ideas, stories, and resources designed to help you share your faith in six areas of faith development: connection, community, conversation, conversion, commission, and confidence. The project was developed by LCMS World Mission, Center for U.S. Missions, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, with the help of 11 subject matter expert authors.
- **Operation Barnabas:** Training, online resources, and support is provided for members of LCMS congregations to reach out to chaplains, military personnel, and veterans in their congregations and communities, especially those far from the support of military bases.
- **Ministry to the Armed Forces Sunday Materials:** Printed bulletin inserts, responsive prayer, and suggested sermon message for pastors are offered free of charge each spring.
- **Beautiful Feet Mission Conference:** Sponsored by LCMS World Mission and led by students on college campuses, participants are encouraged and equipped to reach out to people in their community, at their schools, and throughout the world. The school hosts include Concordia, Portland (2007); Concordia, St. Paul (2008); Concordia, Chicago (2009); and Concordia, Texas (2010).
- **Mission Partners' Conference:** Sponsored by LCMS World Mission annually to bring together district mission and evangelism executives, mission and ministry facilitators, and others active in mission work to support them, thank them, and encourage their efforts in the mission fields. Specialized topics have included church planting (2007), outreach and international mission (2008), and church revitalization (2009).
- **Friendship of Jesus and Muslims Conference:** The first-ever event, held in Detroit in spring 2008, was co-sponsored by LCMS World Mission and People of the Book Lutheran Outreach (POBLO) to raise the level of conversation, direction, motivation, and preparation for sharing the love of Jesus for Muslim friends and neighbors. Session workshops were led by missionaries and others experienced in relationship-building ministries with Muslims in the United States and overseas.
- **Ablaze! in God's Word Bible—Listening Project for Lutheran Schools:** In 2008–09, more than 30,000 students (grades 1–8) in 260 schools received their own digital audio Bibles—listening to the New Testament for 40 days, supporting overseas Bible listening groups in India Lutheran schools, and being equipped to share God's Word with their families, neighbors, and friends. This project was made possible by a collaboration of LCMS World Mission, District and Congregational Services—Lutheran Schools Department, Lutheran Education Association, and Hosanna/Faith Comes by Hearing. A pilot project was also conducted in 2008 on the campus of Concordia, Ann Arbor.
- **Children's Mission Project Curriculum and Resources:** Mission projects and resources in collaboration with LCMS World Relief and Human Care offered through Concordia Publishing House's VBS curriculum included: 2008—Children around the World, 2009—India Schools, and 2010—Dominican Republic.
- **Connecting with LCMS World Mission through Web 2.0 tools:** A blog was launched in 2008 with RSS feed capabilities, as well as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Picasa pages

that offered convenient access to the latest videos, photos, news, and resources celebrating God's Mission. All are easy to access, easy to share with others, and available "on the go" for mobile devices.

People Focus: Identify and develop people who have the expertise and capacity to link partners, mission responders, and resources to mission opportunities in a creative and innovative manner.

T.E.A.M.—Together Everyone Achieves More

LCMS World Mission is broken down into work teams that are not only committed individually to what they do separately, but are also committed to what their teammates are doing on a daily basis. Every work team is assigned a specific area to "own"—executive, administration, communication, development, recruitment, mission education, Ministry to the Armed Forces, International Mission, and National Mission—but ownership doesn't end with each team's specific area of responsibility and expertise. The entire mission team owns and is committed to the vision that LCMS World Mission is the place where the church turns for quality, collaborative mission involvement!

We give thanks to God that in this 2007–10 triennium, LCMS World Mission called and sent more career missionaries than in the two previous trienniums combined (2001–04 and 2004–07)! The new Network-Supported Missionary (NSM) model established in 2007 helped to make this turnaround possible, allowing for an expansion of missionaries in service. In fact, today 34 new career national and international missionaries are now walking together with individuals, congregations, districts, and organizations from across the LCMS in their mission service.

These NSM-model partnerships create "hands-on," personal mission-learning experiences, participating in the act of *sending* another to go in the name of Christ, and then *celebrating* God's mission through His people. Partners within this model also provide vitally important *prayer* support and *give* the financial resources necessary for ongoing Gospel outreach in non-Christian and post-Christian cultures everywhere. As the mission partnerships grow between the network members and the missionary, people start *telling* other believers what God is doing in mission and inviting them to join through their own personal mission involvement. Learn. Pray. Give. Tell. Send. Go. Celebrate.

Personnel Statistics for the Triennium

As of January 2010, 115* career missionaries and personnel based in 31 countries are serving through LCMS World Mission.

- 41 clergy
 - 6 teachers
 - 3 DCEs and DCOs
 - 1 deaconess
 - 1 vicar
 - 3 medical missionaries
 - 21 laypeople
 - 39 spouses with missionary solemn appointments
- (*Seven are clergy serving in the U.S. An additional 9 missionaries from our partner churches around the world serve in other countries in a partnership through LCMS World Mission. Known as *Ablaze!* Alliance Missionaries, these individuals—all clergy—each fill a traditional career missionary position.)
- Throughout 2009, 109 GEO (Globally Engaged in Outreach) long-term missionaries served in 27 countries.

- In 2009, 64 international educators were serving schools in 5 countries.
- Throughout 2009, 48 short-term individuals served
- More than 470 individuals served on short-term mission teams in 2009
- More than 50 volunteers currently serve with The 72—Partners on the Road through the National Mission team
- As of January 2010, the number of staff serving in St. Louis or deployed in stewardship management and services is 60 full-time equivalents—including four deployed international regional directors.
- LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces currently endorses 215 chaplains, including: 71 active duty chaplains, 93 reserve and National Guard chaplains, 22 in Veterans Affairs ministry, 25 Civil Air Patrol chaplains, and 4 full-time prison chaplains.

Mission Focus: Linking Lutherans and Lutheran communities in sharing the Gospel

Scope of Current LCMS World Mission International Work

LCMS World Mission’s international work of linking with and expanding the global Lutheran missionary community outreach in sharing the Gospel is organized into four geographic regions—Africa, Asia, Eurasia, and Latin America. In each region, LCMS World Mission has identified “priority platforms” through which our work is to proclaim the Gospel, plant churches, train leaders, facilitate strategic mission development, and lead global mission multiplication.

- **Africa**—Training national leaders, including pastors, evangelists, and lay leaders
- **Asia**—Reaching people through education and human care ministries
- **Eurasia**—Reconnecting people to their Christian heritage
- **Latin America**—Training national leaders and missionaries

During the triennium, LCMS World Mission relationships and/or work expanded into three additional countries, including Burundi, Senegal, and a restrictive country in Eurasia. This brings the total to 89 countries, including the United States. A number of additional collaborative mission opportunities and relationships are in the process of being developed.

Some additional ministry developments of note include the following:

After 14 years of civil war and two years of talks to overcome their differences, four Liberian church bodies united to form a new church body, *the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Liberia*. LCMS World Mission walked along side them during the two year process. Now made up of some 350 congregations, the church’s Lutheran schools, pastors, and church leaders are in almost all of the 16 language/cultural groups and major regions of Liberia—putting the new church body in a tremendous position to share the message of Jesus Christ to the entire nation.

The mission departments of the LCMS and the *Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus* (the largest Lutheran church body in Africa with some five million members), signed an agreement that formalizes the relationship for mutual mission as church bodies. This allows for LCMS missionaries to work within the country and also begins the process of exploring other areas where we can work together in reaching more for Christ.

Beginning in 2008, *Central Europe* partner churches and their congregations in *Slovakia, Poland, Hungary,* and *Poland* began requesting short-term teams from LCMS congregations and

organizations to help support their local congregation-based outreach initiatives—summer English camps. Ten teams served in the summer of 2009, and the partners have asked for another 30-plus teams to serve together with them in summer 2010.

In *Kyrgyzstan* in October 2009, “Compassion,” the *mobile medical van* that has been such a crucial part of the Kyrgyz church’s growth, ministry, and outreach to surrounding communities, celebrated its 10-year anniversary. The van is a joint ministry between Concordia Mission Society, Orphan Grain Train, and LCMS World Mission. Nearly 250,000 children and adults were treated by the mobile medical van over the past 10 years. The van travels to villages around Kyrgyzstan to provide pediatric, dental, and OB/GYN care to those who would not otherwise receive it.

During the triennium, Dr. Jim Koerschen, former president of Concordia University, Ann Arbor, began serving as the head of school at *Concordia International School—Shanghai* (CISS). CISS also dedicated and opened their new state-of-the art David F. Rittmann Fine Arts Center, a four-story elementary school building, and a new high school building, and celebrated its 10-year anniversary! CISS first opened in fall 1998 with 22 elementary- and middle school students and today serves about 1,100 students in preschool through grade 12. CISS is one of two international schools currently owned and operated by the LCMS. The second is in Hong Kong, with a third school in the developmental stages for Southeast Asia.

Country-specific Partner Vision Summits of varying sizes and scope were held during the past triennium to allow for a vast array of mission-minded organizations to share, network, collaborate, and coordinate their roles in supporting the mission and ministry in the *Dominican Republic, India, South Africa, Sudan, Thailand, Vietnam,* and others. Partners attending these summits included international partner church leadership, LCMS agencies LCMS World Mission and LCMS World Relief and Human Care, mission societies, seminaries, and many other organizations and groups.

Relief efforts following earthquakes in *Peru* (2007), *China* (2008), *Haiti* (2010), and *Chile* (2010); a cyclone in *Myanmar* (2008); and flooding in *Vietnam* (2008) allowed LCMS World Mission the opportunity to walk alongside our international partners and partners churches in serving those in need. This work also expanded or started new collaborative outreach projects with a number of state-side and international organizations including LCMS World Relief and Human Care, Lutheran Hour Ministries, and Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation in Asia, as well as LCMS districts, congregations, and mission societies. As an outgrowth of work in Peru, the LCMS placed its first resident missionary there in 2008. A career missionary is soon to join.

Sponsored work/projects for 2009–10 were as follows:

• 18 countries with work/projects totaling less than \$25,000 annually:

Bolivia	Burkina Faso	Congo (Brazzaville)	England
Ethiopia	France	Haiti	Ivory Coast
Latvia	Liberia	Lithuania	Mexico
Paraguay	Poland	Portugal	Puerto Rico
Sudan	Uruguay		

• 16 countries with work/projects totaling between \$25,000 and \$100,000 annually:

Argentina	Belgium	Benin	Cayman Islands
Chile	The Gambia	Ghana	Guam
Honduras	Jamaica	Peru	Philippines
South Africa	Sri Lanka	Tanzania	Uganda

• **19 countries with work/projects totaling between \$100,000 and \$300,000 annually:**

Brazil	Cambodia	Czech Republic	Dominican Republic
India	Indonesia	Japan	Korea (South and North)
Macau	Papua New Guinea		Sierra Leone
Spain	Taiwan	Thailand	Togo
Venezuela	Vietnam	Slovakia	

• **11 countries with work/projects totaling more than \$300,000 annually:**

China	Germany	Guinea	Hong Kong
Kazakhstan	Kenya	Kyrgyzstan	Nigeria
Panama	Russia	Restrictive Country in Eurasia	

• **24 countries with historic or working relationships only supported by regional budgets:**

Afghanistan	Angola	Australia	Belarus
Botswana	Burundi	Canada	Congo (Kinshasa)
Cuba	Denmark	El Salvador	Eritrea
Estonia	Finland	Georgia	Guatemala
Hungary	Laos	Lebanon	Madagascar
Mongolia	Myanmar	Pakistan	Senegal

• **International work/project totals for triennium**

2007–08 actual	\$14,499,873
2008–09 actual	\$14,697,580
2009–10 budget	\$14,925,135
TOTAL	\$44,122,588
3-year average	\$14,707,529

(up 27% from \$11,378,887 for the 2004–2007 triennium)

Scope of Current LCMS World Mission National Work

Nationally, our strategic goal is to serve as a catalyst for mission partnerships in order to build the capacity of districts and congregations in the United States to share the Gospel with the lost by word and deed within our churches and communities.

LCMS World Mission, National Mission provides resources, training, and support for the following:

- Congregational and individual *outreach*, including trainers for on-site equipping at LCMS congregations, national training events, and identifying and creating quality tools and resources for outreach.
- *Church planting* and new mission starts, including national missionaries serving specialized urban geographic areas and ethnic ministries, as well as *Ablaze! Covenant Congregations*.
- Helping *revitalize* the mission focus of existing congregations, done through a strategic partnership with Transforming Churches Network (TCN), an LCMS RSO.
- The *National Mission Affiliates*—partner organizations of LCMS World Mission working in the 10 ethnic and specialized mission fields in the U.S. that LCMS World Mission has recognized as especially strategic and critical for mission work based on demographics, opportunities, and challenges. The 10 include African Immigrant, Asian, Black, Blind, Campus, Deaf, Hispanic, Jewish, Muslim, and Native American fields.

The *Ablaze! Faith-Sharing Web site* was streamlined in 2009 with a clear, easy-to-use interface for sharing your faith-sharing stories to encourage others across the Synod in sharing the Good News about Jesus. To date, 10,573,346 faith-sharing moments and hundreds of actual faith-sharing stories have been logged on the site www.lcms.org/ablaze.

2010 Convention Workbook

In 2009, *The 72—Partners on the Road* began offering weekend training seminars in the Florida-Georgia and Minnesota South Districts to help congregations begin, expand, or enhance their local outreach to their communities.

Atlanta Urban Mission Strategist Missionary, Rev. Stephen Wiggins, is working to identify congregations that are willing to become covenant congregations and plant new congregations. He is helping to revitalize older congregations with new energy to reach new people from all ethnic groups. One of the churches that he's working to revitalize is Christ Lutheran Church in East Point, GA. The church is working toward the establishment of a low-income housing development for senior citizens. By creating affordable housing, the congregation can not only serve seniors, but it also creates an environment in which they are free to do evangelism and connect people with the message of the Gospel.

LCMS World Mission strategically partners in helping congregations *revitalize* their mission focus through the *Transforming Churches Network* (TCN). TCN is now working with 30 LCMS districts to train consultants and coaches and prepare study materials. To date, more than 330 congregations are involved in the revitalization process, which includes learning communities for pastors who later lead similar communities for congregational leaders. The one- to two-year process includes a weekend consultation to identify five strengths and concerns and outlines five “prescriptions.” If a congregation chooses to continue in the process, the district assigns “coaches”—one to work regularly with the pastor and another to work with the congregation. Most current projects involve urban and suburban congregations, and TCN is working with the Rural and Small Town Ministry to incorporate adaptations to fit the needs of rural and small town congregations.

LCMS World Mission continues to providing leadership and assistance to help healthy congregations replicate themselves. *Ablaze! Covenant Congregations* are recruited by the respective district or self-identified and approved by the district; form a covenant with their district, which in turn is shared with LCMS World Mission; and may be comprised of a partnership with other congregations to plant up to four new congregations. To date, 197 congregations are *Ablaze! Covenant Congregations*—the goal is 600. These congregations are connected to resources and training through the Center for U.S. Missions that includes the Church Planter Assessment Center and, beginning in spring 2010, ten-week online Church Planters Training.

LCMS World Mission is partnering with Lutheran Church Extension Fund to provide a revolving mission planting fund. The fund provides for operating expenses of new mission plants in the U.S. This loan is disbursed in three one-year increments, up to \$50,000 per year (for a maximum loan total of \$150,000). The interest rate is zero percent with a three-year balloon, allowing time for the ministry to become established. These funds are accessible at any time and are not dependent on a grant approval cycle. The cyclical motion of this fund will allow dollars to continue to revolve and bless *new church plants*, as loans are repaid. This fund will support a stewardship mind-set in the LCMS, as the loan-receiving congregations agree to make regular donations back to the revolving fund, which puts mission learnings into practice and allows the LCMS to reach more people with the Gospel.

New church starts in the LCMS now stand at cumulative 567, and the trajectory is exciting toward the goal of 2,000 new church plants

by Reformation 2017! [Note: 118 cumulative new starts in July 2004, 211 cumulative new starts in July 2008]

A triennium project highlight of *Black Ministry, a National Mission Affiliate*, is New Luther High School, Chicago, IL. The school has been totally reorganized and renamed *The New Luther High School of Math, Science, Fine Arts & Performing Arts* with the help of Northern Illinois District endorsement and funding from a Lutheran Church Extension Fund loan. Under the leadership of Rev. Paul Anderson, New Luther High has made impressive improvements to its physical plant, a radically redeveloped business plan that meets its projections, regained its RSO status, revamped its staff, and has 81 students enrolled. The school held a reorganizational “Worship Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving” October 18, 2009.

In the past three years, *LCMS Campus Ministry, a National Mission Affiliate*, has had an active role in establishing 62 new dedicated ministries to the campus community and three new International Student Ministries. The organization has also assisted in the revitalization of 14 campus ministries. Continuing with its mission of “making disciples who make disciples on campus,” 1,522 students and staff have received outreach and leadership training through local, regional, and national events. Six national events were held for new campus ministry leadership, student leadership, and staff continuing education; and 30 workshops were held at the district level focusing on opportunities and strategy for building ministry on campus. We give thanks to God that more than 111,300 people have been reached with the Gospel!

• National work/project totals for the triennium

2007–08 actual	\$2,431,187
2008–09 actual	\$2,652,818
2009–10 budget	\$2,379,219
TOTAL	\$7,463,219
3-year average	\$2,487,740

**Scope of Current LCMS World Mission
Ministry to the Armed Forces Work**

LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces currently endorses and supports 215 chaplains. The ministry provides military chaplains to serve on the field; provides chaplains for veterans hospitals; maintains records of pastoral acts; works with pastors and civilian congregations to provide for the spiritual welfare of their members in uniform (see Operation Barnabas below); and provides spiritual resources to LCMS members serving in the armed forces through a “Ministry-by-Mail Program.”

Ministry to the Armed Forces leadership continues to recruit actively at both seminaries with personal visits and chaplain candidate training programs. Ongoing professional learning is now offered through a specialized Doctor of Ministry program available for all military chaplains, active and reserve. A dozen chaplains are currently enrolled in the program.

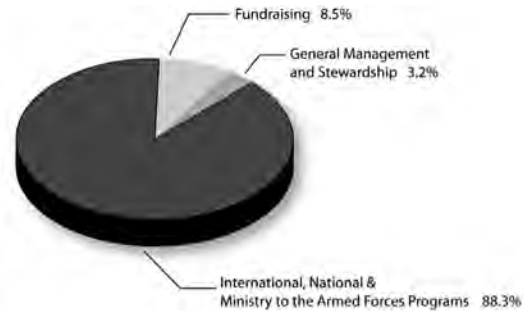
In 2007, in response to the ever-increasing needs of returning service men and women, Ministry to the Armed Forces initiated a program called “Operation Barnabas.” The initiative reaches out to all components of the military, but has a special emphasis on our Reserve members and their families. As the program expanded, an LCMS chaplain was called in 2009 to serve as the full-time program manager.

Two ministry components are currently being offered—both of which equip and encourage people for compassionate care and Gospel-sharing outreach.

1. *Members of LCMS congregations* are equipped and encouraged to reach out to chaplains, military personnel, and veterans in their congregations and communities, especially those far from the support of military bases.
2. *Operation Barnabas district counselors* in areas across the LCMS are trained and ready to serve reserve chaplains and their families through pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment.

**Funding Trends for the 2007–2010 Triennium
Annual Fund Support for LCMS World Mission**

Whether through one-time or pledged direct gifts, planned gifts, or the allocated portion of Sunday morning offering plate contributions—God’s children in the LCMS are passionate about missions! The trends continue that people want to personally select the mission field, project, or initiative for their gift and select the program through which to give. We are excited to see such personal interest, and hearing people say “our mission field” or “our mission project” is encouraging—the global Lutheran missionary community is walking together in outreach!



[*This allocation of spending follows the IRS-990 form guidelines, seen largely as a fiscal reporting standard for nonprofit organizations in the United States.]

To sustain and expand global Gospel outreach through LCMS World Mission, the \$25.3 million budget is supported through various channels:

- \$19.5 million—comes directly from more than 40,000 individuals, congregations, LCMS districts, and organizations (this includes specialized granting organizations, and bequest and endowments gifts).
- \$3.6 million—comes from your local congregation offering plate donations, a portion of which is passed along to your district, of which a portion is passed along to Synod, and of which we receive an allocated portion. On average, \$0.0027 (less than one-third of a penny of every dollar you place in your local offering) makes its way to LCMS World Mission, and these “fractions of pennies” add up to a special blessing for our ministry.
- \$2.2 million value of volunteers—those GEO (Globally Engaged in Outreach) long-term missionaries that serve in a capacity valued far beyond the actual funds raised for their 1–2 years of service and ministry.

We are extremely thankful for the 500-plus LCMS congregations and 600-plus families currently partnering to support the outreach ministry of specific LCMS missionaries through the Together in Mission (congregations) and Mission Senders (families/individuals) programs. In fact, in 2007, 2008, and 2009, 39 congregations celebrated 25 consecutive YEARS of participation in the Together

in Mission program to provide partial or full support of one or more missionaries!

Numerous other families have pledged regular foundational support for LCMS World Mission through the Mission Sowers program and specifically for Ministry to the Armed Forces through the Guardians program. Children of the LCMS through schools, Sunday Schools, and Vacation Bible Schools have joined in God's mission through the Sparklers program; joint collaborative mission projects with LCMS World Relief and Human Care offered through Concordia Publishing House's VBS curriculum and resource in 2008, 2009, and 2010; Lutheran Schools Week Mission project in 2008, etc.

Responsive to donor preferences and utilizing the eco-friendly, cost-effectiveness of electronic media, we continue to expand online learning and giving opportunities. We now regularly deliver electronic ministry updates connected to giving opportunities via our Web site, blogs, e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, and more.

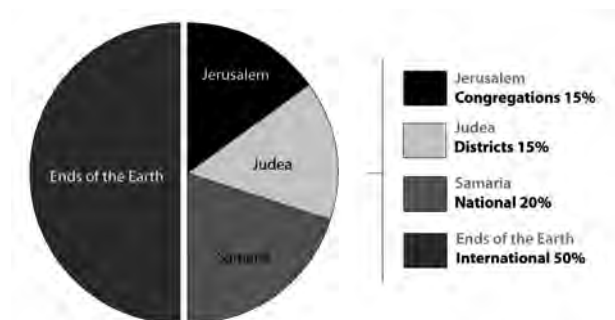
Fan into Flame

Introduction and History

Fan into Flame is a campaign to gather financial support for new mission projects and initiatives of the *Ablaze!* movement. The worldwide goal of the *Ablaze!* movement is to reach 100 million unreached or uncommitted people with the Gospel by 2017. How much money does it cost to share faith with someone else? Truth be told, it doesn't cost anything to tell others about Jesus and to explain the Gospel hope that we have as Christians. New resources are required, however, in several areas that will strengthen the LCMS's ability to share the Good News, such as more missionaries in the field, new congregations throughout North America, and creative *Ablaze!* projects in both congregations and districts to encourage members to tell their friends and neighbors about eternal salvation through Jesus Christ.

The 2004 Synod convention endorsed the \$100 million fundraising campaign. Beginning in 2006, the Texas and South Wisconsin Districts and a handful of congregations in our Synod were asked to participate in *Fan into Flame*. Since then, many more districts, hundreds of congregations, and thousands of members have joined this mission-funding initiative. The results have been impressive. New mission projects have been launched, existing programs have been strengthened, and, most importantly, more people have heard the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Fan into Flame uses a model for distribution of funds that incorporates Jesus' charge to His disciples in Acts 1:8 that "you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Using this model, *Fan into Flame* allocates net funds as shown here:



Current campaign news, including annual reports from fiscal year 2007–08 and 2008–09, can be found at the *Fan into Flame* Web site: www.fanintoflamecms.org.

2010 Convention Workbook

Progress

As of Feb. 26, 2010, \$55,156,391 has been received in cash and pledges from 21,589 total gifts for *Fan into Flame*. This includes the following:

- \$27,064,155 from congregations
- \$23,950,156 from major gifts
- \$4,142,080 from individual gifts

Of this total, \$27,369,402 has been received in cash.

1. 16 districts have formally concluded their involvement with *Fan into Flame* (Atlantic, California-Nevada-Hawaii, English, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Northern Illinois, Oklahoma, Pacific Southwest, SELC, South Wisconsin, Southeastern, Southern, and Texas).
2. 16 districts are currently underway or scheduled to move forward with their campaign timelines in 2010 (Central Illinois, Eastern, Florida-Georgia, Indiana, Iowa East, Iowa West, Michigan, Mid-South, Minnesota North, Minnesota South, New England, Northwest, North Wisconsin, Ohio, Rocky Mountain, and South Dakota).
3. The 1,192 congregations that have or are participating nationally continue to use their share of funds raised for a host of local outreach—both new and expanded.

Fan into Flame continued to receive strong support from individuals and congregations in 2009. Last year alone, over \$13.8 million was pledged by congregations and individuals—a 10 percent increase from 2008!

Key Districts

The *Texas District* was the first to participate in the campaign, beginning in 2006. To date, congregations and individuals have pledged more than \$6.8 million to *Fan into Flame*. *Ablaze! for God's Mission*, the *Southeastern District's* campaign in partnership with *Fan into Flame*, surpassed their \$6 million goal at the end of 2009. In the first six months of their campaign, congregations and individuals in the *Mid-South District* pledged more than 85 percent of their \$1.1 million district goal. The *Oklahoma District* ran their campaign in 2007–2008 with great success. Congregations and individuals surpassed the district goal and pledged over \$1.6 million for *Fan into Flame*. Through a partnership of their multiyear campaign *The Future Is Now* and *Fan into Flame*, the *Michigan District's* congregations and individuals have pledged \$5.1 million to date.

Results

Over the next five years, donors will continue to fulfill their pledge commitments. These new dollars will be immediately applied to mission projects. Additionally, a number of new districts and congregations are anticipated to make new one-time gifts and pledge commitments to *Fan into Flame*. Since the campaign's inception through mid-January 2010, \$6,940,288 in *Fan into Flame* cash funds have been distributed by LCMS World Mission to participating districts and congregations for their local efforts.

Jerusalem—Congregation's local community outreach projects

- Redeemer Lutheran Church, Florence, AL: initiated international student outreach
- Messiah, Oklahoma City, OK: training members for outreach
- Immanuel, Tilden, NE: expanded VBS (preschool/daycare scholarships for community members)
- Zion, Chicago, IL: purchased lists of new residents and mailed a welcome letter with worship times

- Shepherd of the Pines, Payson, AZ: planted a satellite congregation in Tanto Basin, AZ.
 - Faith, Warsaw, MO: purchased weekly broadcast time on the local radio station
- Judea—Districts’ regional and specialized outreach projects
- Pacific Southwest: Mixteco Outreach
 - Florida-Georgia: Amigos en Cristo Hispanic Outreach
 - South Wisconsin: French-speaking African Immigrant Ministry
 - Californian-Nevada-Hawaii: Mosaic Ministry in San Francisco
 - Texas: Rio-Grande Valley Outreach in South Texas
 - Missouri: Congregational Revitalization and Refocusing on Outreach
 - Mid-South: Church Transformation Revolving Loan Fund
- Samaria—National Mission’s support for expanding outreach initiatives in the United States
- *Ablaze!* in God’s Word Bible Listening Program: 55,000 digital audio Bibles distributed to young people at the 2007 National Youth Gathering and in 260 Lutheran elementary schools.
 - *Ablaze!* Covenant Congregations: Currently 197 congregations are committed to planting up to four churches—35 of these congregations are receiving supportive grants. In partnership with the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, a revolving Mission Planters Loan Fund is also now available.
 - Approximately 300 congregations are participating in the Transforming Churches Network revitalization process made possible in part by this funding.
- Ends of the Earth—International Mission’s support of sister/partner church outreach and missionaries
- Ghana: New Seminary in Accra—*Fan into Flame* campaign efforts provided the funding necessary (\$556,000) to build this pastor training facility of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana.
 - Russia: St. Michael’s Lutheran Church in St. Petersburg—the completed restoration project of this historic, multipurpose facility guarantees continuing urban outreach, and the government cannot reclaim the building.
 - Southeast Asia: New international school is projected to open in August 2010 or 2011.
 - Worldwide: To date, 28 new career missionaries were called and able to begin their service as a result of *Fan into Flame* funding and the Network-Supported Missionary model.

What’s Next?

A handful of districts have elected to raise funds beyond the July 2010 convention. In addition, all congregations will receive a final invitation to participate. Furthermore, there are some remaining individuals and foundations that will be and/or are prayerfully considering their participation in this campaign. Therefore, LCMS World Mission has submitted an overture to the 2010 Synod convention, “To Celebrate the Blessings of *Fan into Flame* and Commit to Its Completion,” asking for congregations of the Synod to celebrate the formal completion of the campaign on Reformation Day, October 31, 2011. Campaign support mechanisms will remain in place until the remaining districts and congregations of our Synod complete their campaign efforts and all pending gift requests have been closed. The final report of the *Fan into Flame* campaign will be made at the next Synod convention.

Thomas Zehnder, *Executive Director*
Kermit Almstedt, *Chairman*

R1-02

Lutheran Women’s Missionary League

“The mission of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League is to assist each woman of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world” (LWML Mission Statement).

The LWML is the official women’s auxiliary of the LCMS. The year 2010 marks its 68th year of “Serv[ing] the Lord with Gladness” (LWML motto, based on Ps. 100:2). As “Lutheran Women in Mission” (“doing business as” name, adopted in 1998), thousands of women are daily dedicating their lives to serve the Lord, share the Gospel, and make a difference where He has placed them.

All officers, pastoral counselors, and committee personnel serve as volunteers on every level of the LWML. Funds for grants are gathered through voluntary “mite” offerings and other gifts. The 40 LWML districts receive these funds, of which 75 percent stays in the districts to support grants and administrative costs and the remaining 25 percent is sent to the national LWML organization to finance the grants selected at national conventions and to cover the expenses of running the organization.

Significant activities and programs since our 2007 report:

- Beginning in the 2007–2009 biennium, the LWML increased its Internet presence through its Web site www.lwml.org. The appointment of an Information Technology Committee resulted in the establishment of a secure member log-in system and other Internet enhancements.
- “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10). The 40 LWML districts held conventions in 2008, with over 11,000 in attendance, voting for more than \$6 million in support for the auxiliary’s mission outreach and focus.
- The 2008 LWML Sunday theme was “Opened Eyes ... Hearts *Ablaze!*” with materials written by Dr. Robert Roegner.
- During November of 2008, just over 200 women, representing all LWML districts, gathered for the “Assembly of Leaders” and *A Time to Lead* training event held in St. Louis.
- 2009 LWML Sunday materials were authored by Dr. Warren Schumacher under the theme “Look to the Hills ... God Reigns!”
- At the 2009 LWML convention in Portland, the Heart to Heart Sisters program joyfully celebrated more than 100 participants, women who are leaders in various cultures and ethnic groups. Many have become involved in LWML on the national level, having also started new LWML groups in their areas.
- Materials for 2010 LWML Sunday, under the theme “People of God ... in the Word” were co-authored by Rev. Kent Wendorf and Rev. Nathan Wendorf.
- In February 2010, the LWML debuted a new video-based resource, *Faith Talk*, developed as an interactive tool to assist women in becoming more comfortable with sharing their faith and the hope they have because of Jesus Christ.
- Eleven new sets of *Mustard Seeds* devotions have been developed, with four additional packs in various stages of completion.
- The LWML has continued to publish *Lutheran Woman’s Quarterly*, a magazine for all Lutheran women and not merely for those who consider themselves to be members of the LWML. The magazine features stories for today’s women, Bible stud-

ies, and news and information. It is now published in a larger format that is similar to other women’s magazines.

In June 2009, the LWML’s Board of Directors adopted the following three targets and goals for the 2009–2011 biennium:

Primary Target: Growing in the Lord

Through intentional study of the Word, women of today find guidance for their lives and are encouraged in their personal daily walk with the Lord.

Primary Target: Embracing Our Diversity

The Body of Christ grows and is strengthened when sisters of every age, class, culture, and ethnic group are sought out to participate actively in the mission of LWML.

Primary Target: Sharing the Heart and Identity of LWML

The LWML enables and equips its members and advocates to share with others the vision and direction of the LWML as it emphasizes mission outreach locally and globally.

One of the responsibilities of the LWML president is to set the vision for the organization. The current president has shared the vision that the LWML be known as Lutheran Women in Mission who are

In the Word,

honoring a daily appointment with the Father and His Word;

Of the Word,

made over by the Holy Spirit, forgiven and restored;

Walking with the Lord,

totally confident of Christ’s presence in serving and living.

As mentioned, the LWML met in convention June 25–28, 2009, in Portland. More than 3,200 persons gathered to celebrate under the theme “Look to the Hills . . . God Reigns,” based on Psalm 121:1–2 and Isaiah 52:7. Delegates to the convention adopted a mission goal of \$1.825 million, the largest two-year goal in the organization’s history.

2009–2011 Mission Grants

Defray the Cost of Shipping Quilts by Lutheran World Relief	\$80,000
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Food Bank Relocation	\$50,000
The Carpenter’s Hands—Youth Refurbish Homes in Florida	\$26,000
Psalm 69:14 Project—Emergency Disaster Aid in Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana	\$50,000
Digitize Classes for Specific Ministry Pastor Program—Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne	\$36,000
10 Chapels, Transportation, and Pastoral Training in Tanzania	\$88,000
Body and Soul Care for Children in India	\$50,000
LCMS Prison Ministry—Provides Devotional Materials	\$50,000
Lutheran Braille Workers—Provide English Braille Bibles to Africa	\$100,000
Kyrgyzstan Locals Trained for Evangelism	\$100,000
The Hope Center for Refugees and Immigrants—Ohio	\$90,000
Human Care and Pastoral Ministries Developed in Latvia and Lithuania	\$87,500

Mission Support to Disabled Children—Dominican Republic	\$50,000
Native Leadership Scholarships for Students Enrolled in Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT)	\$100,000
Humanitarian Care Outreach in Kazakhstan	\$90,000
International Student Ministry—Provide Bibles and Christ-Oriented Resources	\$30,000
Earthquake Relief Aid and Church Plants in Peru	\$100,000
Light of Christ Chinese Lutheran Mission—St. Louis	\$75,000
Humanitarian Aid—Open Mission Field in North Korea	\$82,482

“Being with Jesus—Living on the Edge” is the theme chosen for the next LWML convention, to be held June 23–26, 2011, in Peoria, Illinois. The theme is based on the passages (NKJV), “And they realized they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13b) and “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). New mission grant recipients will be selected for the 2011–2013 biennium, past grant recipients will share their stories, and attendees will have opportunities to worship, encounter Him in His Word, and live boldly as His children. New officers will be elected, including the LWML’s 17th president, who will serve the organization during the years 2011–2015.

Janice M. Wendorf, *President*

R1-03

International Lutheran Laymen’s League

Introduction

For more than 90 years, the International Lutheran Laymen’s League (Int’l LLL) has focused its energies on its mission: “Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church.” Because of God’s great blessings and the success He has granted through *The Lutheran Hour*® radio program, in 1992 the Int’l LLL captured the essence of its ministry by adopting the title “Lutheran Hour Ministries” (LHM) to describe more clearly its outreach ministries. Thus the Int’l LLL is the corporate name under which it does business and Lutheran Hour Ministries is what it does. As a grassroots auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and the Lutheran Church—Canada (LCC), LHM’s primary purpose is to share the Savior where He is needed most, often in ways beyond what the organized church is able to do.

LHM programs are operated with three initiatives in mind:

- They powerfully proclaim Christ’s love in the public arena so the unchurched can, by God’s power, come to know and respond to Christ’s love.
- They equip Lutheran Church members worldwide with adequate skills and a passion to share their faith and welcome the unchurched.
- They engage Lutheran Church congregations worldwide in a commitment to reach all nations, all peoples, all in Christ.

To accomplish these initiatives, LHM is a Christian media outreach ministry supporting churches worldwide in their efforts to nurture those already in the faith as well as reach the hurting and lost of the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. LHM produces Christian

radio and TV programming for broadcast, as well as Internet and print communications, dramas, music, and outreach materials using the latest in communications technology to reach unchurched people in the United States and in more than 30 countries around the globe. All activities of LHM are funded solely through the generous contributions of loyal supporters.

God has enabled LHM to reach millions of people each year through radio and TV programming and person-to-person and congregational outreach efforts. As a result of these programs, many thousands of people are referred to churches around the world where they can be trained in their faith and engaged in Christian service.

God's Blessings to LHM's Outreach in the Past Triennium

LHM has conducted an evaluation of all programming and outreach offerings to assess their effectiveness and adherence to the primary mission of the organization. As a result, some previously offered resources and programs have been eliminated in an effort to focus more closely on LHM's vision and mission. The following is a summary of God's blessings provided to key ministry programs during the past triennium.

The Lutheran Hour (www.lutheranhour.org)—LHM's flagship program has aired since 1930 and is the world's longest-running Christian outreach radio program. It airs weekly on more than 960 stations in North America, on Sirius XM Satellite Radio, and on the American Armed Forces Network. It is also available at any time to download on computer or iPod. *Para el Camino*, the Spanish version of *The Lutheran Hour*, was launched in December 2008 and is now heard on many radio stations throughout the U.S. and in several Spanish-speaking countries. It is also available on the Web and is downloaded more than 2,300 times weekly.

Woman to Woman® (www.womantowomanradio.com)—LHM began airing new episodes of the *Woman to Woman* radio program in 2008 to promote women's well-being and spiritual growth through in-depth discussions of topical women's issues. Broadcast on nearly 300 radio stations, most of which are secular, it is available on the Internet and through podcast downloads.

Men's NetWork (www.lhmmen.com)—This new ministry has provided men with resources and opportunities to grow in faith and to learn (through service, fellowship, and leadership) how to be what God has called them to be in their families, churches, and communities. Interest in this program has exceeded all expectations, as thousands of congregations and small groups have enrolled for information and Bible study resources. The most sought-after resources are outstanding video-based Bible studies addressing various topics of interest in today's world. With God's continued blessing, this program could well be a catalyst for the rebirth of young men's involvement and engagement in the church.

International Ministries (www.lhmint.org)—LHM has continued to operate ministry centers in more than 30 countries, manned by nationals from those countries to serve the spiritual needs of the people of their cultures. Tools used extensively include Bible correspondence courses, prison ministry, youth ministry, music and drama, holistic ministry, and a variety of media tools. Involvement with these ministry centers provides local congregations with opportunities to learn of and engage in worldwide Gospel outreach.

International Ministries Volunteer Trips (www.lhm.org/globalmission)—Mission trips have offered cross-cultural volunteer opportunities to churches, schools, and other groups to share Christ's love in foreign fields. Projects include construction, children's events,

and medical clinics in partnership with LHM's international ministry centers.

Equipping to Share (www.lhm.org/equipping/ets.htm)—These interactive, Bible-based, one-day evangelism training workshops have taught church members ways to recognize and seize witnessing opportunities and engage the unchurched and the lost in Gospel-sharing moments. A companion program, **Practicing Hospitality**, provides training information, techniques, and exercises to be used by congregations to ensure a warm and welcoming environment for visitors.

Daily Devotions (<http://www.lhm.org/dailydevotions.asp>)—These online devotions provided in written and audio formats have offered comfort and spiritual insight for daily living. LHM continues also to provide special online devotionals during the seasons of Advent and Lent.

Project Connect (www.lhm.org/projectconnect)—This has continued to be an indispensable outreach booklet ministry resource for churches and businesses. It uses displays that feature up to 55 topical LHM booklets written from a Christian perspective to help church members in their daily challenges and to share Christ with the lost.

JCPlayZone (www.jcplayzone.com)—This safe Christian Web site for children continues to feature interactive games, animated Bible stories, devotions, crafts, and more. Its companion site, **JCParentZone** (www.jcparentzone.com), provides resources and ideas for parents that address common family concerns.

The Results of God's Blessings

By God's grace, LHM's various programs as outlined above have resulted in more than one million Gospel-message touches each week in the United States.

Outreach through LHM's international programs last year netted, by the power of the Holy Spirit, nearly 570,000 responses and 52,000 referrals to congregations. At any one time, approximately 250,000 people are engaged in Bible correspondence courses offered through international ministry centers, introducing people to Jesus and the biblical principles of the faith. LHM and its worldwide outreach ministries have also partnered with the LCMS in sharing the Gospel message with unreached and uncommitted people and have actively supported the goals of the *Ablaze!* movement.

As of January 2010, 3,291 churches (2,626 of which are LCMS) have enrolled in the new Men's NetWork program that launched just a year ago. More than 4,560 Men's NetWork Bible studies have also been purchased or downloaded for use by congregations and groups.

God has truly blessed the work of Lutheran Hour Ministries.

Actions to Improve Governance and Structure

The Int'l LLL Board of Governors took several steps in the past triennium to understand better "who we are, what we do, and why." Key to these discussions were actions by the board to adopt a "Statement of Core Values, Competencies of Leadership, Responsibilities of Leadership, and Principles of Governance."

During the 2009 Int'l LLL convention, action was taken to change from annual international conventions of the organization to biennial conventions with regional conferences in the off-years. These regional conferences will focus more on sharing ministries, equipping and training participants, and motivating for action. They are intended to take the story of what God is doing through the international ministries to a local level and to offer ministry opportunities to a new audience, building grassroots excitement, engagement, and support.

A governance committee was also appointed to examine the current structure of the organization, discuss challenges that currently exist, and look for ways to improve efficiencies, effectiveness, and accountability. A proposal was presented to the Board of Governors late in 2009 which would reduce the size of the board, eliminate regional representation of board members, and foster a selection process focused on board competencies. A proposed overture to the 2010 LCMS convention addresses providing flexibility for auxiliaries in the title they designate for their chief elected officers. Bylaw changes to adopt both proposals for biennial conventions and a new governance structure will be presented to the 2010 Int'l LLL convention, scheduled for July 22–24 in Omaha. If adopted by the convention, the new governance structure will be fully implemented in the summer of 2012.

Goals for the Future

LHM will continue its dedication to vibrant domestic and international ministry in general, but the organization's vision will focus especially on four core areas: *The Lutheran Hour* and *Woman to Woman* broadcast programs; international ministries; and the Men's NetWork.

Specific Goals for Next Triennium

- Increase weekly listenership of *The Lutheran Hour* and *Woman to Woman* broadcasts to 2.5 million people.
- Continue to provide LCMS and LCC congregations with services and resources to accompany their proclamation of the Gospel and witness to their communities.
- Increase the number of congregations that participate in the Men's NetWork.
- Increase the number of congregations that are using LHM's "Equipping to Share" training and resources.
- Strengthen collaborative and cooperative partnership efforts with the LCMS Board for Mission Services.
- Strengthen existing ministry partnerships, and identify and develop new partnerships for prayer support, advocacy, and volunteer and financial support.
- Strengthen collaboration with partner churches overseas with a goal of generating an additional three to four million responses.
- Assist international ministry centers to identify existing and emerging technologies that can effectively engage people with the salvation story of Jesus Christ, and increase outreach with a personal touch through holistic ministries.
- Integrate Gospel outreach resources developed in foreign ministry centers for use in North American congregations to reach out to ethnically diverse groups, immigrants, and refugee communities.
- Provide opportunities for donors to engage in specific ministry projects with their financial support.

Challenges

Along with many other agencies of the church, LHM also faces challenges in the years ahead. As leaders in our church body, LHM recognizes Satan's desire that its efforts fail. Accordingly, the Int'l LLL must be bold to do the following:

- Use new technology and media tools effectively to proclaim the Gospel.
- Provide dynamic programs and resources that support local churches.

- Foster grassroots activities that meet local church and ministry needs.
- Communicate effectively within churches and support groups.
- Assure that members are clear about the expectations of the organization in the use of time, treasure, and talent to advance the mission.
- Engage members who are activated and motivated to serve their Lord.
- Be bold to ask for financial assistance, which helps drive our mission.
- Implement an organizational structure that is visionary and mission-driven.
- Develop a strong leadership base and a leadership development program that meets the needs of the governing board and develops aspiring candidates to serve on the board.
- Use our volunteer human resources effectively.
- Use our financial resources effectively.
- Incorporate greater diversity within the organization (geography, age, gender, and ethnicity).

With God's grace and direction, challenges will be met and LHM will not only thrive but will also become an even more powerful Gospel media force in the years ahead.

In Conclusion

God has blessed His church at large through the use of various media and technology tools for outreach such as those employed by Lutheran Hour Ministries. LHM has also provided valuable resources and services to the congregations of the LCMS and LCC. Those services may be as simple as providing *The Lutheran Hour* sermons and Daily Devotions for shut-ins and the home-bound. They may include training for outreach and evangelism efforts, topical booklets for addressing daily problems or witnessing, Christian outreach tools and resources on the Internet, Bible study information and devotions, or opportunities for hands-on service projects in a foreign country. They may include solid doctrinal media programming and the truth of the unchanging message of the Gospel, helping to associate area listeners with local LCMS and LCC congregations.

But Lutheran Hour Ministries is much more. Not only do its media tools help grow and nurture faithful Christians by the power of the Holy Spirit, but they also enable the Gospel message to penetrate the expanse of distance, the barriers of prison walls, and the lines of civil unrest or hostile political regimes. They bring a message of forgiveness, love, and hope found only in Jesus Christ to a world that is hurting and hungry for the one thing so sorely needed.

Lutheran Hour Ministries pledges to continue as a leader in sharing the Gospel through whatever communications, media, and technology means are most effective to touch lives for Christ. It will continue to offer training and outreach tools for local volunteer evangelism efforts. It will strive to be a leading resource for sound Lutheran programming to support churches and pastors in their outreach efforts, not only in the U.S. but throughout the world. LHM thanks the congregations, church workers, and members of the LCMS for the prayers, involvement, and gifts of love which have helped to support its mission of "Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church."

Michael Onnen, *President*
Bruce Wurdeman, *Executive Director*

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Board for District and Congregational Services

Introduction

The LCMS Board for District and Congregational Services (DCS) “serves with districts in assisting congregations to develop and foster vibrant ministries to bring the saving, life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ to the sinful, dying world” (Bylaw 3.8.6.2). The strategic direction of the DCS continues to support the three foundational pillars of the Synod: “One Mission, One Message, One People.”

Strategic Direction and Initiatives

The strategic direction of DCS is defined by a vision of what it wants to be by the year 2011: (1) a collaborative, integrated, ministry network driven by a shared commitment to responsiveness, service, and quality for all districts, congregations, and schools; (2) a leader in promoting accountability through the use of strong measurement tools within the ministry units; (3) an innovator in the advancement of technology to connect districts, congregations, and schools, thereby enhancing LCMS mission and ministry; and (4) a catalyst in supporting new and proven ways of advancing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Elements of the aforementioned LCMS foundational pillars are present in each of the six DCS strategic direction initiatives. This shared focus strengthens the relationship between the pillars and the strategic initiatives, whether (1) empowering leaders for mission, (2) equipping congregations for outreach, (3) fostering faith development in children and adults, (4) encouraging biblical stewardship, (5) strengthening churches and schools for ministry, or (6) responding innovatively to twenty-first century issues.

Ministry Area Triennium Report

(1) Empowering Leaders for Mission

Children's Ministry

- Approximately 2,200 LCMS early childhood program directors benefited from the quarterly resource *Touchpoints*.
- The staff of the Children's Ministry Department continued to provide a unifying vision, voice, and physical presence for ministry with children and families through publications, presentations, visits to schools and congregations, and consultations and collaboration with districts and congregational leaders. These activities by the staff in their role as administrative leaders of the Synod helped people regain a vision of God's kingdom and reflect upon their fundamental role in Christ's mission as it applies to and is carried out with children and families (next generation ministry).
- Two administrative systems, Children's Ministry Action Team and Early Childhood Consultants, carried out national goals and objectives for children's ministry.
- The National Network of Early Childhood Consultants was expanded in number and met annually for its consultants' conferences. Participants expressed high regard for these conferences which offered leadership training, challenged thinking, and provided opportunity for joint problem-solving and district sharing. Monthly conference calls were also used to address key issues.

Family Ministry

- The development of the Family Ministry Action Team increased opportunities for collaboration with the Concordia University System (CUS), districts, and congregations.
- Visits with five CUS family ministry classes provided positive interaction with students and faculty.

- Visits from Family Ministry Department staff supported district and regional family ministry leaders.
- Synodwide goals supporting a national vision for family ministry were developed and circulated.
- The 2010 Family Ministry Visioning Summit in Phoenix brought together actual families with 20 leaders with known expertise in ministry for discussion of the future direction of family ministry.
- A Family Ministry Conference attended by 40 regional leaders provided opportunity for mutual sharing and initiated the development of a regional network of support for intentional congregational family ministry.

School Ministry

- The “National Funding Academy” was established to help Lutheran school administrators understand their roles as financial leaders. More than 900 administrators, pastors, and lay people attended one of these academies.
- 125 potential Lutheran school administrators were trained and equipped through the School Leadership and Development (SLED) program. More than 600 persons have now received this training, 45 percent of whom currently serve as administrators of Lutheran schools.

Stewardship Ministry

- A Stewardship Ministry Leadership Team was established to implement a vision and goals for intentional year-round stewardship emphasis in the LCMS. The team has met quarterly to plan stewardship training opportunities, evaluate resources, and provide overall direction for stewardship ministry.
- Stewardship counselors were engaged to assist districts in establishing and implementing stewardship goals. Consultants visited district leaders to listen to stewardship needs and encourage networking and the sharing of resources.
- Annual national training conferences provided resources and training for district stewardship leaders, informing and inspiring them for service as advocates for intentional stewardship education.

Youth Ministry

- National Lutheran youth workers conferences provided volunteer youth workers and lay persons from throughout the Synod with training, encouragement, inspiration, and networking opportunities.
- Youth ministry symposiums challenged professional youth workers, especially pastors, regarding major youth ministry issues and topics such as young adult ministry, adolescent spirituality, and Christian/biblical worldviews.
- The Lutheran Youth Fellowship Teen Leadership Initiative targeted high school teenagers with training that focused on building intergenerational youth ministry in congregations, developing individuals' gifts, team building, and outreach to unchurched youth.
- The 2007 National LCMS Youth Gathering provided venues for teens to help them understand and be equipped for a variety of issues, topics, and ministries.

(2) Equipping Congregations for Outreach

Children's Ministry

- The National Children's Ministry Conference offered several workshops which focused on outreach and urgently challenged participants to take the Gospel outside the walls of church and home.

- Work was begun on the development of a resource for organizing for children's ministry, which will include a section on reaching/serving families in the greater community.
- The first National Children's Ministry Workshop, "INsideOUT," was planned and developed in partnership with the North Wisconsin District. The August 2010 workshop will focus on the cycle of gathering as a Christian community and then going outside the walls to serve the greater community.
- Work was begun on a revision and expansion of *In His Hands*, a primary resource for beginning and operating early childhood programs, now also to include a chapter addressing strategies for effectively reaching out to the community and to the growing number of families with no church affiliation that are coming to early childhood centers.

Family Ministry

- A vision for family ministry was developed and articulated in an e-presentation for use by family ministry network regional leaders as they champion intentional ministry with families within their congregations and regions.
- Family ministry e-publications (*24/7*, *Home Base*, and *Great Expectations*) continued to address the importance of outreach "through families to families" and provided practical ideas for expanding outreach strategies in the local church setting.

School Ministry

- During the past triennium, over 6,000 students were baptized as a result of their attending a Lutheran school.
- Ten components for "Lutheran Schools of Excellence" were identified and developed for use by Lutheran schools as they prepare to be the "school of choice" in their neighborhoods.
- A resource manual for National Lutheran Schools Week provided service activity suggestions to empower students to reach out to their communities in unique ways.
- National Lutheran Schools Week offered congregations and schools opportunity to celebrate their special heritage and promote themselves in their communities.
- "Strengthening Schools and Congregations" (SSAC) provided recommendations to enable struggling Lutheran schools to remain effective in providing services and outreach to their communities, so that the mission of "sharing the caring Christ" could be accomplished more effectively.

Stewardship Ministry

- *Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees* provided encouragement to individuals and congregations for their outreach. Module 3 of the process, "Living as God's Child," focuses on the importance of being stewards of the Gospel. Module 4, "Living as God's Family," focuses on the importance of the congregation being about God's mission.
- The *Congregational Stewardship Workbook* was put in an e-learning format to allow leaders to access it online for "just in time" learning.
- New video resources were prepared for the purpose of assisting professional church workers and lay persons with their stewardship leadership responsibilities. E-learning resources include materials from Module 1 of *Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees*, "Living with God's Word."

2010 Convention Workbook

Youth Ministry

- The Lutheran Youth Fellowship Teen Leadership Initiative promoted outreach to youth through its "Teens Reaching Teens" training initiative.
- The Youth Ministry Department began a major outreach project under the title "The Eutychus Project," which explores ways for churches to reach unchurched and marginally-churched youth more effectively.
- A major emphasis developed for the 2010 National LCMS Youth Gathering encourages congregations to target and invite non-churched teens to attend.
- The Young Adult Task Force challenged congregations to build a post-high school youth and young adult ministry.

(3) Fostering Faith Development in Children and Adults

Children's Ministry

- Children were authentically engaged in every aspect of the National Children's Ministry Conference as event leaders, workshop hosts, greeters, and more.
- Articles of the Web magazine, *Children's Ministry (CM) Connections*, were downloaded an average of 30,000 times per month.
- More than 600 individuals were involved in an ongoing national prayer ministry for children that was established during this triennium.
- The 2008 National Children's Ministry Conference, which set a new direction for such conferences with greater focus on the actual involvement of children in all aspects of the conference, prompted the complete reworking of the 2010 VBS resources published by CPH.

Family Ministry

- More than 9,000 subscribers to family ministry e-newsletters benefited from current literature and research relative to ministry with families and were offered insight and ideas for promoting faith growth in the home setting and in the local congregation.
- Administrative systems were planned, initiated, and mobilized within the DCS Family Ministry Department to carry out programs to promote vision, goals, and objectives that will support, equip, and encourage those involved in family ministry (Family Ministry Action Team, Family Ministry Summit, Regional Family Ministry Network, and more).

School Ministry

- More than 300 Lutheran schools participated in the "Ablaze! Bible Listening Project," which encouraged students to listen to the Bible with an iPod device and then pass that device on to others.
- Quality resources such as "Chapel Talks" and the *National Lutheran Schools Week Resource Manual* provided worship and devotional resources to foster faith development in the lives of students, faculty, and administrators.
- The "Spiritual Development" component of Lutheran Schools of Excellence encouraged educators to mentor students as they grew in their relationship with Christ.

Stewardship Ministry

- More than 6,000 people benefitted from *StewardCAST*, a monthly e-newsletter that regularly includes inspirational stewardship material and listings of stewardship resources for subscribers.

- A stewardship newsletter for pastors was initiated to elevate and expand stewardship education in the congregation. This newsletter includes inspirational articles, book reviews, and Bible studies in stewardship.
- The *Faith Aflame* process provided “Stewardship Learning Community” resources including Bible studies, stewardship discussion starters, and prayer resources for congregations.

Youth Ministry

- The 2007 National LCMS Youth Gathering targeted youth through Bible study, worship, and nurturing components with a core emphasis in catechesis.
- *thESource* Internet site provided study materials to help young people grapple with issues that are a part of the teenage culture, respond to current events, and confess/express their faith.
- New efforts were begun to help congregations develop effective methods to connect young adults (post-high school youth through young adults into their thirties) with faith, life, and church.

(4) Encouraging Biblical Stewardship

Children’s Ministry

- National goals for early childhood program directors, including goals for stewardship of time, talents, and resources, were developed and published annually.
- The Children’s Ministry Action Team and the Network of District Early Childhood Consultants continued their service of validating the gifts of others. These teams have the capacity to help others achieve their goals, and to equip children’s ministry and early childhood education ministry leaders with resources to create and nurture climates of trust and reciprocity.
- The first National Children’s Ministry Art Show provided opportunity for children to share their talents by donating art, which was then purchased by participants through their contributions. The proceeds were used to benefit a preselected ministry organization.

Family Ministry

- *Great Expectations*, a new monthly e-newsletter, focused on using the gifts of people of all ages, specifically on engaging older people in ministry.
- Promotional resources were developed to support family ministry, critically important for passing along vibrant faith from one generation to the next.
- Stewardship of time, talents, and treasure was a frequent topic in the recently developed e-publications *24/7: A Newsletter for the Christian Home* and *Home Base: An e-Journal on Christian Family Life*.

School Ministry

- More than 900 school administrators, pastors, and lay people attended the nine National Funding Academies offered by the School Ministry Department.
- The School Ministry Department also partnered with the LCMS Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) to promote the *K.I.D.S. Count* stewardship curriculum for Lutheran elementary schools.

Stewardship Ministry

- The Stewardship Ministry Department provided LCMS congregations with quality adaptive change materials as part of the *Faith Aflame* process. Pilot congregations in 20 districts that participated in the workshop have begun Stewardship Learning Communities.

- Congregations were actively encouraged to participate in LCEF’s “Consecrated Stewards” program as a way to begin intentional stewardship education. More than 400 congregations have participated.
- Seminary leaders were consulted and stewardship materials were provided for seminarians.
- Partnership with LCEF was used to promote the *K.I.D.S. Count* stewardship curriculum for Lutheran elementary Schools.

Youth Ministry

- The 2010 National LCMS Youth Gathering is challenging youth groups to tithe the proceeds from their fundraising efforts in support of a variety of projects, including the rebuilding efforts of RAI/Camp Restore in New Orleans; youth ministry training for youth, laypeople, and professional church workers; local and district mission projects; and outreach projects to reach teens. A portion of the Youth Gathering offering will be used to help fund outreach efforts back home in local congregations.
- “Teen Focus Training” helped teens identify their gifts and explore opportunities to use those gifts in ministry. This training, part of the Lutheran Youth Fellowship Teen Leadership Initiative, was written by a teenager.
- LCMS servant events engaged youth and adults in meaningful service, training, and spiritual growth around the country. More than 2,000 youth took part in more than 100 events during the summer of 2009.

(5) Strengthening Churches and Schools for Ministry

Children’s Ministry

- An infusion of resources, workshop facilitation, custom-designed training, group support facilitation, and technical assistance necessary to upgrade quality of early childhood education and congregation children’s ministry was developed over the past triennium, including the early childhood mailing “DIRECTed,” Children’s Ministry Leadership Training, and Children’s Ministry Action Teams.
- More than 550 leaders in children’s ministry benefited from learning gained at the first National Children’s Ministry Conference held in 2008.
- More than 7,000 people subscribed to the e-bulletin *Children’s Ministry Net*, an increase of nearly 1,500 subscribers during this triennium.
- Approximately 7,500 early childhood educators, directors, directors of Christian education, directors of children’s ministry, and volunteers advanced their skills for working more effectively with children through retreats, seminars, and workshops conducted by the Children’s Ministry Department’s staff at events sponsored by districts and other LCMS entities.

Family Ministry

- A regional network of family ministry leaders was established to support congregations’ growth in effectiveness in organizing for intentional family ministry and support of the Christian home.
- A summit attended by the regional network leaders provided opportunity for collaborative planning, leading to development goals carried out by the Expanded Family Ministry Action Team.
- The family ministry Web pages were redesigned to address more effectively the needs of families and of those who serve them.
- Staff-led workshops in district and congregational settings offered skills and insights to help local congregations expand and strengthen their ministry to families.

School Ministry

- Eight Lutheran schools were identified and recognized as National Exemplary Lutheran Schools by National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA).
- Eleven Lutheran schools achieved U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon School status in recognition of the quality Christian education program these schools provide to the communities that they serve.
- Thirty-five Lutheran schools and congregations received a Strengthening Schools and Congregations (SSAC) visit with ongoing follow-up.
- More than 7,000 subscribers to the school ministry e-newsletter benefited from current information relating to Lutheran schools.
- The “School Mailing,” consisting of 13 monthly publications, provided support for school administrators, pastors, teachers, parents, and school board members.

Stewardship Ministry

- A unified vision and goals for stewardship ministry were established and implemented, including providing stewardship resources in multiple languages, assisting educational institutions in intentional stewardship education, providing training to district and congregational stewardship leaders, and partnering with LCMS entities to further the stewardship cause throughout the church body.
- New stewardship resources for district leaders and congregations were provided in partnership with LCEF, and “Lifetime Plan for Giving” seminars were offered in partnership with the LCMS Foundation.
- A new adaptive change process, designed to evaluate and address the stewardship culture in congregations, was implemented in the *Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees* process.
- Eleven booklets from the *Congregational Stewardship Workbook* were offered online in an e-learning format to provide congregation stewardship leaders with “just in time” learning experiences in the area of Christian stewardship.
- Four sessions of the video-based *Pastor as Stewardship Leader* series were made available online.

Youth Ministry

- The 2007 National LCMS Youth Gathering supported congregational youth ministry, encouraged strong connections to the national church body, supported local efforts through outreach, provided a connector for young people and their church, and built intergenerational support for teens and young adults.
- The Young Adult Task Force targeted its efforts toward connecting young adults (post-high school youth through young adults into their early thirties) with local congregational and interchurch ministry opportunities. A national young adult servant event took place during the summer of 2009, and more local events are being promoted in 2010.
- *thESource*, a free, doctrinally-reviewed, contemporary, and connected top quality online resource written by LCMS professionals was made available (www.youthesource.com).
- Adult training events for lay people and professional church workers, such as the National Lutheran Youth Workers Conference and the Youth Ministry Symposium, focused on the practical application of principles that build strong youth and young adult ministries back home. “What does this mean?” and “How is this done?” were always two focus questions.

(6) Responding Innovatively to 21st-Century Issues*Children’s Ministry*

- In spite of greatly reduced financial resources and staff, children’s ministry expanded through the development of various systems (action teams and other district and congregational leaders, both laity and church work professionals) and through the strategic use of technology.
- Thirty-five early childhood program directors reported greater effectiveness as a result of the *DIRECTed* e-training program.
- Approximately 60 leaders in children’s ministry reported greater effectiveness and growing confidence in their leadership roles in congregations as a result of the “Children’s Ministry Leadership Training” e-training.

Family Ministry

- Despite greatly reduced financial resources and staff, the Family Ministry Department expanded ministry area work and service through the development of various leadership systems (action teams and district and congregational leaders, both laity and church work professionals) and through the strategic use of technology.
- In light of fiscal restraints, the department hosted a visioning summit of 20 key leaders in family ministry to guide the future direction of family ministry, a ministry critical for passing along vibrant, life-changing faith from one generation to the next.
- A “Family Ministry Blog” was developed on the LCMS Web page to address current issues in family life and society and provide opportunity for electronic interaction with constituents.
- The e-publication “Ten Tips for Your Family Ministry in 2010” was distributed to over 9,000 subscribers and was posted on the LCMS Family Ministry Web page.

School Ministry

- More than 700 Lutheran schools have subscribed to the Lutheran School Portal, providing resources and connectivity for Lutheran schools.
- Eight of the 781 Lutheran schools accredited by National Lutheran School Accreditation have been recognized as National Exemplary Lutheran Schools.
- Ten components for “Lutheran Schools of Excellence” have been made available to Lutheran schools to help them become twenty-first century schools.
- School Ministry Department staff members have made themselves available to lead presentations that will introduce and equip teachers and administrators with the latest educational practices and cutting-edge technology.
- More than 600 educators have participated in the “Education Technology Integration Assessment” that provides insight into the integration of technology with curriculum.

Stewardship Ministry

- Eleven modules of the *Congregational Stewardship Workbook* have been placed online in e-learning format to provide easy access to leaders and individual congregation members for “just in time” learning.
- The introductory workshop for the *Faith Aflame* process has been made available in e-learning format online.
- A *Faith Aflame* Web site has been established to provide free stewardship resources for congregations. New resources include four modules of the *Faith Aflame* process with Stewardship Learning Community discussion guides, Bible studies, devotions, a sermon

series on the eight stewardship principles, newsletters for pastors, etc.

- The Stewardship Ministry Department has continued providing free Web-based weekly bulletin “blurb” resources and monthly newsletter articles for ongoing stewardship education in the congregation.
- New DVD resources providing additional tools for the *Faith Aflame* process continue to be offered.

Youth Ministry

- The Lutheran Youth Fellowship Teen Initiative, the National LCMS Youth Gathering, the Youth Ministry Symposium, National Lutheran Youth Workers, and *theSource* all address current events and issues that are a part of our church and our culture. With teenagers and young adults very much enmeshed in contemporary culture and impacted by it, the Youth Ministry Department seriously focuses on how to help teens and young adults respond to today’s culture and how to empower congregations to take the lead.
- Youth ministry programs, events, and resources have tackled young adult ministry, teen sexual abuse, spirituality as opposed to religion, developing a Christian worldview, outreach in a tolerant world, declining youth populations in both the country and in the church, as well as other subjects. The Youth Ministry Department always strives to be supportive and encouraging to youth and young adult ministries.

Additional Ways in Which the Board for District and Congregational Services Has Served the Synod

1. LCMS Children’s Ministry and LCMS Family Ministry serve as the visionary and unifying voice for ministries with children and families in the Synod. Administrative systems have been planned, initiated, and mobilized (Family Ministry Action Team, Children’s Ministry Action Team, and Early Childhood Consultants Network). Comprised of district and congregational leaders, these teams collaborate with various groups and organizations to carry out the vision, mission, goals, and objectives that support, equip, and encourage those who serve in these vital areas.
2. LCMS School Ministry serves as the national voice for Lutheran schools in the Synod. It advocates for professional excellence, links to relevant resources and services, builds collaborative systems of service and support, and provides a timely response to needs and issues.
3. LCMS Stewardship Ministry, partnering with the LCMS Foundation as an active instructor in “Lifetime Plan for Giving” seminars, makes stewardship presentations to various LCMS entities and assists in preparing LCMS district leaders to facilitate local stewardship efforts.
4. LCMS Youth Ministry continues to serve the LCMS by providing timely leadership training for youth and adults, promoting servant events for youth and adults, sponsoring the National LCMS Youth Gathering (the single largest gathering event for the LCMS), and serving as the national advocate for LCMS youth ministry.

Conclusion

Significant opportunities, challenges, and concerns currently facing LCMS District and Congregational Services

1. Opportunities for DCS are the following:
 - o to focus on sharing the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ;
 - o to focus on stewardship education;
 - o to help Lutheran schools become twenty-first century schools;

- o to lead congregations to understand that children and youth are the future of the LCMS and need to be intentionally provided with ongoing Christian education and ministry support; and
- o to lead congregations to embrace the urgent need for intentional ministry with families, family ministry being missional ministry.

2. Challenges for the DCS are:

- o the current Synod hiring freeze (the Executive Director, Associate Director of Children’s Ministry, and Associate Director of Stewardship positions are vacant);
- o the continued reduction in staffing due to financial constraints; and
- o The limited or non-existent financial resources for programs.

3. Concerns of the DCS are:

- o the declining Baptism rate in Lutheran congregations;
- o the prospect of limited financial resources in the future; and
- o the question how current DCS ministries will fit into the new proposed LCMS structure.

Future goals of LCMS District and Congregational Services

In continuing to pursue the following initiatives, DCS pledges that it will model good stewardship of our Synod’s precious resources, collaborating across all ministry areas and through the shared vision of “One Mission, One Message, One People.” DCS remains dedicated to:

- empowering leaders for mission;
- equipping congregations for outreach;
- fostering faith development in children and adults;
- encouraging biblical stewardship;
- strengthening churches and schools for ministry; and
- responding innovatively to twenty-first century issues.

Overtures submitted by LCMS District and Congregational Services

DCS has submitted overtures to the 2010 convention of the Synod to advocate for:

- the recruitment and retention of full-time church workers;
- the continuation of children’s, youth, family, school, and stewardship ministry services for districts and congregations; and
- an orderly transition for district and congregational services should restructuring recommendations be adopted by the 2010 convention.

David E. Bruns, *Chairman*
William D. Cochran, *Interim Executive Director*

R2-02

Commission on Worship

The current Commission on Worship, comprised of seven members appointed by the President of the Synod (Bylaw 3.9.7.1), is immersed in addressing the worship situation ongoing in the Synod. As an appointed group, the members represent a microcosm of the Synod’s varying positions on matters of worship. It is the commission’s collaborative task to shore up the treasure of the Lutheran heritage of worship as it has been advanced, confirmed, and published in the vast constellation of resources associated with *Lutheran Service Book* (Bylaw 3.9.7.2). Furthermore, the commission has been actively engaged in seeking to understand, network, and care for the growing number of pastors, musicians, and laity who are skilled in navigating, harnessing, and unleashing the benefits of multimedia in worship and are able to integrate Web delivery systems that readily

provide nearly an infinite number of worship repertoire choices (Bylaw 3.9.7). Out of necessity, the commission has had to embrace living with the challenge of weighing ecclesiastical authority, personal preference, and thoughtful appreciation for local contextual practices.

Conversations initiated by the commission have sought to balance and consider matters of worship that are unequivocally theological, practical, and missional. Through a labyrinth of networks, the commission has sought to create a permeating sense of concord throughout the Synod, so that congregations and church workers may continue to walk together grounded firmly in a sacramental identity whereby worshipers humbly receive the divine service of God through the proclamation of the Gospel and the faithful administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Certainly God's people gathered around Word and Sacrament are to be continually revitalized by celebrating the Eucharist feast where faith is bolstered, forgiveness is declared, and saints of God from every time, place, context, and mission gather to feast upon the lavish grace of God.

Admittedly, the commission has moved intentionally beyond the printed bylaw guidelines outlined in the 2007 *Handbook*. Resolutions from previous conventions have expressed the need for greater awareness, development, and appreciations for diverse worship resources, such as Res. 2-04 of the 2004 convention, which

- affirmed “respect for diversity in worship practices as we build greater understanding of our theology of worship and foster further discussion of worship practices that are consistent with that theology”;
- encouraged “pastors, musicians, and worship leaders to exercise this freedom responsibly”; and
- called on the commission “to initiate a process leading toward the development of diverse worship resources for use in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.”

Furthermore, 2007 Res. 2-01 resolved

- that “the Commission on Worship and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations organize a model theological conference, including representation of pastors and laity from each district as well as representation from each of our schools of higher learning,” in order to fulfill 2004 Res. 2-04;
- that the districts of our Synod be encouraged “to organize similar conferences to further discussion and understanding”; and
- that “the Commission on Worship, in consultation with the Council of Presidents and the faculties of our seminaries, universities, and colleges, prepare studies on this topic for use in circuits and congregations.”

To fulfill the requirements of the above bylaws and resolutions, the Commission on Worship has specifically collaborated, consulted, endorsed, administered, and/or created the following events, endeavors, publications, and resources.

Conferences

1. “The Institute on Liturgy, Preaching, and Church Music,” July 22–25, 2008, at Concordia University, Nebraska—a nationwide gathering of 750 pastors, musicians, and laity who are engaged in conversation, education, and diverse and practical expressions of Lutheran worship practices that are grounded in Word and Sacrament.
2. “Word and Sacrament Ministry in This and the Next Generation,” a “Worship Leaders’ Conference Exploring Worship Diversity in a Campus Culture,” February 15–17, 2009—a gathering of university/seminary chaplains and deans called to discuss in an open and collegial manner contextual worship paradigms at each and every campus ministry setting of the Synod.

3. “A Model Theological Conference—Toward a Theology of Worship That Is . . .,” January 11–13, 2010, in St. Louis—a gathering of district presidents, designated pastors, musicians, and lay persons from every district that is currently and constructively engaged in contextual/contemporary and/or traditional/liturgical worship. A series of well articulated discourses on the confessional, scriptural, missional, vocational, personal, contextual, practical, and theological aspects of worship was presented and a series of wide-ranging worship opportunities was modeled.
4. “A Lutheran Songwriters’ Conference—Singing the Sacraments of God,” April 22–23, 2010, in St. Louis—a gathering of Lutheran songwriters, worship leaders, and educators actively engaged in shaping the musical worship life of the Synod’s congregations.

Resources

1. *LSB: Guitar Chord Edition*—A comprehensive collection of the hymnody in *LSB* scored in lead-sheet format for guitarists and keyboardists, intended for ensemble or individual use in corporate worship and group and family devotions.
2. *Children Making Music DVD*—A video presentation endorsing through testimony and witness the value of engaging children in the task of making music in the context of Lutheran worship.
3. “Let Us Pray”—An ongoing subscription service providing weekly prayers for the worship life of our congregations.
4. “Worship Survey”—An expansive survey of worship practices developed and administered with the assistance and care of personnel from LCMS Rosters and Statistics. The survey explored the varieties of worship practices and attitudes across the Synod. Results of the survey are posted online.
5. “Theses on Worship”—A comprehensive document prepared by the Council of Presidents that coalesces specific worship principles clearly delineated in Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.
6. Online digital recordings of the comprehensive liturgies drawn from *Lutheran Service Book* have been made available so that pastors and musicians can effectively model and lead corporate worship.
7. “As We Gather”—Lectionary summary statements are released regularly to coordinate with the historic one-year and the three-year lectionary series, helping pastors and parishioners make connections between the readings, particularly as they relate to the Church Year.

Para Church Organization Collaboration

1. **Center for U.S. Missions Worship Consultant**—During the first year of the past triennium, study groups were formed in collaboration with the worship consultant connected to the Center for U.S. Missions to evaluate nearly 200 contemporary worship songs being used in LCMS congregations. The result was the online “Song Evaluation Tool,” an expandable resource to inform congregations of particular strengths or weaknesses of the worship songs based on a prescribed set of Lutheran constructs as defined in the resource “Text Music Context—A Resource for Reviewing Worship Materials.”
2. **Transforming Church Network**—The commission’s executive director recruited an advisory group of pastors to assist Rev. Dr. Terry Tieman in developing an initial module on worship practices that are distinctly Lutheran and yet sensitive to intentional missional endeavors. This online publication will be available directly through Transforming Church Network.

Future Resources

1. **Re:sound**—The Commission on Worship continues to establish an online network of diverse pastors, musicians, technicians, and

worship leaders who actively engage in the creation, administration, and implementation of worship at the local congregational level.

2. **LSB: *Hymnal Companion***—This comprehensive edition will provide essays, vast historic documentation, textual detail, music discussion, and creative practical suggestions on how to understand and integrate the rich hymnic resources made available in *Lutheran Service Book*.
3. **LSB: *Liturgy Desk Edition***—This resource will explain the background of each liturgical component in the divine services and daily offices in *Lutheran Service Book*, providing careful historic background as well as rubrics regarding liturgical presiding and service leadership.
4. **LSB: *Hymn of the Day Bible Study Series***—This resource will explore the biblical foundation for select hymns in *Lutheran Service Book*. The initial goal is to provide online or printed resources as needed for congregations and/or individuals engaged in studying hymn texts as they are related to Scripture and integrated into various worship settings.
5. **DVD *Contemporary Hymn Accompaniments***—A resource that represents the culmination of research, consultation, and development of fresh accompaniments and video components for congregational song. This is an intentional endeavor to begin moderating, encouraging, and providing a fresh palette of sounds to support the singing of hymnody in contemporary idioms.

Institutional Connections

1. **Seminaries**—Personnel from the Commission on Worship have provided encouragement for and engaged in forum discussions with the faculties of LCMS seminaries to ascertain assistance in resolving theological, missional, and practical issues regarding worship practices in the Synod.
2. **Concordia Universities**—The Commission on Worship has provided advice for and engaged in collaborative efforts with several Synod colleges and universities in support of the development of responsible certification programs to assist future musicians and pastors to navigate through the complexities of hymnal and non-hymnal worship.

In response to its mandates, the Commission on Worship is purposely engaged at a very critical juncture in the Synod's history. The commission stands in the middle of an intersection that is filled with individuals and groups that have singular preferences and passions related to worship. This ongoing situation may confuse and challenge our ability to present a clear unwavering Gospel proclamation of One Mission, One Message, One People. In the meantime, within the mosaic of worship practices that characterize the national Synod, the commission continues to encourage faithful yet diverse members, gifted musicians, and pastoral leaders to worship the Triune God, in spirit and in truth, as individuals and as congregations of the Synod.

Gregory Wismar, *Chairman*
David Johnson, *Executive Director*

R2-03

Concordia Publishing House

Since its founding in 1869, Concordia Publishing House has had one purpose: to be the publishing arm of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It is committed to the reality that quality performance is what we are called to give in service to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, together, as *one people—forgiven*. The LCMS can be proud that its publishing company is well respected across the country and around

the world. In spite of a challenging period of economic downturn, Concordia Publishing House has remained strong and viable, thanks to the support of its loyal customers and, most important, because of God's grace and blessing.

Mission Statement

Concordia Publishing House is the publishing arm of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It exists for the purposes of strengthening and aiding member congregations in their proclamation of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and working in partnership with the agencies and congregations of the Synod to provide publishing services. On their behalf, Concordia Publishing House will develop, produce, market, and distribute products and services that are faithful to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and which will effectively serve such proclamation to people throughout the world. All to the glory of God.

Vision Statement

CPH strives to be the premier publisher and provider of choice for products and services that are faithful to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

CPH Serves Churches, Schools, and Homes through a Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Concordia Publishing House is committed to continuous improvement in all aspects of its work in order to serve its customers as best as it can.

Customer service is a passion throughout the organization. CPH engages in an ongoing interactive dialogue through its Web site, customer service initiatives, Church Resource Consultants, and conference representatives. Deployed Church Resource Consultants make personal visits to hundreds of congregations and schools every year. CPH staff is present throughout the Missouri Synod at hundreds of Synod events, involving most professional church workers and many thousands of laypersons.

CPH's strongest measure of performance is customer loyalty. Scientific surveys taken of its customers by the Center for Client Retention in the past three years show that 95 percent of all customers reported being "delighted" and "very satisfied" with their CPH experience. The year 2009 broke records for customer loyalty, with nearly 99 percent of CPH's customers reporting that they would recommend CPH to others—and many have done so. In May 2009, CPH was awarded certification as a Center of Excellence by BenchmarkPortal, in collaboration with the national Center for Customer-Driven Quality at Purdue University.

In October 2009, Concordia Publishing House was awarded a Missouri Quality Award by the Excellence in Missouri Foundation, which works to promote quality principles in business, education, government, and health care. The Foundation's recognition of a Christian nonprofit publishing company solidifies the genuine relationship between business excellence and the "firstfruits service" of Concordia Publishing House. The Excellence in Missouri Foundation is one of nation's strongest and most active state-level quality-award programs, working in partnership with the United States government's Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award program, established by the United States Congress in 1987 to recognize U.S. organizations for achievements in quality and performance.

Further evidence of CPH's commitment to performance excellence in service to the LCMS came when it was awarded a 2009 Best

Christian Workplace award, given on the basis of confidential surveys of the organization's employees.

CPH Partners with, and Supports, LCMS Agencies and Entities

Concordia Publishing House enjoys excellent partnerships with the national and district agencies and entities of the LCMS. It works in close cooperation with the Synod's major program boards and corporate entities, and it supports the work of the LCMS International Center's various administrative and communication units. CPH's Concordia Gospel Outreach ministry exists to help congregations connect directly with various needs for resources around the world, providing resources to a wide variety of mission activities.

CPH was pleased in the last triennium to expand the number of its bookstores. It now operates bookstores on the campuses of both LCMS seminaries as well as on the campuses of Concordia University Chicago, Concordia University Nebraska, and Concordia University, Ann Arbor. CPH also has a store in its St. Louis headquarters as well as one in the LCMS International Center.

CPH Serves with New and Continually Improving Resources

A focus on quality and service is evident in the development of resources and new initiatives. One of the significant developments by CPH is its Emerging Products unit, a team focused on research and development of new technology-based resources.

Among the many new resources and new initiatives at CPH, the following warrant highlighting:

- *The Lutheran Study Bible*
- *Lutheran Service Book*, which has been adopted by nearly 70 percent of all LCMS congregations
- *Lutheran Service Builder*, which has been adopted by nearly 2,500 congregations
- An ever-growing line of DVD-based small-group Bible studies
- New Bible study resources for women
- *The Concordia Organist*, a complete organ recording of *Lutheran Service Book*
- The debut of titles in Amazon Kindle format and other eBook formats
- Music now available via Apple's iTunes store
- A firm presence in social media, including Facebook and Twitter
- A new print-on-demand program offering access to out-of-print resources
- A new and improved CPH.org Web site
- A redesigned new edition of the popular Learning about Sex series
- New volumes of *Luther's Works: An American Edition*
- Strong partnership with Lutheran World Relief and the Lutheran Malaria Initiative
- Publication of a companion children's book for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative
- Continued growth of resources written by Hispanics for Hispanics
- Publication and distribution of several *Ablaze!* initiative resources from various LCMS entities
- Release of a special edition of *Lutheran Service Builder* for military chaplains
- Completion of the *Concordia Curriculum Guide* for faith integration in Lutheran schools

- Launch of a Canadian version of the CPH.org Web site and direct service to Canada
- Launch of the "On Campus" effort to raise awareness of CPH on CUS campuses
- Introduction of Sunday School Web-based enhancements for students and teachers
- Continuing enhancements in CPH Vacation Bible School resources
- Launch of the development process for a new Day School curriculum titled *One in Christ*
- Guitar edition of the hymns in *Lutheran Service Book*

Report on Synod Convention Action Taken in 2007

At the 2007 convention, the LCMS adopted two resolutions that called for specific action on the part of Concordia Publishing House.

Res. 2-08, "To Celebrate Significant Synod Anniversaries," directed Concordia Publishing House "to consider the production of an electronic (e-book) anniversary edition of Walther's works, to be published with computer CD-ROM technology, using all available English translations as well as German printed texts and manuscripts for materials not available in English." Upon study and consideration, it was determined that, in light of the materials by Dr. C. F. W. Walther already available in digital format and others available in print editions and what would be required to gather all extant German materials, this would not be feasible without a considerable and ongoing amount of external grant monies, which are not available. However, in response to this resolution, Concordia Publishing House has announced an annual Reformation Research Theology Award, the first topic to be dealt with to be C. F. W. Walther, in honor of the 200th anniversary of his birth. A juried contest is being held, and the submission of scholarly papers, sermons, and hymns devoted to the topic has been invited. As a result of this contest, a book of essays will be published in 2011 on the significance of Dr. Walther.

Additionally, in late 2010, CPH will be releasing a new edition of Dr. Walther's *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel* in an updated and improved translation, prepared in a manner that will make the book more accessible to laypersons. This reader's edition will be titled *Law & Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible*.

Res. 3-10 "To Encourage Publication of Theological Literature" calls on the President of the Synod to appoint "a task force, in consultation with the President and Chief Executive Officer of Concordia Publishing House, to include professors from both seminaries and the Concordia University System, to establish a new Committee on Church Literature by June 2008, 'for the purpose of providing meaningful input to Concordia Publishing House in identifying, promoting, and facilitating the publication of theological literature' (*CW*, p. 66)." An advisory committee was appointed: Rev. Allen Doering, Dr. Adam Francisco, Mrs. Janet George, Rev. Stephen Hower, Dr. Jenny Mueller-Roebke, Dr. Leo Sanchez, and Rev. Larry Stojkovic. The committee met six times during the triennium and has provided valuable advice and input to CPH. It has reviewed present CPH publications and has offered advice and counsel for possible future publications. The committee has been encouraging and supportive, offering ideas and suggestions for CPH's focus on providing additional resources for the basic teaching of the Christian faith to adults, with the goal of reaching out to an increasingly biblically illiterate population with resources that offer a faithful basic overview of the Scriptures and the doctrines of the Lutheran Church. Several resources are presently in production for release in 2010 and 2011, including Web-based resources for teaching the faith to children and

adults, a new resource titled *Lutheranism 101*, and a lay-oriented presentation on the major points of Lutheran doctrine, titled *The Lutheran Difference*.

CPH's Financial Highlights

Concordia Publishing House is financially strong and healthy and gives thanks and praise to God for its loyal supporters throughout the LCMS. Its 2007 revenue totaled \$54.2 million, followed by \$41.9 million in 2008 and \$39.4 million in 2009. Revenue in 2007 was higher due to the release of *Lutheran Service Book*.

Because CPH exists to serve the LCMS, it reinvests cash proceeds from operations back into the ongoing development of resources that serve the whole Synod and many other Lutherans and Christians around the world. For example, the sale of Vacation Bible School programs, offering envelopes, and bulletins makes it possible for CPH to invest millions of dollars into the development of new Sunday School materials, Day School curriculum, and volumes of *Luther's Works*, as well as the publication of other important Lutheran theological works. The development of *The Lutheran Study Bible*, to cite but one example, required an investment of nearly \$3 million.

The last three years have been challenging for the entire publishing industry in general and for denominational publishers in particular. The economic downturn has impacted sales at CPH, although there are signs of improvement. Unlike many other denominational publishing houses that are in very serious financial crisis, CPH remains very strong, but with significantly growing concerns in several areas. CPH would like to underscore two major areas of concern for the convention's attention.

Copyright infringements are on the increase due to the mistaken assumption that copyrighted intellectual property can simply be used at will, without regard for federal law, which regulates its use. People desiring to start their own self-publishing ventures are either uninformed or unconcerned about the value and necessity of respecting copyright law and what such copyright law means for publishers like CPH. Without copyright protection for the content of the materials it publishes, CPH cannot continue its mission.

Another growing concern is the use by LCMS members of materials that do not deliver truly Christ-centered content that is faithful to God's Word. CPH respectfully must caution against the use of such materials and encourage congregations to continue their support of Concordia Publishing House's Vacation Bible School materials and other resources. Without this ongoing support, CPH's ability to produce excellent Sunday School, Day School, and other curricular resources is threatened, as well as its ability to continue to produce resources for church professionals, laypeople, and congregations.

CPH Gives Back

CPH has been blessed with the opportunity to share a portion of its net income with the Synod, providing close to \$1.5 million during this past triennium. Additionally, in 2007, CPH contributed \$200,000 to Concordia Historical Institute for its new museum at the LCMS International Center. Customers' trust in and use of CPH resources makes it possible for CPH to be and remain financially healthy.

Concordia Publishing House Looks Ahead

CPH moves forward with confidence, knowing that it has the quality systems and appropriate processes, staff, and resources available to continue to serve the LCMS and countless others across the globe with solid, Christ-centered resources that are faithful to the Scriptures

and the Lutheran Confessions, all for the sake of the Lord's mission to make disciples of all nations.

Going forward, CPH has a keen focus on taking advantage of emerging publishing and communication technologies and providing our customers with Web-based and downloadable resources that offer a wide variety of options from which they can best choose what will meet their ministry needs. The initiatives launched in this past triennium will be continued strongly into the next.

Ruth N. Koch, *Chair*
Bruce G. Kintz, *President*

R2-04

Board for Black Ministry Service

Resolution 10-01A of the Dallas Convention (1977) has proven to be a landmark resolution for black ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. This historic resolution reflected years of conversation, work, and dedication supporting the intentional effort of the LCMS to become a systematically inclusive church body. It described the function of what was then called the Commission on Black Ministry as follows: "To plan to coordinate, and to expand Black Ministry." During the days of the commission, black Lutherans met in annual convocations and drafted and voted on resolutions. These affirmative resolutions were then funneled off to the appropriate program boards of the Synod for implementation. This process was extremely effective for several years.

It then seemed to some leaders in black ministry that it was time to move from commission to program board status. It was with great discussion that the convocation voted affirmatively to petition the Synod to create the Board for Black Ministry Services. The Synod, walking together with the leaders of black ministry, affirmed the concept and a program board for black ministry was created. As stated in the current *Handbook* of the Synod, "The Board for Black Ministry Services exists to serve as an advocate on behalf of black ministry in the congregations and agencies of the Synod." Whether it was the Commission on Black Ministry or the Board for Black Ministry Services, the LCMS has made it a priority and one of its values to honor the unique challenges it faces in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the black community.

While the history of this unique outreach among African Americans reaches back to the early 1800s, the approach to effective ministry is changing. The Report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance states (p. 39):

Though the boards and commissions and their staffs have worked hard, particularly in recent years, to coordinate their work, the current framework of structure and governance lacks accountability to the express current dictates and needs of the Synod's congregations. Further, the requirement that boards and commissions hold multiple meetings each year is inefficient and expensive. Finally, the "siloed" or balkanized setup of the boards and commissions creates complications in business oversight and legal compliance. The current operational structure of the Synod's boards and commissions begs for improvement.

It is understandable that change is necessary for the sake of strengthening the effectiveness of the church body. It is critical that it effectively manages the resources that God has entrusted to it. As the Synod maneuvers this change, however, it is also critical that it honor and strengthen the mutual commitment that seeks to share the Gospel in the African American community. Historically, the leaders of this church body have worked hard to model the importance of "walking together" and leading together as it seeks to model a multi-

cultural church. Currently, the work of ministry is heavily focused on supporting the *Ablaze!* initiative.

The *Ablaze!* initiative has emerged as an important moment for the Board for Black Ministry Services and black Lutherans. Black ministry set a goal to reach “one million souls with the Gospel by the year 2017” (Res. 1:01, 2008 Convocation). Many strategies were developed for *Lifting the Vision* of reaching souls with the Good News. Some of these included

- Church planting,
- Recruitment,
- Repositioning of urban schools,
- Revitalization of urban churches, and
- Maximizing of resources in black ministry.

In supporting the vision of reaching one million souls by 2017, black ministry has established phases for this to take place:

Phase I—Each Lutheran in black ministry would commit to contributing \$5.00 annually for three years, ending in 2008.

Phase II—LCMS congregations in black ministry would commit to contributing \$1,000 annually for two years, with 2010 set to be the deadline (likely to be extended).

The *Ablaze!* initiative will be further developed through the 2010 Black Ministry Family Convocation with the theme “Ablaze, Empowered and Determined!” At this convocation, delegates from across the nation will gather around remembering “whom God has created us to be, how God empowers us to be His servants, and how through the Holy Spirit we are determined to strengthen the multi-cultural nature of our church body,” with the goal of living as a people, worshiping as a people, and serving as a people, “as it is in heaven.”

2010 Black Ministry Family Convocation
JW Marriott
Houston, TX
July 8–11

As a special feature of the 2010 convocation, participants will have an opportunity to engage in a segment called “Taking the Convocation to the Streets!” Convocation delegates who sign up for this venue will be paired with participants from four black congregations in the Houston area. At the appointed time on the convocation agenda, these teams of local congregants and convocation delegates will be assigned to canvass in the communities surrounding those four congregations and have some faith-sharing moments. We envision this being a very practical way to nurture comfort levels for talking about Jesus and what He has done for every person and fan into flame the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Reports and follow-ups will follow. It is our prayer that it will be said of the 2010 Family Convocation, “The people had a mind to work” (Neh. 4:6) and “the Word of God was spread” throughout the Houston area.

The work of black ministry continues through the Office of Mission Networking and Education Networking. The Word of God, through the writings of St. Paul, reminds us that the body of Christ is comprised of many parts, with Christ as its head. Mission networking has been defined as “facilitating measurable change among member congregations and schools, by faith-sharing, leadership accountability, and multiplying missions for Jesus Christ.”

Board for Black Ministry Services Values for Mission

- Every member is a viable witness.
- Every congregation is mission-focused, mission-driven, and multiplying.

2010 Convention Workbook

- Leaders are walking together to form healthy, productive partnerships.
- Black ministry reports its national faith-sharing and mission activity to Synod.

Purpose statement for education networking: “The Board for Black Ministry Services partners and encourages Lutheran schools to ensure outreach to the community in which they are located, so that every child has the opportunity to experience Christ’s love through a quality Lutheran Christian education.”

**Board for Black Ministry Services
Education Networking Goals**

- Provide a connecting network of resources for Lutheran educators and schools so that both are encouraged and highly motivated.
- Recruit professional workers for Gospel mission and ministry in areas with the highest multi-cultural environment.
- Affect outreach through urban schools, where leaders are properly trained and equipped to make connections with black children, their families, and people of all nationalities.

Additional Service to the Church

- Encouraged faith-sharing moments among members
- Recorded faith-sharing moments
- Strengthened relationship/partnership with N.A.M.E. and LCMS World Mission
- Added an ethnic ministry position to the board
- Recognized significant historical moments in the lives of pastors and congregations
- Identified congregations that are engaging in rebuilding strategies
- Targeted congregations/areas that are ripe for new mission starts

A tremendous opportunity continues to exist for growth and effectiveness in sharing the pure Gospel to a world and communities that are ill-affected by the many confusing messages of the world. The Lutheran Church need not be a dying church. Nor does the presence of a specific black ministry program in an overwhelmingly white church body need to be seen as a divisive effort. Rather, the LCMS is a people, “One People,” redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and committed through the power of the Holy Spirit to share a life-changing and a life-sustaining message. Pray with and for the Board for Black Ministry Services and the Synod that the church continues to be the Church of God for the world.

Dr. Frazier N. Odom, *Executive Director*

R2-05

Concordia Historical Institute

Introduction

Concordia Historical Institute (CHI) is the Department of Archives and History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Incorporated as a separate entity in 1927, it provides a function that the Synod has recognized as essential from its founding in 1847. Located on the campus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, CHI serves the member congregations of the Synod, its rostered workers, individual members of local congregations, and the general public with a modern archival facility, a reference library on Lutheran history, a state-of-the-art museum, conferences, publications, and reference and research services. It also owns and administers historic sites in Perry County, Missouri, that interpret the Synod’s history and heritage—the Saxon

Lutheran Memorial at Frohna and the “Hill of Peace” historic church at Friedenberg, near Perryville.

The Institute provides several significant benefits to the Synod:

1. CHI is dedicated to the long-term preservation of the official records of the Synod and its work through its boards, commissions, officers, and other entities.
2. It provides access to these records and assistance with finding information to assist the Synod’s staff in carrying out their work.
3. It provides guidance and counsel to the districts, congregations, educational institutions, and other entities of the Synod in the management and preservation of their important historical records.
4. It publishes articles on the history of Lutheranism in America so that people may better understand and appreciate their Lutheran heritage.
5. It seeks to educate the members of the Synod in their own history through museum exhibits, educational materials, and online resources.
6. It conducts conferences for the general public on Lutheran history and to train archivists of the Synod’s districts, congregations, auxiliaries, and other entities in their work.

Goals and Assignments

1. The primary goal toward which the Institute’s efforts and resources have been directed in the past triennium was the development and construction of the new Concordia Historical Institute Museum located in the LCMS International Center.
2. The 2007 LCMS convention (Res. 2-08) called on CHI, in cooperation with the President of the Synod, to engage in several activities to celebrate “significant anniversaries for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod,” specifically the 200th anniversaries of the births of Wilhelm Loehe (2008), F. C. D. Wyneken (2010) and C. F. W. Walther (2011).
3. It is the ongoing goal of CHI to improve its services to the Synod and its members, as enumerated above, by continuing to gather and preserve historical records and artifacts, making them available for research, educating the church and the general public about Lutheran history and heritage, and helping others to care for the records of their work.

Performance Assessment

1. The CHI museum project at the LCMS International Center was designed to present an overview of the Synod’s history, including its roots in the Lutheran Reformation of the sixteenth century, its origins out of the German Lutheran immigration movements of the nineteenth century, its development as a national church body, its worldwide mission outreach, and its expanding use of modern resources to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world. A very significant portion of staff time and resources during the past three years was directed toward the completion of this project. CHI collections were thoroughly searched for suitable documents and artifacts to display. Much time was spent researching the history of the Synod’s work in missions, education, theology, and service in order to tell the story in an engaging way.

The new museum was dedicated and opened to the public on July 26, 2009. It is open during the regular hours of the International Center and is staffed by volunteer greeters throughout the day. It is designed to provide a self-guided walk through the Synod’s history. Groups may arrange in advance for a docent to accompany the group through the museum, highlight special features of the stories that are depicted, and answer questions. The museum’s presence in the International Center offers opportunities for

visitors to the Synod’s headquarters to learn about the background of the LCMS and witness examples of the mission dedication of predecessors in the faith. Participants in meetings and conferences at the International Center from around the world also have an opportunity to understand more about the Synod’s history and heritage.

Special efforts have been made to reach out to area schools with this new resource. Study guides have been produced for students as their classes visit the museum. School ministry and communications staff members at the International Center have been working with CHI staff to develop this area, and local educators have also been involved.

Besides this new museum, CHI has continued to use other exhibits and displays to enhance understanding of Lutheran history. The museum exhibit gallery at the main CHI facility on the Concordia Seminary campus presented a major exhibit on the history of the military chaplaincy in the LCMS (special thanks to the very significant and excellent cooperation of the Ministry to the Armed Forces staff of the Board for Mission Services). Many former chaplains cooperated by providing artifacts and mementoes of their service for the exhibit. The display was well received by visitors from many denominations.

In cooperation with Concordia Seminary, CHI also hosted a special traveling Chinese Christian art exhibit in its main gallery from October 2009 through February 2010. The exhibit was titled *Look toward the Heavens: The Art of He Qi* (pronounced huh-chee). In addition to viewing over thirty pieces of He Qi’s art, guests also saw various artifacts from the CHI collection, including some pieces that were examples of Chinese folk art that strongly influenced the artist. Artifacts on display included ancestral tablets, silks, idols, musical instruments, dolls, and everyday items such as shoes, combs, and chopsticks. The exhibit also included a video of interviews with He Qi conducted by the seminary.

CHI museum staff also prepared special exhibits on the seminary campus for Black History Month during the past several years. They assisted several district archivists with displays and exhibit materials for their district conventions in 2009, and prepared a special Reformation traveling exhibit for use in Lutheran schools in the fall of 2009.

2. Limited time and resources, particularly due to the work on the new museum, resulted in only a partial accomplishment of the anniversary celebration activities called for in 2007 Res. 2-08. Several events took place in 2008 in observance of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Wilhelm Loehe, including an international conference in Neuendettelsau, Germany, and a conference at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, but CHI was not involved directly in these events.

CHI did arrange for the presentation of a series of papers on Loehe, Wyneken, and Walther in connection with its biennial Conference on Archives and History held in October 2009. It plans to publish those papers in the *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* and make them available on its Web site. And it still hopes to carry out the preparation of educational resources on these three significant figures in LCMS history and to work with others toward the wider dissemination of the works of C. F. W. Walther during the anniversary years of 2010 and 2011.

3. The work of gathering and preserving historical records has continued, though financial limitations have made it difficult to provide for the full processing, arrangement, and cataloging that the records require for their effective and efficient use. New resources continue to come from around the Synod and from interested individuals. CHI regularly provides guidance to congregations that are

closing for the proper preservation of their significant records and to individuals who hold important resources from the ministries of their ancestors.

CHI particularly helps staff members in Synod offices with the transfer of important records for preservation in the archives. This has been especially important in connection with a companion phase of the museum project at the IC. In the fall of 2008, over 6,000 cubic feet of compact movable storage shelving were installed in the main CHI facility on the seminary campus because capacity for receiving Synod records had been exceeded. The new museum made possible the conversion of some of the exhibit space in the main facility to provide for the new shelving. As a result, many records that had been in temporary storage at the Synod's International Center were transferred to CHI.

Reference services to individuals, congregations, organizations of the church, scholars, and the general public have continued to grow significantly and keep CHI's part-time reference staff busy. Family history inquiries make up the largest portion of the requests received. Modern technology—e-mail, scanning, digital images, etc.—is being used to a great extent in providing efficient assistance and answers to questions.

Challenges and Opportunities

1. Although CHI has made great strides during the past triennium with the opening of the new museum and the expansion of its records storage capacity, the Institute faces a great challenge in building up its financial support and resources for the future. In May 2008, Dr. Martin Noland resigned as executive director of CHI. The position has been filled for the past two years on an interim basis. The CHI Board of Governors is currently working to fill the position with a person with particular skills in development and management who can work to bring financial stability to CHI and make it possible for the Institute to fulfill the goals the Synod has set out in its Bylaws for its Department of Archives and History.
2. One of the areas where CHI hopes to concentrate in the future is in the development of educational resources for the Synod and its member congregations, based on the resources that have been used in the development of the new museum, working with educators in the church toward that end.
3. Another goal is to develop more fully the CHI Web site as a resource for people worldwide to obtain information from the treasures in its collection. This will include making use of the rapidly growing forms of information distribution available via the Internet and its social networking capabilities.
4. CHI will continue to work with various entities and individuals in the Synod to recognize and celebrate the 200th anniversaries of the births of F. C. D. Wyneken and C. F. W. Walther over the next two years. It also hopes to participate in 2011 with Concordia Seminary in hosting a traveling exhibit to recognize the 300th anniversary of the birth of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, the "patriarch" of colonial American Lutheranism.

CHI will also be involved with Civil War sesquicentennial activities during 2011–15. The Missouri Historical Museum in St. Louis has digitized the diaries of Pastor Franz Julius Biltz of Concordia, Missouri, which reveal the effects of the Civil War on his ministry and congregation. These diaries, just recently discovered and identified in our collection, will be part of an online digital exhibit of Civil War resources.

Planning has also already begun for CHI's participation in the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, which will

include the production of a comprehensive catalog of Reformation commemorative coins and medals.

Scott Meyer, *President*
Larry Lumpe, *Executive Director*

R2-06

Board for Communication Services

Introduction:

The Board for Communication Services (BCS) "exists to interpret...the Synod's purpose and program to its members and to promote an increased understanding on the part of the church's publics of the mission of the Synod" (Bylaw 3.8.5).

The department accomplishes these ends through such means as the Synod's Internet presence (including social media), the official periodicals and their respective Web sites, e-news delivery services, an Editorial Services unit, a Public Affairs & Media Relations division, and radio.

In all of its endeavors, the BCS, on its own and in concert with others, seeks to pay special attention to LCMS initiatives and emphases, such as *Ablaze!* and "Fan into Flame," the "One" theme, and the three "critical target" areas of revitalizing (or transforming) congregations, planting new missions, and stewardship. We intend to continue accentuating these things in the triennium to come, even as we infuse our labors, whenever possible, with the theme of this year's convention, "One People—Forgiven."

Internet Affairs:

Relatively new within the BCS, this division is responsible for overseeing the look, feel, and overall presentation of the Synod's Web site as well as its conceptual functionality. It is further responsible for directing the content of the home page, leading the International Center's Internet Steering Committee, and providing funding for capital improvements of the site.

To meet these responsibilities, the Internet Affairs division works cooperatively with Concordia Technologies and the Electronic Media division of the Synod's General Services department.

Since its inception in November 2007, Internet Affairs has overseen a number of improvements to *lcms.org*. Addressing some of the largest complaints from site visitors, three early improvements included

- changing the main navigation to make it more user-friendly.
- changing the site search to a custom Google search.
- changing the daily devotion from a predetermined rotation that often did not match the Church Year to a freshly written devotion offering previously unavailable subscription and audio features.

Meanwhile, plans to overhaul completely the Synod's Web site got underway. The redesign, set to launch in late 2010, will be completed as part of the larger constituent relationship management project known as "CrossConnect," being undertaken by corporate Synod and the LCMS Foundation.

To satisfy the immediate desire for change to *lcms.org*, Internet Affairs went about developing an interim facelift for the site. In August 2009, this facelift was implemented, updating the look and feel of the site and adding several helpful features while leaving the underlying structure in place. Some new features included

- a lighter, more contemporary look and feel.

- a rotating content feature on the home page that allows ministries to highlight important programs and timely resources.
- a tabbed section on the home page, allowing a variety of information to be displayed in a small amount of space.
- improved left-hand menu functionality.
- quick-search for churches, church workers, and schools available from every page.
- “Share This”—allowing visitors to bookmark and share lcms.org pages with friends through their favorite social network.
- Multi-Site Search—offering results not only from lcms.org pages, but also from lcms.org PDFs and documents, LCMS blogs, Concordia Publishing House, Concordia Historical Institute, Lutheran Hour Ministries, and the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League.

In addition to redesigning lcms.org, this division also is undertaking the creation of a microsite dedicated to delivering the Good News of Jesus Christ to a public that may not know anything about Christianity, may want to know more about the LCMS, or may be searching for answers and comfort for the hurts in their lives. This microsite will be completed on the same timeline as the overhauled lcms.org, set to launch in late 2010.

The Lutheran Witness:

Now in its 129th year, *The Lutheran Witness* continues to serve as the flagship publication of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The mission of *The Lutheran Witness*, as one of the two official publications of the Synod, is clear and direct: “To provide Missouri Synod laypeople with stories and information that complement congregational life, foster personal growth in faith, and help interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran Christian perspective.” That goal was at the heart of the founders’ vision for *The Lutheran Witness* in 1882, when Rev. Charles A. Frank became the magazine’s first editor, and it remains the goal of the magazine’s staff today.

As with almost all magazines, whether consumer or trade, secular or theological, the past three years have been a challenge for *The Lutheran Witness*. Changing demographics and reader habits, the advance of technology and new sources of information, and a depressed and struggling economy have contributed to a continued slow decline in readership of the print version of the magazine. Yet, *The Lutheran Witness*, with the help of Concordia Publishing House, remains a strong, viable publication, and compared with other denominational magazines, some of which have seen their readership fall by half recently, has weathered the cultural and economic changes reasonably well.

While these changes have presented significant challenges (e.g., today, *The Lutheran Witness* reaches only about one in five LCMS households), they also offer new opportunities for a publication that offers a bold, vibrant, life-affirming, and distinctively Lutheran witness to the world. To that end, the Board for Communication Services and Concordia Publishing House, the board’s partner in publishing the *Witness*, are committed to enhancing the look, feel, and content of the magazine; to reminding its readers—and potential readers—of the valuable resources available through the magazine; and to making the magazine easier to subscribe to and acquire—to, in fact, making *The Lutheran Witness* everything that a denomination’s flagship magazine should be.

The Lutheran Witness Online:

What do readers in Australia, Finland, Brazil, and Côte d’Ivoire have in common with those in the United States? All have visited

the Web site of *The Lutheran Witness* recently. In fact, the site (lcms.org/witness) regularly attracts visitors from more than 80 countries around the world.

Created initially as a site offering only links to PDF versions of archived issues of *The Lutheran Witness*, lcms.org/witness was significantly upgraded at the beginning of 2007. Today, it offers access not only to archived issues of the *Witness* from 2002 through 2009, but also to complete versions of the current month’s cover story; complete versions of selected departments, including “Lifeline,” “Letters,” and “From the President”; and exclusive Web-only features that range from commentaries which complement stories in the print version of the *Witness* to “Classic Witness” features that reacquaint readers with authors and stories from issues of long ago (and sometimes not so long ago).

Down the road, the online version of the *Witness* will play an increasingly essential role in providing readers with timely, thought-provoking, and useful information about the Church, our Synod, its people, and our Lutheran Christian faith.

Whether in print or online, in the coming months and years, readers of *The Lutheran Witness* can expect compelling stories that touch their lives, help them grow in their faith, improve their understanding of the Church and our Synod, and encourage them to reach out to their neighbors, whether around the block or around the world, with the Good News of Jesus—and all from the Synod’s best writers, educators, and theologians.

Lutheran Witness District Editions:

Thirteen of the 35 LCMS districts have their monthly district editions “stitched into” the body of the national *Lutheran Witness*.

This program benefits those districts by making it easier and more economical for their members to receive *The Lutheran Witness*, while also receiving BCS editing services and a savings in postage for their individual publications, which range from four to 20 pages.

Working closely with district editors and Concordia Publishing House, a BCS staff member each month prepares the inserts for publication and provides color PDFs for district Web sites, as requested. She also works with the Synod’s Ministry to the Armed Forces in producing the quarterly “So Help Me, God” newsletter, which is mailed with *Portals of Prayer*.

Few things would delight the BCS more than to have other districts opt to participate in our “stitched-in” plan. Few things could do so much so fast for the long-term health of *The Lutheran Witness*.

Reporter:

Reporter—the Synod’s official newspaper—each month goes to nearly 35,000 professional church workers and congregational lay leaders, including delegates to the LCMS convention, and to subscribers.

Through this award-winning publication, readers stay abreast of newsworthy developments in the Church and learn about ministry resources offered by Synod departments and LCMS-related entities.

Among major developments in the past triennium, monthly cost savings of about \$1,000 were realized when a new printer for *Reporter* was engaged in fall 2007.

Costs also have been kept reasonable by a small staff, as aggressive efforts to sell advertising continue. Also, ad rates and the number of advertisers have held at a steady level over the past three years, despite the uncertain economy.

In the same period, the number of regular inserts placed by Synod boards, commissions, and other groups increased dramatically from 14 to 29 annually. With these inserts, *Reporter* offers a cost-effective

way for Synod-related entities to “piggy-back” distribution of their information to a wide audience of leaders throughout the church body.

Reporter Online:

Reporter Online, the Web-based version of *Reporter*, was redesigned in 2009 to conform to the redesigned LCMS Web site. While retaining most elements of *Reporter Online* (such as the “Top Story,” “New This Week” stories, and story sections such as “Events” and “Resources”), the new design brought several improvements to the online newspaper, including

- larger type for improved readability;
- a “site tools” box, making it easier for visitors to customize type size, e-mail, and print stories;
- more prominent and accessible top news stories and search functions; and
- *Reporter Online* continues to offer more news and full-color photos than the monthly print *Reporter* and is the Synod’s most complete source of news relating to our church body. The online newspaper carries from 25 to 40 stories at any given time, with five to eight new stories added each week (currently, on Wednesday afternoons). All stories that have appeared on the Web site since its 2003 debut are archived on the site and may be easily located by typing a related word or phrase into the “Search *Reporter*” box.

During January 2010, 10,135 people visited the Web site, an increase of 463 people, or 5 percent, over November 2009. Those visitors—from 111 countries or territories—viewed a total of more than 42,000 *Reporter Online* pages.

For *Reporter Online*, go to www.lcms.org/reporter.

LCMSNews:

In May 2008, LCMSNews, our department’s e-mail news service, began sending weekly “New on *Reporter Online*” dispatches to alert subscribers to newly posted stories. Each release includes a “hyperlink” to *Reporter Online* that readers may “click” to take them to the online newspaper.

LCMSNews was further refined in September 2008 when the service also began providing each week the “top” news story from *Reporter Online* in its entirety and again, in September 2009, when each “New on *Reporter Online*” e-mail began including hyperlinks for each new story as well.

In 2009, 111 LCMSNews releases were e-mailed to more than 12,900 subscribers—the largest number of subscribers for any of the Synod’s 45 e-newsletters.

Editorial Services:

The two-person staff of Editorial Services, a unit of the BCS’s News & Information Services division, strives to help departments and commissions of the Synod prepare and disseminate their messages to professional church workers, districts, congregations, and lay members of the LCMS, as well as to nonmembers of the LCMS.

The staff works one-on-one with colleagues in District and Congregational Services (including Youth Ministry, NLSA, School Ministry, Stewardship, Family Ministry and Children’s Ministry), Concordia University System, Human Resources, KFUO Radio, Pastoral Education, Black Ministry, Ministerial Growth and Support, General Services, Missions, Worship, Higher Education, Board of Directors, Executive Offices, Accounting, and Lutheran Church Extension Fund in various capacities to design and produce print pieces and Web publications.

The work can basically be broken down into these areas:

- Editing and proofreading existing work
- Incorporating provided text and photographs into new print or Web pieces (including ads, brochures, booklets, newsletters, *Reporter* inserts, school mailings, others)
- Obtaining bids from various vendors to find the most cost-effective method to print
- Supervising and coordinating actual print production and/or dissemination of the completed print pieces or Web placements

This work requires knowledge of the Synod itself, computer design programs, International Center print procedures and requirements, mailing standards, print specifications, and local printing companies. It also calls for considerable computer design capabilities. In concert with other staff throughout the International Center, Editorial Services produces about 250 projects each year.

In sum, this unit networks with other entities of the Synod, helping them tell their stories and share their messages as they respond to the needs of congregations, professional church workers, districts, circuits, mission areas, and others.

Public Affairs & Media Relations:

In its ongoing work to promote the missions, ministries, and positions of the Synod to the public, this arm of the BCS serves across the LCMS, assisting boards, commissions, districts, congregations, schools, auxiliaries, and inter-Lutheran agencies.

Key accomplishments over the past triennium have been to strengthen relationships with members of the secular and Christian media, increase the number of media placements, provide crisis consulting in light of some seriously negative news stories, and assist a number of LCMS ministries with major marketing campaigns. The Public Affairs arm also has been instrumental in the launch of official LCMS social-media sites, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts. As of this writing, we count some 13,000 Facebook “friends” and 1,300 Twitter “followers.”

News clippings have increased from 170 in 2007 to more than 500 in 2009, with placements appearing in such major publications as *Christianity Today*, *Readers Digest*, *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, *Washington Post*, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, and a multitude of other publications and broadcast outlets.

Public Affairs has worked with the Synod President and a number of LCMS ministries headquartered at the International Center on such projects as

- raising awareness of the *Ablaze!* movement and *Fan into Flame* campaign.
- directing the launch of a major fundraising initiative—*The Themba Girls with The Erin Bode Group* CD—for LCMS World Relief and Human Care in 2007.
- advancing the LCMS position relative to the protection of traditional marriage during the 2008 election campaign.
- promoting the church’s participation in the annual March for Life events in Washington, D.C.,—including the first-time involvement of an LCMS sitting president in the pre-march rally in 2008.
- orchestrating the opening of the IC-based Concordia Historical Institute Museum in 2009.
- assisting the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance in communicating the process of its work during its four-year tenure.

This listing represents but a “tip of the iceberg” sampling of such projects.

Following the 2007 Synod Convention, the BCS was given responsibility for the LCMS Church Information Center (CIC), now a unit of the Public Affairs division. Serving essentially as a “reference desk,” the CIC connects LCMS members, laity, employees, and the public with the information they seek to further their work and to open doors for the unchurched.

Over the past triennium, the CIC has worked to increase awareness of its service. In 2009, it responded to an average of 1,000 inquiries per month. Questions range across an array of topics, although the majority deals with LCMS beliefs and practices, denominational differences, and locator information for congregations and church workers.

Public Affairs goals for the next triennium include enhancing relationships with rostered clergy, fostering even stronger relationships with members of the media, increasing awareness and differentiation of the LCMS brand, and escalating the use of the CIC’s resources.

KFUO Radio:

Synod-owned KFUA AM and (as of this writing) KFUA FM “Classic99” reside on the campus of Concordia Seminary in Clayton, Missouri and are administratively overseen by the BCS.

The mission of the stations is synonymous with that of the LCMS: to “vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities, and the world.”

Several major decisions involving KFUA were made since our Synod’s last convention in 2007. In October 2009, the LCMS Board of Directors (BOD) voted to enter into an asset purchase agreement to transfer the license of KFUA FM to Gateway Creative Broadcasting (Joy FM). As of this writing, the sale is under review by the Federal Communications Commission.

Well ahead of this decision—throughout much of 2008—three members of the BCS participated on a committee with three members of the BOD to study two “scenarios” concerning the future of the Synod’s radio ministry, both AM and FM. Upon the conclusion of these meetings, the BCS as a whole expressed its “strong preference to retain the [FM] license” in the hope that the BOD would decide to keep the FM station for the benefit of the Synod.

The disposition of FM notwithstanding, the ministry of KFUA AM will continue. Founded in 1924 by Concordia Seminary, KFUA AM will celebrate its 86th year of broadcasting in 2010. Now heard around the world through Internet streaming at kfua.org, KFUA AM blends information, interviews, Bible studies, and music into a respected and cherished format. Additionally, every week, the station broadcasts live worship services of St. Louis-area congregations.

KFUA AM also distributes programs to other stations around the country—most notably the short-form daily devotion “By the Way” and the weekday parenting program “Front Porch Parenting.” Moreover, the station archives many of its programs and worship services, making them available via the Internet either for on-demand listening or convenient podcasting. Many LCMS congregations feature links to these programs on their Web sites.

In March 2008, under pressure to reduce AM’s unsustainable budgetary shortfalls, the BCS executive director ended the local and syndicated versions of the program “Issues, Etc.” The termination of the program created a stir among many fans of the show, resulting in an e-mail campaign, an online petition, and a demonstration outside the International Center.

At its quarterly meeting the following month, April 2008, the BCS unanimously adopted the following resolution:

“The Board for Communication Services deeply regrets the cancellation of the program, ‘Issues, Etc.,’ owing to the financial realities

facing KFUA and the Synod at large. The board recognizes the value of the program to the Synod for nearly 15 years and is seeking ways to develop more cost-effective, engaging Lutheran apologetic programming for broad distribution.

The board thanks God for the blessing ‘Issues, Etc.’ has been to faithful listeners both in the Synod and its wider radio audience and asks for their prayers and their continued support of the Synod in its commitment to address the fiscal challenges of maintaining a high-quality broadcast ministry.”

The board also instructed its executive director to “prepare, in consultation with two board members, a concise ‘Q&A’ document on the cancellation of ‘Issues, Etc.’ to share with the Synod and its radio- and Web-listening publics.” This “Q&A” was produced and exhibited online for several months.

Today, in the late-afternoon timeslot formerly occupied by “Issues, Etc.,” the station features the less-costly but still theologically substantive program known as “Studio A.”

In March 2009, KFUA AM celebrated its 85th anniversary with a gala dinner and celebration, honoring the founders and supporters of this historic radio ministry. Guest speaker for the evening was Dr. Paul Maier, son of KFUA founder Dr. Walter Maier.

KFUA AM partners with many Lutheran organizations both in revenue development and outreach efforts. Some of the more notable relationships involve the LCMS Foundation, Concordia Publishing House, Lutheran Senior Services, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, Lutheran Hour Ministries, and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

As we move into the second decade of the twenty-first century, it can fairly be said that KFUA AM, throughout the generations, has accounted for millions of listeners of the Gospel. Now, as the digital age unfolds, the station strives to be at the vanguard of reaching people not only via broadcast through the air, but also through all the tools made available via the Internet and its applications.

KFUA AM: “The Gospel Voice of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.”

Conclusion:

In the latter part of this current triennium, the BCS embarked on a rigorous strategic-planning process, the fruit of which we pray will lead to our

- strengthening relationships with pastors, who are so important to the information flow between and among their people, the districts, and the national Synod office.
- expanding the effective use of social-media platforms throughout the Synod.
- making video-based communications a staple on the Synod’s Web site and in other important venues.
- producing new and compelling radio content not just for broadcast on KFUA AM but also for audio-streaming, podcasting, and syndication across America.
- helping to fine-tune the efficacy of International Center-based communications, demonstrably showing that they are hitting their mark and gaining the desired results (i.e., providing a return on investment and prompting people to action).
- contributing to making IC-based communications more coordinated and cohesive in serving to “brand” the Synod and promoting its key messages and emphases.
- working with Concordia Publishing House to improve the business plan of *The Lutheran Witness* and its stitched-in district editions, the magazine’s content and layout, its subscription system, and its marketing and promotion, thus maintaining the

viability of the *Witness* in difficult times for denominational publications.

- connecting with LCMS constituents in new and improved ways through the Synod's "CrossConnect" project, enabling our people to tell us, directly and easily, which communication pieces they want to receive, how they wish to receive them, and how we can make them better.

The BCS believes it has a compelling vision for the future of LCMS communications. Whatever that future holds, whatever the Lord has in mind concerning such things as Synod finances and possible changes to our structure and governance, this department, under God's blessing, will be poised to make the most of its resources and opportunities in the next triennium and beyond.

David L. Strand
Executive Director

R3-01

Commission on Theology and Church Relations

The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) has three functions: (1) "assist the President of the Synod at his request in discharging his constitutional responsibilities for maintaining doctrinal unity within the Synod"; (2) "provide guidance to the Synod in matters of theology and church relations"; and (3) assist the members of the Synod in their witness regarding "societies, lodges, cults, or any organizations of an unchristian or antichristian character" (Bylaws 3.9.6.2 to 3.9.6.3.1).

The CTCR's membership consists of sixteen voting and four advisory members. The voting membership includes two parish pastors, one parish teacher, and two laypersons elected by the Synod convention; two pastors (one of whom is a district president) and two laypersons elected by the Council of Presidents; four seminary professors, two appointed or elected by each seminary faculty; and three additional members appointed by the President of the Synod in consultation with the vice-presidents (one of these appointees is a non-seminary Synod professor). The advisory members are the President and First Vice-President of the Synod and the presidents of the two seminaries.

Current commission members and the dates their terms expire are Rev. Dr. Charles Arand (2010), Dr. Shirley Bergman (2010), Rev. Dr. Armand Boehme (2010), Mr. Kirk Farney (2013), Dr. Jean Garton (2013), Rev. Dr. Charles Gieschen (2010), Mr. Peter Hessler (2010), Rev. Dr. Loren Kramer (2010), Rev. Walter Lehenbauer (2013), Rev. Dr. Michael Middendorf (2010), Dr. Kenneth Palmreuter (2010), Rev. Dr. Paul Raabe (2010), Rev. Dr. Lawrence Rast (2010), Rev. Dr. Robert Rosin (2010), Rev. Dr. Jon Diefenthaler (2010), and Rev. Dr. Orville Walz (2010). The commission's officers during the past triennium were Rev. Dr. Loren Kramer, Chairman; Rev. Dr. Paul Raabe, Vice-Chairman; and Mr. Peter Hessler, Secretary.

In September 2009, Dr. Gerhard Michael completed a total of 14 years of service as a member of the CTCR, having retired from office as president of the Florida-Georgia District. Dr. Michael had served as the representative of the Council of Presidents (COP) to the commission since 2001. Prior to that, he had served as a member of the CTCR, having been appointed by President Ralph Bohlmann (1986–92). At the December 2009 meeting of the commission, Dr. Jon Diefenthaler, President of the Southeastern District, began his service as the COP representative.

For many years, the CTCR has been served by three staff members. At the beginning of the current triennium, Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger

was serving as Executive Director of the CTCR, assisted by Dr. Jerald C. Joersz, Associate Executive Director, and Dr. Joel D. Lehenbauer, Associate Executive Director. Dr. Joersz retired on January 3, 2008, having served for nearly 31 years. Dr. Nafzger, having completed 35 years of service to the CTCR, accepted a call from the LCMS President to be Director of Church Relations and assumed his new office on July 1, 2008. Dr. Lehenbauer, who had served the commission as Assistant and/or Associate Executive Director since 1991, accepted the call to be its next Executive Director, beginning July 1, 2008. The Rev. Larry M. Vogel, pastor of Martin Luther Chapel, Pennsauken, New Jersey, was called and accepted the position of Associate Executive Director, beginning his service to the commission on May 1, 2009. The third staff position remains vacant.

I. Theology

A. Assignments Completed

1. Defending Pre-implantation Human Life in the Public Square

The 2006 convention of the Wyoming District (Wyoming Res. 3-09-2006) requested a response to its concerns with the CTCR's 2005 report *Christian Faith and Human Beginnings: Christian Care and Pre-implantation Human Life*. The Wyoming District asked that the CTCR "revisit" its 2005 report in order to improve its clarity and argumentation regarding the fact that "the unborn are persons in the sight of God from the time of conception." Expressing its gratitude for the attention given to these concerns by the Wyoming District, the CTCR adopted the response *Defending Pre-implantation Human Life in the Public Square* at its December 2007 meeting and sent the response to the Wyoming District, as well as to the Montana District in response to 2007 Ov. 3-59, which is included in 2007 Omnibus Resolution A. The commission also mailed this document to all members of the Synod and posted it on its Web site. This document is included in Appendix II of this *Convention Workbook* and is available online at www.lcms.org/ctcr.

2. Responses to 2007 Omnibus Resolution A

Omnibus Resolution A of the 2007 convention included eight overtures for referral to the CTCR (see 2007 *Today's Business*, p. 169). At its December 2007 meeting, the commission discussed and assigned responses to these overtures. Responses to Omnibus Resolution A were completed at its May 2008 meeting.

3. Further Guidance regarding "Serial Prayer"

In light of requests for further clarification after the publication of the 2004 report *Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events*, the 2007 convention of the LCMS asked the CTCR to provide "further guidance for participation in civic events that includes the offering of serial prayer" (2007 Res. 3-05). In response to this, the commission carefully considered the difficulty of providing further helpful direction for what is essentially a matter of the "exercise of pastoral judgment." At its December 2008 meeting, the document "CTCR Response to 2007 Res. 3-05 regarding 'Serial Prayer'" was unanimously adopted. This brief document is included in Appendix II of this *Convention Workbook* and is available online at www.lcms.org/ctcr.

4. A Pastoral Approach to Membership in Certain Fraternal Organizations

In 2006, the Nebraska District convention requested the CTCR to prepare a document providing assistance to pastors caring for members or potential church members who were involved in fraternal organizations (e.g., Masons). The commission adopted *Membership in Certain Fraternal Organizations: A Pastoral Approach* at its

February 2009 meeting as a resource for church workers and congregations. The document is included in Appendix II of this *Convention Workbook* and is available online at www.lcms.org/ctcr.

5. Response to “A Common Word between Us and You”

On October 13, 2007, 138 Muslim scholars and clerics issued an open letter “to the leaders of the world’s churches” offering their understanding of “the common ground between Christianity and Islam.” The letter was entitled “A Common Word between Us and You” (<http://www.acommonword.com/>). At its February 2008 meeting, the CTCR adopted a resolution recommending that the President submit a response to the “Common Word” letter. President Kieschnick responded by asking the commission to “prepare a draft of such a response for my consideration.” At the commission’s April 2009 meeting, a response was adopted to be forwarded to the President for his review and use. The response is included in Appendix II of this *Convention Workbook*.

6. Theological Statement on Vocation

In February 2009, the commission placed on its agenda a request from Dr. L. Dean Hempelmann, Director of the *What a Way!* initiative fostering recruitment and retention of church workers in the LCMS, that the commission support this effort by drafting a brief theological statement on “vocation” that could be used in connection with the initiative. In April 2009, the CTCR adopted the document *Living to Serve* in response to Dr. Hempelmann’s request. The document is included in Appendix II of this *Convention Workbook* and is available online at www.lcms.org/ctcr. The document can also be found at the *What a Way!* initiative’s Web site: <http://whataway.org/assets/files/PDF-Documents/Christian%20Vocation%20Statement-FINAL%20-%202004-23-09.pdf>.

7. Policy for Declaring Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with Another Church Body

In 2001, President Kieschnick asked the CTCR to prepare a protocol document outlining the procedures to be followed by the Synod in the process of declaring altar and pulpit fellowship with another church body. At its April 2003 meeting, the commission approved *Policy for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Declaring Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with Another Church Body*. The commission then forwarded the document to the President for his review. Reactions were also sought from both LCMS seminary faculties, member churches of the ILC, and the President’s Church Relations Cabinet, as well as the Council of Presidents. At the commission’s September 2009 meeting, this policy was adopted in a slightly modified fashion and formally forwarded to the President for his use, together with a document titled *Church Relations in the 21st Century* (see item 8 below). In a November 13, 2009, memo, President Kieschnick shared the policy with LCMS leaders and the leaders of the member churches of the International Lutheran Council. The document has been translated into Spanish and French. Reactions have been uniformly favorable and the policy is included in Appendix II of this *Convention Workbook* and is available online at www.lcms.org/ctcr.

8. Church Relations in the Twenty-first Century

In a June 2004 memorandum, President Kieschnick requested that the commission address the following question: “Would it be biblically and confessionally appropriate for the LCMS, in certain circumstances, to seek to establish some kind of formalized relationship with another church body, a group of Christians, or an emerging church

body other than a declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship?” He further asked that if this were possible, what would be the “basis, nature, and parameters of such a relationship?” In response to the President’s request, the commission prepared a document under the title *Church Relations in the 21st Century*, sharing the document with various entities, including seminary faculties, the Council of Presidents, leaders of member churches of the International Lutheran Council, and others in addition to the President. After extensive review and some modification, the document was formally adopted at the commission’s September 2009 meeting and forwarded to the President for his use as chief ecumenical officer of the Synod. In a November 13, 2009, memo, President Kieschnick shared the document with LCMS leaders and the leaders of the member churches of the International Lutheran Council, together with the aforementioned *Policy for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Declaring Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with Another Church Body* (see item 7 above). In a letter dated February 11, 2010, the President requested that the CTCR draft a bylaw proposal based on this document for consideration by the Synod convention allowing its further implementation in Synod’s relationships with emerging churches, confessional groups, and others. The document is included in Appendix II of this *Convention Workbook* and is available online at www.lcms.org/ctcr.

9. The Creator’s Tapestry

The 1995 convention of the Synod requested that “the CTCR coordinate a comprehensive study of the scriptural relationship of man and woman, together with the faculties of both seminaries, making use of other persons who are competent in the area of theology, including women” and listed a number of questions that “might be included in such a study” (Res. 3-10). The commission’s work on this assignment involved various steps. Work during the 1998–2001 triennium focused principally on questions related to biblical language and the concept of “the image of God,” which provided foundational biblical data as the commission continued work on this assignment. In the 2001–4 and 2004–7 triennia, the commission dealt with other assignments pertinent to the issue of the man/woman relationship, including responses to expressions of dissent regarding Synod’s position on women’s suffrage and the ordination of women to the pastoral office and a response to questions about women serving as lay teachers of theology. In addition, the commission arranged for the publication of contrasting positions on women serving in combat. Lastly, it responded to questions raised by districts: the Minnesota South District asked about women holding executive offices in congregations; the Atlantic District asked about the meaning of the Greek word *authentēin*.

During the past triennium, between December 2006 and September 2008, the commission hosted a series of four consultations involving presentations and discussions designed to provide various insights and perspectives to the commission on the relationship of men and women in Christ. At its December 2009 meeting, the CTCR adopted the report *The Creator’s Tapestry: Scriptural Perspectives on Man-Woman Relationships in Marriage and the Church*. In the first and major section of the report, the commission presents the scriptural view of the relationship between man and woman on the basis of the three articles of the Apostles’ Creed. The report also identifies the intention of the commission to continue to address various additional facets of the relationship of Christian men and women in the future. *The Creator’s Tapestry* was mailed to the Synod’s congregations and rostered workers in March 2010 and is available on the Web at www.lcms.org/ctcr. The document is included in Appendix II of this *Convention Workbook*.

10. Christian Stewardship of the Environment [2007 Res. 3-06]

2007 Res. 3-06 asked the CTCR to prepare a report on Christian stewardship of the environment “for use by Synod entities including our schools and churches as they develop resources for the church at large.” After receiving a grant of \$34 thousand from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, the CTCR hosted two consultations (Feb. 11, 2009, and September 21, 2009) in St. Louis involving the CTCR’s church and society subcommittee and consultants with expertise, interest, and experience in various facets of this issue. A document titled *Together with All Creatures: Caring for God’s Living Earth* was drafted, which explores the biblical emphasis on the importance of the created world.

These materials were adopted in principle by the commission at its February 2010 meeting and, upon final approval by the commission, are slated to be mailed to congregations and rostered workers and also published on the Web at www.lcms.org/ctcr. At the upcoming National Youth Gathering, the CTCR will sponsor and staff a booth to draw attention to a Christian understanding of environmental concerns and responsibilities.

B. Studies in Progress

1. Guidelines for Inter-Christian Relationships [1981 Res. 3-03A]

The commission continues its work on an assignment of the Synod originating in 1981. The Synod requested that the CTCR prepare “practical guidelines . . . to assist officials, pastors, teachers, congregations, and individuals in the Synod in determining which practices and activities are appropriate to the various levels of inter-Lutheran and inter-Christian relationships in which the Synod is involved” (Res. 3-03A). In the intervening years, the CTCR completed a number of documents relating to the subject of relationships with other churches and Christians. These include *Inter-Christian Relationships: An Instrument for Study* (1992), *The Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship: Study Materials* (2000), *The Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship: Report on Synodical Discussions* (2001), as well as the two documents *Policy for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Declaring Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with Another Church Body* (2009) and *Church Relations in the 21st Century* (2009), mentioned earlier in this report (see items I A 7 and I A 8 above). The commission has received and forwarded to the appropriate standing committee a number of specific inquiries and suggestions regarding the guidance needed on this topic. The CTCR continues to work on a major document responsive to this assignment.

2. The Priesthood of All Believers [2007 Res. 1-03]

2007 Res. 1-03 resolved that the CTCR consult with the Board for Mission Services “to prepare a comprehensive study document which clearly presents the biblical teaching of the royal priesthood and Luther’s teaching on vocation in the light of the mission challenges of today.” The standing committee given responsibility for this is currently at work on this assignment.

3. Implications of the Natural Knowledge of God [2007 Res. 3-04A]

Current confusion regarding the distinction between what reason can know of God and the saving revelation of God in Christ Jesus provided the rationale for 2007 Res. 3-04A “To Call for Study of the Natural Knowledge of God and Its Implications for Public Witness.” The resolution reaffirmed the truth that salvation is not given apart from faith in Jesus Christ and resolved that the CTCR consult with the seminary faculties to “prepare a study of the natural knowledge of God, and especially its implications for our public witness.” A committee of the commission has assigned this task to a writer, who is preparing a draft on this topic.

2010 Convention Workbook

4. A Christian Response to Immigration Issues [2007 Res. 6-05]

Debate in U.S. society regarding the question of immigration has increased in recent years. Christians sometimes find themselves at odds with one another over the issue of how both legal and illegal immigrants should be treated and whether the church has any special responsibility for their well-being. The Human Care floor committee for the 2007 convention prepared Res. 6-05 for consideration (*Today’s Business*, p. 116), requesting the CTCR to research “the historical and theological foundations relevant to this crisis,” but the convention adjourned before there was opportunity for a vote. President Kieschnick then used the proposed resolution as the basis for a request to the CTCR to carry out the proposed study. The commission reviewed initial work on this topic at its December 2009 meeting and hopes to have a draft ready for consideration in the coming triennium.

5. Prayer

In 1986, Synod President Dr. Ralph Bohlmann requested a study of the theology and practice of prayer, noting specifically the importance of prayer in Christian piety and expressing concern about understandings that seem to equate prayer with the means of grace. President Barry renewed this request in 1996. The standing committee given responsibility for this assignment has before it a major draft of this study, which it hopes to present to the commission for consideration during the coming triennium.

6. Preparation of Study Resources for 2017 Celebration of the Reformation [2007 Res. 3-02]

2007 Res. 3-02 resolved that the CTCR, “in consultation with the International Lutheran Council,” work to prepare materials to encourage the study of the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran Confessions in preparation for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Toward that end, the commission’s executive staff have consulted with the executive staff for the ILC, and one of the standing committees of the commission is formulating plans for the completion of such resources.

7. Hostility toward Christianity

A December 23, 2008, letter from an LCMS pastor requested the CTCR to develop “a solid Scriptural directive that will greatly assist our congregations” in understanding the sources and nature of rising hostility toward Christianity in our day. The commission does not normally accept requests for assignments from individual pastors and congregations, but after deliberation, it chose to accept this request and assigned it to one of its standing committees. The committee is currently considering possible ways of responding to this assignment.

8. The Relationship between Science and Theology

In May 2009, a consortium of science and theology professors from the Concordia University System conferred to dialog together on the study of science as Christians under the theme “Two Books, One Truth.” One result of the conference was a request to “develop a study on the relationship between science and theology.” The Executive Director of the Board for University Education, Dr. Kurt Krueger, formally requested that the CTCR give consideration to placing this assignment on its agenda. The commission has accepted this request and assigned the topic to a standing committee, which is formulating plans for a forthcoming report.

C. Theological Conferences

1. Theological Conference on “The Relationship between Theology and Polity”

Beginning with a November 2001 request by the President of Synod, the CTCR has participated in the planning of a series of theological conferences to enable discussion throughout the Synod on important topics (see Bylaw 3.9.6.2.1 [d] for the CTCR’s responsibility in this area). The first model theological conference was held in Phoenix, August 5–7, 2002, under the theme “Conflict, Confession, and Unity: Addressing Doctrinal Issues Faithfully and Fraternally for the Sake of Christ’s Mission.” A second model conference was held in Phoenix on August 23–25, 2005, under the theme “The Congregation’s Ministry and Mission: Who’s in Charge Here?”

Four members of the commission joined representatives of the Council of Presidents and the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance to plan a third theological conference during the past triennium. The convocation was held August 18–20, 2008, in St. Louis, under the theme “The Relationship between Theology and Polity.” Participants at this conference included members of the commission, the COP, the CCM, the blue ribbon task force, the corporate Synod executives, the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Funding the Mission, the heads of the Synod’s auxiliaries, the presidents of the Concordia University System and the two seminaries, the Board of Directors, and 100 representatives from the districts of the Synod, including men, women, pastors, teachers, and other representatives.

2. Model Conference on Worship

2007 Res. 2-01 (see also 2004 Res. 2-04) called for a theological conference that would “build greater understanding of our theology of worship and foster further discussion of worship practices that are consistent with that theology.” In 2009, CTCR members and staff joined together with staff and members of the Commission on Worship for the planning of a model theological conference focused on the topic of worship under the theme “Toward a Theology of Worship.” Once again, a wide spectrum of participants from Synod-wide entities participated, but the primary participatory goal was for wide representation from the 35 districts of the Synod. In addition to its president, each district was invited to send two parish pastors, two laypeople, and one commissioned minister, with its delegations including balance among individuals who were representative of the diverse worship practices in the Synod (both so-called “traditional” and “contemporary” or “contextual” practice). The conference was held on January 11–13, 2010, and was hosted by Concordia Lutheran Church of Kirkwood, Missouri.

The four theological conferences have been made possible by generous grants from the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation. Many of the papers presented at these conferences are available on the CTCR’s Web site at <http://www.lcms.org/ctcr>.

3. Confessional Leadership Conference [2007 Res. 3-03]

At its 2007 convention, the Synod adopted Res. 3-02, “To Encourage Confessional Study in Preparation for 2017,” and Res. 3-03, “To Request the CTCR to Develop a Plan for Confessional Leadership.” Res. 3-03 asked “the CTCR, in consultation with the Office of the President and our seminaries, [to] coordinate fundamentally constructive and intentionally supportive efforts such as theological symposia, conferences, and other opportunities for study of confessional Lutheran theology, to uphold and nourish confessional Lutheranism.” The commission then submitted a grant proposal for \$40,000 to the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation for a conference that would bring together confessional Lutheran theologians and

leaders to further the goals of 2007 Res. 3-03. Thrivent granted the CTCR’s request, and a conference of theologians and leaders from ILC churches and others is scheduled for June 3–5, 2010, on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. The conference is to meet concurrently with the World Seminaries Conference and LCMS Professors of Theology and will benefit from lectures addressing the theme “Confessional Lutheran Identity in a World of Changing Religious Demographics.” In addition to ILC representatives, the commission is inviting guests to attend portions of the conference who represent churches and confessional movements within churches with whom we are not currently in altar and pulpit fellowship.

D. Other Matters

1. Spanish Translations of CTCR reports

Because of the growing need for Lutheran theological literature in Spanish, both in the U.S. and in Central and South America, the commission is continuing to facilitate the translation of its reports into Spanish. During the triennium, two reports were translated into Spanish. In May 2008, the commission posted on its Web site *La Mujer En La Iglesia* (1985 report *Women in the Church: Scriptural Principles and Ecclesial Practice*). In February 2009, it posted *Sexualidad Humana: Una Perspectiva Teológica* (1981 report, *Human Sexuality: A Theological Perspective*). In addition, *Policy for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Declaring Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with Another Church Body* (2009) and *Church Relations in the 21st Century* (2009) have been translated into Spanish and French. Copies of these translations were shared with Synod’s Spanish-speaking partner churches throughout the world. Several individuals collaborated in translating these documents.

2. Publication of Theological Literature

As one aspect of its assigned responsibility to provide guidance to the members of the Synod in matters of theology, the commission recommended that the 2007 convention address the need for the development of a process for providing meaningful input to Concordia Publishing House in identifying, promoting, and facilitating the publication of theological literature in the Synod. In 2007 Res. 3-10, the convention commended Concordia Publishing House for its work publishing theological works for Synod and resolved that the President of the Synod, in consultation with CPH leadership and professors from our seminaries and university system, establish a Committee on Church Literature to identify, promote, and facilitate the publication of theological literature.

E. Requests for Theological Opinions

1. Response to Question Regarding the Removal of a Pastor on Disability

In June 2007, the President of the Michigan District requested a theological opinion: “Regarding a particular congregation whose pastor is on disability and is therefore unable to perform the pastoral duties for which he has been called, is that congregation therefore able to withdraw, rescind or terminate the call while the pastor is on disability?”

The request further indicated the following:

There are several complicating factors in this instance. First, there is the lack of any assurance that the pastor will ever be able to return to the congregation to perform pastoral duties. Secondly, the vitality of the congregation is threatened due to lack of pastoral leadership and continuity thereof during the pastor’s disability. Thirdly, a continued decrease in worship attendance is jeopardizing the very existence of the congregation. Finally, the congregation is unable to plan for its future mission and ministry, if any.

The CTCR responded on December 18, 2007, as follows:

The CTCR sees two theological issues that come into play in this request. First, there is the theological question about whether or not a congregation may rescind the call of a pastor who is on disability. In response to this question, the Commission refers you to an opinion which it gave to the Board of Directors and Praesidium of the Pacific Southwest District on September 12, 1990. (See the enclosed copy of this opinion, which was reported to the Synod in the 1992 Convention Workbook, p. 67.) Although the questions which you have asked are not identical to those posed by the 1990 request, the theological issue which these questions raised are the same.

In the second place, the Commission believes that your request raises another theological issue that comes into play since it specifically asks about the termination of the call of a pastor who is “on disability.” Therefore, the Commission wants to highlight the second and subsequent paragraph of its 1990 opinion which emphasizes that “great caution” be exercised “lest arbitrariness and lovelessness bring the parties under the judgment of God.” In addition to the theological issue regarding the divine call, the circumstance of “being on disability” necessitates taking into account the theological principle that Christians are to moderate their freedom with love as they bear each other’s burdens (Gal 5:13; 6:2) through their mutual love. St. Paul appeals to the Thessalonians to “respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves” (1 Thes 5:12–13). Each of these theological principles, the Commission believes, is to be taken into account as congregations proceed to work their way through the difficult and sensitive matter involved in your question.

2. Request for an Opinion on Excommunication Procedures

Background:

In a letter dated June 29, 2007, the CCM requested “input” from the CTCR with respect to a communication received by the CCM from a pastor regarding the current CCM “Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations.” In this communication, the pastor “declares that the ‘model constitution’ [‘Guidelines’] contradicts Synod’s position” as set forth in C. F. W. Walther’s *Church and Ministry* (cf. 2001 Res. 7-17A).

The CCM “Guidelines” state that “a two-thirds majority vote of the voters assembly shall be required” for excommunication. The pastor maintains that the Synod, in adopting *Church and Ministry*, is bound to the view that “unanimity of the congregation” in cases of excommunication “is not a ‘traditional rubric’ but rather our biblical position under Article II.” Thus, he argues, the CCM “Guidelines” need to be revised and “congregations who have constitutions not reflecting Synod’s doctrinal position need to be revised to bring them into compliance.”

CTCR Response

The CTCR has previously provided “input” regarding this issue in its 1985 report *Church Discipline in the Christian Congregation*. In response to the question “Does excommunication have to be unanimous?” the CTCR says:

Our synodical fathers argued in the affirmative, pointing out that since such a verdict, reached on the basis of a clear Word of God and representing God’s own judgment on the sinner, must be accepted by every Christian and that any who might vote against such action be dealt with (if necessary, excommunicated themselves) before the matter in question is resolved. Although ideally all members will see the justice of what has been resolved (assuming that the congregation has acted on the basis of the Word of God, and the lack of repentance on the part of the one being dealt with is evident), we believe that excommunication may be carried out without unanimous vote. Shall the ignorance and/or weakness of any dissenting member invalidate either the verdict of the Lord through His church or their own eternal salvation? In all such instances, of course, those not in agreement should be dealt with evangelically in the hope of

persuading them that the action of the congregation was truly Scriptural. And if it is evident that a congregation is not sufficiently instructed, with the result that a considerable number would at the time not be ready to favor excommunication in any case, the action should be postponed until such instruction can have its good effect. (22)

The CTCR does not believe that the position taken in the response quoted above (“that excommunication may be carried out without unanimous vote”) contradicts the doctrinal position of the Synod. As Walther himself maintained in defending an unconditional (*quia*) subscription to the Lutheran Confessions, complete agreement with the *doctrinal content* of the Confessions does not imply or necessitate complete agreement with every line of argumentation or every exegetical interpretation employed in support of a specific doctrinal position.¹ This principle also applies to doctrinal statements and resolutions adopted by the Synod.

In *Church and Ministry*, Walther sets forth the theological principle that “the minister must not tyrannize the church. He has no authority to introduce new laws or arbitrarily to establish adiaphora or ceremonies. He has no right to inflict and carry out excommunication without his having first informed the whole congregation.”² Walther goes on to share his view that, according to Matthew 18:15–18, a verdict of excommunication is to be pronounced by the pastor “only when the congregation has *unanimously* decided to excommunicate” the unrepentant sinner.³ However, Matthew 18:15–18 does not specifically address the issue of congregational “unanimity” in matters of excommunication. Despite Walther’s personal views regarding this matter,

A unanimous ballot does not appear to be a Biblical requirement, though it may check impetuous action ... Unanimity does not seem to be a Biblical requirement. When the evidence of sin and impenitence are indisputable, the congregation is not bound to that traditional rubric.⁴

In its report *Church Discipline in the Christian Congregation*, the CTCR also responds to the question “Is it proper for the congregation to delegate to the elders, to the church council, and/or to the pastor the authority to excommunicate?” Whether it is wise to do this may well depend on the circumstances, says the commission, but “it is no doubt within the power of the congregation to ask the Board of Elders and/or pastor to act in its behalf” (25). The CTCR notes in this connection that “a kind of delegation has already taken place when the voters’ assembly, as is generally the case, is authorized to act in the name of ‘the church’” (25). This principle seems relevant in view of the pastor’s claim that “Synod’s position under Article II states that ... there must be unanimity not only of the voters but there must be unanimity of the congregation.” In other words, the position taken by the pastor (which he claims to be “the Synod’s position under Article II”) would not give the congregation itself the power to delegate to others—even to the voters’ assembly—the authority to carry out excommunication on its behalf.

The CTCR shares this input with the CCM in support of the view that one can affirm the doctrinal position set forth by Walther in Thesis IX of *Church and Ministry* regarding congregational consent in cases of excommunication without necessarily agreeing with the view that Matthew 18:15–18 implies or requires a “unanimous” decision on the part of the congregation.

Adopted February 20, 2008

3. Request for an Opinion on Constitutional Issues Involving the Service of Women in Congregational Offices

Background:

In February 2007, the South Wisconsin District Committee on Constitutional Matters requested “the guidance and opinion of the

CTCR regarding an amended Constitution and Bylaws submitted by a district congregation.” The CTCR’s opinion was specifically requested regarding the permissibility of a woman serving as congregational president in view of the duties and responsibilities associated with that office in the congregation’s amended constitution and bylaws.

Response of the Commission:

In response to the questions submitted in your letter of February 16, 2007, the Commission refers your committee to the “Guidelines for the Service of Women in Congregational Offices” prepared in January 2005 by the task force appointed by the President of the Synod and including representatives from the CTCR, the CCM, and the COP. These “Guidelines,” prepared in light of the adoption of 2004 Res. 3-08A, can be found on pages 19–23 of *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices* (September 1994) with *Guidelines for Congregations* (January 2005).

These “Guidelines” do not provide specific answers to all questions of congregational polity, nor were they intended to do so. As “Guidelines,” they set forth principles that require application to specific circumstances by those who have been entrusted with this responsibility and who have access to the information required to make such application.

The Commission specifically calls the committee’s attention to the five Scriptural and Confessional principles set forth on page 20 of the document cited above, to the “Sample Paragraph for Congregational Constitutions” on page 21, and to the “Recommendations” on pages 21–22. To assist the committee in considering how the principles contained in this document may apply to the specific questions forwarded to the Commission, the CTCR offers the following comments related to each of these questions.

1. In the opinion of the CTCR, the response to the first question depends on what specific functions are involved in serving as “an advisory member to the board of elders.”
2. See response to question 1 above.
3. The answer to this question depends on what is meant by “assist[ing] the Pastor with the Administration of the Office of the Keys.” If this involves “carrying out the specific functions of the pastoral office,” then the answer to this question is “No” (see “Sample Paragraph” on page 21). If this means “assist[ing] the Pastor” as a layperson in ways that do not involve “carrying out the specific functions of the pastoral office,” such assistance is not excluded by the “Guidelines” or the “Sample Paragraph.”
4. “Investigating charges against a pastor” is not identified in the “Guidelines” as a “distinctive function of the pastoral office.” The Synod holds that “God has instituted the office of the pastoral ministry” and that “the one who holds this office carries it out on behalf of and with accountability to God and those through whom God has called him” (1992 Res. 3-06A).
5. The “Sample Paragraph” states that women may serve not only as *members* but also as *officers* of “all boards and committees ... which do not call upon them to carry out the specific functions of the pastoral office.” “Bringing charges to remove the pastor” is not identified in the “Guidelines” as a “specific function of the pastoral office,” but is ultimately the responsibility of the congregation as a whole (cf. point #4 above).

6. Chairing a meeting of the Voters Assembly at which charges are brought to excommunicate a member is not identified by the “Guidelines” as a “specific function of the pastoral office.” The Synod has always understood excommunication as a responsibility involving “the entire congregation” (Thesis IX of C. F. W. Walther’s “Theses on the Ministry,” found on pages 44–45 of the CTCR’s 1981 report on *The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature*).
7. 2004 Res. 3-08A affirmed the “conclusions” of the CTCR’s 1994 report on *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, one of which reads as follows: “If the duties prescribed for the offices of chairman and vice chairman in the congregation do not allow for the assumption of the distinctive functions of the pastoral office, women are free to hold this office without any scriptural restriction—a principle that applies to the chairmanship of all other congregational committees as well” (13).

Adopted February 20, 2008

4. Request for an Opinion on the Consecration of Elements

The Request

In a letter dated Sept. 26, 2007, the president of the South Wisconsin District asked the CTCR to render an official opinion concerning “the process for the consecration of sacramental elements that occurred at the Mass Communion Service at the LCMS National Youth Gathering on July 31, 2007, in Orlando, Florida.”

The text of this request reads as follows:

At the 2007 National Youth Gathering in Orlando, FL, some 150 Communion distribution teams were organized for the Mass Communion Service on Tuesday evening, July 31. Each distribution team was to consist of one pastor and three others. The organizers of the event apparently decided that, logistically, it would be best for the sacramental elements to be already in place at the approximately 150 distribution stations scattered throughout the assembly hall rather than on or nearby the altar at the front. Accordingly, at the training session for the distribution teams, both written (PowerPoint slides) and verbal instructions were that the pastors of the distribution teams were to “assist” in the consecration of the elements by making the sign of the cross over each of the elements while the Presiding Minister said the Words of Institution. This request was challenged as comprising “a Lutheran variation of concelebration that focuses on human action rather than on the clear Words of Institution of Christ.”

The request for an opinion is therefore the following: Is the practice that occurred at the 2007 LCMS NYG in Orlando an “acceptable practice” for such mass Communion services? Or, is it rather preferable that the elements intended for consecration in Holy Communion be set aside in a central location (on or nearby the altar), that the Presiding Minister alone engage in the consecration of the elements (with an emphasis on the Words of Institution of Christ), and that no other clergy be involved to “assist” in the consecration (either in action or in word)? What is the “best practice” from a Lutheran perspective?

The Response of the CTCR

For the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, two things are necessary: the public speaking of the Words of Institution in connection with the elements of bread and wine that are present in the same worship space (see Matt. 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:15–20; 1 Cor. 11:23–26). “Because the Words (*verba*) of Institution are the very heart of the sacramental action, they should always be employed. It is through Christ’s word and its power, not through the action of the celebrant, that Christ’s body and blood are present in the bread and wine” (CTCR, *Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Supper* [1983], 14). As the Formula of Concord says:

In the administration of Communion the words of institution are to be spoken or sung distinctly and clearly before the congregation and are under no circumstances to be omitted. Thereby we render obedience to the command of Christ, “This do.” Thereby the faith of the hearers in the essence and benefits of this sacrament (the presence of the body and blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and all the benefits which Christ has won for us by his death and the shedding of his blood and which he gives to us in his testament) is awakened, strengthened, and confirmed through his Word. And thereby the elements of bread and wine are hallowed or blessed in this holy use, so that therewith the body and blood of Christ are distributed to us to eat and to drink, as Paul says, “The cup of blessing which we bless,” which happens precisely through the repetition and recitation of the words of institution (FC SD VII, 79–82).

The CTCR declines rendering a judgment on whether or not “the practice that occurred at the 2007 NYG in Orlando [is] an ‘acceptable practice’ for such mass Communion practices,” since the term “acceptable practice” can be understood in differing ways. On the one hand, the “two things necessary” (the *verba* in connection with the elements) were present at the gathering referred to above. On the other hand, as the CTCR notes in its 1983 report, “to separate, by distance or liturgical action, a portion of the bread or of the wine from consecration moves in the direction of a Protestantism wherein the *verba* need not be held in sacramental proximity to the elements” (13, fn. 15).

In view of the above, two guidelines are suggested by the commission as preferable practice. In order not to burden anyone’s conscience with doubt, whenever possible the pastor who is the celebrant should consecrate all of the sacramental elements at one location/altar. Second, if this is not feasible due to the size of some gatherings, it may be necessary to have several altars/communion distribution stations. In this case, it is would be helpful for each pastor to speak the Words of Institution at the individual altars/communion distribution stations, provided that this can be done in a way that ensures that the Words of Institution are clearly heard and understood by all communicants. Adopted February 13, 2009

5. Response to Questions Regarding Elimination of Staff Positions

The Michigan District President requested a theological response to questions having to do with the status of the call in circumstances where multiple-staff congregations needed to reduce the number of called ministry positions. At its April 2009 meeting the commission adopted the following response:

Question 1:

In a multiple pastoral staff congregation, if the congregation eliminates the administrative pastor position and the associate pastor position in favor of a sole pastor position, do the Calls to the administrative pastor and the associate pastor terminate? In other words, if the position is terminated, are the Calls by the congregation also terminated?

Response:

1. The pastoral office itself is divinely mandated and the congregation may not abolish it. The commission reminds the congregation of the necessity to examine the specific language of the original call documents of both pastors and honor the commitments that were made.
2. As to whether a congregation may terminate certain specific positions within the pastoral office the CTCR points, first of all, to its previous statement that: “According to her need, the church may under the one Ministry of the Word establish such ‘offices’ as the situation requires. If the situation changes, she may also abolish some offices” (*The Ministry in Its Relation*

to the Christian Church [1973], p. 12).

In specific response to the question “Can a congregation, district or Synod terminate a call for financial reasons?” the CTCR reaffirms its previous opinion (dated Sept. 21, 1990) in which it makes reference to its 1973 report and further states: “A congregation may abolish any called position or ranking that it has established as long as it retains the pastoral office.” In this same opinion the CTCR urges a congregation that finds itself in this situation to “examine its motives and procedures before Him who searches the heart” and to be “guided by the concern that nothing be done in disobedience to God’s Word.”

Since there is no “call” without a position, a called position that is eliminated inevitably involves the termination of a person’s call to that position. It should be made clear to all concerned, however, that in situations of financial duress a person’s call is *not* being terminated for “cause”—i.e., false doctrine, an immoral life, or unwillingness or inability to fulfill the responsibilities of the office. (See also the CTCR’s 1981 report *The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature*, pp. 41–42, and its 2003 report *Theology and Practice of “the Divine Call,”* pp. 21–25, 42.) The goal should be to come to “mutual agreement” about what is best for the congregation and both pastors (*Theology and Practice of “the Divine Call,”* p. 45).

Question 2:

If both administrative and associate positions are eliminated, may the congregation choose to call either pastor or neither pastor currently in those positions?

Response:

The congregation retains the right to call to the pastoral office the man of its choosing. As C. F. W. Walther says in Thesis VII of his Theses on the Ministry: “The holy ministry is the authority conferred by God through the congregation, as holder of the priesthood and of all church power, to administer in public office the common rights of the spiritual priesthood in behalf of all.” (See the CTCR’s 1981 report on *The Ministry*, p. 44.)

However, while upholding the congregation’s right to choose and call its own pastor(s), the commission urges the exercise of great care and extreme caution in situations such as those depicted in this request. The potential to divide deeply the congregation over the matter of personal loyalties to one or the other of the pastors involved must be carefully taken into account. Whether either pastor should be called to the new sole pastor position should be carefully considered. Seeking the counsel of the appropriate people in circuit and district positions of supervision (circuit counselor and district president) is critically important for the well being of the congregation now and in the future.

Question 3:

If the congregation chooses to call the associate pastor as sole pastor, could the administrative pastor have grounds for appeal?

Response:

The right to appeal is given to all members of the Synod. As to the question of whether a called worker has “grounds for appeal,” that is to be determined after consideration of all the specifics of the situation. The procedure that governs matters of dispute resolution is described in the 2007 *Handbook* of the LCMS. We call particular attention to the purpose of dispute resolution on p. 38, Bylaw 1.10.2.

Again, if circumstances make it necessary to eliminate a certain position, great care and concern must be exercised so that all

persons involved are treated fairly and with Christian compassion. Our Lord's call to love one another and care for one another must prevail. The necessity of providing financial support and benefits during a time of transition must also be addressed.

Adopted April 25, 2009

6. CTCR Response to 2007 Resolution 8-10

Background:

2007 Res. 8-10 resolved that the CTCR, in consultation with the Committee on Structure (COS) and the Council of Presidents (COP), consider 11 overtures (8-47–57) submitted to the 2007 Convention regarding CCM Opinions 02-2296, 02-2309, 02-2320 and report its findings to the 2010 convention. The central point of concern regarding these three opinions was the judgment by the CCM that

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod do not allow or contemplate the expulsion of a member of the Synod on the basis of an action taken with the full knowledge and approval of the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor. (CCM Opinion 02-2296)

One of the overtures (8-47, from the Northern Illinois District) asked for clarification of the interpretation of Opinion 02-2309. Another (8-48, from the South Wisconsin District), asked Synod either to reaffirm or to decline Opinions 02-2296 and 02-2309. A third (8-50, from a Nebraska congregation), urged individual responsibility for behavior without specific mention of the CCM opinions. The remaining eight overtures, from seven districts and various congregations, circuit forums, and pastors' conferences, sought to overrule one or more of the opinions in question.

Several clarifying points regarding these opinions were raised by the "whereas" portions of Res. 8-10. First, the resolution distinguishes between "scriptural" and constitutional concerns with the opinions, noting that the CCM is charged with interpreting the constitution and bylaws of the Synod, not its theological position, and that all the objections to the opinions are theological or scriptural and none is constitutional. Additionally, the resolution points out that significant bylaw revisions occurred and new policies were implemented by the COP after the CCM opinions (the changes in bylaws and policies occurred as a result of and following the 2004 Synod convention, while the opinions all date from 2003). Res. 8-10 goes on to note that these changes "may impact" the discussion of the opinions in question.

The CTCR's Task:

The CTCR has consulted with the COS and has received confirmation that it has found the CTCR's response included here to be "quite adequate." The CTCR also shared its response with the COP and received no objections or suggestions for modification.

The task before the CTCR seems to be two-fold. First, we need to identify the theological issues raised by the 11 overtures to the 2007 convention. Second, we must consider how the changes to the bylaws and COP policies impact or "address" the identified theological issues.

Identification of theological issues.

The theological issues raised by the overtures may be summarized as follows:

1. That the CCM opinions encourage partiality or "respecting of persons" in judgment (citing Deut. 1:17; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; James 2:1, 9).
2. That the opinions make the Word of God secondary to human traditions (making human commandments into church doctrine and encouraging obedience to men rather than God; citing

Mark 7:7, 13; Acts 5:29).

3. That the opinions repeal a divinely given obligation (citing AC 27, 24 and AAC 28, 17–21).
4. That the opinions grant "immunity from expulsion" for an action that may eventually be judged to be worthy of expulsion for anyone who has secured the permission of an ecclesiastical supervisor.
5. That because the opinions allow an ecclesiastical supervisor to provide approval to a member in private, the supervisor would not necessarily be held accountable for his actions.

The overtures in question do not provide extensive theological arguments for the issues they raise, which makes it difficult fully to understand the concerns of those who submitted the overtures. For example, references to partiality or "respecting of persons" are not elucidated further in order to explain the contention that the CCM opinions encourage such partiality. One would have to assume that the concern is that someone in an office of supervision could potentially show favoritism or partiality and grant approval to a course of official action by someone he favors or withhold approval from someone he dislikes. In such a case, the first (favored) person would have no fear of discipline for his action while the second (disfavored) individual could be immediately subject to discipline for his action.

The second and third concerns seem clearer. Both the idea of making the Word of God secondary to human traditions and the idea of repealing divinely given obligations seemingly flow from the judgment that the CCM opinions make Synod policy more important than the Bible. Human (Synod) traditions are viewed as having been elevated to higher status than the Bible because an individual who is eventually found to have transgressed biblical teaching or practice is nevertheless exempt from church discipline because he obeyed a human authority (his ecclesiastical supervisor). Additionally, the overtures contend that an exemption from discipline transgresses the Bible's obligation to exercise responsible admonition and church discipline when a Christian errs. In both cases, there seems also to be a concern that the opinions may allow a supervisor the authority to set aside biblical teaching in favor of his own judgment.

The fourth item of concern, the perception that "immunity from expulsion" is granted by the CCM opinions is less clear. On the one hand, is the suggestion that something akin to a rule of "no double jeopardy" is inherent in the CCM opinions? "Immunity" would seem to suggest a continuing freedom from discipline for the issue under question. On the other hand, perhaps the concern refers only to a particular instance for which the member of Synod cannot be expelled.

The fifth item of concern seems clear. The supposition of the overtures is that a supervisor may permit a course of action that is not publicly known or that cannot be addressed by his supervisor or, in the case of the Synod President, by the convention, in a timely manner.

Consideration of how bylaw and policy changes address the theological issues.

The 2004 convention of the LCMS changed the bylaw procedures for dispute resolution and ecclesiastical supervision in several significant ways. Those procedures have remained following the 2007 convention without significant change. We will address the two areas separately. First, however, it should go without saying that no action by any human authority, ecclesial or otherwise, can exempt an individual from personal responsibility toward God and His judgment. Synod's Constitution and Bylaws are humanly devised organizational tools to enable a group of individual pastors and congregations—its members—to operate together as effectively as possible. They are far from infallible and are always subject to revision. Synods (like

Councils) may indeed err, but God and His Word do not err. Synod may well determine that someone is guilty or not guilty of an action against God, but God will be the final judge. Synod's sanctions are no guarantee of divine sanctions.

Therefore, individuals and congregations who are members of Synod must indeed obey God above men. The question about human rules is whether they hinder us from obeying God. It is the contention of this opinion that the rulings in question do *not prevent or discourage obedience to God*, but we commend those who submitted overtures for their legitimate questions regarding such a perennially important concern.

Dispute Resolution

Bylaw 1.10, "Dispute Resolution of the Synod," was established due to "grave concern for the whole church," over conflicts within the church (Bylaw 1.10.1, citing Matt. 5:23–24; Eph. 4:26–27). The preamble to 1.10 is established on biblical admonitions to practice the humility of our Lord (Phil. 2:5), to resolve conflict within the fellowship of faith rather than by means of governmental courts (1 Cor. 6:1–7), to be guided by Matthew 18:15–20 in matters of discipline in the wider church and not only the congregation, to seek lovingly in all disputes to exercise a "ministry of reconciliation" and restoration of erring members rather than adversarial practices (2 Cor. 5:18; Gal. 6:1), and to hold to "the justification of the sinner through grace in Christ Jesus" as the "heart and center" of that reconciling ministry whereby conflict is resolved in a God-pleasing manner, asking for and extending the forgiveness of sins in our dealings with each other (see Bylaws 1.10.1.1–6).

From the CTCR's perspective, the procedures outlined by the dispute resolution bylaw address the theological concerns of the 2007 overtures in the following ways:

1. While the focus of the bylaw is disputes and not "procedures for expulsion from membership" (Bylaw 1.10.3), it *emphatically encourages face-to-face interactions* between disputing individuals, without any distinction as to the office or position those individuals hold (e.g., Bylaw 1.10.5). This recurring stipulation to some extent addresses the worry that Synod has established a system of ecclesiastical supervision which allows partiality. If an individual is concerned with a fellow member's conduct or that of an ecclesiastical supervisor, he may (and should) speak face-to-face to the individual in loving, fraternal admonition. This important responsibility is not abrogated, but is reinforced by the Synod's 2004 action and acts as a check against potential pretentiousness on the part of one in a position of authority. One may also note in this context that a later CCM consideration of concerns regarding Opinion 02-2309 clarifies this same matter: "The Commission has never opined that one brother should be denied the right or responsibility to admonish another brother over matters of the soul." (See "Opinions of Commission on Constitutional Matters," "Concerns re Opinion 02-2309 [03-2338B]," adopted Aug. 15–16, 2003; *2004 Convention Workbook*, p. 365. Note: Opinion 02-2309 did affirm and the CCM reaffirmed the principle that ecclesiastical supervision is only "to be provided by those whom the Synod has given that responsibility in its Constitution and Bylaws.")
2. In the dispute resolution process, the possibility of undue influence (partiality) on the part of ecclesiastical supervisors is limited by the fact that the administrator of the dispute resolution process is the secretary of the Synod or district and not either a Synod or district president (ecclesiastical supervisors of Synod officers and districts respectively). (See Bylaw

1.10.6.)

3. The right of appeal of dispute resolution decisions is clearly preserved (Bylaw 1.10.8). In so doing, yet another check exists to prevent partiality in decisions affecting the well-being of Christ's holy people as they seek to live in accordance with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.
4. The dispute resolution process makes provision for the disqualification of those who would serve as potential reconcilers, panel members, or hearing facilitators (all the positions of judgment regarding disputes; see Bylaw 1.10.16). This section of the bylaw explicitly allows for disqualification in the instance of "actual partiality or the appearance thereof." Once again, a vitally important check is created against favoritism or special treatment or any "respecting of persons."

Ecclesiastical Supervision

2004 Bylaws 2.12 and 2.13 (referenced in 2007 Res. 8-10) specifically address the matter of ecclesiastical supervision, the focus of the overtures' concerns. For the sake of clarity, it may be helpful to point out changes between the 2004 and 2007 versions of the Synod's Bylaws that are relevant to this consideration.

- The Preamble to 2004 Bylaw 2.13 ("Restricting, Suspending, and Expelling Congregations or Individuals from Membership") was added to 2004 Bylaw 2.14 ("Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod") in formulating 2007 Bylaw 2.14 (without other change of content).
- 2007 Bylaw 2.13 ("Membership Status and Limitations") includes all the remaining procedures from 2004 Bylaw 2.13 ("Restricting, Suspending, and Expelling Congregations or Individuals from Membership").
- 2007 Bylaw 2.13 ("Membership Status and Limitations") now begins with a section titled "Specific Ministry Pastor Status and Limitations" (2.13.1). The 2004 Bylaw 2.13.1 was the "Preamble," which has been added as the first paragraph in the preamble to 2007 Bylaw 2.14.
- References hereafter are to the relevant bylaws as they appear in the 2007 *Handbook* of Synod, not to the 2004 bylaws as they are identified in the overtures.
- Finally, while 2007 Res. 8-10 directs the commission to consider how Bylaws 2.12 and 2.13 "impact" the theological issues raised, 2004 Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.16 are also relevant to this discussion and must be referenced.

Current handbook provisions regarding the expulsion of members of the Synod, from congregations, to individuals, to Synod officers (including a district president), to the President of Synod, have been in place since the 2004 convention. The following aspects of ecclesiastical supervision seem to be relevant to the theological concerns of 2007 Overtures 8-47 through 8-57:

1. Bylaw 2.14.1 Preamble states that termination of membership "should only be taken as a final step" after admonition has failed and a Synod member persists in violating its confession (Constitution Article II) or its conditions of membership (Article VI) or has persisted in offensive conduct (Article XIII). The entire bylaw, as well as Bylaws 2.15 and 2.16 provide the procedure for the way in which ecclesiastical supervision is to take place in the Synod. What is clear is that the procedure presupposes fidelity to Scripture and the Lutheran confessions *by all Synod's members*, whether in positions of authority or under authority. This presupposition clearly addresses any theological concern that Synod's procedures encourage partiality.

2. In Bylaw 2.14.2 Definition of Terms, reference is made to Bylaw 1.2 (g) for a definition of ecclesiastical supervision. Bylaw 1.2 (g) subjects ecclesiastical supervision “to the provisions of the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions.” In so doing, the bylaw requires, again, that ecclesiastical supervision be carried out according to the confessions that the Holy Scriptures are “the only rule and norm of faith and of practice” and that the Lutheran confessions are “a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God” (*Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, Article II Confession). This reference to the confessional basis of the Synod once more addresses the theological concern of the overtures about favoritism or that human tradition or human ideas are being placed above the Scriptures. That there is a danger that ecclesiastical supervision would not be properly exercised—an obvious possibility in a sinful world where those charged with ecclesiastical supervision in the church are always “sinner-saints”—does not prove that the procedure for ecclesiastical supervision is itself defective. No human procedures are without fault, but if the authority of Scripture and the Confessions is upheld, the procedure is not inherently defective.
3. Bylaws 2.15 and 2.16 allow for the expulsion of those in positions of ecclesiastical supervision (district presidents and the President of Synod), as well as other officers of Synod under the supervision of the President. Such procedures certainly address the concern of partiality. Synod officers, including district presidents, are under the ecclesiastical supervision of the President of Synod. He, in turn, is subject to the Synod meeting in convention should the Council of Presidents have commenced an action for his own expulsion. It is important to see that no partiality is shown to those in offices of authority in the Synod. Moreover, the basis of an action of expulsion must be that an individual has violated Synod’s confessional foundation (Article II) or its conditions of membership (Article VI) or has engaged in persistent offensive conduct (Article XIII). The retention of these bases means that the authority of Scripture is not made subject to human guidelines. Moreover, rather than encouraging partiality, it is clear that no member of the Synod is exempt from potential expulsion if he acts contrary to Synod’s confession of faith or its conditions of membership.
4. The third area of concern—that the opinions of the CCM abrogate a biblically given responsibility for believers to reprove and admonish one another—is not directly addressed in the bylaws regarding expulsion from membership in the Synod. However, the aforementioned emphasis on the bylaws’ reaffirmation of Scriptural and confessional authority must be understood to include the fact that Synod continues to encourage every believer to exercise the responsibility of godly admonition and correction according to biblical command. Lest there be any doubt in this regard, the CCM has itself stated, in a response to “Concerns re Opinion 02-2309 (03-2338B)”: “The Commission has never opined that one brother should be denied the right or responsibility to admonish another brother over matters of the soul. However, when it comes to ecclesiastical supervision by the Synod, such supervision is to be provided by those whom the Synod has given that responsibility in its Constitution and Bylaws.” (See “Opinions of Commission on Constitutional Matters,” *2004 Convention Workbook*, 365).
5. Another concern raised was that the CCM rulings grant “immunity” (e.g., 2007 Overture 8-50, 8-57). The suggestion of Overture 8-57, that CCM opinions may allow for Constitutional violation “with impunity and immunity,” indicates that some are interpreting the CCM ruling as allowing for some sort of blanket immunity that allows for persistent disregard of Synod’s confessional standards and membership conditions. Perhaps the concern is that an approval of an action at one point would now have precedential value in the manner of case law in the secular courts. Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.16 rule out such an understanding. There is no guarantee, first, that the decisions of any ecclesiastical supervisor are exempt from review. Thus, while it is clear that a Synod member who acts in accord with his ecclesiastical supervisor’s approval is not subject to discipline, it is *not* the case that the ecclesiastical supervisor is also exempt from discipline. If the Synod President, for instance, determines that an approval granted by a district president to a pastor in a questionable matter is contrary to Synod’s confessional position or its conditions of membership, the President can and should admonish the District President and, if necessary, initiate a process of expulsion against him. In such an instance, one would hope that, when biblically admonished, the district president would acknowledge his error, repudiate it, and in turn correct his advice to the pastor in question. He would inform the pastor that in future instances, he (the district president) would no longer approve such action. Similarly, a Synod President can be admonished and corrected for an action he has approved, perhaps by an individual privately or by the Council of Presidents if it commences an action of expulsion. The Synod President, then, in turn, could correct his earlier advice and insure that similar action not take place in the future.
6. In this same vein, one more circumstance should be considered. If an ecclesiastical supervisor’s advice is found to be erroneous and the supervisor is admonished, changes his view, and then gives the corrected advice to the Synod member under his supervision, he would be warning that member who had been granted earlier approval not to repeat the action in question. His correction would include an admonition that such action, while not subject to discipline in the past, is also not to be repeated in the future. In such a circumstance, if a Synod member should stubbornly persist in similar action or practices, that member would then be subject to the discipline of the supervisor. Such an approach toward ecclesiastical supervision, rather than being lax, is fully appropriate to human fallibility in judgment and sinfulness and is in keeping with Scripture’s guidance on pastoral admonition (Titus 3:10).
7. The final point of concern—the potential for an ecclesiastical supervisor to approve an action for which he cannot be held accountable because the approval is not made public—is difficult to evaluate theologically. It seems to the commission that such an assertion is not a theological contention but an assertion of the possibility of immoral conduct. Surely, Christians will sometimes act irresponsibly, including those in positions of authority. The Law of God exists to curb such behavior, and human laws—under the “left hand realm”—exist under God’s Law to exercise the same function. Synod’s procedures for removal from office are examples of such curbing Law at work. That said, one should grant that it is impossible to create human procedures that cannot (and will not) be violated. That a procedure may be violated does not make it bad, or there would be no Decalogue. Therefore, the final point seems to be without merit as a theological criticism of the CCM rulings.

Adopted
February 12, 2010

7. CTCR Response to Board for University Education/Concordia University System Request regarding “Women as Presidents of LCMS Colleges and Universities”

Question:

In correspondence dated December 18, 2009, the Board for University Education/Concordia University System requested an opinion from the CTCR on the matter of “Women as Presidents of LCMS Colleges and Universities.” The specific question that the CTCR was asked to address is this: “If the president of an LCMS college or university is not directly responsible for carrying out the official functions of the pastoral office, is there any theological reason why a woman could not serve as the president of an LCMS college or university?”

Response:

1. First, the CTCR holds that the word “could” in the above question is most properly understood in the sense of “may.” Clearly the question is not about a woman’s *capability* to serve in this office, but whether this is theologically *permissible* under the stated conditions.
2. With this clarification, the CTCR’s answer to the question is “No.” There is no theological reason why a woman may not serve as the president of an LCMS college or university if the “job description” for this office does not involve direct responsibility for carrying out the official functions of the pastoral office. Conversely, of course, if the “job description” for this office at a particular institution requires carrying out the official functions of the pastoral office, then a woman is not eligible to serve in this office.

Adopted

February 12, 2010

8. Response to “Request for CTCR Opinion concerning Continued Eligibility of an Inactive Emeritus Member under Article VI of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod”

Background and Request to the CTCR:

In a letter dated September 7, 2009, a district president depicts a scenario in which an *emeritus* ordained member of the LCMS is receiving Holy Communion in a member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Referring to the Synod’s Constitution, he then asks the CTCR to give an opinion on two questions:

Question 1: Is reception of the Lord’s Supper “[t]aking part in the services and sacramental rites” of a congregation, as that phrase is used in Article VI, Section 2 b, of the Constitution?

If the answer to Question 1 is yes, then;

Question 2: Is the reception of the Lord’s Supper by a member of Synod, with a congregation that is a member of a church body that is not in church fellowship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (e.g., the ELCA), a failure of the membership requirement of “[r]enunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description” as that phrase is used in Article VI, Section 2 of the Constitution?

The district president notes that consideration was given to requesting an opinion from the CCM, but the decision was made instead to request an opinion from the CTCR based on an earlier CCM decision regarding a similar issue. In a 2002 request, “Interpretation of Article VI 2 b (02-2278)” the CCM was asked: “Could you explain the exact meaning of Article VI 2 b of the Constitution which proscribes members of Synod from ‘taking part in the ... sacramental rites of heterodox congregations or of congregations of mixed confessions’; specifically, with reference to the celebration of the Lord’s Supper in

heterodox congregations? Does this forbid members of Synod from communing in such congregations (presumably congregations not in fellowship with the LCMS) or does it only forbid members from being celebrant or helping in the distribution of the elements or some other service at the altar?”

The CCM declined to offer a specific response to this question, stating:

Article VI indicates that taking part in a service or sacramental rite of a heterodox congregation or a congregation of mixed confession is an act of unionism and syncretism. The specific questions are then: 1) What constitutes “taking part”? 2) What constitutes a “service”? 3) What constitutes a “heterodox congregation”? 4) What constitutes a “congregation of mixed confession”? The answer to these questions relates to a minister of religion’s commitment to witness publicly and privately to the one and only Gospel set forth in the Holy Scriptures. Among the functions of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations is to “provide guidance to the Synod in matters of theology and church relations” (Bylaw 3.925 b). Thus this question should be directed to that commission.⁵

CTCR Response

As the CTCR has considered this request and the issues raised therein, it can offer only a limited response. While it can address certain issues raised in the district president’s request in light of the CCM response cited above, it cannot respond directly to the specific questions raised.

1. The CTCR has addressed the matter of a Lutheran communing at the altar of a church with which his or her church body is not in doctrinal agreement. On page 25 of its 1983 report *Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Supper*, the CTCR asks: “Is it proper for a Lutheran to attend the Lord’s Supper at the altars of churches not in doctrinal agreement with the church body of which he/she is a member?” It responds:

In accordance with the confessional nature of participation in the Lord’s Supper (cf. pp. 19–23), and in agreement with Lutheranism’s historic position, it is inappropriate to attend the Lord’s Supper at non-Lutheran altars. Since participation in Holy Communion, Scripturally and confessionally understood, entails agreement in the Gospel and all its articles, it would not be appropriate to attend the Lord’s Supper in a church with which such agreement is not shared.

What is said here about Lutherans in general (i.e., members of Lutheran congregations) certainly applies also to Lutheran pastors (*emeritus* or otherwise), who by virtue of their office bear a special responsibility “to witness publicly and privately to the one and only Gospel set forth in the Holy Scriptures” (see CCM response cited above). However, the response given in the CTCR’s 1983 report does not answer the specific questions posed by the district president about “the continued eligibility of an inactive *emeritus* member under Article VI of the Constitution.”

2. Certain *terminological* questions raised in the district president’s request in reference to the CCM’s 2002 Opinion—such as the definitions of “service” or of “heterodox congregation” or “congregation of mixed confession”—are matters which can be considered theologically. For example, in its 2001 report, *The Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship: Report on Synodical Discussions*, the CTCR addresses the question of the meaning of a “service” and defines it as “any occasion in which the Word of God is preached and prayer is made to Him by a fully authorized church worship leader.” The document further notes that the same understanding of the meaning of a service was articulated by a 1973 Opinion of the Commission on Worship (with the concurrence of the CTCR), “What is a service?”⁶

In a 1973 Opinion, *Statement on Lutheran/Non-Lutheran Marriage Ceremonies*, the CTCR defined the term *heterodox* as “those who hold theological opinions not in accord with our

acknowledged standard,” namely, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and the Lutheran Confessions. The CTCR’s 2000 document *The Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship: Study Materials* indicates that the term *heterodox* is used simply to refer to false teaching.⁷ Specific definitions for these terms were also suggested in the CTCR’s 1991 study document *Inter-Christian Relationships: An Instrument for Study*.⁸ However, as the titles of the latter two documents indicate, both were intended for study and cannot be cited as “official statements” of the CTCR or of the Synod.

Moreover, the definition of these terms does not seem to be the decisive factor in the questions posed to the CTCR. For example, no one would deny that a service of Holy Communion would fall under the usage of “service” in Article VI of the Constitution. Additionally, our Synod is clearly on record that we do not consider the ELCA to be an orthodox Lutheran church body, and is therefore heterodox (2001 Res. 3-21A). Lastly, in the scenario as depicted, the congregation is of one confession and is not mixed. Therefore, none of these issues appear to be in dispute in the scenario in question.

3. What *remains* to be considered is the interpretation of the phrase from Article VI, “*taking part in the services and sacramental rites*” of a congregation (emphasis added). This, clearly, is the critical question being posed in this request: what exactly does “taking part” mean “as that phrase is used in Article VI, Section 2 b of the Constitution?” It is precisely this question that the CTCR does not believe it can interpret *theologically* with any certainty. For example, the Synod has understood this expression as referring to being a co-officiant or worship leader in some capacity such as performing a Baptism, preaching, reading the lessons, offering the prayers, or conducting either the liturgy of the Word or of Holy Communion (see, e.g., 1973 Opinion of the CTCR, *Statement on Lutheran/Non-Lutheran Marriage Ceremonies*). Alternatively, however, the expression itself could possibly refer to attending a service of worship and singing psalms and hymns and joining silently in public prayer. Obviously, one might also understand this expression to mean receiving Holy Communion in the service. Each of these examples is conceivable as a legitimate grammatical and theological way of understanding the phrase “taking part” in the services of a congregation. What is not clear is how “that phrase is used” or is intended to be understood or interpreted in Article VI of the Constitution.

The CTCR’s 1991 study document *Inter-Christian Relationships* offers this definition: “*Taking part in* such services and rites refers both to the conducting of worship services or portions thereof by pastors and to the official sponsorship or involvement of congregations as such in worship services, as distinguished from the occasional attendance by individuals at the services of heterodox denominations (such as weddings or funerals)” (p. 19). However, as noted above, this is a study document and has no official status in the Synod. Moreover, the definition offered in this study document does not provide an exact answer to the question before the Commission. It suggests that “taking part in” refers to conducting worship by pastors or congregational sponsorship of worship services. It then contrasts this with “occasional attendance,” but seems to refer more to such services as weddings and funerals than to the divine service of Word and Sacrament and does not address the issue of communing in such a service at all.

As to Article VI terms, one additional underlying question may be identified. Are the “members” in question in Article VI 2

congregational or individual members? In the wider context of Article VI, some references can only involve individual members (6). Sections 3, 4, and 5 refer primarily to congregations, while others obviously refer to both congregations and individual members of Synod (1, 7). Section 2 a clearly refers to ministers and 2 c likely refers to both congregational and individual members. 2 b, however, is not completely clear in terms of its specific point of reference. This ambiguity increases the difficulty for the commission to answer with any certainty the question of what Article VI 2 b means by “taking part.”

Given this uncertainty, the CTCR cannot answer Questions 1 or 2 directly on the basis of the stated theological positions of the Synod or past CTCR reports or opinions. As noted in the CCM’s 2002 Opinion, the commission is currently continuing its work on a longstanding assignment to give guidance concerning “inter-Christian relationships” (see 1981 Res. 3-03A). This assignment, however, does not include a specific request to provide a precise definition of the phrase “taking part” in Art. VI 2 b of the Synod’s Constitution.

It is the opinion of the CTCR that the meaning of the phrase “taking part in,” within the context of Article VI 2 b, is a *matter of interpretation based upon the original intent of our Synod’s fathers when they drafted the Constitution*. Its potential *theological* meanings are varied, as noted above. Its particular usage in the context of the Constitution of the LCMS is a question, therefore, that can be rightly decided only by those who are charged with the responsibility for such interpretation, the CCM.⁹

Conclusion

The commission therefore cannot answer the first question posed to it regarding the meaning of the specific constitutional terminology, “taking part in.” The second question is asked provisionally, that is, the question applies only if the answer to the first question were Yes. Therefore it too cannot be answered by the CTCR.

Adopted

February 12, 2010

F. Expressions of Dissent

There were no expressions of dissent filed with the CTCR during the past triennium.

II. Church Relations

A. Inter-Lutheran Relationships

1. International Lutheran Council

The International Lutheran Council (ILC) was established in 1993. It is a worldwide association of 34 established confessional Lutheran church bodies that proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of an unconditional commitment to the Holy Scriptures as the inspired and infallible Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions contained in the Book of Concord as the true and faithful exposition of the Word of God. The ILC is not a church body and it does not carry out churchly functions. Church fellowship with all member bodies is not necessary for membership. The council does not intend to prescribe any course of action for its members. Rather, it seeks to strengthen its member churches in their confessional witness and mission.

The ILC exists for the purpose of encouraging, strengthening, and promoting confessional Lutheran theology and practice centering in Jesus Christ. To this end, the ILC provides opportunities for the study of contemporary theological issues; gives mutual support and encouragement for the heads of member churches in planning

for mission outreach; strengthens theological education through conferences of theologians and seminary teachers; facilitates communication between confessional Lutheran churches of the world through the publication of *ILC News*; and facilitates the preparation and publication of confessional Lutheran literature.

Serving as officers of the ILC during the present triennium are Dr. Gerald Kieschnick (President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod), chairman; Dr. Paulo Nerbass (President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil), vice chairman; and Rev. Gijbertus van Hattem (President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Belgium), secretary. Also serving on its executive committee are Rev. Christian Ekong, President of the Lutheran Church of Nigeria; Rev. Robert Bugbee, President of the Lutheran Church—Canada; Rev. James Cerdeñola, President of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines; and Rev. Hans-Jörg Voigt, Bishop of the Independent Evangelical—Lutheran Church in Germany (SELK). Dr. Samuel Nafzger serves as its executive secretary. Rev. Peter Ahlers, from the Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa (FELSISA), serves as editor of *ILC News*.

The ILC meets in international conference every three years. The Eighth Conference of the ILC was held on August 26–31, 2009, in Seoul, South Korea, under the theme “In Christ: Living Life to the Full.” At this conference, the ILC adopted unanimously the following statement:

**Same-Gender Relationships and the Church
A Statement from the International Lutheran Council**

Recent years have brought confusion and discord to churches in various parts of the world—including Lutheran churches—as some church bodies have adopted resolutions stating that sexually active, same-gender relationships are an acceptable way of life for Christians. In addition, some have approved the ordination of pastors living in such a committed, sexually active same-gender relationship. The 8th World Conference of the International Lutheran Council met August 26–31, 2009, in Seoul, Korea, under the theme, “In Christ: Living Life to the Full.” Our desire to proclaim and to live the abundant life in Christ compels us to make this statement in light of the current turmoil regarding same-gender relationships.

In evaluating the question of homosexuality, even in the 21st century, we believe we are ultimately dealing with the authority of Holy Scripture as the inspired Word of God. Even in the sensitive matter of human beings and their sexual identity, the church is to submit in humility to the authority of the Word of God. The Scriptures testify clearly and repeatedly that the lifelong committed union of one man and one woman is the place the Lord intends for human sexuality to be lived out. Biblical passages which address the practice of homosexuality do so in terms of disapproval. Rooted in the Bible’s witness and in keeping with Christian teaching through 2000 years, we continue to believe that the practice of homosexuality—in any and all situations—violates the will of the Creator God and must be recognized as sin.

At the same time, we declare our resolve to approach those with homosexual inclinations with the deepest possible Christian love and pastoral concern, in whatever situation they may be living. Though we affirm the demands of God’s Law without reservation, we Christians confess that the sins of the world have been forgiven through Christ’s suffering and death on the cross. As the redeemed children of God, we lead our lives as “saints and sinners” at the same time. We hope for full renewal and sanctification, but realize that these hopes are not completely fulfilled in this life. This applies to countless temptations. Our sinful condition calls for a lifetime of prayer and struggle. Confession and absolution provide a welcome refuge to receive the Lord’s forgiveness, which He also offers through His Word and the Sacraments. This enables us to continue our personal struggles to live a God-pleasing life in the power of the Spirit.

Adopted unanimously by the International Lutheran Council
Seoul, Korea, August 31, 2009

The ILC also sponsors a world conference of representatives from ILC churches who are responsible in their respective churches for training pastors. The next World Seminaries Conference is scheduled to be held June 3–6, 2010, in Fort Wayne, Indiana on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary. The theme of this conference will be “Confessional Lutheran Identity in a World of Changing Religious Demographics.”

Additional information about the members and work of the International Lutheran Council is available at www.ilc-online.org.

2. Relationships with Sister/Partner Lutheran Churches

a. American Association of Lutheran Churches

The 2007 conventions of both The Association of American Lutheran Churches (AALC) and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) declared the two church bodies to be in altar and pulpit fellowship on the basis of agreement in doctrine and practice. The protocol document signed by the leaders of the church bodies called for a Commission on AALC-LCMS Fellowship “for the purpose of monitoring relationships between our two church bodies.” The commission began meeting November 20, 2007. AALC representatives on this commission are AALC Presiding Pastor Franklin Hays; Administrative Assistant to the Presiding Pastor Fred Balke; and Commission on Doctrine and Church Relations Chairman Phillip Hofinga. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is represented by First Vice-President William Diekelman; Secretary Raymond Hartwig; Commission on Theology and Church Relations Executive Director Joel Lehenbauer; and Minnesota South District President Lane Seitz.

During its various meetings in the past triennium, the commission has studied and discussed church body governing documents and processes, congregation and church worker rosters, existing protocol and related documents, and specific fellowship situations requiring early response. It has also prepared two formal operating agreements to govern the movement of members between the church bodies and to facilitate necessary day-to-day relationships and cooperation between the two church bodies, covering ecclesiastical supervision, temporary pastoral service, and other such issues. The commission will continue to meet in the coming triennium.

b. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti

Representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti (ELCH) and the LCMS met January 17–20, 2008, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to discuss the work of and between the two church bodies, which have been in altar and pulpit fellowship since 2001. The dialogue included such topics as theological education, inter-Lutheran relationships in Haiti, and assistance with church planting in Haiti. Such meetings had been impossible prior to that time because of political turmoil. President Marky Kessa and other officials of the ELCH and its seminary represented that church body. Dr. William Diekelman, First Vice-President; Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger, then Executive Director of the CTCR; Dr. Gerhard Michael, Jr., a member of the CTCR; and others represented the LCMS.

After the devastating earthquake experienced by Haiti on January 13, 2010, the pastors and people of the ELCH have been severely tested, and the partnership between our church bodies has resulted in an outpouring of prayer, financial donations, and offers to assist in rescue, relief, and rebuilding efforts in Haiti. LCMS World Relief organized Mercy Medical Teams and channeled funds to where they could be used most effectively. Because of transportation difficulties, much of the initial assistance took place in the Dominican Republic through the efforts of Rev. Ted Krey and other LCMS missionaries. A

team of LCMS representatives transported medical supplies and tents into Haiti from the Dominican Republic within 10 days of the earthquake. Aid efforts are continuing through the present time.

c. Japan Lutheran Church

The Missouri Synod's partner church in Japan, the Japan Lutheran Church (JLC), received a proposal at its 14th General Convention in May 2008 to ordain women to the pastoral office. LCMS President Kieschnick extended an offer to have the two churches discuss this issue, "since a decision to ordain women would have serious implications for a relationship which our two churches have enjoyed for so many years." In response, the JLC convention resolved to discuss the issue with the LCMS before making a decision. Since that time, representatives of the Synod and the JLC have met on three occasions, in February and September 2009 and in February 2010. The LCMS has been represented by Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger, Director of Church Relations; Dr. Joel D. Lehenbauer, Executive Director of the CTCR; and Dr. Gerhard Michael, former missionary to Japan and past president of the Florida-Georgia District.

In the first round of discussions, the participants in these talks focused their attention on "the history, the position, and the situation of the service of women" in each church body. In round two, each church body presented a careful study of what the Scriptures teach about the service of women in the church. In round three, the participants sought to clarify points of agreement and disagreement and discussed questions about the implications of a possible decision by the JLC to ordain women. This latter issue will be the focus of a fourth and final round of discussions planned for August 29–30, 2010.

The JLC grew out of LCMS mission work in Japan beginning in 1948. It was organized as an autonomous church in 1968 and became an LCMS partner church in 1971.

d. Lutheran Church—Canada

Representatives of the LCMS and the Lutheran Church—Canada meet a minimum of one time each year to discuss areas of mutual interest and cooperation as partner churches. Recent meetings were held in St. Louis on November 5, 2008, and November 9–10, 2009. The latter meeting included an opportunity for interaction and conversation with members of the AALC-LCMS Commission on Fellowship (see item 2 a above).

e. Lutheran Church in Korea

The Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) celebrated 50 years of Lutheran mission work in Korea in October 2008. Representing the LCMS on this occasion was Dr. Samuel Nafzger, Director of Church Relations and Assistant to the President.

The LCK presented a plaque to the LCMS which reads:

The congregation and members of the Lutheran Church in Korea present this plaque of appreciation to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with profound appreciation for sending four missionary families 50 years ago for the sake of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ in a country devastated by war. By God's grace, and as a result of that initiative, the Lutheran Church in Korea exists today. For this reason we give thanks to God first of all, and also to the Synod, in this 50th anniversary year of Lutheran mission work in Korea.

Today, the Lutheran Church in Korea has 42 congregations, 53 pastors, and 5,060 baptized members. Through the Bethel Bible Study program, it has led 450,000 individuals and 15,000 clergy in its part of the world in the study of the Bible.

3. Relationships with Other International Lutheran Churches and Confessing Movements

a. Ethiopian Evangelical Church—Mekane Yesus

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church—Mekane Yesus (EECMY) is the largest Lutheran church body in Africa, with over 6 million members. Although the LCMS and the EECMY are not in altar and pulpit fellowship, in recent years a mutually beneficial relationship has developed between the two church bodies. Ethiopian students have studied at LCMS seminaries through the CRISP program. EECMY pastors have become members of the Synod and served in various capacities and locations.

During the 2007–9 triennium, Dr. Berhanu Ofgaa, an EECMY pastor with post-graduate degrees from both of our LCMS seminaries, became an LCMS pastor. In August 2009, Dr. Ofgaa was elected by the EECMY to be its general secretary. In this position, he is responsible for the administration of the church at large, serving next to the recently elected president of the EECMY, Dr. Wakseyoum Idosa.

Dr. Tilahun Mekonnen Mendedo, formerly a pastor in the EECMY who had earned a doctorate from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, also has become a pastor in the LCMS. In December 2009, he was elected to serve as president of Concordia College in Selma, Alabama.

In January 2010, representatives from the LCMS and EECMY signed a document titled *Partnership Agreement between the Ethiopian Evangelical Church—Mekane Yesus and the Department of World Missions Representing The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*. This document outlines a mutual commitment to work toward doctrinal agreement as the basis for altar and pulpit fellowship.

A representative of the EECMY has been invited to the Confessional Leadership Conference in June 2010 (see item I C 3 above).

b. Mission Province of Sweden and Finland

The Mission Province of Sweden and Finland is a free province of pastors and congregations in the Lutheran Church in Sweden that seek to remain faithful to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. In its desire to remain faithful, it has opposed the Church of Sweden's decisions to ordain women to the pastoral office, to bless and to perform gender neutral "marriages," and to ordain noncelibate homosexual persons. While the Mission Province has a significant history of missions and church planting, it is not recognized by the Church of Sweden, seminarians who share its beliefs have been denied ordination, some of its pastors have been defrocked, and the Province has been denied the right to have a bishop officially recognized by the Church of Sweden. All requests from the Mission Province to talk with leaders of the Church of Sweden have been denied. In May 2009, the staff of the CTCR and the Director of Church Relations, Dr. Nafzger, met with representatives of the Mission Province, including Dr. Bengt Birgersson, its general secretary, for the purpose of encouraging the cause of biblical, confessional Lutheranism in Sweden.

c. Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church

Representatives of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC) and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) met at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis on January 27, 2010, to begin discussions that leaders of both church bodies anticipate will lead to formal altar and pulpit fellowship. At this initial meeting, SELC Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin expressed appreciation for his church body's relationship with the LCMS, which began in the 1990s. He provided a brief history of the SELC which led to its official licensing by the Russian government in 2002, his consecration as

Bishop in 2007, and the official recognition of its name change to the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church, also in 2007. The SELC has about 2,000 parishioners, 22 parishes and mission stations, and 17 clergy, but it covers a geographical area that extends 5,000 miles from east to west.

Discussions at this meeting centered primarily around how the LCMS might proceed toward the goal of declaring altar and pulpit fellowship with the SELC. A document prepared by the CTCR titled *Church Relations in the 21st Century* was reviewed and its applicability to SELC/LCMS fellowship talks was discussed at length. All present supported responsible pursuit of church fellowship based on agreement in doctrine and practice. The next step in the process toward formal altar and pulpit fellowship will be an early meeting arranged by SELC Bishop Lytkin and LCMS President Kieschnick.

4. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Executive Director of the CTCR, Dr. Joel D. Lehenbauer, serves as one of seven representatives from the LCMS that meets together with representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) as the Committee on Lutheran Cooperation (CLC). With meetings twice each year, the purpose of the CLC is to share and discuss matters of mutual interest and concern and to monitor areas where common work is taking place, such as Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lutheran Services in America, and Lutheran Social Services. An additional day for theological dialogue is added to one of the meetings each year.

The other LCMS representatives on the CLC are Dr. Gerald Kieschnick, President; Dr. William Diekelman, First Vice-President; Dr. Raymond Hartwig, Secretary; Dr. Samuel Nafzger, Director of Church Relations and Assistant to the President; Mr. Ronald Schultz, Chief Administrative Officer; and Dr. Larry Stoterau, President of the Pacific Southwest District and chairman of the Council of Presidents.

LCMS President Gerald Kieschnick and Dr. Samuel Nafzger were invited to attend the ELCA's 2009 Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis. President Kieschnick addressed the assembly toward the end of its meetings, after it had "voted to open the ministry of the ELCA to gay and lesbian pastors and other professional workers living in 'committed relationships.'" In an earlier action, the assembly approved a resolution that commits the ELCA "to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships" (ELCA Assembly minutes). As part of his remarks, President Kieschnick stated: "The decisions by this assembly to grant noncelibate homosexual ministers the privilege of serving as rostered leaders in the ELCA and the affirmation of same-gender unions as pleasing to God will undoubtedly cause additional stress and disharmony within the ELCA. It will also negatively affect the relationships between our two church bodies. The current division between our churches threatens to become a chasm."

The commission has received contacts and inquiries from ELCA individuals, pastors, and congregations regarding LCMS teaching as well as numerous inquiries and suggestions from LCMS individuals and congregations as to a future course of action. In January 2010, President Kieschnick appointed a task force that includes the Director of Church Relations, two members of the Synod's Praesidium, both seminary presidents, and the executive staff of the commission. The task force has three responsibilities: (1) "To address succinctly the understanding of confessional Lutheran identity at this time and 'who we are' as a Synod in a transparent, invitational, and appropriate manner"; (2) "To offer a brief, substantive, readable, understandable identification of and response to theological issues related to

recent ELCA actions"; and (3) "To address theological questions and issues regarding cooperative work between LCMS and ELCA entities." Dr. Kieschnick asked for the task force report to be completed by March 15, 2010.

5. Lutheran World Federation

The LCMS is not a member of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), but it is regularly invited to bring greetings to the LWF at its assemblies. The Eleventh Assembly will be held in Stuttgart, Germany, July 20–27, 2010. The theme for this assembly will be "Give Us Today Our Daily Bread."

B. Lutheran/Roman Catholic Dialogue

In fall 2005, the LCMS was invited to send two representatives to the eleventh round of the Lutheran/Roman Catholic Dialogues in the USA. The topic for this round of discussions is "The Hope of Eternal Life." President Kieschnick has appointed Dr. Samuel Nafzger, Director of Church Relations and Assistant to the President, and Dr. Dean Wenthe, President of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, to represent the Synod in these continuing dialogues. Discussions in this round of dialogues have focused on the topics of purgatory, indulgences, and prayers for the dead. Six meetings have been held during this past triennium. At the present time, the dialogue is working on its final report.

C. National Council of Churches

The LCMS is not a member of the National Council of Churches (NCC). On the recommendation of the CTCR, however, its executive directors have been appointed by the President of Synod to participate in the NCC's Faith and Order Commission as a representative from a nonmember church body. At the commission's April 2009 meeting, the commission recommended that the President of the Synod appoint its new executive director, Dr. Joel D. Lehenbauer, to serve as the LCMS representative to the NCC's Faith and Order Commission, succeeding Dr. Nafzger. Dr. Lehenbauer accepted Dr. Kieschnick's appointment and is currently serving as the LCMS representative to the Faith and Order Commission, which meets twice a year. Early in 2009, the Faith and Order Commission published via the Internet a collection of essays on the topic "The Authority of the Church in the World," which includes an essay by Dr. Lehenbauer on the LCMS perspective on this issue (see www.nccusa.org/faithandorder/indx.html). During the past triennium, the CTCR has received regular reports from its executive director regarding developments in the NCC and its Faith and Order Commission, particularly the study group in which he is participating as it discusses the WCC document *The Nature and Mission of the Church*.

III. Religious Organizations and Movements

The CTCR is charged with assisting "congregations and ordained and commissioned ministers of religion in fulfilling their commitment to witness publicly and privately to the one and only Gospel set forth in the Holy Scriptures" (Bylaws 3.9.6.3ff., "Fraternal and Other Organizations," 2007 *Handbook* pp. 175–76). These bylaws contain the Synod's longstanding provisions for dealing with the lodge issue as well as other organizations that may be of concern to LCMS members. (Prior to 2001, the LCMS addressed these concerns through the Commission on Organizations, which was discontinued at the 2001 convention.)

In keeping with its responsibility to provide resources and information to the members of the Synod regarding organizations, philosophies, and religious movements, the CTCR inaugurated a section of

its Web site designated by the general title “Religious Organizations and Movements.” This portion of the Web site provides evaluations from a Lutheran theological perspective of a broad range of religious practices, organizations, and movements—both Christian and non-Christian (see <http://www.lcms.org?2150>). In addition to evaluations previously available, during the past triennium the commission has made available two new evaluations on the topics of Islam and Theophostic Prayer Ministry. It is also in the process of translating several of its evaluations into Spanish for posting on its Web site. The current listing of topics includes the following:

- *Baha’i Faith*
- *Christian Identity Movement*
- *Christian Science*
- *Church of Scientology*
- *Cursillo Movement*
- *Elks Lodge*
- *Fraternal Order of Eagles*
- *Human Potential Movement*
- *International Church of Christ (ICOC)*
- *Islam*
- *Jehovah’s Witnesses*
- *Judaism*
- *Kabbalah*
- *Latter-day Saints*
- *Membership in Certain Fraternal Organizations: A Pastoral Approach*
- *Moose International*
- *New Age Movement*
- *The Lodge*
- *The Occult*
- *Overview of Cults*
- *Rastafarians*
- *Reiki*
- *Restorationism*
- *Satanism*
- *The Salvation Army*
- *Theophostic Prayer Ministry*
- *Unification Church*
- *Unitarian-Universalist Association (UUA)*
- *United Pentecostal Church International*
- *Unity School of Christianity*
- *Vineyard Ministries*
- *Wicca*
- *Word-Faith Movement*
- *Yoga*

Through its staff, the commission continues to respond to a large number of inquiries, making use of resources accumulated in its library and files and information available on the Internet.

Loren Kramer, *Chairman*
Joel D. Lehenbauer, *Executive Director*

Notes

1. “Why Should Our Pastors, Teachers and Professors Subscribe Unconditionally to the Symbolical Writings of Our Church,” reprinted in the *Concordia Journal* (July 1989: pp. 274–84).

2. Thesis IX, “Concerning the Holy Ministry,” *Church and Ministry*, trans. J. T. Mueller (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987), p. 303.

3. *Church and Ministry*, p. 322.

4. *Pastoral Theology*, ed. Norbert H. Mueller and George Kraus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1990), p. 183.

5. Commission on Constitutional Matters (of the LCMS), “Interpretation of Article VI 2 b (02-2278).”

6. The complete reference on this topic is found on pages 10–11 of *The Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship: Report on Synodical Discussions*, as follows: “But what is meant by a public worship service? According to the historic LCMS understanding, a worship service is any occasion in which the Word of God is preached and prayer is made to Him by a fully authorized church worship leader. Thus worship services include not only regular Sunday services or other set times of worship (e.g., festival services, Lenten and Advent services), but also those in which worship takes place (e.g., weddings, funerals). Leading such services with those not in church fellowship with the LCMS violates the Synod’s biblical and confessional commitments.”

In the same document, footnote 1 (pp. 10–11) states: “In a 1973 opinion titled *What Is a Service?* (with which the CTCR concurred) the Synod’s Commission on Worship responded in part as follows to the question, ‘Is a wedding ceremony a “service” in the same sense as, for instance, Sunday morning worship?’

... any occasion on which a public worship of God occurs—that is, in which the Word of God and prayer are used by a regularly designated worship leader of the church—is understood to be a ‘service.’ This would therefore include not only those occasions regularly designated as worship services (e.g., the ordinary Sunday morning worship noted in the question above) but also occasions—such as weddings, funerals, dedications, baccalaureates, etc.—which may have an ad hoc assembly different from the regular congregational worship assembly. It should be noted, moreover, that there are other types of ‘service’ than just the ‘public’ occasions for worship. Thus when the congregation’s (or its delegated representative’s—e.g., mission board, association of congregations, etc.) officially designated worship leader (chaplain, pastor, etc.) carries out his regularly appointed ministerial functions (private Communion, etc.) in which the Word of God and prayer (also at times exposition of the Word and/or singing of hymns) form the major portion of such function, this also is rightly understood to be a congregational ‘service,’ albeit only a private or a semiprivate one.”

7. See page 7.

8. Page 19.

9. The CCM may wish to consult the Concordia Historical Institute or other historians on this matter.

R4-01

First Vice-President

The vice-presidents of the Synod are the elected advisers of the President. Upon his request or as provided by the Synod, they assist him in carrying out his responsibilities and represent him as needed.

The First Vice-President serves as a full-time executive and a non-voting member of the Board of Directors. He is responsible to the President at all times for the performance of his duties.

During this past triennium, I have had opportunity to be involved with many individuals and groups throughout the Synod. These groups include the

- Council of Presidents
- Board of Directors of the LCMS
- Corporate Synod executives

- President's Church Relations Cabinet
- Ablaze!* Ambassadors
- American Association of Lutheran Churches
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Fan into Flame* Cabinet
- President's National Outreach Cabinet
- Blue Ribbon Task Force on Funding the Mission
- Board for Pastoral Education (President's representative)
- Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance
- Praesidium
- Chapel Advisory Committee
- National Circuit Counselors' Conference Committee

The Praesidium, which includes the President of the Synod and the five vice-presidents, met regularly for prayer, Bible study, and discussion of Synod matters. The Praesidium gave counsel on a variety of matters as requested by the President of the Synod, district presidents, and others.

In the past three years, I had occasion to visit each of our seminaries and Concordia University campuses, attend the LCEF Fall Leadership Conferences, attend 15 district conventions, speak at various professional church worker conferences, preach at a number of congregations around the Synod, and address a variety of groups within the Synod. I regularly attended meetings of the Operations Committee of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, mostly via telephone conference calls with a few face-to-face meetings.

This past triennium, I have worked through Wayne Knollhoff, Synod stewardship executive, in coordinating stewardship communications throughout the Synod.

The First Vice-President has served this past triennium as chairman of the Colloquy Committee for Pastoral Ministry and the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry. Through this process, the Lord has provided to the congregations of our Synod many qualified commissioned ministers and ordained pastors.

For this past triennium, it has been my distinct privilege to serve with President Kieschnick, the Praesidium, the other Synod officers and staff, and the Council of Presidents. The Lord has blessed The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with rich resources and godly leadership.

William R. Diekelman, *First Vice-President*

R4-02

Secretary

Since my election as Secretary of the Synod in 1998, I have been blessed with the very faithful and proficient assistance of Pearl Houghton, loyal co-worker and veteran servant of the Synod, who made it possible for two persons to carry out the considerable responsibilities of this office. When the Board of Directors offered her an opportunity for retirement in 2009, Pearl accepted the well-deserved offer and left the Synod's employment after more than 35 years of faithful service.

Although most other vacated positions at the International Center have not been filled, the assistant position in the Secretary's Office was granted the rare exception. Since August 2009, I have been blessed with another very capable assistant, Pam Weeke, who has brought her considerable International Center skills and experience to the position. Aided by Pearl's timely assistance during the transition, the manifold responsibilities associated with the Secretary's Office have been carried out without interruption, also during this very busy pre-convention time.

2010 Convention Workbook

And speaking of assistance, one of those responsibilities of this office is the supervision of the ongoing maintenance of the official roster of the Synod. This is made possible by the faithful and careful work of the Synod's Rosters and Statistics Department. These other assistants, although not directly associated with the Secretary's Office, receive and handle the constant flow of detailed information received from the 35 district offices that is essential for maintaining an official, accurate, and up-to-date roster of the Synod's membership.

Bylaw Responsibilities

Bylaw 3.3.3 requires the Secretary of the Synod to perform all the duties of a secretary of a not-for-profit corporation. As such, I have served as the secretary and a voting member of the Board of Directors, supervised the use of its seal and lists, and signed its official documents when appropriate. In addition to keeping the board's minutes, I have also published *Board Briefs*, quarterly inserts in the Synod's *Reporter* to keep the Synod at large informed of board decisions and actions. These board-related duties, however, are only a fraction of the responsibilities of the Secretary that are detailed in the Bylaws, beginning with duties associated with the Synod's conventions.

In the Secretary's Office, conventions of the Synod are not separated by three years. Preparations begin already two years prior, only a month or two after matters related to the previous convention have finally been handled. Bylaw 3.3.3.1 articulates some of the Secretary's responsibilities associated with conventions of the Synod, including managing the nominations process for the Praesidium, assisting the committees for nominations and elections, developing and maintaining the lists of voting and advisory delegates, making the necessary official announcements in the Synod's periodicals, carrying out secretarial duties during the sessions of the convention, conducting the constitutional amendment ballot following the convention, and editing and publishing all convention materials, including the *Convention Workbook*, all issues of *Today's Business*, the *Proceedings*, and a revised edition of the *Handbook* of the Synod incorporating the preceding convention's constitutional and bylaw decisions. This time around, these considerable responsibilities have been made even more interesting by the report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance.

Bylaw 3.3.3.2 and random bylaws throughout the *Handbook* add additional responsibilities to the office, duties that are associated with many of the core functions of the Synod. Accordingly, during the past triennium:

- As the secretary and a non-voting member of the CCM, I participated in its discussions, prepared its minutes and other documents, and disseminated its opinions.
- As administrator of the Synod's dispute resolution process, I saw to the selection and training of the Synod's 140 reconcilers and 25 hearing facilitators, and guided and facilitated the use of the process throughout the Synod.
- As editor of *The Lutheran Annual*, I have worked closely with the Rosters and Statistics Department and with Concordia Publishing House to provide a timely, accurate, and user-friendly publication that serves as the official public listing of the official membership and organizations of the Synod. Each year new features have been added to serve the needs of the Synod, its members, and those outside the Synod who use the *Annual* to locate specific services or ministries.
- As required by bylaw, the Secretary's Office maintains a file of all governing instruments of all agencies of the Synod. Much work has been done in this area during the past triennium as a

result of the CCM's efforts to conduct a systematic review of the governing instruments of all Synod agencies.

- As a voting member of the Board of Governors of Concordia Historical Institute (the Synod's official Department of Archives and History), I have participated in the board's oversight responsibilities and challenges during the past triennium, including the relocation of the CHI Museum in the Synod's International Center. As the board member most available to the museum site, I was able to assume a coordinative role in the construction phase of the museum.
- As a member of the Commission on Structure, I have met regularly with the commission as it has evaluated the need for revision or amendment of certain sections of the *Handbook*, brought to its attention by previous conventions and various entities of the Synod. The commission is bringing several significant proposals to the 2010 convention, including the restating of the Synod's Articles of Incorporation and the introduction of a bylaw section to govern the removal of board and commission members.

Other Work Pertaining to the Office

Bylaw 3.3.3.2 also allows for "such other work as the Synod in convention, the President, or the Board of Directors may assign" to the Secretary. This "other work" has provided opportunities for involvement in matters not always secretarial in nature. During the past three years:

- I have been privileged to serve on the AALC/LCMS Commission on Fellowship that has been meeting regularly to work out agreements with the Synod's newest partner church body, the American Association of Lutheran Churches. Agreements governing the movement of congregations and pastors between AALC and LCMS rosters, voting representation, and ecclesiastical supervision under various circumstances, necessary because of the close proximity of LCMS and AALC congregations, have been reached and are published elsewhere in this *Workbook*.
- At the beginning of the triennium, I was asked by the President of the Synod to serve on the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance when he added several members to the task force. I have appreciated the opportunity to be involved first-hand in the task force's discussions of proposed changes to the Synod's structure. If adopted by the convention, the implementation of those changes will present an additional challenge to the post-convention responsibilities of the Secretary's Office.
- I continue to appreciate the opportunity to serve on the President's Church Relations Cabinet as its secretary. The cabinet meets regularly to review church relations matters and offer advice to the President in their regard, matters often of great significance as a result of our Synod's ever-increasing role as a leader of confessional Lutheranism worldwide.
- I have found very interesting the opportunity as an officer of the Synod to meet twice annually with the leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to share current church body information and to discuss the theological issues that continue to separate our two church bodies. The ELCA's recent action regarding human sexuality has given these meetings new interest and purpose as the LCMS endeavors to determine the significance of the ELCA action for those activities that our church bodies do jointly.
- I have been privileged as an officer of the Synod to participate in meetings with representatives of Lutheran church bodies

who express interest in a closer relationship with the LCMS, in some cases altar and pulpit fellowship. The most recent case was a meeting with representatives of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church.

- During the past triennium, due to my membership on the CCM and my staff-related responsibilities with the Council of Presidents, I have facilitated a review of the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual* for the dispute resolution process and two of the four manuals that accompany our Synod processes that govern removal from membership.
- I have worked with other staff and representatives of those boards most involved in granting Recognized Service Organization status to put in place a more orderly and uniformly monitored process for granting and renewing RSO status. The Secretary's Office plays a key role in receiving applications and moving them forward through a very deliberate process intended to ascertain that such recognition will be of benefit both to the Synod and to the recognized organization.
- Once each triennium I have been able to call together the elected secretaries of the Synod's 35 districts to provide orientation regarding their important responsibilities in the Synod, especially during the delegate certification process for conventions of the Synod. As a testimony to the recognized value of this meeting, each district of the Synod contributed \$500 toward the cost of the meeting when it became evident that no unrestricted funding would be available for this purpose in the Synod's budget.

All of these duties have constituted one part of the activities of the Office of the Secretary during the past triennium, specifically those responsibilities articulated in the Synod's Bylaws. The Bylaws, however, are silent regarding another important function of the office.

The Place to Call

Each day provides occasion for numerous contacts via telephone, mail, or e-mail with other workers in the International Center who have specific bylaw issues, district officials with procedural questions, parish pastors and church workers with constitutional questions, parties with questions regarding dispute resolution procedure, leaders of congregations with questions regarding their own constitutions and bylaws, or just random people from around the globe who visit our Synod's Web site and find themselves left with not-frequently-asked questions on their minds. Such contacts, while they add considerably to the workload in our office, are a welcome reminder that the Office of the Secretary is immersed in and is facilitating the walk and work of a real live church body that has a critical message to get out to a needy world. Such contacts also often add a refreshing personal and even pastoral element to an office that is most closely associated with boards and bylaws, decency and order.

As I have been privileged to carry out the responsibilities of Secretary of the Synod for the past twelve years, I have often found occasion to marvel at the unexpected direction that one's life can take under the hand of God. From parish pastor to the position of service I currently hold has been an unforeseen journey with many unexpected turns, opportunities, and blessings. I thank God regularly for this opportunity to serve as the Secretary of our beloved Synod, truly "One People—Forgiven."

Raymond L. Hartwig, *Secretary*

2010 Convention Workbook

R4-03

Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer

The Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod serves as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in administrating the financial affairs of the Synod. The duties of the CFO are carried out in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the Synod and as directed by the Board of Directors of the Synod. I believe all my activities have been consistent with this requirement.

When reading this report, it is important to understand the distinction between *Synod* and *corporate Synod*. Bylaw 1.2.1 (t) of the *Handbook* indicates that the term *Synod* “[r]efers collectively to the association of self-governing Lutheran congregations and all its agencies on the national and district levels.” This means that, in addition to congregations, *Synod* includes corporate Synod, 35 districts, 10 colleges and universities, 2 seminaries, Worker Benefit Plans, and 5 synodwide corporate entities. The synodwide corporate entities are Concordia Historical Institute (CHI), Concordia Publishing House (CPH), The Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod (LCEF), The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation (Foundation) and Concordia University System (CUS). *Corporate Synod*, on the other hand, is defined in Bylaw 1.2.1 (d) of the *Handbook* as “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Missouri nonprofit corporation, including the departments operating under the supervision of the Board of Directors of the Synod and the program boards and commissions of the Synod.”

This report does not include any comments on the financial condition of the individual congregations of the Synod, as this information is not available. However, it is estimated that total annual congregational receipts approximate \$1.34 billion, of which \$120 million are used for the work of the church at large.

The operating budget of Synod, excluding congregations, for the year ended June 30, 2010, is summarized as follows:

	<u>Budgeted 2010 Operating Revenues</u>
Corporate Synod	\$ 81,145,000
Districts	89,719,000
Seminaries	29,828,000
Colleges & Universities	304,440,000
Synodwide Corporate Entities	<u>128,035,000</u>
Total Budget Operating Revenues	\$633,167,000

The Synod has substantial unrestricted assets. Unrestricted net assets may be defined as the accumulated operating profits. At June 30, 2008, the unrestricted net assets were as follows:

	<u>Unrestricted Net Assets at June 30, 2008</u>
Corporate Synod	\$ 142,000
Districts	89,666,000
Seminaries	28,260,000
Colleges & Universities	175,435,000
Synodwide Corporate Entities	<u>220,496,000</u>
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	\$513,999,000

The relationship of unrestricted net assets to annual operating revenues indicates a strong financial condition existing in the Synod.

Another indicator of the financial strength of the Synod is the relationship of capital debt to the value of capital assets. A summary of capital debt at June 30, 2008, is as follows:

	<u>Capital Debt</u>
Corporate Synod	\$ —
Districts	27,233,000
Seminaries	6,432,000
CUS, Colleges & Universities	210,546,000
CPH	—
LCEF	—
Foundation	1,259,000
CHI	<u>—</u>
Total Capital Debt	\$245,470,000

The insurable value of the capital assets (excluding land) exceeds \$1.8 billion. This value and the amount of unrestricted net assets demonstrate that Synod is in an extremely favorable debt position.

The permanent endowments of the seminaries, colleges and universities are \$208 million. These endowments continue to grow.

While the financial condition of the Synod is strong, some districts, a college, two universities, and the two seminaries are experiencing current operating losses. Corrective plans have been implemented that hopefully will result in the elimination of the losses. It should be noted that one of the universities has experienced operating losses in ten of the past eleven years.

The financial position of corporate Synod is not as sound as the rest of Synod. Corporate Synod continues to experience decreases in unrestricted revenues (primarily receipts from districts). In 2001, corporate Synod received \$28 million of unrestricted revenue.

In the 2010 budget, unrestricted revenues are estimated to be \$20.1 million. In this budget, district pledges are \$638,437 lower than the previous year. Also, LCEF has eliminated distributions to corporate Synod, and CPH has reduced its annual distribution. Restricted gifts now comprise 75 percent of the annual budget of approximately \$81 million.

The trend of continuous decreases in unrestricted revenues is a significant problem to the Synod. Currently, approximately \$9.0 million of unrestricted revenues are budgeted for non-discretionary functions of the Synod. This leaves \$11 million available for allocation to program boards and commissions.

The decrease in unrestricted revenues has negatively affected the mission and ministry functions of corporate Synod. Initiatives have been undertaken to mitigate the continuing reduced revenues. Since 2002, staff levels have been reduced by 25 percent. Operational reviews were performed, and reengineering is occurring in the technology and human resource functions. Outsourcing opportunities are being considered. There were no salary increases or bonuses in the current fiscal year. A hiring freeze was established on July 1, 2009. An early retirement program adopted in the current fiscal year will annually reduce compensation by \$750,000.

The audited financial statements of corporate Synod as of June 30, 2009 reflect an unrestricted net assets deficit of (\$5.56) million if land and fixed assets are excluded. As corporate Synod has no long-term debt, nor has it borrowed on its line of credit with LCEF during the current triennium, the deficit has depleted previous years’ accumulated profits.

As the next triennium begins, it is likely that corporate Synod will continue to experience decreasing unrestricted revenues. Further, there are insignificant opportunities for general and administrative efficiency gains. Therefore, it is clear that fewer dollars will be available to the ministries.

My message to the Synod has been consistent during my tenure as Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer. Simply stated, “We will need to make significant reductions in expenditures for the ministries.” The

Synod has responded to my message by passing resolutions, forming task forces, and conducting fiscal conferences. None of these efforts have changed the downward trend for unrestricted revenues.

Several items will have a positive impact on the Synod's financial position in the next triennium. Corporate Synod will begin a program of soliciting contributions for unrestricted purposes. This program will be initiated with the convention offering. It is estimated that annual gifts should approximate \$500,000. Also, it is expected that KFUO-FM will be sold on or about March 31, 2010. An initial payment of \$1.5 million will be received during this fiscal year. In the next triennium, annual proceeds will average approximately \$1.0 million. A major portion of these proceeds will be used to improve the communications of the LCMS.

As the Synod faces continuing financial challenges, it is important that all assets be reviewed to determine that they are used appropriately and effectively in carrying out its ministry. Also, the report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Funding the Mission should be revisited. The report includes various suggestions for increasing unrestricted revenues.

This triennium has included many fiscal challenges to corporate Synod. Corporate Synod has been able to meet these challenges without incurring debt. However, we have depleted corporate Synod's cash and investment reserves. Corporate Synod continues to have substantial net worth but minimal cash and cash equivalents. Therefore, if the challenges of operating with reduced revenues continue, it will be necessary to reduce national ministry activities, incur debt, and/or sell assets in order to achieve a balanced budget.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the church during these last nine years. In serving, I have worked and partnered with talented and committed brothers and sisters in Christ.

Thomas W. Kuchta, *Vice-President-Finance—Treasurer*

R4-04

LCMS Board of Directors

Introduction

"The Board of Directors is the legal representative of the Synod. It is the custodian of all the property of the Synod, directly or by its delegation of such authority to an agency of the Synod. It shall exercise supervision over all the property and business affairs of the Synod except in those areas where it has delegated such authority to an agency of the Synod or where the voting members of the Synod through the adoption of bylaws or other convention action have assigned specific areas of responsibility to separate corporate or trust entities, and as to those the Board of Directors shall have general oversight responsibility as set forth in the Bylaws." (Constitution, Art. XI F 2)

During the past triennium, by the grace of God, the Board of Directors has striven in the following areas of its responsibility:

Personnel

Due to his declining health, the Board regretfully accepted the member resignation of Rev. Edward J. Balfour, Cape Elizabeth, ME. Rev. Dr. Jeffrey T. Schrank, Phoenix, AZ, was elected to fill Rev. Balfour's unexpired term.

The Board filled 27 vacancies on various boards and commissions of the Synod and has been involved with the process of replacing the retiring Vice-President-Finance—Treasurer of the Synod, Dr. Thomas Kuchta.

Each year of the triennium, the board set salary and bonus guidelines for the Synod's servants, including a painful yet prudent hiring and salary freeze for the 2009 fiscal year. Also, the board established

an early retirement program in 2009, of which 13 of the 40 people eligible took advantage. The vacated positions were not filled except in one critical instance.

Funding of the Synod

The decline of the Synod's unrestricted dollars income has continued throughout the triennium. The board has appropriated between 19 and 20 million dollars in each of the past three years for the Synod's mission and ministry, supplementing designated offerings and gifts.

Joining with the Council of Presidents, the board began exploring other options for macro-financing the Synod. Having multiple fundraising efforts simultaneously emanating from various departments, boards, and commissions may not be as efficient or effective as other possibilities. It also strongly urges the Synod to receive and act upon the reports of both the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Funding the Mission (which never made it to the floor of the 2007 convention) and the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (which will come before this year's convention).

Thankfully, due to the faithful donors throughout the Synod, especially during our nation's economic decline, the Synod budget has been balanced for two of the past three years.

At the request of the Board for Mission Services, the board sold some of the Synod's property assets that included an apartment complex in Hong Kong and a number of former mission houses in Venezuela. The board also sold the KFUO FM radio license in St. Louis and established a new policy for the use of proceeds from sales such as these.

The oversight and conduct of financial audits fall under the board's responsibility. Since September 2007, three unqualified audits for corporate Synod have been completed, which attest to the fine fiscal and accounting performance of the Synod's servants.

Seminary and University Support

During the past triennium the board approved nine changes to Master Plans for Concordia University System (CUS) campuses, as well as five loan and bond issue adjustments.

During the past three fiscal years, the Synod has provided the seminaries, colleges, and universities with \$27.6M. These funds include direct subsidy to the colleges, universities and seminaries; repayment of debt incurred by the schools (current debt totals approximately \$24 million); and funds to operate the CUS national office.

Legal

Each year the Board monitors and attends to a number of legal proceedings. By God's grace and with the assistance of good legal counsel, the Synod has been able to keep legal costs under control. Legal fees have averaged about \$498,705¹ during each of the past three years, a decline from an average of \$625,573 during the prior three years. The Board of Directors has not initiated any legal proceedings during the triennium.

Relationships

The Board has adjusted its regular agenda to include specific time for discussion and building relationships with the various entities of the Synod. During the past triennium it sought to meet at least once with the executives and chairs of every department, board, and commission. As a result, the Board has received much favorable comment about the trust and friendly relations that are building from its efforts.

With a continued interest in communicating the work of the board, it continues to publish *Board Briefs*, a quarterly insert to the *Reporter*.

It also posts the minutes of its meetings online at www.lcms.org/bod, and it sends out a quarterly e-newsletter from the Synod's Web site for those persons who have signed up to receive the mailing.

Finally, the Synod needs to know that this board has worked together in an effective manner, as reflected in its self-evaluation. It has worked through some tough issues with care and diligence, respected various viewpoints, sought and often achieved consensus, used time efficiently, and, above all, tried hard to keep focused equally on caring for people and executing its tasks. For that, God is praised, as are all with whom the board has been privileged to serve.

Donald Muchow, *Chairman*
Ronald Schultz, *LCMS Chief Administrative Officer*

Note

1. Legal fees include actual expenses for 2008 and 2009 and approximately seven periods of 2010.

R4-04-01

Progress Report of the Task Force on Synodical Harmony

Introduction

The 2007 national convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod adopted Res. 4-01A:

Resolved, That the Council of Presidents and Board of Directors as elected leaders of the Synod be given the responsibility to initiate a specific plan for the sake of the whole church to restore harmony in our Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That they bring together a representative group of respected leaders throughout this church for a summit, and that at the end of this summit these church leaders present to the Council of Presidents and to the Board of Directors a strategy toward harmony that demonstrates how this great church body can provide a God-pleasing witness of our confession and practice; and be it finally

Resolved, That the product of their coming together honor the Scriptures and Confessions and dishonor the work of Satan that diverts us from the "way of the Lord."

In response to this resolution the Council of Presidents and Board of Directors chartered a group of twelve leaders in the Synod with the task of recommending "a strategy for harmony." Three of these leaders came from the Council of Presidents, three from the Board of Directors, and six from the church at large. This group of twelve constitutes the Task Force on Synodical Harmony.

Early in our work, the task force members realized that we needed a common language for communication with the church and with one another. Three concepts that kept reappearing in our conversations were unity, concord, and harmony. We often used them interchangeably with some confusion and miscommunication. It was extremely helpful in our work to develop a clear definition for each of the concepts. These can be summarized below:

- **Unity:** The oneness that all believers in Christ have with each other through Spirit-given faith in Jesus created through the means of grace. "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:4). This unity cannot be seen by human eyes, but we confess it by faith: "I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church" (Nicene Creed).
- **Concord:** The oneness that believers in Christ seek to manifest and express in their confession of the Gospel and "all its articles" (FC SD X, 31). The church's unity as confessed in the Creed is a "given." Concord in doctrine and confession is

a goal that we "strive to maintain" (Eph. 4:3) by God's grace on the basis of His Word. St. Paul urges the Christians at Corinth—and us—to speak the same thing, to avoid divisions, and to be perfectly united in the same mind and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10–11). The Book of Concord sets forth what we in the LCMS continue to affirm without qualification as a "single, universally accepted, certain, and common form of doctrine," drawn from the Word of God, that bears faithful witness to the oneness of doctrine and confession that serves as the basis for true concord in the church.

- **Harmony:** The oneness that believers in Christ seek to manifest and express in their life together as God's people. Paul urges those who are united in Christ and who seek to manifest that unity through concord in doctrine and confession to be eager to maintain this unity "in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). He reminds the Christians at Corinth that Christ-like attitudes and behavior are crucial to their efforts to maintain doctrinal concord (1 Cor. 13). Above all, says Paul in Colossians, "put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Col. 3:14). "Paul urges that there be love in the church to preserve harmony...lest the church disintegrate into various schisms and lest enmities, factions and heresies arise from such schisms" (Ap IV, 232).

In summary, *unity* focuses on our oneness with Christians everywhere by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. *Concord* focuses on our oneness in doctrine and practice. *Harmony* focuses our life together in Christ to be characterized by Christ-like attitudes, particularly love. These definitions helped us focus on a biblical understanding of harmony and its relationship to unity and concord.

Task force members also reached some initial conclusions as we considered our charter. These observations were foundational for our work:

- While we will look at what divides and alienates us from one another, we must not ignore the abounding grace of God among us. God's people still gather around the Word and the Sacraments to be graced with His forgiveness and together move forward in God's mission in the world. The treasure of the church is still ours—the glory and grace of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- While disharmony in the Synod is nothing new (an undercurrent of quarrelling, rumor, and unkind words being present through most of our Synod's history), in recent years it has deepened to the point of being destructive of both our unity in Christ and our concord in doctrine and practice.
- We are convinced that until we find a way to speak and to listen to one another in love, little hope exists for moving toward greater concord in doctrine and practice. Luther's insight is compelling: "Where there is no love, there doctrine cannot remain pure" (LW 24, 244).
- We also believe that conflict can be a blessing in the church. Historically, the church has taken quantum leaps out of its conflicts. The debate at the Jerusalem Council clarified the church's doctrine of salvation and united her in mission. The Arian conflict of the fourth century led to a trinitarian confession in the Nicene Creed. The conflict over justification in the sixteenth century led to the Reformation and the Lutheran Confessions. Closer to home, the LCMS conflict of the 1970s yielded a church with a more clearly defined theology of the authority of the Scriptures.
- Disharmony in the LCMS is not just about what we say and what we do with one other; it is about the way we are with one another. It is a concern for our character as Christians who

share a common loyalty to the Scriptures and the confessions and to walking together as a synod.

Process

Res. 4-01A directs the following: “*Resolved*, That [the Council of Presidents and Board of Directors] bring together a representative group of respected leaders throughout this church for a summit.” With the approval of the Council of Presidents and Board of Directors, task force members proceeded to extend the number of “respected leaders” beyond themselves. The “summit” of Res. 4-01A would become a process of listening to voices from across the Synod.

The task force sought to listen to what we perceive to be a representative group of LCMS leaders. Each of these leaders was invited to make a presentation to the twelve-member task force, responding to the question: “What do you suggest as a strategy toward greater harmony in the LCMS?” Presenters were given 20 minutes for their presentation, followed by 30–40 minutes of conversation with the task force. Each of the 29 presenters appeared alone with the task force members and was given assurance of the anonymity of their presentation. We express our gratitude to them for their preparation, time, and wisdom.

These presentations were made in St. Louis, September 2–3 and October 28–29, 2009.

Each presentation was transcribed verbatim for members of the task force, who in turn individually summarized in writing what we had heard from the presenters. These summaries provided invaluable perspectives on the disharmony present in Synod. From these presentations and summaries, the task force identified key aspects of our Synod’s disharmony.

Aspects of the Present Disharmony in Synod

Below are the seven aspects of disharmony in the LCMS that the task force heard in the process detailed above. The descriptors are not presented in any rank order of importance.

1. *Inability to Deal with Diversity.* While most (not all) presenters agreed that our church is blessed with amazing concord in matters of doctrine, all recognized that we see diversity among us in practices. These practices relate to such issues as; admission to Holy Communion, worship substance and style, the Office of the Public Ministry and the role of laity, and the service of women in the church. Some of these practices are closely tied to our doctrinal beliefs—hence a concern among some of our presenters about unhealthy “doctrinal diversity” in the Synod. Others are simply a matter of tradition and preference. Holding high the values of preserving uniformity and tradition, we have not learned how to address diversity among us—whether it is perceived to be “doctrinal” or “non-doctrinal.” The same difficulty with diversity is apparent in the lack of inclusion in leadership positions experienced by women, ethnic minorities, and the young.
2. *A Lack of Civility.* Simple Christian virtues like kindness and gentleness are often lacking in our dialogue, especially among LCMS clergy. Rumors, sarcasm, and satire characterize much of our conversation over our differences. At times there is an actual breach of the commandments as lies and slander seem to become the expected behavior among us. Reflecting the same incivility we see in the political world today, our church has conformed to the world’s standards of character and conduct when confronting our differences. Paul’s descriptive words in 1 Corinthians 1:3 seem especially appropriate here: “You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?”
3. *A Politicized Culture.* National and some district conventions have become more politically charged than ever. Political lists have become the norm. The LCMS is becoming a denomination of parties, each seeking to elect its own candidates as leaders. In recent decades, the parties in power are perceived to proceed with a “scorched earth” policy, totally disenfranchising the losing party. Rather than valuing all the voices in the LCMS, the “losing” voices are silenced until they can amass enough votes to gain power and do the same to the other party. Helpful here is Jesus’ description of “the rulers of the Gentiles who lord it over them” (Matt. 20:25).
4. *Primarily a Clergy Problem.* Repeatedly, the task force heard that the problem of disharmony in the LCMS is primarily a clergy problem. Certainly lay people have participated in our Synod’s disharmony as well, but pastors seem to be in the forefront of practices and attitudes unbefitting God’s people. While some clergy may contend that “anything goes” when fighting for truth, such an approach ignores both our unity and concord as Christians and as confessional Lutherans. Is there something in the personality of some of our pastors that brings on an attitude of judgment, criticism, and elitism toward other pastors? Is there something lacking in pastoral formation at our seminaries that allows pastors to enter the ministry with little appreciation for collegiality and mutual encouragement? The apostle Paul counsels the young pastor Timothy: “And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently teach in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. 2:25–26). Have many of our clergy lost their confidence that gentle teaching from the Word is the way to truth?
5. *Poor Communication across “Party Lines.”* Though some progress has been made through theological convocations in recent years, we still seem unable to communicate well across the lines that divide us. We have lost the ability or the will to listen. We also balk at true transparency, often failing to speak the truth in love with one another (Eph. 4:15), a sign of spiritual immaturity. The task force is eager to find ways by which healthy communication can happen among us. Whatever process may be developed, it must be centered in the Word and the Sacraments, prayer, and confession and absolution.
6. *Lack of Accountability.* Pastors causing disharmony by sinful attitudes and behaviors must be held accountable. Currently no code of conduct exists for LCMS pastors, especially as it relates to collegiality and public behavior. With no standards for reference, it becomes difficult to hold one another accountable. No matter the person’s “party” within the Synod, there must be consequences for sinful behavior. District presidents and circuit counselors, who serve as ecclesiastical supervisors in our Synod, have this responsibility and must exercise it. They must admonish, teach, encourage and model “churchmanship.” Where lay people are concerned, local pastors and elders are responsible for this accountability.
7. *Distrust.* The product of the above is a deep distrust among clergy. The years of many pastors spending a decade together in pastoral formation are gone. Pastors don’t get to know each other as they did in the past. Even within circuits they have little contact with one another’s families. This distancing of clergy and years of politicization have led to a damaging distrust, which makes communication and a commitment to civility very difficult. The task force is eager to recommend ways by which trust can be built or enhanced among both clergy and lay people.

Next Steps

The task force intends to continue working to develop specific strategies which address these aspects of disharmony in the LCMS. Presentations before the task force included not only these aspects of disharmony but also suggestions to move us toward greater harmony.

As the task force continues to meet, we will ultimately present a plan to the Council of Presidents and the Board of Directors. It is our prayer that the strategies identified will enable us to “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3).

Surely our unity in Jesus Christ and our concord in doctrine are treasures to be cherished and preserved. And surely God’s mission on earth unites us in a common cause with eternal consequences. May the harmony we share as we walk together increasingly enhance our unity and concord for the sake of God’s mission.

Members of the Task Force for Synodical Harmony

Paul Sieveking, Chair (Council of Presidents)
 Ken Hennings (Council of Presidents)
 Dean Nadasdy (Council of Presidents)
 Kermit Brashear (Board of Directors)
 Betty Duda (Board of Directors)
 Roy Schmidt (Board of Directors)
 Wally Arp (At Large)
 Tom Cedel (At Large)
 Eloy Gonzalez (At Large)
 Joel Lehenbauer (At Large)
 Linda Reiser (At Large)
 Glen Thomas (At Large)

Paul Sieveking, *Chairman*

R4-05

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation

During the last triennium, the LCMS Foundation celebrated its 50th anniversary. Established in December 1958, the Foundation is now in its 52nd year of *Linking Christians with Giving Opportunities*®. At the heart of this mission statement is the core value of Christ-centered financial stewardship, which properly views giving as a Spirit-inspired act of sanctification motivated by the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5:14). The Foundation exists to offer comprehensive charitable expertise and services to help individual Christians plan and direct their passions for giving to family and all ministries of the church today, tomorrow, and forever.

Vision The Foundation vision statement—“Every Christian with a Lifetime Plan for Giving Today, Tomorrow, and Forever”—proceeds from its mission. In this vision, each person who has come by faith to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ sees his or her life as a God-given resource “to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10b) and approaches personal stewardship joyfully, prayerfully and conscientiously. The terms “today, tomorrow, and forever” each have distinct meaning within the context of the Foundation’s mission and vision.

“Gifts Today” are direct gifts used immediately to support ministry efforts. During the last triennium, many individuals throughout the LCMS expressed their love for Christ through the Foundation by providing direct support for the ministries they love. In fiscal years 2007, 2008, and 2009, the Foundation processed and distributed 482,304 individual gifts for immediate support of ministry, totaling \$135,192,889.

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“Gifts Tomorrow” are deferred, or planned, gifts—including annuities, trusts, family gift funds, bequests and other estate plans—that support ministry efforts at some point in the future. Many deferred gift instruments administered by the Foundation provide a stream of payments to individuals and married couples during their lifetimes (and in some cases during the lives of their loved ones), with the remainder value of the assets distributed to ministries named by the donors when the instruments mature. During the last three years, the Foundation distributed 13,433 matured planned gifts totaling \$66,137,460 and helped prepare 5,001 new gift plans with an estimated future value of \$224,669,345 to be distributed as the charitable instruments mature.

“Gifts Forever” are endowed gifts that produce ongoing support for ministry efforts. The Foundation administers 630 endowments designed to support ministry in perpetuity. Current asset balance of the managed endowments is more than \$79 million. During the last triennium, \$14,408,460 was distributed from the endowments to ministries of the church. At the end of fiscal year 2009, total assets at the Foundation were \$675 million. The investment performance of assets under management did quite well during the triennium, a period which included the worst global economic recession in the last eighty years and significant investment declines in the financial markets. All Foundation funds have positive performance relative to their benchmarks over both the short and long term. Over 700 separate ministries of the church benefited from gifts received and distributed through the LCMS Foundation during the triennium.

Membership and Partnerships While the Foundation exists to serve all congregations and entities of the church, 49 voting Members elect trustees and vote on other official actions. Foundation Members currently include 22 LCMS Districts, eight colleges/universities, two seminaries, 12 other Synod-affiliated entities, and five members-at-large. The Foundation’s Board of Trustees includes 11 members, of which seven are elected by the Members, two are elected by the Synod in convention, one is appointed by the President of the Synod, and one is appointed by the Board for District and Congregational Services. The Treasurer of the Synod is an *ex officio* member of the board. In addition to its Members, the Foundation has working relationships with all of the other LCMS districts and universities and many other Synod-affiliated entities.

During the past triennium the Foundation expanded its working relationship with Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) and Concordia Plan Services (CPS). With LCEF, the Foundation established a Congregational Mortgage Loan Pool, through which custodial endowment account holders may invest directly in loans issued by LCEF to the congregations of the Synod. With CPS, the Foundation participated in a joint search for investment advisory services and is pursuing broader collaboration in investment managers and custodial banking.

Leadership and Organization Since April 2004, Rev. Thomas Ries has served as president of the Foundation. Four senior vice presidents give leadership to the organizational functions of finance and administration, trust administration and customer support, marketing and communications, and gift planning. The Foundation is served by 63 employees.

The Foundation has full-time gift-planning partnerships with one auxiliary and seven districts of the Synod. These entities are the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League and the following districts: California-Nevada-Hawaii, Eastern, English, Iowa West, Nebraska, Ohio, and SELC. In addition, the Foundation has three gift-planning counselors-at-large and associate gift-planning partnerships with 29 other districts and Synod entities. It also serves individuals,

congregations, and organizations with gift-planning and investment services in all 35 LCMS districts.

In 2001, the Synod's Board of Directors assigned to the Foundation the responsibility for development efforts that benefit the ministries represented by the program boards of the Synod. Depending on the needs of each program board, the scope of these efforts has ranged from full development services on the one hand to a more limited scope of services on the other. The term "full development services" is broadly described as including three levels—Level 1: face-to-face contact with donors; Level 2: non face-to-face contact with donors; and Level 3: non-donor contact activities such as gift processing, data management and reporting. Since 2001, some Synod program boards have continued in a full development services partnership. Others have migrated to taking responsibility for their own Level 1 activities, while continuing to work with the Foundation for Level 2 and 3 services.

Overall, the Foundation has brought a high degree of consistency and professionalism to every aspect of the development process and continues to adapt to the development needs of the Synod's program boards as they evolve. Foundation leaders have also participated in discussions about what the gift-raising paradigm will be pending convention decisions regarding the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance.

Goals During the past triennium, the Foundation focused its strategic plan more toward its core competency of gift-planning and introduced consulting and training services to help equip leaders of districts, congregations, and other ministries to conduct their own gift-planning efforts. The goal of this reorganization is to increase the number of face-to-face encounters with decision-makers, who will create their own lifetime plan for giving. The Foundation follows five avenues in pursuit of this goal: congregations, existing accounts, referrals, organizations, and training and consulting. Each avenue provides its own set of opportunities for identifying individuals who have a passion for Christ-centered stewardship and helping them create lifetime gift plans.

The Foundation's annual Ministry Report with supplemental information, updated financials, and distributions appears on the Foundation's Web site at www.lcmsfoundation.org. The Foundation's audited financial statements are available upon request.

As it enters the next triennium, the Foundation rejoices in the enormous blessings of the past and looks forward confidently by God's grace to the future.

Thomas K. Ries, *President*

R4-06

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) 2007–2010

"ONE People—Forgiven"

LCEF Mission Statement:

To support the Church in fulfilling its mission of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ by being a Christ-centered servant partner of the LCMS, ensuring that funds and services are available now and in the future.

The Lord continued to bless LCEF during the 2007–10 triennium. The key financial and ministry highlights listed below illustrate this point. (Please note all financial data noted in these six points are as of Dec. 31, 2009, unless otherwise identified.)

1. Total assets for LCEF grew to \$1.8 billion, up from \$1.6 billion in June 2007.

2. The loan portfolio under management exceeds \$1.5 billion; this includes \$12 million in loans sold to LCMS entities. In addition, LCEF provides loan guarantees to educational institutions in order to secure low-cost, tax-exempt funding. The resulting total amount of funds at work for the church, providing space and place for ministry, is at a record level of \$1.6 billion.
3. Reflecting a continuing commitment to providing outstanding value in loan costs while recognizing the critical importance of our fiduciary responsibility to all investment and loan partners, the interest rate for congregational loans was 5.375% in February 2010, down from the 6.00% level at the time of the 2007 LCMS convention. This is the lowest rate since April, reflecting the partnership between investors and borrowers and ensuring that fewer mission and ministry dollars are spent on bricks and mortar and more on sharing the Gospel in response to the Great Commission.
4. LCEF is blessed to partner with loyal investors who provide the funds needed to meet the growing demand for ministry-expansion loans. The investor payable portfolio of \$1.511 billion represents an increase of nearly \$250 million in the past three years. The total number of investors declined during this period but remains strong at approximately 60,000. Investors in the easy-access StewardAccount®, introduced in 2000, have in excess of \$305 million invested.
5. Net assets decreased \$13 million to \$161 million due to investment and real estate loan losses resulting from the deteriorating financial and real estate markets associated with the 2008–9 recession. LCEF's capital position remains strong and management actions to increase annual net income have been successful. LCEF's capital-to-asset ratio (inclusive of the loan loss reserve), a measure of financial strength, was 9.76% as of Dec. 31, 2009.
6. LCEF Ministry Services, including Capital Funding Services, Laborers For Christ, and the Architectural Advisory Committee, continue to offer ministry-enhancement resources to a growing number of LCMS congregations, schools, and agencies. Services have been expanded to include additional high-quality, high-value, customer-focused programs to meet the changing needs of LCMS ministries.

Operational Summary

2006–7

The ministry of LCEF would not be possible without the continued efforts of so many supporters who help further its mission. Working together in His name, the ministry of providing "space and place" blossomed during this time period. LCEF approved a record amount of loan dollars—a total of 757 loans were approved, with a dollar amount reaching more than \$360 million. Loans to rostered church workers accounted for 345 of the loans, totaling more than \$37 million.

LCEF was blessed with record earnings in fiscal 2007. Based on these blessings, LCEF was able to distribute \$2.9 million to LCMS partners. The International Center received \$300,000, while the 28 member districts each received an average of \$89,000 to support mission and ministry. In support of the *Ablaze!* initiative, LCEF also placed \$300,000 in a new Mission Planting Fund. This fund provides special, low-cost loans to new mission starts.

Capital Funding Services (CFS), one of LCEF's Ministry Services offerings, increased its contracts to 115 in 2007. LCEF Services seeks to be a resource to ministries from "start to finish." CFS consultants were cross-trained on all LCEF planning and building services dur-

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ing this period, thus providing more thorough, integrated advice and assistance.

In 2007, LCEF partnered with several outside funding sources to find ways to help large schools refinance their mortgage at even lower rates through tax-exempt bond funding. Partnering with two state-financing agencies—the Missouri Health and Educational Facilities Authority and the Colorado Educational and Cultural Facilities Authority—LCEF was able to provide LCMS schools with tax-exempt financing, resulting in loan rates at a net savings for our schools of up to 1.5%. These savings allow the ministries to use those valuable dollars for mission and ministry outreach.

2007–8

In 2008, LCEF celebrated 30 years of incorporation, a result of many people dedicating themselves to serving God's plan for more than 100 years through church extension and ensuring it will serve on for eternity.

In 2008, LCEF increased its emphasis on partnerships that expand ministry opportunities. Though there were many challenges within the economy, financial and real estate markets, and loan and housing industries, LCEF's mission statement remained at the heart of all decisions, allowing God's light to lead the way. By remaining conservative stewards of the assets entrusted to the mission, LCEF was able to support His work in many ways, such as

- approving a loan to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia, which previously operated for decades under Soviet rule;
- assisting additional Lutheran schools to gain money-saving tax-exempt financing;
- growing the rostered church worker loan program and loan options;
- increasing the Capital Funding Services capabilities to meet the needs of churches; and
- offering new investment options that promote good stewardship and provide needed loan funds at the same time.

New investment opportunities were introduced to expand participation and partnership among LCMS members. The Family Emergency StewardAccount®, which helps investors set aside funds for unexpected needs, and the FlexPlus Health Savings Account (HSA), for use with qualified high-deductible health plans, provides investors products that address changes in personal finance.

Ministry Services supported the church-planting initiative and church revitalization efforts of the LCMS by underwriting the Strategic Ministry Planning process and demographic analysis for selected *Ablaze!* Covenant Congregations. These complimentary services provided vital assistance to the missions as they strove to establish their ministry vision and reach more people.

Working with the Synod to help Lutheran schools remain healthy, LCEF introduced LCEF Marketing Resources (www.lcefmarketing.com) in fiscal 2009, an online source for branded direct-marketing and communication materials for schools of all levels. This is an extension of the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Mailing List service offered by Demographic Services, and it efficiently answers the question many schools had of what to mail/distribute in recruitment and retention efforts. These materials establish a professional brand image at a reasonable price.

In spite of the economic downturn, LCEF continued to maintain a strong capital position to support growth and operations and provide investor protection. The liquidity position remained robust, with an investment portfolio in excess of \$300 million in marketable securi-

ties and line-of-credit arrangements totaling \$100 million. Total assets at the end of fiscal 2008 were more than \$1.8 billion.

Subprime mortgages were a constant source of national news during this period. LCEF, however, was not negatively impacted by direct investments in these products. LCEF's loan portfolio—mostly comprised of loans to congregations and other ministries—experienced a slight rise in the loan delinquency rate, but there were few foreclosures and minimal write-offs. LCEF did experience losses during fiscal year 2008 due to falling property values on real estate securing certain loans. These losses were fully provided for in year-end financials, with LCEF's net income—after the reserves for real estate collateral were covered—totaling \$2.9 million.

LCEF works with outside professional financial advisors to construct and maintain a diversified, conservative, and prudent investment portfolio. LCEF had no direct investment and minimal indirect investment in the financial firms that failed late in 2008. LCEF did hold Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac fixed-income securities, but they were backed by the federal government and did not expose LCEF to financial losses. During calendar 2008 and early 2009, the majority of the investment portfolio was in fixed-income investments with a smaller amount invested in a diversified portfolio of equities. Since LCEF is required to record its investments at market value on a month-end basis, LCEF's financial statements reflect values in both volatile and stable market conditions.

2008–9

The extended economic recession and downturn in the equity and real estate markets impacted the financial condition of LCEF in fiscal 2009. However, steps were taken to improve LCEF's financial position, reduce risk, and ensure the availability of its services and loan funds.

LCEF experienced strong operating income in fiscal year 2009 and into the beginning of fiscal 2010, driven by an increase in net interest income that was the result of falling interest costs on investor payables. The economic downturn, however, impacted the cash flow of some of the congregations and schools borrowing from LCEF. As a result, loan delinquencies increased to 6.4% from 2.7%. In addition, impaired loans (defined as a loan placed on nonaccrual status or with restructured terms) increased to \$63 million of the \$1.5 billion loan portfolio as of June 30, 2009. To accommodate this impact, LCEF increased its provision for loan losses to \$6.8 million. Consistent with our mission of being a ministry partner, LCEF works closely with organizations to assist them in addressing their financial concerns and to keep loans current. At fiscal 2009 year-end, the total operating income totaled \$4.6 million, an increase of \$2.6 million compared to the prior year.

Due to the substantial downturn in the equity markets, LCEF experienced net investment losses totaling \$28.9 million, or 10.6% of LCEF's average investment balance. With declining real estate values, LCEF recorded net losses resulting from updated real estate valuations and foreclosed assets totaling \$1.4 million. The positive operating income described above was offset by these losses, resulting in a total net loss for the fiscal year of \$24.8 million.

LCEF deemed it prudent to reduce risk in light of these major economic issues and to accommodate the increasing rate of loan delinquencies. The investment portfolio was reallocated to include only conservative, fixed-income investments. This change in investment strategy realized a substantial portion of the 10.6% in investment losses described above.

Since LCEF's ability to meet future loan demand is contingent on its capital strength and liquidity, gifting opportunities were used to

restore the capital-to-asset ratio and congregation loans were sold to LCMS entities to provide additional liquidity. The sale of congregation loans allows LCEF to continue to meet the loan demand without requiring significant growth in total assets, which would negatively impact LCEF's capital-to-asset ratio.

LCEF investors remained loyal during this difficult time, knowing that their investments are being used to assist ministries impacted by the recession. This allowed LCEF to continue serving the LCMS community with loans at historically low interest rates—at a time when many financial institutions were decreasing lending activity. LCEF investors expressed their commitment to the mission of LCEF by reinvesting with LCEF nearly \$360 million in maturing notes that had been invested in 18-month and two-year terms, representing a renewal rate of 85%.

Furthering our goal to assist LCMS schools, LCEF and Concordia Publishing House (CPH) worked together to create and launch in late fiscal 2009 a new stewardship curriculum resource for students in kindergarten through eighth grade (www.lcefkids.org). *K.I.D.S. Count* includes Bible-based lessons, interactive activities, and service project ideas that provide schools, Sunday schools, vacation Bible schools, and home-school instructors a fun way to teach children what it means to be a Christian disciple. This program dovetails well into LCEF's existing children's stewardship investment, the K.I.D.S. Stamp program.

LCEF Today

In spite of the economic challenges, LCEF remains a well-capitalized institution with a strong emphasis on liquidity. LCEF is committed to professional and prudent management (with a ministry heart) to protect investors' interests as we partner together to meet the lending needs of the LCMS. The management actions taken to date are resulting in positive steps forward:

- Net assets grew \$13.7 million in the first seven months of fiscal 2010.
- The capital-to-asset ratio reached 9.91% as of Jan. 31, 2010—an increase of 0.86% versus June 30.
- Net operating income as of Jan. 31 is \$8.4 million, versus \$4.6 million for the entire fiscal year ended June 30—an increase of \$3.8 million in the first seven months of fiscal 2010.
- Net gain on investments of \$4.7 million partially reverses the decline in the first seven months of fiscal 2009.

In early 2010, Merle Freitag retired after 11-plus years of dedicated service to LCEF; Richard C. Robertson was installed as the new LCEF president on Jan. 14, 2010. We pray that the Synod will support him and the entire management team just as strongly as it has in the past. God has provided the church with many gifted servants, and we are confident He has equipped Rich to lead LCEF on the journey of fulfilling the Great Commission.

Conclusion

In the past three years, the financial stability of our nation has been significantly challenged, and we have yet to recover fully. While LCEF has felt the effect of this unstable environment, it has taken measured steps to minimize the impact and continue to provide needed resources to the LCMS. LCEF is blessed to be a vital link between investors and borrowers, making ministry happen in LCMS churches and schools, now and in the future.

Every day, God presents opportunities to extend His kingdom. LCEF is poised to meet the mission before it; to work for the church

with a clear vision, purpose, and direction; and to serve the Lord and His people in one mission, sharing one message, with one people.

Soli Deo Gloria!

David Belasic, *Chairman*
Richard Robertson, *President*

R4-07

Accounting Department

The Accounting Department has maintained all budgetary, financial, and accounting records for corporate Synod on behalf of the Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer. Cash receipting and certain treasury/banking functions were also performed on the Treasurer's behalf. The department provided similar accounting, cash receipting, and treasury services for Radio Stations KFUE AM and FM, Concordia University System, LCMS Holdings Limited, LCMS Housing Corporation, and several districts of the Synod. The department provided payroll and accounts payable services to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation, Concordia Plan Services, Concordia University System, and several districts.

The department prepared checks for all disbursements for the above entities based upon appropriate approvals, served as the custodian of payroll and payroll-related records, and published and disseminated financial and management reports for all entities served. The department prepared and filed tax and other compliance-related informational returns to various state agencies and federal tax authorities. The department continuously monitors compliance with federal and state tax matters for corporate Synod and certain other related entities.

During the past triennium, the Accounting Department prepared or assisted in the update and publication of several documents designed to assist congregations, schools, pastors, and teachers by providing pertinent tax, accounting, and personnel guidance on matters specifically related to not-for-profit and church-related organizations. In each of the past three years, the department published and disseminated through district offices (now widely available on the Internet) the *Congregational Treasurer's Manual* and provided assistance in developing and coordinating needed materials for the annual Joint Business Administrators Conference. Along with these documents, the department assisted church workers by responding to their telephone inquiries and e-mails related to tax and payroll matters. Additional guidance and tax updates were provided by the department through the publication of a "Tax and Information Guideline for Ministers of Religion." In each of the past three years, the department responded to invitations from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis to participate in its annual Financial Planning Workshop attended by fourth year students and spouses and by districts to enable them to speak to congregational church leaders about church tax and financial matters.

Charles E. Rhodes, *Executive Director*

R4-08

Information Technology (IT)

The Information Technology (IT) Department manages LCMS information technology services, resources, and strategy. It provides information technology services to corporate Synod (boards, commissions, departments, and offices) and the LCMS Foundation.

The provided services include network administration, data management and application hosting, network security management, software development and maintenance, e-mail, Internet access, Web

application hosting, personal productivity and collaboration, IT support desk (help desk and microcomputer support), business process analysis and management, technical training, and IT project and policy management. The department currently supports the technology needs of more than 500 business users at the LCMS International Center.

When the department was “Concordia Technologies” (CT), and prior to that, the “Office of Information Systems” (OIS), services were provided to a broader group of LCMS organizations that included Concordia Plans, Concordia Publishing House, the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, Lutheran Hour Ministries, and a variety of district offices and other organizations. The Lord accomplished much through these services and the information technology partnership that those organizations once shared with corporate Synod and the LCMS Foundation. Over the past 25 years, however, the department evolved to its current state, now providing services only to the tightly coupled corporate Synod and LCMS Foundation organizations. This evolution was influenced by the increasing diversity of the information technology needs and regulatory requirements of LCMS organizations and the increased capabilities of their internal staffs, significant changes in technology, the evolution of the information technology governance model, and a recent external review.

Technological advances continue to impact society and the LCMS in significant ways. The pace of those advances and the evolving needs of corporate Synod and the LCMS Foundation challenge God’s people to make appropriate use of His gift of technology. The IT Department recently realigned its services per Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) standards and has established policies and procedures that help to ensure accountability in meeting that challenge with the best possible stewardship.

Over the past three years, when it was Concordia Technologies, the department led and/or supported the following initiatives:

- CrossConnect—the implementation of Blackbaud’s fund-raising and Web content management tools for corporate Synod and the LCMS Foundation
- Wireless Networking—the implementation of secure wireless networks for employees and visitors at the International Center
- Enhanced Firewall—the implementation of an enhanced firewall and related tools to ensure data security
- Trust Processor—the implementation of a new trust management system for the LCMS Foundation
- Banner HR and General Ledger—the implementation of significant version upgrades and Web access for this core system
- Serve Now—the implementation of a volunteer recruiting system for LCMS World Mission
- Ablaze! Web site—support for the evolving needs of the Ablaze! program and its Web-based tools
- Web statistics—the implementation of improved tools to track and analyze Web-site traffic

Future technology initiatives will include the following:

- CrossConnect—full completion of the implementation of Blackbaud’s suite of products, and migration to a new HR/Payroll service
- SaaS—appropriate migration of internally-hosted systems to Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions and externally-hosted services
- Corporate Data—consolidation of corporate data and creation/revision of related policies
- Expanded integration of smart phones with all systems

May God continue to bless our efforts to make appropriate use of His gift of technology.

Myron A. Koehn, *Interim Executive Director*

R4-09

General Services

In support of our Lord’s command to the Church to share the news of the forgiveness that is ours in Christ, the Department of General Services is responsible for “developing and administering building, office, information and electronic support services to the entities of the LCMS International Center properties and other corporate organizations of the church in their support of the LCMS mission and ministry objectives” (General Services Department Mission Statement).

General Services is made up of the following units:

- Business Services
- Facility Services
- Electronic Media
- Purchasing Services
- Travel & Meeting Planning

Most of these service units are joint operations of the four corporate and trust entities housed in the LCMS International Center (IC) buildings, operated under the authority of the Facilities & Services Management Board. At present, approximately 35 full- and part-time employees work in these five areas.

Business Services includes the following units in General Services that support business activities of the entities housed at the IC as well as district offices, congregations, recognized service organizations (RSOs), and professional church workers.

Rosters and Statistics compiles and maintains the official LCMS rosters of congregations and professional church workers. This unit also maintains lists of schools, congregational lay leaders, RSOs, and LCMS high school youth. Roster information is available on the LCMS Web site and is made available to all congregations, schools, districts, and boards as well as other approved organizations. LCMS districts and individuals can manage relevant data via the Internet.

IC Services is primarily the copy and mail services center serving the IC organizations. Digital imaging, the scanning of paper documents onto CDs, is also offered, allowing the storage of hundreds of documents on a single disk, significantly reducing the number of files and file cabinets needed while more readily providing access to information.

Research Services provides a full range of research design and analysis services. The staff conducts original research, including written surveys, telephone interviews, or focus groups (in-depth interviews), and also provides secondary analysis of existing data, such as congregation information collected by Rosters and Statistics or public data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau. Over the past three years, Research Services has provided extensive assistance to the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance, collecting and analyzing feedback from meetings with district boards of directors, district convention delegates, and delegates to the 2010 LCMS convention gathered at nine regional gatherings in late 2009 and early 2010.

Facility Services provides support services within the IC in St. Louis.

Building Operations is responsible for the full operations of the IC physical plant, including electrical, plumbing, life safety, and

structural systems; also security services, business continuity support, maintenance services, floor-plan design, telephone service, data and telephone infrastructure support, voice mail, and overall building and grounds maintenance. Major projects undertaken by Building Operations during the past three years include the construction of the CHI Museum at the IC; the installation of new worship furnishings in the IC chapel; and the complete inventory and assessment of artwork on display throughout the IC.

Crossroads Café provides cafeteria, vending, and catering services to the IC properties.

Electronic Media provides leadership, coordination, design services, project management, and policy administration of the LCMS Internet presence and the IC Intranet. The unit works directly with more than 20 ministry areas who maintain content on the LCMS.org Web site, enabling them to create and upload content directly to their section of the site. Electronic Media also manages the LCMS eNews system, an opt-in e-mail list that allows visitors to subscribe to e-mail newsletters from a list of more than 35 newsletters covering a variety of topics.

Purchasing Services works with IC organizations in developing purchasing requirements and bid specifications for the procurement of goods and services. It also oversees the LCMS Group Purchasing Agreement, which negotiates volume-based discount pricing with selected vendors on behalf of the more than 8,000 LCMS churches, schools, and other organizations.

Travel and Meeting Planning provides event-planning services that include travel, housing, transportation, and conference arrangements for LCMS organizations. In its negotiations of contracts and its coordination and execution of events, this department works strategically to combine and partner events wherever possible and to secure the most cost-effective meetings and events possible with the highest return on investment. Events across the country and the convention of the Synod are included in its responsibility. Since the 2007 convention, this department planned or assisted with over a thousand external (off-site) events, accommodating an estimated 200,000 people; during the same time, it coordinated more than 15,000 meetings and activities in the IC buildings.

David Fiedler, *Executive Director*
General Services Department

R4-10

The Department of Human Resources

The Department of Human Resources provides leadership to the human resources function in service to church workers at the International Center and throughout the Synod. The department is guided by its mission statement, "To participate in the advancement of the kingdom of God by serving the LCMS and entities with efficient and competent service in a caring, confident manner, striving for fairness to all." The department is keenly focused on creating a caring and supportive work environment so that employees may give their most effective service to the Lord and to the Synod. The department has a direct relationship to the LCMS Board of Directors and endeavors to support the board's philosophy "to be good stewards of the dollars entrusted to us, pay fair salaries, and reward performance in order to be able to attract, motivate, and retain employees." The Department of Human Resources coordinates the development and administration of personnel policies, procedures, and supporting systems within and between all boards, commissions, departments, entities, and agencies of the Synod.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the department administers compliance with the Synod's Bylaws as they relate to the human resources function. Annual goals are established around major personnel categories: human resources administration, employee functions, staff development, legal, recruitment, compensation and benefits administration, employee relations, and performance management. The administrative function of the Department of Human Resources encompasses the maintenance of records, the preservation of documents, and the development and revision of the employee handbook and management procedural manuals. Significant progress has been made within the last year to validate data in the human resources information system to allow for enhanced reporting capability. The employee handbook has been revised and complements the new online management procedural guidelines. An important task of the Department of Human Resources is to coordinate employee functions. Organizing forums for employees to fellowship with one another greatly enhances the work environment. During the past three years, greater emphasis has been placed on providing educational training seminars to promote wellness, financial stewardship, and retirement planning. Ongoing emphasis is placed on staff development via the tuition reimbursement program and the Matura leadership training. The department stays apprised of employment-related legal matters and works with legal counsel to implement required policy and procedural changes.

Recruiting the best talent is an important mission of the department. The recruiting function has made significant progress in recent years by better utilizing Internet job sites and by promoting the International Center as an excellent place to work. In an effort to find the necessary talent, the department has worked toward the enhancement and standardization of recruitment testing through acquisition of testing software. In order to retain employee talent, it is imperative to provide fair compensation and benefits. The department has increased the research into compensation and benefits administration in order to be attuned to changes and to stay competitive. In execution of our mission, the department strives to provide exemplary employee relations services to every employee and manager. Increased focus on service has resulted in more effective relationships with managers, which in turn has resulted in better and more consistent administration of policies and procedures. A major initiative in 2010 is the revision of the performance management appraisal system. A new appraisal tool will greatly enhance management's ability to assess and reward employee performance.

During the last triennium, the department assisted in the calling or appointing of chief executives, including the Executive Director of the Board for Pastoral Education, the President/CEO of Concordia Plan Services, the Executive Director of the CTCR, the Executive Director of the Commission on Worship, the Executive Director of Human Resources, and the LCEF President. Other major accomplishments in the last triennium include a voluntary early retirement offer to employees of the LCMS Foundation and corporate Synod. Technological advancements included the implementation of an online system for pay advices and the development of an online New Hire Orientation Program, which includes harassment and discrimination preventative training.

As the Department of Human Resources endeavors to continue to refine the day-to-day processes and procedures, its major goals are the development of a new performance management system, improved employee communication tools, increased training and development programs for all employees, and an upgrade in the Human Resource Information System. Accomplishment of these objectives will lead

to enhanced services to boards, commissions, agencies, departments, and corporate entities supported by the Synod so that they can concentrate on giving their most effective service to their mission.

Val Rhoden-Kimbrough, *Executive Director*

R4-11

Internal Audit Department

The Internal Audit Department provides independent appraisals of accounting, financial reporting, and operational activities of boards, commissions, service departments, and agencies of the Synod as requested by their governing boards or the Synod's Board of Directors. The scope of the internal audit function includes (1) performing financial statement audits in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants; (2) assisting the external auditors with financial statement audits of the various synodical corporate entities; (3) examining and evaluating internal controls, operations, and organizational structures for adequacy, effectiveness, and efficiency; and (4) investigating allegations of suspected financial and organizational misconduct in accordance with Synod policy.

The goals of the above-listed activities are to ensure that (1) the assets and resources of the Synod and its components are properly safeguarded; (2) financial reporting is accurate, reliable, and in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles; (3) operations are being performed in the most efficient and effective manner; and (4) a more effective level of stewardship of the resources provided to the Synod and its related entities is obtained.

To carry out the department's goals and objectives, it maintains a dynamic, team-oriented environment that encourages personal/professional growth and the obtaining of professional certifications. Currently, seven audit professionals are included on the department's staff, five of whom are licensed certified public accountants and one is a certified fraud examiner.

To promote independence and enable the auditors to maintain the objectivity to render unbiased opinions, the Internal Audit Department is accountable to the Synod's Board of Directors through its Audit Committee. Annually, the Audit Committee reviews and approves the Internal Audit Department's objectives for the upcoming fiscal year. During the past triennium, the Executive Director of Internal Audit met with the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis to review and discuss the results of all financial statement audits and operational reviews conducted by internal or external auditors, provide a status report on the progress achieved in meeting the department's annual objectives, and discuss the coordination of the internal and external audit functions in order to avoid duplication, promote efficiency, and maximize audit coverage.

The activities of the Internal Audit Department during the triennium are summarized as follows:

1. **Districts of the Synod** Upon request of district boards, the department conducted annual financial statement audits for 14, 11, and 12 districts during the fiscal years 2007–08, 2008–09, and 2009–10 respectively. In each of these fiscal years, the department also reviewed the financial audit reports of the remaining districts, which had been audited by external auditors, to ensure they had received unqualified (i.e., clean) opinions on their financial statements. In addition, one district requested a financial/operational audit of their Planned Giving Office in the 2009–10 fiscal year.
2. **The Synod, Its Departments, and Other Entities** During each of the triennium years, the Internal Audit Department assisted

the external auditors in conducting their financial statement audits of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation, and Concordia Plan Services (CPS).

The Department performed annual financial statement audits of Concordia Historical Institute and the Concordia University System (CUS) national office. The consolidated CUS financial statements (CUS national office and its 10 affiliated colleges/universities) as of June 30, 2007; 2008; and 2009 were also compiled by the department.

During the past triennium, financial/operational audits were conducted for LCMS World Mission, LCMS World Relief & Human Care Ministries, the Board for District and Congregational Services, KFUO, and the Synod's purchasing card system. In addition, at the request of various agencies of the Synod (e.g., LCEF), special financial and operational audits were performed of selected functions, programs, and activities during the triennium.

3. **Seminaries, Colleges, and Universities** Upon request, the Internal Audit Department assists the 12 educational institutions with their financial statement close process, assists their external auditors with interim and/or year-end audit procedures, performs operational audits of selected business processes, and/or reviews their internal controls. In 2007–08, the department assisted one university with its financial statement close process, prepared its 2007 financial statements, and provided training for its accountant.

Joann Spotanski, *Executive Director*

R5-01

Board for Pastoral Education



The LCMS Board for Pastoral Education advocates and coordinates the formation of pastors, missionaries, and other church servants to serve the mission and ministry of Christ's Church.

Servants on the Board for Pastoral Education (BPE):

The voting members of the BPE are John Behrendt (chairman); Gillian Bond; Steven Briel; Richard Cohrs (vice-chairman); William Diekelman; Gerhard Freche; Thomas Krause; Richard Schaefer (secretary); and Kenton Wendorf.

The advisory members are Kurt Krueger, Thomas Kuchta, Dale Meyer, Paul Sieveking, and Dean Wenthe.

The International Center staff supporting the work of the BPE are Barbara Clark and Glen Thomas, assisted by Richard Davis, deployed staff at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. The deployed staff position at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, is currently vacant.

Significant Achievements

- Chaired meetings of the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Committee and conference calls of SMP working groups at both seminaries to facilitate implementation of the SMP program (2007 Res. 5-01

- B). An SMP program report to the Synod is available at www.lcms.org/pastoraleducation.
- Chaired a task force that included two other BPE members to implement 2007 Res. 5-02, “To Address Licensed Lay Deacons.”
 - Participated in a task force to implement 2007 Res. 5-05, “To Encourage Commitment to Continuing Education for Clergy.”
 - Chaired a committee to begin an annual process of receiving assessment of seminary graduates two and five years after seminary graduation by lay leaders in their congregations.
 - Partnered with the President’s Office to plan and implement a Pastoral Ministry Summit, Nov. 4–5, 2009, at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.
 - Initiated and implemented steps designed to facilitate the formation of a vision for the future of theological education in the LCMS for 2015 and beyond.
 - Authored, adopted, and forwarded to the seminaries and the Council of Presidents a document concerning “Above Reproach Issues” related to seminary admission practices.
 - Worked in partnership with the LCMS Joint Seminary Fund to encourage and facilitate monetary support of the seminaries and seminary students.
 - Met jointly each year of the triennium, as required by the Bylaws of the Synod, with the boards of regents of the seminaries and with the Board for University Education.
 - Updated a strategic action plan for the triennium to deal comprehensively with all the functions assigned to the board in the Bylaws of the Synod.
 - Fostered coordination, cooperation, and collaboration of the seminaries in programs and activities, policies and procedures.
 - Conducted official visits to the seminary campuses to identify strengths and recommend avenues to improve the institutions.
 - Reviewed annual financial audit reports of both seminaries.
 - Provided for the distribution of grants from the Synod (unrestricted and restricted) to the seminaries.
 - Convened annual (or twice-annual) meetings of the seminary presidents, academic deans, deans of students, admission directors, and others to discuss items of mutual interest and foster collegial cooperation between the two seminaries.
 - Developed a list of potential faculty for the seminaries, and provided the list and periodic updates to the seminaries.
 - Participated in the meetings and interviews conducted by the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry.
 - Redesigned and continued publication of a quarterly *Pastoral Education* insert for the *Reporter*.
 - Arranged an LCMS Theology Professors’ Convocation (March 2009) and another LCMS Theology Professors’ Convocation in conjunction with the ILC World Seminaries Conference (June 2010) for the purpose of theological discussion and joint work on theological issues for the benefit of the church.
 - Annually evaluated the performance of the executive director.
 - Nominated, called, and installed (November 2007) Dr. Glen Thomas to serve as executive director of the BPE following the October 2007 retirement of Dr. L. Dean Hempelmann.
 - Facilitated the writing of new entry-level competence exams for seminary enrollment.

- Approved and forwarded three overtures to the 2010 LCMS Convention: “To Support LCMS Seminarians and Seminaries”; “To Recruit and Retain Full-Time Church Workers”; and “To Clarify Bylaw Articulation of Specific Ministry Pastor Limitations.”

The BPE joins the Synod in giving thanks to the Lord of the Church for two excellent seminaries and for the many blessings received over the past triennium, as described below.

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri

Concordia Seminary continues to be blessed by God as it fulfills its mission to serve church and world by providing theological education and leadership, centered in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the formation of pastors, missionaries, and leaders in the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The following blessings over the past triennium are worthy of special mention:

- Over four million downloads from iTunesU since 2007.
- More than 525 pastoral candidates provided for placement in the LCMS.
- More than 450 academic degrees granted to students from around the world, including advanced degrees in theological studies.
- Continued collaboration with LCMS World Mission and LCMS districts to launch and continue to operate innovative, specialized distance education programs, including the Center for Hispanic Studies (CHS); Specific Ministry Pastoral Program (SMP); Distance Education Leading to Ordination (DELTO); Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT); Deaf Institute of Theology (DIT); and the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center (CCMC) in partnership with Concordia University, Irvine, CA, and the Pacific Southwest District.
- Immersion and cultural development through site-specific cross-cultural education in domestic urban contexts such as Houston, Chicago, Minneapolis, and New York in collaboration with Concordia College, Bronxville.
- Continued urban education in St. Louis through cross-cultural education, working with various minority demographics (African American, Bosnian, Jewish, Deaf, Chinese, Vietnamese, Bhutanese, Hispanic, and more).
- Immersion and cultural development through site-specific cross-cultural education in international contexts such as Guatemala, Belize, Africa, Russia, and Panama.
- Terminal degrees held by 86 percent of faculty members in their particular areas of study—from various institutions including but not limited to Cambridge, Notre Dame, Washington University, University of Chicago, Northwestern University, Union Theological Seminary, Hebrew Union College, Stanford University, University of Leeds, and the University of Southern California.
- Development of deaconess studies curriculum with three areas of specific concentration available: social ministries, counseling and spiritual care for women, and institutional chaplaincy.
- Successful projections and implementation of the “How Will They Hear?” Campaign:

Campaign Report Overview

Pastors (student aid)	\$45,404,084 (100% of goal)
Place (campus)	\$9,737,572 (55% of goal)
Promise (endowment)	\$18,381,702 (100% of goal)
Total	\$73,523,358 (95% of goal)

- Redesign of Concordia Seminary’s *Concordia Journal* to be as responsive and relevant as possible, and to be used more immediately as a resource to the church at large.
- Redesign of *Concordia Seminary Magazine* to communicate dynamically, clearly, and aggressively Concordia Seminary’s Christ-centered mission within the St. Louis area, within the contexts of the LCMS, and to the church and world at large.
- Establishment of an endowed faculty chair in Hispanic Ministries.
- Naming of Rev. Dr. Leopoldo A. Sanchez as director of the seminary’s Center for Hispanic Studies.
- Installation of Rev. Robert Hoehner as director of placement and alumni relations.

Concordia Seminary is one of the largest Lutheran seminaries and one of the 25 largest seminaries of any denomination in the United States. Since its inception in 1839, more than 12,000 Concordia Seminary graduates have served as pastors, deaconesses, missionaries, and chaplains throughout the world.

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

The mission of Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS) is to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all. Over the past three years, CTS has been blessed by God and supported by God’s people so that this mission can be carried out. Here are some of the blessings that have come from this mission:

- Completion of an institutional self-study in preparation for formal accreditation visits by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (HLC).
- Beginning of the expansion of Walther Library in the summer of 2009, with scheduled completion in the fall of 2010. This facility will add 45,000 square feet to the existing library, enabling the seminary to meet the standards of our accreditation agencies, house the library’s full collection, and provide adequate space to enhance teaching and learning.
- Addition of faculty with extensive parish, district president, and Synod leadership experience. Members of the faculty also published significant works and earned advanced degrees.
- Purchase and implementation of a new Enterprise Resource Planning System (Blackbaud) in order to serve students, staff, and donors more efficiently.

- Expanded distance education offerings:
 - Development and offering of a master’s level online Greek course
 - Development and implementation of the Specific Ministry Pastor curriculum, matriculating two “cohorts” in the program
 - Web site access to all CTS media information
 - New multifaceted CTS Web site launched in 2009
- Continued implementation of a new curriculum, which integrates the historic disciplines and focuses on formation of pastoral character and habits. More modules are being developed to offer enhanced pastoral formation.
- Initiation of an online deaconess program leading toward the Master of Arts degree and certification for deaconess service in the Synod.
- Construction of the “Enter the Biblical World” Playscape in May 2009 (located behind the existing gymnasium) with volunteer labor from CTS students, staff, and faculty, along with the local Lutheran and Fort Wayne community.
- Campus wellness center refurbished and gymnasium floor resurfaced to increase its utilization by CTS and groups within the larger Fort Wayne community, including the local sheriff’s department.
- Relationship developed with Lutheran Ministries Media (*Worship for Shut-ins*). Construction was begun on a state-of-the-art studio, this facility to be shared by the seminary and LMM.
- Reception of a grant from the Lilly Endowment to fund the summer high school Christ Academy experience for the next three years.
- Attendance by 300–400 people from the local community to the monthly “First Sunday of the Month Brunch”; ticket proceeds benefit both CTS and Concordia Lutheran High School of Fort Wayne.
- With Concordia Lutheran High School, welcomed to Fort Wayne Miss America 2009, Miss Katie Stam, in October 2009. The daughter of a Lutheran school teacher from Seymour, Indiana, Stam’s presence was inspiring to all who attended the events.

The seminary is deeply grateful for the abundant blessings of steady enrollment and generous support that God has provided through His people. The seminary will, under God’s grace, continue to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all.

John Behrendt, Chairman
Glen Thomas, Executive Director

	07 FW	07 STL	2007 Total	08 FW	08 STL	2008 Total	09 FW	09 STL	2009 Total
Enrollment (Census Day Headcount)									
Residential Ordination Track	282	470	752	252	408	660	246	376	622
Non-Residential Ordination Track	12	123	135	36	176	212	43	170	213
Total Ordination Track	294	593	887	288	584	872	289	546	835
Total Graduate School	84	113	197	76	105	181	81	90	171
Total Others	12	19	31	18	14	32	9	13	22
Total Headcount	390	725	1,115	382	703	1,085	379	649	1,028
Cost (Full Regular School Year, Excluding Summer)									
Tuition and Fees	\$18,711	\$21,600		\$20,517	\$21,600		\$21,642	\$21,600	
Room and Board	\$6,903	\$6,054		\$6,903	\$6,699		\$7,542	\$6,825	

R5-02

Board for University Education Concordia University System



... All across the Country ...
An Educational Mission of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
“A church in mission is and must be a teaching church.”

Statement of Mission and Purpose

The Concordia University System builds national identity, enables cooperative endeavors, and enhances the strengths of the colleges and universities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as they engage students of diverse ages and cultures in quality, Christ-centered, value-oriented, Lutheran higher education for lives of service to church and community.

Concordia University System National Office Profile

The national office ensures that the resolutions of the Synod's conventions and the directives of the Synod's Board of Directors and Board for University Education/Concordia University System (BUE), as they pertain to college and university education, are faithfully discharged. It works through the boards of regents of the universities and colleges and their executive officers to ensure that the highest-quality education is offered to students preparing to be professional church workers and to those wishing to prepare for secular vocations in a Christian academic community. It is the oversight agency for the LCMS to authorize academic programs and to establish criteria for initiation, continuation, and improvement of programs. Through consultation, review of instructional materials, and campus visits, it ensures that the curricula and campus lifestyle reflect, with utmost fidelity, the teachings of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions and also the teachings and practices of the Synod. It promotes good management, successful recruiting, and cost effectiveness at the institutions, and it provides for and assists in funding beyond the collection of tuition/fees and income from auxiliaries. It ensures that the highest principles of stewardship are exercised in the acquisition, use, disposition of, and accounting for real properties and equipment owned by the Synod through its institutions of higher education. It promotes cooperation and coordination of individual institutional activities and programs in a joint and shared effort to develop a system-wide approach to funds development, advancement, communications, and strategic planning. It provides system-wide news and institutional information to the Council of Members in order to promote and enhance broader participation and involvement in higher education within the Synod.

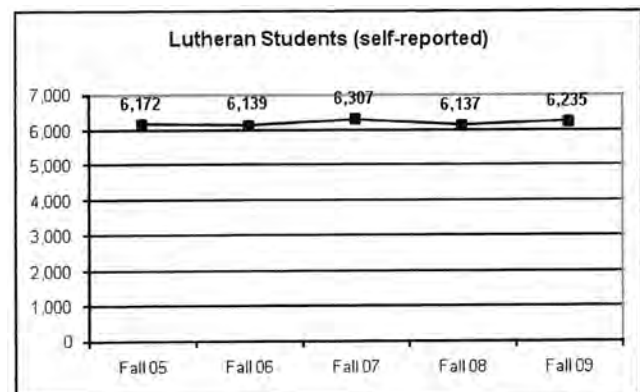
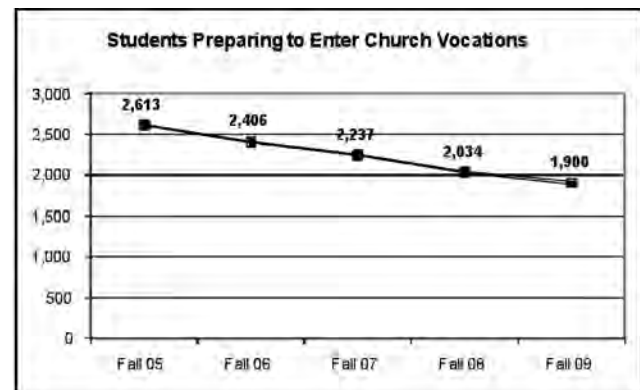
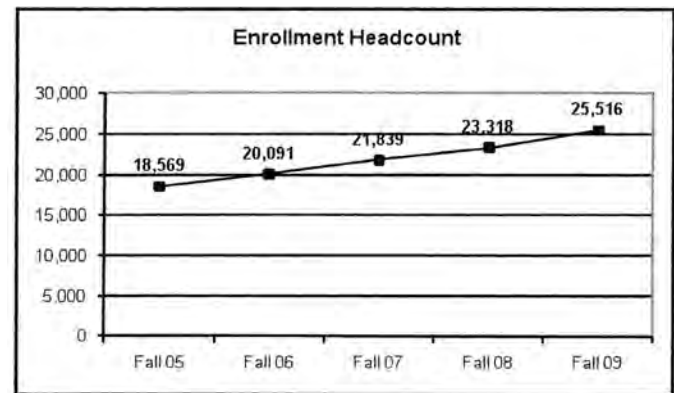
The Concordia University System

- Over 25,500 students
- Over 1,500 full-time and part-time faculty
- Over 200 majors and academic programs

Degrees Awarded

- Associate Degrees
- Bachelor Degrees
- Master Degrees
- Doctoral Degrees
- Post-Baccalaureate Certificates

Enrollment Trends



Placement of Commissioned Ministers 2006–2009

Category	2006–7	2007–8	2008–9
Teacher	313	287	212
DCE	55	65	41
Lay Minister	2	10	10
DCO	3	6	2
Deaconess	9	10	14
Parish Music	5	6	6
Family Life	2	6	4
Totals	389	390	289

Major Achievements: Concordia University System

- Participated in the election of Rev. Dr. Tilahun Mendedo as President of Concordia College Selma
- Approved sale of downtown Austin campus and purchase of Northwest Austin campus of Concordia University Texas
- Initiated the “Concordia Difference,” a program to equip all part-time and full-time faculty members to appreciate, understand, and promote the values of Lutheran higher education
- Strengthened college and university boards of regents by endorsing a 2007 LCMS convention resolution allowing for the appointment of up to four additional board-appointed laypersons to boards of regents
- Launched the Concordia University System *Viewbook*, an annual publication promoting the excellent education offered at the ten CUS colleges and universities
- Approved construction of a new facility for CUEnet operations in Bend, Oregon
- Approved revised campus master plans and capital construction projects for the Concordias in Ann Arbor, Texas, New York, Chicago, Irvine, Nebraska, Portland, St. Paul, and Wisconsin
- Approved all new academic majors and programs at CUS schools
- Provided financial assistance from the Risk Endowment Fund for ongoing support and campus improvements at Concordia College Selma
- Revised BUE/CUS “Outcome” statements in the BUE *Board Policy Manual*
- Initiated the CUS Leadership Institute to develop a pool of leaders for CUS campuses
- Increased *For the Sake of the Church* endowment fund contributions and pledges from \$151M to \$197M (cumulative fund totals from the 10 CUS campuses)
- Completed a strategic planning process for BUE and CUS
- Established the Concordia International Study Consortium, a CUS effort to provide unique study-abroad opportunities for CUS students
- Enhanced efforts to recruit Lutheran faculty on a national level

CUS Budgets and Fiscal Matters**Annual Operating Budgets by Institution
For the Five Years Ending June 30, 2009**

Institution	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Ann Arbor	\$11,508,511	\$14,594,797	\$14,477,328	\$16,279,178	\$13,692,134
Austin	13,859,297	14,851,804	\$17,466,907	24,134,473	26,027,069
Bronxville	13,054,063	14,039,000	\$15,151,711	16,818,875	17,049,572
Irvine	28,439,395	31,246,233	\$35,626,110	40,833,648	38,726,924
Mequon	36,411,362	39,920,942	\$42,519,072	46,242,073	51,248,978
Portland	16,581,773	18,243,783	\$19,816,892	21,763,666	24,109,148
River Forest	29,071,409	35,095,380	\$39,724,836	42,519,034	46,092,121
St. Paul	30,183,358	30,822,029	\$32,292,703	33,181,875	35,244,637
Selma	6,401,949	6,146,833	\$7,059,065	7,173,585	8,456,856
Seward	20,089,695	21,299,504	\$23,288,550	23,283,767	23,950,575
Total	\$205,600,812	\$226,260,305	\$247,423,174	\$272,230,174	\$284,598,014

**Scholarships and Financial Aid by Institutions
For Five Years Ending June 30, 2009**

Institution	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08	FY 09
Ann Arbor	\$2,765,975	\$3,541,287	\$3,472,158	\$4,029,661	\$3,937,591
Austin	4,058,316	5,083,962	4,307,112	5,876,806	6,757,649
Bronxville	4,327,000	4,439,193	6,703,224	5,287,743	5,123,181
Irvine	8,911,822	9,604,241	9,865,557	10,989,550	12,100,000
Mequon	11,309,381	11,584,899	12,435,444	13,820,983	15,460,626
Portland	5,901,470	6,309,442	7,491,568	7,969,662	8,119,994
River Forest	6,287,936	6,930,699	7,328,403	8,522,522	13,119,147
St. Paul	5,706,401	6,677,581	6,813,326	8,119,994	8,916,180
Selma	2,747,791	2,595,340	3,056,436	1,349,045	1,179,120
Seward	7,092,968	7,651,414	8,172,865	9,082,873	9,880,753
Total	\$59,109,060	\$64,418,058	\$69,646,093	\$75,048,839	\$84,594,241

**Church Worker Financial Aid by Institution
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2009**

Institution	2007-08 FY Total	2008-09 FY Total	2008-09 FY # of CW	2008-09 FY Aver. Aid
Ann Arbor	\$2,282,410	\$1,650,634	150	\$11,004
Austin	1,438,689	1,212,730	123	9,859
Bronxville	436,435	286,131	22	13,005
Irvine	2,025,618	2,100,000	132	15,909
Mequon	3,396,553	4,238,635	356	11,906
Portland	451,500	407,680	36	11,324
River Forest	2,712,134	3,490,885	293	11,914
St. Paul	1,617,495	1,502,849	135	11,132
Selma	17,142	55,431	7	7,918
Seward	4,275,616	4,289,725	452	9,490
Total	\$18,653,592	\$19,234,700	1,706	\$11,346

***For the Sake of the Church
Endowment Report
as of December 31, 2009***

Institution	Amount
Ann Arbor	\$13,940,522
Austin	8,272,927
Bronxville	4,535,408
Irvine	21,266,615
Mequon	32,363,476
Portland	8,049,844
River Forest	19,556,481
Selma	3,453,859
St. Paul	28,738,211
Seward	40,710,887
CUS	15,941,693
Total	\$196,829,923

Institutional Operations Summary

Since its inception six years ago at the 2004 LCMS convention, the BUE has focused its attention on the ten colleges and universities of the Concordia University System (CUS). That attention is centered in four Quality Standards adopted by the BUE which define the ways that CUS institutions continue to fulfill their mission as academic institutions and entities of the LCMS. These Quality Standards provide guidelines to ensure that the Concordias remain Christ-centered and Lutheran; that they provide strong liberal arts and professional programs for all students, while continuing to offer and support church-vocation programs; that they strive constantly for academic quality; and that they achieve and maintain financial strength.

During the last three years, total CUS enrollment rose to over 25,500, with eight of ten schools reporting solid enrollment gains, especially in graduate programs. For several years, Concordia University Wisconsin has been the largest Lutheran university in the country, with Concordia University Chicago close behind. Due to CUS enrollment growth, the BUE approved significant building projects for nine of our ten schools in the last triennium. Those projects range from new student dormitories to accommodate growth in residential populations to a new gymnasium and stadium to provide needed space for physical education and athletic competition.

While overall enrollment growth was up in the last three years, the number of students preparing for professional church work declined. Building on the “What a Way” initiative, a collaborative effort with the Board for Pastoral Education, the Board for District and Congregational Services, and the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support is underway to recruit, retain, and nurture church-work professionals for the schools, congregations, and agencies of the LCMS.

By the time of the convention, the BUE will have completed a strategic planning process which identifies strategic directions and initiatives for the next triennium. Initiatives currently being considered are the following:

- (1) Empowering boards of regents for greater service through board training
- (2) Identifying and developing a deeper pool of candidates for CUS leadership positions through intentional leadership training
- (3) Facilitating and promoting educational innovation by identifying and supporting one or more CUS colleges or universities as “innovation incubators”

(4) Developing new models for the structure and governance of CUS

(5) Implementing new branding and marketing initiatives for the Concordia University System

Believing that much can be achieved by working together, the BUE office strengthened several efforts to foster collaboration among the ten Concordias in the last three years. The institutions are currently working together to recruit additional Lutheran faculty members and to identify and train new top level leaders for the CUS under the auspices of the CUS Leadership Institute. To help new faculty understand and promote the values of Lutheran higher education, the BUE developed the “Concordia Difference,” a program for use in faculty-orientation sessions. Working collaboratively with CUS schools, the BUE initiated the Concordia International Study Consortium, an effort to provide unique study-abroad opportunities for CUS students.

Because higher education in the US is so competitive, in the last three years CUS institutions have increased their efforts to raise scholarship dollars and grow their endowments, to offer programs which appeal to traditional and nontraditional students, and to position themselves strategically in local and regional markets. To remain competitive and to continue to produce outstanding graduates, CUS institutions must continue to identify talented, dedicated administrators and regents who understand the complexities of higher education and who are able to work together to achieve the mission of the colleges and universities of the LCMS.

Progress Report on 2007 Convention Resolutions

Resolution 5-04, “To Strengthen College and University Boards of Regents”

The adoption of this resolution, which allows each CUS college and university board of regents to add up to four additional lay members, has deepened and broadened the collective experience and expertise of each board. Some schools chose to add four regents immediately, while other schools chose to stagger the addition of regents over two to three years.

Resolution 5-06, “To Clarify Membership on the Board for Pastoral Education and the Board for University Education”

To eliminate a potential conflict of interest, no executive, faculty member, or staff member from a Lutheran institution of higher education may now serve on the BUE as a voting member.

Resolution 5-07A, “To Change CUS Membership Structure”

The CUS has changed the structure of its Council of Members from an individual member structure to a corporate member structure. This change provides greater flexibility in setting meeting dates and place of meetings and in granting corporate entities the privilege of selecting delegates to represent their respective entities at membership meetings.

CUS Goals for the Next Triennium

- Increase the number of Lutheran faculty candidates in the “Faculty for the Future” database in order to help CUS schools identify and recruit additional Lutheran faculty members
- Assist CUS schools recruit LCMS students and church career students
- Support efforts of CUS schools to increase “For the Sake of the Church” endowment fund contributions, pledges, and estate-designated gifts
- Intensify efforts to identify and train individuals for positions of leadership in CUS colleges and universities
- Provide for education and training of regents, especially in the areas of finance and higher education administration

- Strengthen the CUS study-abroad program by identifying and developing new study sites
- Strengthen the “Faith and Learning” program to equip all faculty members, full-time and part-time, to understand and promote the values of Lutheran higher education

Significant Achievements: Individual Campuses

Concordia University, Ann Arbor, MI—Charles Winterstein, Acting President

- Concordia University’s School of Education was granted a renewal of its national accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Earning this certification ensures Concordia graduates can be placed anywhere in the United States and be received as highly qualified teachers.
- The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) recognized Concordia University Ann Arbor as a Champion of Character institution for 2008–09 for the sixth straight year.
- Concordia University’s School of Education received an “Exemplary” rating from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). The MDE scores the performance of all teacher preparatory institutions in the state. Concordia earned an exemplary rating with a score of 65 out of a possible 70, outscoring a number of better-known, larger schools.
- Concordia University Ann Arbor announced that football would become its 14th sponsored athletic program. CUAA becomes the first NAIA university in Michigan to sponsor football. In January 2010, the Mid-States Football Association unanimously voted to admit CUAA into the league. The Cardinals seek to play a club schedule in the fall of 2010, with its intercollegiate schedule starting in 2011.
- The Concordia University arts program was renamed the “Kreft Arts Program” in 2008. The program features an annual theme that fuses arts events and academic curriculum. The Kreft Arts Program seeks to enrich the academic experience and enrich the lives of students, faculty, staff, and members of the community.
- The HAAB School of Business & Management at Concordia University Ann Arbor began hosting a guest lecture series in the fall of 2009. The series invites executives from local and national organizations to come and speak with CUAA students. In September, CUAA welcomed Wendy Beck, executive vice president and CFO of Domino’s Pizza, for a lecture. Roger Fraser, city administrator of Ann Arbor, lectured in early October. The third lecturer of the series was Mark Bierley, CFO and executive vice president of finance for Borders Group.
- CUAA established an annual Veterans Day Celebration in 2008. The event draws a variety of service men and women from the region, and has been highlighted by the dedication of flags from both Iraq and the state capitol building. Each ceremony is capped with a flyover by military personnel. The university has also had the honor of conferring \$5,000 scholarships to every veteran in attendance, given in their name.
- As of January 2010, Concordia University Ann Arbor, in partnership with Concordia University Wisconsin, is hosting a Master of Business Administration (MBA) program on its campus. Program accreditation comes from the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE).
- Approved in 2009, the Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction (MSCI) at Concordia University Ann Arbor is a 31-credit program designed for the P–12 educator who is interested in enhancing leadership skills, expanding teaching strategies, and becoming a master teacher.

Concordia University Texas, Austin, TX—Thomas Cedel, President

- In summer 2007, Concordia University at Austin was renamed Concordia University Texas (CTX), to reflect Concordia’s locations across the state of Texas. In addition, a new logo was adopted to illustrate Concordia’s mission of developing Christian leaders.
- CTX relocated its entire campus in the summer of 2008 and began its first semester on the new site in Northwest Austin in September. The relocation took over three years of prayer, planning, and work. The new campus included six existing buildings totaling 195,000 square feet and 389 acres of land, with 250 acres devoted to a nature preserve. Classrooms, offices, a cafeteria, and a library were renovated. An athletic field house and gym, student housing, and additional parking were constructed. The new campus was dedicated on Sunday, October 26, 2008.
- In the middle of the relocation process, CTX was also successfully reaccredited for a full 10 years by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
- Spring 2009 showed the highest enrollment in the school’s history, with more than 2,200 students enrolled in traditional undergraduate programs, the Accelerated Degree Program for working adults, and the Masters of Education graduate program.
- New programs are being added, including a Pre-Nursing Program, which will be followed with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree beginning in fall 2010. Also a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Science degree, with Technical Management as the first major, will be launched in summer 2010. A Special Education certification program at the undergraduate and graduate levels is scheduled to be completed this year.
- The Service Learning Program continues to play an impactful role on campus. In the 2008–2009 academic year, the student leaders of the Service Learning Program undertook a project in conjunction with “Water to Thrive” to raise funds for a water well in Ethiopia. They were successful in meeting this goal, and now over 1,700 people can enjoy clean water at a school in Sudi.
- In July 2009, CTX began a strategic transformation process to create a vision of its learning community for 2020. Over one hundred members of the faculty and staff were involved in several committees, and a plan for Learning Transformation was drafted. May 2010 has been set as a milestone to publish “Toward 2020,” with implementation of major elements of the plan by fall 2011.

Concordia College New York, Bronxville, NY – Viji D. George, President

- In June 2007, Concordia was awarded a \$2 million Title III federal grant to launch an accelerated 15-month nursing program for students with a bachelor’s degree in other fields. The first class matriculated in August 2008 and graduated with bachelor of science degrees in nursing in December 2009. The new Nursing Division has exceeded expectations in enrollment, graduation rates, accreditation, co-curricular activities, and clinical outreach.
- In August 2009, Concordia was authorized by the state of New York to begin a four-year undergraduate nursing program, which has attracted significant interest in the fall 2010 inaugural class.
- In 2010, Concordia is celebrating 100 years on its Bronxville, NY, campus. Year-long centennial festivities kicked off with an exhibition and an illustrated lecture, both based on hand-colored glass slides used a century ago by Rev. William Koepchen to promote the college’s move to this village. The original four buildings survive, with nearly unchanged exteriors. One of the students attending the first class, on January 4, 1910, was an 18-year old African American studying for the Lutheran ministry. Today, and tradi-

tionally, Concordia's student body is more than 30 percent minority and international.

- Talbot House, the first president's residence, built 100 years ago, was converted into the new admissions building in 2008. Complete remodeling, renovation, and furnishing of this beautiful structure was made possible by a generous gift from Regent Jack Pietruski in honor of his wife, Roberta Talbot Pietruski.
- In 2009, Concordia and Valparaiso University established the Center for Global and Professional Studies, through which programs will be developed for both campuses in areas of high synergy, capitalizing on the strengths, resources, and locations of the two institutions. These include business, media/communications, law, nursing, social sciences, and humanities. In addition, the Center will facilitate international study and faculty development on both campuses.
- Concordia's Tour Choir's Palm Sunday and Easter services were featured in 2009 on the Christian Television Network's "Service for Shut-Ins."
- In 2009, a Concordia graduate was honored as the New York State Social Work Student of the Year, the fourth time in the last eight years that a Bronxville-trained social worker has been recognized with this prestigious award.
- Recent facilities improvements included the complete renovation and refurnishing in 2007 of Feth Hall, the original administration and classroom building, with ten completely renovated classrooms, many with state-of-the-art educational technology. The Liberal Studies Hall opened the following year in remodeled space, providing a huge new art studio and much-needed faculty offices.
- In 2007, Concordia again received accreditation from Middle States Commission on Higher Education.
- In 2007, Concordia launched the Business Breakfasts at Concordia networking and lecture series to enthusiastic response from members of the surrounding communities, the campus community, and alumni. Noted speakers in this and other campus lecture series included former Nebraska Senator and Governor Bob Kerrey, television journalists George Stephanopoulos and Cokie Roberts, and David Westin, President of ABC News, as well as many other leaders of media, finance, and business in the New York City metropolitan area.
- The OSilas Gallery, an exquisite exhibition space in the Donald A. Krenz Academic Center, has been firmly established as a preeminent art gallery in lower Westchester County. The Academic Center itself was honored by *American School & University* magazine in August 2009 as one of the nation's most outstanding learning environments. It was cited for its ability to integrate current and future technology, its "timelessness" with the flexibility to update to meet evolving standards, and the enhancement of an engaged educational mission.
- At its annual Community Dinner, the College celebrated the 10th anniversary of the inauguration of President Viji George. The event drew a record crowd and record fund-raising support from the local community, area alumni, and Concordia's regents.

Concordia University, Irvine, CA—Loren Kramer, Interim President

- The Master of Arts in Coaching and Athletic Administration program continues to grow rapidly, offering both face-to-face and online versions of the program. As of spring 2010, 346 students are enrolled—the vast majority of them online.
- A revised core curriculum, approved in 2009 by the faculty, includes paired courses in philosophy/mathematics, biology/theology, and

history/literature, and is required of all incoming students during their first two years. Classes begin fall 2010.

- Enrollment grew to 2,564 in 2009 from 2,317 in 2006. Traditional undergraduates in 2009 numbered 1,253. The university also enrolled 1,311 graduate and adult students.
- Athletics:
 - The athletic department finished in the top five in the nation the last three years in the Directors Cup Competition: second in 2009, fifth in 2008, and third in 2007.
 - Women's volleyball finished in the final four in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009.
 - Men's soccer played in the NAIA championship game in 2007.
 - Men's basketball won the Golden State Athletic Conference (GSAC) championship and tournament in 2008.
 - NAIA national quarterfinal finishers for spring also included men's basketball (sixth appearance in past seven years) and men's tennis, making their first appearance at the national tournament.
- The Second Degree Accelerated BSN program, which began in August of 2008, was granted full accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education in October 2009. As of spring 2010, 48 students have graduated from the program.
- A forensics program was initiated in the fall 2007. The 2009–10 squad includes 13 students, 8 of whom competed in the national championships.
- Concordia initiated the "Faithfulness and Excellence" program, a year-long seminar that provides education to new faculty and staff by addressing the following questions: _ "What does it mean to work at a Lutheran institution?" "How does my understanding of vocation affect my work at Concordia?" "What does excellent teaching/leadership look like?"
- *The Foolish Proposal*, written and directed by Professor Lori Siekmann, was one of 10 college plays from the southwest US selected for the Region 8 festival of the Kennedy Center/American College Theater Festival in February 2010.
- Since 2007, music ensembles have toured to 14 states and five foreign countries (Italy, Austria, Hungary, Germany, Canada), performing for over 45,000 people. CUI currently fields 21 music ensembles, ranging from the Concordia Choir, the Concordia Wind Orchestra, and Concert Handbells to the Jazz Combo and four contemporary worship bands.
- Attendance at annual Faith and Business Forums average 1,000 per event. Speakers have included Hugh Hewitt, John Maxwell, and Ken Blanchard.
- Faculty approved an 18-week "Around the World Semester" for fall 2010, during which two faculty members will lead 24 students on a study tour of all six inhabited continents, earning a full semester of course credit and engaging in short-term mission activities.
- Since 2007, CUI has organized seven mission trips to South Africa; China; Hungary; Biloxi, Mississippi; Mexico; Costa Rica; and Israel. In summer 2010, the Concordia Choir tours Italy, Concordia handbell choirs travel to Hungary and Austria, and a faculty-led group of students travels to India.

Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, WI—Patrick Ferry, President

- In 2008, the administration announced plans to establish a School of Pharmacy, only the second school in Wisconsin to offer a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. The focus of the pharmacy school, which should be built on campus in time for the 2011–2012 academic

year, will be to prepare pharmacists as practitioners for rural and urban Wisconsin.

- A state-of-the-art, \$22 million residence hall was completed in time for the 2008 spring semester. Coburg Residence Hall features balconies on the third and fifth floors and houses over 350 students during the school year. It also played “home” to the National Football League’s St. Louis Rams for their 2008 summer training camp.
- A 25-year upward enrollment spiral continues, as 7,178 students were enrolled at our main and satellite campuses at the beginning of the 2009–10 academic year.
- Ground was broken in July 2009 for the \$3.5 million Concordia Center for Environmental Stewardship, which will afford both graduate and undergraduate students the opportunity to study aquatic life along the recently renovated, half-mile Lake Michigan shoreline.
- Hall of fame baseball slugger Henry Aaron delivered an inspiring commencement address to a packed field-house audience at the May 2008 commencement.
- A Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree was added to the curriculum in fall 2008, with 16 students receiving their diplomas last December. CUW is the only Wisconsin college/university offering a DNP degree.
- Pro-Grass synthetic turf was installed on the football, soccer, and softball fields during summer 2007, which played a big role in attracting the St. Louis Rams’ training camp the following summer. Men’s and women’s lacrosse are the latest sports being offered, starting this coming fall.
- The University introduced a new logo and tagline in 2009, “Inspiration in Action,” following a comprehensive research study that solicited opinions and perceptions of both internal and external constituents, along with months of meetings with cross-department committees and students. In addition to the cross on the logo are the waters of Lake Michigan and the rays of the sun on the horizon; the tagline brings to life our mission and vision.
- Dr. Patrick T. Ferry, President, authored his first book, *Faith in the Freshman: A Story of Hopes and Hoops* in 2009. The memoir details his own freshman college experience and his son’s desire as a college freshman to play Division I basketball while battling diabetes.
- Concordia’s Lakeshore Environmental Enhancement and Education Project was one of five finalists in the 2010 Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement (OCEA) competition. The annual award recognizes the project that best illustrates superior civil engineering skills. Other finalists included the Sutong Bridge in Nantong City, Jiangsu Province, China, and the Sound Transit Central Link Light Rail in Seattle, Washington.
- A new Welcome Center was added to the south campus entrance, along with a new west side entrance. Expansive landscaping and classroom renovation has taken place on the 200-acre campus during the past two years.

Concordia University, Portland, OR—Charles Schlimpert, President

- The university entered a partnership with the LCMS Northwest District to design and implement the Center for Applied Lutheran Leadership (CALL), aimed at bringing the Christian faith and its Lutheran expression to bear on regional opportunities.
- In only the third year of the program, Concordia University Portland nursing graduates rank among the highest in the state of Oregon on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX).

- The Board of Regents approved a law school program as a branch campus in Boise, ID, to open in fall 2011. Judge Cathy Silak, former supreme court justice for the state of Idaho, was chosen as the school’s inaugural dean.
- Record enrollment for each of the past five years culminated in over 1,900 students in the fall semester of 2009.
- In July 2009, the university opened the George R. White Library & Learning Center. The 74,000 sq. ft. center is the hub of the campus, with expanded library resources, classrooms, faculty offices, community meeting spaces, important centers of learning, and a coffee house.
- Concordia Place Apartments, a modern residence hall, was completed in August 2009. The 50,000-sq.-ft. building features 43 apartment-style units with kitchens and bathrooms. Common spaces, bike storage, on-site parking, and other amenities make the new residence hall a comfortable place to live and learn.
- Concordia University’s state-of-the-art Throw Center (track and field throwing events) is utilized by Olympic and Concordia student athletes for training. Inspired by Concordia’s throws coach, Olympic gold medalist Mac Wilkins, the facility is one-of-a-kind in the U.S. and engages youth from around the region as part of Concordia’s ongoing commitment to the community.
- In February 2009, Concordia University was named to the U.S. President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to America’s communities. On average, Concordia University faculty, staff, and students contribute more than 250,000 hours of practicum, internship, and service learning hours per year, serving over 10,000 community members, 5,000 of whom are youth.
- “Concordia University is at the head of the class for community engagement. Concordia connects campus and community like no other. It’s a place where students serve the community and, in the process, become servant leaders” (Tom Potter, mayor, city of Portland, 2005–8). Concordia now partners actively with almost 40 church and community organizations.
- Concordia hosted a number of very special national and international guests for the benefit of the university, its students, and the surrounding communities. President Johnson-Sierlief (Liberia) was the first visiting head of state to appear in Oregon in 2008. Authors Greg Mortenson (*Three Cups of Tea, Stones to Schools*) and Mitch Albom (*Tuesdays with Morrie*) also spoke to standing-room audiences.

Concordia University Chicago, River Forest, IL—John F. Johnson, President

- Record-breaking enrollment each year of the past triennium culminated in a total enrollment of 5,049 students in fall 2009. The fall freshman enrollment was the largest in the history of the institution.
- Since 2006, 13 new master’s-level programs and 6 new doctoral programs have been launched. Examples of the new programs are an MA in educational technology; an MA in Sports Leadership; an MA in Religion (online program); an MBA in Not-for-Profit Management; and a PhD in Educational Leadership.
- A College of Business, offering both undergraduate and graduate degrees, was established in 2008. It becomes the fourth college comprising the university.
- The university received a seven-year unconditional reaffirmation of its accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities, the official accrediting body of the institution.

- The Service Learning Program received national recognition and was the recipient of the President's Higher Education Community Service Presidential Award.
- The University Seven-Year Strategic Plan continues to be reviewed and updated in light of significant growth in students, programs, and faculty.
- As the demand for degrees in health sciences remains strong, partnerships in nursing have been established with Rush University College of Nursing in Chicago and Valparaiso University.

Concordia University, St. Paul, MN—Robert Holst, President

- Supported by a 10-year, \$40 million grant from the Bush Foundation, Concordia University, which received a \$7 million grant for the 10-year period, is among 14 regional higher education institutions that have partnered on a broad-based initiative to transform teacher preparation programs in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.
- Concordia hosts the Science Research Institute (SRI), a year-long program partnering college STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) majors and urban high school students from under-represented populations for the purpose of increasing their knowledge, hands-on research skills, and interest level in pursuing STEM-related higher education and careers.
- Concordia revised its Religion and Theology General Education requirement. Students take the introductory course on the Bible and basic Christian teachings and then select from a range of intermediate level courses that will challenge them to apply the basics of biblical Christianity to contemporary issues.
- Concordia achieved an all-time enrollment high of 2,816 students for the fall of 2009, with the most significant growth in graduate programs (1,026 students). The university's increasingly diverse student body includes nearly 20 percent students of color.
- Concordia launched a number of new accelerated cohort-delivered degree programs: BA degrees in Food Retail Management, Pulmonary Science, Exercise Science, and Business Management; MA degrees in Strategic Communication Management and Leadership and Management; and an MBA with Health Care Management emphasis.
- Concordia was the first private school in Minnesota to be accepted as a Yellow Ribbon institution offering GI Bill benefits to military veterans. Concordia opened a staffed Veterans Resource Center to help veterans access their education benefits and to address their unique needs as veterans in their transition to academic life.
- To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Concordia University Alumni Association, the university will host an All-Class Reunion for its more than 15,000 alumni, Oct. 1–2, 2010.
- In December of 2009, the Concordia University volleyball team won its third consecutive NCAA Division II National Championship, making Concordia the only D2 school in NCAA history to win the championship three consecutive seasons.
- Concordia celebrated the completion of Sea Foam Stadium, its new football, soccer, and track and field facility. The 2,000-seat stadium features an inflatable dome that covers the field during the winter months, allowing the facility to be used year-round.
- Concordia seeks to help students from traditionally under-represented populations to achieve their academic potential through the BOLD (Building Opportunities for Leadership Development) scholarship program. BOLD Scholars are required to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress while participating in a variety of educational, extracurricular, and service activities to build leadership capacities.

- Concordia hosts the Hmong Culture and Language Program, a K–12 program focused on building bridges across cultures while preserving Hmong culture and language through storytelling, gardening, and the arts. The program seeks to increase K–12 student achievement and plant the seeds of higher education while offering opportunities for Concordia's pre-service teachers to have cross-cultural experiences prior to graduation.
- As part of an effort to enhance campus life and support retention efforts, Concordia opened an apartment-style student housing complex in fall 2008 that accommodates 300 students.
- In 2008, Concordia created the Community Action, Leadership and Learning (CALL) Center to engage and empower students to use their gifts and talents to serve and to lead others.

Concordia College, Selma AL—Tilahun Mendedo, President

- Dr. Tilahun Mendedo, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Mobile, Alabama, accepted the call to become the seventh president of Concordia College, Selma.
- The college's retention program, including The Man Center, The Women Center, and the Academic Boot Camp were initiated with funding from the Rupert Dunklau and Gainesville Community foundations, the U.S. Department of Education, and many Christian friends of the college.
- The CCS Soccer Team won the 2009 United States Collegiate Athletic Association (USCAA) championship.
- The CCS Women's Basketball team won the USCAA national championships for two consecutive years: 2007 and 2008.
- CCS was blessed to have the splendid services from Laborers for Christ during the summer of 2008. They refurbished the Lehman Center (old gymnasium) and provided training in basic construction techniques to 11 young men and one courageous young woman.
- The college celebrated its 85th anniversary in 2008 with campus events reaching over 1,000 faithful alumni and friends.
- An ROTC program was inaugurated on campus in fall 2009.
- The college enjoyed a 6 percent enrollment increase in the last two years.
- The college was awarded the distinction of "The Best Business in Selma" in 2009.

Concordia University Nebraska, Seward NE—Brian Friedrich, President

- The College of Arts and Sciences added programs in ecclesiastical art, pre-deaconess studies, arts administration, contemporary church music, environmental science, world and intercultural studies, gerontology, fitness studies, and sports studies, with emphases in sport management, sport communication, and sport coaching. Forensic science is now an emphasis for biology students, and agribusiness is a concentration option for business students.
- Concordia opened a new campus in Lincoln, Nebraska, to house the College of Graduate Studies and offer master's and degree-completion programs to an even wider audience. Concordia also started an MBA program in consortium with Concordia Wisconsin and a Master's-level gerontology program.
- Phase I (the arena and classroom wing) and Phase II (the field house) of the Health, Human Performance and Athletic Center were completed on time and under budget. The \$24 million addition to the campus offers classrooms, office space for professors and coaches, athletic training rooms, classroom labs, locker rooms, a weight room, VIP spaces, a 200-meter indoor track with multi-use interior space, and a 2,000-seat performance arena.

- The Music Center is now home to a 38-rank Casavant Frères organ with more than 2,000 pipes. The recital hall was renovated to house the new instrument and is also home to a Steinway grand piano.
- Enrollment has continued to climb, reaching the second highest total headcount in history at 1,717 in fall 2009; this includes a graduate college enrollment which has doubled in the last year.
- The seven-year *On A Mission* campaign was completed; it exceeded its \$60 million goal by more than 5 percent.
- Concordia Nebraska's spot in the *U.S. News & World Report* Best Colleges rankings continues to rise. CUNE is ranked number 16 in the Midwest baccalaureate category in the 2010 rankings, improving three spots in the past three years.
- Concordia Nebraska students topped the nation in its number of NAIA Scholar-Athletes in 2008–9, with 74. Concordia Nebraska also holds the highest number of NAIA Scholar-Athletes of all time, with 573.
- The University A Cappella Choir toured Spain, Austria, and Italy in June 2009 and was awarded fourth and fifth place finishes at the 46th International Competition of Choral Singing in Spittal on der Drau, Austria.
- The Center for Liturgical Art at Concordia Nebraska has continued to produce a myriad of furnishings for churches all over the country, using God's gifts of art and beauty to further share the truth of His salvation. The Center created an altar, baptismal font, and ambo for the LCMS chapel at its headquarters building in St. Louis, and produced thousands of brightly colored "Bibelots" for sharing the gospel in the U.S. and abroad.

Concordia University Education Network (CUEnet), Bend, OR—
Ray Halm, Senior Director

Major Achievements

- CUEnet completed construction on its new property, including a 4000-sq. ft. building with office space and a well-equipped studio as well as a small rental house. This property provides CUEnet with customized space within which to grow and work.
- Over 1,400 students have applied to the online colloquy program since the program's launch in 2001. To date, over 700 of those have completed the program. Synod offices, district offices, and CUEnet continue to work together to bring the colloquy program to more teachers throughout the nation.
- CUEnet continues to gather significant grants and donations for colloquy scholarships and collaborative projects. From 2007–10, over \$700,000 was raised through the generosity of individual donors and several foundations.
- CUEnet has improved its capabilities, its studio, and its equipment to high-definition recording.
- CUEnet is working in collaboration with a significant donor foundation and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, to produce a multi-media confirmation program for the LCMS. The confirmation program materials are being designed either to supplement a church's existing confirmation program or to stand alone as a confirmation curriculum.
- CUEnet has launched an online seminar program designed for teachers who are not eligible for the colloquy program but who can benefit from a fuller understanding of Lutheran doctrine and the mission of Lutheran schools. Consideration is currently being given to other possible audiences for additional seminar programs, including Sunday School teachers, elders, and other lay leaders within the church.

- CUEnet will be beta-testing a new program of online Bible study for adult laity. Based on the colloquy program and called *My Deeper Faith*, this program will provide in-depth theological courses asynchronously to anyone who desires it. Full launch of the program is anticipated within the next 12 months.

Board for University Education / Concordia University System
 Elmer Gooding, *Chairman*
 Kurt J. Krueger, *Executive Director/President*

R5-03

Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support

The Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support (CMGS) is fully supportive of and working toward the accomplishment of all three of the President's mission and ministry emphases. That which is most closely connected to its work, however, is the emphasis on renewal of the congregations of the LCMS. The commission's efforts are oriented toward the support and renewal of the church's ministers (ordained and commissioned), through whom God has chosen to "build up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11–12).

The Mission

The CMGS exists to

1. provide opportunity for the continuing education and vocational growth of the church's workers;
2. advocate and facilitate care and counsel for the church's workers to support them in the performance of their official duties; and
3. advocate and facilitate support for the personal well-being of the church's workers and their family members.

CMGS Purpose Statement

The CMGS helps the church's workers learn and grow, serve well, and be healthy, and advocates for the workers and their families.

CMGS Membership Changes

The following resigned their appointments to the commission during the course of the triennium:

Kim Marxhausen, Lincoln, NE

John Oberdeck, Milwaukee, WI*

Harvey Schmit, Canton, MI*

* Resignation from the commission was necessitated by a change in the *CMGS Policy Manual* (October 2008), which now prohibits participation at both the governance and operational levels. These men elected to continue their service to the commission through its Continuing Education Action Team.

Critical Targets and Goal Statements

In pursuit of its mission, the CMGS, in September 2009, adopted the following critical targets with accompanying goal statements:

1. **Relational Vitality**—As Christ's disciples in today's culture, church workers live in trust, respect, and love for one another.
2. **Vocational Transitions**—Church workers and their families are intentionally supported in vocational transitions.
3. **Wellness Promotion**—Church workers and their families are faithful stewards of their total health, emphasizing prevention and self-care, and are role models for wellness in their communities.
4. **Continuing Education for Church Workers**—With the support of and in partnership with the congregation, every professional church worker is developing a service and learning plan which will facilitate kingdom growth.

5. **Economic Vitality**—Church workers and their families are faithful stewards of their financial health, adequately compensated and with manageable debt and a personal financial plan for present needs, emergencies, and retirement.

In addition, the 2007 convention assigned two specific tasks to the commission:

1. “That the Council of Presidents, the Board for Pastoral Education, and the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support work together in developing strategies for implementing continuing education plans for pastors” (Res. 5-05, “To Encourage Commitment to Continuing Education for Clergy”); and
2. “That the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support be charged with developing model Synod guidelines for use in the Synod” (Res. 6-08: “To Encourage Congregations to Provide Professional Church Worker Sabbaticals”).

An understanding of the work of the commission directed toward these targets may be gained through the following notes.

The Governance Committee continues to function with its primary assignment the review of the *CMGS Policy Manual* and the provision of updates for consideration by the members of the commission, as necessary. The current manual was updated and approved at the September 2009 meeting of the commission.

A significant change in the commission’s pursuit of the targets was experienced as it evolved from a “working” commission into a “policy-based governance” approach. The official clarification came in a regular meeting on October 5, 2008, at which time the commission members also approved, by consensus, the understanding that members of the commission would no longer serve on action teams formed by the executive director for the purpose of accomplishing operational goals.

The commission members, in a regular meeting on May 19, 2009, accepted, by consensus, the recommendations from the LCMS CCM for revision of the *CMGS Policy Manual*.

Relational Vitality—At the outset of the triennium, a study was engaged to explore the linkage of spiritually healthy relationships between pastors and members to

1. spiritual vitality;
2. congregational participation;
3. unity of the body of Christ and member retention; and
4. biblical stewardship.

Four LCMS congregations participated in the study *Celebrating the Power of the Holy Spirit Moving in the Hearts of God’s People*, conducted by People Solution Strategies.

Responses were received from 438 participants, who completed a survey of 125 questions in the following categories:

1. Congregational Leadership
2. Pastor(s) Relationships
3. Your Faith and Learning about God
4. Worship Services
5. Planning for the Future
6. Your Commitment/Involvement in the Congregation
7. Your Community Service Focus
8. Faith/Walk Impact
9. General Questions of Your Commitment to the Congregation

The findings indicate that members engage in ministry activities, intentionally share their faith, are good stewards, and recommend their congregation to others when the fruit of the Spirit in pastors

is “very evident” and the pastors are “very good” in displaying the human relationship skills of

1. listening to what members have to say;
2. encouraging members;
3. treating members with respect;
4. being friendly and approachable;
5. smiling easily;
6. caring about members individually;
7. exercising humility;
8. greeting members by name; and
9. making eye contact when speaking with members.

For a complete summary of the study, contact the office of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, 314.996.1378, or cmgs@lcms.org.

The Antioch Project is another venture into the dynamics of Relational Vitality. Supported in part by funding from the CMGS, the pilot project, entitled “The Antioch Project,” was initiated in 2007 and conducted by Partners in Caring, an arm of Lutheran Family Services of NE, Inc. The project pursues the goal of equipping core leaders of congregations that frequently receive first-call pastors for their unique role in “pastoral formation.” Workshops were held in each of the first two years of the project, involving nearly 50 leaders representing 13 congregations. Results from evaluation instruments as well as from anecdotal information about the manner in which congregations and pastors made adjustments to each other indicate that this approach has been helpful.

Anticipated project outcomes:

- First-call pastors will have a nurturing environment in which to develop and improve their skills.
- Congregations receiving first-call pastors will gain understanding of the unique role they play in the development of first-call pastors.
- Congregations receiving first-call pastors will have a wider network of resources from which to draw.
- Congregations will build stronger partnerships with other congregations and district/Synod officials.
- The number of pastors leaving within the first 10 years of ministry will be reduced.

The efforts to date have been very successful. For a complete summary of the study, contact the office of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, 314.996.1378, or cmgs@lcms.org.

Vocational Transitions—Pursuit of this critical target of the commission is outlined below.

• The **Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS)** initiative is an intentional effort to help new pastors and their families transition from seminary life into life in the parish. The initiative is designed to provide educational opportunities as well as spiritual and emotional support in a “peer group” environment, led by experienced pastors.

The desired outcomes for the PALS initiative include the following:

- Foster and enhance the personal, spiritual, and professional formation of pastors.
- Help make a successful transition from seminary life to parish ministry for pastors and wives.
- Ease the sense of isolation that often accompanies the transition from seminary life to parish ministry for pastors and wives.

- Aid congregations in readily valuing and accepting their pastors.
- Extend first-call ministries by cultivating positive and joyful congregation-pastor relationships.
- Nourish the necessary skills for pastors to give positive and healthy leadership to their congregations.
- Encourage pastors and congregations to place value on continuous learning as an important and ongoing ingredient of pastoral ministry.

Since its beginning in 1998, more than a thousand newly placed pastors have participated in PALS. In the current program year (2009–10), 48 groups are meeting throughout the United States, with more than 300 participants. While the rate of participation was slightly up (72 percent) in the 2008–9 program year, the average rate of participation has typically hovered around 70 percent. These groups consist of three to twelve first-call pastors (within three years of graduation) who meet together on a regular basis, with an experienced pastor serving as the facilitator. Worship, Bible study, personal sharing, reflection on ministry and its context, and topic study comprise the bulk of the group's time together. The collegial bonds that form among the participants during their time together are very important in the transition from seminary to parish.

The importance of including pastors' wives in the PALS efforts has become increasingly obvious. Many benefits are reported to flow from the Bible and topical studies and especially from opportunities to process realities of the transition to parish life with other wives dealing with similar experiences.

Participants and spouses are overwhelmingly in favor of the concept. In a recent study of those who have completed the PALS experience, it was found that over two-thirds of participants and spouses think their participation was worthwhile, indicating that they would recommend participation to other seminary graduates. (John O'Hara, "Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support [PALS] Follow-Up Interviews" [2007]; see Appendix A). For a complete summary of the study and findings, contact the office of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, 314.996.1378, or cmgs@lcms.org.

The provision of funding for the PALS initiative is shared by the Synod, the districts, congregations receiving new graduates, and the first-call pastors themselves.

The following testimonial, shared by a participating pastor in Texas, reiterates in a "nutshell" the importance of this initiative: "PALS has been a great support for me and my family. I cannot express enough how necessary PALS is to a healthy life and ministry of any pastor. It has given me a healthy fellowship in which I can talk about the joys, frustrations, fears and excitements that are experienced in ministry. It also gives me opportunity to learn through the experiences that my peers are having as well as good theological discussion and guest speakers. I personally believe that PALS has made me a better pastor, a stronger Christian, and a greater servant of Christ for His people."

PALS Facilitators Who Served during Current Triennium but Are No Longer Serving

Philip Bruening	Mark Buchhop	Lewis Busch
Stephen Constien	Harvey Gerdes	Dale Johnston
Alvin Lange	Raymond Larson	Jeffrey Lee
Randy Maland	Daniel Meckes	Gerry Mohr
William Plath	Daniel Quiram	Robert Riggs
Timothy Rynearson	Brian Saunders	Daniel Schneider
Mark Schockey	Harlan Schoenrock	Stewart Schulz
Robert Spillman	Mark Whitsett	Ronald Young

PALS Facilitators Now Serving

Michael Awe	Randall Bard	Mark Barz
Gordon Besel	Keith Besel	Gordon Bohlman
Luther Brunette	Mark Demel	Arnold Frank
Kurt Gremel	David Groth	Edwin Harkey
Don Hefta	Bradley Heinecke	James Heining
William Hessler	Barry Hildebrandt	Peter Holm
Tim Jenks	Daniel Johnson	Tom Johnson
Ronald Jones	Dale Kern	Glen Keylon
Steven Lange	Stephen Koenig	Mark Leckband
Gerard LeFeber	Francis Lieb	William Marler
Mark Nebel	Peter Nickel	Charles Schmidt
Mark Schultz	Herbert Schumm	Chris Schwanz
Russell Senstad	Howard Shane	Steven Simon
Henry Simon	John Standley	Allen Steinbeck
Alan Struckmeyer	John Telloni	Mark Tewes
William Wilson		

A recent and welcome development is the use of the Internet for Web-based training, collegial support (for facilitators), and ease of access to meeting materials. This is a direction in which the PALS initiative will continue to develop, improving connections with the participating pastors and strengthening support for the wives facilitators.

• *Handbook for New Lutheran School Teachers*—This is the name of the CD and workbook which continues to be made available to our new-to-teaching teachers. Prepared by experienced teachers, these materials contain many helpful insights and ideas for our teachers during their first year in the profession. Offered through the CMGS to these new church professionals, the intention is to help them in the transition from student in the classroom to professional teacher and worker in the church. Thousands of copies of these materials have been distributed to new teachers over the past number of years. The manual is also available on the CMGS website: cmgs.lcms.org.

• The *Next Steps* initiative is a strategy for "connecting passion with mission" among retired and retiring ministers of the LCMS. The *Next Steps* Pilot Project—Indiana District, under the capable leadership of Rev. David V. Dubbelde, has been under way since October 2007. Interviews have been conducted with retired ministers, as well as congregational and institutional leadership, in pursuit of the goal to discover and facilitate "unique matches" between gifted passions and mission/ministry opportunities.

The number of, and information about, individuals who are able and willing to serve in various settings continues to grow, along with opportunities for them to be involved.

One of the significant goals of the Indiana District pilot project is to identify and standardize the necessary procedures and protocol for implementation on a broader scale throughout the Synod. This process will come to be extremely important as the LCMS moves toward a time of dramatically increased rates of ministers in, and eligible for, retirement.

The pilot has brought several unanticipated opportunities into focus. One of them, under review by the Pilot Advisory Committee, involves retired laypersons who are also interested in mission and ministry opportunities for the expression of *their* gifted passions.

For a complete summary of the work of the *Next Steps* Pilot Project—Indiana District, contact the office of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, 314.996.1378, or cmgs@lcms.org.

• *Ministry challenges* are always of interest to the commission in the pursuit of its critical targets. In May 2008, Dr. John O'Hara presented a special summary report to the CMGS, sharing the following insights into why LCMS pastors leave parish ministry (2002):

- Forty-two percent of these clergy said there was major conflict in the parish they left, primarily related to pastoral leadership style, changes in worship style, or finances.
- Six in ten respondents said they had a problem separating their private life from their ministerial role, or finding time for recreation, relaxation, or personal reflection.
- Institutional/interpersonal reasons caused more clergy to leave the congregation than did doctrinal issues, health issues, or financial issues.
- Half or more of the respondents often felt lonely and isolated in their work or agreed that the demands of the laity in their last congregation were unreasonable.

For a complete summary of the study, contact the office of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, 314.996.1378, or cmgs@lcms.org.

Responses to a question of the greatest challenge in ministry, gathered from professional church workers during the 2009 district conventions, overwhelmingly revolve around demands upon, utilization of, and management of time. Another recurring theme: Emotional stress and feelings of inadequacy.

A more recent survey (2009) of LCMS professional church workers, sponsored by the *What a Way!* initiative and conducted electronically, identified these challenges (in the following order; see Appendix B):

1. emotional drain
2. long hours
3. strain on family
4. low compensation/pay and benefits
5. antagonistic flock
6. staff conflict
7. educational debt

Wellness Promotion—This critical target of the commission is pursued in the dimensions as described below.

- The commission continues to participate with the Inter-Lutheran Coordinating Committee on Ministerial Health and Wellness (ILCCMHW). This committee is guided by the charter statement “To develop and promote health and wellness initiatives within and across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod that encourage well-being and vital faith for those preparing for and serving as rostered leaders and professional church workers, their spouses and families.”

Work of the committee through the triennium has resulted in the following:

1. Revision of the *Wellness Wheel* to include the component of “Financial Wellness.”
2. Development of a model for “Wellness Days.”
3. Comprehensive review of the literature related to congregational wellness.
4. A symposium of experts on various dimensions of clergy and congregational wellness from the two church bodies and a document to facilitate congregational wellness: *Healthy Congregations—Healthy Workers*. This document offers concrete markers for congregational well-being and tools for congregational self-assessment. All of the efforts are for the sake of strengthening and supporting ministers (ordained and commissioned) through the dynamics of healthy congregations.

For an updated version of the *Wellness Wheel* (with suggestions for its use), a model for congregational wellness days, a literature review of congregational wellness resources, and the resource *Healthy Congregations—Healthy Workers*, contact the office of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, 314.996.1378, or cmgs@lcms.org.

- The commission was honored to participate in the development of, and to direct grant support toward, *Responding to Sexual Temptation in a High-Tech Society*. This outstanding resource, provided by Ambassadors of Reconciliation, is an effective tool in the effort to reduce the impact of Internet pornography among our church workers and in the church.

- *Focus on the Workers of the Church* shared 72 topics of encouragement and support to busy church leaders throughout the triennium. The list of subscribers to this bi-weekly e-newsletter has grown to 4,914.

- The commission produced an *Electronic Catalogue of Wellness Resources* providing information on how to access more than 200 wellness resources available to professional church workers of the LCMS. This electronic catalogue can be found by selecting “wellness” on the resources menu of the CMGS Web site.

- “*Healthy Spirit—Healthy You*” was the theme of the CMGS emphasis on the core necessity of spiritual health in a pursuit of wellness. Materials were made available to each of the 35 LCMS districts so that the name of one minister (ordained or commissioned) might be drawn at each convention, the winner to receive a paid registration to the Prayer and Spirituality Retreat held at the Canyon of the Eagles, Burnett, Texas. As a result, 19 professional church workers received the paid registration certificate to the retreat, held October 5–7, 2009.

- Two Synod-wide Worker Wellness Conferences, attended by district presidents and district “Advocates for Ministerial Wellness,” provided

1. support for the efforts of ministerial growth and support in districts;
2. opportunity and encouragement for development and refinement of specific strategic targets in district “Worker Wellness” efforts;
3. interaction in small groups around “best practices”; and
4. information about resources to promote growth and nurture wellness among the professional church workers in their districts, including availability of grant funding.

Overall, 18 districts went on to host various wellness incentive activities. These activities were funded by Wellness Initiative Grants, with grant funding from LCMS World Relief and Human Care totaling \$84,825.

- The identification and training of the Critical Incident Support Team was an effort to prepare qualified LCMS individuals who could respond in the aftermath of a critical incident to provide professional church workers with an appropriate level of spiritual and personal care so that they might, in turn, maintain the capacity to reach out to members of their congregation and community.

Thirty-five individuals were nominated to serve in this capacity. Twenty-four of the nominees successfully completed the training, conducted in April 2008. Unfortunately, deployment of this trained and competent team has not developed as had been anticipated. In May 2009, the members of the support team were encouraged to participate with the Disaster Response Team of LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

- The CMGS is participating in the effort to raise awareness and prevent domestic violence and child abuse in congregational

environments. Leadership of this effort is provided through a task force of the LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

- The commission is participating with the Health and Wellness Advisory Council, formulated by Concordia Plan Services, with the intention to identify current dimensions of wellness within the LCMS culture and discover strategies to move our culture toward improving wellness. As a part of that effort, the week of May 16–22 was identified in the LCMS as Ministerial Wellness Week, and May 19 was specifically observed as LCMS health and fitness day.

- “A Healthy Lifestyle” is the name of a project from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, in which the commission participated under direction of staff members Al Wingfield and Timothy Puls. A DVD containing encouragement from Synod leaders was sent to all LCMS congregations, along with other material supportive of healthy lifestyle thinking and behaviors.

- Materials for the observance of October as Clergy Appreciation Month were developed by the commission in 2008 and 2009 and sent to congregations. The Synod has officially identified October 2010 as Clergy Appreciation Month, and the CMGS will again be encouraging its use as an opportunity to praise God specifically for the blessing of pastors and for expressing words and actions of appreciation to our pastors for their ministry.

- The commission pursues the target of Wellness Promotion through participation with the *What a Way!* initiative. This effort is motivated by the conviction that the LCMS must undertake fervent efforts to identify, inform, and encourage appropriate candidates to serve as ordained and commissioned ministers of religion, and must implement strategies through which ordained and commissioned ministers might be effectively retained in their service.

Continuing Education for Church Workers—The pursuit of this critical target is described below.

- The commission’s Continuing Education Action Team (CEAT) has engaged in efforts to shift understanding of continuing education from a burden of fulfillment to an expectation of opportunity. The effort seeks to also engage congregational leaders in the shift of thinking and to encourage their supportive participation in the process of lifelong learning for workers.

A survey was conducted in January 2009 to discover what the lay leaders of LCMS congregations feel would be beneficial in the area of continuing education for the professional church workers serving them. Responses from lay leaders around the Synod overwhelmingly identified three categories above all others, in the following order:

1. Growth in strategies for outreach and evangelism
2. Growth in strategies for leadership
3. Growth in dynamics of relational vitality

A fourth category, not far behind, was identified as “growth in the strategies for equipping the saints.”

At the time of this writing, an electronic survey is in the final stages of preparation to discover what LCMS pastors are currently pursuing in terms of “lifelong learning.”

Members of CEAT have been participating in the efforts of a larger group gathered to promote continuing education among pastors, work assigned by the Synod in convention (2007 Res. 5-05: “To Encourage Commitment to Continuing Education for Clergy”). An overture growing out of this work is submitted by the CMGS for consideration by the 2010 convention.

- In pursuit of work assigned to the commission by the Synod in convention (2007 Res. 6-08: “To Encourage Congregations to Provide

Professional Church Worker Sabbaticals”), CEAT has studied some of the very fine guidelines already adopted by several of the districts in the Synod and is offering a guideline for consideration on a broader scale. (See Appendix C.)

Economic Vitality—This critical target of the Commission is pursued as outlined below.

Several tools for use by professional church workers that are geared toward sharing insight into basic concepts of financial management were made available electronically at the CMGS Web site. Among them are the *Consumer Purchase Payment Calculator*, the *Debt-to-Income Analysis* tool, and the *Financial Planning Toolkit*.

- The Economic Vitality Action Team also successfully accomplished the placement of the six-session video *The Good Sense Budgeting Course* on the LCMS e-learning Web site for access by church workers without fee, and it also provided curriculum materials regarding financial literacy for the seminaries to use in orientation of new students.

- In an effort to more fully explore financial resources for professional church workers, more than 800 invitations were sent to the homes of LCMS ministers (ordained and commissioned) living in the St. Louis metropolitan area. This pilot project was intended to discover the level of receptivity to, and the effectiveness of, Thrivent’s Financial Fitness Club.

More than 20 participants engaged in the pilot. Evaluations were mixed but generally supported the intention of the CMGS to encourage similar efforts.

- The Economic Vitality Action Team (EVAT) has developed two major projects in the desire to help professional church workers with financial issues. One of the projects is related to financial education and raising the level of financial literacy among church workers. The other project is related to the systemic realities of congregational financial health and the impact it has on the workers serving in those congregations. The challenge now is to find the resources to launch into these very important projects.

For a detailed summary of the project plans for financial education and congregational financial health, contact the office of the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, 314.996.1378, or cmgs@lcms.org.

Looking to the Future—At the time of this writing, it is difficult to know with any clarity what the future holds for the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support. One thing seems to be quite evident. There is significant value in providing the support and nourishment for the ministers of our church (ordained and commissioned) to flourish. It is through these workers that Jesus has determined to “equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we attain the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God” (Eph. 4:12–13 ESV).

In that regard, there is much work to be done. The work is in the areas of the critical targets identified at the beginning of this report. Whether that work is accomplished by the commission as it has been constituted or in another format, it will still be important for our workers to receive the support which will enable ministers to flourish in the ministry to which we have been called.

Soli Deo Gloria

David A. Muench, *Executive Director*

Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support
Lcms Convention 2010

Highlights

Significant accomplishments of the triennium:

- 1. Collaboration with numerous other agencies and departments pursuing the LCMS mission
- 2. The strengthening and “refreshment” of Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS)
- 3. The *Next Steps* Pilot Project: Connecting gifted passion of retired workers to mission/ministry
- 4. *Healthy Congregations—Healthy Workers*: Concrete markers for congregational well-being
- 5. *Focus on the Workers of the Church*: The bi-weekly e-newsletter of encouragement to busy leaders
- 6. The Worker Wellness Conference and ensuing Wellness Initiatives in the districts
- 7. Development and distribution of the Clergy Appreciation Month materials
- 8. *Healthy Spirit—Healthy You*: The promotion of growth in the dimensions of prayer and spirituality
- 9. The development and provision of materials for improving “economic vitality” among workers

Goals for the future:

- 1. Continue to develop the dynamics of improving relational vitality in all dimensions of ministers’ lives
- 2. Continue to sharpen our ability to learn of, and respond to, current and future needs of ministers
- 3. Continue to discover ways in which the values of lifelong learning will be embraced by ministers
- 4. Develop and deliver more widely the dynamics of helping ministers to transition through various stages of ministry
- 5. Continue to be a positive influence in the LCMS culture regarding ministerial wellness
- 6. Discover and develop a system in which ministers can identify and trust in relationships of confidentiality and safety among colleagues

Appendix A
Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS)
Follow-Up Interviews (2007)

Executive Summary

The Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS) program is designed to ease the transition from seminary to parish ministry. The PALS Follow-Up Interviews project was designed as one avenue to assess how well the program is serving the 2000–2003 graduating classes. The key findings are highlighted below.

- 1. Both PALS participants and nonparticipants report similarly high levels of satisfaction with their professional and private lives. They are similar in that respect with a national sample of clergy interviewed for the Pulpit and Pew project in 2001.
- 2. Twenty percent or more of both PALS participants and nonparticipants were dissatisfied with “opportunities for continuing theological education” and “support from (my) district official.”
- 3. Two problem areas which perennially surface in surveys of professional church workers arose in these interviews: separating one’s private life from one’s ministerial role, and finding time for relaxation or personal reflection.

- 4. Dealing with the stress caused by the challenges of congregational ministry was a problem for one-third or more of our interviewees.
- 5. The top three “most helpful” aspects of PALS, according to participants were (1) the fellowship with other pastors, (2) having a “sounding board” for their experiences in the parish, and (3) the support of a “mentor” (usually the facilitator).
- 6. Nine out of ten PALS participants who completed the program said PALS had a “positive” effect on their transition to the parish.
- 7. Nearly half of those who left PALS early gave a structural reason for dropping out (e.g., took a call to a congregation not close to a PALS group, had scheduling issues, PALS group disbanded).
- 8. One thing participants would change about PALS would be to make it more convenient to meet, either by better scheduling or by cutting the distance to sessions. The other change would be better meeting content.
- 9. Future planning and facilitator training should focus on the key value of PALS to participants: open sharing and support among participants who are ably facilitated by experienced pastors.

Dr. John P. O’Hara, Senior Research Analyst,
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Research Services Department,
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December 2007

Appendix B

What Are the Greatest Challenges You Face as a Church Worker?

Identified challenge	% of workers identifying as the greatest challenge
• Emotional drain	21.34
• Long hours	20.95
• Strain on family	17.19
• Low compensation/pay and benefits	15.61
• Antagonistic “flock”	7.71
• Lack of ecclesiastical leadership	7.71
District/Synod	
• Staff conflict	5.34
• Education debt	4.15

The *What a Way!* initiative e-mail survey of LCMS professional church workers, December 30, 2009, by Divine Marketing Solutions.

Appendix C
Sabbatical Guidelines

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in convention (2007) gave to the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support (CMGS) the assignment to prepare guidelines for sabbaticals for use by congregations and professional church workers. The Continuing Education Action Team (CEAT) of the CMGS offers the following guidelines as one part of an overall continuing education strategy for congregations and their workers.

Introduction

“A sabbatical is a time to receive, to be nurtured, and to reflect on one’s relationship with God so that one may be renewed, refreshed, and revitalized for a life of service to others” (2007 Res. 6-08). Sabbatical leaves provide time for professional church workers to gain perspective and focus for ministry. The benefits of a sabbatical leave belong to the church workers and their families through renewed commitment and to the congregations who receive them back, energized for ministry.

In order that these guidelines might have broad applicability, they are brief. They touch on foundational issues of eligibility, length, arrangements, and finances. Resources that provide greater detail for specific contexts are referenced at the conclusion.

I. Eligibility

Professional church workers are eligible for sabbatical leaves after serving in ministry full time for a period of seven years. Thereafter, they are eligible after every five years of service.

II. Length

Three consecutive months following seven years of service constitutes a sabbatical leave. Second, and ensuing sabbatical leaves, would occur every five years of service thereafter, although other arrangements may be deemed more appropriate (e.g., six weeks sabbatical leave after three years).

III. Arrangements

A. Before the sabbatical leave begins:

1. Twelve months prior to the beginning of the sabbatical, the professional church worker submits a Sabbatical Leave Proposal to the appropriate governing body of the congregation for input and mutual planning. The proposal includes the following:
 - a. Time, length, and purpose for the sabbatical leave
 - b. Suggestions for professional service replacement during the sabbatical leave
 - c. Timetables and applications for outside support funding through grants and scholarships (e.g., Lilly, Wheat Ridge)
 - d. Desired outcomes for both congregation and the church worker
2. After review of the proposal with the leadership of the congregation, the sabbatical leave proposal is submitted to the congregation for approval and action. The plan is approved by the congregation with the full understanding that
 - a. the sabbatical leave is not counted as vacation time and
 - b. all emergencies are to be handled through appropriate substitutes.
3. Upon approval, the district president and circuit counselor are informed that a sabbatical leave has been approved and ministry functions accounted for.

B. During the sabbatical leave:

1. A complete break from all professional duties and parish responsibilities is in effect for the worker during the sabbatical leave.
2. The worker tracks progress toward the desired outcomes of the sabbatical leave.
3. The members of the congregation work together in cooperation with the professional replacement(s) to maintain and enhance the mission and ministry of the church.

C. After the sabbatical leave:

1. Within three months of the conclusion of the sabbatical leave, the professional church worker offers a report and evaluation to the congregation on the impact of the sabbatical leave.
2. Leadership within the congregation shares what they also have learned through the sabbatical leave.
3. Ordinarily, the professional church worker continues to serve the congregation for a minimum of one year following a sabbatical leave.

IV. Finances

- A. Prior establishment of a sabbatical fund by the congregation may help to offset the costs of the sabbatical leave.
- B. Sabbatical fund monies shall be distributed according to the sabbatical leave proposal agreed upon by the congregation and worker. For example, approximately one-fourth to one-third of the funds could be used to provide professional service replacement and three-fourths to two-thirds used to reimburse applicable sabbatical expenses incurred by the professional church worker.
- C. Sabbatical leave expenses are part of the worker's professional, spiritual, and business life, and therefore are business expenses to be reimbursed when proper documentation is provided by the worker on sabbatical leave.
- D. Other funding sources: Attempts should be made by the professional church worker to secure outside funding for the sabbatical leave. Any monies secured by outside funding should be used to offset the cost of the sabbatical, thereby reducing the financial burden on the congregation.
- E. Salary, housing, and benefits continue during the sabbatical leave.

Resources

Documents detailing guidelines with further suggestions and a bibliography can be obtained from the following districts:

Florida-Georgia
Michigan
South Wisconsin

These documents may also be accessed at <http://cmgs.lcms.org>.

Further reference:

The Alban Institute
2121 Cooperative Way, Suite 100
Herndon, VA 20170

Sabbatical granting organizations:

Lilly Sabbatical Grants: "Clergy Renewal Grants"
www.clergyrenewal.org
Wheat Ridge Sabbatical Grants
www.wheatridge.org/sabbaticalgrants

R5-04

Report of the Res. 5-02 Task Force

Executive Summary

In meeting its responsibilities assigned by the 2007 convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), the Res. 5-02 Task Force:

- 1) Gained an understanding of the number of deacons serving in the Synod, the types of service they are offering, and the contexts in which they are serving.
- 2) Recommends that district deacon instructional programs should continue in order to address four specific needs in the Synod.
- 3) Recommends that a thorough study of *deacon* be provided to the Synod by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations.
- 4) Affirms the historic practice of the Lutheran church that those who provide Word and Sacrament ministry should be "rightly called" (*rite vocatus*) and understands *rite vocatus* to include: (1) instruction/examination; (2) divine call; and (3) ordination.
- 5) Concludes that men who desire to serve in Word and Sacrament ministry should be encouraged to enroll in one of the pastoral formation programs offered by the Synod's seminaries, including the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program.

- 6) Recommends a procedure whereby exceptional cases may be recognized by the Council of Presidents so that Word and Sacrament ministry might be provided in challenging contexts by men who are not called and ordained.
- 7) Recommends a process through which deacons currently serving in Word and Sacrament ministry and those who will serve as exceptional lay providers of Word and Sacrament ministry might become called and ordained as assisting pastors, without seminary formation.
- 8) Recommends a process to address the fiscal barriers some face in accessing the SMP program.
- 9) Stipulates that most of its recommendations should not be implemented until six months after the conclusion of the next LCMS convention (2013 or 2014).

I. Background Information

The 2007 LCMS convention passed Res. 5-02, “To Address Licensed Lay Deacons.” The resolution stipulated that the following actions occur:

Resolved, That the Board for Pastoral Education and the Council of Presidents be requested to study the situations currently served by licensed lay deacons to determine whether there continues to be a genuine need for this program within the Synod and to present a report with recommendations to the 2010 convention of the Synod.

A. Task Force Composition

The Board for Pastoral Education (BPE) and the Council of Presidents (COP) assigned the following members to serve on a Res. 5-02 Task Force and provide the results requested in the resolution:

BPE:

- 1) Rev. Steven Briel, pastor
- 2) Rev. Thomas Krause, pastor (now retired)
- 3) Dr. Glen Thomas (chair), executive director, BPE

COP:

- 1) Rev. Ken Lampe, president, Mid-South District
- 2) Rev. John Wille, president, South Wisconsin District

The original group of five members intentionally expanded the membership of the group in order to add a rich diversity of knowledge, experience, and perspective to the group. The following members were added to the task force:

- 1) Dr. Charles Arand, professor, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis
- 2) Dr. Robert Hartwell, pastor, The Village Lutheran Church, Bronxville, NY; Registrar for Region 2, Bronxville Campus, Atlantic District Deacon Training Program
- 3) Steven Henderson, director, LAP Program, Northwest District (replaced following his death in 2009 by Mr. David Schilling, deacon, Crown of Life Lutheran Church, Rigby, ID)
- 4) Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, executive director, LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations
- 5) Dr. Cameron MacKenzie, professor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne
- 6) Mr. Donal “Lucky” Pugh, deacon, Zion Lutheran Church, Holyoke, CO
- 7) Mr. William Storm, deacon, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Flint, MI

B. Task Force Activity

The members of the task force identified three distinct actions that were prescribed in Res. 5-02:

- 1) Study current situations involving licensed lay deacons.
- 2) Determine if a need exists for licensed lay deacon programs

to continue.

- 3) Provide a report with recommendations to the 2010 LCMS convention.

The task force determined that it should develop an understanding of how many lay deacons are functioning in the LCMS and an understanding of the types of service they are offering, particularly as their service involves Word and Sacrament ministry. A survey of the entire COP was determined to be the most effective manner to obtain this data. This survey was conducted on August 28, 2008, and one of the questions in the survey was:

Does your district contain an official functioning program which forms men to serve as licensed lay deacons (non-ordained, practicing Word and Sacrament ministry)?

Twelve district presidents answered yes to this question. One district president indicated that there was not a program of this type in his district, but one was in the formation process because there was a need for it. Four district presidents indicated that a program of this type had existed in their districts, but had been discontinued.

In determining the number of deacons offering different types of Word and Sacrament-related service, it became clear that greater clarity was needed in the terminology utilized. Some deacons were part-time and others were full-time. Some were working under close pastoral supervision, and others were working with complete autonomy. Some were licensed for Word and Sacrament ministry, and others were licensed for neither.

In response to this need for greater clarity, the task force surveyed the entire COP again on February 2, 2009, this time asking them to identify how many deacons were serving in very specific categories of service. The following table contains both the descriptions of the categories and the number of deacons functioning in the LCMS in each of the categories at that time:

Description of Service Offered	Number in LCMS
1) Functioning nearly or completely autonomously in providing preaching and Sacrament ministry, with only occasional communication with a supervising pastor	60
2) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as the regular provider of preaching and Sacrament ministry	81
3) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as the regular provider of preaching (not Sacraments) ministry	13
4) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as a part-time provider of preaching and Sacrament ministry	90
5) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as a part-time provider of preaching (not Sacraments)	71
6) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as the primary provider of non-preaching, non-sacramental care (e.g., Bible studies, devotions, visitation, youth ministry, etc.)	24
7) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as a part-time provider of non-preaching, non-sacramental care (e.g., Bible studies, devotions, visitation, youth ministry, etc.)	196
TOTAL	540

The task force did not engage in case studies, site visits, or other micro-study methodologies. Instead, it relied upon task force members who were active lay deacons or serving in administrative capacities for district deacon programs to provide accurate contextual information concerning the service of lay deacons in the Synod. They provided this valuable perspective, noting especially small groups of Lutherans, unable to support a pastor on their own, and/or worshipping in remote geographic areas in which no pastor is willing or able to provide Word and Sacrament ministry.

C. Task Force Theological Framework

The task force worked with the understanding that the Office of the Keys was given by Christ to His Church on earth. As such, the Church has both the gift and the privilege of preaching the Word of God and administering His Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. To do so, God calls men through the local congregation who exercise this gift and privilege in the midst of the local congregation.

The task force also affirms that ordination, while not existing in the Church as a *iure divino* (divinely mandated) requirement for preaching the Word and the administering the Sacraments, is nonetheless in keeping with the historic practice of the Lutheran church and that of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. As Walther states in Thesis VI of his *Theses on Ministry*:

The ministry of preaching is conferred by God through the congregation, as holder of all church power, or of the keys, and by its call, as prescribed by God. The ordination of those called, with the laying on of hands, is not by divine institution but is an apostolic church ordinance and merely a public, solemn confirmation of the call (C.F.W. Walther, *Theses on Ministry*, as quoted in *The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature*, [St. Louis: Commission on Theology and Church Relations, 1981]), Appendix.

The following quote from Walther reaffirms and summarizes this position well:

Indeed, neither the examination administered by a duly appointed extra-congregational commission and to which a candidate called to the pastoral office submits himself and which he passes, nor the ordaining he likewise receives from duly appointed persons outside the congregation, make the vocation valid; however, both procedures belong to the most salutary arrangements of the church and have particularly in the case of the latter, among other purposes the weighty one of publicly certifying the vocation as one recognized by the whole church as legitimate and divine (*rechtmässig und göttlich*). Anyone, therefore, who, except in the case of necessity, omits one or the other, acts schismatically and lets it be known that he belongs to those who “having itching ears ... accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own liking”, 2 Tim. 4:3.) (C.F.W. Walther, *Pastoral Theology* 1877 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House) 62, as quoted by George F. Wollenburg, *Church and Ministry*, [online, <http://pages.prodigy.net/cnehrenz/textwollburg.html>]).

More than 300 years before Walther, the Lutheran reformers expressed the understanding that all who would publicly preach the Word and administer the Sacraments should be “rightly called” (*rite vocatus*) in the Augsburg Confession (AC). Article XIV of the AC states that, “Concerning church order, they teach that no one should teach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments unless properly called” (*Book of Concord*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000] p. 47).

The task force sought the meaning of the term *rite vocatus*, as it was understood by the reformers. The task force was instructed that the reformers understood *rite vocatus* to include the following three components:

- 1) Instructed/Examined. Since the Scriptures describe in some detail the characteristics of those who aspire to the office of the ministry, the church has to have a process for developing these characteristics in prospective candidates and then for assessing them before a man is placed into the office.
- 2) Called. Although every Christian has the responsibility of witnessing to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, men do not place themselves into the public ministry. This is the responsibility of the church. In particular, congregations are responsible for maintaining the office of pastor in their midst.
- 3) Ordained. Although the LCMS has never held that ordination determines whether a ministry is valid or not, it has along with other Lutherans since the days of the Reformation maintained this apostolic custom as a way for the church as a whole

to publicly certify the call in a particular case and to mark the entrance of a man into the Office of the Public Ministry.

At the same time, the task force affirms that the reformers understood that the manner in which these three basic features of *rite vocatus* were accomplished was a matter of judgment and prudence. Although history has a great deal to say about how the church has carried them out in the past, tradition is not binding. The church is free to respond to varying times and circumstances with innovative methods as it sees fit.

One example of the flexibility the church has with respect to the ways in which these three features of *rite vocatus* are exercised is evident in the current LCMS bylaw opportunity for laymen who have had primary responsibility for Word and Sacrament ministry in a congregation of the LCMS for at least 10 years to be examined by the LCMS Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry, and, assuming a positive examination result, to be recommended as eligible to receive a call as a pastor and be ordained. The current LCMS bylaw allows the colloquy committee to interview and recommend for call and ordination the following individuals:

In exceptional cases, laymen who have carried out the full responsibilities of the pastoral ministry for at least 10 years, who are currently licensed for such ministry by a district president, and who have been recommended by a congregation holding membership in the Synod on the basis of that congregation's observation and experience, and with the stated assurance that such congregation will extend a divine call asking the recommended individual to serve as their pastor; (Bylaw 3.8.2.4.2 [a] [2]; 2007 Handbook, p. 124).

With this theological and historical perspective in mind, the task force returned to its table of eight distinctive descriptions of service being rendered by lay deacons and agreed upon the categories of service that should ordinarily be offered by one who is called and ordained (designated by a Y in the table below) and those categories that did not require one who is called and ordained (designated by a N in the table below).

Description of Service Offered	Ordained	Number in LCMS
1) Functioning nearly or completely autonomously in providing preaching and Sacrament ministry, with only occasional communication with a supervising pastor	Y	60
2) Functioning nearly or completely autonomously in providing preaching ministry (no Sacraments), with only occasional communication with a supervising pastor	Y	5
3) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as the regular provider of preaching and Sacrament ministry	Y	81
4) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as the regular provider of preaching (not Sacraments) ministry	Y	13
5) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as a part-time provider of preaching and Sacrament ministry	Y	90
6) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as a part-time provider of preaching (not Sacraments)	N	71
7) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as the primary provider of non-preaching, non-sacramental care (e.g., Bible studies, devotions, visitation, youth ministry, etc.)	N	24
8) Functioning under direct supervision, and serving as a part-time provider of non-preaching, non-sacramental care (e.g., Bible studies, devotions, visitation, youth ministry, etc.)	N	196

It should be noted that the task force struggled with category 6 above, particularly in drawing a distinction between it and category 5 when it comes to the person being called and ordained. The distinction was a recognition of the pastoral care involved in administering the Sacrament of the Altar.

The task force acknowledges that the binding and loosing of sins is not listed as a separate activity in the table above. This aspect of the Office of the Keys is understood by the task force to be associated primarily with the Lord's Supper. The task force suggests that its recommendations for ordination in connection with administration of the Lord's Supper also be applied to the binding and loosing of sins.

D. Task Force Observations

The task force realizes that the need for Word and Sacrament ministry in challenging situations and the qualifications of those who should provide this Word and Sacrament ministry publicly on a regular basis are issues that the LCMS has addressed previously. One might ask, "What is different now compared to the previous attempts to address the issue?" One significant difference occurred at the 2007 LCMS convention when the SMP program was approved. Now the LCMS had a distance-education program to prepare a new category of clergy who would be supervised throughout their preparation and service, and would provide Word and Sacrament ministry as called and ordained pastors who have been prepared by the seminaries of the LCMS.

With its first students enrolled in the fall of 2008, the SMP program is relatively new. Yet the initial report to the Synod (available online at www.lcms.org/pastoraleducation) contains a positive initial evaluation of the program by the students and supervising pastors who participated in its first year. By the time the 2010 LCMS convention begins, nearly 100 students will be enrolled in the program, a commendable number for this relatively new program.

Yet, the task force heard repeatedly that while the SMP program appears to be working very well, the cost of the program (\$1,250 or more per course) and the adaptability of the program (e.g., allowing workers to be formed in advance of serving in a particular ministry site) are obstacles that have prevented SMP from meeting the needs of the church as fully as it might. Deacons who are retired from a former vocation and are serving small groups of people (ca. 20–25) in remote geographic areas where no ordained pastor is able or willing to provide Word and Sacrament ministry are particularly challenged by the economics of SMP program participation. The task force also heard that many bi-vocational workers wish to be formed in advance for service in a challenging ministry context and then would make themselves available as needs would arise. While district deacon programs allow for the possibility of formation in advance of a challenging ministry site being identified, the SMP program does not. These issues, cost and adaptability, are two particular issues that the task force would encourage the SMP Committee to address as it seeks to improve and refine the SMP program and allow it to serve the needs of the church more effectively in the future.

Challenging circumstances such as those noted above moved the task force to make provisions for "exceptional cases" in its recommendations. At the same time, the task force attempted to provide a procedure whereby these exceptions could be defined and confirmed in a consistent way across the Synod, fostering trust in the way that the Synod is walking together when it comes to providing Word and Sacrament ministry in challenging contexts.

An appreciation of the challenging ministry contexts referenced above led the task force to conclude that district deacon programs are needed in the Synod. These programs provide numerous blessings to

the church, including the ability to form workers to provide category 1-5 Word and Sacrament ministry in the exceptional, challenging circumstances referenced above.

In its desire to balance two significant concerns, the task force understood that it should not recommend any measures that would deprive people of God's life-giving, life-sustaining Word and Sacraments. At the same time, the task force sought to address the concern that Word and Sacraments be provided by those who meet the standards that Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions prescribe for those who publicly preach and administer the Sacraments. The task force hopes that its recommendations strike a reasonable balance in retaining the healthy tension that exists between these two important considerations: (1) through the acknowledgement of exceptional circumstances and situations, and (2) through the recognition that the "regular practice" should be the historic practice of the Lutheran church, that the one who publicly preaches the Word and administers the Sacraments is called and ordained.

II. Recommendations

In conjunction with the more formal recommendations below, the task force would commend to the Synod a video resource, a *SemCast* concerning AC XIV recorded by Drs. Dale Meyer and Charles Arand (Concordia Seminary, St. Louis iTunes U Web site). It is the hope of the task force that this *SemCast* could be viewed by as many members of LCMS congregations as possible. It provides the historical and theological context for the consideration of AC XIV and had a significant impact upon the task force's understanding of *rite vocatus*. The task force also hopes that a Bible/Lutheran Confessions study could be produced to accompany the *SemCast*.

With this background and understanding as its context, the Res. 5-02 Task Force respectfully submits the following recommendations to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod:

A. Recommendations for immediate implementation

- 1) District deacon instructional programs should be retained (see below);
- 2) A study of *deacon* in Scripture and church history should be conducted by the CTCR, with specific attention to its relationship to Word and Sacrament ministry; specific examples of service that would be consistent with Scripture/Lutheran Confessions and the practice of the Church throughout the ages; and, specific examples of service that would not be consistent with Scripture/Lutheran Confessions and the practice of the Church throughout the ages.

B. Recommendations for implementation six months after the next LCMS convention (2013 or 2014)

Implementation of the recommendations below should not begin until six (6) months after the close of the next LCMS convention (2013 or 2014), recognizing the limited track record of the SMP program, providing time for additional assessment and refinement of the program, allowing time for the CTCR study referenced above to occur, providing a buffer of time so that district presidents can work evangelically and intentionally with situations where category 1-5 ministry is now being offered by a licensed deacon, and giving the Synod time to adjust to the changes being recommended by the task force.

- 1) District programs should be retained for:
 - a. Equipping laity who wish to grow and be enriched for Christian life and service;
 - b. Preparation for men to demonstrate entry-level competence prior to SMP enrollment;

- c. Forming individuals to serve in categories 6-8 (see table) in local ministry sites; and
 - d. Preparation of men for category 1-5 Word and Sacrament ministry (see table) in cases deemed to be exceptions by a committee of the LCMS Council of Presidents (see #3 below).
- 2) Apart from those cases deemed to be exceptions (see #1d above and #3 below) district presidents should encourage men who are preparing for category 1-5 Word and Sacrament ministry to enroll in one of the pastoral formation programs offered by the LCMS seminaries, including SMP.
- 3) In exceptional cases, where a district president concludes that enrolling in a pastoral formation program offered by the LCMS seminaries, including SMP, is not a feasible means to form a candidate for category 1-5 service,
- a. The district president will request confirmation of this assessment by a designated committee of the Council of Presidents to authorize a graduate of a district program to serve in Word and Sacrament ministry as a deacon; and
 - b. Within three years, a deacon serving in category 1-5 Word and Sacrament ministry will apply for examination and certification through the Synod's colloquy committee. Following successful completion of the examination process, he would be certified as eligible to receive a call to serve as an *assisting pastor*.
- 4) Those deacons already serving in categories 1-5 should be "examined" by the Synod's colloquy committee (expanded to include district representatives for these interviews only, and done regionally, if needed) and, upon successful completion of the examination, be certified as eligible to receive a call to serve as an *assisting pastor* and be ordained as such.
- 5) An *assisting pastor* would be subject to the same limitations of authority and autonomy as are SMPs, including supervision by a general pastor, and he will not be rostered and will not be eligible for a call to a different ministry site. Requests to consider exceptional cases allowing an *assisting pastor* to serve in a different location would be considered by the same Council of Presidents committee referenced in #3 above and district presidents may submit individual, exceptional cases for consideration and confirmation by the committee.
- 6) Assuming that the recommendations above are implemented, then current LCMS Bylaw 3.8.2.4.2 (a) (2) (2007 Handbook, p. 124) allowing for the examination, certification, calling, and ordaining of laymen who have had full Word and Sacrament responsibilities for ten years (see below) should no longer be necessary and should be eliminated. It reads as follows:
- In exceptional cases, laymen who have carried out the full responsibilities of the pastoral ministry for at least 10 years, who are currently licensed for such ministry by a district president, and who have been recommended by a congregation holding membership in the Synod on the basis of that congregation's observation and experience, and with the stated assurance that such congregation will extend a divine call asking the recommended individual to serve as their pastor.
- 7) The task force recommends that the SMP Committee, augmented by deacons and/or district staff closely associated with district deacon programs, endeavor to design ways through which the SMP program might be more accessible, particularly in cases involving men who are serving small groups of Lutherans in remote geographic areas. The cost and adaptability of the program should be primary focal points for the SMP Committee's efforts. The task force is optimistic that these issues can be resolved prior to the next LCMS convention.

- 8) The task force recommends that the SMP Committee encourage and oversee a process through which the districts and the seminaries could:
- a. Agree on desired formational outcomes for SMPs; and
 - b. Gain greater knowledge and understanding of the curricula in use at the seminaries and in the districts, especially as these curricula are designed to produce the formational outcomes referenced in 8a.
- 9) The task force recommends that the Committee on Constitutional Matters formulate the necessary changes to LCMS bylaws and present them to the delegates at the next LCMS convention and that the Council of Presidents formulate the necessary changes to its policy manual prior to the next convention so that the recommendations above will be ready for implementation six months following the conclusion of the next LCMS convention.

Resolution 5-02 Task Force

R6-01

LCMS World Relief and Human Care

Vision Statement

- ONE Mission—showing Christ's mercy to all with fidelity.
- ONE Message—reflecting Christ's love in Word and deed with integrity.
- ONE People—united in Christ with capacity to show mercy.

Convention Theme

- ONE People—*Forgiven*
"Forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).
- Because Christ has forgiven us and died for all people, we love our neighbor and show mercy to those in need. LCMS World Relief and Human Care—Mercy Forever.

"We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith" (2 Thessalonians 1:3-4).

It is impossible to adequately express the profound honor, thankfulness, and joy that we at LCMS World Relief and Human Care have and experience as a result of the unfathomable generosity of you, the dear members and congregations of the LCMS. Your kindness through the 2006 tsunami, Katrina, Haiti, and hundreds of other disasters has been as encouraging as it has been amazing. Stewarding LCMS World Relief and Human Care is a sacred task. This institution has been a blessing to millions, literally.

As a result of a series of strategic decisions over the past nine years, we have vastly increased the capacity of the LCMS to act immediately in times of disaster and other need. The response to Haiti illustrates this in spades. In virtually everything we do, we seek to increase local Lutheran capacity to care for their communities, because when local Lutherans do this, they share the love of Christ in word and deed.

It has been a blessed endeavor, but a very hard road. Our offices have had more direct contact and involvement with the ELCA than any other in the LCMS. The complications brought about by the recent decision on homosexuality are only the most recent high-water mark of what has been a rising tide of pain, sorrow, and frustration

in dealing with ELCA leadership, whom I have personally heard confess that there is salvation outside of faith in Christ. The decisions on homosexuality are symptomatic of a fundamental difference with them on what the Bible is and what the Gospel is. It has been supremely challenging to kindly but firmly insist on respect for the LCMS's biblical positions, and to do as little damage as possible to agencies that serve so many with mercy. That said, the status quo with the ELCA cannot hold.

It has been a hard road too, guiding LCMS World Relief and Human Care through the complexities of a Synod bureaucracy that is severely strapped for cash. Through many hard decisions, especially over the past year and a half of economic downturn, we have been able to operate well in the black, and our financial position as of March 2009 is, frankly, outstanding. Some time ago the LCMS President's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Funding the Mission recommended that perhaps LCMS World Relief and Human Care become a synodwide corporation (like CPH, or the LCMS Foundation or LCEF) because we are "fully funded" by donors. Some twenty years ago, the Seventh Day Adventists (a church body smaller than the LCMS) did this with its mercy arm, which became the "Adventist Development and Relief Agency" (www.ADRA.org). ADRA has grown from revenues similar to LCMS World Relief and Human Care (\$10–20 million per year) to \$170,000,000, and has vastly increased the impact and influence of that church body worldwide. We should do the same with LCMS World Relief and Human Care. We could vastly increase the work of mercy worldwide and benefit millions. "Could we have the vision and foresight to do the same? Because of constant overspending and weakening revenues, the Synod headquarters is deeply dependent on donations to LCMS World Relief and Human Care for operating cash (from \$5–15 million dollars at any given time over the past triennium). The financial crisis of the Synod can be quickly addressed. As every businessperson, every farmer (and even the occasional person in government) knows, expenditures must not exceed revenues.

For whatever the strengths and weaknesses of the LCMS board system, thus far the Board for Human Care in the present system of bylaws has formed a reasonable firewall in the face of a Synod headquarters starving for cash and constantly (understandably!) looking for ways to ease its condition. I believe the proposed elimination of our board will erode that firewall further, and decisions about funds given by donors for mercy will increasingly be made in view of the Synod's financial crisis and less in view of the need of people in trouble. (On stewardship and God's priorities for mercy, see 2 Corinthians 8–9.)

In any case, I am at peace. Our board and staff have given everything they have, even risking their own lives and well-being at times, for the advance of mercy in the name of Jesus all over the world. The following report is but a small snapshot of the work done. I am humbled and honored to have had this opportunity to work with such fabulous staff, to be so humbled by the generosity of so many thousands upon thousands of donors, to be able to mine the depths of the Scriptures on mercy, and to have had this message resonate so profoundly all over the Synod and the world. And I am, finally, profoundly optimistic. The Lord has blessed this work so abundantly through so many difficult times when the road ahead seemed impossible, and He will continue to do so—but always in his way—under the cross. "Be ye merciful, as your father in heaven is merciful."

With profound thankfulness, I remain convinced that mercy—the mercy of Christ to and for us—and our demonstration of that mercy to those within and outside the Body of Christ is the key to the future

of the Church. Mercy is the key to mission and stewardship. It is the key to living our Christian lives together in love and forgiveness. We desperately need to learn more deeply of the mercy of Christ so we may learn how to care for one another in the Church. Mercy is the key to moving boldly and confidently into the future with courage in the Gospel—a confidence and courage based on conviction (*Christ Have Mercy: How to Put Your Faith in Action*, p. 11).

Matthew C. Harrison
Executive Director

Overture from BHCM to Synod Convention Regarding BRTFSSG Recommendation 18

WHEREAS, the LCMS is considering a restructuring of the Synod and such restructuring has both short- and long-term implications for ministry, the Board for Human Care Ministries (LCMS World Relief and Human Care) respectfully requests that careful consideration be given to the following:

WHEREAS, in 2010 Haiti experienced an earthquake of overwhelming proportions, and LCMS World Relief and Human Care Ministries had the expertise, ground resources, and contacts to respond by providing some of the first Mercy Medical Teams to meet the needs of the Haitians; LCMS World Relief and Human Care was among the first relief organizations on the ground with a network of volunteer medical and pastoral personnel. Will the restructuring plan improve the Synod's ability to initiate and nurture a sustainable network on the ground in the United States and around the world that can be as responsive to an earthquake, tsunami, flood, or hurricane as the current structure has allowed? and

WHEREAS, a significant portion of the work of LCMS World Relief and Human Care involves domestic grants to churches, pastors, church workers, and RSOs that experience significant human care needs, and responding to these needs requires experience and resources; will the restructuring plan improve the Synod's ability to attract, maintain, and foster the expertise and resources that have been developed over past several years? and

WHEREAS, domestically the inter-Lutheran collaboration known as Lutheran Services in America provides nearly \$16 billion of service to communities and individuals, with the assistance of leadership from the LCMS provided to this network; and

WHEREAS, LCMS recognized service organizations depend upon this human care network to improve quality and maintain and provide advocacy and care for the most vulnerable citizens in America; will the restructuring plan improve the Synod's ability to strengthen, oversee, encourage, and advance this network and thereby serve increased needs as an expression of God's love in Christ? and

WHEREAS, in a rapidly shrinking world, where global interaction is increasingly common, long-standing values and cultural perspectives are being challenged and eroded; LCMS World Relief and Human Care has been at the forefront of discussions of and advocacy for life issues; will the restructuring improve the Synod's ability to lead, speak and partner in such a way that God's plan for humankind is advanced and He is honored? and

WHEREAS, Human Care Ministries has met external benchmarks established by the Better Business Bureau, regarding administrative and fund-raising costs, and the best possible rating according to Charity Navigator for combined administrative/communication expenses; will the restructuring improve the Synod's ability to meet these external benchmarks? and

WHEREAS, Disaster work, human care, Mercy Medical Teams, Life Ministries, and many other ministries of mercy are global and interconnected national and international efforts, does splitting whatever

work of LCMS World Relief and Human Care that remains after the restructuring into Domestic Mission and International Mission advance the global work of mercy of the Church? therefore be it

Resolved, That LCMS World Relief and Human Care would encourage you to prayerfully consider these questions as you deliberate upon *Recommendation #18: Realign the National Synod Ministries around Two Mission Commissions*.

Respectfully Submitted BHCM, February 2010

BHCM Overture Regarding Funding and Investment of Donor Gifts

To Allocate Investment Earnings Back to Human Care

WHEREAS, The Synod consolidates all available cash for investment purposes, and does not allocate investment earnings back to the departments where the funding originated; and

WHEREAS, Currently all investment earnings are retained for general operations of Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Board for Human Care Ministries (LCMS World Relief and Human Care) receives significant funding from donors that in some cases is expended over a period of years; and

WHEREAS, The Board for Human Care Ministries believes that the donors' gifts should receive an allocation of investment earning until such time as the gifts are expended for the designated purpose; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention require investment earnings be allocated back to the Board for Human Care Ministries donor designated gifts; and be it further

Resolved, That the provision of the previous resolved applies specifically to bequest dollars and disaster relief funds on a pro rata basis, from which the investments originated, until the funds are expended for their designated purpose.

Respectfully submitted, BHCM, February 2010

Health Ministries

Christ's humble compassion for humanity typically finds His Gospel words of Good News closely accompanied by caring for the physical needs of individuals. LCMS Health Ministries seeks to complement the outreach of the church by serving others in the same fashion through our international and domestic outreach goals. We promote Christ-centered health and wellness of body, mind, and spirit through LCMS congregational health ministries programs, parish nursing coordination, and international medical service opportunities.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments:

- Since 2006, our Mercy Medical Team (MMT) program has served the international health needs of more than 17,000 clients in faraway countries such as western Kenya, Haiti, Guatemala, Indonesia, and Madagascar by recruiting, training, and accompanying volunteer medical professionals, LCMS pastors, and lay workers to offer free high-quality health care to some of the world's most vulnerable people suffering with HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, parasites, dysentery, serious wounds, infections, malaria and other tropical diseases, and illnesses associated with unhealthy drinking water and sanitation.

- Our new Emergency Mercy Medical Team program responded immediately to the earthquake crisis in Haiti by mobilizing, outfitting, and accompanying four back-to-back teams of 38 highly skilled physicians, surgeons, trauma nurses, and other medical professionals from all over the U.S. onto the field in Haiti to provide field clinics for free medical care to those affected by the tragedy. More than 2,200 patients were seen in the field.
- With the help of our generous donors, our MMT program is able to purchase and bring along huge amounts of medical supplies and our own full-service pharmacy of medications for our physicians to dispense at no charge. To date, we have donated and administered more than \$1 million (retail value) of prescriptions and over-the-counter medications to our overseas partners at the substantially reduced rate of only 3 percent of that cost to us since the program began in 2006.
- Health Ministries also carries out this model of Gospel-centered health outreach through our coordination of the LCMS parish nursing program for service to local congregations. In each of our 35 districts, we organize, train, and encourage the ongoing education of theologically trained registered nurses serving our local congregations and institutions.
- Through our initiative and board representation, we also serve on the newly formed Lutheran Parish Nursing International cooperative. Through this organization, we seek to encourage the vocation of Lutheran parish nursing among our international Lutheran church partners.
- Since 2007, we have donated four international shipping containers through our recycled medical goods shipping program. These commercial shipping containers are packed full of hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of donated, recycled medical and surgical equipment to be used by our overseas partners in Kenya and Sudan. Currently we have additional containers being packed and loaded for Madagascar and Kenya. Through our partnership with Orphan Grain Train, we are able to relocate these goods in an efficient, cost-effective manner.
- Health Ministries publishes health resources and printed materials on a number of health-related topics such as ministry to people with disabilities and mental health topics for local congregations and individuals as well as mental health resources specific to clergy, such as the free booklet *I Trust When Dark My Road: A Lutheran View of Depression*, published in 2009.

Next Triennium Major Goals

- Intentionally advocate for the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities and chronic mental illness and the underserved in LCMS congregations and their communities.
- Continue to expand medical volunteer opportunities to reach out in mercy through districts, partner churches, and missionaries to people in need, including serving those whose lives have been touched by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, poor nutrition, and inadequate sanitation.
- Continue to support health ministry, especially parish nursing, at the congregational, district, national, and international levels and through expanded outreach to communities.
- Continue to develop resources and programs to assist congregations in the supportive and healthy care of church workers.

Examples of LCMS World Relief and Human Care Funds Leveraging and Multiplying Giving



Life Ministries

Life Ministries was mandated as the responsibility of BHCM at the 2001 Synod convention to promote the sanctity of human life, both in our church body and the culture at large. Through programs that care for the world's most marginalized and vulnerable, supplying leadership for the Synod's called workers and laity, and through projects with our international partners, Life Ministries carries the banner for our Synod to the public and the globe proclaiming that all life is sacred.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Life Ministries gives our Synod an active voice on Capitol Hill with a number of other pro-life organizations and church bodies to influence our culture and our leaders with a united message for life. Life Ministries also works closely as a strong ally with the pan-Lutheran Lutherans For Life organization through shared projects and funding support.
- Life Ministries has established, oversees, and completely sponsors the work of two Lutheran pro-life pregnancy resource centers in Russia and is currently using this successful model to establish another pro-life pregnancy center in Asia in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malaysia. A center in St. Petersburg, Russia, assisted more than 16,000 women in crisis

since it began in 1994 and counseled and assisted 267 women clients who were needy or contemplating abortion in 2009.

- In the United States, Life Ministries works to provide start-up grants to congregationally based pregnancy centers, pregnancy center staff mentoring, and development of a wide range of online and printed pro-life materials, including publishing the popular *A Small Catechism on Human Life*, which has provided young and old the opportunity to view Luther's catechism through a pro-life lens.
- One of Life Ministries popular hallmark programs is providing free, on-site workshops to youth groups and churches on abstinence and Christian chastity.
- Under the auspices and leadership of Life Ministries, the LCMS Sanctity of Life Committee currently advises the work and outreach of Life Ministries for the Synod. This committee of dedicated volunteers includes some of our Synod's best theologians and laity from diverse areas of the pro-life movement and bioethics field. Their goal is to inform and serve as a catalyst for the church to assume a full measure of participation in the public square concerning life issues.
- Life Ministries and the Sanctity of Life Committee published the long-awaited statement for pastors, health care workers, and laity entitled "Res. 6-10: Guidance on Contraceptive Methods" following the resolution at the 2004 LCMS convention. The committee also produced the helpful "In the Beginning" Bible study on the ethics of stem cell research.

Next Triennium Major Goals

- Continue to expand our international pro-life influence by working with partner churches to open additional pregnancy resource centers overseas.
- Publish additional practical resource materials that can be utilized in congregational settings, such as a chastity curriculum for youth and educational end-of-life decision-making materials.
- Establish congregational grace-centered materials for women who regret past abortions and are seeking healing and forgiveness.

Division of Social Ministry Organizations

The Division of Social Ministry Organizations is responsible for the administration, management, and oversight of the granting of Recognized Service Organization (RSO) status to service organizations that provide health, chaplaincy, and social ministry efforts to people in need. To date, 121 Recognized Service Organizations have been granted status through the Board for Human Care Ministries (BHCM). The work of Social Ministry Organizations includes, but is not limited to, assuring the Synod that all service organizations granted status meet and comply with all RSO requirements as set forth in the Synod Bylaws and Board of Directors' policies. Additionally, the division is responsible for acting as a liaison to the RSO and working with RSOs to identify, develop, and/or participate in mutually beneficial collaborations and cooperative ministries, offering grants, as able, to advance ministry with and through RSOs, consulting with the RSO to address problems or issues of concern, and advocating for the RSO as a responsible ministry partner to the LCMS. In past years the BHCM has overseen the granting of RSO status to service organizations and has followed the example of Jesus Christ to minister to the entire spectrum of human needs: spiritual, physical, and emotional. All of the church's social ministry efforts have dealt with the

same populations of people—the aged, disabled, homeless, orphaned, and hungry—and are motivated to reach out with aid motivated by the mercy we have received from God through Jesus Christ. This work has been done in recent years and over many, many decades in the past.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Worked to revise the guidelines and instructions for service organizations to be recognized by the LCMS and/or affiliated with the ELCA and have worked to develop and publish BHCM document for recognition procedures that can be posted online with links to the ELCA document outlining steps toward ELCA affiliation.
- Developed an RSO database that is able to generate detailed information about 121 RSOs and their 1,544 service locations. This information allows for strengthened knowledge within the Synod about service organizations granted status and facilitates communication to the RSOs.
- Advocated for RSOs to strengthen their Lutheran identity not only in governance but throughout their organization, which has resulted in a greater awareness among the RSOs about the mission of the LCMS and its doctrines and practices.
- Intentionally worked to enhance the partnership with Lutheran Services in America, which continues to be a strong and important partner to the BHCM in serving the many RSOs granted status through the BHCM.
- Barb Below, director of Social Ministry Organizations, has served on the RSO Standing Committee formed by the LCMS Board of Directors in 2008 and actively worked to develop and implement the new RSO granting process in the Synod. Because of the many improvements, we now have established greater clarity and consistency in requirements that RSOs must meet prior to granting of status, which thus provides increased protection to the Synod and fairness to service organizations.
- Granted status to five service organizations not previously affiliated with the LCMS through recognition: The International Lutheran Wittenberg Society, The Ysleta Lutheran Mission Human Care, DOXOLOGY, Cross Connections, and Acts 1:8 Mission Society. In addition, the division has completed reviews of eight RSOs and granted continued status to them and revoked RSO status to two RSOs that either closed or dissolved.
- Requested 32 RSOs make reapplication for status as part of the transition to the new RSO granting process.
- Enhanced RSO Web page that provides information about RSOs granted status through the BHCM, offering detailed information about the RSO, links to their Web pages, resources, application information, and RSO news stories highlighting their work and accomplishments.

Next Triennium Major Goals

- Request all remaining RSOs make reapplication for RSO status to complete the transition to the new RSO granting process.
- Develop projects to assist RSOs to strengthen their Lutheran identity expressed throughout the agency and programs.
- Strengthen connections of RSOs to the LCMS by providing Lutheran accompaniment to RSOs in times of disaster, crisis, and challenges.

Grant Administration

The grant program offered by LCMS Word Relief and Human Care is interwoven through all the ministry's individual programs. Grants are awarded to congregations, districts, Recognized Service Organizations, other agencies, mission fields, and national churches to develop or expand projects that reach out in communities and address unmet human needs, while sharing the Gospel message and proclaiming Jesus Christ as the world's Savior.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Awarded 242 international grants totaling more than \$7.6 million for projects in partnership with LCMS World Mission and national church partners in 39 countries. These grants helped a variety of projects, including agricultural training, livestock distribution and training, literacy and other educational programs, orphan care, life-skills training, refugee resettlement assistance, vocational skills training, medical care, HIV/AIDS care, counseling, and water projects. Construction projects provided church roofs (Guinea, India, Kenya, and Tanzania), assisted with building renovations (Gambia, Kenya, and Nicaragua), and built a hospital pediatric wing in Madagascar and four rescue centers in Kenya.
- Partnered with Central Illinois, Iowa East, and Rocky Mountain districts for projects with national church partners in Latvia, Lithuania, and South Africa.
- First-time grants were awarded to Democratic Republic of Congo for food distribution to internally displaced people; Peru for construction of an irrigation channel; Chile for life-skills training; Georgia for refugee relief; and Paraguay to complete building renovations needed to relocate HIV/AIDS orphans facing eviction.
- Awarded 287 domestic grants totaling \$2.4 million to benefit projects in 31 districts throughout the U.S. These grants assisted food pantries, after-school programs, immigrant assistance programs, community development, health and wellness programs, church worker care, counseling, chaplaincy, elder care programs, and transitional care, among others.
- Awarded 53 international disaster grants in 28 countries totaling almost \$2 million. Half this amount continued relief and recovery work in Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand following the Dec. 26, 2004, tsunami. Additional grants assisted survivors of hurricanes (Bangladesh, Cuba, Haiti, Mexico, Myanmar, and the Philippines); earthquakes (China, Haiti, and Indonesia); political crisis (Kenya); and other less publicized emergencies.
- Awarded a total of 210 domestic disaster grants totaling almost \$6.3 million for work in 27 districts. The majority of these grants helped continue recovery work from Hurricane Katrina and assisted new recovery work from hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Disaster grants also helped those affected by tornadoes (Arkansas, Iowa, Missouri, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas); floods (Alaska, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin); fires in California; and other local disasters.
- Over the past 10 years, provided \$15,537,000 for Lutheran World Relief Baltimore (LWR); \$2,077,072 for Lutheran Services in America (LSA); \$2,635,850 for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS); and \$7,142,329 for Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR)—a total of \$27,392,251 to pan-Lutheran organizations.



Deaconess Ministry

LCMS World Relief and Human Care encourages and supports deaconess ministry—women who are called and commissioned by the church to provide diaconal care. Deaconesses serve through works of mercy, spiritual care, and teaching the faith while focusing on Word and Sacrament. Echoing “ONE People: *Forgiven*,” deaconesses serve as a channel for the love and compassion within our church body and with LCMS partner churches.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments:

- The district mercy coordinator (position created in 2005 by the BHCM) now serves through “diaconal project development” to oversee deaconess ministry and serve as a catalyst in identifying and meeting diaconal needs worldwide. Diaconal project development engaged and informed the Synod’s districts, congregations, and partner church bodies on LCMS works of mercy, increasing awareness of diaconal needs and deaconess ministry of LCMS WR-HC programs.
- Initiated international outreach, including in South Africa (professional advice on the educational needs pertaining to the role of women in the church, especially with curriculum design for introducing a deaconess program); Malaysia (designed a deaconess curriculum by writing a 30-course syllabus; assisted and directed implementation of the deaconess program for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malaysia; taught classes for deaconess students); India (redesigned the deaconess curriculum by writing course syllabus and evaluating deaconess training program based on confessional Lutheran theology); Latvia and Lithuania (support and assisting with developing diaconal projects).
- Worked with the Synod’s three deaconess-training programs (Concordia University Chicago and two seminaries). Efforts included assisting a deaconess student from Australia and placing deaconess interns, including one intern with LCMS WR-HC.
- Developed diaconal resources for domestic and overseas use.
- Informed districts, congregations, and other audiences of the church’s theology of mercy through speaking engagements, presentations, and displays.
- Served as managing editor of *Mercy Works* magazine and developed Web resources for professionals on diaconal service.
- Assisted the colloquy program chair pertaining to deaconess colloquy.

Next Triennium Major Goals

- Plan, develop, implement, and direct existing and new diaconal programs in response to a variety of human care issues.
- Continue to engage and inform districts and congregations by promoting, identifying, and advocating diaconal needs with special relevance to deaconess ministry.
- Establish contacts to promote deaconesses as commissioned workers in institutional and parish settings, including promoting deaconess internships.
- Develop Web site to provide resources for church professionals on diaconal service.
- Continue to build relationships with overseas churches to assist with deaconess training programs and diaconal projects.

Districts and Congregations

This department responds to and stimulates requests from LCMS districts and/or their congregations for assistance in assessing internal (congregation members and church staff) and external (neighborhood and community) human care needs (the most critical, unmet, or underserved) and assistance in developing initiatives to address those needs. Assistance may also include fund development to support program initiatives.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Invested an increasing amount of time (especially in the current economy) assessing the internal needs of congregational staff in a financial crisis and responding accordingly, working with the church workers’ district presidents to process financial assistance from the Soldiers of the Cross Ministry Fund and assuring that pastoral care for church workers is in place.
- In the last triennium, Soldiers of the Cross funds raised totaled \$643,275; Soldiers of the Cross funds distributed to assist church workers with emergency needs totaled \$624,723. (It should be noted that districts have been encouraged to participate in these grants and have responded wonderfully, often providing half of the final grant issued.)
- Provided case management and pastoral care to Veterans of the Cross recipients, which now include 50 retired church workers in need. (About \$500,000 is needed annually to provide these retired church workers with this much needed supplement to their often meager retirement checks.)
- In the last triennium, LCMS World Relief and Human Care raised \$863,844 of the total \$1,444,501 expended to Veterans of the Cross. Corporate Synod contributed \$580,657 but has now turned over the responsibility of raising the total needed for this important program to LCMS WR-HC.
- Provided assistance for 35 congregations in assessing internal (member) and external (community) human care needs through the “Planting Gospel Seeds While Serving Human Needs” program. Another 15 congregations receive ongoing, follow-up mentoring and coaching.
- Served on an inter-disciplinary team with the director of Disaster Response in responding to more than 100 requests for assistance after disasters, providing congregationally based, pastoral care resources to members and the community as part of long-term recovery.
- As a Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services board member, provided technical assistance and financial resources to congregations seeking help in family reunification matters for undocumented workers.

- With Social Ministry Organizations Manager Dorothy Krans, developed an Older Adult Ministry process to assess congregational and community needs, including opportunities for involving seniors in Christian service.
- Provided community assessments and organizing principles services to the National Lutheran Housing Support Corp.
- Consulted with districts and congregations seeking to develop outreach to Latinos.
- Provided deaconess training in Panama and Argentina on the theology and practice of mercy in congregational settings.
- Developed a domestic abuse prevention workshop with Task Force on Domestic Abuse members.

International

LCMS World Relief and Human Care's international activities continued to implement the new paradigm that emphasizes the ministry's core values of mercy, fidelity, integrity, and capacity. LCMS WR-HC recruited and deployed international staff to build the ministry's capacity—as well as the capacity of LCMS partners—to reach out in mercy to those in need around the world. Through these partnerships, LCMS WR-HC ensures theological fidelity and financial integrity in a process now termed “Lutheran Accompaniment.”

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Internationally deployed staff directly oversees all international projects. This new capacity has enabled LCMS WR-HC to identify and engage dedicated Lutheran partners around the world with unprecedented accountability. Agreements are signed, projects are visited, and reports are obtained. Viable partners are distinguished from unviable ones as healthy relationships grow based on accountability, Lutheran fidelity, and mutual respect.
- As a result of increased capacity, LCMS WR-HC retains and manages more of the resources entrusted to this ministry so that strategic partners such as LCMS World Mission and official LCMS partner churches receive more projects funded by LCMS WR-HC than ever before.
- Increased capacity also resulted in concrete benefits for LCMS WR-HC donors. Most important, LCMS WR-HC has elevated the priority and importance of projects clearly associated with Lutheran Word and Sacrament ministry whenever possible. In addition, LCMS WR-HC has achieved a significant increase in efficiency by partnering directly with local Lutheran partners.
- Gained access to previously “closed” countries because of LCMS WR-HC's new paradigm and identity as a distinct, international relief organization with its own operational capacity.

Next Triennium Major Goals

- Continue to strengthen partnerships with international partners in response to need and the wishes of dedicated donors.
- Continue to build international operational capacity to the benefit of the LCMS, other Lutheran churches, and, most importantly, the needy people of the world.

Disaster Response

As the disaster response arm of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, LCMS World Relief and Human Care works through a broad network of diverse partners to alleviate human suffering and enable people to build or regain self-sufficiency following natural and man-made disasters or emergencies. These key partners include Lutheran World Relief (LWR), Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR),

Recognized Service Organizations (RSO), and other faith-based agencies, as well as governmental agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and nongovernmental agencies such as the Red Cross and National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. The mission of the church through LCMS WR-HC is to reach out in mercy and compassion to those in need, motivated by and in the clear name of Christ and His Gospel, and according to the Lutheran confession of faith. The local church has an opportunity to reach out and minister to those in need—whether Lutherans or non-Lutherans—while state and national relief efforts are being mobilized. The church's response to a disaster is a commitment and witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ to assist those affected by the disaster. LCMS WR-HC provides funding and direction to districts and congregations as they reach out to their communities with solid spiritual care and timely disaster relief.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Working with LCMS districts, formed a network of trained district disaster response coordinators and teams.
- Held two District Disaster Response Coordinators conferences in St. Louis to provide training for the coordinators and to develop strong working relationships, which increases LCMS capacity.
- Continued to expand LCMS disaster response capacity by developing close partnerships with agencies and entities such as governmental and nongovernmental organizations (such as FEMA and the Red Cross) and other faith-based disaster related entities (such as LDR, LWR, the Salvation Army), and our RSOs throughout the United States (such as Lutheran Social Services of the South, Peace Officer Ministries, Lutheran Services of Florida, Orphan Grain Train, Lutheran Child and Family Services of Missouri).
- Developed two separate training courses for congregations entitled “Congregational Preparedness” and “Lutheran Early Response Team Training,” which are currently being taught by the District Disaster Response Coordinators and District Disaster Response Teams network.
- Developed “Disaster Kit” program. (This includes a partnership with the LWML, where Disaster Response distributed 3,000 kits at the LWML convention, which were then completed and given to shut-in and elderly congregation members, among others.)
- In partnership with Orphan Grain Train, developed a “Flood Bucket” program, which is being expanded to the LCMS WR-HC online store.

Specialized Pastoral Ministry

LCMS World Relief and Human Care recruits rostered ministers of religion for ministry in institutional chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, and clinical education and facilitates the process of ecclesiastical endorsement for these ministries. Our more than 500 chaplains and pastoral counselors serve as “domestic missionaries,” touching the lives of many at their most stressful and vulnerable moments. Chaplains and pastoral counselors serve in hospitals, nursing home and retirement centers, parishes, counseling agencies, businesses, law enforcement agencies, fire and rescue agencies, hospice centers, jails and prisons, and workplaces. Having received specialized clinical training, chaplains and pastoral counselors listen with the ears of Christ as they hear the cares and burdens of those to whom they minister. They reflect His mercy and compassion as they offer support and care, bringing words of forgiveness, life, and hope through Jesus Christ. Those who teach chaplaincy and pastoral counseling ministry prepare our rostered ministers of religion and our seminary and dea-

coness students as they teach the art of integrating our rich Lutheran theology with effective interpersonal skills.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Generous grants from the Schwan Foundation and A. E. Finley Foundation enabled LCMS World Relief and Human Care to form a task force with representation of chaplains, pastoral counselors, clinical pastoral educators, seminary representatives, and the Council of Presidents with the goal of developing a plan to increase interest in specialized pastoral ministry among seminary students and deaconess students, as well as rostered church workers already serving in parish ministry.
- The Board for Human Care Ministries approved submitting an overture to this triennial convention that will amend the Bylaws, thus enabling the Board for Human Care Ministries to extend calls to those who serve in specialized pastoral ministry and who have received ecclesiastical endorsement through the BHCM. Many rostered church workers currently serve in these full-time ministries without call.

Next Triennium Major Goal

- Continue to develop interest in specialized pastoral ministry through scholarships and work closely with seminary and deaconess students.
- Extend calls to those who meet criteria.

Task Force on Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

A task force was formed to respond to 2007 convention Res. 6-06, “To Develop Domestic and Child Abuse Education Materials and Programs,” which mandated the Board for Human Care Ministries to appoint a committee to examine the issues of domestic violence and child abuse; to provide materials and train individuals to assist LCMS districts, congregations, and schools in addressing abuse and ministering to the spiritual needs of those affected by abuse; to make these materials and training available to seminary and professional church worker students; and to consult with the Commission on Theology and Church Relations in examining these issues and comment specifically on the topics of forgiveness, repentance, and reconciliation in the context of abuse situations.

Past Triennium Accomplishment

- With gratitude to a generous grant from the Lutheran Community Foundation’s field of interest fund, the Task Force on Domestic Violence and Child Abuse was formed, consisting of a diverse group throughout the LCMS with representatives of parish ministry, school ministry, deaconess ministry, professional pastoral counseling, psychology, forensic law, parish nursing, domestic violence education, seminary education, university education, LWML, Recognized Service Organizations that provide direct services to those affected by abuse, and individuals who have experienced the effects of domestic violence and child abuse. The task force sifted through secular and religious information about domestic violence and child abuse; developed a Web site containing resources (www.lcms.org/domesticviolence); developed an outline for material that addresses forgiveness, repentance, and reconciliation; and created a training module for implementation.

Next Triennium Major Goal

- A working group selected from the task force will continue to work to finalize materials and training for individuals, and to make these materials available to seminary and professional church-work students. The Lutheran Community Foundation has expressed strong

interest in providing financial assistance for the successful completion of this project.

LCMS National Housing Support Corporation

The LCMS Board for Human Care Ministries established the Housing Support Corporation in 2004 as its housing ministry arm. As a Synod-controlled entity, that “arm” provides critical funding and technical assistance to LCMS congregations, districts, social ministry organizations and other partners. A charitable and educational organization, the corporation builds more than houses. It engages and trains LCMS members who then put their many vocational gifts to work in communities. Our members’ faith active in love restores and revitalizes deteriorated neighborhoods close to LCMS altars. Building homes and revitalizing communities in proximity to Word and Sacrament ministry provides opportunities to proclaim Christ to a chaotic world. The first fiscal year of operation for the Housing Support Corporation began July 1, 2006.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

Nehemiah Project, New York

In 2007–2008, we completed our five-year commitment to the Atlantic District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with a disbursement of \$49,902 of a total \$145,298 grant to provide an interest-free LCEF loan of \$1,000,000 for the purpose of participating as an investor in the Spring Creek-Nehemiah III project.

- Two Brooklyn LCMS congregations are veteran EBC members whose determination to remain in and serve their inner-city parishes helped lead to the Synod’s first Nehemiah investment.
- To date, 2,900 homes have been built in East Brooklyn using the Nehemiah Project.
- When the first phase of the current Spring Creek project is completed, it will include 365 single family homes, 163 two-family homes, 19 three-family homes, and 90 eight-family condos.
- When completed, the Spring Creek Nehemiah project will house 1,500 families in affordable homes, made possible, in part, by the participation of LCMS World Relief and Human Care in partnership with the Atlantic District of the LCMS in paying the interest on \$1 million for five years, which greatly reduces the final costs of these new homes for working families.

Nehemiah Project, St. Louis

In partnership with the Lutheran Foundation in St. Louis, HC-WR launched a Nehemiah community revitalization effort to bring caring into an abandoned urban neighborhood, training local residents in community organizing and engaging volunteers from neighboring suburban churches. The effort has included the following.

- A \$485,000 grant funding commitment received from Lutheran Foundation St. Louis for support of work in the neighborhood around St. Paul Lutheran Church to build partnerships for a Nehemiah-type project.
- A \$45,000 grant received from Daughters of Charity in St. Louis for an elderly homeownership rehabilitation project in St. Louis neighborhood around St. Paul Lutheran Church.
- The formation of a Women’s Giving Circle, which has provided \$135,000 grants for direct projects in the neighborhood around St. Paul Lutheran church.
- A training video describing work and process for potential investors and other churches interested in the same model—200 free copies have been requested and provided to date.

Fort Wayne, Indiana

- Provided 2500 hours of on-site technical assistance to the Zion/St. Peters Project.
 - Formed consortium of local banks, attorneys, and community leaders to build affordable homeownership for the working poor.
 - Took leadership to New York to visit Nehemiah site.
- \$390,000 grant funding received from Tippmann Foundations in Fort Wayne, Indiana, for our work in the Lutheran Community Center and Homeownership Center in support for the Zion Lutheran project.
- Opened in January 2010 a Lutheran Community Center by engaging collaborative partnerships with Bethesda and Lutheran Social Services of Indiana. The Center is valued at \$1 million and is provided on a long-term lease to Bethesda for \$1.00 per year for 15 years.

Elderly Housing Development

- Provided on-site technical assistance to 10 LCMS congregations, RSOs, and seminaries to construct housing for elderly and disabled on church-owned property.
- Approved budget to provide five feasibility grants for \$10,000 each before June 2010 for elderly projects to be built in proximity to Word and Sacrament ministries.

Next Triennium Major Goals

- Continue to provide support to neighborhood and community development efforts maintained by or associated with LCMS congregations, districts, and Recognized Service Organizations that help revitalize communities or prevent community deterioration. This support will include financial support (grants, loans, and guarantees), consultations (on obtaining financing from other sources), technical staff, and technical assistance.
- Obtain financing from private and government sources to support the corporation's mission as the Synod's housing ministry arm.

Communications

LCMS World Relief and Human Care communications provides opportunities for both the church-at-large and the secular world to learn about and support LCMS WR-HC programs and projects through a growing variety of Web resources, print publications, and other media.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Hired Director of Communication Services.
- Created and staffed new position of media/Web developer.
- Created and staffed new position of communication projects manager.
- Developed a greater alignment between communications and fund development.
- Implemented a "newsroom approach" to disaster coverage with faster reporting timelines.
- Completely redesigned Web site and created international Web site.
- Created March for Life online newsroom and sent staff to report on-location from Washington DC.
- Complete redesign of *Caring* magazine and *Sharing* newsletter.
- Initiated regular schedule of *Reporter* inserts featuring work of LCMS WR-HC.

- Created domestic and international profile booklets.
- Implemented use of social media, including blogs, Facebook, and Twitter.
- Implemented extensive Web cross-training program to insure Web communications continuity.
- Improved internal communication partnerships with LCMS Board for Communication Services, LCMS World Mission, and other entities, including Concordia Publishing House for the VBS Mission Project.
- Added additional contract workers to increase Communications' capacity.
- Created Web-based "E-mail Update" sign-up opportunities to increase contact database.
- Created LCMS WR-HC online store presence within Web environment and added features and products.
- Initiated new LCMS WR-HC branding.
- Created new display materials.

Operations

The ability of LCMS World Relief and Human Care to respond in mercy with increased effectiveness and efficiency has been a priority over the past three years. Improved internal capacity became necessary as LCMS WR-HC added staff and became more active in carrying out its own work, focused on responding to major disasters with long-term assistance, and dealt with the financial stress that came with the recession.

Past Triennium Major Accomplishments

- Improved project accounting to allow for more accurate reports to donors.
- Improved internal communication regarding operational procedures and finances resulting in greater buy-in by staff.
- More formalized decision-making processes related to our domestic and international grants resulted in more strategic granting.
- Streamlined administrative services, making more funds available to programming.
- Increased educational resources made available helping to promote mercy work in the districts and congregations.
- Aligned external communications more closely with fund development and programs to provide a more focused effort.

Fund Development

Major Accomplishments Past Triennium

- Reported gift income of \$30 million.
- Maintained a staff average of three major gifts officers who made 2,200 donor visits, received \$3 million, completed 60 estate planning leads, and established 20 Congregation Giving Clubs.
- Held 15 major donor events for several designated projects.
- Coordinated direct response giving, including 20 mail appeals generating 53,000 gifts and \$4.385 million received.
- Coordinated Shepherd's Staff sustained giving program, generating \$3 million in gifts.
- Received \$6 million from direct congregational support.
- Reported other gifts generated by newsletters (\$3 million) and electronic giving, which increased over the three-year period from almost nonexistent to \$1 million this fiscal year.

- Increased support from foundations and organization through grant support. (Submitted grants to district LWML units and had five LWML national grants approved for \$256,000.)
- Coordinated fund development for major programs, including Animals for the World (Barney Buddies, \$200,000; Cows for Kenya, \$500,000); Orphans (1001 Orphans Sponsorship Program, \$500,000; Project 24 Orphan Rescue Centers, \$300,000); Themba Trust Girls High School; Pediatric Hospital Wing in Madagascar (\$90,000); Fort Wayne Seminary students mission trips to Madagascar; Medical Mercy Mission trips; Veterans of the Cross and Soldiers of the Cross (\$900,000).
- Coordinated fund development for Life Ministries and for the Dominican Republic in partnership with LCMS World Mission and Bethesda.
- Reported bequest income of \$3.5 million.
- Oversaw fund-raising through a variety of disaster relief response campaigns.
- Partnered with LCMS districts on fund-raising to support LCMS WR-HC projects, including partnerships with Iowa District East (\$1 million for Lithuania), the Rocky Mountain District (\$1 million for South Africa), the Central Illinois District (\$150,000 for Latvia and Wittenberg), and the New England District (\$200,000 for Kenya projects).

Next Triennium Major Goals

- Establish and grow endowment funds to provide support for disaster preparedness, operational ministry, and Veterans and Soldiers of the Cross programs.
- Implement new BBEC constituent relationships database management system.
- Expand 1001 Orphans funding program to include support for more orphans beyond Kenya.
- Expand volunteer fund development efforts for agricultural programs overseas.
- Provide increased funding for Mercy Medical Team expansion and support.
- Establish adoption projects for various ongoing ministry areas (Life Ministries, Health Ministries, Older Adults, Housing, and more).
- Increase giving, including donor base for the National Housing Support Corporation. support from major donors, congregational support, and undesignated giving.

LCMS World Relief and Human Care Resources

- The LCMS World Relief and Human Care Web site, www.lcms.org/worldrelief, shares news, resources, and information about events related to the work of LCMS WR-HC. It also now includes links to connect to WR-HC via various social media.
- *Sharing*, a bi-monthly, newly redesigned two-page print newsletter, spotlights disaster response and self-help development ministries of LCMS WR-HC.
- *Caring* carries news and features about LCMS WR-HC work of mercy in a newly redesigned 12-page, magazine-style print newsletter published three times a year.
- *Shepherd's Staff Newsletter*, an annual newsletter, shares updates of WR-HC's mercy work with giving program members.
- Organizational profile describes the what, why, and how of WR-HC's mercy work.

- *50 Faces of Mercy*, a special article reprint from *The Lutheran Witness*, offers glimpses of 50 lives touched by the work of LCMS WR-HC.
- One-sheet handouts:
 - Describing the relationship between WR-HC and Lutheran World Relief, Baltimore.
 - Introducing each of WR-HC's directors and ministry areas.
- LCMS WR-HC videos briefly tell stories of each WR-HC ministry area, including how that work is supported by LCMS congregations and individuals.
- Series of booklets on theological insights added these titles:
 - *Mercy and the Lutheran Congregation* by Theodore Julius Brohm.
 - *Löhe on Mercy* by Wilhelm Löhe.
 - *Mercy in the Old Testament* by Reed Lessing.
 - *Toward a Theology of Mercy: Winning Student Essays for 2008* by Peter J. Brock, Jason M. Gehrke, Mary Moerbe, and Samuel P. Schuldeisz.
 - *The Contemporary Debate on Homosexual Clergy* by Armin Wenz.
- *I Trust When Dark My Road: A Lutheran View of Depression* by Todd A. Peperkorn. (This 100-page book published by LCMS WR-HC offers a rare glimpse into one LCMS pastor's personal journey through depression, while remaining reliant upon God's grace. The book also offers suggestions to help a loved one battling depression.)

Christian Citizenship

- *Mercy Notes*, public policy electronic newsletter on governmental and human care issues, including legislative updates, of interest to Christian citizens.

Chaplaincy

- *A Pastoral Touch*, quarterly online newsletter reaches out to chaplains, pastoral counselors, and pastoral care educators who serve in specialized settings.

Disaster Response

- One-sheet handout describing how LCMS WR-HC responds to the immediate and long-term needs following disasters, both domestically and around the world.
- Disaster response training: videos, handouts, and in-person training sessions for congregations and individuals interested in learning how to effectively respond to a disaster.

Life Ministries

- *Notes for Life*, informative articles about sanctity of life issues (abortion, euthanasia, bioethics, and more), published quarterly and available electronically.
- Life Sunday worship resources, including sermon helps, bulletin inserts, and suggested Bible readings and hymns.
- Asia life video, a five-minute video describing the great need for pregnancy resource centers in Asia and how to help.
- March for Life newsroom, a Web page dedicated to photos, videos, news stories, and videos of LCMS Lutherans' participation in the annual March for Life in Washington DC.
- One-sheet handout describing the work of LCMS Life Ministries.

Deaconess Ministry

- *Mercy Works*, semi-annual magazine, explores ministries and opportunities for diakonia (service to others and care for their needs), including the deaconess ministry. Distributed electronically.
- *In Service to Our Lord*, DVD, spotlights the ministry of deaconesses—women who are called to serve the church to provide diaconal care, including works of mercy, spiritual care, and teaching the faith. Now also available in Spanish.
- Translation of select *Mercy Insights* booklets into Spanish and Latvian.

Districts and Congregations

- *Veterans of the Cross*, DVD, shares the stories of church workers and their families helped by Veterans of the Cross. Through this program, LCMS WR-HC and Concordia Plan Services provide small, periodic stipends for impoverished, aged pastors, teachers, and their families. This assistance is provided so these former church workers can pay for necessities such as gas, electricity, and food.

Social Ministry Organizations

- *Hands of Mercy*, a new Web interface where Recognized Service Organizations can come to share news, find resources, and apply for RSO status.
- One-sheet handout describing partnerships in the Dominican Republic.

Health Ministries

- *LCMS Parish Nurse Newsletter* provides news, networking, and resources for LCMS parish nurses; distributed electronically.
- Parish nurse directory—annually updated directory lists congregational health ministries/parish nurses. Now available online.
- *Are You Ready?* DVD recruits medical professionals for service on LCMS Mercy Medical Teams.
- One-sheet handouts on the topics of overseas medical supply shipments and home-based care programs in Kenya.

Worship Resources

- *Good King Wenceslas (It's All about Mercy)*, Christmas program based on the carol “Good King Wenceslas” with options for day school or Sunday School settings.
- *The Spirit Anointed Christ for Mercy*, an eight-part Lenten sermon and service series, available from LCMS WR-HC. The series is based on Luke 4:18–19 and examines the church’s corporate life of mercy.

Matthew Harrison,
Executive Director

R6-02

Board of Trustees—Concordia Plans Board of Directors—Concordia Plan Services

Description and Background

For 45 years Concordia Plan Services (CPS)—formerly Worker Benefit Plans—has been entrusted with the responsibility of administering the Concordia Plans for LCMS workers and their families. Today, CPS is the benefits provider of choice for more than 6,000 congregations, schools, universities, seminaries, and other organizations in the United States and in mission fields worldwide. Through

these participating organizations, more than 32,000 active workers, along with 58,000 dependents, are covered by the various benefits of the Plans.

In addition to the benefits and programs for active workers, CPS is currently providing pension benefits to 16,200 retirees and also makes available continued health coverage for qualifying pre-age-65 and post-age-65 retirees who were enrolled in the Concordia Health Plan (CHP) upon retirement.

With sophisticated plan designs and partnerships with many well-respected benefit administrators, CPS keeps pace with market offerings to ensure its products remain competitive and sufficient to meet the needs of its valued members and employing organizations.

Key Founding Principle

All aspects of the work of CPS and its ensuing partnerships are based on one key founding principle established by the LCMS Constitution in Article III, Objective 10. Through that objective the LCMS comes together as a whole church body to protect and provide for church workers by stating the need to “aid in providing for the welfare of pastors, teachers, and other church workers, and their families in the event of illness, disability, retirement, special need, or death.” CPS was created, as stated in the Synod’s Constitution, for the purpose of providing comprehensive benefits for workers of the LCMS.

Vision, Mission, Values

CPS walks together with the LCMS by aligning its mission and vision in support of the mission and vision of the Synod.

Its **VISION**: healthy workers serving in healthy ministries.

Its **MISSION**: “walking together” with LCMS ministries and workers by providing quality benefits and services that support workers and their families throughout their service and retirement.

Its **VALUES**: a Christ-centered approach to serving others, applying biblical principles, standards, and practices as an organization and as individuals.

Its guiding principles will be

- **Integrity**—CPS commits to a relationship based on honesty and trust;
- **Compassion**—CPS commits to a spirit of humility and kindness as it serves its members and employers;
- **Excellence**—CPS commits to striving for excellence in the products and services that it offers and in the way it conducts business; and
- **Stewardship**—CPS commits to planning operations that demonstrate good and appropriate stewardship of the resources entrusted to its care.

Assignment from the 2007 LCMS Convention

In preparation for the 2007 LCMS convention, the Nebraska District submitted Overture 5-13 “To Study Health Insurance Coverage for Seminary Students.” This overture was included in an omnibus resolution and referred to CPS and the seminaries for consideration. CPS held several meetings with the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and the Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. Together, participants reviewed the different health plans offered by the seminaries, discussed the concerns expressed by students and others throughout the Synod regarding the existing student plans, and worked to develop a better healthcare package.

Focus groups and surveys indicated that the students were uniformly dissatisfied with the health coverage available to them and were ready for a change. They wanted better service, better value

for the cost, and more comprehensive coverage, including preventive care.

Armed with an understanding of the issues, the group focused on these objectives:

- provide affordable and comprehensive health benefits that will meet the needs of students and their families;
- offer resources and tools to prepare students for a healthier lifestyle; and
- ease the transition from the student plan into the CHP for active members upon graduation.

Option CSS (Concordia Seminary Students)

With the full consensus of representatives from both seminaries, a new plan option was added to the CHP for students and their families at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. The new “Option CSS” was designed to follow the general guidelines of the CHP with benefit programs very similar to those offered to active members.

While the cost is comparable with other insurance plans, the CHP covers much more:

- medical and dental care;
- preventive services, well-child care, and routine exams; and
- prescription drugs.

Additional benefits include behavioral health and substance abuse care, health and wellness programs, vision care, and discounts on hearing care. Coverage is also available during vicarage, internship, or foreign study and following graduation for up to one year if the graduate is writing a dissertation or awaiting a call.

Seminary Students/Families Enrollment Option CSS				
Coverage	Ft. Wayne	St. Louis	Extension	Total
Self Only	110	135	7	252
Self and Spouse	46	57	0	103
Self and Child(ren)	2	1	0	3
Family	25	27	0	52
Totals	183	220	7	410

Serving the Workers and the Work of the CHURCH

The Church's Plan: The Most Comprehensive Benefits Package

In keeping with the commitment to provide for the welfare of LCMS workers and their families in the event of illness, disability, retirement, or death, *The Church's Plan* (TCP) benefit package was introduced in 2006. Employer participation in this comprehensive benefit package continued to grow throughout the past triennium.

TCP consists of all of the Concordia Plans—Concordia Health Plan (CHP), Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan (CDSP), Concordia Retirement Plan (CRP), and Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP)—as well as an additional benefit under the CRP, the Retiree Medical Supplement.

The Church's Plan (TCP) Participation

Members Currently in TCP	23,665
Number of Employers in TCP	3,865

Concordia Retirement Plan (CRP) Participation

Active Members	31,900
Retirees and Survivors of Retirees	13,900
Terminated Vested Workers and Survivors of Terminated Vested Workers	9,700

Benefits Provided by the Concordia Retirement Plan (CRP)

	2007	2008	2009
Primary Retirement Benefits	\$124,913,028	\$135,450,206	\$145,282,056
Supplemental Retirement Account	\$9,676,018	\$11,750,774	\$11,271,716
Survivor Benefits	\$710,805	\$828,712	\$982,563
Retiree Medical Supplement	\$12,129,346	\$12,427,992	\$12,799,975

The CRSP—the 403(b) tax-deferred savings component of TCP—grew substantially during the past triennium. While participation levels hover around 50 percent of those who are eligible, assets in the Plan tell a wonderful story of how those participating workers are engaged in preparing for their retirement. By the end of 2009, the assets of the CRSP crossed the \$100 million mark! The Plan's growth is a result of worker salary deferrals, rollovers into the Plan, employer basic and optional matches, and investment earnings. This is an impressive achievement in just four years.

CPS will continue to focus on planning for retirement and the benefits of participating in the CRSP. It is the prayer of CPS that everyone who is eligible will participate and that all LCMS workers will seize the opportunities available, allowing them to be better prepared for retirement.

Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP) Accumulation

	2007	2008	2009
Employee Contributions	\$17,483,416	\$21,028,270	\$27,053,072
CRSP Basic Match	\$3,984,665	\$4,524,513	\$4,974,272
Optional Employer Match	\$453,190	\$538,223	\$617,818
Employee Rollover Contributions	\$2,873,141	\$1,390,912	\$1,968,741

Pension Plan for Pastors and Teachers

Prior to the CRP, the Pension Plan for Pastors and Teachers (PPPT) was the only pension program for pastors and teachers of the Synod. When the CRP was established in 1965, new enrollments in the PPPT ceased.

As of December 31, 2009, there were 3,700 individuals receiving benefits as retired members, disabled members, or surviving dependents of deceased members.

Benefits Provided by the Pension Plan for Pastors and Teachers (PPPT)

2007	2008	2009
\$11,480,061	\$11,329,294	\$10,900,111

Benefit Consultants and Relationship Building

Recognizing the reality that 6,000 church, school, and other organizations have different employee benefit needs and requirements, CPS introduced a new alignment in its Education and Outreach department in 2007. New roles for Benefit Consultants and Employer Relationship Specialists were designed to provide better support for the employers and their needs.

The new arrangement facilitates the growth of relationships with employers and provides them with assistance in making worker benefit choices and administering the Concordia Plans. This consultative relationship assists employers in making decisions that result in wise stewardship of their benefit dollars.

In 2010, this division will be expanded to serve even more employers by employing two additional Benefit Consultants to provide increased service and contact with employers.

Relational enhancements are also growing with LCMS entities, associations, and recognized service organizations as CPS strives to become a “partner of choice” for these groups. It continues to strengthen its partnership with district offices by working closely with the business administrators and meeting annually at the Joint Business Managers Conference to share new developments and explore opportunities to work more collaboratively with each other.

In 2009, CPS assigned a staff person to nearly every district convention, representing the Plans to the delegates, district personnel, and congregational leaders.

CPS is also a recognized partner with the Lutheran Education Association (LEA), consulting with their leadership regularly and leading educational presentations at LEA annual conferences, meetings, and triennial convocation.

Collaborative Efforts Continue to Grow

CPS continues to collaborate with the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support (CMGS) in wellness opportunities. In April 2009, CPS participated in a CMGS-sponsored Symposium for Ministerial Health and Wellness, which sought to develop wellness markers for healthy congregations. The executive director of the CMGS, Rev. David Muench, is also an integral member of the CPS task force focusing on changing the wellness culture of the LCMS.

In addition to the districts, LEA, and CMGS, CPS has strong partnerships with the recognized service organizations Grace Place Lutheran Retreats and Doxology. And it is strengthening collaborative relationships with Concordia Publishing House, Lutheran Hour Ministries, Lutheran Family Services, the Concordia University System, the seminaries, the Association of Lutheran Secondary Schools (ALSS), Lutheran Social Services, Lutheran High School associations, and Parish Nurses, as well as the Synod’s offices and departments.

Representative of the outreach of CPS to Synod offices is our work in meeting the needs of the LCMS World Mission department. In June 2009, CPS participated in the missionary orientation meetings held at Concordia University Chicago and shared information about the Plans and their benefits with the new missionaries and their families, as well as the special procedures and services in place to handle the unique needs of LCMS workers serving outside the United States.

In early 2010, CPS introduced the International Employee Assistance Program through CIGNA Behavioral Health that provides an opportunity for plan members in 16 countries to access face-to-face counseling. Members can call a special international phone center for free counseling, or use a Web site that provides access to many other resources. (CHP had an Employee Assistance Program in place for

many years, but it was not adaptable to meet the needs of plan members serving in mission fields worldwide.)

Financial and Retirement Workshops

The past several years have seen a marked change in the “face” of the workers serving the church. More and more second career and “non-traditional” workers are filling numerous positions, as many “career” church workers are aging and considering retirement. This, paired with the economic downturn since 2008, has resulted in many workers questioning whether they will be able to retire when the time comes. And many church workers are not sure that the “traditional” retirement pathway is the one they want to follow.

As a result, the need for financial and retirement education has grown rapidly, and CPS is working to meet this need through retirement workshops offered throughout the Synod. More and more church workers are realizing the importance of first understanding their current financial status and then focusing on the numerous benefits that will be available to them from the Concordia Plans as they plan for a secure and fulfilling future.

Workshops and consultations are conducted throughout the country, usually at district-organized seminars and through our collaborative partnerships with Grace Place Lutheran Retreats and Doxology. In many cases, the worker and his or her spouse are invited to attend and learn together. Several day-long financial seminars have also been conducted at the LCMS International Center.

In addition, and in cooperation with the Concordia Universities and the LCMS seminaries, financial workshops are organized for senior students who will soon be considering calls as they embark on their church careers.

Online Payment System for Invoices

An online payment system was introduced in 2007. Employers as well as individuals who are responsible for paying for their own coverage have taken advantage of this quick and convenient method for paying their monthly invoices.

New Technology for Training—Educational Webinars

Beginning in 2007, CPS introduced live Webinars for employers, members, and benefit constituents. Numerous Webinars have been conducted to educate employer representatives about upcoming benefit changes and benefit administration. This method of communication allows CPS to “meet” with employer representatives and plan members with an emphasis on stewardship and convenience. This emphasis will grow in 2010 with the addition of a Training Manager to coordinate all Webinar and online training activity and to implement curriculum for the ongoing continuing education of CPS staff.

A series of on-demand training modules is available on the CPS Web site to provide assistance with administration of the various benefit programs. These modules, targeted for treasurers, business managers, and members, include topics on enrolling new workers, reporting changes, retirement, and participating in the CRSP.

New Health Plan Options Add Flexibility and Address Budget Constraints

The CHP now offer nine options for employer election that encompass three health plan models—two Consumer-Directed Health Plans (CDHPs), four Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs), and three Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs). These options give employers the opportunity and flexibility to evaluate and select the plan model and the deductible level that best suit their needs, as well as to establish personal spending accounts to help workers with their out-of-pocket expenses.

2010 Selections for Concordia Health Plan (CHP) Options

Option	No. of Workers	Percent of Total Individuals
A	2,213	11%
B	7,290	36%
C	5,275	26%
D	2,454	12%
HMO—California	261	1%
HMO—California 2	219	1%
HMO—National	43	0%*
Options Blue HRA	238	1%
Options Blue HSA	1,926	10%
CSS (Seminary Students)	403	2%
Total	20,322	100%

*Less than 1%

Concordia Health Plan (CHP) Options Available and Percentage of Members in Each

	2008	2009	2010
Option A	18%	14%	11%
Option B	47%	44%	36%
Option C	21%	23%	26%
Option D	9%	10%	12%
Options Blue HRA	0%*	1%	1%
Options Blue HSA	3%	6%	10%
Option HMO—National	0%*	0%*	0%*
Option HMO—California	2%	1%	1%
Option HMO—California 2	NA	1%	1%
Option CSS	NA	NA	2%

*Less than 1%

Benefits Provided by the Concordia Health Plan (CHP)

2007	2008	2009
\$180,911,105	\$192,580,968	\$205,460,767

Consumer-Directed Health Plan Models

CDHPs were introduced as a means of helping the healthcare consumer become more aware of the true costs associated with health care and thereby become more involved in the decision-making process with their healthcare providers. Unlike HMO and PPO plans, which can shelter individuals from the actual costs associated with care, CDHPs carry higher deductibles and coinsurance which have a greater impact on individuals' out-of-pocket costs. To help offset the higher expense, these plans were designed to work with "personal spending accounts" that provide tax-advantaged savings for the individuals.

Employers and members have access to SelectAccount, which works with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota to administer personal spending accounts efficiently and at a discounted price.

Access to Health Savings Accounts (HSA), Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRA), and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) was

made available in 2008. Participation continues to grow as employer interest and education regarding the CDHP options increase.

Be Well ... Serve Well Health and Wellness Initiative

The CHP, through CareAllies, continues to provide health and wellness programs for active church workers and their families through the "*Be Well ... Serve Well*" initiative introduced in 2007. While improving the health of workers is the ultimate goal, healthier workers lead to lower out-of-pocket costs for the members, which in turn helps to control CHP contribution rates for employers.

The key to reaching those objectives, however, is participation in the wellness programs. CPS offered an incentive in 2008 in which more than 13,100 CHP members were rewarded with a \$75 Visa debit card for taking their Health Assessment and learning about their health risks.

In addition to print communications, *Be Well ... Serve Well* is promoted through health and wellness presentations and by assisting with health fairs at district and national educator and pastor conferences, as well as the national Parish Nurse Conference.

CareAllies Health Management Programs

Program Title	No. of Participants
Smart Steps Disease Management	9,751
Depression Disease Management	2,185
Health Advisor and Lifestyle Management	4,818

Preventive Care Benefits Enhanced

As part of *Be Well ... Serve Well*, CHP members beginning January 2008 found it easier on their budgets to focus on preventive care and monitor their health conditions through regular checkups and testing. For most options, preventive medical care is covered at 100 percent with no copays, deductibles, or coinsurance (HMO members can incur an office visit copay.)

Some of the services that are generally considered preventive medical care include

- well-baby and well-child care for children,
- routine physical exams and lab tests,
- immunizations,
- vision and hearing screenings,
- mammograms and osteoporosis screenings, and
- cancer screenings such as Pap smears and colonoscopies.

Changes Necessitated by Mental Health Parity Act and Michelle's Law

In order to comply with new legislation effective January 1, 2010, changes were made to the mental health and substance abuse benefits for each CHP option. Essentially, the new legislation requires that coverage for mental health and substance abuse care be on par with the medical benefits. The most apparent change was the removal of daily and annual limits from mental health and substance abuse care. Other changes involved modifications to copays, deductibles, and coinsurance for mental health and substance abuse services.

Another change to CHP provisions as of January 1, 2010, was made to comply with the terms of Michelle's Law. Under the provisions of this legislation, seriously ill or injured college students who are covered dependents in a health plan are able to continue coverage under their parent's health plan for up to one year while on a medically necessary leave of absence.

Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan Updates

A new benefit administrator and case manager, Liberty Mutual, was selected to handle the disability aspects of the Plan beginning January 1, 2008. Among the value-added services provided to members was the weekly issuance of disability checks for those on short-term disabilities. Prior to the switch to Liberty Mutual, all disability checks were distributed monthly.

Also beginning January 1, 2008, disabled members who are members of CHP became eligible for a new monthly benefit if they are enrolled in Medicare Part B and provide proof of enrollment. The benefit was added to help the disabled members pay their Medicare Part B premium.

In addition, Minnesota Life was introduced as the new administrator for survivor benefits under the Plan July 1, 2007. Along with providing many value-added services such as access to complimentary beneficiary financial counseling, will preparation, and other services, the opportunity to offer voluntary supplemental life insurance to all workers enrolled in the Plan was made available January 1, 2009. Thanks to the CPS's relationship with Minnesota Life, workers are able to purchase additional term life insurance at a substantially reduced cost, including supplemental life insurance for the worker's spouse and children.

As of December 31, 2009, there were 31,900 members enrolled in the CDSP.

Benefits Provided by the Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan (CDSP)

	2007	2008	2009
Survivor Benefits	\$5,480,143	\$6,910,298	\$6,869,921
Disability Benefits	\$25,906,731	\$8,353,215	\$7,936,209
Health Benefits for Survivors and Disabled Workers	\$3,483,013	\$5,028,838	\$4,931,407

Serving the Synod through Financial Assistance Programs

CPS continues to administer the Synod's Support Program, which provides financial aid to eligible disabled and retired ministers as well as dependents of deceased ministers. Services include determining the financial need of the applicants, approving amounts to be provided, and disbursing monies through the CPS benefit payment system. Funds are primarily provided through the fund-raising efforts of the LCMS Board for Human Care Ministries and are a part of the Synod's budget. Currently 50 individuals are receiving assistance.

Financial Assistance Programs—Annual Financial Aid

2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
\$423,293	\$398,546	\$327,665

Congregational and Worker Help following Crisis Situations

Due to the devastating effects of Hurricane Ike in 2008, several congregations were provided assistance through the waiver of their contribution payments to the Concordia Plans for a limited period. CPS also has a policy whereby payment or filing deadlines can be extended in the event of a disaster affecting LCMS employers or plan members.

Significant Publications and Communications

Concordia Plan Services Honored for Excellence in Marketing and Communication

CPS was recognized in 2009 for its excellence in marketing and communication, earning six MarCom awards—two Platinum and four Gold. MarCom Awards, an international competition for marketing and communication professionals, is administered and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, which consists of several thousand marketing, communication, advertising, public relations, media production, and freelance professionals. The awards honor outstanding achievement and service to the communication profession.

Many of the CPS marketing and communication pieces earning either Platinum or Gold recognition appear throughout the various communications outlined in the topics below. Categories in which CPS competed were educational publications and handbooks, newsletter writing, creative marketing and promotion, and promotional campaigns.

New IRS 403(b) Regulations for Employers

Revised 403(b) regulations regarding compliance and administration of 403(b) tax-deferred savings plans like the CRSP have had a significant impact on employers and their responsibilities. CPS published several resources to assist employers and workers in understanding the revised regulations and has encouraged employers to take the appropriate steps to be in compliance with the January 1, 2009 regulations. Such items included an eight-page newsletter, employer invoice enclosures, a *Reporter* article, Webinars, and a dedicated Web page consolidating all information provided on the topic.

Health and Wellness Communications

Several communications have been produced to educate and inform workers about the wellness programs and the importance of leading healthy lifestyles:

- *Better Health* and bulletin articles;
- *Concordia Plans Update* newsletter with information about the Health Assessment;
- special newsletter encouraging members to "Know Your Numbers" (with accompanying recording materials);
- letters and brochures to employers and CHP members to increase awareness and encourage use of the CareAllies Lifestyle Management Programs and the Health Advisors Program, as well as the Employee Assistance Program;
- posters to employers promoting CareAllies Lifestyle Management Programs, the Health Advisors Program, and the Employee Assistance Program for their workers; and
- a communication campaign to announce the Health Assessment and reward card.

Health and Wellness Culture Survey

In 2009, Health and Wellness Culture surveys for both employers/leaders and workers were conducted to gain insight into the health behaviors of church workers and into the environments/cultures in which they work and live. The survey results are giving direction to future wellness initiatives and possible incentives to help improve the health habits of workers.

Administrative Guide Books Created for Decision-Making Needs

To assist employers with the administration of the Plans, an administrative series of guide books was launched in 2007, beginning with the *2008 Concordia Health Plan Employer Guide to Choice*. In 2008 and 2009, more guides were introduced:

- *Employer Guide to Personal Spending Accounts*;
- *Concordia Retirement Savings Plan Employer Administrative Guide*; and
- *Administrative Information for Treasurers and Business Managers*.

Educational Material for Employers and Plan Members with HSAs or HRAs

Due to the increased interest in CDHPs, CPS collaborated with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota and SelectAccount to create custom reference guides to help answer the many questions employer representatives and plan members have regarding these new plans. Three guides now exist:

- *Reduce Costs and Promote Health*;
- *Options Blue HSA Reference Guide for Your High-Deductible Health Plan with a Health Savings Account*; and
- *Health Reimbursement Arrangement Reference Guide for Concordia Health Plan Options Blue HSA and Options Blue HRA*.

Expansion of Retirement/Savings Programs and Information Online

Continuing to increase awareness and opportunities for workers as they prepare for retirement is a primary focus for CPS. To complement the efforts of our Retirement Planning Workshop leaders, several communications and features were provided throughout the past triennium, such as:

- targeted campaigns designed to increase awareness around eligibility to contribute to or to maximize the matching contributions in CRSP;
- special mailings to employers and plan members promoting National Save for Retirement Week activities and resources;
- a new newsletter called *Mind Over Money Matters*;
- enhanced online Personal Statement of Benefits complete with retirement modeling capability; and
- special Webinars, online training, and online contribution and match calculators.

CPS plans to continue to grow its communication touch points and interactions with plan members and employers regarding the importance of becoming engaged as early as possible in the planning for successful retirements.

Revamped Web ;Site

In 2007, a redesigned CPS Web site was introduced (www.ConcordiaPlans.org). One new feature is a special section called "Who Am I?" This section pulls the most frequently requested information together in one convenient spot and is organized according to the person visiting the site: active worker, disabled worker, retiree, missionary, survivor, student, and treasurer or benefits administrator.

In addition, the "Resources" section was expanded to include online training, Webinars, reproducible material, and calculators, as well as a convenient access point for forms, newsletters, plan booklets, manuals, and many other features. An informative "News" section was also included.

Significant Opportunities, Challenges, Concerns, and Problems Facing CPS

Recession and Economic Environment Impact on CPS

The CRP, CDSP, and the CHP were in a strong financial position going into the recession, but were not immune from the investment market fluctuations and economic downturn experienced in 2008 and into 2009. While the Plans have benefited from the market rebounds, and are in a relatively good position today, the Board of Directors, management, and staff were forced to make some tough decisions. One decision was to announce a one-percent-of-compensation rate increase for the CRP effective January 1, 2010.

The negative effects of the recession also resulted in no benefit increases from the CRP for retired members in 2009 or 2010. Although we know the recession has severely impacted those living on fixed incomes, the Board and staff felt that the prudent decision was not to add further to the liabilities of the Plan in a time of such economic uncertainty.

Health Care Reform: Status and Possible Impact on CPS

As of this writing, February 1, 2010, we do not know how health care reform, when or if enacted, will affect employers and workers in the LCMS. The late January election of Scott Brown as senator from Massachusetts has changed the course of action. Despite this new development, Democrats in Washington are determined to move forward with health care reform.

What we do know is that our participation in the national Church Alliance gives us voice with Washington lawmakers and the White House. The Church Alliance works to mitigate any adverse impact new legislation might have on church plans. Historically, Congress has accommodated and supported the continuance of church plans nationwide. Through the Church Alliance, we are working to ensure that pending healthcare measures specifically address the unique nature of church plans. If not, there could be significant, negative consequences to church health plans.

New Flexibility of Benefit Selections for Employers

Beginning in 2008, CPS has been investigating ways to add greater flexibility to the CRP, particularly to serve better the needs of shorter-term or non-career workers.

Over the years the demographics in the church workforce have shifted—the proportion of lay workers to rostered workers continues to grow. Many of these are short-term, high-turn-over employees or university professors not on a tenured track. As a result, in the hiring process, employer benefit needs are changing.

CPS has studied and drafted changes that will not affect the existing retirement program but will offer some relief to employers. As of February 1, 2010, these measures are being carefully reviewed by the CPS Board of Directors and representative employers of the Synod (primarily employers with day care operations, preschools, and universities who are recruiting non-rostered faculty).

Please note: The potential options will not be applicable to rostered LCMS workers. Rostered workers will remain covered by the current CRP—the Primary Benefit (defined benefit), the Supplemental Retirement Account, and, if in *The Church's Plan*, the Retiree Medical Supplement.

An LCMS Culture to Embrace Healthy Behaviors for the Sake of the Ministry

A challenge for CPS in the coming years is to cultivate wellness initiatives that influence the LCMS culture in a way that encourages and empowers workers to take charge of their health so that they are better equipped to *serve well* in their area of ministry.

Efforts to reach that end have included establishing a task force consisting of health and wellness experts/consultants, CPS staff, and the Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support. The initial step of the task force was the formation of a nationwide survey to adequately assess the current environment and attitudes about health and wellness among church workers and employers. The survey results revealed workers as having a strong desire to be well, but lacking the time, motivation, and most efficient means to get there.

The next steps going forward will be twofold: (1) encouraging workers to engage the wellness programs that are currently in place—or programs that will be developed—and (2) encouraging employers to establish healthy workplaces that foster and promote healthy lifestyles.

Information Technology Strategy

Since 2008, CPS has been engaged in an Information Technology (IT) strategy project. The overall purpose of the project is to ensure that CPS can deliver on the promises made to its members and their employers using reliable technology.

To help determine what changes were needed, CPS hired CSC, a global consulting and outsourcing company. With the CSC consulting team it became clear that to fulfill unfailingly its commitments to its members, CPS needed to address several gaps, which included improving its disaster recovery and business continuity plans.

The IT strategy generated a number of projects to address the identified gaps, the largest being the outsourcing of CPS systems to a technical systems and server provider outside of St. Louis. Also implemented was the office of Project Management as a way for CPS to be disciplined and structured in its approach to managing change.

Enterprise Risk Study

In 2009, CPS embarked on an enterprise risk management (ERM) study. Risk is defined as the potential for loss or harm—or the missed opportunity for gain—that can adversely affect the achievement of an organization's objectives. By identifying and proactively addressing risks and opportunities, CPS will be better situated to provide comprehensive solutions to the unique needs of LCMS employers and church workers as it envisions the future state of benefits and services.

Executive management currently is reviewing the results of the risk assessment and is in the process of implementing appropriate plans of action.

Activity Highlights

Most Significant Accomplishments since 2007

- CPS closely managed the impact of the investment market downturn on the funding status of the CRP. This required a modest increase of one percent of salary in the employers' contribution rate to the Plan. However, no reductions in benefits earned in the past or future, or for current or future retirees, were necessary.
- CPS outsourced its computer servers and some of its systems to an outside vendor to ensure continued high-quality operations and to protect CPS and the data it maintains in the event of a disaster.
- CPS introduced Personal Savings Accounts to make flexible spending accounts, health savings accounts, and health reimbursement arrangements available to LCMS employers and their workers.
- CPS introduced through the CHP and a partnership with CareAllies, the *Be Well ... Serve Well* health initiative to make wellness and disease management programs available to plan members. This included the *Be Well ... Serve Well* incentive program to increase workers' awareness of their health status, which had more than 13,100 participants.

- CPS provided educational and consulting support to employers and workers to assist them in navigating through the significant and complex regulations issued by the IRS for 403(b) tax-deferred savings plans.
- CPS made health plan coverage available to seminary students and their families, providing comprehensive coverage at affordable rates.
- CPS introduced the opportunity for plan members to purchase supplemental term life insurance at inexpensive group rates.
- CPS redesigned and renovated the CPS Web site to be more user friendly and provide more expanded information.
- CPS implemented enhanced employer and member relations through the hiring of four Benefit Consultants and two Employer Relationship Specialists.
- CPS implemented numerous "minor" changes to enhance the benefits provided to health plan members, with minimal impact on contribution rates (the addition of a vision benefit, 100 percent coverage of all preventive medical care, 100 percent coverage for the shingles vaccine and H1N1 flu shots, 100 percent coverage for organ transplants at specified facilities along with travel benefits, the addition of HMO options in selected areas, and more).

Significant Goals for the Future

- Continue to closely monitor the investment markets and make changes as needed to ensure the long-term funding of the various Concordia Plans.
- Analyze the impact of health care reform, influence change beneficial to church plans, and implement changes as needed.
- Complete a review of the current health plan offering to Medicare-eligible retirees to determine whether a more suitable or less expensive plan or plans can be made available.
- Continue the study to add flexibility in the retirement plan and implement changes as appropriate to better serve the needs of both LCMS employers and workers.
- Continue the expansion of the *Be Well ... Serve Well* health and wellness initiative to cultivate a culture of wellness among LCMS workers and their families.
- Continue to evaluate and implement new product or service offerings to LCMS employers and/or their workers.
- Analyze and implement additional measures as needed to further ensure the security of information and data maintained by CPS.

CPS Acknowledges with Heartfelt Gratitude:

- The leadership of Paul Middeke as President of CPS from 2003 until his retirement in March 2008;
- The CPS Board of Directors members whose terms will end in 2010:
 - Richard E. Beumer, board member since 2001 and board chairman from 2005 through August 2010;
 - F. Mark Kuhlmann, who served three 3-year terms, 2001-2010; and
 - Thomas W. Kuchta, non-voting board member and LCMS Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer, who is retiring from office in 2010;
- The support and participation of LCMS employers, workers, and retirees;
- God's continued blessing on the work of CPS as it strives to serve the needs of LCMS ministries and workers.

Richard E. Beumer, *Chairman*
James F. Sanft, *President*

R7-01

Commission on Constitutional Matters

During the past triennium, the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) has carried out the functions assigned to it by the Synod in Bylaws 3.9.2–3.9.2.2.4. Bylaw 3.9.2.2 states that the commission “shall interpret the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions upon the written request of a member (congregation, ordained or commissioned minister), official, board, commission, or agency of the Synod.” The CCM does not have a directive to interpret the Scriptures or the Synod’s Articles of Incorporation. Matters of theology are, as deemed necessary, referred to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations. Matters involving changes to the Constitution and Bylaws are referred to the Commission on Structure, also as deemed necessary. Still other matters may be directed to another commission or board.

The CCM consists of five voting members: three ordained ministers and two lawyers. The Secretary of the Synod serves as a non-voting member as well as the secretary of the commission. The five voting members serve six-year terms, renewable once. At present, the membership of the commission includes its chairman, Albert Marcis; Secretary Raymond Hartwig; clergy members Philip Esala and Wilbert Sohns; and attorneys Daniel Lorenz and Gordon Tresch.

The method of appointing the voting members of the commission is set forth in Bylaw 3.9.2.1.1. Briefly stated, the procedure is as follows: candidates are nominated by district boards of directors and submitted to the Council of Presidents through the Secretary of the Synod; the council selects five candidates to fill each vacant position; those names are forwarded to the President of the Synod by the Secretary; the President consults with the vice-presidents of the Synod and makes an appointment for each vacant position from the list of names; and the appointments become effective upon ratification by a majority vote of the Council of Presidents.

The Synod has stated since the inception of the CCM that “an opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [c]). Since a process for such an action was not previously set forth in the Bylaws, additional procedure was added to Bylaw 3.9.2.2 by the 2007 convention. Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) states: “Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action.” The floor committee is to view CCM opinions in the same manner in which the CCM renders those opinions, by carefully interpreting the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions.

The commission has also followed the directive given in Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (b) which requires: “The commission shall notify an officer or agency of the Synod if a request for an opinion involves an activity of that officer or agency and shall allow that officer or agency to submit in writing information regarding the matter(s) at issue.” This bylaw has proven to be helpful, but it has also required more time for issuing opinions. The commission has submitted questions to officers, agencies, and legal counsel for information and has allowed time for responses before issuing its opinions.

The CCM continues to work as necessary on amending the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOPM)* for Bylaw sections

1.10 and 2.14–2.17, as well as Bylaws 3.8.2.7.5ff. and 3.8.3.8.5ff. As of the time of this report, the *SOPMs* for Bylaw sections 2.15 and 2.16 remain on the commission’s agenda.

The CCM has spent much time over the past year reviewing the material and bylaw change recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance “to determine their agreement in content and language with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2.1). The commission will also be represented at the meetings of all floor committees for the 2010 convention of the Synod that are considering constitutional and bylaw matters. Prior to the meetings of the floor committees in May, the commission will have examined all reports and overtures asking for amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws.

Following the 2007 convention, the CCM spent time carrying out Bylaw 3.9.2.2.3, which directs the commission to “revise the *Handbook* of the Synod immediately after each convention of the Synod to bring it into harmony with the resolutions or changes adopted by the convention.”

In addition to carrying out its responsibility to interpret the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions, the commission has spent time in carrying out the responsibilities set forth in Bylaws 3.9.2 and 3.9.2.2.4 that call on the CCM to “ensure that the governing instruments of the Synod and its agencies are in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2). The commission continues to review and approve proposed revisions to constitutions, bylaws, and other governing instruments of the districts and other agencies of the Synod. It has also, through its secretary, requested from the various agencies copies of their policy manuals and is presently moving forward in an attempt to evaluate all of them. Due to the time that was required to examine the proposed changes to the structure of the Synod, time will be needed following the 2010 convention to complete this task.

The CCM has been represented on the Commission on Structure for the past three years by its chairman Albert Marcis. Commission members Wilbert Sohns and Raymond Hartwig served as members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance. Philip Esala served on the Res. 8-06 Task Force mandated by the 2007 convention.

Each meeting of the CCM begins with devotional time led by one of its members, asking the Lord to bless its efforts in serving our Synod. During the past triennium, the commission met 16 times and addressed nearly 160 agenda items. Its opinions in response to requests received, as well as several former opinions of particular interest to the convention, are published in Appendix I of this *Convention Workbook*.

Albert Marcis, *Chairman*

R7-02-01

Atlantic District

The Atlantic District is composed of the eastern portion of New York State, including Long Island, New York City (the capital of the world), the northern suburbs of New York City, the Hudson Valley, the state capital region around Albany and Schenectady, and points north to the Canadian border. It is one of the most beautiful geographical regions of the United States, and one of the most densely populated. As Iowa is to corn, so New York is to people.

Mission outreach has been the main focus of the Atlantic District endeavor since the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001. The Atlantic

District theme is “Engaging the World with the Gospel of Hope.” This theme was developed by the president of the Atlantic District for presentation on Sept. 11, 2001, and has been resoundingly affirmed at the district’s conventions in 2006 and 2009.

The Atlantic District’s goals remain:

1. That every congregation be an active mission station;
2. That over the next ten years the active mission stations double to two hundred; and
3. That two hundred homegrown mission leaders be trained and equipped for the sake of the mission.

Each goal is connected to the *Ablaze!* movement.

With regard to the first goal, Atlantic District *Ablaze!* Covenant grants provided close to \$300,000 for new mission concepts in 16 parishes and schools during the past triennium, and an additional \$300,000 has been set aside for 2010. Several congregations have worship services in three or more languages, with a total of 20 different languages in use on Sundays in Divine Services in the district.

With regard to the third goal, there are now close to 100 Atlantic District commissioned deacons. Deacons complete a ten-course curriculum that can also, for male deacons, lead toward pastoral ordination. Additionally, over a five-year period, 32 men and women have been added to the roster of the Missouri Synod in the Atlantic District through colloquy, DELTO (now SMP), EIIT, and alternate route placements. Homegrown mission leaders are abundantly in evidence.

“Witness in the Public Square,” the Atlantic District Mission Society’s annual luncheon in midtown Manhattan, has now brought in over a million dollars for mission-planting resources. Scores of servant trips to bring healing through deeds of love have been sponsored in the district, many to the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. In addition, the district has sponsored an orphanage, a school, and a village’s economic return after the Asian Tsunami, a ministry of love that continues. The parishes, schools, and pastors of the Atlantic District are committed to engaging the world with the Gospel of hope in Christ Jesus through every baptized member’s words and deeds.

David H. Benke, *President*

R7-02-02

California-Nevada-Hawaii District

The 184 congregations of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, have covenanted to serve as priestly communities together under Christ for the sake of the world. We recognize that we often lose sight of those who are still bound as slaves to sin, unable and unwilling to help themselves. For that we daily repent. We also recognize how much we need Christ and each other in order to be the world’s priests as God intended. This need has never been more real than it is right now as we Lutherans in the CNH District find ourselves virtually on the “outs” of our culture and society. We have little if any public voice any more in the affairs of our families, communities, and nation. Once universally accepted standards, such as the sanctity of all human life and the sanctity of marriage, are stressed under constant and vigilant attack. The foundation stones upon which our societies were built have been shaken loose and discarded. How do we sound a prophet’s warning to abandon these dreadful directions when our society turns a deaf ear to our words? How do we offer hope and healing in the crucified and risen Lord when we are not allowed to speak publicly in His Name? We live in a *post-church* world, a world in which our churches hold no significant place in shaping the moral values and addressing the spiritual needs of our present and future society. Increasingly, people look

elsewhere for the help they need to face the challenges of their everyday lives in a broken world. Over the past decade, CNH congregations have experienced overall a 15% loss in confirmed membership, worship attendance, and adults joining our churches through Baptism or confirmation.

So how do we make a difference for Christ in such a world? First, we are humbly seeking God’s Spirit and striving to work together in addressing the many challenges facing us in this post-church era. We recognize that there are no easy answers, magic programs, nor silver bullets for our churches to utilize in serving our communities as faithful disciples of Jesus. I am pleased, however, that in the midst of decline we have grown in the courage and wisdom needed to venture into this post-church world with the confidence that belongs to Christ’s own.

We praise God for the number of pastors and congregations that make Christ’s mission the heart of their ministry. They have responded very positively to the post-church message that we began presenting throughout the district. Understanding more clearly the post-church context in which we live and minister has significantly encouraged many of our people to apply themselves anew to the missionary task. A number of congregations have become motivated to look at their mission contexts in a new way and to ask district/Synod to help them in their missionary outreach. Concomitant with this CNH development was the Synod’s larger emphasis on revitalizing 2,000 congregations for mission outreach by 2017. This emphasis on mission revitalization—known as “Transforming for Mission” in the CNH District—has taken root in over 20 of our CNH churches with the promise of bearing much fruit. Furthermore, we have been blessed to receive in this past triennium several mission-focused graduates from our seminaries and universities, as well as rostered workers coming to us from other districts. “Transforming for Mission” is working, but it comes with a significant price tag of district resources. We’ve begun to understand the needs and structure accordingly in this triennium.

One of the last significant connections that remain between our churches and the unchurched in this post-church era is the education of children. Here is where our Lutheran schools, preschools, and early childhood centers continue to serve as critical mission posts in our communities. Presently, we have 78 schools in our district with over 8,000 children attending. Approximately one third of these children are unchurched. In the last three years we have had 183 Baptisms, 126 adult member transfers, and 219 adult Baptisms or confirmations through their ministries.

To increase the mission potential of this ministry, our schools have begun utilizing admissions counselors who connect directly with the communities in which our schools minister. In each case, these counselors have proven not only to contribute significantly to the enrollment in our schools but also to be a positive interface with the local communities. They clearly understand their missional purpose and potential. Begun as a pioneering effort of one of our oldest congregations, Zion, Piedmont, the service of admissions counselors has spread to every school in our district. Furthermore, our district has taken the lead in the Synod for the promotion of this ministry and the training necessary to implement it.

We have entered a period in our church history where we Christians are not directing the affairs of our world in any significant way. Still, the pastors and people of our congregations take heart in the fact that Jesus owns this part of history too. His promises cannot be shaken, His strong arm cannot be shortened as He moves triumphantly

to the completion of His Father's will—"that all might be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). This post-church era provides us, His Church, with the greatest opportunities of our lives. More now than ever before, we have the opportunity, even the necessity to grow in faith and rely less on sight, to choose the high road of adventure as we follow our crucified and risen Christ into the world instead of clinging to the fleeting safety of our own human plans and structures. Regardless of how shaken the foundations seem to be in this post-churched world, we are anchored by Word and Sacrament to the cross of Christ, which cannot be moved.

Robert Newton, *President*

R7-02-03

Central Illinois District

The Central Illinois District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is beginning its second century of service to the Lord. Our district consists of 156 congregations and several preaching stations, divided into 17 circuits. We have been a strong financial and prayer supporter of missions here at home and throughout the world. One of the highlights in the past three years was to hold a Great Commission Convocation last November, with Dr. Wallace Schulz as the keynote speaker, that included a variety of workshops focused on reaching out to the lost.

We have been heavily involved in outreach and starting new missions. We are intent on beginning a definite effort to launch missions in three areas where we have not had a real presence in the past. We live in challenging times, when people are not just walking in the doors of our churches. The church is no longer among the major values in people's lives. We live in an unchurched culture. We are also not having as many children born into our LCMS families as in years past.

Our district is focused on telling the Good News about Jesus. Some would say we are *Ablaze!* God has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Because of this, we are excited about sharing that message. Our convention theme was "Born Again to a Living Hope," which pointed out to us the purpose for living once we have become God's children through Holy Baptism. We dare not hide our light under a bushel but must let it shine in all we do. We used electronic voting for the first time at our 2009 convention. It was a blessing to deal with elections so easily, allowing the election committee to not have to be away from the convention floor counting paper ballots as was done in the past.

Our district budget is about \$2 million. Of this, about 30 percent is sent in to support our Synod and seminaries. About 50 percent is spent on our district's mission projects. We have five mission congregations (with three more starting up soon), one Hispanic mission, two hearing-impaired congregations, five prison ministries, one ministry to the developmentally disabled, four campus ministries at four of our state's largest universities, and a ministry with our partner church in Latvia. Our campus ministries have been a bright spot in missions. God's Word has touched the hearts and lives of many young people. We have also seen quite a few of our young men from our campus ministries go on to become pastors.

A new adventure this past year has been getting started in the revitalization process. Our biblical Lutheran approach honors the pastoral office and enables the pastor and congregational members to move forward together in serving Christ in their community and throughout the world. We continue to tell others the Good News about Jesus Christ.

During the past triennium we have held a number of visitations around the district, sharing with the congregations what we are doing as a district to accomplish the Lord's work. We also led officers' workshops which were requested by many of our congregations.

In the area of Christian education, most of our congregations operate various volunteer education programs, including Sunday School, VBS, Midweek Schools, confirmation instruction, and Bible classes for all ages. In addition, 54 of our congregations are involved in the operation of 24 full-time elementary schools and four high schools. Another 29 congregations are operating early childhood programs. Sharing Christ with children is one of our priorities.

Our district church camp, Camp CILCA, is operated by the district and the district Lutheran Laymen's League and has experienced some positive changes recently. Even though camper numbers were down a bit in 2009, the finances of the camp improved tremendously. Through the efforts of the camp board and the new director and the blessing of the Lord, much of its debt has been eliminated. Now we look forward to increased numbers in the summer camp program.

During the past three years we have added two congregations transferred to us from the Northern Illinois District—St. Paul of Woodworth and Redeemer of Peru. We also received into membership a new mission congregation—Risen Savior in Buffalo. During this time, we lost two congregations who left the LCMS—Holy Cross of Peoria and Our Redeemer of Forsyth—and sadly closed St. John, Topeka, although its baptismal font and altar are being used at Risen Savior in Buffalo.

There is always much work to be done in the Lord's kingdom. We are thankful that God continues to give us time to reach others with the message of how Jesus Christ paid for the sins of the world by His suffering, death, and resurrection. He has promised that His Word will not return void (Is. 55:11) and has told us He will be with us always (Matt. 28:20). With His promises, we go forward with His blessing.

David J. Buelmann, *President*

R7-02-04

The Eastern District

The Eastern District is the only LCMS district of the original four to retain its historic name. Thus, in 2010, it is privileged to give great thanks to God as it celebrates 156 years of ministry as a district. As it does so, it continues the tradition of transforming lives for time and eternity, of making a difference in the name of Jesus. Included in Eastern District heritage is the first church extension fund, the first foreign language congregations (Polish, Jewish, Estonian, and Lithuanian), the first African immigrant congregation, and the first English-speaking congregations.

We in the Eastern District highly value and provide ongoing support to the innovative visionaries who serve as our pastors and lay leaders, who see the preferred future for the Church of Jesus Christ in New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. We continue to explore ways to help congregations "break new ground..." in their commitment and access the resources needed to impact the communities to which they have been sent. Our vision is to break new ground "...for the mission of Jesus Christ" as we:

1. Foster a culture of wellness for our church workers, schools, and congregations;
2. Inspire and/or direct new ministry starts and models in keeping with the growing kingdom of God; and
3. Promote biblical discipleship/spirituality.

In the past three years, we have moved forward with an initiative to gather groups of small, struggling congregations and help them to start thinking beyond survival and toward transformation. The goal is to examine demographics, pool resources, and talk about sharing staff and expanding vision to become outward-focused, mission-minded, multiple-point parishes. The challenge is to spend necessary time and money equipping, encouraging, and influencing leaders—professional and lay—to help them tap their resources and focus the work of their congregations on mission beyond their walls.

Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center remains one of the high-visibility, high-impact ministries of the Eastern District. Our board of directors recently supported the camp's proposal to establish an office of development to expand its ministry of and to solicit support from those who wish to be a part of a dynamic and growing program for the church and community. The objective, to make Camp Pioneer a primary resource for ministry in the district, is being achieved at an increasing level.

For many congregations, schools and preschools remain the obvious entry point into the community. New funding models will be necessary, constituencies will very likely change, and technology will continue to generate new and exciting teaching methods, but the core values and fundamental truths remain. At the same time, congregations with elementary schools face severe fiscal constraints. To help congregations make their irreplaceable resource a fountainhead for refreshing change and to address other funding needs, the district has partnered with the LCMS Foundation to make the services of a current giving counselor available to congregations to help them explore funding options.

The commitment to mission outreach in the Eastern District demands vision, determination, and a sense of entrepreneurship for the sake of making a difference in the name of Jesus. The Liberian outreach in Philadelphia gathered at *Christ Assembly* continues to grow and raise up leaders, some of whom are now taking the mission to the next generation in planting a new congregation. Similar ventures are being made in the northeast section of that city where a mission director will soon be on site through Philadelphia Lutheran Ministry. The Lord has also blessed the work of *Unity Lutheran* in Pittsburgh through which a new start is taking place for the inner city community beset with economic hardship. Work continues among the Hispanic communities of Rochester and Buffalo, where the Eastern District assists to help make a difference in the name of Jesus. Lay and clergy leaders in other regions are also exploring ways to promote and support outreach mission projects through the support of local congregations. There are a variety of new mission opportunities as well as the support and development of existing ministries.

The Eastern District is committed to the continuous transformation of its congregations so they can make a difference in the name of Jesus in the next generation as they have done in the past. District staff will work with these congregations to help them find ways to grow to be centers of leadership development where dedicated disciples learn to commit themselves to the power of God's Holy Spirit. Newly created learning communities are a source of leadership transformation and support. Also, as congregations bathe their ministry in prayer, they also look for opportunities to form strategic alliances for the purpose of reaching out into their surrounding communities with the message of the Gospel in a style and language that can be understood by those who live there.

Mission-minded congregations will be able to identify their core beliefs, understand their passion, and know what they can do better than anyone else. These will be congregations that reflect their

apostolic nature as places of welcome, worship, nurture, and mission. These will be blessed places on the frontier of a world that does not know about the message that we have, of God's love and forgiveness, a message we want them to hear.

Chris Wicher, *President*

R7-02-05

English District

Ephesians 4:5—“*One Lord, one faith, one baptism.*”

These apostolic words of St. Paul were the scriptural text for the May 15 sermon in 1911 in St. Louis when the English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri was received as the “English District” into the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. In the 99 years that have followed, the English District has provided faithful, fruitful, and unique service in the LCMS. The Lord God continues to bless this district of the Synod, even in difficult economic times of uncertainty and amid huge challenges to Christianity in North America.

The English District is about to celebrate its 100th anniversary. What is unique about our district as a servant and missional leader among the Synod's 35 districts? First, it is one of two non-geographic districts. Second, it is a microcosm of Synod, serving in 17 states and the province of Ontario. The English District is divided into four regions (Eastern, Lake Erie, Midwest, and Western) and proclaims God's Word in 20 different languages within its 156 congregations, 10 new mission starts, five campus ministries, two SYNOD REPORTS ministries, and 64 school ministries. Our Detroit-based staff engages in congregational, school, campus, and other ministry visitation. Students are part of 18 different LCMS high schools in addition to our Valley Lutheran High School in Phoenix.

The English District is unique in having distributed over half of the nearly 100,000 *Ablaze!* cards in the LCMS, encouraging members to be light-bearers for Jesus. This ties in with the district's motto, “*Igniting Christ's Church in Mission,*” and its Mission Statement:

Congregations and schools of the English District, in worshipping the Lord God, are:

Serving in our communities

Connecting with the unchurched and dechurched

Growing in faith and numbers

Reproducing by planting new churches.

The English District continues to be passionate for seeking the “lost” (Luke 15) for Christ, while nurturing the Christian faith in our churches and schools, coaching church workers, and providing leadership development through the revitalization/transformation process.

As a heavily urban district, many of our inner city congregations have declined, while others are increasing numerically under God's grace. For example, inner city Zion Church, Detroit, is growing and reaching out to people at ground zero of U.S. unemployment and underemployment. Another, the Synod's largest congregation, Hales Corners Lutheran in Wisconsin, has adopted two satellite congregations and graciously hosted our 2009 district convention, providing ministry models for congregational delegates. A mid-sized congregation, First Lutheran in El Cajon, CA, is a fine example of off-campus ministry in its community, including adding three mission planters. Many pastors do not see spectacular results but are good, solid, and faithful, helping their flocks be disciples in mission to lead people to Jesus. English District school ministries have witnessed an increase in student population in eight out of the last nine years, opposite the trend in our Synod.

Even though our district staff has been reduced in size and our budget decreased for 2010–2011, our pastors, teachers, lay leaders, and congregations together with district staff are figuring out effective ways to proclaim Jesus Christ in our U.S. and Canadian communities and expand the mission.

The English District has replaced some district communications with an improved Web site, a new missions quarterly, bulletin mission-story inserts, and our “*Servant-to-Servant*” and Parish E-Note communiqués. The *English Channels* monthly continues to tell mission and ministry stories. We share a unique diagram called “*The Church’s Life, Mission, and Ministry*” in Bible classes, congregational assemblies, and pastoral conferences, helping congregations and schools centered on the Lord Jesus Christ to address the foci of worship (*leitourgia*), witness (*martyria*), and SYNOD REPORTS and service (*diakonia*). We also provide care for our workers through an exceptionally talented Ministerial Health Commission.

The 53rd District Convention, noted above, was held June 18–20, 2009, under the theme “*Let the Children Come to Me*.” The district focused attention and theological reflection on Jesus’ words. At the convention, children’s choirs sang and youth delegates distributed 317 hand-made quilts from our congregational members to five different Milwaukee area venues (mercy and youth ministry combined!). Re-elected as English District president was the Rev. Dr. David Stechholz. The elected Praesidium included: 1st Vice President Roger Ellis of Sarnia, ON; 2nd Vice President Wayne Morton of Pinetop, AZ; 3rd Vice President Martin Bangert of Muskego, WI; 4th Vice President Jamison Hardy of McMurray, PA; and District Secretary Robert Fitzpatrick. The newly-elected district board of directors is a bit younger—men and women of different backgrounds and ethnicities. They have a collective zeal for leading the lost to Christ.

New to the English District staff is Mrs. Teresa Fairrow, Planned Giving Counselor and Development Director, deployed in Iowa. Besides Teresa and the undersigned, the executive staff includes Tim Ewell, Parish Services/School Ministry Executive; Dale Lewis, LCEF Vice President; Sally Naglich, Business Manager/Treasurer; and the Rev. David Thiele, Missions Executive/Consultant. The support staff consists of three dedicated Christian women. We are blessed with local volunteers at our district office. One other uniqueness of the English District is the use of the words circuit “visitor” (counselor) and the biblical term “bishop” (“overseer”) as a servant of Jesus Christ along with the title of “president” of the district.

In faithfulness to the Lord of the harvest, we evangelical Lutheran Christians in the English District, LCMS, pledge to work with our sister districts in the LCMS and LCC and in volunteer service in 24 countries. We invite you to share our vision and winsomely share the uplifting joy of confessing Jesus Christ in this second decade of the twenty-first century.

David P. Stechholz, *President*

R7-02-06

Florida-Georgia District

“The love of Christ urges us on” (2 Cor. 5:14)—these words set the tone for our district convention but also serve to guide the mission and ministry of the people and the congregations of the Florida-Georgia District.

The Florida-Georgia District experienced tremendous blessings during the last triennium. It observed its sixtieth anniversary during the first half of 2008 with a variety of activities. A special anniversary service was prepared for use in each of the congregations in February near the actual date of the district’s founding convention. (It

was hard to do it on the actual date, since in 2008 that date was Ash Wednesday!) More than \$320,000 in gifts and pledges were gathered for the Servants for the Future Endowment Fund, to provide student aid for church work students, to support the Concordia House of Studies, and for campus ministry. Almost 200 of our professional church workers contributed to this fund. It is hoped that this endowment fund will continue to grow to provide a steady revenue stream for this important aspect of the district’s work in providing future workers for the church.

On the Saturdays and Sundays of the Easter season, convocations were held in each of the district’s 22 circuits. District staff members were present at each of these gatherings to lead participants in celebrating God’s blessing on the district’s first 60 years. Circuit leaders provided blueprints and resources for “Following in Faith,” the anniversary theme, that each circuit’s congregations might expand their outreach. An inspirational anniversary booklet, “Pioneers of the Faith,” shared vignettes and mini-biographies of 14 individuals and couples who had been instrumental in moving the mission forward. The circuit convocations capped a visitation program that had taken place over the previous four years, when each congregation was visited by a staff member and then representatives from each congregation met in circuit gatherings to consider how they could work together, to share resources across congregational lines to strengthen one another and to collaborate on common endeavors such as planting new missions. Undergirding the entire effort was the conviction that the district would be “stronger together” when the individual members and congregations were wound together as a cable with Christ at its center. Strengthened by partnership in the Gospel, it would find the needed strength to rise to the missionary opportunities God was placing before us.

The district convention saw a change in leadership as Gerhard Michael completed his term as the Florida-Georgia District President, and Gregory S. Walton was elected to serve. The convention was very congenial and provided a great opportunity for strengthening unity in the district and fellowship among delegates.

Sad for the district was the decision of the board of directors to downsize staff, which included terminating the director for the Concordia House of Studies due to financial constraints. While the Concordia House of Studies will continue, the district is in the process of reshaping it to meet the needs for the future. The downturn in the economy, while challenging, has also sparked many new opportunities, including a guideline for reduction in force and a focus on re-examining all that we do to find more efficient and effective ways to do ministry in the name of Jesus Christ. The Florida-Georgia District also has invested considerable time and energy into the Transforming Congregations Network. A pilot program was conducted in the Fall of 2008, and we are only now beginning to learn the result of this. We have trained men and women to serve on consulting teams, and have also done some coaches training. The follow-up and coaching will become a greater focus in the next few years, as we involve more congregations in revitalization.

As we look to the future with new leadership, we continue to strive to encourage “each church [to] be a mission and every member a missionary with all of us working together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, empowered by His Gospel to share His love.” We go into the future holding fast to the words of Jesus, “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.” (John 15:16)

Gregory S. Walton, *President*

2010 Convention Workbook

R7-02-07

Indiana District

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 15:5–6)

God gives endurance and encouragement as well as a spirit of unity as we in the Indiana District strive to follow God's lead with one heart and mouth and thereby give glory to God the Father of our Lord Jesus! We know that by God's grace we can do more together than we can do individually. We always pray for the gift of unity as we share the mission work to be done in the Indiana District. Finally, the Lord who loves and calls us together accomplishes His will among us!

We thank and praise God for the opportunities He has placed before us, and we give hearty thanks for the life and growth that He provides in this vibrant district. He continues to lead us to be intentional and enduring in our sharing of the Holy Gospel in this place. May we remain faithful and determined in all that we do, and may we always glorify Him as we celebrate the bond of faith and love that we share in His name. *The mission of the Indiana District is to encourage and assist the Christian outreach and nurture of its congregations and other ministries!*

Our bond of faith and love in Christ is celebrated in the 238 congregations of the Indiana District and among the more than 1,200 professional church workers! We want to do all that we can "with one heart." These three words from Paul's letter to the Romans provided our theme for our 2009 district convention and will serve as our focus until our next convention.

We are happy to provide this report of God's work among us. May our work always be the outgrowth of God's active grace in this place!

Endurance in Christ

God has provided our district with a president, an outreach executive, a Christian education executive (schools), a congregational services executive, and a financial executive who share the same desire to encourage all in our district to work together in a spirit of unity and endurance. We enjoy the faithful efforts of these executives: Larry Jung, Jon Mielke, Geoff Robinson, and Dr. David Ebeling. The unity and harmony which characterize our joint efforts are a blessing to us and, we pray, the entire district!

Together we have seen and enjoyed the God-given unity which defines our district. We are pleased to encourage a spirit of cooperation among congregations, schools, and a host of professional church workers. We continue to enjoy a healthy relationship with Concordia Theological Seminary, which has its home in our district. Our efforts at maintaining and expanding significant multicultural ministries and our desire to plant new congregations provide exciting challenges that we approach faithfully. We thank God for more than 120 schools (pre-schools, elementary, secondary) that provide daily child and youth ministries. The congregations of our district demonstrated a commitment to faithful and generous giving to the Lord's work on the local, district, and Synod levels!

At our convention this past summer, we also adopted two special mission projects. The first is to help and support our fellow Latvian partners plant an immigrant church in Ireland. The second is the Wittenberg Project. We were able to provide a special gift of \$80,000 for these two projects. President May visited both missions to share our gifts and express our partnership with these two efforts. In the year now past, more than \$8 million was used by our congregations

to build or expand facilities for God's use in mission in our district. These funds were graciously available through the Lutheran Church Extension Fund! These efforts, funds, and expansions are wonderful demonstrations of the enduring unity we have in Christ Jesus! Our district continues to reach out with the Gospel and God has continued to bless us with steady growth.

Encouraged In Christ

We work to invite and encourage church workers of the future to continue in their studies with support from our district funds. We are also a new effort to engage older church workers in their retirement years. Rev. Dave Dubbelde directs "Next Steps," which seeks to match needs of congregations with the strong interest of retirees. Next year, we plan to expand this program to laypeople. This is all possible because of a partnership with the Fort Wayne Lutheran Foundation.

At this time, we also enjoy the opportunity to provide added support for pastors with indebtedness due to student loans and other financial challenges. We have established a *Ministry Excellence Fund* that grew out of a Lilly Foundation grant of nearly one million dollars. This program functions under the leadership of Dr. David Ebeling and a volunteer task force. They review requests and provide grants on a matching basis to those qualifying pastors. We are striving to maintain the corpus of the original grant so that this can be an ongoing blessing in the future.

We are amazed by the growth and vitality of many of our congregations. We see a variety of approaches to establishing satellite missions, daughtering new congregations, and launching new mission starts from some of our larger congregations. We have pastors and circuits working at restarts and new starts in many areas of our district.

We have not been immune to the economic times and we have had to make some spending adjustments this year. We have frozen district salaries and used some "rainy day" funds to continue our work in a financially "rainy economic season." This is what it means to be led by God to endure and encourage one another to work with zeal and unity.

We remain convinced that our working and walking together will be enhanced by strong circuits and cooperative efforts in local communities. Our circuit counselors work hard to encourage this spirit. God continues to bless these efforts as we see a variety of ministry projects growing up in every region of our district.

The effectiveness of these efforts is seen as God combines and uses the gifts and talents of our dedicated support staff in our district office and resource center. The blessings of our support staff are essential to all that we do. They are faithful people with strong professional skills dedicated to the unity we seek in Christ.

We join with Christians everywhere in bringing Christ to an often hostile world. We pray for the congregations in our district and around the world as together we strive to be the best possible stewards of all of God's gifts. We thank God for placing us in this time in history as we strive to be faithful and strong in our witness.

Finally, we thank God for all of the elected leaders in our district who serve as vice-presidents, circuit counselors, council members, task force leaders, and committee members. These people are critical gifts as they share the day-to-day ministry responsibilities in our large and lively district! To God be the glory!

Daniel May, *President*

R7-02-08

Iowa District East

In June 2009, the Iowa District East met in convention under the banner of “Proclaiming Christ in Your Fields of Opportunity.” The proclamation of Christ is stated in Luke 24:46–47: “And He said to them, ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’”

President Gary Arp announced his retirement and the Rev. Brian Saunders was elected district president at the convention. Each committee of the district assists President Saunders and Dr. Dean Rothchild, Assistant to the President, with the responsibilities of advising, helping, and supporting the pastors and congregations of the district as they carry out the mission of the church. At each altar in the district, the pastor preaches and the congregation hears, the pastor officiates and the congregation eats and drinks of the heavenly treasures.

Renewed by the gifts of God in that place, the congregations reflect the incarnate Christ into the communities and cities where Christ has planted them. A concerted effort is being made to assist the “noncalling” vacancies to understand the value of a called shepherd in their midst. Sacrifices from neighboring congregations, creative means of compensation, and deeply dedicated lives to the Holy Ministry are bearing fruit in these congregations. What was once a bustling rural setting for some churches has become a struggle with a poor economy and a vastly reduced population. Each congregation is encouraged and supported in seeing its opportunity to proclaim Christ, even in fields less dense than before. The church of the Word and Sacraments is never a dying church. God is a God of life and uses His saints to reach and teach in ways never before imagined by human minds but grasped by faithful hearts.

We continue the many missions of the district, with two campus ministries, two congregations for the deaf, Camp IODISECA, prison catechesis, chaplaincy at the University of Iowa hospitals, and church-planting opportunities. Our schools are led and staffed by dedicated men and women. The preschools continue to be a blessed source for outreach, and plans for another Lutheran high school are well under way. An ongoing project of the district in Palanga, Lithuania, is nearing completion, where a \$1 million catechetical center will soon be open for men and women to study the Word of God in a land where such study was forbidden not that long ago. When that project is complete, the district plans to focus on other missions around the world, such as in Kenya, Africa, and Siberia, Russia.

President Saunders and Dr. Rothchild are conducting workshops and conferences for congregations and pastors on topics such as “The Healthy Congregation,” “Calling on Inactive Members Using the Hymnal,” “Resolving Conflict with Difficult People,” “The Key to the Revitalization of the Church Is the Office of the Keys,” and “Confessing Christ Where You Live, Work, and Play.” The catechesis of pastors and congregations is bearing much fruit in the fields of harvest. The forgiveness of sins is being preached and bestowed in His name on all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (the home altar).

Brian S. Saunders, *President*

R7-02-09

Iowa District West

“Joy in Serving”

St. Paul wrote,

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. (Phil. 2:1–4)

“Selfish ambition ... vain conceit ... only to your own interests ...” The passage reads like the top news stories of our day. It seems to be the way the world operates. In the church, however, this attitude destroys the unity and leads to conflicts between brothers and sisters. In a church where people turn inward and focus only on themselves and their own needs, there isn’t much interest in missions and ministry to the community—or serving others. It robs the church of her joy.

Paul pleads with us to be the church our Lord has called us to be: “If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion.” There isn’t really any “if” about it. Paul reminds us that we have been blessed with encouragement, comfort, fellowship, tenderness, and compassion as a result of being united with Jesus. We have been forgiven through His cross. We know the love of God! We have the hope of eternal life. It is the precious Gospel that motivates us.

Now our relationship with Jesus has a profound influence on our relationship with others. No longer do we see them as adversaries or opponents, but as brothers and sisters whom Jesus loves and for whom He died. Now we can rejoice with them, encourage them, support and comfort them. Because you and I are on our Savior’s heart, we can express the same kind of tenderness and compassion in our actions—and in our service.

Paul wrote that if all of this is true, “then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose ... in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look ... to the interests of others.” There is “Joy in Serving!”

“The Mission of Iowa District West is connecting, resourcing, optimizing, partnering and serving with the member congregations for the extension of the Gospel within our communities, throughout the district, into all the world” (Mission Statement). During the past triennium, the district staff has had the privilege and joy of serving the congregations and professional church workers of Iowa West. Along with the district board of directors and circuit counselors, we attempted to visit every congregation to “Focus on the Fields,” to share the work of the district, to listen, to learn the needs of our congregations—so that we might better serve them and provide the resources they need to carry out their ministries. As a result of these visits, we have provided leadership workshops for school boards, treasurers, elders, stewardship committees, endowment committees, evangelism and outreach teams, youth leaders, older adults, and rural congregations. We have assisted congregations in strategic planning and revitalization.

We have sought to serve and support professional workers when their service has become stressful and when, through health issues, family matters, addictions, and disabilities, they have lost their joy.

As a district, we continue to generously support the Synod’s mission efforts around the world. By convention resolution, in 2010 we

will forward 43 percent of the contributions received by the district to the national Synod office. Over and above their regular offerings, our congregations and people have adopted special mission projects through Mission Central. In 2008, we conducted a series of “Mission Ignition” events to raise mission awareness and encourage participation in *Fan into Flame*.

Our district’s own missionaries joyfully serve students from our communities and from around the world at Iowa State University; they also serve deaf, Hispanic, Asian, and African people in small towns and suburbs. Through our support for the Los Angeles Nehemiah Project, we have served with our sister congregations in Los Angeles.

Our members continue to serve the victims of hurricanes on the Gulf Coast, floods in eastern Iowa, and poverty in Mexico. They volunteer in hospitals and nursing homes. They teach English as a Second Language. They serve in food banks and soup kitchens. They sew quilts and make health kits. They sort clothing, gather medical supplies, and pack containers for shipment around the world. They build houses. They donate toys so that children can celebrate Christmas. They volunteer at Camp Okobojo. They host booths at county and state fairs. Some serve as volunteer firefighters and EMTs, while others serve in the armed forces. They financially support the work of Lutheran Family Service, Lutherans For Life, Orphan Grain Train, Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and a host of other charities. In the name of Jesus, our people serve in their communities, and they find great “Joy in Serving.”

Paul G. Sieveking, *President*

R7-02-10

Kansas District

“The Servant mission of The Kansas District is to equip, empower and encourage each congregation in its mission vision and Christ-care ministry.”

Grace to you and peace, from our God and Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the resurrected Lord! Amen.

The mission moves forward. Or more appropriately, it journeys toward the cross. That is His story and the story of the last triennium in the Kansas District. There are countless stories to tell about what the men, women, and children of God are doing in this corner of the Kingdom. Space and time do not give allowance for them all. However, this is an opportunity to highlight some of the ways that God has worked through us. I could go on in this report with statistical information and specific reference, but you can get that anywhere in our church. Let me share with you a report which had its beginning in the report that I gave to this corner of the Kingdom in our district convention. I believe it reveals to the church at large, our Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, what we strive to be as a part of the body life of our church.

I would like to spend a few moments drawing the vision for what is a part of our work together proclaiming that message of life and hope into tomorrow. We are formed in our ministries by the three *Ms*. Those are message, mission, and THE means. The good news I have for you is that we don’t have to spend much time defining any of them. Each is a gift of God to His Church. If anything, it is our goal together by the work of God’s Holy Spirit to discover and pursue them.

Too many times the church, meaning individuals, congregations, and our organizations spend way too much time planning and considering what they are going to do, and then turn toward God and ask Him to bless it. I believe that we must be a church that spends our energy discovering what God is blessing, and then commit ourselves

to doing it. That is my prayer over the work of the Kansas District in these days.

There is no doubt that these are formidable days for our work. We begin with the first quotient; the *message* is the unchanged Gospel of our God. We shall always and only stand upon the pure, inerrant, and inspired Word of God. It is the constant as well as the norm for all that we own. We had many references to the Book of Acts in our latest convention, and especially during our devotional time. But one that I would refer to now is also a reference to the Preamble of the Constitution of our LCMS. In the first point of the “Reason for the Forming of a Synodical Union,” it lifts up “The example of the apostolic church. Acts 15:1-31.” From that portion of Scripture we find the pivotal passage in verse 11, “We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

It is the “they are” that propels us from the message into the *mission*.

Three years ago I stood before the Kansas District convention and said that as I look around our mission field I see three areas that I believe draw us into the harvest. These are the areas that I believe invite and should command our investment of energy, emphasis, dollars, staff, and most importantly, the attention of all of our people, even beyond our current levels of work.

At that time I said that they were:

- Advancement in Ethnic Outreach and Embracing the New Mission Population among our Boundaries, including the Military Buildup.
- The Care and Keeping of Workers in the Church.
- Investment in the Spiritual Growth of the Lay Leadership.

I did not suggest any change in those targets, but I did add at least two. The first of those is the “revitalization of our existing congregations.” I have been encouraged by the number of our local congregations who have moved beyond the “how can we survive?” mentality to the critical question of “why should we?” I appreciate the work that the vital church has done to offer help and hope to congregations and ministries to look at themselves and their community with “new eyes” and mission hearts. I honestly believe that this is one of the birthing areas of the mission of the Kansas District, and the “mission hearts” of our DNA is already prepared for this challenge. In the words of a great churchman, “Bring it ON!”

In more than one of our congregations I have visited in the last three years, our congregations considered the struggles of being a “small ministry” with “limited resources.” We have heard these words before. If there should come a day when we have to close the doors as one of the last churches of our community I pray that it is a day that the entire community mourns. If not, why wait? And if that is true, the Lord will grant you new life every day.

Within the second point, and actually it is an expounding of a previous point, is the care and keeping of our workers. I believe that the investment that we all have made in our Kansas District Retreat Place will pay exponential dividends for the ministry of this district. I am not going to steal anyone’s fire from the reports that are part of the larger picture, but I do believe that we have provided a space and a place that will fulfill the theme of that place: “A place where the workers of Kansas District and their families can reconnect to their God, their family, and to themselves.”

The nature of the Kansas District of the LCMS is *MISSION*. Please don’t think that if I don’t mention them all here that any one is less important.

But I didn’t want to close without also speaking the third quotient. We talked about the message, the mission, and we must also put all

these into the context of the “*means*.” These are extraordinary days that our church has not known for decades. And yet we exist under one of the basic stewardship principles taught me through Scripture by one of my father confessors years ago, “You begin every day with every gift and penny that God intends you to have that day.” As we have said before, God invites you into that day under the waters of Baptism. We begin the day then by saying, “Bring it ON.”

Finally, in these days, God puts before us the care and keeping of the workers of our church. Even the most seasoned of veterans in professional church work express to me that these are new days in that service, and days which bring on a whole new set of challenges. I have spent a lot of hours in the study and homes of pastors, educators, professional workers in these past three years listening to both the joys that they feel serving today and the frustrations that sometimes come to a breaking point. The battle in which they are engaged is not new. The Lord is the Lord of the church, and the devil doesn’t like it. But the expectations and demands of that service today have risen. There is no doubt. The doctrine of the call hangs between the balance of a godly union of a worker and congregation. It suffers from a mentality of “hire and fire” based upon personal likes and dislikes, to the tyranny of workers who hide behind the call as an excuse for not examining themselves and seeking personal growth.

All in all, I can tell you that we have an exceptional group of servants of the church here in the Kansas District, who are largely eager to serve their Lord and their church. We continue to be vigorous in the care and keeping of those who serve us as God’s leaders, both those enlisted through the roster of our church and those lifted and elected by our congregations and ministries. Together, we strive to fulfill our calling, “*The Servant mission of the Kansas District is to equip, empower and encourage each congregation in its mission vision and Christ-care ministry.*”

In Christ’s Service,

Keith E. Kohlmeier, *President*

R7-02-11

Michigan District

“Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9–11). As the Michigan District gathered in convention in June 2009 under the theme “*Celebrate Jesus*,” it was both humbling and exciting to think back over the past triennium and celebrate His presence.

Since 2006, seven new missions have been established. We praise God for the success of the 125th thank-offering *The Future Is Now* in partnership with *Fan into Flame*. With the three main objectives of the thank-offering being mission starts, support for Michigan students, and international ministry, many generous donors have made it possible to continue mission starts in Michigan. There are also ten new mission sites that are in varying stages of implementation.

During the 2009 convention, the two documents “*Partners in Ministry: Ethical Conduct for Congregations*” and “*Partners in Ministry: Ethical Conduct for Professional Church Workers*” were approved. At the request of many, these documents were mailed to every district office for study, use, duplication, and so on.

Due to term limitation as per the Michigan District Constitution, President C. William Hoesman completed 12 years in office as president of the Michigan District. His service has been blessed by God

throughout the Michigan District and the Synod as well. Pastor David P. E. Maier, elected district president on the first ballot at the June 2009 district convention, began the duties of the office in October 2009.

The Michigan District is most blessed with the desire to follow the promise of God in Proverbs 22:6, “*Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.*” Students attending one of the 8 high schools, 84 elementary schools and 154 preschools are challenged academically, physically, and, most importantly, spiritually, as they learn of God’s love for them. Although funding continues to be a major challenge, the dedicated teachers and staff of our schools continue to share the love of Jesus with each child in their care. Michigan is also thankful for Concordia University, Ann Arbor, as future church workers are trained for Christian service.

The Church Extension Fund (CEF) of the Michigan District is separately incorporated from the district. Organized in 1901 under the laws of the State of Michigan as “Church Trustee Corporation,” the CEF is governed by its nine-member Board of Trustees elected by the Michigan District in convention. Mr. Ronald L. Steinke is the president and CEO of the fund, serving in that capacity for the past 15 years. At the end of its most recent fiscal year, December 31, 2009, total assets of the Fund stood at \$264.3 million, with total net assets of \$44.2 million, representing a strong capital ratio of 16.7 percent. The CEF in Michigan has experienced steady growth since the last report to the LCMS in convention, when total assets equaled \$256.8 million on December 31, 2006. It offers a menu of options for the investor and is the main provider for the borrowing needs of congregations, schools, and other entities of the Michigan District.

As we look to the future, we celebrate in the midst of a challenging context in society. These times would seemingly not lead to celebration but rather to anxiety, fear, and hopelessness. However, in the face of such we recall God’s invitation to turn to Him, “Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matt. 1:28). Therefore, as we remember the words of our 2009 district convention theme, we focus on the “basics” to simply “celebrate Jesus” through a regular use of His Word and Sacraments.

David P. E. Maier, *President*

R7-02-12

Mid-South District

The ongoing mission of the Mid-South District continues to be expressed in these words:

“As an alliance of congregations and schools, the Mid-South District provides leadership, resources, and encouragement for reaching the lost for Christ’s Kingdom.”

For its 2009 convention, the district chose the theme: “Fishers for Christ—Casting our Nets” based on Luke 5:1–11. The theme provided the opportunity for the district to have a very mission-focused convention and for delegates to think and talk about how we can be “fishers for Christ” in our own communities in our post-Christian world.

During the past triennium, the board of directors made the transition to policy-based governance and called a new executive assistant to the president, Rev. Todd Jones, whose focus is on congregational health and outreach. The board of directors also made changes and updates to the strategic plan which had been presented to the 2006 convention. The plan, however, continues to focus on the same five critical targets:

Laity: A nurtured and equipped laity, vigorously using their God-given gifts and abilities to intentionally reach out to the lost with the

Gospel and effectively serve in their congregations, communities, and the district.

Professional Workers: Equipped and effective workers with hearts on fire, providing leadership, training, and inspiration to their congregations and schools for the work of sharing the Gospel.

Congregations: Strong vibrant, Spirit-filled congregations compelled by the love of Christ, selflessly supporting, encouraging, and networking with each other in expanding healthy, fruitful ministries and planting new congregations to better reach the lost with the saving message of the Gospel.

Schools/Early Childhood Centers: Christ-centered, academically excellent education programs, viewed as mission outposts, intentionally embracing students, their families, and their communities with a Christ-like love and the saving message of the Gospel.

Mission-Focused Unity: District and congregational leaders, staff, and members clearly understanding, enthusiastically affirming, and actively working together to accomplish our corporate mission and vision.

At the 2009 convention, delegates renewed the district's partnership with the East of Lake Victoria Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Each year a mission team made up of clergy and laity goes to Tanzania to strengthen this relationship.

The district is in the process of once again giving a greater emphasis to church planting and has committed itself to a new approach to church planting, which involves church planters receiving additional training at a mission training center before beginning a new church plant. The district has also seen an increase in the number of congregations participating in the revitalization process and of pastors getting involved in learning communities.

The Mid-South District is striving to help its congregations and schools, professional workers, and laity see themselves as missionaries and to develop a sense of urgency about the mission God has given to us. To that end, the district is providing leadership, resources, and encouragement for congregations and schools to develop an outward-focused vision for ministry that can provide opportunities to connect and build relationships with unreached people in their communities.

Ken Lampe, *President*

R7-02-13

Minnesota North District

One Message:

It is a privilege to share what the Lord has done in and through the Minnesota North District during the past triennium.

The theme of our District convention in 2006 was "Living and Forgiving as God's Holy People: In Peace, In Mission, In the Word... Through Christ" based upon Col. 3:12–17. In 2009, the theme of our district convention was "Make a World for Christ My Goal" based on Acts 1:8. We have witnessed through the Word of God, through the Sacraments administered, through the preaching of the Law and the Gospel—the death and the resurrection of the Lord. Through these means we have been called to repentance and granted the gift of forgiveness that is life and salvation. And we are now called to witness to the blessing of redemption which Christ has won for us. It is with this Gospel message of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection that we reach out to a world that is lost and condemned.

One Mission:

"Tell the Good News," "Becoming Northern Lights," "Minnesota Ablaze!" and "Equipping to Share" are outreach training events that

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have been held to assist congregations and individuals in their efforts to witness.

A Mission Partners Summit II was held on March 30, 2008, which included representatives from the district board of directors, the divisions and committees of the district, the LLL, and LWML, the Oswald Hoffmann School of Christian Outreach (OHSCO), Good Shepherd Lutheran Community (Senior Care), and others. The focus of the gathering was to discuss the mission the Lord has given us and explore ways by which all parts of the district might collaborate in carrying out that work.

"Hearts for Jesus" is an opportunity for the children of our Sunday Schools, Vacation Bible Schools, and Lutheran preschools and elementary schools to support mission projects such as the ministry of missionary John Muhly in Moscow and the work among the Anuak people at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sauk Rapids, MN.

The congregations of the district continue to support efforts to begin new ministries. At the present time, we are working with the Minnesota South District in looking at the Otsego area for a potential new mission start. We also continue to support ministry to the hearing impaired, to Native Americans (on two reservations with two called workers), and to students (six campus ministries).

Workshops have been held and resources have been provided for our rural/small town congregations in an effort to strengthen their witness and outreach efforts.

A technology workshop was presented to help reveal new ways that the message of Christ can be shared.

The Minnesota North District has embarked on a mission appeal entitled "Make A World For Christ." Its goal is to raise an initial \$1.35 million to improve and expand the facilities of Lutheran Island Camp and to support the work of three overseas missions: the "Wittenberg Project"; Concordia Seminary in Nagercoil, India; and health care centers in Africa.

One People...

The parish nurses of our district have been involved in serving within their respective congregations and also within our district. They have organized workshops on dealing with sexual abuse; provided Christian care and counsel for church-worker training; and offered mental health conferences ("Mental Illness/ Addictions"; "Help End Abuse with Respect and Trust" [HEART]; and "Sowing the Seed—Rural Health Ministry") as well as a Church-Worker Wellness Conference.

Donald J. Fondow, *President*

R7-02-14

Minnesota South District

Gathered under the theme "Transformed for HIS Mission" based on Romans 12:2 "*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,*" the Minnesota South District met in convention at Concordia University, St. Paul, MN, for its triennial convention. Rev. Dr. Lane Seitz was elected district president for his seventh consecutive term during the June 2009 gathering.

During the past triennium, the district has been faced with many challenges and opportunities to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ into a society that reflects more and more the reality of being one of the world's largest mission fields. Minnesota has become one of the largest settlement states for ethnic immigration in the United States. In addition to receiving four new Anglo congregations into the district (one a partner mission start with the Minnesota North District),

focused efforts were made to reach new ethnic immigrant populations. A Sudanese congregation was accepted into membership. New ethnic mission ministries were begun to reach Ethiopian, Hmong, Liberian, Hispanic, Swahili, Chinese, and Sudanese people. Annual mission summits have been sponsored to challenge attendees to engage in missional thinking in their congregational and personal lives. Campus ministry programs are provided at Minnesota State University in Mankato and the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Two well-attended theological convocations were held during the triennium, one focusing on the theology and practice of Holy Communion and the other looking at “Worship—Uniformity or Diversity.” Additional convocations are being planned for the next triennium, the first of which will study the issue of the service of women in the church.

The district completed and implemented a circuit and regional realignment process designed to provide a more equal representation of communicants and congregations within the district, and to avoid the need for special exception requests for representation at Synod conventions.

Christian education remains a priority for congregations of the district. While eleven schools and daycare centers closed during the triennium, eight new schools and preschools were begun during the same time.

The Minnesota South District is committed to developing missional leaders in its congregations and schools. It seeks to be a unified network of people and congregations actively engaged in the mission of Jesus Christ. As part of its commitment to the *Ablaze!* movement, the district is working towards its goals of making 300,000 new disciples, beginning 50 new mission congregations, revitalizing 50 congregations, and establishing 250 new congregational ministries by 2017. To help support these goals, the district’s “It’s Time to Fish” campaign has raised nearly \$300,000 from congregations and individuals, funds currently dedicated to supporting ethnic ministries within the district. In an attempt to raise awareness of these outreach efforts, the district has sponsored five annual “Taste of Ethnic Mission” events.

A devastating flood afflicted the southeastern part of the district in August 2007. Congregations of the district, as well as other entities, responded to the needs of people and congregations in a generous way. A generous outpouring of funds and volunteer hours enabled many people to return to their homes and a number of district congregations to continue their ministry despite the physical damage from the flood. To God be the glory for these and many other outpourings of love to assist people in trouble. The Lutheran Counseling Center is supported by the district to provide counseling services to troubled people.

Opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ abound both within and outside the Minnesota South District. The district continues to work to meet the challenges God has laid before us, for the glory of His name.

Lane Seitz, *District President*

R7-02-15

Missouri District

“Faith Aflame: Communicating the Gospel” was the theme for our 2009 Missouri District convention and serves as the theme for the current triennium. By God’s grace and mercy, it is the goal of this district to communicate the Gospel throughout the state of Missouri

and to the ends of the world, knowing that it “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16 ESV).

President Mirly’s report to the seventeenth convention of the Missouri District emphasized the many mission initiatives that began during the just-completed triennium and encouraged congregations, full-time workers, and lay leaders to be prayerful, intentional, and deliberate in carrying out the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Synod President Gerald Kieschnick, through a video report, shared with the delegates highlights of LCMS mission efforts and his passion and vision for the future. He emphasized the importance of the recommendations by the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) and answered questions that were submitted by convention delegates.

LCMS World Mission missionary Patrick O’Neal, serving in South Korea, presented exciting news about the expansion of his mission efforts into North Korea. Res. 1-01 was then presented and adopted by the delegates, committing the Missouri District to partner with LCMS World Mission’s efforts to begin mission work in North Korea. Res. 1-02 was also adopted, urging congregations and groups of congregations to consider starting new missions.

The delegates also passed Res. 2-01, requesting that the Synod’s 2010 convention direct the CTCR to “review critically all the recommendations in its 1994 report and their basis in its 1985 *Women in the Church* document in light of the seminaries’ input and scholarly studies concerning relevant biblical passages (many aided by ancient literature databases) that have appeared since 1985.” Also adopted was a resolution asking that the Synod’s convention direct the CTCR to “restudy guidelines for participation in civic events.”

The convention gave special recognition to Mr. Roger Mailand for his long and faithful service and leadership as executive for Family Life and Youth Ministry.

Missouri District circuits were realigned by the delegates to be in conformity with the Synod’s Bylaws. The number of circuits was reduced from 29 to 28.

Rev. Jon Braunersreuther of the LCMS President’s Office represented the BRTFSSG, giving a prepared presentation to the delegates that explained the task force’s proposed structure changes. Many questions were asked and suggestions made.

Rev. Dr. Ray G. Mirly was elected to serve a second term as Missouri District President; Rev. Alan Wollenburg was elected First Vice-President; Rev. Dr. Ken Schurb was elected Second Vice-President; Rev. Dr. Ron Rall was elected Third Vice-President and Rev. William Marler was elected Fourth Vice-President.

The state of Missouri continues to be a destination point for many ethnic groups newly arriving in the United States. Active ministries are reaching immigrants from China, Bosnia, India, various countries from the continent of Africa, and other parts of the world. The Hispanic population continues to grow rapidly.

Great emphasis has been given by the district board of directors and staff to rural and small-town ministry and urban ministry.

Mission Advisory Groups, associations of mission-minded congregations, continue to develop new missions and ministries to reach out with the Gospel.

Mr. Peter Krege joined the district staff as Director of Financial Planning and Control, replacing Mr. Michael Earickson upon his retirement.

Statistically, the district numbers 302 congregations, with 135,000 baptized souls served by 293 parish pastors. There are also 58 elementary schools (9,800 enrolled), 52 early childhood centers not affiliated

with elementary schools (3,180 enrolled), and seven high schools (1,745 enrolled.) The number of sole pastor vacancies has averaged less than ten, and the number of vacancies not actively calling a pastor has averaged 21.

The population of the state of Missouri continues to grow. Like most states, Missouri has experienced significant difficulties due to the economic recession. In turn, many congregations have encountered financial challenges. Several congregations have reduced the number of full-time staff, including ordained and commissioned ministers of religion.

The Missouri District, under God's guidance and blessing, is committed to proclaim the Gospel and administer the Sacraments faithfully. Our prayer is that the members of the congregations of the district and all who hear the Gospel will grow in God's grace and faith in Jesus Christ.

Ray G. Mirly, *President*

R7-02-16

Montana District

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for He who promised is faithful." This (Heb. 10:23) was the theme of the 2009 Montana District convention. We are confident that since our faithful God is holding fast to us in Christ Jesus, He will also keep us holding fast to the confession of our hope. The purpose of holding fast to the confession is so that the Gospel may be heard and that people may be brought to and strengthened in the faith by it. The Lutheran Confessions tell us that the chief article of the Christian faith is justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Another way of saying this is: Lutherans believe that the main thing is the Gospel of Jesus. When Lutherans say, "Let's keep the main thing, the main thing" it means that we are being held fast to our confession. God is faithful. He will see to it that the Gospel does its work. The "main thing" could never be something we do, or a manner in which we respond. The main thing is not our participation in the mission of God. To speak in this way is to replace an act of justification (God's act to save us) with an act of sanctification (God's act in us to lead holy lives). If our actions, even those by which God is at work in us, become the main thing, then the Gospel will not be heard in its truth and purity.

Lutheran doctrine is carefully structured for the sake of the Gospel. We believe, teach, and confess in such a way that the Gospel may be heard and people brought to and strengthened in faith by it. In today's world, the Gospel is under attack. Jesus, if He is regarded at all, is taught as just one among many good teachers. Even many who claim to be a part of the Church do not confess Him as God and Savior.

How shall we respond to these attacks? Let me encourage you not to panic. The response of fear is idolatry. It is a fearful, idolatrous response to suggest that we are responsible to "save" the true confession. Such a response means that we are afraid that God is not able to preserve His Church. The proper response to the attacks that the Church is experiencing now is a confident, bold, faithful proclamation of the Gospel. We need not search for worldly success in terms of the response. God calls us to hold fast to the confession of our hope and to let Him take care of the results, for He who promised is faithful.

God has demonstrated His faithfulness to the Montana District in many ways during the past triennium. He has sustained our congregations to grow and thrive in their proclamation of the Gospel. He has protected and strengthened our pastors in their proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. This is no

small wonder. Over 50 percent of our congregations are in declining population centers. This creates considerable pressure on those congregations to continue as proclamation outposts. As a result of these demographics, over 50 percent of our congregations are also in multiple-congregation relationships. Consequently, we are seeking new and creative ways to maintain the centers from which the Gospel is proclaimed in Montana.

We are also seeking to expand the number of centers from which the Gospel is being proclaimed. Our Missions Committee has been charged with the job of examining the 12 communities in Montana that have a population of 1,500 or more where the LCMS is not represented. In other parts of the Synod, such small communities may be overlooked. This is what we have to work with in Montana, and the Lord has seen fit to bless us. In January of 2010, we installed a missionary at large to begin work in a western Montana valley for the purpose of starting a new congregation. In addition, we have five congregations that have begun Lutheran day schools in the past triennium. These are also considered to be mission outposts.

God's faithfulness was also shown in that He received the Rev. Dr. George Wollenburg into eternal rest during the last triennium. President Wollenburg faithfully served the Synod for 51 years. His death was a great loss to us, but a great gain to him.

We in Montana remember the LCMS in our prayers. As we look to the future, we know that He will hold us fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

Terry Forke, *President*

R7-02-17

Nebraska District

The mission of the Nebraska District is to resource congregations, leaders, and related organizations in their mission of discipling the saved and proclaiming Christ to a lost and changing world.

The Lord has blessed the Nebraska District during its 128 years with congregations who preach the true Word of God and administer His Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as well as Lutheran schools who teach the truths of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

The 2009 convention of the Nebraska District continued with an *Ablaze!* outreach theme. The theme for the 2009–12 triennium is "Conversations of Grace" from Col. 4:5–6, "*Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*"

LCMS President Rev. Gerald B. Kieschnick preached an outreach sermon at the opening service of the 2009 convention and reported to the convention on the mission and ministry of the Synod. Convention essayist Rev. Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus III helped all in attendance to understand the post-church post-modern culture mission field in which the church serves the Lord. He also began unpacking from the Scriptures a theology of diversity to help all in their Christian conversations of grace seasoned with the salt of biblical unity and relational harmony. The convention was pleased to welcome its first Sudanese lay delegate from the Sudanese Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mission, Omaha, Nebraska. The convention also welcomed delegates from three new congregations, 1C Mission Church of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod of Columbus, Word of Life Lutheran Church of Lincoln, and The Rock Lutheran Church of Seward. Praise be to God! The convention included a mission festival dinner with Nebraska missionaries giving inspiring presentations led by Gary

Thies, a wonderful LCMS Mission Awareness Developer. The convention continued its partnership with the emerging Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan through LCMS World Missions, with the intention to partner further with various LCMS agencies to help this emerging church to grow. During the convention the district realigned its circuits and added a new circuit in the Lincoln area bringing the total number of circuits to 23 in four regions. The district's board of directors has sought the Lord's guidance to develop and monitor a strategic plan for resourcing its congregations, schools, missions, and professional church workers in their mission to disciple the saved and reach out to those without Christ.

It was a joy for the convention to meet in the newly completed arena of the Health and Human Performance Center on the campus of Concordia University in Seward, where students are prepared for servant leadership for the church and world. The Nebraska District and Concordia University, Nebraska continue a strong partnership in the Gospel.

Nebraska District President Emeritus Eugene Gierke and his wife, Linda, were also present and were recognized and thanked by the convention for their faithful service. President Emeritus Gierke currently serves as the Promotions Director for the Nebraska District Lutheran Church Extension Fund.

The Nebraska District is blessed with 247 congregations, 41 Lutheran elementary schools, 4 Lutheran high schools, and 39 preschools. Thanks be to God for the dedicated members of Northeastern Nebraska who have labored to open a new Lutheran School on the Winnebago Native American Reservation where the district has had an outreach and preschool ministry for 15 years.

God continues to provide amazing opportunities to share His grace in the person and actions of Jesus Christ. All areas of Nebraska have many people who are in need of the saving news of salvation from Jesus. Nebraska is experiencing some population growth in a few communities, as well as a growing population of Hispanic, African, and Asian immigrants. The African Sudanese population in Nebraska has become the largest in the United States, and Sudanese Lutherans participating among Nebraska District churches continue to be great blessings. Campus ministries in Nebraska offer to university and college national and international students the Good News of salvation in Jesus.

Nebraska District congregations and schools continue to be moved by the Holy Spirit to be involved in personalized mission. Youth and adults are active in mission servant events in the district and on international mission fields. Pastors, teachers, and directors of Christian education are teaching and serving on various mission fields. Nebraska District pastors who serve as military chaplains have been deployed to war zones and disaster sites. The Orphan Grain Train, based in Norfolk, Nebraska, continues its worldwide SYNOD REPORTS ministry. The Nebraska District and Iowa District West partner to involve congregational members and church workers in personal mission prayer, financial support, and servant events through the work of Mission Awareness Developer Gary Thies and Mission Central in Mapleton, Iowa.

The Nebraska District is also working together with the Nebraska Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer quality SYNOD REPORTS service through Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska.

The four district vice-presidents and 23 circuit counselors assist the district president in his supervision and services for the professional church workers, congregations, schools, and missions of the district. The district also provides church worker health care to its

ordained and commissioned professional church workers through Rev. Mark Rockenbach, who serves as Executive Assistant to the President for Church Worker Health.

The LCMS Foundation Gift Planning and Lutheran Church Extension Fund are special blessings in the Nebraska District. The district has participated in a pilot project of the Synod to test a model for planting churches called the Association of Related Churches. The district is also participating in the Transforming Churches Network for revitalization of the congregations.

Christian stewardship is once again being emphasized around the district. The District Stewardship Committee has hosted special stewardship equipping conferences during 2008 and 2009. The Nebraska District participated in Synod's *Fan into Flame* campaign to support its *Ablaze!* outreach emphasis. The Nebraska District has been amazed by the Lord's outpouring of generosity among its congregations and individual members. Nebraska District gifts and pledges total \$3,520,772, of which congregations contributed \$1,448,772 and individuals \$2,072,000. Gifts returning to the Nebraska District thus far as part of the *Fan into Flame* campaign are \$136,302.14. The gifts are being used for new work to help revitalize congregations, plant new churches, provide Lutheran education scholarships, and assist the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan. All praise to God!

Many rural and small town areas of Nebraska are experiencing population decline. Still, opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus are present. But this is not without challenges, which call for reliance upon the Lord.

The District continues its Lay Leadership Program in partnership with Concordia University in Seward to train congregational members for special service in assisting their pastors, teachers, and DCEs.

The Nebraska District continued to host its *Ablaze!* events called "Prairie Fire" in order to provide a large selection of equipping workshops and seminars for laity and church professionals for Christian outreach. Keynote speakers included Synod President Rev. Gerald Kieschnick and Rev. Scott Snow, former Director of Outreach for LCMS World Mission.

As the Nebraska District looks to the future, congregations, schools, pastors, missionaries, teachers, other commissioned workers, and lay leaders are asking the Lord to make us *wise in the way we act toward outsiders; making the most of every opportunity to let our conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that we may know how to answer everyone.*"

Russell L. Sommerfeld, *President*

R7-02-18

New England District

The 15th regular convention of the New England District truly lived out its theme, "Ignited in Christ to be Ablaze in HIS Mission!" The atmosphere and spirit of our 2009 convention was truly one of unity in being about the mission of making disciples. A total of 87 percent of our congregations were represented by their voting participation.

The convention adopted the five-year "Mission Blueprint for the New England District," approved by the Board of Directors during the last triennium. The blueprint was created to formulate the vision, craft the strategy, and identify the resources that will guide and focus the district's mission through the year 2012.

The blueprint has three vision categories. The first vision is a culture change on the district, congregation, and pastor levels that places mission outreach as a priority. The second vision is the development

of a specific number of new mission initiatives within the district. The third vision is increased mission outreach beyond our district's boundaries.

Vision 1 includes the goal of every circuit initiating a new church start, with the necessary resources to make it reality. It also includes at least one-half of our congregations growing by at least five percent in their worship attendance. Among other goals is that at least 15 of our pastors travel to our international partner church in Kenya for a short-term mission trip (eight have done so thus far). Additionally, it is our goal to have at least one-half of our congregations involved with short-term mission trips.

Vision 2 includes such specific goals as at least 20 cross-cultural VBS programs over the five years and the conduct of "Daughter Church Planting Seminars" to help enable renewed church planting in our district (two have been held so far).

Vision 3 includes the above listed goals of Kenya mission participation and a continuing encouragement to reach out creatively to the needs of those around the world who need so much, not the least of which is the Gospel.

Our mission goes forward with the contracting of Rev. William Meyer to serve in a part-time capacity as our mission executive and to coordinate our revitalization or Transforming Churches Network (TCN) program. We have begun five "Learning Communities" involving 35 (one-half) of our district pastors. We have completed three congregational consultations and have trained two lead consultants, while also training four coaches. The Learning Communities have gone a long way in helping us create a growing culture that does not allow us to forget the unbelieving world all around us.

Ethnic ministry continues to present many possible open doors for reaching out with the Gospel. Ministry to Brazilians, Hispanics, African immigrants, Koreans, Chinese, and Asian Indians continues to be opportunities for us in various parts of the district. In several cases, ministry is already taking place, and in other areas we are fervently seeking the resources to engage in these much-needed ways of outreach.

Church planting is very much on our radar screen. We are presently supporting our congregation in Acton, Massachusetts, as it has begun to plant a new church in the western suburbs of Boston. Vicar Eric Sahlberg has been assigned as a church planter, with the hope of calling him this year to continue this work of creative church planting. We are convinced that church growth best happens through new church plants.

A brief look at statistics reveals that we have had 21 pastoral vacancies during the past triennium with 19 installations and 10 ordinations. The ordinations included two DELTO students and one colloquy candidate. We have five Lutheran elementary schools and 24 preschools or early childhood programs.

We continue to work at building and creating an atmosphere of care and trust between pastors, other church professionals, and congregations. Being one of the smaller districts, there is a sense of family here in our district. Pastoral conferences hopefully allow for an environment of open sharing and encouragement. We also continue to offer pastors' wives retreats and appreciation gatherings for our Lutheran schools and staffs.

Being a partner in our beloved Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod continues to be a joy for us here in New England. Whether it be *Ablaze!* or *Fan into Flame* or just celebrating together our scriptural and confessional understanding of what it means to be the church in mission, we desire to walk together in nurturing the flock and reaching the lost. May we rejoice in celebrating our unity and partnership

through this convention and all the evangelical outreach that shall result from our resolutions and conversations. To God be the praise and to us be the enabling power through Word and Sacraments to be "HIS Church in Mission"!

James E. Keurulainen, *President*

R7-02-19

New Jersey District

The New Jersey District seeks faithfully to proclaim Jesus Christ through its 58 congregations, 3 elementary Christian schools, and 28 early childhood education centers. These mission outposts perform the day-by-day ministry to those called by the Gospel and those whom Jesus Christ is seeking to reach through His disciples.

In June of 2009, the district gathered in convention under the theme "Chosen for a Purpose" based upon Isaiah 49:5–7, where the prophet reminds God's people that they are a servant of the Lord, chosen for the purpose of being a "light to the nations." The district is committed to the *Ablaze!* goals of planting new congregations, revitalizing the mission of existing congregations, and equipping and deploying mission leaders.

In the last triennium, efforts to plant new congregations encountered the barrier of needing healthy congregations to plant daughter congregations. To that end almost 55 percent of full-time parish pastors of the district along with several lay leaders are involved in one of four Learning Communities, which meet monthly. With God's blessing, these trained leaders will be the catalyst for restored congregational health and vision for planting daughter congregations. These congregations can then carry through on the mission vision to reach those who need Jesus Christ.

From a mission vitality perspective, the New Jersey District can be divided roughly into thirds. The 40 percent of congregations in mission revitalization are finding ways to carry out intentional outreach ministry to reach the lost and impact their communities with incarnation of Jesus Christ ministries. Another one-third are facing serious issues including declining attendance, declining membership, and financial problems. Many are "mission minded" in that they are supportive of the district and Synod and other ministries such as the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and Lutheran Hour Ministries, but they have little "incarnation of Jesus Christ" ministry in their communities. The other one-third of our congregations are inward focused and hoping to survive. In the last triennium three aging and declining congregations closed, which was offset in part by receiving a new congregation using an "Open Arms" model of church planting.

There are no rural congregations in the New Jersey District. A new resource available to all congregations is the ministry and outreach models brought by Urban Mission Strategist Rev. James Buckman through a new partnership with LCMS World Missions. Encouraging signs for the future are that three congregations have established House Churches among immigrant groups in their communities, and numerous congregations are following a pattern of "prayer walking" to connect with the unchurched in their communities.

The district continues to be supportive of and provide leadership and guidance to Lutheran Social Ministries in New Jersey (LSMNJ), a highly effective social ministry agency. In the last year and a half, our congregations joined in "Lutherans Feeding Friends" in supporting food pantries during the economic downturn. In these challenging times, LSMNJ is able to continue the process of constructing a new continuing care retirement center, build a skilled nursing facility and assisted living center on the grounds of a district congregation, and

open two PACE centers, which provide senior medical care in a day-care setting.

In these ways, God's people in the New Jersey District have been seeking vigorously to make known the love of Jesus Christ in word and deed in our communities and throughout the state over the last three years. We seek to be a vital part of the LCMS by bringing faithful witness to Jesus Christ to those who do not yet know Him and to nurture the faith and witness of those already gathered around Word and Sacrament.

William Klettke, *President*

R7-02-20

North Dakota District

"Cultivating Life in Christ: Strength for Today ... Hope Forever" is the vision statement of the North Dakota District. Its overarching goal: "The pastors and laypeople throughout North Dakota will cultivate life in Christ by being one in Christ, Bible-based, mission-minded, and grateful stewards."

As the brokenness of this fallen world is felt throughout our world and synod, so it is felt in the North Dakota District as well. Our pastors, laypeople, and district leaders most certainly deal with the fall into sin every day. To this end, the North Dakota District keeps her eyes fixed on Jesus, "the author and perfecter of our faith" (Heb. 12:2). Only in Christ are we given new life, reconciliation, forgiveness, strength, and eternal hope. Everything we do in the North Dakota District, therefore, is to cultivate this life in Christ. As 80 percent of the 88 North Dakota congregations are rural, the word *cultivate* is well known to us. To cultivate means to prepare the land for seeding and harvesting. So, through every board, committee, task force, and auxiliary, the North Dakota District is about cultivating life in Christ. This involves the preparing, seeding, and harvesting of God's Word and blessed Sacraments for the faith and life of God's people.

This past year, the North Dakota District created a Task Force on Rural Ministry. As we met for planning, we soon realized the purpose and goals of this task force were pertinent to all of our congregations throughout the North Dakota District. This is what the purpose of the Task Force on Rural Ministry was determined to be: "We know that we have done a good job when *circuits* are coming together as *pastors* and *laity*, to be a catalyst for a change of mindset." Under this purpose, we developed three goals:

1. Networking: We know that we have done a good job when ... circuits are coming together as pastors and laity to be a catalyst for a change in mindset.
2. Pastors: We know that we have done a good job when ... pastors are encouraged, mentored, and held accountable toward an undershepherd's mindset.
3. Laity: We know that we have done a good job when ... pastors and laity are sharing and living the vision of the Great Commission.

As we work with rural and city churches throughout the North Dakota District, it is our intentional focus to work on revitalizing our congregations in mission and ministry in many and various ways. The North Dakota District confesses with the whole church that it is the Holy Spirit who "calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." With this being said, we also believe God has given us many tools and models for ministry in carrying out the Great Commission. The North Dakota District realizes that one model and set of tools does not necessarily fit all situations throughout

the district. Therefore, the North Dakota District will be evaluating various models and tools in which to revitalize our congregations. This may include, but is not limited to, *Transforming Congregations Network*, *SPIFE*, *Appreciative Inquiry*, and preaching and teaching workshops.

In our work toward strengthening pastors, congregations, and circuits, we have begun a process called *Excel!* A number of our district pastors have received training from Tentmakers Nehemiah Institute. They are now leading this same process in our own district. *Excel!* is meant to help pastors and congregations grow in their ability to communicate, set mission and ministry goals and plans for their congregation, develop greater people skills, cast a vision, and get people from the congregation actively involved in the mission and ministry of the church.

The North Dakota District is rich in mercy toward her neighbor. In spring 2009, with state-wide flooding, Missouri Synod Lutherans were active in their communities helping to sandbag, fix fences, carry belongings out of basements, and give encouragement to pastors and congregational members. With the great help from LCMS World Relief and SYNOD REPORTS, the district was able to care for "one of the least of these." While the Missouri Synod Lutherans became known as those who care about their neighbor, our love and mercy for one another flowed out of who we are in Christ Jesus.

As we seek to be forward-thinking in our mission and ministry, we in the North Dakota District desire to strengthen our circuits. This includes rebuilding trust and communication between pastors, caring for one another and sharing resources among congregations, and even evaluating new ministry models to most effectively do the work God has called us to do. Beginning in February 2010, we have begun to hold "Circuit Gatherings," where we call together pastors and laity to be in the Word together, report on current ministry taking place in the circuit, discuss the ministry dreams of the circuit, discuss new/alternative models for ministry, and set out to evaluate and implement these models.

While the North Dakota District is very attuned to and connected to the mission and ministry of the Synod, it has made plans for a "Lutheran Heritage Tour." In October 2010, our people have been invited to join our district president to tour our Lutheran heritage and roots, specifically in St. Louis. We will be visiting Concordia Seminary (including a "Bach at the Sem" concert, with a reception to follow), the International Center (a chapel service and the CHI Historical Museum), various historical churches, Perry County, Concordia Publishing House, and, of course, the wonderful attractions and culture of St. Louis. During our travels, we will be having devotions that give focus to our Lutheran history.

As the Church finds herself in a post-modern, post-church era, the North Dakota District is determined to be a light in a dark and fallen world. We are reminded of Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." With this being said, it is the focus of the North Dakota District to connect God's life-giving Word to a people who daily deal with the brokenness and pain and suffering of this fallen world. While the fall into sin leaves all creation weak and hopeless, the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings strength, hope, and restoration to all who believe in Him. This is the prayer, determination, mission, and ministry of the North Dakota District. *Soli Deo Gloria!*

James A. Baneck, *President*

R7-02-21

North Wisconsin District

The North Wisconsin District's 2006–2009 triennium was a time of change, not only with a new president, Rev. Joel Hoelter, but also with the transition to a different model of governance for the board of directors and staff. Using policy-based governance, we have worked intentionally to create a more responsive atmosphere and vehicle for conducting the work of the Kingdom through and among the congregations, schools, and ministries of the district. As a result of this work, a number of congregations have begun to implement the same type of governance to make them more effective in ministry.

Two major emphases have been initiated in the last two years. Transforming Congregations Network (TCN), focusing on leadership accountability, has become a growing part of our work. A team of trained consultants from within the district is leading the way. Several congregations have already either committed to or anticipate beginning the two-year focus of TCN. The district is committed to helping congregations reverse the trend of decline in membership and worship attendance that is affecting a majority of congregations in the Synod. Nearly half of the congregations in the North Wisconsin District are in dual-parish relationships, many of those in small communities and rural areas. Along with TCN, we are working to strengthen the ministries in rural areas through specific events and materials that are designed for smaller churches.

The other major emphasis has been participation in *Fan into Flame*. We have been especially pleased with the positive response we have received from many congregations as they see the opportunities for outreach and Christian witness in their communities and beyond. A series of regional events was held throughout the district in 2009, paving the way for participation by our congregations. Our *Ablaze!* Task Force has met regularly to help circuits and congregations become involved, and those labors are beginning to bear fruit.

While many districts are closing their camps and associated ministries, Camp Luther in North Wisconsin is growing. Through the "Every Kid to Camp" program begun four years ago, by God's grace and a generous outpouring of financial support from faithful members in the district and elsewhere, nearly 700 children have been able to experience a week at our Christian camp at no expense to them or their families. These 700 lives that have been touched by the Gospel of Jesus Christ have in turn touched many more lives. Funds are already in place for 2010 and we are beginning to work toward 2011. As a result of the support that Camp Luther receives from congregations, individuals, and organizations, we have been able to conduct capital improvements and expand this ministry. We are planning a satellite summer camp for 2010 that will give us a presence on the far western side of the district. God continues to shower His blessings on our humble efforts!

Mission efforts continue with outreach to the Hmong population, and efforts are still being made to reach out to the Hispanic population in and around Green Bay. Ministry to the deaf continues at four different sites in the district, our district-supported pastor also traveling as far as North Dakota to carry out his ministry.

The 220 congregations in our district continue to address the changing demographics of their communities. Several of the congregations that have recorded the most significant gains in membership have been in the Upper Peninsula, one of the most economically challenged areas in our district. This is evidence that the Gospel continues to touch peoples' lives in these trying times. Some of our smaller congregations in rural areas are discussing the possibility of mergers or the formation of new multiple-point ministries. Together we are

seeking ways, with God's help, guidance, and blessing, to strengthen the ministry that we share.

The 21 Lutheran elementary schools and 3 Lutheran high schools in our district continue to meet the challenges of Christian education in creative ways. Our 32 free-standing preschools continue to be a growing segment of ministry as schools and churches respond to the opportunities God is presenting to them.

The 2009 district convention gathered under the theme, "Revive! Renew! Reach Out!" We are looking ahead in this new triennium to the continuance of God's blessings on our humble efforts, and with the prayer that God will revive in all of us the commitment we share as members in His Kingdom of Grace; that He will renew us in our faith each day as we recall our Baptisms; and that He will empower us to reach out with the saving Good News to those who do not yet know and confess Jesus Christ as Lord!

Joel A. Hoelter, *President*

R7-02-22

Northern Illinois District

"*New Starts ... New Believers*"—These four words describe what the Northern Illinois District values, prays for, and works for, while at the same time guarding our life and doctrine closely and providing ecclesiastical supervision for more than 220 congregations; over 120 early childhood, elementary and high schools; and nine recognized ministry organizations.

Throughout the history of the church, new believers are consistently found in largest numbers in new churches. It is in new churches that we most often see the Holy Spirit giving the gift of faith to girls and boys and men and women through the Means of Grace. Recognizing that we do not have the resources to do everything, the leadership of the Northern Illinois District (NID) concentrates on these two areas, "*New Starts ... New Believers*" and ecclesiastical supervision.

A new start can be a number of different things. The "crown jewel" of new starts is a new chartered LCMS congregation. Many congregations are in a position to partner with other congregations to plant a new church. We are at various stages of doing both what is viewed as typical and experimental new starts in Chicago, Lake in the Hills, Lombard (Arabic Church), Manhattan, Park Forest, Spring Grove, Winnebago, and other locations. Most if not all congregations are in a position to do some other kind of new start. Here are just a few examples of new starts in NID congregations: a second site for worship aimed at people who are not currently going to any church, perhaps in English or perhaps in another language; a new venue onsite for the same purpose as a second site; building relationships through SYNOD REPORTS with the people in the community in the name of Jesus, doing good as He did and proclaiming repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name as He also did. SYNOD REPORTS is probably the most effective method for going into the community and inviting people to know the One in whose name we do good. But it must not end with just providing SYNOD REPORTS. Always the goal is to bring the message of repentance and forgiveness to people who do not currently believe while fervently praying that the Lord will multiply new believers, adding to our number day by day those who are being saved.

The NID has also committed to and put into practice good stewardship efforts, both in terms of instructing the people through LCEF's "Consecrated Stewards" program and other resources and through good financial practices by the district as an organization.

The instruction from God's Word and Gospel-motivation of the Consecrated Stewards program has seen significant offering increases in nearly all the congregations who have used the material. Regarding financial practices, the NID Board of Directors has for the first time in many years adopted a balanced budget for FY 2010. Unrestricted assets owned by the district are still available and used for worthy mission and ministry items that come up and need funding on a case-by-case basis, but the operating budget itself no longer draws from these assets. Our unrestricted offerings continue to be divided three ways: 30 percent unrestricted to the Synod, 30 percent for NID missions, and 40 percent for the ecclesiastical work of the Synod in this place. Instituting a balanced budget resulted in some drastic reductions in force that affected three rostered church workers and one lay support staff member. While these changes are personally painful, the leadership of the NID believes that it is wise and God-pleasing to live within the means of our regular income while using the assets entrusted to us to further the mission.

Challenges abound in this post-Christian culture: faith in Jesus is no longer assumed to be the faith of most people; denominational loyalty is nearly nonexistent; and Lutherans no longer immigrate into the U.S. and join our churches. But the Gospel is still the power of God for the salvation of all who believe, the Lord has still entrusted His pure doctrine to the LCMS, and we still have the God-given privilege of proclaiming repentance and forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name at home, a little farther from home, and to the ends of the earth. The leadership and many members of the NID are committed to the preservation of sound doctrine and the proclamation of sin and forgiveness, not just to those who already come to our divine services but also to those who do not yet do so. We realize that it is false doctrine to expect unbelievers to come to hear the Gospel without being invited, since they are dead in their sins. So we do good to proclaim the message in Jesus' name to those who are not yet in our churches, and we pray that the Holy Spirit will bring many to faith where and when He chooses.

The NID is, by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit in Word and Sacraments, working and praying for "*New Starts ... New Believers.*"

Dan Gilbert, *President*

R7-02-23

Northwest District

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Hebrews 12:2-3

Ministry in the Northwest District has undergone some significant changes. The district gave thanks to God for the ministry of Rev. Dr. Warren Schumacher, who retired in 2009 after 15 years of inspirational and visionary leadership as president. The district staff also suffered a significant loss as Steve Henderson, assistant to the district president, was called to his eternal home in July 2009. The Scripture passage printed above calls us to keep our focus on our Lord's leadership and blessing as we seek to share His love with the people of the great Northwest.

The "Tracking the Spirit" movement began in 2002 with 113 attendees. Sessions continue to gain momentum with over 300 attending in 2009. More sessions have been scheduled thus far in 2010 than were held all last year. "Tracking I" covers the purpose of the Holy Spirit, "Tracking II" addresses spiritual gifts, "Sharing Jesus without

Fear" focuses on evangelism, and "Paradigms" helps attendees look at their mindsets as they relate to outreach. "The Faith Communities Project" is an effort to train people to reach into the post-church culture with the Gospel.

Ethnic ministries are an important emphasis in the district. "Alaska Mission for Christ" has the ongoing mission of bringing the Gospel to every community in the state of Alaska. Rev. David Sternbeck, pastor at Makah Lutheran Church in Neah Bay, was ordained in December 2009. There are new leaders and new gatherings of people in all areas of ethnic ministry including the following. Oromo, Eritrean (new church in Seattle area), Burmese (eastern Washington), Latino, Vietnamese, Russian, Sudanese, and Korean missions continue to reveal themselves. Some are affiliated with existing churches; others are worshipping in house churches with partnerships being explored.

The "VBS Express," our traveling ministry bringing VBS into rural communities through a big rig equipped with climbing wall and other gathering activities, acquired another trailer formerly operated by Cross Country Mission Society. Now operating with Trucks I & II, they grew their service from 18 locations in 2008 with one truck to 24 locations in 2009 (serving 2,500 kids during the summer of 2009) with two trucks.

The Northwest District LCEF program has been and continues to be an integral servant-partner of the congregations and ministries in the district. As the primary funding source for capital expansion in the district, the district's LCEF program has seen its loan portfolio grow by more than \$11 million over the last triennium while maintaining a stable investor base. The challenges of supporting more than 260 congregations, schools, and other ministries across four states are ongoing, but through the grace of God, LCEF will be a servant and a partner for many years to come, ensuring that funds and services are available for the creating of space and place for the preaching and teaching of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The district LCEF team was recognized for its outstanding leadership and service.

The Center for Prayer Renewal operates regular prayer retreats and facilitates a prayer ministry throughout the district. Prayer partners receive weekly e-mails encouraging them to bring people and concerns to the Lord for His blessing.

The Northwest District is blessed with 100 early childhood centers. Through networking, onsite visits, conferences, and monthly Webinars, we are encouraging reconnecting congregations with the early childhood centers. We believe God is sending children and families to us that do not know Him or have a church home.

The district received a grant for a three-year project called "Sustainable Lutheran School Initiative." The initiative includes three modules: (1) Financial and strategic planning, (2) Significant staff development, and (3) School accreditation. The project has as its centerpiece the coaching and mentoring of the school leader. Webinars are held for pastors, board members, and admission counselors.

The development of the Center for Applied Lutheran Leadership (CALL), a ministry partnership with Concordia University, Portland, continues to take shape. CALL is intended to be a research and training center for the purpose of bringing the Gospel into the post-church culture.

The Northwest District's Ministry to Military Personnel, Congregations, and Families provides resources that equip fellow Christians to reach out to military members and their families with the love of Christ. The District Disaster Response effort utilizes teams in Idaho, Alaska, Oregon, and Washington for training in congregational preparedness. District coordinators are volunteers, in partnership with

state team leaders, who organize the training and disaster response needs when appropriate.

God continues to lead and bless the Northwest District. We look forward with anticipation to the places where He will lead our ministry in the years ahead.

Paul Linnemann, *President*

R7-02-24

Ohio District

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the “*One Message*” we have been called to speak in “*Many Contexts*”!

We in the Ohio District are faced with many challenges not of our making. Certainly the last three years have not shown dramatic improvement in those areas of shrinking and aging populations and economy. Pockets of prosperity and growth do exist, and we thank God for His gracious hand of blessing in those areas. For the most part, the states that comprise the Ohio District continue to age and the majority of our congregations mirror that change. Being “in the heart of it all” has also placed Ohio squarely in the middle of the national economic downturn that began in the final quarter of 2008.

The board of directors has established three ends policies that I will summarize as “healthy congregations,” “healthy professional church workers,” and “a healthy relationship between our congregations, district, and the Synod.”

Healthy Congregations

We have seen some good progress as more congregations are stepping outside their four walls and bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their unchurched surroundings. I pray that the Holy Spirit would move other congregations to see themselves for what they are—the living Body of Christ—and no longer behave as though they were exclusive country clubs. If someone were to visit your church and ask, “Would I learn to be a more faithful pray-er here?” “Would I have opportunity to exercise myself in the faith that works through love here through community outreach projects?” “Will my faith grow more strong here through solid Bible studies and sermons?” or “In this congregation would I learn how to give an answer about the hope that lies within me?”—what would your congregation answer?

Numerous congregations face the challenges created by aging members. As God blessed those congregations in the 1950s with steady growth, now all of those people are at the opposite end of the age spectrum. We are also hampered by significant numbers of pastors who have found themselves ill-equipped to bring the Gospel to a post-Christian world. A few have ventured out and God has blessed their courageous efforts; other pastors are overwhelmed and may choose to tread water until retirement. Far better to partner with a pastor who could help train and challenge that brother pastor for a new page of ministry. Where that has happened, some pastors have become excited about ministry once more.

Between 60 and 90 of our congregations are “at-risk” congregations. That means that if they continue as they have in the past, they will close their doors or significantly change the way they operate in the next five to ten years. While it is easy to live in a state of denial, I would plead with such congregations not to wait until their numbers have dwindled to below 50 in Sunday worship before addressing the problem.

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Healthy Professional Church Workers

I have been pleased with the caliber of incoming candidates from both seminaries during the past triennium. They have shown themselves to be dedicated to our Lutheran Confessions and evangelical in practice. While the Synod’s demand for new pastors has not met previous forecasts because many pastors are not retiring at age 65, the numbers of candidates needed will not diminish. As costs continue to rise, I do suspect that an increasing number will need to be bi-vocational, however.

Hard economic times have hit both our parishes and our schools. Please do all in your power to show these professional church workers how much you value them. Because several congregations have fallen into budgetary problems and have had to reduce their staffs, I am looking carefully at all requests for new pastors. Congregations cannot hope to call a pastor by saving money during their vacancies and then using that to supplement their below-average weekly giving once the new pastor is on-site. Ethically and morally that is not fair to the worker when that money runs out. Calls for those church workers who have been let go are not forthcoming immediately. Some are still without a call after three years.

Healthy Relationships

During the past three years your district has made rapid movement into the digital age. Our website has undergone dramatic change, thanks in no small part to Mr. Glenn Richter. He has been a constant encourager to your district staff to use this Web resource as the basis for communication to you and we have responded. Furthermore, utilizing this electronic medium has been a blessing since economic realities have forced us to continue to downsize our support staff. Placing materials on the Web site has proven to be more economical and timely than having to arrange large mailings. We will continue to make further use of this communications tool, just as many of our congregations are doing. Visit us at www.oh.lcms.org for news, views, and ministry resources.

Terry Cripe, *President*

R7-02-25

Oklahoma District

The Oklahoma District is a fellowship of congregations committed to caring, sharing, teaching, preaching, and reaching people so as to bring them into a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Oklahoma District has an all-volunteer staff made up of lay-people, pastors, teachers, and directors of Christian education, all of whom continue to serve in their specific full-time callings. Salaried and stipend positions include the administrative assistant, the Outdoor Ministries director, and the treasurer/business manager. Whether salaried or volunteer, the district staff is composed of gifted people who freely and readily share their gifts and time in extending the work of Christ’s kingdom.

It was with mixed emotions that at our April 2009 convention we bid farewell to outgoing Oklahoma District President Paul Hartman, who did not seek reelection but expressed his desire to retire. His tireless efforts as well as those of so many other committed individuals brought great blessings to the congregations of the Oklahoma District as the district went beyond its pledged goals to the *Ablaze!* and *Fan Into Flame* outreach and funding endeavors of the LCMS. The Oklahoma District continues to work toward the goal of planting 12 new congregations by 2017, the revitalization of 40 congregations,

and an enlarged high school outreach program to help our youth learn how to share the Gospel with their peers.

The Holy Spirit continues to work dynamically within and through the 82 congregations of the Oklahoma District. Equipped with the effectual Word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit, many new people groups are being touched with Christ's grace. In the panhandle of western Oklahoma, new outreach has occurred among the Burmese Karen people, and Camp Lutherhaven is being refined for greater outdoor ministry. In central Oklahoma, Hispanic ministry continues to grow and flourish, and an Islamic outreach pastor is in place for one-on-one witnessing in the Oklahoma City area. In eastern Oklahoma, doors are miraculously opening as outreach continues among Hispanics and in a new ministry among the Hmong people. Camp Lutherhoma is in the process of a major building expansion and is continuing to reach out to hundreds of youth and adults. New preaching stations are being developed throughout the district, with some serving as satellite sites for well-established congregations. And in southeastern Oklahoma, a prison ministry continues to bring blessings to the Oklahoma State Prison at McAlester.

Even in these economically trying times, the saints of the Oklahoma District continue to give generously of the resources entrusted to them by God. We thank God that He has counted us worthy to serve Him through our place in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Barrie E. Henke, *President*

R7-02-26

Pacific Southwest District

The Pacific Southwest District (PSW) is comprised of 310 congregations and 205 schools in southern California, Arizona, and southern Nevada. Established at our district convention, June, 28–30, 2009, the PSW three-year theme is “Inviting Conversations—Empowering Words” based on John 17:20 and John 4:29. In John 17, Jesus prays for His followers, in verse 20 praying, “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message.” It is in our conversations with those who do not believe that the Holy Spirit comes with power to create faith. As we share the hope that is within us with those who do not know Christ, we “invite” them, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to meet Jesus.

The second “inviting conversation” comes from a Samaritan woman who meets Jesus at the well in John 4. After her conversation with Jesus, she runs to those who have abandoned her with the invitation, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” (v. 29). Even before she is confident of who Jesus is, she invites others to come and meet Him. And they, too, came to believe in Him.

In the PSW, 70 of our 310 congregations have at least one worship service in a language other than English. With 278 first languages spoken in the Los Angeles Unified School District and throughout our district, we live in a culturally diverse corner of God's kingdom. Our Culture Specific Ministry Counsel brings together representatives of the major culture-specific ministries to discuss church planting, lay leadership training, and common challenges faced by these missions. Through “Planting Churches Across Cultures,” congregations in changing communities are trained in how to welcome people of different cultures and languages and how to share space and time in their facilities for the good of the kingdom.

Participation in Fan into Flame began in the PSW during 2008. The first major gift designated for planting new cross-cultural

ministries made possible a new Chinese ministry and outreach to Mixteca-speaking people from central Mexico. This latter group of people do not speak Spanish and have never had the Scriptures translated into their language. Current outreach is possible in Santa Paula, north of Los Angeles, because of this Fan into Flame gift.

Through Frontera, a partnership with the Rocky Mountain and Texas Districts, church planters and lay leaders along the Mexican border are being identified and trained to plant new churches north and south of the border. This ministry continues to expand as God provides the workers.

The PSW continues to be blessed through its Lay Training Program where men and women are being equipped to serve their congregations and beyond. Currently approximately 180 men and women have been licensed as deacons or certified as parish ministry assistants.

The two Ablaze! priorities for the current triennium are “Planting New Churches” and the revitalization of existing congregations through the Transforming Churches Network (TCN) and “Cures and Connections,” designed for smaller churches. We currently have 34 “Covenant Congregations” committed to plant a new ministry in the next five years, on our way to our goal of 50. We have our first six congregations involved in the TCN process, with five more to begin in the spring of 2010, on our way to our goal of 100.

With over 200 preschools, elementary schools, and high schools, we seek to support these schools in the midst of some very challenging economic times. Through the “Grantparent Program,” scholarships are provided to support students in some of our urban schools. The schools in Arizona are blessed with a state tuition tax credit which enables more individuals to support the work of our schools.

In our district's report to the 2007 convention, we were able to report that several of the fastest growing counties in the nation were located in the PSW. Those same counties are now some of those hardest hit by the economic recession, placing significant challenges on the ministry of our churches and schools. As in other parts of the Synod, the PSW seeks to be good stewards who are faithful in mission with declining resources.

The PSW is blessed with a close partnership with Lutheran Church Extension Fund and we are grateful for its support. While in these difficult economic times we have seen churches and schools challenged with increased debt and decreased income, we are grateful for the support of LCEF in working with them.

The PSW mission statement is “effectively [to] resource congregations and schools to fulfill the Great Commission.” As we enter the second decade of the twenty-first century, we seek to implement our *Ablaze!* goals with passion for those who do not know Jesus as their personal Savior.

Larry Stoterau, *President*

R7-02-27

Rocky Mountain District

The Rocky Mountain District—with its 185 congregations and more than 2,000 students in its Lutheran schools—is privileged to be the Lord's mouth, hands, and feet to broadcast His saving Word far and wide. The district, which includes the states of Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico, also has parishes in El Paso, Texas; Paige, Arizona; and Venango and Big Springs, Nebraska.

A significant milestone reached at the 2009 district convention was the culmination of a three-year effort to raise \$500,000 for the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane (Pretoria), South Africa,

along with two SYNOD REPORTS projects. By God's grace, by the end of September of this past year, the Lord's people contributed over \$504,000! In addition, LCMS World Relief and SYNOD REPORTS matched these gifts dollar-for-dollar. The essayists for the 2009 District Convention included Bishop David Tswaedi of the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa and Dr. Wilhelm Weber, Rector of Lutheran Theological Seminary.

The district convention voted to continue raising funds into the coming triennium, dividing the contributions between international and national missions. Ministries to be funded are the seminary in South Africa and the Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute (which trains of Hispanic men and women to be missionaries to their fellow Hispanics). A Church Planting Fund will also be set up for outreach within the district.

Igniting Church and Culture for Christ! remains the district's mission theme, focusing on God Himself to enliven His Church by the Word—as a fire—to keep penetrating the culture for Christ with the enlivening words of Christ. Even though the district has five critical targets, its focus has narrowed to two: (1) new ministries and (2) healthier ministries. Essential for the triune God's mission are new mission outposts of Word and Sacrament ministry as well as established churches made up of pastors and laity who live repentantly beneath the Lord's compelling grace.

Present and ongoing challenges for His people in the Rocky Mountain District include:

- remaining a broken people fully restored and absolutely sturdy in the Lord's favor;
- having eyes to see the harvest (John 4:35);
- seeing each of the 17 circuits as mission fields where pastors and laity strategically plan and work for Gospel outreach;
- being fully committed in love to each other (Col. 3:14), realizing that other churches, pastors, and the district are also important;
- recruiting and training qualified teachers and administrators for our schools, and qualified, trained directors, teachers, and aides for our early learning centers;
- strategically addressing the financial decline of the whole church while believing that the Word and the Sacraments ever remain the church's greatest treasure;
- deeply valuing and loving the confessional fellowship of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and working together with the other 34 districts, its seminaries, and its colleges and universities for the preservation and proclamation of the Lord's pure doctrine to the world; and
- engaging unbelievers in their places of vocation and on their own turf because they are completely incapacitated by original sin and therefore damned eternally without faith in Christ.

A quotation from Luther's commentary on 1 Peter exemplifies by God's grace the purpose and urgency of the work of the Rocky Mountain District:

We have no other reason for living on earth than to be of help to others. If this were not the case, it would be best for God to kill us and let us die as soon as we are baptized and have begun to believe. But He permits us to live here in order that we may bring others to faith, just as He has brought us. (LW 30:11)

Solely to the glory of God!

Randall L. Golter, *President*

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R7-02-28

SELC District

"The Changeless Christ ... for a Changing World!" was the theme of the 2009 SELC district convention. The need for the changeless Christ is evident to all who are already believers; and believers know that the changing world desperately needs the security and the hope that only the changeless Christ can provide. It is the desire of the SELC to be faithful to the changeless Christ, and to do whatever we can to bring Him to the changing world.

Many resist changing anything, because, for the most part, change is uncomfortable. One of the most difficult things to change is "assumptions." The SELC has not had the word *Slovak* in our name since 1950, but we are still called the "Slovak District." Most of our congregations have as little to do with Slovak as any other LCMS congregation has to do with German.

Among the assumption statements of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance PowerPoint presentation to all the LCMS district conventions (including the SELC) was:

"Number 11: Consider Future District Configuration. Current Problem or Deficiency: Districts without 'critical mass' or geographical proximity (in the case of non-geographic districts) lack the resources to provide congregations with the most effective and efficient support."

For the first 70 years of our existence, the SELC was a separately incorporated synod, and an equal partner with the LCMS in the Synodical Conference (during its existence); and now in 2010, the SELC celebrates 108 years of continuing ministry, serving the needs of our congregations while not owning or renting a building or office, having no full-time employees or staff, and not paying any full salaries or benefits. All clergy officers continue to serve as parish pastors, and all lay officers are volunteers. The year 2010 also marks the 83rd anniversary of the continuing SELC District youth organization known as the Luther League, annually sponsoring both circuit gatherings and district conventions, with all officers being elected by the youth in convention. The SELC also oversees a Lutheran independent living retirement, assisted living, and nursing home facility known as the Lutheran Haven in Oviedo, Florida, established in 1948. How is the "critical mass" of the SELC deficient?

Look also at the 2008 statistics from the 2010 *Lutheran Annual*: The SELC ranked #1 out of all 35 districts in percentage of growth. It ranked #8 (note the numbering is printed in reverse order) for "average in per confirmed member" giving to the Synod. The SELC, the "smallest" of the LCMS districts, provided more undesignated dollars to the Synod than the Atlantic, New England, New Jersey, Eastern, Southern, Montana, and the Wyoming Districts. Plus, the SELC annually provides separate undesignated support to both seminaries in the amount of 10% of our committed pledge to the Synod. In the recent alumni fund-raiser by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, the SELC was #1 in percentage of alumni who provided support gifts or pledges.

The SELC District fosters cooperation and mutual respect among our professional church workers and our congregations. We encourage and are dedicated to reaching out with the Law and the Gospel to be used by our Lord to reach the lost. The SELC continues to stand for "Showing Everyone Life in Christ by Showing Everyone the Love of Christ!"

Carl H. Krueger, *President*

R7-02-29

South Dakota District

The theme for the 2009 South Dakota District Convention was “Called Into Partnership,” based on the words of Philippians 1:3–6. As God calls His people to faith, He also calls them into a “fellowship” or a “partnership” both with Himself and with others in His Church. At the center of that calling is God’s eternal plan of salvation for the world, founded upon His grace in Jesus Christ.

Jesus explained His mission in coming to earth when He said, “The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). Even as Jesus came to seek and save the lost, He both called His Church into partnership in that mission and empowered His Church by sending the Holy Spirit, who through the Church’s proclamation of God’s Word and the administration of the Sacraments, brings forgiveness of sins and eternal life (cf. John 20:21–23; Acts 2:38–41).

The congregations, pastors, commissioned church workers, and members of the congregations of the South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod all have been “Called Into Partnership” in mission in our churches, communities, and world. The mission statement of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod wonderfully reflects the mission purpose of our partnership: *In grateful response to God’s grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities, and world.*

At our convention, each ministry in the district was identified as a “mission outpost.” In each of our congregations; in our mission work on the Rosebud and Pine Ridge Indian Reservations; in Sudanese, Ethiopian, and Swahili worshipping communities associated with our congregations; in our deaf ministry work; and in our schools and early childhood centers, the love of Christ is being made known by word and deed. Because all of these ministries and all who are a part of these ministries have been called into partnership, and because of the grace of God in Christ Jesus that is being made known as a result of that partnership, so many people—the Lord alone knows the numbers—will spend eternity in the presence of God and of the Lamb in heaven. What an incredible blessing! What an incredible calling!

The 114 congregations, the 30,770 baptized members of those congregations (which includes 24,238 confirmed members) and the special missions and ministries that are a part of the South Dakota District, are part of a larger partnership of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The word *synod* is another word for “partnership.” In our partnership in the LCMS, we are blessed with a unity of doctrine based upon the divinely inspired Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions that is second to no other major denomination in Christianity. While we frequently have discussions—sometimes lively—over some matters of doctrine and practice, there is no disagreement as to the central message of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith, nor to the focus of our proclamation summarized in these words of the apostle Paul: “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2).

Over the past two years, our nation has experienced the greatest economic challenge since the days of the Great Depression. While South Dakota has not been affected as seriously as some other parts of our nation, our rural economy has been challenged, resulting in significant impact upon the partnership between congregations, district,

and Synod. However, after several years of operating deficits, the district ended 2009 in the black. Words from a past partnership still ring with great encouragement to our current partnership. Dr. Frederich Pfotenhauer, the President of the Synod during the Great Depression, was a missionary to South Dakota in the early years of our district’s history. These are his words to the 1932 convention of the Synod:

It is true that the present economic conditions throughout the world induce us, if we do not keep our vision clear, to curtail our church activities. No doubt, money is more scarce than in previous years. All the more, we must keep before us the lesson of history: first, that the more evil the days, the greater the prospect of success in our Christian work; and secondly, that when children of God are eager to promote their Savior’s glory, the Lord supplies the necessary means and blesses them.

One of the greatest challenges confronting the South Dakota District is the face of ministry in our small, rural, and often scattered congregations. In the 1800s and early 1900s, with homesteaders, large families, and growing rural communities, our Lutheran churches grew, multiplied, and thrived for two or three generations. Today, a much different trend that began a generation and a half ago continues. The majority of South Dakota counties continue to decline in population. Most towns in our rural communities continue to experience declining populations, the loss of many of their businesses, their schools, their bars, and their churches. Some of our LCMS churches have closed in the past as well, with others facing the possibility of closing within this generation. Several of our congregations or two-and-three-point parishes are struggling to pay their pastors fair salaries or benefits.

The day that a church closes is a sad day! Some members transfer to other LCMS congregations, often many miles distant. Some members join churches of other confessions that might still be in a community or neighboring town. But the reality is that others neither transfer to other LCMS churches nor join churches of other denominations. And though they may claim that they still hold to the faith in which they were baptized and confirmed, the next generation of people who live in that place will *not* have a church in which to be baptized and confirmed and hear God’s pure and Holy Word. And there will not be outreach to the lost. In short, when we lose churches, the other loss is souls to God’s kingdom. “How can they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how can they hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 10:14).

While the South Dakota District is committed to establishing new mission starts in our larger growing communities, we are also exploring new ways of serving our small congregations and parishes through the use of Specific Ministry Pastors (SMPs) and men who are trained through our district’s Lay Leadership Institute to assist their pastors. And, by necessity, we are increasing our multiple-point parishes.

In all, we in the South Dakota District find ourselves addressing the challenge of being open to doing things that we have not done before while not sacrificing our partnership in the Gospel, our partnership in faith and hope, our partnership in mission, and our partnership in the integrity of holding to God’s Word and our Lutheran Confessions.

Dale L. Sattgast, *President*

R7-02-30**South Wisconsin District**

It's a time of great excitement, opportunity, and challenge as the South Wisconsin District (SWD) comes together under the banner of *"Passionate Believers ... Changing Life."*

At the 2006 district convention, delegates began to answer our guiding question: Can SWD be a missional district? The delegates adopted the goal of raising up 50 new missions and ministries in the next five years. We are well on our way to accomplishing that. While it might appear that Wisconsin is a monolithic Germanic place, we are fast becoming a place similar to what is described in Revelation 7. Our fastest growing demographic is Latino. We also have outreach efforts at work among various other cultures: African American, African immigrants from Nigeria and the Congo, Hmong (with three full-time called pastors), and Chinese Lutherans. POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach) is helping us reach out to those of the Muslim faith. For more than a hundred years we have had a chaplaincy presence at the Milwaukee County House of Correction (HOC). About a year ago, budget restraints forced us to take a different approach. We now have two part-time pre-SMP ("Specific Ministry Pastor") students working in this ministry. In the past year, worship attendance at the HOC has risen to well over 100 each week, and there have been more than 225 Baptisms. In response, we are starting "Free at Last Lutheran Ministry" to serve those being released and their families.

To help serve these various cultures we are expanding our Specific Ministry Pastor process to include people from the various expanding cultures in the SWD. Dr. Harald Tomesch works with us part-time to sharpen the pre-SMP process.

Stewardship

In the area of stewardship, the SWD continues to move forward in the area of creating a stewardship renaissance. Under the leadership of Tim Dittloff who works in the area of stewardship part-time, the "Consecrated Stewards" program has been used in approximately 45 of our congregations with great success. Monthly stewardship learning communities are held around the district. One unique stewardship event that is underway is "Rivers of Your Life," a stewardship Bible study wrapped in with fly fishing which will culminate in a mission/fly fishing trip to Wyoming.

Schools

South Wisconsin District schools continue to serve the children and families of our churches and communities. We currently have 64 preschools, 59 elementary schools, and six high schools with a total enrollment of over 11,750 students and staffed by more than 1,030 teachers and administrators.

Gene Ladendorf (former superintendent from 1982–1991) was appointed in September 2009 to serve as interim superintendent. At this writing, the superintendent position is in the process of being filled. For the past three-plus years, Gene and three other men (Roger Laesch, Dennis Vierk, and David Jording) served as regional superintendents. They assist in maintaining contact with administrators and teachers, visit schools, and serve as supporters and troubleshooters as needed. These additional resource personnel have proven to be effective and well-received by leaders in our churches and schools.

Urban Mission

LUMIN (Lutheran Urban Mission Initiative) continues to grow and develop as an organization directed by a president and a board

with the goal of expanding school ministry under the Choice Program in Milwaukee. LUMIN now manages the financial and organizational programs of five urban schools in the Milwaukee community.

Challenges and opportunities for our schools include extending ministries to neighborhoods and communities, expanding enrollments and resources, maintaining quality programs with quality personnel, preparing for the future, and meeting the needs of children and families in a post-modern society.

John C. Wille, *President*

R7-02-31**Southeastern District**

Throughout the last triennium, the *Ablaze!* movement in the Synod has provided much of the framework for efforts to fulfill the vision that God has given the Southeastern District (SED). Resolutions adopted at the 2009 convention continue to affirm and build upon the work of the goals based on Acts 2:42, that is, to be disciple-making communities of teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer and of God's kingdom growing daily as His people boldly proclaim the love of Jesus Christ in word and deed (Acts 2:47).

This is being accomplished through intentional efforts in the following areas:

- Spiritual Formation
- Leadership Development
- Congregational Vitality
- Faith Sharing
- New Mission Development

These mission goals are further defined with more than 15 operational goals that are guiding the work and setting the direction of mission and ministry today. God is blessing this effort and bringing about results and opportunities that were not expected.

This is most clearly seen in the area of spiritual formation. It is not by accident that this is at the top of the goals. A growing team of Mission Prayer Partners prays regularly for mission starts and leadership on the front line. The answers to prayers that God is providing, moreover, are often astounding. Obstacles are overcome! Doors once closed are opened!

"Without Me," Jesus says in John 15:5, "you can do nothing." The emphasis that is being placed upon prayer seems to have tapped a deep desire felt by many to be more intimately connected with our Lord in everything we do. As a result, Rev. Art Umbach is also serving as the Director for Spiritual Life and meets with congregations, missions, and circuits to support them in the knowledge and practice of prayer.

Sharing the faith and bearing witness to Jesus is an act in which our congregations and schools are already engaged. Encouraging growth and confidence in faith-sharing is a goal that will enable the district to record 2.5 million faith-sharing conversations by 2017. Already, more than 360,000 events have been recorded. Working with Lutheran Hour Ministries, a new resource has been designed to prepare, equip, and resource laity in sharing the faith. Mission U(niversity) offers congregations and missions Web-conferencing classes and online Web office hours to help them in outreach.

What is motivating the SED, however, is not the counting or the numbers of these events. Rather, it is the Word of God: "As the Father has sent Me, even so I send you" (John 20:21). "You will be My witnesses" (Acts 1:8).

The planting of 100 new ministries and congregations in many different settings throughout the five-state region and the resourcing of these efforts has occupied much time and energy during this triennium. Since the setting of this goal, 38 new mission starts have been initiated and are at one stage or another of development. Of our 21 circuits, 14 are actively involved in supporting a new mission project. By agreeing to become “*Ablaze! Covenant Congregations*,” 32 congregations will start or assist in starting at least one new mission between now and 2017.

In addition, a new staff position focused on providing resources and oversight in this area was developed. Rev. Glenn Lucas joined the district staff as Director of Mission Development and is working with new and emerging missions.

Renewal is the term that is being used when established congregations become interested in church transformation or revitalization. Their number in the SED appears to be on the increase, and Dr. William Seaman has written a strategic model for this work and has equipped a team of persons who are piloting this effort with four congregations.

During this past triennium, the SED completed a special funding effort in partnership with our Synod’s *Fan Into Flame* campaign. *Ablaze For God’s Mission* is the name we gave to it, and the goal of enlisting \$6 million in gifts and commitments was a very bold one.

The “witnesses” Jesus called upon His disciples to become in Acts 1:8, first “in Jerusalem,” then “in all Judea and Samaria,” and finally “to the ends of the earth” provided the terms of this funding partnership with the Synod. After the deduction of campaign expenses (10 percent) by the LCMS Foundation, 15 percent (Jerusalem) of all the remainder of unrestricted gifts and commitments, as they are received or paid off, are set aside for mission projects of the circuits in which the donors reside; 35 percent of the same (Judea and Samaria) help to support SED mission partnerships; and 50 percent (ends of the earth) are being directed to LCMS World Missions.

As of December 31, 2009, major donors, individuals, and congregations made total commitments of \$6,008,068. We praise and thank God that the goal of \$6 million has been met and surpassed.

To God be the glory! He has taken the work and gifts of His people and multiplied them for ministry in ways we could not have anticipated. We pray for the continued work of the Gospel within the communities of the SED, the LCMS, and the world.

Jon T. Diefenthaler, *President*

R7-02-32

Southern District

The need for the church to be empowered by God’s Word in order passionately to fulfill its core purpose is what gave birth to the Southern District’s 2009 convention theme, “Spirit Kindle.”

“Spirit Kindle” is a prayer that the people of God would burn with the gracious love of Christ, become animated, and illuminate the world with the light of life they have received. This is a prayer as old as faith itself, reflected in the ancient prayer of our church fathers: “Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful people and kindle in them the fire of Your love.”

“Spirit Kindle” is a promise from God that when we live in oneness with Jesus Christ and His will, “all men are to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. 2:25). Our witness will glow from the fire of His faithful presence in our hearts.

“Spirit Kindle” is also a power given to us from God Himself. Whenever we hear the Word of God or speak it to others, it is the Holy Spirit alone who unleashes His power to bring into being the fire of faith and keep it burning eternally.

Many have predicted that converging world trends will produce “the perfect storm,” bringing rough sailing for the church. To aid us in our “storm” preparedness, our convention spent time focusing on the lessons we have learned from our own “storm” experience. Our first lesson was that storms bring clear focus to one’s core purpose when forced to answer the question, “What are you willing to die for?” Other lessons we learned were that everything with value is not always useful; that none of us are as strong as all of us; that everyone has a storm story that needs to be heard; that everyone has a rescue story that needs to be told; that storms prepare you to hear more clearly the voice of God; and that storms bring renewal.

Clear regarding our core purpose, the convention adopted resolutions “To Establish a Goal of at Least 200,000 Critical Events in the Next Triennium,” “To Commit to a Minimum of Five New Church Plants,” and “To Establish a Ministry Task Force for New Orleans.”

In order to make our “valued” district resources more “useful” and to build on the strength of “all of us,” the convention put into place new election procedures. Moving from two at-large vice-presidents to four regional vice-presidents and having every circuit represented on the district board of directors has produced one of (if not) the strongest Southern District Board of Directors.

Plans are now underway to consider moving from district-wide committees, which tend to work as silos, to regional mission and ministry task forces that will partner with each other. In order to maximize available resources for missions, avenues of greater partnering with neighboring districts as well as self-funding of district office expenses are being explored. Our goal is to commit 100 percent of congregational offerings to new mission work.

We are thankful for the clarity of the Word of God that is spoken to us in His Son, Jesus, who continues to renew us.

We continue to pray “Spirit Kindle,” praying that in all things, as He has promised, God the Holy Spirit will kindle in us through His powerful Word His own passionate heart for the fulfilling of His loving core purpose in and through us.

Kurtis Schultz, *President*

R7-02-33

Southern Illinois District

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3). This Scripture informed our theme for the triennium: Christ: Our One Sure Hope!

Our district includes 96 congregations, one new mission start, 3 high schools, and more. We are 100+ colonies of the future, where Christ gives sure hope and eternal life in His Word. The Synod in Southern Illinois, we walk together—congregations, pastors, and commissioned ministers—toward the future God has provided. God gives great blessings, challenging opportunities, and always His abundant resources.

While 80 percent of our congregations are within 75 miles of St. Louis, they are surprisingly diverse. Besides English, two other languages are spoken in weekly worship and Bible study—Mandarin

Chinese and Korean. We hope soon to carry on work in Vietnamese. In the previous triennium, we made efforts to do Gospel work in Spanish but were unsuccessful in sustaining the work.

Found in both rural/small town communities and urban areas east of St. Louis, the SID includes large suburban congregations, small churches in the city, as well as large small-town parishes—a wide variety in a small area, totaling 43,046 baptized souls and 33,942 communicants. We are blessed with 92 active pastors, 323 teachers and commissioned ministers, 22 schools, 14 preschools, and 3 Lutheran high schools. The district operates a mission school in East St. Louis with 119 students (a 100% increase in three years) and supports vigorous campus ministry in Edwardsville and Carbondale, both touching hundreds of lives with the Gospel.

God gives our district the challenge of ministry (through pastors and volunteers) in 31 prison and jail settings across Southern Illinois. Prison ministry represents our greatest mission expense. However, by God's grace through one of our rural congregations (Our Redeemer, Golconda) a new mission start is being developed in Eldorado, Illinois. Eldorado and Harrisburg represent the largest population center in the district where we did not have an LCMS presence.

We continue a vigorous program of pastoral and congregational visitation. Our purpose is to encourage congregations to be more intentional in bringing the Gospel to those who do not know Christ and to address possible reasons for disharmony in our midst. We believe God is blessing these efforts with His grace and Spirit.

Yes, the Southern Illinois District faces funding issues, with congregational remittances to district and Synod continuing to decline. We are very careful with God's money. Of every dollar spent by the district in 2010 (approximately \$1.1 million), 59 cents will go to district and Synod missions, while 41 cents will go to support congregations in their work. Unfortunately, the share of congregational remittances sent on to Synod had to be reduced to 27 percent in 2010. We are planning a special mission offering to coincide with our participation in *Fan into Flame*.

One more joy God has given our district is our mission partnership with the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa. Our congregations have provided approximately \$40,000 per year, over and above regular offerings, to support agreed-upon mission projects in Southern Africa.

All of this is in line with the prayer for the future adopted by our board of directors in 2005, that we (1) grow in faith through the Word; (2) increase support for Synod missions; (3) grow in our mission partnership with the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa; (4) help congregations and schools be mission outposts; (5) strengthen members in firm confession and outreach; (6) unite by the Spirit in our confession of faith through the Lutheran symbols; (7) plant churches and schools; and (8) expand the various ministries of the district (prison, campus, mission school).

How will this be done? If it depends on us, we fail. We simply pray that God will be at work through us to carry out this vision and purpose. His Word never fails. We have His promise that “*the Word of the Lord remains forever. And this Word is the good news that was preached to you*” (1 Peter 1:25).

Herbert C. Mueller Jr., *President*

R7-02-34

Texas District

The mission of the Texas District is to strengthen congregations to reach the lost, disciple the saved, and care for people—locally and globally.

Over the last three years, the population of the state of Texas has grown at a faster rate than normal—a net population growth of over 900,000 just in the last two years. The majority of these new people are coming from other parts of the United States and not from other countries. The downturn in our nation has brought on much of this growth, as people searching for work have moved to Texas. The health of state government, new job creation, and a diversified economy have all helped the Texas economy remain strong.

The Texas District continues to move forward to accomplish its *Ablaze!* goals:

- 200 new Word and Sacrament congregations by 2017;
- 2.5 million witnessing events; and
- 2 percent growth per year in baptized membership within the district.

To accomplish the goal for new congregations, the district's four mission and ministry facilitators have conducted major training events each year to encourage congregations to partner with the district in planting these congregations. The congregations of the district will need to step up their activities if the district is to meet its goal. There are signs that this is beginning to happen as every major city and area of our state experiences the influx of new people.

Our deployed staff and elected vice-presidents and circuit counselors continue to be a blessing to local congregations by providing more personal connections to the district. Both the staff and the officers actively serve and support congregations and professional church workers and their families.

The funding model for new starts established by the mission board is proving to be a blessing for the district's mission efforts. The amount of dollars repaid by our new starts has increased each year, dollars that are in turn used to begin more new congregations.

The district continues to be blessed by the two Lutheran Inner City Network Coalitions (LINC) that carry out ministry among the numerous immigrants in their inner cities. LINC Houston and LINC North Texas have focused their efforts in raising up indigenous leaders, training them, connecting them with seminary training, and using them to reach their people group. At the present time, there are over 40 people in some level of training. San Antonio will begin their own LINC organization this year.

The Texas District Church Extension Fund continues its healthy growth in investments, loans, and capital funding. This ministry has been a huge blessing in supporting expansions of established congregations as well as new mission starts. It also partners with the Synod's LCEF in providing services beyond Texas.

Because the Texas District has been blessed by God in so many different ways, we are committed to be a blessing for others and the Synod. The district has increased its percentage in support of Synod each year over the past three years. This did not always result in an increased dollar amount because of the adverse economic impact even in Texas, but the district is committed to support and walk together with our brothers and sisters who make up The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Even though the population boom is a blessing, it is also one of our biggest challenges. The Texas District has not been able to

keep up with the growth. We thank God for the growth with which He has blessed our district, and we are confident that He will anoint our feeble human efforts to expand His kingdom in Texas through the ministry of the district and its congregations. We keep our eyes on the cross and ourselves open to the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

Kenneth Hennings, *President*

R7-02-35

Wyoming District

The Wyoming District was formed from the former Northern Nebraska and Southern Nebraska Districts on Sept 30, 1970. It includes all of Wyoming and the panhandle of Nebraska, with one congregation in Colorado (part of a dual parish). It includes 60 congregations, two mission stations (one full-time Indian ministry), two campus ministries (one full-time), 6 circuits, 13 preschools, 4 kindergartens, and 4 elementary schools.

Although smaller in numbers, with nearly 15,000 baptized members and 11,000+ communicant members, we are spread across the entire region with congregations in every community of 1,500+ except one. The sparse population, long distances between towns, and smallness of cities (largest is 50,000) makes ministry a challenge, long travel normal, and gatherings for ministry precious.

One of those gatherings held annually for the last nine years has been an evangelism convocation (“Tell the Good News about Jesus!”) which has consistently brought over 250 laypeople and pastors together for worship, study, and preparation to tell the story of Jesus Christ to their friends, family, and neighbors back home.

Strong interest in taking the Word out to as many people as possible is shown by the support of district work to the Indian tribes near Riverton, Wyoming; providing a missionary to a new area of population growth south of Jackson, Wyoming; and a full-time campus pastor at the University of Wyoming, Laramie. In addition, all the congregations assist four other congregations with subsidy, and as a district, provide generous gifts to assist students preparing for full-time church work through district grants.

Teaching and equipping congregations for stewardship continues with an emphasis started in 2008–2009 to teach it in each

congregation. To date, one-third of all congregations have benefited from a special district presentation of “Faithful Stewardship,” which emphasizes giving from blessings and from a “total stewardship” perspective that is not limited to money but certainly includes it, also encouraging investing gifts in Word-related ministry for the sake of bringing souls to know Christ Jesus and be saved.

Another responsibility that is taken seriously and carried out faithfully is the practice of “visitation” of every congregation and pastor during the triennium. That has been our practice now for the past 25 years. These visits are directed (and done) by the district president with the assistance of the vice-presidents and circuit counselors (“visitors” in the Wyoming District) who often do most of the visits. These “visitations” have benefited our congregations and pastors by keeping us in close communication and walking together in doctrine and practice.

At present, we are less impacted by the economic woes common to our nation, but we are having to learn to deal with small communities and congregations facing aging and declining populations. Being provided with pastoral care becomes more difficult to afford, so various options for providing such care need to be explored and considered.

After the district convention in the spring of 2009, the district administrative team met to adopt a new theme for the next triennium (2010–2012), “No Other Foundation,” based on 1 Cor. 3:11, “For no one can lay any other foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.” In 2010, the emphasis will be “No Other Foundation—Christ and the Word!” In 2011, “No Other Foundation—Law and Gospel!” And in 2012, “No Other Foundation—Church and Ministry!” Each year, the emphasis will be on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ and some aspect of speaking, sharing, and taking the message of Jesus Christ into our communities, district, and the world.

Pastors and congregations faithfully proclaiming the truth of God’s Word, faithfully administering the Sacraments, gathering in worship, and going forth into their communities to share Christ in their vocations continue to be the joy and strength of our district.

The Lord has truly blessed us through His Son, and we pray that the Father may be glorified through the worship and activities of those who are His in the Wyoming District.

Richard O. Boche, *President*

R7-07

Res. 8-06 Task Force Report

The 2004 convention of the Synod adopted Res. 8-01A which established new procedures for ecclesiastical supervision, dispute resolution, and expulsion from membership in the Synod. In 2007, the Synod in convention adopted Res. 8-06 calling for a special task force to study further the composition of Hearing Panels under Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17, established as a result of Res. 8-01A and involving expulsion from membership in the Synod. Res. 8-06 is as follows:

To Recommend Further Study of Composition of Hearing Panels in Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17

WHEREAS, In 2004 Res. 8-01A, the Synod adopted new procedures for ecclesiastical supervision and dispute resolution; and

WHEREAS, This process has been a blessing to the Synod in resolving disputes and cases of ecclesiastical supervision that have arisen since its adoption and in better stewardship of the time and other resources of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Concerns have been expressed by some regarding the composition of the Hearing Panel under current Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17 which makes decisions for or against an accused member who is facing expulsion from membership in the Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention call for a special task force to study further the composition of the Hearing Panel under Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17; and be it further

Resolved, That this special task force be comprised of two members appointed by the Commission on Constitutional Matters, one of whom shall be a commissioned minister; two members appointed by the Commission on Structure, one of whom shall be a layperson who is a hearing facilitator; and two district presidents appointed by the Council of Presidents; and be it finally

Resolved, That this special task force report the results of its study, and any recommendations that may result from its study, no later than the 2010 64th Regular Convention of the Synod.

Appointed to the task force by the Commission on Constitutional Matters were Lu Juana Butts (a commissioned minister) and Phil Esala (chair). Appointed to the task force by the Commission on Structure were Bill Hibbler (a layperson and a hearing facilitator) and Walter Rosin. Appointed to the task force by the Council of Presidents were District Presidents Terry Forke (secretary) and Dale Sattgast.

After conducting many interviews and reviewing significant resources, the “8-06 Task Force” concurs with the observation from 2007 Res. 8-06 that the process that came as a result of 2004 Res. 8-01A “has been a blessing to the Synod.” The task force also recognizes “concerns have been expressed by some” that under Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17 the current composition of Hearing Panels and Final Hearing Panels is three district presidents. This has led to the perception by some that the laity of the Synod has been excluded from involvement in the process of expulsion from membership in the Synod.

Historically, expulsion from membership in the Synod occurred as a result of the action of the Synod and/or districts in convention in which the laity had voice and vote (cf. 1854 Constitution, Chapter 5, *A 7 Moving Frontiers*). While the Synod recognizes that “the choice of the form of government for a church is an inalienable part of their Christian liberty” (C. F. W. Walther, 1848 Presidential Address), and while there is no explicit Scriptural or confessional command with respect to the expulsion provision in the human organization of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the involvement of the laity in the expulsion from membership provisions does put into practice a doctrinal position of the Synod, to wit, “To the ministry of the Word, according to divine right, belongs also the duty [*Amt*] to judge doctrine, but laymen also possess this right. Therefore, in the ecclesiastical courts (consistories) and councils they are accorded both a seat and vote together with the clergy” (Thesis X, Concerning the Holy Ministry or the Pastoral Office, *Church and Ministry*, adopted 1851).

The 8-06 Task Force makes the following recommendations:

- A) That a hearing facilitator be appointed to Hearing Panels and Final Hearing Panels under Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17; and
- B) That the composition of both the Hearing Panel and the Final Hearing Panel under Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17 be changed to replace one district president with a layperson chosen from the Synod’s roster of reconcilers.

Consistent with these recommendations, the 8-06 Task Force recommends the following changes to the Bylaws of the Synod:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Definition of Terms

2.14.2 The definitions of terms used in this bylaw are as follows: ...

- (j) Hearing facilitator: One selected according to these bylaws (Bylaw 1.10.13.2) by blind draw by the Secretary of the Synod and trained to serve as a facilitator for hearings before panels.

(j)(k) *[and following letters]*

2.14.7.2 A Hearing Panel consisting of ~~three~~ two district presidents and one reconciler who is a layperson selected as follows but excluding the involved district presidents shall conduct the hearing:

- (a) One district president selected by the accused.
- (b) One district president selected by the district president who imposed the suspended status (a district president may not choose himself).
- (c) A third district president selected by the other two Hearing Panel members. If the two Hearing Panel members cannot agree on the third Hearing Panel member, then One reconciler who is a layperson. Such third This member shall be chosen by blind draw from among the Synod's roster of reconcilers remaining district presidents, excluding any involved district president, with the blind draw administered by the chairman of the Council of Presidents and audited by witnesses.
- (d) Each Hearing Panel shall have a nonvoting hearing facilitator who will serve as chairman of the panel.
- (e) The hearing facilitator shall conduct the hearing, shall serve as chairman of the panel, and may draw upon persons and resources that he deems necessary for conducting a hearing in a fair and equitable manner.
- (f) The hearing facilitator shall serve as an advisor to the panel on the form but not the substance of the decision.

2.14.7.3 Upon receipt of a request for hearing, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall promptly notify the accused and the district president who imposed the suspended status of their respective right to choose one Hearing Panel member and direct that the identity of their selection be transmitted to the chairman of the Council of Presidents within 15 days from the date of such notice. If either party declines to make a selection within 15 days, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall then make such selection within five days.

2.15.2 [No change needed]

2.15.7.2 A Hearing Panel consisting of ~~three~~ two district presidents (excluding the involved district presidents) and one reconciler who is a layperson selected as follows shall conduct the hearing:

- (a) One district president selected by the accused (a district president, if he is the accused, may not choose himself).
- (b) One district president selected by the President of the Synod.
- (c) A third district president selected by the other two Hearing Panel members. If the two Hearing Panel members cannot agree on the third Hearing Panel member, then One reconciler who is a layperson. Such third This member shall be chosen by blind draw from among the Synod's roster of reconcilers remaining district presidents, excluding any involved district president, with the blind draw administered by the chairman of the Council of Presidents and audited by witnesses.
- (d) Each Hearing Panel shall have a nonvoting hearing facilitator who will serve as chairman of the panel.
- (e) The hearing facilitator shall conduct the hearing, shall serve as chairman of the panel, and may draw upon persons and resources that he deems necessary for conducting a hearing in a fair and equitable manner.
- (f) The hearing facilitator shall serve as an advisor to the panel on the form but not the substance of the decision.
- (d)(g) If a Referral Panel was formed, the three district presidents that served in that capacity are not eligible to serve on a Hearing Panel.

2.15.7.3 Upon receipt of a request for hearing, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall promptly notify the accused and the President of the Synod of their respective right to choose one Hearing Panel member and direct that the identity of their selection be transmitted to the chairman of the Council of Presidents within 15 days from the date of such notice. If either party declines to make a selection within 15 days, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall then make such selection within 5 days.

2.17.2 [No change needed]

2.17.7.2 A Hearing Panel consisting of ~~three~~ two district presidents (excluding the involved district presidents) and one reconciler who is a layperson selected as follows, shall conduct the hearing:

- (a) One district president selected by the accused.
- (b) One district president selected by the ecclesiastical supervisor who imposed the suspended status (a district president may not choose himself).
- (c) A third district president selected by the other two Hearing Panel members. If the two Hearing Panel members cannot agree on the third Hearing Panel member, then One reconciler who is a layperson. Such third This member shall be chosen by blind draw from among the Synod's roster of reconcilers remaining district presidents, excluding any involved district president, with the blind draw administered by the chairman of the Council of Presidents and audited by witnesses.
- (d) Each Hearing Panel shall have a nonvoting hearing facilitator who will serve as chairman of the panel.
- (e) The hearing facilitator shall conduct the hearing, shall serve as chairman of the panel, and may draw upon persons and resources that he deems necessary for conducting a hearing in a fair and equitable manner.
- (f) The hearing facilitator shall serve as an advisor to the panel on the form but not the substance of the decision.

2.17.7.3 Upon receipt of a request for hearing, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall promptly notify the accused and the involved ecclesiastical supervisor of their respective right to choose one Hearing Panel member and direct that the identity of their selection be transmitted to the chairman of the Council of Presidents within 15 days from the date of such notice. If either party declines to make a selection within such 15-day period, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall then make such selection within five days.

2.14.7.4 The chairman of the Council of Presidents shall also promptly notify the Secretary of the Synod of the need for hearing facilitator.

2.14.7.45 [and following numbers] When ~~two~~ the Hearing Panel members have so been chosen, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall promptly notify them of their selection to the Hearing Panel and direct that they select the third member of the Hearing Panel within 10 days and notify the chairman of the Council of Presidents of their selection.

2.14.8.1 Within 30 days after receipt of the request, a Final Hearing Panel shall be selected.

- (a) The panel shall be constituted in the same prescribed manner as described in Bylaws 2.14.7.2–2.14.7.5, except that the three district presidents, reconciler, and facilitator that constituted the Hearing Panel and the involved district presidents are omitted from consideration for the Final Hearing Panel.
- (b) The procedures for the final hearing shall be the same as prescribed in Bylaws 2.14.7.5–2.14.7.7.
- (c) The chairman of the Hearing Panel shall provide the Final Hearing Panel with a written statement of the matter and the Hearing Panel's report, minutes, records, and proceedings.

2.15.7.4 The chairman of the Council of Presidents shall also promptly notify the Secretary of the Synod of the need for hearing facilitator.

2.15.7.45 [and following numbers] When ~~two~~ the Hearing Panel members have so been chosen, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall promptly notify them of their selection to the Hearing Panel and direct that they select the third member of the Hearing Panel within 10 days and notify the chairman of the Council of Presidents of their selection.

2.15.8.1 Within 30 days after receipt of the request, a Final Hearing Panel shall be selected.

- (a) The panel shall be constituted in the same prescribed manner as described in Bylaws 2.15.7.2–2.15.7.5, except that the three district presidents, reconciler, and facilitator that constituted the Hearing Panel and the three district presidents that constituted a Referral Panel and any other involved district presidents are omitted from consideration for the Final Hearing Panel.
- (b) The procedures for the final hearing shall be the same as prescribed in Bylaws 2.15.7.5–2.15.7.7.
- (c) The chairman of the Hearing Panel shall provide the Final Hearing Panel with a written statement of the matter and the Hearing Panel's report, minutes, records, and proceedings.

2.17.7.4 The chairman of the Council of the Presidents shall also promptly notify the Secretary of the Synod of the need for a hearing facilitator.

2.17.7.45 [and following numbers] When ~~two~~ the Hearing Panel members have so been chosen, the chairman of the Council of Presidents shall promptly notify them of their selection to the Hearing Panel and direct that they select the third member of the Hearing Panel within 10 days and notify the chairman of the Council of Presidents of their selection.

2.17.8.1 Within 30 days after receipt of the request, a Final Hearing Panel shall be selected.

- (a) The panel shall be selected in the same manner as described in Bylaws 2.17.7–2.17.7.5, except that the district presidents that constituted the Referral Panel and the district presidents, reconciler, and facilitator that constituted the Hearing Panel or any other involved district presidents are omitted from consideration for the Final Hearing Panel.
- (b) The procedures for the final hearing shall be the same as prescribed in Bylaws 2.17.7.5–2.17.7.7.
- (c) The chairman of the Hearing Panel shall provide the Final Hearing Panel with a written statement of the matter and the Hearing Panel's report, minutes, records, and proceedings.

The 8-06 Task Force also wishes to note the following:

While it is beyond the scope of the assignment given to the task force, the 8-06 Task Force also recommends for floor committee consideration that the Secretary of the Synod be designated as administrator for the processes involved in 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17. While this recommendation does not speak directly to the composition of the Hearing Panels or Final Hearing Panels, it would help to alleviate the impression that the district presidents are in control of the entire process.

Res. 8-06 Task Force

R8-01**Commission on Structure**

The members of the Commission on Structure (COS) appointed by the LCMS Board of Directors for the 2007–2010 term are Rev. Alan Barber, Rev. Carl Anton, Mr. Bruce Dannemeyer, Dr. Walter Rosin, and Rev. Marvin Temme; *ex officio* members are Synod Secretary Dr. Raymond Hartwig and Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Ron Schultz; and advisory member Dr. Albert Marcis represents the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM).

The COS met for its organizational meeting on Dec. 14, 2007. Rev. Marvin Temme was elected to serve as chairman and Dr. Walter Rosin as secretary of the commission. During the course of the remainder of the triennium until the writing of this report, the commission has met an additional seven (7) times, including one phone conference meeting.

Bylaw 3.9.5 describes the purpose of the commission: “The Commission on Structure exists to serve the members of the Synod in convention by providing direction for ongoing maintenance and management of the *Handbook*, that is, the Constitution, Bylaws, and Articles of Incorporation of the Synod.” In addition, Bylaw 3.9.5.2 offers, “The Commission on Structure shall assist the convention in maintaining the *Handbook* of the Synod by identifying and recommending modifications to areas of concern in the *Handbook* and for promotion of its ease of use, thereby to enable the Synod most effectively to accomplish its mission.”

During this triennium, the commission has dealt with matters referred to it by the 2007 convention, matters referred by other commissions or boards, matters relating to the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG), and various new items that surfaced during this time.

Matters referred by the 2007 convention and acted on by the commission included these:

- Res. 8-06, calling for the commission to appoint two (2) members to a special task force to study further the composition of Hearing Panels in Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, and 2.17—one of whom was to be a layperson who is also a hearing facilitator for the Synod’s dispute resolution process. Mr. Bill Hibbler and Dr. Walter Rosin were appointed in March 2008 for this responsibility.
- Res. 8-10, calling for the commission to be in consultation with the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) in reviewing CCM Opinions 02-2296, 02-2309, and 02-2320 “as to how the theological issues are addressed under the most recent changes to the Bylaws, namely dispute resolution and ecclesiastical supervision, and the policies implemented by the

COP.” This task was completed in the fall/winter of 2009 and is included in the CTCR’s report to the Synod.

Several 2007 convention overtures were referred to the commission and in turn referred to other appropriate boards or commissions. Still others were delayed any action, pending the recommendations and outcome of the BRTFSSG. An example is the circuit forum election process for the election of convention delegates.

On the other hand, the commission has prepared an overture dealing with a matter in Bylaw 5.3.2 to bring it into compliance with task force recommendations. Another such matter is an overture to amend Bylaws 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 to bring these bylaws into compliance with the task force report.

In light of the proposed task force recommendations, considerable time was committed by the commission to a study of the Synod’s Articles of Incorporation. An overture has been prepared to amend and restate this document to describe more accurately the objectives, purposes, governance, and activities of the Synod, should the task force recommendations be adopted.

In response to the BRTFSSG proposal to change the name of the commission from “Commission on Structure” to “Commission on Handbook,” the current commission is in agreement with the task force. The commission has, however, submitted an overture to retain the membership of the Chief Administrative Officer and an advisory member from the CCM on the Commission on Handbook. The reason for this request is to continue the valuable resource and historical, contextual input provided from these two positions.

The commission also addressed matters referred to it from the LCMS Board of Directors and/or carried over from the previous commission term. This resulted in recommendations for a change to the election process at conventions and a proposed bylaw regarding the removal of board and/or commission members. The commission has prepared overtures on both matters for inclusion in the 2010 *Convention Workbook*. Much of the commission’s time was spent on the matter of board member removal.

In addition to referrals from overtures or boards, the commission received requests from both the Lutheran Laymen’s League for a change in bylaw terminology and the Lutheran Church Extension Fund for a return to pre-2004 bylaw wording. The commission is in agreement with both requests and has prepared overtures addressing both of these matters.

For the sake of clarity and consistency, the commission has prepared overtures on the definition of the terms “Operating Board” and “Governing Board” for inclusion in Bylaw 1.2.1.

In relation to the commission’s responsibility for “providing direction for ongoing maintenance and management of the *Handbook*” and to “assist the convention in maintaining the *Handbook* of the Synod by identifying and recommending modifications to areas of concern in the *Handbook* and for promotion of its ease of use, thereby to enable the Synod most effectively to accomplish its mission,” the commission has prepared an overture to bring the Bylaws into consistency with the Synod’s practice and requirements regarding the calling of pastors. Another such overture has been prepared to enable meetings in a manner other than face-to-face, so long as appropriate requirements and conditions are met. Still another overture adds wording to Bylaw 1.3.4, providing expectations of Synod membership to enable the Synod better to plan current and future ministry efforts.

Marvin Temme, *Chairman*



1. MISSIONS

1-01

To Celebrate *Fan into Flame* Blessings and Commit to Its Completion

WHEREAS, The 2004 LCMS convention adopted Res. 1-04, which called for the Synod in convention assembled to commit itself to supporting the major fund-raising effort approved by the Board of Directors of the Synod and administered by the Mission Support Unit, with a goal of raising \$100 million above the regular LCMS World Mission budget in time for a celebration of God's blessing by the 2010 Synod convention; and

WHEREAS, This effort, named the *Fan into Flame* campaign, was begun in earnest in 2005; and

WHEREAS, The Mission Support Unit was tasked with the engagement of each district in a local effort and the national effort in order to raise support for mission activity in local congregations, districts, throughout the United States and around the world, using a case model that incorporated Jesus' charge to His disciples in the Book of Acts 1:8 ("... in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"); and

WHEREAS, In 2007, an interim report was made to the Synod convention sharing the blessings of *Fan Into Flame* to that point and celebrating over \$20 million in pledges to the campaign; and

WHEREAS, Two-thirds of LCMS districts have completed their district efforts to date; and

WHEREAS, One-third of the districts will require additional time to complete their efforts; and

WHEREAS, An additional \$40 million in major gift requests are pending; and

WHEREAS, \$54 million dollars has been raised, 8,000 new donors have been added to the ranks of mission supporters, 18,000 gifts have been generated, and 1,100 congregations have participated; and

WHEREAS, A number of *Ablaze!* projects and initiatives of the Synod and her districts and congregations have been undertaken as a result of the *Fan into Flame* campaign; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention celebrate God's blessings through the *Fan Into Flame* campaign, it having developed over \$54 million to date for mission work in local communities, across the country, and around the world; and be it further

Resolved, That the congregations of the Synod celebrate the formal completion of the campaign on Reformation Day of 2011; and be it further

Resolved, That *Fan into Flame* campaign support mechanisms remain in place until the remaining districts and congregations of our Synod complete their campaign efforts and all pending gift requests have been closed; and be it finally

Resolved, That a final report of the *Fan into Flame* campaign be provided to the next Synod convention.

Board for Mission Services

1-02

To Increase Outreach to Immigrants at Congregation Level

WHEREAS, Already in the nineteenth century, Dr. C. F. W. Walther, the first president of the LCMS and himself an immigrant, recognized the needs of new immigrants to our country and the responsibility of the Missouri Synod to reach out to these new Americans, as he spoke to the Synod in 1874, "In the course of time millions immigrated to

our new fatherland overflowing with all of God's wonderfully rich blessings. Many are still landing on our coasts here to establish a life for themselves ... But not only has God gathered His church out of the mass of lost and condemned humanity but He also, as always, has cast His Church into the midst of this lifeless and decaying mass as the only purifying salt of the earth" ("Glorious Challenge—Difficult Task "); and

WHEREAS, The most recent LCMS statistical report (2008) contains the information that 219 congregations have reported that they have "specialized worship services" to address the needs of minority language and other immigrant communities (less than three percent); and

WHEREAS, More than one million people were naturalized as U.S. citizens in 2008 alone; and

WHEREAS, Many of these people have come to our country without faith in Jesus; and

WHEREAS, LCMS congregations and individual members can play an important role in the incorporation of these people into the kingdom of God; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention thank God for those congregations that have stepped out in faith to meet the needs of the immigrants in our midst; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention urge the districts and the National Ministry Office of LCMS World Mission to work together to find ways to strengthen their commitment to and increase the effectiveness of the work of LCMS congregations and their members among the new immigrants in our midst; and be it finally

Resolved, That the convention urge Concordia Seminary and Concordia Theological Seminary to continue the expansion and development of the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT) and other such programs that provide education for ministry to immigrants and ethnic groups via distance education.

Board for Mission Services

1-03

To Implement 2007 Res. 2-04A re Position of Director for Strategic Development of Hispanic Ministries

WHEREAS, The 2007 LCMS convention overwhelmingly authorized "the President of the Synod, working with the Board for Mission Services and the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Hispanic Ministry and in consultation with the National Hispanic Lutheran Convention, to appoint a Director for Strategic Development of Hispanic Ministries as soon as funding is available" (Res. 2-04A); and

WHEREAS, Hispanic immigration into the U.S. continues; and

WHEREAS, At the district, circuit, and congregational levels, LCMS members are seeking guidance and direction as they make their plans to reach out to Hispanic people; and

WHEREAS, Funding for this position could not be found in this triennium; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2007 convention again affirm the need for faithful and effective outreach to Hispanic people, reaffirm the need for a Director for Strategic Development of Hispanic Ministries to guide the church in this important task, and urge the prompt appointment of this director.

Board for Mission Services

1-04

To Respond to Opportunities for Outreach to Islam

WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach that there is salvation in no one other than Jesus, “for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12 ESV); and

WHEREAS, According to its self-definition, Islam is an alternative religion to and a competing religion with Christianity; and

WHEREAS, Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the world; and

WHEREAS, The Pew Research Center has estimated (2009) that there are 2.5 million followers of Islam in the U.S., with the number of Islamic immigrants continuing to grow; and

WHEREAS, Most Christians in America, including Lutheran Christians, are woefully ignorant of the Islamic religion; and

WHEREAS, Already in the sixteenth century, Martin Luther encouraged the translation and publication of the Qur’an and wrote a preface to the translation, arguing that publication was necessary so that Christian people would “be able to heal some” of the followers of Islam and powerfully defend the Christian faith; and

WHEREAS, In the U.S., Lutheran laypeople who know what they believe and why they believe it—so that they can answer questions as loving neighbors, co-workers, and friends—are likely to be those most effective in communicating the Christian faith to those outside the Christian faith; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2007 LCMS convention recognize response to Islam as a high-priority task that requires action from the whole church and its institutions; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention urge LCMS congregations and members to respond to opportunities to share the Good News of Jesus by word and deed with those who are seeking answers to questions of faith and life in both the U.S. and around the world; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention commend Concordia Publishing House for the publication of books such as *Muslim Friends*, *The Truth about Islam*, and *How to Respond—Muslims* and encourage the use of these resources and the publication of further resources to equip Lutheran people to respond to questions raised by Islamic people; and be it finally

Resolved, That the convention give thanks to God for those in our midst who already have stepped out in faith to share the Gospel in the world of Islam, including missionaries of LCMS World Mission past and present, workers of other Lutheran organizations dedicated to work among Muslims, and many Lutheran congregations and their members.

Board for Mission Services

1-05

To Encourage Participation in Operation Barnabas

WHEREAS, Large numbers of LCMS men and women, together with numerous others, are making enormous sacrifices as members of the Armed Services to make it possible for the citizens of the U.S. to live in peace and safety; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Department of Defense estimates that one out of six servicemen and women who return from Iraq suffers from severe depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); and

WHEREAS, Six out of ten of these hurting people will not seek help because they are afraid; and

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WHEREAS, LCMS congregations in various places are served by pastors/chaplains who have served with their reserve units in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, Many returning veterans in distress are members of LCMS congregations or are friends or relatives of LCMS members; and

WHEREAS, LCMS World Mission’s Ministry to the Armed Forces has formed Operation Barnabas and has called Chaplain Mike Moreno to serve full time to train and equip congregations and their members to minister to the needs of Armed Forces personnel and their families, both during their time of deployment and when they return from the field; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention express its thanksgiving to God for the service of the very special men and women in the Armed Forces who protect our country; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention urge its congregations to be especially sensitive to the needs of all military personnel who return from combat, including those who are part of our communities while not members of our congregations; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention urge congregations and their members to take part in Operation Barnabas and to establish standing committees for military concerns, so that they can be prepared to respond to the needs of deployed and returning servicemen and women and their families; and be it finally

Resolved, That LCMS congregations and their members be urged to pray for the safety of military personnel and for God’s guidance and direction for the Ministry to the Armed Forces as it, together with LCMS congregations and their members, endeavors to minister to all in need.

Board for Mission Services

1-06

To Provide Exclusively Lutheran Theological Training for Missionaries

WHEREAS, The LCMS confession of faith is clearly biblical; and

WHEREAS, The impact of poorly understood or unclearly formulated theology in any mission outreach results in errors which impact future generations of Christians; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montana District in convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to direct the Board for Mission Services to use exclusively Lutheran theological training and preparation for missionaries.

Montana District

1-07

To Set Aside Reformation Day 2010 for Fasting, Prayer, Confession, and Repentance

WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ invited His Church into mission with Him by making disciples of all nations and baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19) and promised them the power of the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth; and

WHEREAS, Despite their commitment to *Ablaze!* and to “Transforming Lives for Time and Eternity,” many congregations of this district and throughout the LCMS have difficulty in establishing effective strategies to reach the unchurched and unsaved in their communities; and

WHEREAS, The focus remains on the needs of the saved rather than the needs of the unsaved and unchurched of our communities; therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the LCMS Eastern District assembled in convention recognize as unacceptable our corporate and individual response to Jesus' invitation to reach those lost and dying in unbelief; and be it further

Resolved, That the Eastern District commit itself to a district-wide day of fasting, prayer, confession, and repentance on Reformation Day, October 31, 2009, seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit to become a district *Ablaze!* with genuine personal zeal for the lost; and be it further

Resolved, That the Eastern District direct its Department of Mission Services to develop resources appropriate for such a day of fasting and prayer for use within all congregations and circuits; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Eastern District memorialize the 2010 convention of the LCMS to set aside Reformation Day 2010 as a similar day of fasting, prayer, confession, and repentance.

Eastern District

1-08

To Encourage District Presidents to Visit Other Districts' Institutional Ministries

WHEREAS, The strength of the *Ablaze!* movement is to promote the confession and the missions of LCMS Districts, LCMS Human Care and World Relief, and LCMS World Mission; and

WHEREAS, We rejoice in Iowa District East's two campus ministries, its two pastors to the deaf, its two part-time chaplains to the University of Iowa Hospital and the State Penitentiary, its Eastside Mission, its camp ministry, and its Hispanic migrant ministry; and

WHEREAS, Our campus ministries have produced many pastors for the Synod; and

WHEREAS, It is not known how future restructuring will impact all district-supported ministries; therefore be it

Resolved, That Iowa District East memorialize the 2010 Synod in convention to adopt the following resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That during the first year of the next triennium the members of the Council of Presidents will choose among themselves to visit the other districts and see the joy of the Gospel work in these special ministries; and be it further

Resolved, That the district presidents, at one meeting of the Council of Presidents, share their insights regarding what is happening in the other district institutional ministries; and be it finally

Resolved, That the result will be that all district presidents will hopefully have seen the wonderful district-supported ministries of the Synod and rejoice in walking together.

Iowa District East

1-09

To Encourage New Mission Starts to Use "Lutheran" and "LCMS"

WHEREAS, The 2004 LCMS convention adopted Res. 1-04 "To Commit to \$100 Million *Ablaze!* Fund-raising Effort," resolving to "commit itself to support the major fund-raising effort approved by the Board of Directors of the Synod and administered by the Mission Support Unit, with a goal of raising \$100 million above the regular

LCMS World Mission budget in time to celebrate God's blessing by the 2010 synodical convention"; and

WHEREAS, This fund-raising effort was initiated under the name *Fan into Flame*; and

WHEREAS, *Fan into Flame* is intended to support mission work and evangelistic outreach at all levels; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has a rich theological heritage that should be celebrated and not excluded; and

WHEREAS, Many new LCMS church/mission plants are using the name "community" in their name; therefore be it

Resolved, That all new LCMS church/mission plants, whether or not they use *Fan into Flame* money, be encouraged to use "Lutheran" in their names; and be it further

Resolved, That they be encouraged to use "LCMS," or "Missouri Synod" in all promotional materials and signage; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Praesidium and the district presidents enforce such measures as the Synod strives to "walk together."

Circuit Nine Forum

Kansas District

1-10

To Support Church Transformation

WHEREAS, It is pleasing to God our Savior for all to be saved and to understand the truth of the Gospel (1 Tim. 2:3-4); and

WHEREAS, The sharing of this Gospel message is best accomplished by the committed outreach activities of individuals in local congregations (Rom. 10:17); and

WHEREAS, 2007 Res. 1-01A adopted a goal of praying and working for the mission revitalization (also known as "church transformation") of at least 2,000 existing LCMS churches by 2017; and

WHEREAS, LCMS World Mission has a partnership agreement with Transforming Churches Network (TCN), an LCMS Recognized Service Organization, to assist in reaching the Synod's *Ablaze!* goal stated above; and

WHEREAS, TCN is already partnering with 30 districts and 350 congregations, has trained over 200 consultants and 100 coaches, has conducted 175 consultations, and is continuing to develop resources and processes that help congregations to revitalize—congregations that are "regularly and consistently making new disciples and renewing [their] members in order that they make new disciples through the power of the Holy Spirit" (2007 Res. 1-01A); therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod renew its goal of praying and working for the mission revitalization of at least 2,000 existing LCMS churches by 2017; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS, through its districts, congregations, auxiliaries, and LCMS World Mission (through its partnership with TCN) continue to support these mission revitalization (church transformation) efforts as a major component of the *Ablaze!* initiative.

Board for Mission Services

1-11

To Ask CTCR and Seminaries to Evaluate Transforming Churches Network

WHEREAS, The Transforming Churches Network (TCN) is listed on the Synod's Web site as a "non-profit partner organization of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod dedicated to revitalizing congregations"; and

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WHEREAS, Although it is concerned for the health of existing LCMS congregations, TCN determines a congregation's health based chiefly on numerical measurements and sociology such as attendance numbers and financial giving but not on its adherence to the teaching of the Scriptures or the Lutheran Confessions; and

WHEREAS, TCN advocates changing the main emphasis of a pastor's duties from "being the lead caretaker of the existing congregation to the lead missionary to lost people in the community" ("Pastor Survey," TCN, question 7a [<http://portal.tcnbackup.com/Portals/0/5%20Pastor%20Survey.pdf>]), thus diminishing the pastoral care of the Law and Gospel that pastors have historically provided to members of the churches they serve (Jn. 21:15–17); and

WHEREAS, TCN initially asks pastors to see how comfortable they are with this statement, "If we do not achieve the 5% growth goal in the next 24 months, and 5% growth annually thereafter, I will put my name out for another call" ("Pastor Survey," question 8d), thus suggesting that the man who is divinely called to be a pastor is only effective if he meets preset worldly standards, even though both Jesus and Paul did not always find such worldly success in their ministries (Jn. 6:60ff.; 2 Tim. 4:9–16; Acts 17:1–9); and

WHEREAS, TCN also asks congregation leaders to determine if "The leaders of this church hope to initiate a style of worship service

that appeals to unreached people" ("Leader's Survey," TCN, question 3e [<http://portal.tcnbackup.com/Portals/0/6%20Leaders%20Survey.pdf>]), thus suggesting that a congregation's worship style should be based on sociology instead of the Word of God as it has been taught in the Lutheran Confessions, or that a congregation's worship style should be changed even if it exclusively uses the approved hymnals of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Holy Spirit alone is responsible for converting people to saving faith by His Word and Sacraments, when and where He pleases; and

WHEREAS, Jesus in Matt. 23:15 teaches that a strong missionary zeal without the proper biblical and Christ-centered doctrinal teaching is spiritually dangerous; and

WHEREAS, We as Christians are called to be in this world but not of it; therefore be it

Resolved, That the CTCR, Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne be asked to give a theological evaluation of the premise, methods, and materials of Transforming Churches Network; and be it further

Resolved, That this theological evaluation be completed and published in *The Lutheran Witness* before the next regular LCMS convention.

Mt. Calvary
Fullerton, NE

2. DISTRICT AND CONGREGATIONAL SERVICES

2-01

To Tell the World That Christ Is the Only Way to Heaven

WHEREAS, The World Parliament of Religions held in Australia in December 2009 again showed that an antiscritptural universalism continues to advance within most major denominations; and

WHEREAS, The Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, and most major Protestant denominations no longer insist that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven and that Christianity is the only saving faith; and

WHEREAS, Surveys reveal that a majority of church members maintain that all religions worship the same true God; and

WHEREAS, The Pope and liberal Protestant churchmen often pray with Muslims, Jews, and other non-Christians; and

WHEREAS, The Athanasian Creed states: “Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic, [i.e., universal, Christian] faith. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity ...”; and

WHEREAS, The 1973 LCMS “Statement on Scriptural and Confessional Principles” says that Jesus is the only way to heaven and that all those who do not trust in Him for salvation will go to hell; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention declare that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven, that Christianity is the only saving and divinely revealed faith, and that those who die without saving faith in Jesus Christ are lost; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention ask the LCMS Board of Directors to request a series of articles in *The Lutheran Witness* exposing the antiscritptural universalism which has infiltrated the major denominations and defending the fact that Christianity is the only saving and divinely revealed faith; and be it finally

Resolved, That all LCMS district presidents insist that every pastor in their districts maintain that (1) Jesus is the only way to heaven; (2) those who do not trust in Christ for salvation are damned; and (3) Christianity is the one and only divinely revealed and saving faith (“Confessional Lutherans Support True Biblical Mission Work—UNIVERSALISM DESTROYS MISSIONS,” *Christian News*, November 16, 2009).

Trinity
New Haven, MO

2-02

To Reaffirm Justification by Faith Alone

WHEREAS, In October 2009, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and Methodists celebrated the tenth anniversary of the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification” (JDDJ); and

WHEREAS, JDDJ, which was signed in Augsburg, Germany, on October 31, 1998, has been referred to by orthodox Lutherans who still affirm the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith alone as “the Augsburg Concession” (*Christian News*, October 5, 2000); and

WHEREAS, Surveys have shown that many Americans, including church members, maintain that man must work, at least in part, his own way to heaven; and

WHEREAS, A survey of 3,000 Lutheran youth revealed that the majority of Lutheran youth do not accept the teaching of justification by grace through faith; and

WHEREAS, The Roman Catholic Church still affirms the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, which condemns the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith alone; and

WHEREAS, When Pope John Paul II in 1995 visited the cathedral in Trent on the 450th anniversary of the Council of Trent, he declared that “[i]ts conclusions maintain all their value”; and

WHEREAS, Session VI, Canon 12 of the Council of Trent, which the Pope and Vatican II reaffirmed, says: “If anyone saith that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ’s sake, or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified, let him be anathema”; and

WHEREAS, What the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent condemn is precisely what the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions teach about justification by faith alone in the merits of Christ; and

WHEREAS, The article “Poll: Most Christians’ Beliefs Out of Sync with Bible,” published in the July 2001 LCMS *Reporter*, said that only 27 percent of the Lutherans in the U.S. affirm the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith alone; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 convention of the LCMS reaffirm the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith alone in the merits of Christ; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention authorize a professional survey of only the LCMS to find out the percentage of members of LCMS congregations who accept the scriptural doctrine of justification; and be it finally

Resolved, That the convention urge all LCMS congregations and schools regularly to affirm the importance of the doctrine of justification by faith alone in the merits of Jesus Christ.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

2-03

To Engage in Theological Discussion and Reaffirm Authority of Scripture

WHEREAS, Wyoming District congregations have had the opportunity to study six Bible studies written by the circuit visitors on topics of concern; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has recently drifted away from God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions in rendering decisions in matters of both doctrine and practice, thus causing considerable disagreement in the Synod about (1) the propriety of joint or sequential prayers with people who do not worship the true God, (2) accountability even when acting with the permission of one’s ecclesiastical supervisor, (3) the right of laypeople and parish pastors to judge doctrine, (4) the order of creation, (5) close(d) communion, (6) the use of doctrinally pure worship forms and the uniformity of worship, (7) the theology and nomenclature of mission, (8) who may exercise the Office of the Holy Ministry, (9) the role of women in the church, and (10) the Church Growth movement; and

WHEREAS, God specifically warns in His Word against falling away from the Word (1 Tim. 1:3–7; 2 Thess. 2:15); and

WHEREAS, God has promised to work faith through the Word—that is, plant, nourish, and strengthen saving faith in human hearts through the Word; therefore be it

Resolved, That based upon comments of pastors and congregations, these six studies be revised and clarified; and be it further

Resolved, That a summary report be shared with Synod President Gerald Kieschnick (as per his request); and be it further

Resolved, That these studies, along with Bible studies that address additional concerns, be revised and be posted on the Wyoming District Web site; and be it further

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District continue to engage their sister congregations in the LCMS in theological dialogue, with the goal of getting back to theology, practices, and emphases that truly conform to the historical confession of the LCMS; and be it further

Resolved, That the faculties of its seminaries and the CTCR of the Synod be asked to make a clear confession of our position on these important issues; and be it further

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District resist the current theological direction of the LCMS and instead remain faithful to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions; and be it finally

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District memorialize the Synod to reaffirm its historic position regarding God's Word as the only norm and rule of life and the Lutheran Confessions as the proper exposition of God's Word.

Wyoming District

2-04

To Encourage Study of Confessions during Reformation Celebration

WHEREAS, The 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther will be observed in 2017; and

WHEREAS, It is most appropriate for the members of a Lutheran church to join in the celebration of that anniversary; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Minnesota South District encourage every congregation of the district to hold regular ongoing studies of all writings contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 (i.e., the Lutheran Confessions); and be it further

Resolved, That the Minnesota South District encourage each congregation of the district to encourage all of its members to attend these studies regularly; and be it further

Resolved, That this memorial be reintroduced at the 2012 and 2015 conventions of the Minnesota South District as a reminder of what the district has agreed to do in preparation for the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Minnesota South District memorialize the Synod at its 2010 convention to encourage every congregation of the Synod to hold regular ongoing studies of all writings contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 (i.e., the Lutheran Confessions) and to encourage all of their members to attend those studies regularly.

Minnesota South District

2-05

To Celebrate and Encourage the Practice of Two-Kingdom Theology

WHEREAS, "When Jesus prayed for His followers, before His arrest in Gethsemane, He set the terms: 'I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.' (John 17:14–18)" (Gene Edward Veith Jr., *The Spirituality of the Cross* [St. Louis: CPH, 1999], p. 96); and

WHEREAS, Lutherans celebrate the doctrine of "two kingdoms," that Christian people are citizens in the world but not citizens of the world; and

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WHEREAS, "God rules His earthly kingdom by power; He rules His spiritual kingdom by love. God's earthly kingdom is under the law; His spiritual kingdom is under the Gospel. Christians are citizens of both kingdoms. They are thus to be active members of their cultures, called in vocation to serve their neighbors through moral action. They are also members of Christ's church, justified entirely by faith. In the spiritual kingdom, they are passive recipients of God's grace. In the earthly kingdom, they are active for God in the tasks of their vocations. Christians must function in both realms at once, so that they are 'in, but not of the world'" (Veith, p. 98); and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther proclaims in *The Freedom of the Christian*: "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all" (Martin Luther, "Treatise on Christian Liberty" [*The Freedom of a Christian*] in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings*, ed. John Dillenberger [New York: Anchor Books, 1961], p. 53); and

WHEREAS, "Christian citizens may be under no illusion that they will be able to create heaven on earth through their activism, but they must still uphold and apply God's moral demands" (Veith, pp. 99–100); and

WHEREAS, "The doctrine of the two kingdoms actually frees Christians for effective action in the secular arena and untangles the dilemmas they often face in public policy" (Veith, p. 100); and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church has a rich theological heritage concerning this doctrine, including the writings of Dr. Martin Luther (e.g., *The Freedom of a Christian* [1520], AE 31:327–77; "Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Be Saved" [1526], AE 46:87–137; "Lectures on Romans—Chapter 13," AE 25:109–12, 468–84) and the current writings of Dr. Gene Edward Veith Jr. (e.g., "God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life," *Crossways* [2002]; *The Spirituality of the Cross* [CPH, 1999]); and

WHEREAS, the September 2009 edition of *The Lutheran Witness* featured LCMS Christian people working for the common good "in the public eye"; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention celebrate its "two-kingdom" theology by giving thanks to God for those LCMS Christians who give of their time and are involved politically on the local, state, and national level; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention vote to have Bible study materials made available to all congregations and pastors on the "just and why" of how LCMS Christian people can and should become involved politically, using the resources of the two seminary faculties and Concordia Publishing House; and be it finally

Resolved, That through these means, LCMS Christians become educated and empowered on issues that directly affect them as provided in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

Circuit Nine Forum
Kansas District

2-06

To Encourage Pastors to Further Their Study of Biblical Languages

Preamble

Dr. Martin Luther, the blessed reformer, wrote of the significance of the study and understanding of the biblical languages in his work entitled *To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools* (1524). He points out the benefit of the use of the biblical languages in preaching and teaching by saying,

In the Christian church all teachings must be judged. For this a knowledge of the language is needful above all else. The preacher or teacher can expound the Bible from beginning to end as he pleases, accurately or inaccurately, if there is no one there to judge whether he is doing it right or wrong. But in order to judge, one must have a knowledge of the languages; it cannot be done in any other way. Therefore, although faith and the gospel may indeed be proclaimed by simple preachers without a knowledge of languages, such preaching is flat and tame; people finally become weary and bored with it, and it falls to the ground. But where the preacher is versed in the languages, there is a freshness and vigor in his preaching, Scripture is treated in its entirety, and faith finds itself constantly renewed by a continual variety of words and illustrations. (AE 45:365)

Likewise, he warns of the threat of losing the Gospel if the biblical languages are lost when he says,

And let us be sure of this: we will not long preserve the gospel without the languages. The languages are the sheath in which this sword of the Spirit [Eph. 6:17] is contained; they are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; they are the vessel in which this wine is held; they are the larder in which this food is stored; and, as the gospel itself points out [Matt. 14:20], they are the baskets in which are kept these loaves and fishes and fragments. If through our neglect we let the languages go (which God forbid!), we shall not only lose the gospel, but the time will come when we shall be unable either to speak or write a correct Latin or German. (AE 45:359);

and

WHEREAS, The written Word of God is the very voice of God given to us to be heard and learned; and

WHEREAS, The Holy Spirit chose to use the language of the Hebrew people to write the Old Testament Scriptures and chose to use the language of the Greek-speaking world to write the New Testament Scriptures; and

WHEREAS, This word is to be preached, taught, and confessed in its truth and purity so that the kingdom of God may come to us and to many others; and

WHEREAS, The knowledge and the use of the original biblical languages is essential in the judging of doctrine and the preserving of the Gospel, as Dr. Luther taught us; and

WHEREAS, The intention of the introductory courses taught through the Concordia University System and the seminaries is to begin the study of the languages; and

WHEREAS, The Synod has begun to put forth an effort in the continued growth in the biblical languages of her pastors in such ways as the publication of beginning grammar textbooks and commentaries by Concordia Publishing House (CPH) and by the *Lectionary at Lunch* Internet podcasts by the faculty of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod encourage and promote the continued education of her pastors in the biblical languages, so that they do not become mere “simple preachers” but preach with vigor and freshness, preserving the purity of the Gospel and bringing the Kingdom to us and to many others; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod acknowledge and thank both CPH for the biblical language resources that are currently made available and the faculty of Concordia Seminary for their efforts in the *Lectionary at Lunch* podcasts; and be it further

Resolved, That CPH be encouraged to further expand the publication of biblical language resources, including advanced grammar text books and the like; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod encourage her pastors to increase in their understanding of the biblical languages with the use of such resources published by CPH and produced by the faculty of Concordia Seminary; and be it finally

Resolved, That the actual reading from and the translating of the biblical languages be promoted at Synod, district, and circuit level meetings.

North and South Sandia Circuit Forum
Rocky Mountain District

2-07

To Promote Usage of *The Lutheran Study Bible*

WHEREAS, God has blessed us with His unchanging Word; and

WHEREAS, Concordia Publishing House, working with Lutheran theologians throughout the world, has produced *The Lutheran Study Bible* as a resource for deeper study and edification for all of God’s people; therefore be it

Resolved, That the South Region Pastors’ Conference (SRPC) of the Northern Illinois District promote and commend use of *The Lutheran Study Bible* both in the congregations of the South Region and in the homes of its members; and be it further

Resolved, That the SRPC memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to promote and commend the use of *The Lutheran Study Bible* in both congregation and home throughout the LCMS.

South Region Pastors’ Conference
Northern Illinois District

2-08

To Urge Family Worship Using *Portals of Prayer*

WHEREAS, *The Lutheran Witness* reported several years ago:

Do statistics tell anything? Consider the following from the U.S. Census Bureau as noted in the March 24, 1980, *Marriage and Divorce*: “Although nationally one out of three marriages currently ends in divorce, those who have church weddings and attend church regularly beat the odds by one in 50. But of couples who have married in church, attend regularly, and have family worship, one in 1,105 ends in divorce.”

and

WHEREAS, Concordia Publishing House publishes *Portals of Prayer*, one of the best daily devotional guides for individuals and families printed today by any denomination; and

WHEREAS, Regular use of the same Scripture readings, devotionals, and prayers by hundreds of thousands of families in the LCMS will not only strengthen our families spiritually but also help to improve a sense of unity and fellowship within the Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That we commend CPH for publishing *Portals of Prayer*, urge all families within the LCMS to conduct daily family worship in the home, and consider using *Portals of Prayer*.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

2-09

To Direct Concordia Publishing House to Release the Six Chief Parts of 1986 Translation of Small Catechism

WHEREAS, The text of Luther’s Small Catechism (the “Six Chief Parts”) is the primary teaching tool of the Lutheran Church; and

WHEREAS, The text is intended to be used in the home and church and spread abroad as freely as possible; and

WHEREAS, The Scriptures themselves encourage writing the text of the catechism on doors and walls (Deut. 6:6ff.; see Luther’s “Preface to the Large Catechism,” p. 141); and

WHEREAS, Wherever the catechism is read, studied, printed, sung, written, posted, repeated, and learned, the Holy Spirit produces the fruits of faith and love; and

WHEREAS, The congregations of the Synod in love for one another and the unity of the Spirit have a common translation of the Small Catechism (1986); and

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WHEREAS, The copyright limitations placed on the 1986 translation of Luther's Small Catechism limit its distribution (e.g., on the Internet, church Web sites, catechism study books and worksheets, audio recordings, posters and artwork, *etc.*); therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the Rocky Mountain District memorialize the Synod in convention to direct the Board of Directors of Concordia Publishing House to release the Six Chief Parts of the 1986 translation of Luther's Small Catechism for non-profit use only.

Rocky Mountain District

2-10

To Publish Orthodox Christian Translation of Bible

WHEREAS, In 1963, Concordia Publishing House published the New Testament section of *An American Translation of the Bible in the Language of Today* by William F. Beck; and

WHEREAS, An LCMS convention asked CPH to publish Beck's entire *An American Translation* (AAT); and

WHEREAS, At one time, CPH enthusiastically promoted Beck's AAT; "Beck's Bible Coming in Early 1974," a story in the summer 1973 *CPH Commentator*, said,

The thousands of users of the late William F. Beck's *New Testament in the Language of Today* will rejoice in the news that Beck's Old Testament (together with his popular New Testament) is now being readied by CPH for publication. Target date for the complete Bible is early 1974.

Beck's New Testament is one of the translations used in the special paperback edition of the Billy Graham organization's *The Four Translation New Testament*, originally published by Moody Press.

and

WHEREAS, Liberals in the LCMS, particularly at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, did not want CPH to publish AAT. (They wanted the Revised Standard Version [RSV] of the National Council of Churches [NCC] to become the Bible promoted by CPH. They opposed Beck's defense of the inerrancy of the Bible and his opposition to the destructive higher critical views of the NCC's RSV translators. Most of the RSV translators rejected historic Christianity. When the liberals were successful in stopping CPH from publishing Beck's entire AAT, the Beck family brought to *Christian News* [CN] the boxes of AAT manuscripts worked on by the various solid Lutheran editors at CPH. Assigned the task of evaluating and improving Beck's work, they spent hundreds of hours doing so before all four editors recommended publication of AAT. Beck's work was improved by CPH editors Norden, Allwardt, Stallman, and Foelber. *CN* accepted almost all of their suggestions.); and

WHEREAS, When *CN* published Beck's AAT in 1975, it sold some 250,000 copies and *CN* was commended by many in the LCMS for publishing AAT; and

WHEREAS, This commendation of *CN* for publishing AAT displeased some in leadership positions in the LCMS and CPH, who then began a campaign to discredit AAT because it was published by an uncertified editor who opposed the LCMS "bureaucracy" for not disciplining liberals on the LCMS clergy roster; and

WHEREAS, In 1977, CPH highly praised and sold Beck's AAT when it was published by A. Holman Company, a division of J. B. Lippencott (*CN*, August 24, 2009); and

WHEREAS, The "plates" Holman used were given to Holman by *CN* without charge; and

WHEREAS, CPH and the LCMS Commission on Worship have insisted that both the RSV, copyrighted by the NCC, and the English Standard Version (ESV), which is 91 percent the NCC's RSV, are accurate translations in the language of today; and

WHEREAS, No LCMS convention ever authorized CPH to use the ESV in almost all of its publications; and

WHEREAS, The title page of the ESV states, "The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV) is adapted from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. All rights reserved"; and

WHEREAS, CPH has refused to answer letters asking if CPH has had to pay the NCC any money for use of the ESV; and

WHEREAS, A review of the ESV in the April 2005 *Concordia Journal* of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, said:

The text of the English Standard Version feels antiquated, if that is the desired outcome. However, the use of archaic English is not helpful ... The advanced reading level alone makes this translation difficult to read ... Outside of an articulate minority, the AAT (Beck) never caught on in the LCMS. Yet, the AAT provides a more readable and understandable translation

and

WHEREAS, Professor John Brug, editor of the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, wrote in the Fall 2006 edition:

While the ESV does enjoy some advantage in not introducing as much interpretation into the text, it reads less smoothly than the NIV. It is not that its language is very archaic and hard to understand like the King James, but just that it does not have the natural flow of contemporary English. In many places it sounds quite stilted even to a reader used to the idioms of the King James. Perhaps some of this is due to the fact that the ESV is not a fresh translation but a touchup of the RSV, done in part to meet the need for a quickly available alternative to the TNIV.

and

WHEREAS, Mark L. Strauss of Bethel Seminary, San Diego, who has been a consultant for several Bible translations, wrote:

So I like the ESV. I am writing this article, however, because I have heard a number of Christian leaders claim that the ESV is the "Bible of the future"—ideal for public worship and private reading, appropriate for adults, youth and children. This puzzles me, since the ESV seems to me to be overly literal—full of archaisms, awkward language, obscure idioms, irregular word order, and a great deal of "Biblish." Biblish is produced when the translator tries to reproduce the form of the Greek or Hebrew without due consideration for how people actually write or speak. The ESV, like other formal equivalent versions (RSV, NASB, NKJV, NRSV), is a good supplement to versions that use normal English, but is not suitable as a standard Bible for the church. This is because the ESV too often fails the test of "standard English."

and

WHEREAS, A survey (*CN*, August 24, 2009, pp. 16, 17) comparing the AAT and ESV showed that some 90 percent who responded preferred the language and doctrinal accuracy of the AAT over the ESV; and

WHEREAS, When CPH and the LCMS Commission on Worship were invited to publish this comparison chart in *The Lutheran Witness* in order that hundreds of thousands throughout the LCMS might have an opportunity to respond, CPH and the commission refused; and

WHEREAS, When CPH and the Commission on Worship were invited by a pastoral conference to conduct a discussion between scholars who supported the AAT and CPH scholars who favored the ESV, both CPH and the commission ignored the request; and

WHEREAS, Dr. William Beck in his "What Does the Text Say?" (*The Holy Bible: An American Translation*, 3rd edition, pp. 341–444) shows that the RSV undermines various doctrines of the Christian faith, including the virgin birth and the deity of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, When *CN* published the AAT in 1976, and the *CN* editor's preface concluded, "No translation is perfect. Suggestions for revisions in any future printing will be gratefully accepted and considered," *CN* sent a copy of the AAT to every LCMS congregation, inviting suggestions for a revision, and a committee of leading Bible,

Greek, and Hebrew confessional Lutheran scholars met at Camp Trinity (Missouri) to consider the suggested revisions; and

WHEREAS, Some 25 confessional Lutheran scholars from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne; Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon; Bethany Lutheran Seminary, Mankato, MN; and elsewhere helped prepare a revision of Beck's New Testament AAT known as the New Evangelical Translation (NET); and

WHEREAS, Before *CN* published the fourth edition of the AAT, it invited the professors at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne; Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon; and Bethany Lutheran Seminary, Mankato, MN, to send in suggestions for revisions; and

WHEREAS, *Christian News*, New Haven, MO, in December 2000, published the fourth edition of Dr. Beck's AAT incorporating improvements from the New Evangelical Translation under the direction of John Drickamer, an English language scholar; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention authorize the publication of an orthodox Christian translation of the Bible by confessional Lutheran scholars from confessional Lutheran church bodies; and be it further

Resolved, That *An American Translation of the Bible* be used as the basis for this orthodox Christian translation.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

2-11

To Instruct CPH to Stop Using ESV

WHEREAS, Concordia Publishing House is beginning to use the English Standard Version in all its publications; and

WHEREAS, Communicating the Word of God as we read Scripture is central to who we are as the church of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, The English Standard Version is frequently awkward to read orally in public settings; and

WHEREAS, The language of the English Standard Version is often difficult for children in elementary schools to understand; and

WHEREAS, The New International Version is a translation that is commonly in use by our Christian friends in this country, is easily read in public, and uses a vocabulary that is understood by elementary school students; therefore be it

Resolved, That Concordia Publishing House be instructed to stop using the English Standard Version for future publications, especially when the intent is for it to be used in public oral reading; and be it further

Resolved, That future publications for Lutheran schools and Sunday Schools use a simpler translation such as the New International Version; and be it finally

Resolved, That future publications intended for public reading use a translation that is easier to read orally in public.

St. John
Country Club Hills, IL

2-12

To Appoint Commission to Study Congregational Size, Generations, and Life-Stage Ministries

WHEREAS, Scripture encourages an intra- and intergenerational concern for God's people, especially as they cluster in Christian communities sometimes also known as congregations; and

WHEREAS, This concern is the same no matter where these clusters develop or whatever their generational makeup is at the moment; and

WHEREAS, Such concern is reflective of the mind of Christ and is integral to His mission mandate to reach out to all; and

WHEREAS, Our society is in a time of generational flux and institutional crisis on a broad range; and

WHEREAS, Our church body has a sizeable potential within the ranks of its laity and professional workers for addressing a legitimate concern for both congregations and generations; therefore be it

Resolved, That our Synod President appoint a commission to study and make recommendations relating to our changing world and to the twenty-first century ministry of churches of differing size; and be it further

Resolved, That this commission especially study the scriptural scope of and directives concerning intra- and intergenerational ministry; and be it further

Resolved, That this commission consider the implications of its study as they apply to congregations of different size in different political/social/economic locales and congregations of different cultural makeup; and be it further

Resolved, That this commission share its findings with congregations as soon as they are appropriate for congregational application and consideration; and be it further

Resolved, That this commission prepare recommendations to strengthen our church's ministry in these two areas of concern; and be it finally

Resolved, That, as it does its work, this commission regularly report through the Synod's President to the Board of Directors and the Council of Presidents as it prepares its findings and recommendations for the next LCMS convention.

St. Paul, Aurora, IL; St. Paul, Weston, FL; Holy Cross, Ft. Wayne, IN; Circuit 13 West, Southeastern District; Board of Directors, Southeastern District

2-13

To Appoint a Study/Action Commission regarding Congregational Size, Generations, and Life-Stage Ministries

Preface and Rationale

How the LCMS Faced New Challenges in Its First Centuries

Any suggestion that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod hasn't/won't/can't adapt to a changing world is categorically contradicted by its history from when the earliest Saxon segment of our ancestry arrived here in the late 1830s until now. For nearly two centuries, our Synod worked its way through innumerable immigrant and language challenges, through nearly a dozen wars, through regularly recurring economic depressions, through the explosive expansion of our nation and the opening of the West, and—most consequential of all—through our nation's swing from an overwhelmingly agricultural social order to an industrial power. The Synod was deeply involved all the way. The challenge of change has been a steady diet, making it all the more remarkable that today, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the LCMS stands as the oldest extant Lutheran body of size in America, change notwithstanding. Impossible?

All of that is not so much something about which to boast as it is something for us to acknowledge with thanks to God. Under His sure hand, our ancestors faced and dealt with a constantly changing world and did so with little fanfare. Though seldom in the vanguard of national or international changes, they came to grip with whatever arose while clinging to two core convictions:

- a. They were committed to the inerrant Word.
- b. They were determined to work through challenging moments—together.

Neither conviction should surprise anyone. Both are rooted in the Synod's first president, Dr. C. F. W. Walther. His purposeful resolve to judge everything by Scripture, twinned to a determination to walk and work together with others of the same mind, was at the heart of his 1848 inaugural presidential address. In it, he openly admitted that some believed the new association was doomed from the start. It could have been. Trying to organize immigrants from areas in Germany that had been separated for centuries, Walther asked the question, "Why should and can we carry on our work together although we have no power but the power of the Word?" A complete copy of his eloquent response is preserved in *Moving Frontiers* (Carl S. Meyer, editor [CPH 1964], pages 170–76). In it, he said that the work would be carried on if, together under the Word, the new association would be guided in its life by convincing one another rather than by resorting to force or control.

In summary, that is how the LCMS started off and then adventured together through the first hundred years of its organizational life. There were rough spots over those years, but there was also an awesome catalogue of accomplishments. The fuller story of that first century is told in numerous books plus pages and pages of regional and national reports. It is tragic that so many LCMS members know little about our remarkable past while others have distorted it almost beyond recognition.

The Synod's second century opened in the late 1940s as the post-war world was taking shape, GI Generation and all. Many clergy and lay leaders were concerned in those years about what the face of effective ministry in the future might be. At the same time, there was much institutional angst about change and about our place in the world of social/economic/political adjustments. Trying to find our way, we explored TV, radio, the print media, outreach programs of all sorts, and new attempts at foreign and domestic missions. Many congregations tested newer organizational models complete with councils, administrative boards, and committees. There were efforts to expand and enlarge the role of the laity, male and female alike. At the same time, internal unrest was developing as it became increasingly apparent that congregations were not all of one kind and that disturbing demographic realignments were in motion, changing the face of our congregation's neighborhoods as well as our congregations themselves. The way church was done appeared to differ from district to district. Some found that scary.

Reaction? More than a few clergy and congregations assumed a position of denial: change was not going to happen on their watch, or, at the very least, it should not. One reason many missed out on community/congregational transformation was that we had become embroiled in a battle about Bible versions, in disagreements about hymn books, in arguing about worship styles, in tension over fellowship questions, in debating the place and value of the Lutheran World Federation, and in struggles with ever-present internal theological differences over issues real and imagined. While all of this was going on, we, as an institution, seemed to lose track of what was happening in the world around us, even though signs of current and imminent change were everywhere.

On top of all that, there slowly surfaced an uncomfortable recognition that, after years of steady numerical growth, most if not all indicators of congregational health were in decline. While ignoring our Synod's decline in birth rate and in immigrations from those of the '30s and '40s, there were those who saw this falloff as another indicator of flawed doctrine and practice: not enough theology of the cross (purity in doctrine) and too much theology of glory (numbers).

Some gloried in our losses, seeing declining numbers as evidence of doctrinal faithfulness.

Another explanation of the tragedy of declining and dying churches was to see it all as a matter of chance. Growth or decline was a matter of being located in the right/wrong places (chance), of having the right/wrong kind of pastor (chance), of adopting the right/wrong programs (chance). Few seemed to notice two critical sociological/ecclesial shifts affecting all churches—Lutheran or not—that that were in motion. Left unattended, these two shifts tell the story of how hundreds of congregations have been brought to their organizational knees.

The first shift is that LCMS parishes at their best are not cookie-cutter clones dealing with the same mission opportunities with the same style, resources, and experience. The truth is that they can be, and most often are, different one from another, yet still locked together in love walking down the same road (synod).

Second, huge generational changes have taken place which are not only triggered by the changing generational numbers and life expectancy but also by the ways generations interrelate in our crowded (and getting more so) world.

The Matter of Parish Size and Style

For the first one hundred years, the LCMS was made up of congregations that that came in two sizes: small or large. In either case, they functioned in essentially the same way. If they could speak loudly enough, pastors were interchangeable regardless of parish size or location. All did parish ministry the same way. One size fit all.

After the 1950s, it became increasingly clear that all parishes and their ministries were not alike. A number of different congregational types were developing. Some were "preaching stations." Others were "family parishes" or "pastor parishes" or "organizational parishes" or "resource parishes" or "community parishes," to cite but a few types. They were what their names suggested. Over time, it became clear that they were not organized the same way, nor for their health's sake could they be. While sharing a common faith, they did not do church the same way. That stirred institutional unrest and tension.

Further, these different kinds of parishes needed and developed different kinds of clergy leaders that required a broad range of skills, many not taught at the seminaries. But the LCMS organizes its congregations geographically, not by size or operational style or mission intent. In the end, congregations of one given style can find themselves with more in common with similar congregations in another district than with many congregations in their own districts. Pastors, in turn, discovered that they were not as effective in one kind of parish as another.

Today there are at least eight different types of congregations in the LCMS. (Data in support of this assessment has been around for years.) The pastoral/staff/lay leadership requirements of each type of congregation are size- and location-specific and can vary markedly from one congregation to another. In many ways, the most demanding and complex effective leadership requirements today are for congregations worshiping less than 100 people per Sunday, though even within that size of parish, the ministry components (e.g., rural, urban, generational, cultural) vary. The bottom line is that our Synod can no longer muddle along in this matter. We need to explore it in depth while there is still time. We need to do this openly and together rather than covertly and alone.

Recognizing this as a need, many of our larger LCMS congregations are already linking with similar-sized parishes across the nation in the hope that by working together they can help their pastors and parishes improve in ministry and outreach effectiveness. This scares some. They can feel intimidated. Instead of distancing ourselves from this kind of development, we need to search for ways to rescale and

expand our efforts to the benefit of congregations of various sizes, of ministerial size, and of location. The LCMS needs vigorously to investigate and strategize how its parishes in all categories may best be linked and served regardless of district membership or geographical location.

The Matter of Our Extant Generational Paradigm

A demographic segmentation of today's generational mix will show that sometime during the 1950s or 1960s, another generation slipped in. This happened unannounced, and for most churches it was unnoticed. This generational addition has changed the congregational mix of all congregations. Generational demands are very different, and better attention to this fact must be given by congregations in their ministries. It is clear that when they are ignored, generations just wander elsewhere either inside or outside the Church. Compounding this situation is that members of our oldest generations are living longer and today are in larger numbers as a generation than at any time since before the time of Christ. This was never anticipated and is straining community, church, and family resources.

As background to our current generational movement, there have been 18 immigrant-based generations born on American soil since this country was initially colonized in the seventeenth century. For most of our history, segments of five generations have been simultaneously on the scene. Today sizeable segments of six generations are present. Together with their generational birth span years the six are (a) GI (waning; 1905–1924); (b) Silent (1925–1944); (c) Boomer (1945–1964); (d) Gen X (1965–1984); (e) Millennial (1985–2004); and (f) Newest (gaining; 2005–2024).

The struggles for generational role and recognition are well known and acknowledged in the secular world. This is clear by how products are being offered via print, radio, TV, and the Internet—and at whom they are aimed. This is also obvious in the current debate about the government's role in medical care. Left unattended, generational tensions and differentiations will become even more pronounced and tension-filled.

Church bodies and congregations are not impervious to this generational jockeying. We have historically lavished most of our care on the youngest generation at any time, under the assumption that once raised, young people remain in the faith and within the Christian community. There does not seem to be much evidence to fully support that assumption. That is not to suggest that we should care less about the young. However, it does suggest that we need to simultaneously study, seek to understand, and respond more effectively to all generations as they progress through life's stages.

Stages? Generations move along but life stages are constant. Generations react differently to any given stage. That fact is the stuff from which effective ministry is shaped and is the reason why programs that were very effective in the past can become largely ineffective a generation or two later. How long will it take us to learn that every generation needs tailored attention? They move through progressing stages, such as early childhood, childhood, pre- and post-adolescence, young adulthood, family and career, peak vocational years, empty nest and pre-retirement, the go-go/slow-go/no-go years—life stages, all. And there seem to be variations at each step.

Today too many congregations are paying scant formal attention to GI and Silent Generation members except to see them as a mother lode for volunteer help and financial support. That's all well and good, but they deserve more and better. They need assistance in working through questions of worth, service, and life direction, especially in the later years. All other extant generations need the same kind of attention and care.

The previous paragraphs are an abbreviated context for the following overture. This overture is not offered as a finished product. It

needs the clear-eyed attention of any who care about the church. Feel free to improve, expand upon, or otherwise amend this overture as your insight and experience might suggest. It is open to all who love the LCMS and are ready to emulate our forebearers, who in their day recurrently developed effective responses to their moments of need and of challenge, calling for change. Give them the credit and praise they are due ... and follow their example.

WHEREAS, The Scripture encourages an inter- and intra-generational concern for God's people, especially as they cluster in Christian communities, sometimes also known as congregations; and

WHEREAS, The concern is the same no matter where these clusters develop or what their generational makeup is at the moment; and

WHEREAS, Such concern is reflective of the mind of Christ and is integral to His mission mandate to reach out to all; and

WHEREAS, Our society is in a time of generational flux and institutional crisis on a broad scale; and

WHEREAS, Our church body has a sizeable potential within the ranks of its laity and professional workers for addressing a legitimate concern for both congregations and generations; therefore be it

Resolved, That our Synod President appoint a commission to study and make recommendations relating to our changing world and to the twenty-first-century ministry of churches of differing size; and be it further

Resolved, That this commission especially study the scriptural scope of and directives concerning inter-generational and intra-generational ministry; and be it further

Resolved, That this commission consider the implications of its study as they apply to congregations of different sizes, in different political/social/economic locales, and of different cultural makeup; and be it further

Resolved, That this commission share its findings with congregations as soon as they are appropriate for congregational application and consideration; and be it further

Resolved, That this commission prepare recommendations to strengthen our church's ministry in these two areas of concern; and be it finally

Resolved, That as it does its work, this commission regularly report through the Synod President to the Board of Directors and the Council of Presidents as it prepares its findings and recommendations for the next Synod convention.

Trinity
Roselle, IL

2-14

To Recognize Higher Things as an Asset to Youth Ministry

WHEREAS, Youth ministry is key to the mission of the LCMS in that it exists "vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities, and world" (LCMS Mission Statement); and

WHEREAS, Higher Things was initiated in the 1990s as a grassroots effort by faithful members of the Synod to provide, on a yearly basis and at minimum cost, a quality youth gathering for congregations that desire sound Lutheran theology and historic liturgical worship for their youth; and

WHEREAS, Higher Things has requested Recognized Service Organization status from the Synod; and

WHEREAS, For whatever reason, fewer than 50 percent of all congregations in the Synod send youth to the Synod's triennial national youth gatherings, often at great cost; and

WHEREAS, Some of those remaining congregations may find that Higher Things provides a better fit for their youth gathering needs; and

WHEREAS, In addition to its gatherings, Higher Things provides many valuable and excellent services such as its magazine, devotions, Web site, and blogs; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention recognize Higher Things as a valuable asset for youth ministry for its congregations and encourage its members to consider including Higher Things in their youth ministry strategies.

Circuit 12 Forum
Missouri District

2-15

To Encourage Responsible Worship

WHEREAS, The Lord has commanded His people to worship Him in spirit and in truth; and

WHEREAS, There is diversity in expression of that same spirit as the one Lord of the Church comes to His people in the Means of Grace; and

WHEREAS, The Church has been engaged in worship since her inception (Acts 2); and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran confessors did not seek to violate this “Great Tradition” but instead desired to affirm their catholicity in the proclamation of Christ crucified, risen, ascended, and returning; and

WHEREAS, The Council of Presidents has produced the *Theses on Worship* for guidance for congregations of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The CTCR and the Commission on Worship have conducted a Model Theological Conference on theology and worship that has generated dialogue and conversation about worship in the Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod affirm the Great Tradition and the ongoing development of resources for worship within the Great Tradition; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod recognize responsible diversity in worship; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod encourage congregations to follow the historic practices of the ancient and Reformation churches in celebrating the Lord’s Supper at each Divine Service (1995 Res. 2-08A, “To Encourage Every Sunday Communion”); and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod affirm Eucharistic centrality in the Divine Service (see Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20, 33; the CTCR’s *Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Supper*, p. 28; and the 1986 translation of Luther’s Small Catechism) within appropriate and responsible cultural contextualization; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod encourage “responsible use of freedom in worship” (2004 Res. 2-04) so that the Great Tradition is not lost nor are people restricted from employing diverse resources that are doctrinally sound; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod foster a confessional unity and unified confession in the unity and diversity of worship that respects the Great Tradition as it is expressed in contemporary and contextual ways throughout the Synod.

Board of Directors
Atlantic District

2010 Convention Workbook

2-16

To Remain Faithful to Lutheran Worship Practices

WHEREAS, Disunity exists in our Synod because some Lutheran congregations and pastors are using non-Lutheran materials and forms of worship; and

WHEREAS, The clear witness of God’s Word states: “Now I exhort you brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there be no divisions among you, so that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10); and

WHEREAS, Lutheran congregations and pastors have bound themselves to the “[e]xclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymnbooks, and catechisms in church and school” (Constitution, Art. VI 4); and

WHEREAS, The practice of a congregation in worship affects its doctrine; and

WHEREAS, A Lutheran congregation that uses different forms of worship that are not doctrinally pure deceives the members into thinking there are no important doctrinal issues that separate it from those who are in error; and

WHEREAS, This is harmful to the salvation of the soul and robs the Christian of the assurance of that salvation; and

WHEREAS, According to Romans 16:17, Christians are urged to “watch out for those who cause divisions” and “keep away from them”; therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District memorialize the Synod to instruct the Council of Presidents to come up with a responsible way of ensuring that pastors and congregations who are introducing heterodox forms of worship be disciplined according to the Word of God in a manner that reflects Jesus’ words in Matthew 18:14–17.

Wyoming District

2-17

To Give Thanks for the Dedication of *Issues, Etc.* Personnel

WHEREAS, The work of the Gospel and the salvation of the lost is to be the priority of all members of the LCMS and of all who hold dear the Christian faith; and

WHEREAS, Many who have come to the knowledge of salvation have attributed the proclamation of the Gospel by Pastor Todd Wilken through *Issues, Etc.* as the witness through which the Holy Spirit brought them to faith in Christ Jesus; and

WHEREAS, The salvation of even one lost soul, as in the parable of the lost sheep, causes our Lord and all the hosts of heaven to rejoice; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS Minnesota South District in convention rejoice in the saving work of the Gospel which our Lord has done through Pastor Wilken and *Issues, Etc.*; and be it further

Resolved, That the district in convention give thanks to God for the efforts of Pastor Wilken and Mr. Jeff Schwarz to seek and save the lost through the broadcasts of *Issues, Etc.* and encourage its congregations to listen to *Issues, Etc.* online at www.issuesetc.org; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS Minnesota South District memorialize the Synod in her 2010 convention to give thanks to God for the efforts of Pastor Wilken and Mr. Schwarz to seek and save the lost through the broadcasts of *Issues, Etc.*

Minnesota South District

2-18

To Encourage Support for *Issues, Etc.*

WHEREAS, The LCMS mission statement is “In grateful response to God’s grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of the LCMS is vigorously to make known the love of Christ by Word and deed within our churches, communities, and world”; and

WHEREAS, For 15 years the radio program *Issues, Etc.* has reached audiences with the Gospel through radio stations and has been accessible around the world via the Internet and podcasts; and

WHEREAS, *Issues, Etc.* was suddenly cancelled during Holy Week, 2008, and was no longer produced or aired by KFUD-AM because of what was stated to be business and programmatic reasons; and

WHEREAS, *Issues, Etc.* is now being produced independently and is broadcast by several radio stations and over the Internet; and

WHEREAS, The Nebraska District adopted Res. 1.03 at its 2009 convention, stating that “*Issues, Etc.* demonstrates a strong commitment to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions,” and that “*Issues, Etc.* is ‘Christ-centered, cross-focused talk radio’”; and

WHEREAS, Res. 1.03 resolved to “express gratitude to Mr. Jeff Schwartz and Rev. Todd Wilken” for producing the Christ-centered program, *Issues, Etc.*; and

WHEREAS, The resolution resolved also to “encourage the people of [Nebraska District] congregations to prayerfully consider financial and other support for this program”; and

WHEREAS, The resolution resolved also to “express to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod its disappointment with the cancellation of *Issues, Etc.*”; and

WHEREAS, This resolution passed with a sizable majority (74.1 percent) in the Nebraska District; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention express gratitude to Mr. Jeff Schwarz and Rev. Todd Wilken for bringing *Issues, Etc.* back and for keeping this program “Christ-centered and cross-focused”; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod in convention encourage the congregations, pastors, and people of the LCMS to give financial and other support for *Issues, Etc.*

Mt. Calvary
Fullerton, NE

2-19

To Commend *Issues, Etc.*

WHEREAS, The radio and internet program *Issues, Etc.* has been a great blessing to the church and an effective tool for reaching the world with the Gospel of Christ; and

WHEREAS, Through its live radio and Internet broadcasts and its on-demand downloads and podcasts, *Issues, Etc.* is reaching tens of thousands of people around the world (more than 20,000 unique visitors a month and approximately 4,000,000 downloaded segments a year); and

WHEREAS, *Issues, Etc.* truly lives up to its motto, “Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Christian Talk Radio”; and

WHEREAS, *Issues, Etc.* is a production of Lutheran Public Radio; its host, Todd Wilken, is an LCMS pastor; and its producer, Jeff Schwarz, is an LCMS layman; and

WHEREAS, Many LCMS pastors, professors, authors, church workers, and church members appear regularly on *Issues, Etc.*; and

WHEREAS, *Issues, Etc.* addresses the significant social and theological issues of our day in a substantive and engaging manner, guided by the Word of God; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod commend *Issues, Etc.* and encourage its congregations and members to support this valuable program.

St. Matthew, Bonne Terre, MO; St. John, Owensville, MO;
Farmington Circuit Forum, Missouri District;
Good Shepherd, Arnold, MO

2-20

To Support the Ministry of *Issues, Etc.*

WHEREAS, *Issues, Etc.*, an Internet radio Lutheran talk program, has proven to be an effective voice in preaching the Gospel to win souls for Christ and in presenting Lutheran views in an ever more diversified world; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention express its support for the important ministry of *Issues, Etc.* and ask its member congregations to join in this support.

Zion
Fort Wayne, IN

2-21

To Continue Children’s Ministry for Congregations and Districts

WHEREAS, God desires all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:3–4); and

WHEREAS, God has called upon parents to teach their children the faith (Deut. 4:9; Ps. 34:11; Ps. 78:1–7); and

WHEREAS, The church is called upon to assist parents in this responsibility of passing the faith from one generation to the next (Is. 54:13; Joel 2:15–16; Matt. 18:1–6; Matt. 19:13–15; Acts 2:37–39); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has 2.3 million members, of whom 500,000 are children who have not yet been confirmed, and

WHEREAS, There are 17 million unchurched children and youth in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The church exists in a mission field with great opportunities to reach out to children who have been abandoned, neglected, disenfranchised, ignored, and exploited; and

WHEREAS, While the future of the world’s children is ultimately in God’s hands, our districts, congregations, and early childhood centers need access to print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking in order to aggressively move forward with renewed intentionality to bring children with us to the foot of the cross, walking with them in their baptismal journey, through the children also bringing their families; and

WHEREAS, Children’s Ministry of District and Congregational Services (DCS) currently functions at the national level on behalf of the 35 districts, 6,123 congregations, and 2,300 early childhood centers to provide print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking to reach the children of our congregations and communities, including: the Children’s Ministry Action Team, Early Childhood Consultants, Children’s Ministry Leadership Training, DIRECTed (a continuing education program for early childhood directors), strengthening the Sunday School program, *Connections*, *Children’s Ministry-Net*, and the National Children’s Ministry Conference; and

WHEREAS, The districts, congregations, and early childhood centers of the LCMS benefit from the national advocacy and voice for the children of our church that DCS Children’s Ministry currently provides; therefore be it

Resolved, That DCS Children’s Ministry be commended for the print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and

networking that it currently makes available to LCMS districts, congregations, and early childhood centers; and be it further

Resolved, That DCS Children's Ministry be adequately funded and appropriately staffed at the national level in order that print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking continue to be available to districts, congregations, and early childhood centers of the Synod.

Board for District and Congregational Services

2-22

To Continue Family Ministry for Congregations and Districts

WHEREAS, God desires all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:3–4); and

WHEREAS, God has created the family as the foundational unit for faith formation for future generations (Gen. 18:19; Deut. 6:6–7; Eph. 6:1–4); and

WHEREAS, God has called upon parents to teach their children the faith (Deut. 4:9; Ps. 34:11; Ps. 78:1–7); and

WHEREAS, The church is called upon to assist parents in this responsibility of passing the faith from one generation to the next (Is. 54:13; Joel 2:15–16; Matt. 18:1–6; Matt. 19:13–15; Acts 2:37–39); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has 2.3 million members, including all types of families; and

WHEREAS, There are 100 million unchurched people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, While the future of the world's families is ultimately in God's hands, our districts and congregations need access to print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops and networking in order to aggressively move forward with renewed intentionality to bring families with us to the foot of the cross, walking with them in their baptismal journey; and

WHEREAS, The Family Ministry Department of District and Congregational Services (DCS) currently functions at the national level on behalf of the 35 districts and 6,123 congregations to provide print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking to reach the families of our congregations and communities, including Family Ministry Action Team, *Home Base E-journal*, *24-7 Newsletter* for the Christian home, PREPARE/ENRICH (premarital counseling program), and online family ministry articles; and

WHEREAS, The districts and congregations of the Synod benefit from the national advocacy and voice for the families of our church that DCS Family Ministry currently provides; therefore be it

Resolved, That DCS Family Ministry be commended for the print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking currently available to districts and congregations of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod through DCS Family Ministry, in cooperation with Synod's seminaries and university system, provide training and education that embraces a cradle-to-grave approach in family ministry to districts, congregations, pastors, and commissioned workers; and be it finally

Resolved, That DCS Family Ministry be adequately funded and appropriately staffed at the national level in order that print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking continue to be available to districts and congregations of the Synod.

Board for District and Congregational Services

2010 Convention Workbook

2-23

To Continue Youth Ministry for Districts and Congregations

WHEREAS, God desires all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:3–4); and

WHEREAS, God has called upon parents to teach their children the faith (Deut. 4:9; Ps. 34:11; Ps. 78:1–7); and

WHEREAS, The church is called upon to assist parents in this responsibility of passing the faith from one generation to the next (Is. 54:13; Joel 2:15–16; Matt. 18:1–6; 19:13–15; Acts 2:37–39); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has 2.3 million members, of which approximately 170,000 are youth (ages 13–19) and approximately 301,000 are young adults (ages 20–29); and

WHEREAS, There are 17 million unchurched children and youth in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The church exists in a mission field with great opportunities to reach out to youth who are struggling with their personal identity, especially their personal faith (the number one concern in an LYF youth poll); their response to teen issues such as sex, drugs, alcohol, culture, and media; and how to reach out to their unchurched peers; and

WHEREAS, While the future of the world's youth is ultimately in God's hands, our districts and congregations need access to print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking in order to enable young people to boldly confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior; to proclaim, celebrate, and witness their salvation through Him in the fellowship of their church; and to be affirmed and nurtured as God's people in the faith through Word and Sacrament; and

WHEREAS, The Youth Ministry Department of District and Congregational Services (DCS) currently functions at the national level on behalf of the 35 districts and the 6,123 congregations of the Synod to provide print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking to reach the youth of our congregations, including: young adult ministry materials, *thESource* (an on-line magazine), The Eutychus Project (reaching unchurched and marginally churched youth), Lutheran Youth Fellowship, servant events, and leadership training; and

WHEREAS, LCMS districts and congregations benefit from the national advocacy and voice for the youth of our church which DCS Youth Ministry currently provides; therefore be it

Resolved, That DCS Youth Ministry be commended for the print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking currently available to districts and congregations of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That DCS Youth Ministry be adequately funded and appropriately staffed at the national level in order that print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking continue to be available to districts and congregations of the Synod.

Board for District and Congregational Services

2-24

To Continue School Ministry for Districts and Congregations

WHEREAS, God desires all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:3–4); and

WHEREAS, God has called upon parents to teach their children the faith (Deut. 4:9; Ps. 34:11; Ps. 78:1–7); and

WHEREAS, The church is called upon to assist parents in this responsibility of passing the faith from one generation to the next (Is. 54:13; Joel 2:15–16; Matt. 18:1–6; 19:13–15; Acts 2:37–39); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has 2.3 million members and 270,000 students enrolled in 1,406 early childhood centers, 986 elementary schools, and 108 high schools; and

WHEREAS, The church exists in a mission field with great opportunities to reach out to the unchurched students in our schools, with approximately 3,000 unchurched children baptized every year as a result of attending a Lutheran school; and

WHEREAS, While the future of our Lutheran schools is ultimately in God's hands, our schools need access to print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking in the areas of leadership development, accreditation, funding, and reaching the unchurched (17 percent of students have no church membership) in order that, through the school, all students are equipped as disciples of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, The School Ministry Department of District and Congregational Services (DCS) currently functions at the national level on behalf of the 35 districts, 6,123 congregations, and 2,500 schools to provide print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking, including the Lutheran School Portal, National Lutheran School Accreditation, National Lutheran Schools Week, Strengthening Schools and Congregations, and School Leadership Development Project; and

WHEREAS, LCMS districts, congregations, and schools benefit from the national advocacy and voice for the students in the schools of our church that DCS School Ministry currently provides; therefore be it

Resolved, That DCS School Ministry be commended for the print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking currently available to districts, congregations, and schools of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That DCS School Ministry be adequately funded and appropriately staffed at the national level in order that print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking continue to be available to districts, congregations, and schools of the Synod.

Board for District and Congregational Services

2-25

To Continue Stewardship Ministry for Districts and Congregations

WHEREAS, God desires all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:3–4); and

WHEREAS, God has called upon His people to be Christian stewards (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Thess. 3:9–13; James 2:14–18); and

WHEREAS, The church is to assist God's people in becoming mature disciples by teaching biblical stewardship (Eph. 3:14–19; Eph. 4:22–24; Col. 3:12–17); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has 2.3 million members in 35 districts and 6,123 congregations; and

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force for Funding the Mission identified a significant need in the Synod to “strengthen the areas of stewardship in the life of every Christian within our church body”; and

WHEREAS, “Enhanced focus on the stewardship of time, talent and treasure” is one of the three critical targets of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, While the future of our districts and congregations is ultimately in God's hands, they need access to print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking so that every member of every congregation is helped to understand and live out the fact that they are God's stewards by His grace, free to live as His disciples, and free to manage the gifts He entrusts to them with joy and generosity, so that God's purposes are accomplished and His mission enhanced; and

WHEREAS, The Stewardship Department of District and Congregational Services (DCS) functions at the national level on behalf of the 35 districts and 6,123 congregations to provide print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking that embrace a “whole life” stewardship approach, including: *Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees, Consecrated Stewards* (LCEF), *Congregational Stewardship Workbook*, StewardCAST, video resources, stewardship newsletters, bulletin resources, monthly newsletter articles, and stewardship materials for seminarians, as well as training and instructing for pastors and vicars on implementing *Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees* in their congregations; and

WHEREAS, The districts and congregations of the Synod benefit from the national advocacy and voice for biblical stewardship in our churches that DCS Stewardship Ministry currently provides; therefore be it

Resolved, That DCS Stewardship Ministry be commended for the print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking currently available to districts and congregations of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That DCS Stewardship Ministry be adequately funded and appropriately staffed at the national level in order that print and online resources, training, conferences, workshops, and networking continue to be available to the districts and congregations of the Synod.

Board for District and Congregational Services



3. THEOLOGY AND CHURCH RELATIONS

3-01

To Continue Cooperation in Externals with Theological Integrity

WHEREAS, “The church will cooperate with others in meeting human need. Cooperation in externals has long been an expression describing the church’s legitimate ability to cooperate with other entities (whether churches, societies, Lutheran, Christian or not) in meeting some human need. To ‘cooperate in externals’ means to work toward common goals in endeavors, which do not necessitate, require or necessarily imply church fellowship (*communio in sacris*), or involve joint proclamation of the gospel and administration of the sacraments (worship). Such cooperative endeavors are entered upon often for practical reasons (e.g., lack of critical resources). But such endeavors are also often an expression of the belief (when entered into with other Christians entities) of the catholicity of the church, as well as an expression of love for fellow Christians. Through such endeavors, the LCMS will often have opportunity to insist on theological integrity and the truth of God’s word, and thereby make a positive contribution to ecumenical activities. Such endeavors may range from providing resources for a simple community food bank, to the highly complex ecclesial and civil realities involved in operating a jointly recognized SMO [social ministry organization]. Such endeavors must recognize legitimate doctrinal differences and provide for the requisite integrity of its partners” (Matthew Harrison, *Theological Foundations: Christian Works of Mercy*); and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Services in America (LSA) is an alliance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and LSA’s membership of more than 300 health and human service organizations which touch the lives of more than six million people—one in 50 Americans each year—and have aggregated annual incomes of more than \$16.6 billion; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS), Lutheran World Relief (LWR), and Wheat Ridge Ministries are strong international inter-Lutheran agencies providing human care opportunities for Lutherans; and

WHEREAS, Church fellowship (see first *whereas: communio in sacris*) is not integral to, assumed, or necessarily carried out in conjunction with the agencies in Lutheran Services in America, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, or Lutheran World Relief; and

WHEREAS, The only American Lutheran entity with which the LCMS is in church fellowship is the American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC)—and specifically *not* the ELCA, WELS, or ELS—thereby eliminating *communio in sacris* activities with any church body except the AALC; and

WHEREAS, This configuration of Lutherans in fellowship has existed for a minimum of 20 years, with the exception of the 2007 LCMS/AALC rapprochement; and

WHEREAS, Throughout that period of time, with serious doctrinal issues separating the various Lutheran church bodies and the LCMS, cooperation in externals has continued and allowed millions of individuals to receive human care assistance through inter-Lutheran agencies; therefore be it

Resolved, That cooperation in externals with Lutherans through agencies affiliated with LSA, LIRS, LWR, and Wheat Ridge Ministries continue and be affirmed by the Missouri Synod gathered in convention; and be it further

Resolved, That such cooperation be carried out with full theological integrity by the Missouri Synod in partnership, remaining doctrinally steadfast to LCMS standards; and be it further

Resolved, That an assessment of such cooperation in externals, as it is impacted by theological differences with Lutheran partners, be undertaken by the President of the LCMS, including conversation

with national/international partners (LSA, LIRS, LWR, Wheat Ridge) during this triennium; and be it finally

Resolved, That a full report of this assessment be delivered to the next convention.

Board of Directors
Atlantic District

3-02

To Examine All Joint Work with the ELCA

WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ said, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit” (Matt. 7:15–17); and

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its 2009 Churchwide Assembly passed resolutions on ministry policies stating that “The ELCA commit[s] itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships...the ELCA commit[s] itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church,” and eliminated the prohibition of rostered service for members in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, Homosexual acts are sinful, contrary to God’s will and design, and an abomination before the true and living Lord God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Lev. 18:22; Matt. 19:4–6; Rom. 1:18–32); and

WHEREAS, The ELCA does not confess the truth of God’s Word, but as a church body is in rejection of it; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS confess the truth of God’s Word concerning homosexual acts: that they are sinful, contrary to God’s will and design, and an abomination before the true and living Lord God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Lev. 18:22; Matt. 19:4–6; Rom. 1:18–32); and be it further

Resolved, That for the sake of faithfulness to the true God and His Holy Word (Rom. 16:17) and for the sake of its own public testimony, the LCMS and its Recognized Service Organizations prayerfully examine their joint work with the ELCA and, where that work involves any possibility of ministry in Word and Sacrament being administered by an official or clergyman of the ELCA, bring an end to their working relationship with the ELCA; and be it finally

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention pray for the repentance and faith of the false teachers of the ELCA, for those who are bound in sexual sin within the ELCA and all church bodies including our own, for those who are faithfully confessing against false teaching regarding sexuality within the ELCA, and for our own humble faithfulness to God’s Word.

Farmington Circuit Forum
Missouri District

3-03

To End Joint Campus Ministry with ELCA

WHEREAS, THE SYNOD in convention (2001) declared that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) can no longer be considered an orthodox Lutheran church body (Res. 3-21A); and

WHEREAS, There remain many areas where significant changes have occurred in the doctrine and practice of the ELCA where our Synod in all its entities has yet to respond, and where decades-old agreements with the ELCA’s predecessor bodies remain in effect as if these changes never took place; and

WHEREAS, It is an insufficient response merely to express disappointment or declare the ELCA no longer to be an orthodox Lutheran church body, while continuing to maintain joint ministries that bear witness that there are no differences between our two church bodies; and

WHEREAS, As long as joint campus ministry arrangements exist between the ELCA and the LCMS, our LCMS college students will be subject to heterodox doctrine and pastoral care; and

WHEREAS, Given the nature of the fellowship agreements that the ELCA has entered into, ELCA college students can now receive pastoral care from various other denominational campus ministries, making agreements no longer a necessity; and

WHEREAS, The retreat from traditional confessional Lutheranism has been unfolding in the ELCA and its predecessor bodies for decades, with the ELCA showing no signs of returning to doctrinal orthodoxy as a result of joint participation with the LCMS; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Wyoming District commend faithful LCMS campus pastors and other workers serving in campus ministries for maintaining confessional integrity in providing genuine Lutheran Word and Sacrament ministry to those college students under their spiritual care; and be it further

Resolved, That the Wyoming District memorialize the 2010 convention of the LCMS to declare that the Synod will no longer engage in joint campus ministry of any description with the ELCA; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Wyoming District memorialize the 2010 convention of the LCMS to mandate that the President and Vice-Presidents of the Synod oversee and supervise all districts and any corresponding boards, commissions, or associations of Synod in detaching themselves from every vestige of joint campus ministry with the ELCA where joint work is being conducted on any level in the Synod, doing so no later than December 31, 2012.

Wyoming District

3-04

To End All ELCA/LCMS Cooperative Ministry Efforts

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture condemns homosexual behavior as intrinsically sinful and therefore contrary to the will of God and constitutes sin against His commandments (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9–20; 1 Tim 1:9–10; and Rom. 1:26, 27); and

WHEREAS, The 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted to open the ministry of the ELCA to gay and lesbian pastors and other professional workers living in “committed relationships” and approved a resolution that commits the ELCA “to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships”; and

WHEREAS, Doctrinal decisions adopted by the ELCA in 2001 led the LCMS to declare that it could no longer consider the ELCA “to be an orthodox Lutheran church body” (2001 Res. 3-21A); and

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture tells us to watch out for “those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them” (Rom. 16:17 ESV); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2009 All Workers Conference of the Montana District memorialize the 2010 convention to direct the LCMS to end all cooperative ministry efforts (e.g., campus ministry, military chaplaincy) as soon as possible.

2009 Montana District All Workers Conference

2010 Convention Workbook

3-05

To Terminate All ELCA/LCMS Cooperative Ministries While Continuing to Reach Out to ELCA Church Members

WHEREAS, God’s Word warns us to “watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people” (Rom. 16:17–18) and warns us not to be partners with sexual immorality or take part in the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:3–12); and

WHEREAS, At the 2001 LCMS convention, Res. 3-21A was passed, which, in part, *resolved* that “we cannot consider them [the ELCA] to be an orthodox Lutheran church body,” also resolving that the Synod would continue to reach out to them in love and support; and

WHEREAS, Since that time the ELCA has moved further and further from God’s Word until on August 21, 2009, its Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis, MN, voted to ordain homosexual men and women in committed monogamous relationships to serve as pastors; and

WHEREAS, LCMS President Gerald Kieschnick said in *The Lutheran Witness* (October 2009, Vol. 128, 10), when referring to the ELCA action: “this matter is fundamentally related to significant differences in how [our two church bodies] understand the authority of Holy Scripture and the interpretation of God’s revealed and infallible Word”; and

WHEREAS, Cooperation between the ELCA and the LCMS is likely to confuse the public, who may interpret such cooperation to mean that the LCMS and ELCA agree regarding the unbiblical position of the ELCA in this most recent and other points of doctrinal divergence, and may further confuse the Synod’s identity as distinct from the ELCA; therefore be it

Resolved, That LCMS church members be encouraged to continue to reach out in Christian love to ELCA church members with clear biblical admonition; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS terminate all cooperative ministries between the LCMS and the ELCA.

Concordia, Sikeston, MO; Holy Cross, Kansas City, MO; Christ, Lampson/Trego, WI; Circuit 3 Forum, North Wisconsin District; St. John, Owensville, MO; Good Shepherd, Arnold, MO

3-06

To Cease Cooperative Work with ELCA

WHEREAS, In response to actions taken by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Res. 3-21A of the 2001 LCMS convention declared, “we cannot consider them [the ELCA] to be an orthodox Lutheran church body”; and

WHEREAS, The 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly continued down the path of establishing full communion agreements with Reformed church bodies; and

WHEREAS, The 2009 ELCA Assembly also took another step away from the tradition of the worldwide church, Scripture, and the Lordship of Jesus Christ when it directed that ministry policies be revised to eliminate prohibitions against partnered gay and lesbian members serving as lay and ordained leaders of the church; and

WHEREAS, Res. 3-21A of the 2001 LCMS convention recognized that “many of our brothers and sisters of the ELCA remain faithful to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and we resolve to reach out to them in love and support”; and

WHEREAS, It would be unloving and uncaring for the LCMS to take no action with respect to the heterodox actions of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, Continued cooperation with the ELCA, even in external matters, will likely be perceived as a lack of integrity on the part of the LCMS in both doctrine and practice; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention repent that it has been unable to convince the ELCA to bear effective witness to the truth of the Gospel and to the authority of Holy Scripture; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention request all agencies and organizations of the ELCA, as well as its related agencies and organizations with whom cooperative work with the LCMS currently exists, to provide written verification that full communion agreements and changes in ministry policies regarding partnered gay and lesbian members will not implemented in such cooperative work; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS direct all of its agencies and organizations to cease all cooperative work with the ELCA and its related agencies and organizations where such written verification is not provided; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS direct all of its agencies and organizations to explore relief work, social services, chaplaincies, works of mercy, and other ministries through avenues other than in cooperation with the ELCA and to implement such when ELCA written verification is not provided; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS pray for the return of the ELCA to Christian orthodoxy and commit itself to the renewal of unrestricted cooperative work when it is again possible.

Circuit 3 Forum

South Wisconsin District

3-07

To End All Joint Work with ELCA

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its 2009 Churchwide Assembly passed resolutions on ministry policies, stating that “the ELCA commit[s] itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships ... the ELCA commit[s] itself to finding a way for people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church,” and eliminating the prohibition of rostered service by members in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, Homosexuality is sinful, contrary to God’s will and design, and an abomination before the true and living Lord God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Lev. 18:22; Matt. 19:4–6; Rom. 1:18–32); and

WHEREAS, The ELCA does not confess the truth of God’s Word, but as a church body is in rejection of it; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS confess the truth of God’s Word concerning homosexuality, that it is sinful, contrary to God’s will and design, and an abomination before the true and living Lord God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Lev. 18:22; Matt. 19:4–6; Rom. 1:18–32); and be it further

Resolved, That for the sake of faithfulness to the true God and His Holy Word, and for the sake of its own public testimony, the LCMS end all joint work with the ELCA in military chaplaincies, college and university chaplaincies, hospital and nursing care chaplaincies, educational institutions, human care programs, and all other joint ministry ventures by January 1, 2012; and be it further

Resolved, That all recognized service organizations of the LCMS conducting joint ministry work with the ELCA also end such ministry relationships or forfeit their RSO status by January 1, 2012; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention pray to our Father for the repentance and faith of those who teach contrary to God’s Word in the ELCA, for those who are bound in sexual sin, and for our own humble faithfulness to His Holy Word; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Northern Illinois District East Region Pastoral Conference submit this overture to the 2010 LCMS convention.

East Region Pastoral Conference

Northern Illinois District

3-08

To Sever All Endeavors with ELCA

WHEREAS, As stated by the 2001 LCMS convention and, as appealed to by President Kieschnick in his remarks to the 2009 ELCA assembly last summer, the ELCA is no longer an orthodox Lutheran church body; and

WHEREAS, As proven by the positions of the ELCA with regard to central social issues on human life and family such as abortion and homosexual lifestyles, the ELCA has forsaken goodness and godliness with respect to society; and

WHEREAS, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil” (Prov. 8:13) and “The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death” (Prov. 14:27); and

WHEREAS, “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth” (Rom. 1:18); and

WHEREAS, We as a Lutheran church body differ from the ELCA in the most essential matters of both doctrine and life; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention take immediate action to sever all ties and joint efforts with the ELCA in all spiritual and social matters including campus ministries, Armed Forces chaplaincies, Lutheran World Relief, and more, lest the LCMS be a partner in the iniquity and ungodliness with which the ELCA is involved.

Trinity

Tryon, NC

3-09

To End All Official Theological Talks with ELCA

WHEREAS, The 2001 LCMS convention adopted Res. 3-21A declaring the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to be not “an orthodox Lutheran church body”; and

WHEREAS, The ELCA in its Churchwide Assembly held August 17–23, 2009, in Minneapolis, MN, passed with a two-thirds majority vote its social statement “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust”; and

WHEREAS, The passing of this social statement will allow homosexual professional church workers “in committed relationships” to maintain their status as professional church workers; and

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture speaks very clearly of those who are to lead God’s people and of their character and conduct (1 Tim. 3:1–7; 1 Tim. 3:8–13; Titus 1:7–9; Matt. 10:2–4; Eph. 4:11–13; and Acts 20:28); therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS gathered in convention vote to rescind all official theological talks between the LCMS and the ELCA.

Circuit Nine Forum

Kansas District

3-10

To Request Synod President Not to Attend ELCA Churchwide Assemblies

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its August 2009 Churchwide Assembly voted to open its ministry to non-celibate homosexual and lesbian pastors; and

WHEREAS, LCMS President Gerald Kieschnick, as an invited guest at the ELCA's convention, told the assembly that its decision "will negatively affect the relationships between our two church bodies"; and

WHEREAS, The Central Illinois District Pastors' Conference commends President Kieschnick for his well-placed remarks to the ELCA's assembly; and

WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus has instructed His Church to mark and avoid those who are unrepentant in teaching and promoting false doctrine (Rom. 16:17–18; Gal 1:6–8); therefore be it

Resolved, That the Central Illinois District Pastors' Conference assembled in conference in October 2009 respectfully request that President Gerald Kieschnick not invite the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to bring greetings to, or otherwise address, the LCMS in convention in July 2010, as has been the custom in the past; and be it further

Resolved, That the conference respectfully request that the Synod President not attend future conventions of the ELCA, as has been the custom in the past; and be it finally

Resolved, That pastors and congregations of the Central Illinois District of the LCMS be encouraged to pray for those members of the ELCA who seek to be steadfast and faithful to our Lord's teachings.

Pastors' Conference
Central Illinois District

3-11

To Respond to ELCA Statement re Homosexuality

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), at its Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis in 2009, adopted a statement that practicing homosexuals and lesbians may serve as pastors; and

WHEREAS, This statement has received widespread publicity in the nation's press and has led many Americans to conclude that almost all Lutherans support the position taken by the ELCA; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention adopt this statement for the nation's press:

"By God's grace, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in 2010 still believes, confesses, and teaches:

- + The Holy Scripture is the true, inerrant Word of God in its entirety (2 Tim. 3: 16).
- + The moral code of God's Law is for all people for all time, and this moral code is clearly expressed in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20), by Jesus Christ (Matt. 5–7), and by Christ's apostles (Eph. 5:3–21).
- + Salvation from sin and eternal death is solely by God's grace through faith in His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Acts 4:12; Eph.2:1–10).
- + The sanctity of marriage between one man and one woman has God's design and blessings (Gen. 1–2; John 2:1, 11; Eph. 5:21–33).
- + The sanctity of human life (Ps. 139:13–16; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:41–44).
- + Sex outside of God's design of marriage is sinful and therefore harmful to both the individuals who practice such and to society at large (Lev. 18:20–23; Rom. 1:21–31; 1 Cor.6:9–20; 1 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 13:4; Jude 7).
- + 'The Great Commission'—in the power of the Holy Spirit, to share the Good News with all the world, to love the sinner, and to call everyone to repentance and faith in Christ Jesus (Matt. 28:18–20; Luke 24:46–49; 1 John 4–5).

We are far from perfect. We are repentant sinners and rest in the comfort of God's sure forgiveness through the bloody sacrifice of Christ Jesus on the cross of Golgotha. We pray for those who defend sin and justify its practices that they may repent and no longer mock the atonement of Christ. We pray for those who call themselves 'Lutherans' but are so in name only, that they may truly follow the lead of Dr. Martin Luther (1483–1546), hold to the sacred Scriptures

2010 Convention Workbook

as the inerrant Word of God, remain steadfast to the historic Luther's Small Catechism and the Lutheran Confessions, and refrain from the 'political correctness' and 'secular moral relativism' shaping their theology and practice."

Trinity
New Haven, MO

3-12

To Respond to Certain Actions of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its August 29 Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis adopted statements to grant non-celibate homosexual pastors and other professional workers living in committed relationships the privilege of serving as rostered leaders in the ELCA and to affirm same-gender unions as pleasing to God; and

WHEREAS, These actions have received wide publicity in our nation's press, and, for the uninformed, there may be the thought that all "Lutherans" believe the same—perhaps even including LCMS Lutherans as supporting these decisions made by the ELCA; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention adopt this statement for the nation's press on where the Missouri Synod stands:

In response to the statements adopted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its August 2009 Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis granting non-celibate homosexual pastors and other professional workers living in committed relationships the privilege of serving as rostered leaders in the ELCA and affirming same-gender unions as pleasing to God, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) speaks a resounding "no" to these changes regarding human sexuality that contradict the Commandments of God (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9–20; 1 Tim. 1:9–10; Rom. 1:26–27) and two thousand years of practice in the Christian Church.

The reason for this polarity is cited by LCMS President Rev. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick in his August 24, 2009, statement in which he pinpointed the root cause for these differences: "Simply stated, this matter is fundamentally related to significant differences in how we [our two church bodies] understand the authority of Holy Scripture and the interpretation of God's revealed and infallible Word." While the culture we live in is constantly changing and, therefore, many think that churches also should change, God's Word does not change! The Missouri Synod has not bought into the liberal thinking of higher or historical criticism (developed over the last two to four hundred years), while the ELCA has (along with other church bodies). Thus, while both the ELCA and the LCMS carry the name "Lutheran," they are miles apart on the authority of the Bible, so that doctrinal differences will only increase. We encourage both LCMS and ELCA members to study and learn what higher criticism is and how it developed so that they may better understand the current situation.

Our hearts grieve over these new and additional doctrinal differences that now separate our church bodies, hoping for the day when we can again be one in doctrine and one in Christ. We speak respectfully in this situation, recognizing that many in the ELCA do not agree with these decisions while others are thankful for them. Our prayers go out to both sides as they wrestle with and integrate these changes into their church body.

Circuit 3 Forum
North Wisconsin District

3-13

To Pursue Official Theological Talks with WELS

WHEREAS, The LCMS proudly and boldly proclaims that the Holy Scriptures are the inspired, inerrant Word of God (2 Tim. 3:15–16; 2 Peter 1:20–21); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS proudly and boldly subscribes to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS stands as a beacon of light to these dear truths in our ever-changing nonconfessional world; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention vote to ask the Praesidium to pursue official theological talks with the leadership of the WELS (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod).

Circuit Nine
Kansas District

3-14

To Support Other Lutherans with Consciences Bound by the Will of God

WHEREAS, Recent decisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) that are contrary to Scripture have offended many of the congregations and individuals who considered themselves affiliated with or members of the ELCA; and

WHEREAS, Many congregations and individuals have withdrawn from or are considering withdrawal from affiliation with or membership in the ELCA and consider their decision necessitated by conscience, Holy Scripture, and right reason; and

WHEREAS, For the sake of good order and in furtherance of the clear proclamation of the Gospel of Christ, many of these same congregations and individuals have organized themselves into WordAlone, and Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC; headquartered in Canton, Michigan, with no bishops or bureaucratic hierarchy, but a freely associated membership of congregations); and

WHEREAS, The decisions of the ELCA referred to above have brought scandal in the minds of the public to all who call themselves Lutherans and have sown discord and confusion for many who are unaware of the various and many synods that faithfully subscribe to and affirm the Lutheran Confessions as a true understanding of Scripture, including the LCMS; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has a stake in redirecting the public focus away from the disastrous decisions of the ELCA and toward the truth that other Lutheran denominations have faithfully maintained; and

WHEREAS, These same Lutheran Confessions and also the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) have recognized that there are “extraordinary situations and circumstances” which call for “the necessity of exercising responsible pastoral care” to other Lutherans that are not in full doctrinal agreement with the LCMS (CTCR report, “Admission to the Lord’s Supper: Basics of Biblical and Confessional Teaching”); therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS recognize that WordAlone and LCMC are in a state of faithful confession of the Word of God while in extraordinary circumstances, and that the LCMS, while recognizing that many and significant differences exist in doctrine between us, nevertheless desire and support, encourage and welcome WordAlone and LCMC in their faithful confession of God’s Word and in their missions and other common ministries; and be it further

Resolved, That in furtherance of this desire and goal, the LCMS invites and welcomes dialogue with representatives of WordAlone and LCMC on matters of common ministries; and be it further

Resolved, That LCMS welcome and invite WordAlone and LCMC to encourage referral of students seeking preparation for ordained ministry and other professional lay ministry in the LCMC to the various programs, colleges, universities, and seminaries of the LCMS, and that cooperation of education and training between these bodies be encouraged; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMC and LCMS be encouraged to use each others’ publishing houses and other educational, ministry, and training resources; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS through the CTCR invite the LCMC to dialogue regarding the possibility that individuals on the clergy roster of the LCMC may be recognized and licensed by district presidents on a case-by-case basis as deacons in the LCMS; and be it finally

Resolved, That LCMC and LCMS congregations be encouraged to adopt many and varied creative ways to work together locally based on the unique needs and gifts of the congregations involved, guided by the Holy Spirit and including but not limited to the cooperative venture that now exists between Amazing Grace Lutheran Church (LCMC) and Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (LCMS) of Spokane, Washington, such cooperation to include evangelism and mission.

Gloria Dei
Spokane, WA

3-15

To Encourage Participation in Interfaith Dialogues

WHEREAS, North America has become more religiously pluralistic and secular (Robert D. Newton, “Missionary Churches: Navigating in a Post-Church World,” *The Lutheran Witness*, vol. 109, no. 1 (January 2010), pp. 6–11); and

WHEREAS, There exists an unfortunate amount of fear, suspicion, misconception, and even animosity between various religious faiths; and

WHEREAS, Some use fear, the lack of knowledge, and suspicion of different faiths to enact violence against them; and

WHEREAS, These conditions are problematic for a proper understanding of the Christian faith and for Christian outreach; and

WHEREAS, Christ said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God” (Matt. 5:9); and

WHEREAS, Paul calls upon us to enlarge the circle of our contacts when he wrote, “So then as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10); and

WHEREAS, God’s Word commands us to love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves (Matt. 22:39); and

WHEREAS, Our Synod has much to offer a broken and sinful world with its sound biblical theology centered in the Gospel of God’s justifying love in Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, God’s Word encourages us to always be ready to share the hope of Christ that is within us with gentleness and respect (1 Pet. 3:15); and

WHEREAS, Engaging in religious dialogue is one way of sharing the hope of Christ within us; and

WHEREAS, Engaging in dialogue builds necessary trust and respect with those whom we seek to know and love by demonstrating our willingness to hear about our neighbor’s faith, while giving us opportunities to witness in word and deed about the Christian faith; and

WHEREAS, Christ commands His Church to share the Gospel with the world (Matt. 28:18–20; Mark 16:15–16; Luke 24:44–49; John 20:19–23; Acts 1:8); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention direct the CTCR to develop guidelines and resources for initiating and participating in such dialogues at congregational, district, national, and international levels, so that members of the LCMS can participate in interfaith dialogues to promote greater understanding among religious faith systems; and be it further

Resolved, That one of the goals for engaging in interfaith dialogues would be the providing of opportunities for Synod members to gain knowledge of the religious faith of others, thus enabling them

to move beyond stereotypes and other barriers while strengthening their own understanding of the Christian faith and their commitment to Jesus; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod be encouraged to make use of resources already available, such as “A Common Word Between Us and You,” “Scriptural Reasoning,” a Lutheran understanding of God’s left-hand care for the world, and other such resources, and by attending meetings of world religious leaders, to promote religious peace and harmony; and be it finally

Resolved, That the knowledge, love, and understanding of the neighbor and the greater knowledge about the Christian faith that results from these interfaith dialogues be used by the members of the Synod to better understand and share the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world.

St. Paul, Weston, FL;
Bethlehem, Delmar NY

3-16

To Request Partner Church Withdrawal from LWF

WHEREAS, The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has issued a statement that it is in basic agreement with the Roman Catholic Church on the doctrine of justification; and

WHEREAS, Many of the Lutheran members of the LWF, the Roman Catholics, and the Pope insist that Jews, Muslims, and other non-Christians can be saved without faith in Christ and do not believe that Christianity is the only saving faith; and

WHEREAS, The LWF is open to churches that support abortion and homosexual and lesbian clergypersons; and

WHEREAS, The Pope still insists that Rome affirms all of the decrees of the Council of Trent; and

WHEREAS, Some churches in fellowship with the LCMS are members of the LWF; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention request that all churches in fellowship with the LCMS withdraw from the LWF.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

3-17

To Declare Fellowship with the Siberia Evangelical Lutheran Church

WHEREAS, The Siberia Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC) is an orthodox Lutheran church that over the years has requested fellowship with the LCMS; and

WHEREAS, All the ministers of the SELC have been trained and educated by LCMS seminary professors and ministers; and

WHEREAS, Churches in fellowship with the LCMS have declared and are already in fellowship with the SELC; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS direct its appropriate officers draw up the necessary documents to affirm the fellowship in faith that already exists between it and Siberia Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Zion
Fort Wayne, IN

3-18

To Reaffirm Inerrancy of Bible

WHEREAS, The Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, and most major Protestant denominations no longer affirm the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures, God’s directly revealed and inerrant Word; and

WHEREAS, The Bible teaches that it is the inerrant, powerful, efficacious Word of God (John 10:35; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Cor. 11:23; 1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Tim. 3:16); and

WHEREAS, *The Formula of Concord*, one of the *Lutheran Confessions*, declares, “First [then, we receive and embrace with our whole heart] the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the pure, clear fountain of Israel, which is the only standard by which all teachers and doctrines are to be judged” (*Concordia Triglotta*, 851); and

WHEREAS, The Large Catechism, another Lutheran Confession, states, “I and my neighbor and, in short, all men, may err and deceive, but the Word of God cannot err” (*Concordia Triglotta*, 747); and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther affirmed the inerrancy of the Bible, writing, “The Scriptures have never erred” (*Saemmtliche Schriften* [St. Louis: Concordia XV], 1481); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS “Brief Statement” adopted in 1932 says, “Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, John 10:35”; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS, at a time when hardly any churches or seminaries insist on the inerrancy of God’s Word, should let the nation know that in 2010 there is still one major denomination which affirms what the Bible, the Lutheran Confessions, and Martin Luther teach about the inerrancy of the Bible; therefore it be

Resolved, That the LCMS at its 2010 convention declare that the LCMS maintains that the Bible, Martin Luther, and the Lutheran Confessions teach that the Bible is without error in all matters, and that all those on the clergy roster of the LCMS must believe and teach that, since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters; and be it further

Resolved, That all delegates to any LCMS convention and all those on the convention ballot for any position in the LCMS must maintain that the Bible is without error in all matters; and be it further

Resolved, That any LCMS clergyman or professor who denies the inerrancy of the Bible should be given a fair hearing and be removed from the LCMS clergy roster if he still refuses to affirm the inerrancy of the Bible; and be it finally

Resolved, That in this day of widespread denial of the inerrancy and efficacy of the Bible, all professors in LCMS colleges and seminaries emphasize the inerrancy and efficacy of the Bible.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

3-19

To Continue to Oppose Higher Criticism of the Bible

WHEREAS, The destructive notions of biblical higher criticism are now being promoted within modern Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church; for example:

1. Pope Benedict XVI, when he was still Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, in his *Introduction to Christianity*, now being widely promoted in the Roman Catholic Church, maintains that a mysterious Deutero-Isaiah and not the known eighth-century B.C. prophet wrote much of the Book of Isaiah (p. 132; reviewed in August 9, 2006, *Christian News*).
2. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which has the Imprimi Potest of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger of the Interdicasterial Commission for the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, rejects

the historicity of the Genesis account of creation and opens the door for evolution (reviewed in the August 7, 1995, *Christian News*).

3. “Minimalists on Parade,” a report in the January/February 2004 *Biblical Archaeological Review* of an academic conference of leading Bible scholars in Rome, concludes that David and Solomon never existed and that the Bible has little or no reliable history (*Christian News*, January 3, 2004).
4. The Jesus Seminar, a group of Protestant and Roman Catholic Bible scholars, maintains that some 80 percent of the words attributed to Jesus in the Bible were never spoken by Jesus.
5. The *Jerome Biblical Commentary* of the Roman Catholic Church, which has Rome’s imprimatur and is dedicated to the memory of Pope Pius XII, says that the Bible contains fiction, myths, and fables;

and

WHEREAS, Most major Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church allow their theologians to promote such notions of the higher critics as the J-E-D-P source hypothesis, which rejects the Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Bible, the fact that the known eighth-century B.C. prophet Isaiah wrote the Book of Isaiah, the fact that the sixth-century B.C. prophet Daniel wrote the Book of Daniel, the fact that the first chapters of Genesis present historic fact and not myth, the fact that the Book of Jonah presents historic fact, and the fact that the exodus took place in the fifteenth century B.C., as the Bible teaches; for example:

The massive 2,112-page *Lutheran Study Bible*, published by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in 2009, the work of scores of ELCA scholars, says it presents the best of modern biblical scholarship (p. 15). *Lutheran Study Bible* (reviewed in the March 23, 2009, *Christian News*) does not affirm the scriptural doctrines of the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible (pp. 20–22), says the Book of Daniel was written in the second century B.C., says First and Second Timothy were not written by Paul (p. 1952), says the exodus took place in 1290 (pp. 31, 124); says Isaiah 40–66 was written long after Isaiah died by some Second Isaiah (p. 31), says the first five books of the Bible came from some unknown sources designated as J-E-D-P and Q and not from Moses (p. 45), says much of the New Testament came from some fictitious source designated by higher critics as “Q” (pp. 1599–1600), and says Jesus is not the only way to heaven (p. 1658).

and

WHEREAS, Many are unaware that the LCMS during its great “Battle for the Bible” insisted that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, the known eighth-century B.C. prophet Isaiah wrote the Book of Isaiah, the sixth-century B.C. prophet Daniel wrote the Book of Daniel, the exodus took place in the fifteenth century B.C., the J-E-D-P and Q sources are fiction and never existed except in the minds of unbelieving Bible scholars, and the books of Genesis and Jonah present historic fact; and

WHEREAS, *The Lutheran Study Bible*, published by Concordia Publishing House in 2009, clearly presents justification by faith as the chief teaching of the Christian faith, defends the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible (p. 1560), defends the Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Bible (p. 3), rejects evolution (p. 10), shows that the Trinity is taught in the Old Testament (p. 14), asserts that Job 19:25–26 teaches the resurrection of the flesh (p. 807), affirms that the eighth-century B.C. prophet Isaiah wrote the entire Book of Isaiah (pp. 1085–86), affirms that Psalm 16 refers directly to Christ (p. 857), affirms that the sixth-century B.C. prophet Daniel wrote the Book of Daniel (p. 1393), affirms that Jesus is the only way to heaven (p. 1811), affirms that Christianity is the only true faith (p. 1839), affirms that homosexuality is sinful (pp. 1910–1911), shows

that women should not serve as pastors (p. 2073), and affirms that there should be no sex outside of marriage (p. 2121); therefore be it

Resolved, That in response to modern Protestant and Roman Catholic “scholarship” and particularly ELCA’s *Lutheran Study Bible*, the 2010 LCMS convention declare that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, the known eighth-century B.C. prophet Isaiah wrote the Book of Isaiah, the sixth-century B.C. prophet Daniel wrote the Book of Daniel, all the statements attributed to Jesus in the New Testament were actually made by Jesus, the J-E-D-P and Q sources never existed, the exodus took place in the fifteenth century B.C., and Jesus is the only way to heaven; and be it further

Resolved, That all professors and pastors on the LCMS clergy roster must confess and teach that the entire books of Genesis and Jonah present historic fact, Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, the known eighth-century B.C. prophet Isaiah wrote the entire Book of Isaiah, the exodus took place in the fifteenth century B.C. as the Bible teaches, the J-E-D-P and Q sources never existed, and Jesus is the only way to heaven; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention resolve that the LCMS regards the views expressed in ELCA’s *Lutheran Study Bible* to be far more destructive than the resolution the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted declaring that practicing homosexuals and lesbians may serve as pastors; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention, while not endorsing the use of the *English Standard Version of the Bible*, commend Concordia Publishing House and the editors of *The Lutheran Study Bible* for the many thoroughly scriptural notes in CPH’s *The Lutheran Study Bible*, published in 2009; and be it finally

Resolved, That the convention ask the President of the LCMS to inform the ELCA that the LCMS regards the destructive views of the Bible expressed in the ELCA’s *Lutheran Study Bible* as being far more destructive and divisive than the ELCA’s support of homosexual pastors and abortion.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

3-20

To Encourage Frequent Observance of the Lord’s Supper

WHEREAS, A 2008 survey conducted by the LCMS Commission on Worship regarding worship practice in the LCMS reveals that one-fourth to one-third of the congregations offering blended or contemporary worship services offer the Sacrament of the Altar at these services less than once per month, with up to one-tenth of them never celebrating the Sacrament at all (Question 45, *Results of the LCMS 2008 Worship Survey*, p. 38); and

WHEREAS, Regular and frequent reception of these means of God’s grace is to be encouraged, for we are even exhorted to frequent reception by the very command and institution of the sacrament itself (Matt. 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; 1 Cor. 11); and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Confessors at Augsburg noted the importance of the Sacrament of the Altar as a mark of the Church when they appealed to the emperor that “among us masses are performed every Lord’s Day and on the other festivals” (Apology Art. XXIV 1); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention encourage the congregations of the Synod to offer the Sacrament of the Altar frequently.

Board of Directors
Central Illinois District

2010 Convention Workbook

3-21

To Encourage Use of the Words of Institution

WHEREAS, A 2008 survey conducted by the LCMS Commission on Worship regarding worship practice in the LCMS reveals that a significant number of congregations (16 percent in one category) do not use the Words of Institution when celebrating the Sacrament of the Altar (Question 6, *Results of the LCMS 2008 Worship Survey*, p. 18); and

WHEREAS, All congregations of the LCMS subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions as true and faithful expositions of the Word of God; and

WHEREAS, We confess in the Large Catechism, “The Word must make the element a sacrament, otherwise it remains mere element”; and

WHEREAS, It is always the desire of the people of God not to introduce confusion and doubt but to proclaim with clarity the grace of God given in His sacraments; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention remind the pastors and the congregations of the Synod to include the Words of Institution in the celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar; and be it further

Resolved, That the district presidents of the LCMS exercise appropriate ecclesiastical supervision to ensure that all congregations are observing the Lord’s Supper in accord with the Lutheran Confessions.

Board of Directors
Central Illinois District

3-22

To Expect Practice to Agree with Doctrine of Closed Communion**Doctrine and Practice**

WHEREAS, Art. II of the LCMS Constitution expects not just agreement in doctrine but also agreement in practice when it says, “The Synod, and every member of the Synod, accepts without reservation: 1. The Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm *of faith and of practice* [emphasis added]; 2. All the Symbolic Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God ...”; and

WHEREAS, The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (i.e., the Lutheran Confessions) state in the Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration X 31, “churches will not condemn one another because of dissimilarity of ceremonies when, in Christian liberty, one has less or more of them, *provided they otherwise are in unity with one another in doctrine and all its articles, and also in the right use of the Sacraments*” (emphasis added); and

WHEREAS, Former Synod President Dr. A. L. Barry said, “It is precisely *for the sake of unity in both doctrine and practice among us, that our Synod adopts doctrinal resolutions* (emphasis added) that affirm and carry out our commitment to the truth of the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions” (1998 *Convention Proceedings*, “Report of the President,” Part III, p. 61); and

WHEREAS, Dr. Barry also said, “When I am made aware of a doctrinal concern with one of our congregations or church workers, I make every effort to inform the District President *and encourage him to take appropriate action to resolve the concern in a manner in keeping with our scriptural and confessional positions. I have repeatedly underscored with our District Presidents how important it is for all of us to uphold the Synod’s doctrinal positions. Not to do so will only result in division among us and will detract from our desire to reach out boldly with the Gospel*” (emphases added) (“Report,” Part I, p. 54); and

2010 Convention Workbook

Synod’s Position on Closed Communion

WHEREAS, Our Synod still maintains in its official writings a scripturally correct position on closed Communion:

1. The 1983 CTCR document *Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Supper* says, “The practice of refusing Communion to certain Christians and the general population at Lutheran altars is called close Communion. This practice serves the Gospel, and even those refused, by its reverence for our Lord’s last will and testament. ... Since fellowship at the Lord’s Table is also confession of a common faith, it would not be truthful for those who affirm the Real Presence and those who deny it to join one another. Their common Communion would indicate to the non-Christian community that the last will and testament of Christ could be interpreted in contradictory ways. Indeed, the non-Christian might rightly ask whether it was Jesus’ word which determined the church’s position and practice or simply a human consensus. ... Close Communion seeks to prevent a profession of confessional unity in faith where there is, in fact, disunity and disagreement. It would be neither faithful to the Scriptural requirements for admission to Holy Communion (1 Cor. 11:27 ff.; cf. 10:16–17) nor helpful to fallen humanity if the Christian church welcomes to its altars those who deny or question clear Scriptural teachings.”

2. In doctrinal resolutions from Synod conventions:

- A. 1995 Res. 3-08, “To Reaffirm the Practice of Close(d) Communion”
- B. 1998 Res. 3-06A, “To Recognize Action of Florida-Georgia District as Null and Void.” A 1997 Florida-Georgia District resolution supporting “A Declaration of Eucharistic Understanding and Practice” was rejected because it stated that the district affirmed “the right of its pastors and congregations to welcome to the Lord’s Table those who, regardless of denominational affiliation, share our confession of Christ and our conviction of what He freely offers in the Eucharist.”
- C. 1998 Res. 3-05, “To Reaffirm Our Practice of Admission to the Lord’s Supper.” It stated, “Foremost among our concerns with *A Declaration [of Eucharistic Understanding and Practice]* is its failure to recognize the following two essential elements of our practice: 1. Pastoral Oversight ... and 2. Public Confession of the Faith Is Reflected by Participation in the Sacrament. ... That the Synod pleads with its members by the mercies of God to abide by the historic practice of the church and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod concerning admission to the Lord’s Supper.” (Notably absent are resolutions affirming our practice of closed communion in the convention years of 2001 and 2004. On a side note, 2001 Resolution 3-16, “To Encourage Use of Only Wine in Administration of Lord’s Supper,” is an exceedingly weak resolution at best, since the Holy Scriptures absolutely and unconditionally require the use of wine, but our Synod saw fit to only encourage its use.)

and

Actual LCMS Practice

- WHEREAS, Franz Pieper states in *Christian Dogmatics*, volume 3, under the title “Orthodox and Heterodox churches,”

A church body is orthodox only if the true doctrine, as we have it in the Augsburg Confession and the other Lutheran Symbols, is actually taught in its pulpits and its publications and not merely “officially” professed as its faith. Not the “official” doctrine, but the actual teaching determines the character of a church body, because Christ enjoins that all things whatsoever He has commanded His disciples should actually be taught and not merely acknowledged in an “official document” as the correct doctrine. It is patent that faith in Christ will be created and preserved through the pure Gospel only when that Gospel is really proclaimed.

and

WHEREAS, The former First Vice-President of the Synod, the Rev. Daniel Preus, wrote in a paper entitled “Lord, Have Mercy” (presented at Confession and Christ’s Mission: Challenges to the Future of the LCMS, Melrose Park, Illinois, October 23, 2003),

The first is obvious. It is the increasingly common practice among many LCMS churches to open the Lord’s Supper to those with whom we are not in altar and pulpit fellowship. (p. 4)

He also wrote,

But there is simply no question that many pastors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod have departed from the historic Christian and Lutheran practice of closed communion. Many in our LCMS are no longer adhering to our long-held position that the Lord’s Supper (except under exceptional circumstances) should be given by our pastors only to members of our own congregation and to those who belong to churches with which we are in pulpit and altar fellowship. Already over ten years ago, in 1993, President Barry pointed to the disunity among us in the area of our communion practice by alluding to the “... numerous letters and telephone calls from pastors and laity in our Synod wondering if our Synod still affirms the confessional practice of close communion.” (A. L. Barry, “The President’s Newsletter,” November 1993).

and

WHEREAS, In May of 1997, the Florida-Georgia District approved *A Declaration of Eucharistic Understanding and Practice (DEUP)*, which stated that there should be no “denominational requirement of baptized Christians who desire to receive the body and blood of Christ offered in the Lord’s Supper.” This generated some 30 overtures to the 1998 Synod convention. Most sought to reaffirm Synod’s position or reject this document, but five were in support of open communion. The Northwest District declared, “A practice congruent with Scripture and the Confessions calls for the Sacrament to be shared with baptized Christians who repent of their sins, believe the real presence, and sincerely intend to amend their sinful lives” (Res. 3-04). Synod President Dr. A. L. Barry directed his words before the 1998 Convention, saying,

First, at our last convention [1995], the Synod adopted a magnificent resolution concerning close(d) Communion, Res. 3-08. *I believe this resolution needs once again to be affirmed ...* [emphasis added]. Second, there are a number of overtures before you commenting on a resolution adopted by our Florida-Georgia District which is clearly at odds with the position of our church body. The resolution quotes approvingly from a document titled, “A Declaration of Eucharistic Understanding and Practice.” The resolution that the District adopted departs from the position of our church body. *It will be very important for our Synod at its 1998 convention to state fraternally and clearly that the Florida-Georgia District’s decision in this matter is not in keeping with the biblical and confessional position of our Synod, and is, therefore, null and void* [emphasis added]. (1998 *Convention Proceedings*, “Report of the President,” Part II, p. 57)

At the 1998 convention, a resolution was passed “To Recognize Action of Florida-Georgia District as Null and Void” (3-06A) “because it is contrary to the resolutions of the Synod which have consistently upheld the truth *that pastors and congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, except in situations of emergency and in special cases of pastoral care, commune individuals of only those Lutheran synods which are now in fellowship with us*” (emphasis added) (1967 Res. 2-19; see also 1977 Res. 3-12; 1981 Res. 3-04; 1983 Res. 3-12; 1986 Res. 3-08; 1989 Res. B; 1992 Res. B; 1995 Res. 3-08).

Synod President Dr. Gerald Kieschnick writes in his 2004 Report,

In my travels across the Synod, I have not encountered disagreement in the doctrine of what the Lord’s Supper is. With unanimity, we believe, teach, and confess the Real Presence of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, received in, with, and under the bread and wine of Holy Communion, for the forgiveness of sin, the strengthening of faith, and the assurance of life eternal through faith in Christ. I do not believe that fundamental doctrinal disagreement concerning what the Lord’s Supper is exists in the LCMS.

At the same time, significant disagreement exists in the Synod regarding the policies of admission to Holy Communion, namely, who should be allowed or even encouraged to receive the Sacrament at the altars of our LCMS congregations. Some believe that all baptized Christians who believe in Jesus Christ, who are penitent, who accept the Real Presence of our Lord’s body and blood, and who desire to amend their sinful lives should be welcome at our altars. Others believe that only members of LCMS congregations and congregations of other church bodies with whom the LCMS is in altar and pulpit fellowship should be communed at our altars, with no exceptions.

The official position of our Synod, which welcomes members of LCMS congregations and congregations of church bodies with whom we are in altar and pulpit fellowship, also understands this policy to include “the necessity of exercising responsible pastoral care in extraordinary situations and circumstances” in the communing of “Christians who are members of denominations not in fellowship with the LCMS” (1986 LCMS Convention Resolution 3-08). *There is significant disagreement about what constitutes “extraordinary situations and circumstances,” which some pastors and congregations interpret very broadly and others quite narrowly* [emphasis added].

This disagreement in practice has resulted in dissension and disharmony between pastors and congregations of the LCMS, even though they are otherwise agreed on the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper.

It is important to recall the words of Francis Pieper, fourth president of the LCMS:

Christian congregations, and their public servants, are only the administrators and not lords of the Sacrament. ... On the one hand, they are not permitted to introduce “Open Communion”; on the other hand, they must guard against denying the Sacrament to those Christians for whom Christ has appointed it. (*Christian Dogmatics*, III, p. 381). (“Report of the President,” 2004 *Convention Proceedings*, p. 55);

and

WHEREAS, To avoid logomachy concerning the administration of the Lord Supper, our Synod’s doctrinal position is to welcome to the table those with whom we are completely united in doctrine and practice, as evidenced by their public membership held in a Missouri Synod congregation or a synod with which we are officially in fellowship. There are some who refer to this teaching and practice as “closed communion,” following in our German forefathers’ footsteps, who used the German word *geschlossen*. There are some who refer to our teaching and practice with the term “close communion.” And rather recently it has been common to include both possible words, by showing this in print with the letter “d,” in parentheses, so that it looks like this: “close(d) communion.” In keeping with St. Paul’s command not to “strive about words to no profit” (2 Tim. 2:14), this resolution will not concern itself with these differences in words, provided that the doctrine taught is the same. However, if the word “close” is used to teach that we only need to be “close” to each other in teaching and practice, only somewhat united, then it is a different teaching; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2009 Southern Illinois District (SID) convention direct her district president to undertake a visitation of every SID congregation and pastor in order to determine whether those SID congregations and pastors are administering the Sacrament of Communion according to our Synod-approved teaching on closed Communion, which is founded on the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions (Note: The district president always has the right to direct his vice-presidents and circuit counselors to assist him in the endeavor); and be it further

Resolved, That SID direct the district president to present a report to the 2012 SID convention concerning his findings and the actions he has taken in order to restore our unity in doctrine and practice; and be it finally

Resolved, That the 2009 Southern Illinois District convention memorialize The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to direct her district presidents to initiate a visitation of every congregation and

pastor in their respective districts in order to determine whether those congregations and pastors are actually practicing our Synod-approved position on closed Communion, which is founded on the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. (Note: The district president always has the right to direct his vice-presidents and circuit counselors to assist him in the endeavor.)

Southern Illinois District

3-23

To Affirm Biblical Practice of Admission to the Lord's Table

WHEREAS, The new testament in Jesus' blood instituted by Christ Himself is most holy, whereby we are brought, as it were, into the very Holy of Holies of God, as God gives us the true body and blood of our Savior; and

WHEREAS, This new covenant takes the place of and is the fulfillment of the old covenant given by God at Mt. Sinai; and

WHEREAS, God has entrusted pastors with the proper administration of this blessed mystery in a way similar to the way Old Testament priests were charged to oversee the sacrifices of the Lord, so that pastors should heed the warnings of Scripture, as when faithful Abijah speaks to rebellious Jeroboam,

But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the sons of Aaron are ministering to the LORD as priests, and the Levites attend to their work. And every morning and evening they burn to the LORD burnt offerings and fragrant incense, and the showbread is set on the clean table, and the golden lampstand with its lamps is ready to light every evening; for we keep the charge [literally, "guard the things to be guarded"] of the LORD our God, but you have forsaken Him. (2 Chron. 13:10–11)

Which these words hearken back to an earlier scene during the days of Aaron, when Korah and his sons and with them 250 others had brought great trouble on young Israel, so that the Lord said to Aaron,

So you shall attend to the obligations of the sanctuary and the obligations of the altar [literally, "you shall guard the things to be guarded of the sanctuary and the things to be guarded of the altar"], that there may no longer be wrath on the sons of Israel. (Num. 18:5);

and

WHEREAS, The proper administration of the new covenant is certainly as important as the proper administration of the old covenant, for it involves "the blood of sprinkling" (Heb. 12:24); and

WHEREAS, That proper administration involves limiting who should "be invited or allowed to commune at the altar of our Lord" to those who

1. are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; and

2. say the same thing—are of the same mind, bring with them the same teaching, that is, the apostles' doctrine: "Now by this we know that we have known Him, if we guard His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not guard His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:3–4); "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20); "and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42); "that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:6); "holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught" (Titus 1:9); and

3. live an outwardly godly life (1 Cor. 5:11, 13; 10:20–21)

which teaching is nothing new but was espoused in the second century by Justin Martyr, "First Apology" (c. 150):

(66) And this food is called among us *Eucharistia* [the Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration and who is so living as Christ has enjoined;

and

WHEREAS, Throughout the history of the LCMS, its members have guarded the things to be guarded of the altar" by taking seriously the question of who should be invited or allowed to commune at the altar of our Lord in LCMS congregations so that it was stated unequivocally in 1967 (Res. 2-19) that its pastors, "except in situations of emergency and in special cases of pastoral care, commune individuals of only those Lutheran Synods which are now in fellowship with us," which was restated again in 1986 and 1995; and

WHEREAS, In recent decades that holy practice has been neglected among us, so that pastors find "special cases of pastoral care" or "extraordinary situations" and "situations of emergency" around every corner (i.e., when relatives, friends, or visitors who are members of congregations/denominations outside our fellowship attend the Divine Service in our congregations on any given Sunday morning, when they attend at Christmas, for the Baptism of a relative, at Easter, or following a wedding); and

WHEREAS, Our Synod's President writes in his June 2009 *Letter to Pastors*:

Having said the above in my convention report about our doctrinal unity, I do take note of areas in which we in the LCMS are not in agreement, citing four of them [the first only cited here]: "The administration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, mainly the question of who should be invited or allowed to commune at the altar of our Lord in LCMS congregations";

and

WHEREAS, In the above-cited *Letter to Pastors*, President Kieschnick speaks of a lack of agreement among us in practice as to "who should be invited or allowed to commune" and then goes on to write about the matter as follows,

Where Scripture speaks plainly and clearly to the question at hand, the matter is resolved. Where Scripture does not speak plainly, clearly, or at all to the question at hand, it behooves us as a group of rational, reasonable, Christian people to come to a godly and common-sense conclusion regarding how to proceed with mutual respect and non-offensive conduct;

and

WHEREAS, The Scriptures are clear and do not change, and yet throughout the Synod it seems that "everyone does what is right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6) regarding who is eligible to commune; and

WHEREAS, The postmodern world politically, socially, and religiously is one of doublespeak in which clear statements of truth are regularly ignored or interpreted away; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention confess Christ boldly by affirming the clear teaching of Scripture regarding participation in the Lord's Supper as stated in the fifth "whereas" above; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention declare that the matter regarding who is eligible to commune at the altar of the Lord is resolved; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention admonish all who oversee doctrine and practice among us to enforce the proper administration of the Sacrament of the Altar in all of the member congregations of the LCMS; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention thank and praise God for those faithful pastors who are guarding that which has been entrusted to them, the mystery of the blessed Sacrament, but warn those who trifle with the holy things and profane the name of Christ by practicing open communion, for they treat as common the holy blood by which they were redeemed; and be it finally

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention recognize that open communion includes communing those whose confession is only "close" to our own, and that it is time once more to guard against the "i" of the "like/same" debate at the time of Arius (Council of Nicaea;

homoios instead of *homoousios*), this time regarding teaching and confession: “LIKE” TEACHING and “LIKE” CONFESSION is not enough, but let him who believes and says the SAME THING come forward and commune.

Trinity
Tryon, NC

3-24

To Advocate Consistent Practice of Closed Communion

WHEREAS, The Scriptures require both a knowledge of the Lord’s Supper sufficient for its proper reception and a contrite heart that trusts Jesus’ Word (1 Cor. 11:27–29); and

WHEREAS, Fellowship at the Lord’s Table is an act of confession of faith (1 Cor. 10:17); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS, by adopting 1998 Res. 3-05, addressed the document “A Declaration of Eucharistic Understanding and Practice” by reaffirming 1995 Res. 3-08 and, thereby, 1967 Res. 2-19, officially placing the entire Synod in opposition to the document; and

WHEREAS, Admission to Holy Communion without a regard for confession of faith is neither faithful to God’s Word nor an act of love (Rom. 16:17); and

WHEREAS, The practice of closed Communion was officially and publicly taught and observed by the Early Church; and

WHEREAS, The practice of closed Communion is affirmed by our Lutheran Confessions: “For we do not intend to admit to the sacrament and administer it to those who do not know what they seek or why they come” (Tappert 447:2; also 575:32f, *et al.*); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS from its beginning in 1847 practiced closed Communion (1943 version of the Small Catechism, question 326); and

WHEREAS, The practice of closed Communion seeks to prevent both a harmful reception of the Sacrament as well as a profession of unity of confession of faith where this unity does not exist (1 Cor. 11:27–29; 1:10); and

WHEREAS, Disparity in the practice of the Lord’s Supper has created confusion and controversy in the Synod; and

WHEREAS, It is desirable that uniform practice that is in harmony with the theology of the Lord’s Supper be followed in the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The 1983 report of the CTCR, *Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Supper*, reaffirmed the biblical practice of closed Communion as believed, taught, and confessed by the orthodox Lutheran Church for centuries; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention reaffirm its position on fellowship and the practice of closed Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That articles based on the Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions explaining why we practice closed Communion be written and published in our Synod’s and districts’ official publications, (i.e. *Reporter*, *The Lutheran Witness*, district newsletters, etc.); and be it finally

Resolved, That the implementation of this consistent practice be a top priority of the Synod’s district presidents, who are responsible for the supervision of the doctrine and practice of the pastors and congregations in their districts.

Salem
Taylorsville, NC

3-25

To Request a Study on Certain Theses from Walther’s *Church and Ministry*

WHEREAS, The 2001 LCMS convention adopted Res. 7-17A, “That the LCMS in convention reaffirm the decision of the 1852 convention

in recognizing C. F. W. Walther’s book *The Voice of Our Church on the Question of Church and Ministry* as the official position of the LCMS” and “That all pastors, professors, teachers of the church, and congregations honor and uphold the resolutions of the Synod as regards the official position of our Synod on church and ministry and teach in accordance with them;” and

WHEREAS, The President of Synod noted in his “Report of the President” to the 2004 convention that “Clear as these affirmations [on church and ministry] might appear, disagreement nevertheless exists within our Synod regarding their application. In more than a few instances, there simply is lack of clarity and concurrence regarding the role, responsibility, authority, and accountability of both the office of pastor and the role of laity in the church” (2004 *Convention Proceedings*, p. 56); and

WHEREAS, The President of Synod noted in his “Report of the President” to the 2007 convention that the topic of church and ministry, along with other issues, “are still matters of concern among us in our Synod today” (2007 *Convention Proceedings*, p. 60); and

WHEREAS, Rather than being honored as the official position of the LCMS, the following theses from *The Voice of Our Church on the Question of Church and Ministry* continue to be debated:

- Concerning the Church, Thesis IV—“It is to this true church of believers and saints that Christ gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and it is the proper and only possessor and bearer of the spiritual, divine, and heavenly gifts, rights, powers, offices, and the like that Christ has procured and are found in His church.”
- Concerning the Holy Ministry, Thesis IV—“The ministry is not a special or, in opposition to that of ordinary Christians, a more holy state, as was the Levitical priesthood, but it is a ministry of service.”
- Concerning the Holy Ministry, Thesis VI—“The ministry of the Word [*Predigtamt*] is conferred by God through the congregation as the possessor of all ecclesiastical power, or the power of the keys, by means of its call, which God Himself has prescribed. The ordination of the called [persons] with the laying on of hands is not a divine institution but merely an ecclesiastical rite [*Ordnung*] established by the apostles; it is no more than a solemn public confirmation of the call.”
- Concerning the Holy Ministry, Thesis VII—“The holy ministry [*Predigtamt*] is the power, conferred by God through the congregation as the possessor of the priesthood and all church power, to exercise the rights of the spiritual priesthood in public office in the name of the congregation.”

and

WHEREAS, An understanding of some that the holy ministry stands apart from a mediated call (i.e., a call being conferred by God through the congregation) has led to an understanding by some that those who hold the Office of the Ministry of the Word have little or no accountability to the congregation, the congregation’s governing body, or the congregation’s board of elders; and

WHEREAS, Such understanding often has led to conflict within congregations of the LCMS; therefore be it

Resolved, That a study document focusing on Thesis IV from “Part 1: Concerning the Church” and Theses IV, VI, and VII from “Part 2: Concerning the Holy Ministry or the Pastoral Office” of *Church and Ministry*, with special attention both on the theology and application of these theses in a local congregation, be prepared for study, discussion, and use by district conventions, district pastors’ conferences, circuit pastors’ conferences (Winkels), the pastors and congregations of the LCMS, and by the seminaries of the Synod as part of their program for pastoral formation; and be it further

Resolved, That this study document also critique views of the church and ministry that have gained unofficial acceptance by some in our Synod but which contradict the theology and practice contained in Walther’s *Church and Ministry*; and be it further

Resolved, That this study document be prepared by a committee of two members of the Council of Presidents (COP) appointed by the chairman of the COP; two members of the CTCR appointed by the executive director of the CTCR; two faculty members from each of the Synod's seminaries appointed by the presidents of the respective seminaries; and two members of the CCM appointed by the President of the Synod; and be it finally

Resolved, That this study document be completed prior to the conventions of the districts in 2012 or 2013.
Board of Directors

South Dakota District

3-26

To Restudy Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events

WHEREAS, In 2004 Res. 3-06A, the Synod commended for study *Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events*, a report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR), "to help pastors, teachers, and church workers make decisions about participation in civic events"; and

WHEREAS, The CTCR's report indicates that the commission itself was divided over the matter of "serial" or "seriatim" prayer, even though this matter was an important subject within the report; and

WHEREAS, Prayers are offered "seriatim" in virtually any setting—the exception being for multiple leaders to speak their prayers simultaneously! and

WHEREAS, The Synod's 2007 convention resolved to "assign to the CTCR the task of providing further guidance for participation in civic events that includes the offering of serial prayer" (Res. 3-05, 2007 *Convention Proceedings*, p. 121); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2009 Missouri District convention memorialize the Synod's 2010 convention to (a) assign the CTCR to restudy the issues raised by and to clarify the *Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events* document on the basis of input to be solicited from the membership of the Synod, attending especially to "serial" or "seriatim" prayer; and (b) require that the CTCR issue to the Synod its new report no later than July 31, 2012.

Missouri District

3-27

To Unambiguously Renounce Syncretism and Unionism

WHEREAS, In the First Commandment the triune God, out of love for us, strictly forbids us from joining in worship with non-Christians; and

WHEREAS, Participating with others while they are praying to false gods and reading their sacred writings gives a false testimony to the truth that only one God exists, is a violation of the First Commandment, and fails to lead sinners to the Savior Jesus; and

WHEREAS, Article VI of the LCMS Constitution lists as a condition for membership "renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description"; and

WHEREAS, God through His holy apostle said, "Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry...sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons" (1 Cor. 10:14, 20); and

WHEREAS, Pastors of our Synod willingly and without coercion have pledged themselves to abide by our Synod's Constitution, including Article VI 2 b and c, which state that pastors are to avoid "taking part in the services of heterodox congregations...and [heterodox] missionary activities"; and

2010 Convention Workbook

WHEREAS, 2007 Res. 3-07A has been interpreted to allow LCMS pastors to participate in events that many see as clearly syncretistic or unionistic; and

WHEREAS, The 2004 LCMS convention passed Res. 3-06A, which commended for study the CTCR document entitled "Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events (GPCE)"; and

WHEREAS, We find this document to be ambiguous, as it states on page 19,

The members of the Commission disagree about the issue of so-called "serial" or "seriatim" prayers involving representatives of different religious [Christian and/or non-Christian] groups or churches. Some members of the Commission believe that under no circumstances is it permissible for LCMS pastors to participate in any type of an event in which various Christian and/or non-Christian leaders "take turns" offering prayers, holding that such an activity by its very nature constitutes "joint prayer and worship." The majority of the Commission believes that in some instances it may be possible and permissible for LCMS pastors to participate in such an event as long as certain conditions are met (e.g., when the purpose of the event in question is clearly and predominantly civic in nature, and when it is conducted in such a way that does not correspond to the LCMS understanding of a "service"; when no restrictions are placed on the content of the Christian witness that may be given by the LCMS pastor; when a sincere effort is made by those involved to make it clear that those participating do not all share the same religious views concerning such issues as the nature of God, the way of salvation, and the nature of religious truth itself.);

and

WHEREAS, The notion of "civic events" sponsored by governments has been used to justify participation of LCMS pastors in syncretistic and unionistic services; and

WHEREAS, 2004 Res. 3-06A was commended "for study to help pastors, teachers, and church workers make decisions about participation in civic events"; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2009 Southern Illinois District convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to recognize that the CTCR document "Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events" (2004 Res. 3-06A) and the CTCR document, "The Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship" (2001 Res. 3-07A) are ambiguous; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2009 Southern Illinois District convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to have clear and unambiguous guidelines produced by the Council of Presidents in conjunction with the faculties of the two seminaries regarding participation in civic and other events that would be in keeping with the LCMS Constitution Article VI condition for membership, "renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description."

Southern Illinois District

3-28

To Review the Role of Women in the Church

WHEREAS, The Missouri District at its 2003 convention encouraged pastors to "catechize their congregations in the biblical doctrine held by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on the different roles of men and women" (Res. 1-10); and

WHEREAS, The Synod in adopting 2004 Res. 3-08A seems to have affirmed only the first of the two criteria for determining whether women can serve in various lay congregational offices, criteria which have been previously held in past resolutions of the Synod (see 1969 Res. 2-17); and

WHEREAS, In 1995 Res. 3-06A, the Synod directed the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) to continue studying the issues in its 1994 report and dissenting opinion and to do so "in consultation with the faculties of the seminaries"; and

WHEREAS, The CTCR has not reported to a convention any record of such communication with or from the seminaries on the topic

of the role of women in the church nor has any further report been issued by the CTCR except for a report on the meaning of the Greek word “authentēin,” which drew no conclusions concerning application in the contemporary church (see 2007 *Convention Workbook*, pp. 377–80); and

WHEREAS, The 2007 LCMS convention received overtures, including several from entire districts, calling for 2004 Res. 3-08A to be rescinded, rejected, or repealed; for its implementation to be suspended; or for further study to be given to its subject matter (see 2007 *Convention Workbook*, pp. 175–82); and

WHEREAS, The Synod responded in part by deciding to “await the CTCR comprehensive report on the scriptural relationship of man and woman to be completed in 2008” (Res. 3-07, 2007 *Convention Proceedings*, p. 122); and

WHEREAS, The CTCR did not complete this study during 2008, and the CTCR’s executive director has stated that the commission’s work on this assignment focuses “not so much on specific questions about the service of women in the church—topics covered in other CTCR documents—but on the scriptural *relationship* of man and woman both within and outside of marriage and church-service contexts” (*Reporter*, November 2008, p. 2); and

WHEREAS, the Synod is not in agreement about the role of women in the church and the practical application of the various resolutions of the Synod concerning women’s roles; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Missouri District express its desire to see the Synod seek a God-pleasing resolution and lasting solution to the understanding of women’s roles in the church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Missouri District memorialize the Synod to rescind 2004 Res.3-08A and anything based on it, such as policies or administrative procedures; and be it further

Resolved, That the Missouri District memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to assign the CTCR the task of fulfilling the mandate given it in 1995 Res. 3-06A; and be it further

Resolved, That the Missouri District memorialize the 2010 convention to assign the task of giving input to the CTCR concerning the role of women in the church to the faculties of the Synod’s two seminaries by addressing “open letters” to the CTCR and making them available to the entire Synod; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Missouri District memorialize the 2010 convention to assign the CTCR to review critically all of the recommendations in its 1994 report and their basis in its 1985 “Women in the Church” document in light of the seminary input mentioned above and the input of other concerned members of the Synod and in light of the scholarly studies concerning relevant biblical passages (many aided by ancient literature databases) that have appeared since 1985.

Missouri District; Carrollton Circuit Forum, Missouri District;
Trinity, Freistatt, MO; Zion, Moberly, MO

3-29

To Offer Biblical Rationale for Opposing Combat Roles for Women

WHEREAS, At creation Adam was given the responsibility for dominion over the earth and headship over against his relationship with Eve, even to the point of being himself responsible for the fall into sin (Rom. 5:12ff.); and

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture consistently affirms male headship (1 Cor. 11:7–9; 1 Tim. 2:12–13) on the basis of Gen. 2:18–25; and

WHEREAS, Woman was created out of man and was designed to be “a helper fit for him” (Gen. 2:18); and

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture views a primary vocation of woman being that of the home, caring for her husband, and raising and nurturing her children (Prov. 31:10–31); and

WHEREAS, A husband is admonished to love his wife sacrificially (Eph. 5:25ff.) and to honor her as the weaker vessel (1 Pet. 3:7), which implies woman’s God-designed need for protection; and

WHEREAS, By having women defend men in war, God’s design is violated and the glory of woman is diminished (1 Cor. 11:7); and

WHEREAS, Assigning women to combat roles will involve them in our present cultural perversion of the roles of male and female as conceived by the Creator, and would be a misuse of women in violation of the Creator’s purpose for them; and

WHEREAS, Given the present “war on terror,” and the nature of Islamic religious teaching about women and radical Islamic philosophy, women captured in combat would face serious danger, physically, mentally, and emotionally; and

WHEREAS, A clearly articulated position on this matter on the part of the Synod would give valuable assistance to our young women who are considering military service careers; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Synod in convention direct the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) to address these concerns, offering a clearly reasoned biblical and theological rationale for opposing women in combat roles in our nation’s military services; and be it further

Resolved, Due to the immediacy of the “war on terror,” that this report from the CTCR be offered at the next LCMS convention.

Carrollton Circuit Forum,
Missouri District

3-30

To Agree That Female Readers in Public Worship Are Divisive and Offensive

WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus through St. Paul calls on us to “mark those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine you have learned and avoid them” (Rom.16:17); and

WHEREAS, Jesus has reserved for the Holy Office of the Ministry eligible males only to lead and teach His flock (1 Tim. 2:8–15; 3:1–13; 1 Cor. 14:33–38); and

WHEREAS, Jesus has taught us through St. Paul in Rom. 10:13ff. both how the office is established and what it accomplishes by His grace, so that “whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved”:

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?

And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?

And how shall they hear without a preacher?

And how shall they preach unless they are sent?

and the result of such sending and preaching and hearing will be: “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”; and

WHEREAS, On the basis of Romans 10 and other passages of Scripture, we believe, teach, and confess as set forth in Augsburg Confession Article V:

German text: *Concerning the Office of Preaching* To obtain such faith God instituted the office of preaching, giving the gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when he wills, in those who hear the gospel. It teaches that we have a gracious God, not through our merit but through Christ’s merit, when we so believe.

Latin text: *Concerning Ministry in the Church* So that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and the sacraments as through instruments the Holy Spirit is given, who effects faith where and when it pleases God in those who hear the Gospel, that is to say, in those who hear that God, not on account of our own merits but on account of Christ, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace on account of Christ. Gal. 3 [14b]: “So that we might receive

the promise of the Spirit through faith.” [Kolb, Wengert *The Book of Concord*, emphasis added]

and

WHEREAS, The reading of Holy Scripture publicly to the people is the means whereby God blesses His people with faith, so that the public reading of Scripture is the means whereby the Holy Spirit publicly teaches the faith and increases faith in the hearts of His people; and

WHEREAS, It is not only the reading of the Gospel that is working alongside the Sacrament of the Altar to create and sustain faith, but it is the reading of the Old Testament and Epistle lessons as well; and

WHEREAS, It is impossible to divorce the Word from the Sacrament in the liturgy, and even less possible for one to divorce the reading of the Scriptures from the sermon; and

WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus through St. Paul tells Timothy to give attention to the “reading,” “exhortation,” and “teaching [of Scripture]” (1 Tim. 4:13); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention recognize:

- 1) That in the public reading, exhortation, and teaching of Scripture God Himself is speaking, as the Augsburg Confession teaches, “in those who hear the gospel, that is to say, in those who hear that God” [Latin text]; and
- 2) That the public reading, exhortation, and teaching of Scripture is part and parcel of “the office of preaching” through which God “gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith” [German text]; and
- 3) That [Latin text] “the ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments” is one and “the ministry of teaching the gospel” necessarily involves “reading” as much as “exhortation and teaching”;

so that it is divisive and offensive to have female readers in the divine service, even as it would be to have female “exhorters” and female “teachers” in the divine service; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention ask that its pastors and congregations remove such offense from our midst by refraining from using female readers in public worship as well as female assistants to distribute Christ’s holy body and precious blood.

Trinity
Tryon, NC

3-31

To Return to Scriptural Position on Birth Control

WHEREAS, Until the 1930s, most major Protestant denominations, along with the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, opposed birth control; and

WHEREAS, The Bible prohibits birth control (see “*Nine Reasons Why the Bible Prohibits Birth Control*” by Charles Provan, *Christian News*, February 28, 1988, reprinted in *The Bible and Birth Control*); and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther strongly condemned birth control (Luther wrote in his comments on Gen. 38:9–10 [American Edition, p. 21]: “Accordingly, it was a most disgraceful crime to produce semen and excite the woman and frustrate her at that very moment. He was inflamed with the basest spite and hatred. Therefore he did not allow himself to be compelled to bear the intolerable slavery. Consequently, he deserved to be killed by God. He committed an evil deed. Therefore God punished him.”); and

WHEREAS, John H. C. Fritz, in his *Pastoral Theology*, long used as a textbook in LCMS seminaries, shows that birth control “is sinful”: “It is a willfully setting aside of God’s will and command, Gen. 1:28; 1 Tim. 5:15, 2:15; Gen. 8:9–10” (p. 177); and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Hour Speaker Walter Maier, in a chapter titled “The Blight of Birth Control” in his marriage manual *For Better, Not for Worse*, shows that birth control is sinful and contrary to the Bible (pp. 377–421); and

2010 Convention Workbook

WHEREAS, A major factor in the decline of church growth is the ever-decreasing size of the families of pastors and church members; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention declare that the LCMS still accepts the scriptural position of Martin Luther on birth control and the position long promoted in the LCMS by such orthodox LCMS theologians as John H. C. Fritz, Walter Maier, Martin Nauman, Theodore Laetch, and many others.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

3-32

To Prepare Study on Practice of Cremation

WHEREAS, In Gen. 3:19, after man sinned, God said to Adam, “By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you *return to the ground, for out of it you were taken*; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return,” signifying that God’s people are to be buried; and

WHEREAS, In Rom. 6:1–5 Paul tells the Christians living in Rome to be different from the pagans: “Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were *buried* therefore with him by Baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Paul uses the term “buried,” while the Roman practice of cremation signified a different belief than the Christians’ resurrection of the body); and

WHEREAS, In our committal service in the *Lutheran Service Book Agenda* (p. 130), which uses the phrase “ashes to ashes, dust to dust,” taken from the Church of England’s *Book of Common Prayer* and found nowhere in Scripture, a pastor may implicitly be giving approval for cremation; and

WHEREAS, In the past, cremation was the exception (now, in post-Christian America, cremation has become a normal practice in many communities, increasing from 3.56 percent in the 1960s to an estimated 39 percent by 2010 and growing); and

WHEREAS, Cremation was not practiced in the Christian Church for 2,000 years and was viewed as a denial of the statement in the Apostles’ Creed, “I believe in . . . the resurrection of the body” (and our funeral is the last message of our Christian faith we give to our family and friends and the community); therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention ask the CTCR, in consultation with a group of congregational pastors and the seminary faculties, to prepare a study on the practice of cremation and especially of its implications for our public witness.

St. Mark
Chesterland, OH

3-33

To Maintain Practice of Requesting Theological Opinions from Seminary Faculties

WHEREAS, Since the Reformation, Lutheran theological faculties have responded to requests for theological opinions; and

WHEREAS, This practice has existed in the LCMS for more than one hundred years; therefore be it

Resolved, That when occasions arise where such opinions are needed, the Synod encourage its congregations, districts, and other entities to maintain this tradition by requesting opinions from the seminary faculties.

Zion
Fort Wayne, IN

4. ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

4-01

To Increase Financial Support for Synod Seminaries

WHEREAS, The support of seminaries was included as a part of the rationale for the formation of the Missouri Synod in 1847; and

WHEREAS, The Constitution of the LCMS states as one of its objectives: “The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall— ... 3. Recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” (Art. III); and

WHEREAS, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, belong to the Synod and are critically important for the long-term health and faithfulness of our Synod; and

WHEREAS, Over many years the financial relationship between the Synod and its seminaries has changed from one where the Synod provided the majority of the seminaries’ budgets to the situation today in which the Synod provides nominal contributions to the seminaries’ budgets; and

WHEREAS, The necessity of raising nearly all of their own funding distracts the resources and attention of seminary faculty and staff away from forming pastors and deaconesses for the church; and

WHEREAS, Requiring the seminaries to be financially independent from the Synod degrades the relationship between Synod and seminaries and tempts the leadership of the seminaries to disregard the will of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The dependence on individual contributors for funding leaves the seminaries vulnerable to the desires of the contributors rather than the needs of the church; and

WHEREAS, Because of financial challenges facing the Synod, budget and program decisions will be very difficult for Synod officials to make beyond what is simply required; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montana District of the LCMS memorialize the Synod in convention to direct the Synod to increase direct support to the seminaries to 5 percent of their total budgets in 2011, and to increase another 5 percent of the seminaries’ annual budgets each year until 2020, at which time the Synod will support the seminaries at a minimum of 51 percent of their budgets, to be continued at this level indefinitely; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations be informed of this change and thereby be encouraged to support our seminaries.

Montana District

4-02

To Encourage Support of Seminaries

WHEREAS, The LCMS in convention has spoken repeatedly of the need for the Synod to provide financial support for the seminaries (e.g., 2007 Res. 4-09A); and

WHEREAS, Corporate Synod does not receive sufficient funds from Sunday morning offerings from congregations via districts to provide substantial financial support for the seminaries; and

WHEREAS, Both LCMS seminaries rely increasingly on gifts from congregations and individuals for the resources needed to fulfill their mission to the Synod of providing theological education; therefore be it

Resolved, That pastors and congregations be encouraged to include the seminaries in their congregational budgets; and be it further

Resolved, That pastors and congregations be urged to include (by 2011) envelopes for one or both of the seminaries in the offering boxes/packets distributed annually to their members.

Board of Regents
Concordia Seminary

4-03

To Encourage Immediate and Long-Term Financial Support for Seminaries

Rationale

Pastors are necessary for the mission and ministry of the church, and seminaries are necessary to produce pastors. As existing congregations need pastors, and the mission goals of the Synod include planting new congregations, even more pastors will be needed.

Articles in the April 2009 issue of *Reporter* and the Spring 2009 issue of *Concordia Journal* state that Concordia Seminary in St. Louis receives only 2 percent of its funding from the national budget of The LCMS. The articles state that Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, is faced with making drastic cuts in its operating budget for next year (one-fourth of its budget). Similar short-term and long-term funding challenges exist for Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne as well.

WHEREAS, Art. III of the Constitution of The LCMS states that two of the objectives of the Synod are: “3. Recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” and “5. Aid congregations to develop processes of thorough Christian education and nurture and to establish agencies of Christian education such as elementary and secondary schools and to support synodical colleges, universities, and seminaries”; and

WHEREAS, The 2007 LCMS convention passed Res. 4-09A which states:

Resolved, That the Synod as a whole continue to support each seminary’s development efforts; and be it further

Resolved, That the funding model adopted by the Board for Pastoral Education be put into place, including:

- Continued direct funding of the seminaries by corporate Synod from its annual budget in the form of subsidy.
- An intentional and fundamental return to being tuition-driven institutions in order to make funding more predictable and reduce the risk of financial crises at the seminaries.
- The LCMS as a whole (individuals, congregations, circuits, districts, corporate Synod, and agencies) assumes primary responsibility for gathering funds to support seminary students and assist them in paying undiscounted tuition.;

therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of Circuit 9 of the Texas District memorialize the LCMS in its 2010 convention to encourage all congregations and calling entities of the Synod, as an immediate solution to help out in the current financial need, to engage in active fundraising now, and that these dollars be sent to the Joint Seminary Fund as soon as possible; and be it further

Resolved, That the Circuit 9 Forum memorialize the Synod in its 2010 Convention to encourage all congregations and calling entities of the Synod, as a long-term solution and to reflect a greater responsibility for the seminaries of the Synod, to place in their annual budgets \$1,000 per pastor or 1 percent of their annual budget to be paid to the Joint Seminary Fund annually.

Circuit 9 Forum
Texas District

4-04

To Increase Support for Seminaries

WHEREAS, The financial support given to our Synod's two seminaries has continued to decline over the past years; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Constitution, Art. III 3 states that one of the main objectives of our Synod is to "Recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth"; and

WHEREAS, The April 6, 2009 *Reporter Online* included an article which stated that because of financial shortfall, some of our Synod's seminary professors are being encouraged to take an early retirement; and

WHEREAS, The article also stated, "The early retirement offer is the first step in reducing personnel expenses, and other personnel reductions are likely"; and

WHEREAS, The seminaries are important for conserving and promoting the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3-6); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention instruct the Board of Directors of the LCMS, along with both seminary presidents and the boards of regents of both seminaries, to develop a fiscally sound plan for increased support for both seminaries; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Directors immediately implement this plan for financial support.

Salem
Taylorsville, NC

4-05

To Support LCMS Seminarians and Seminaries

WHEREAS, The 2007 LCMS convention passed Res. 4-09A "To Provide Financial Support and Adopt Funding Model for Seminaries," which resolved that a funding model be adopted including the provision: "The LCMS as a whole (individuals, congregations, circuits, districts, corporate Synod, and agencies) assumes primary responsibility for gathering funds to support seminary students and assist them in paying undiscounted tuition"; and

WHEREAS, Res. 4-09A also resolved that "the Synod as a whole continue to support each seminary's development efforts"; and

WHEREAS, Both LCMS seminaries have taken significant and responsible steps to reduce staff and operating expenses in light of the challenges presented by the recent economic downturn; and

WHEREAS, 74 percent (the average between the two seminaries) of the pastoral ministry students who graduated from the two LCMS seminaries in May 2009 did so with educational debt; and

WHEREAS, The average educational debt of those pastoral ministry students who graduated with educational debt was \$39,689; and

WHEREAS, The average salary of seminary graduates placed in the spring of 2009 was \$38,008 (cash salary, not including other benefits); and

WHEREAS, Carrying large amounts of educational debt while receiving a modest salary results in stress for the pastor, which negatively impacts his family, health, and service; therefore be it

Resolved, That individuals, groups, and congregations in the LCMS be encouraged to increase their support of the two LCMS seminaries with prayers, referrals of prospective students, and financial gifts; and be it further

Resolved, That corporate Synod continue to provide subsidy to both LCMS seminaries through its annual budget; and be it further

Resolved, That LCMS seminaries continue their efforts directed at reducing the discounting of tuition; and be it further

Resolved, That each congregation of the LCMS be urged to include a line item in its operations budget to support the seminaries; and be it further

Resolved, That Concordia University System (CUS) schools and the two seminaries require all students enrolled in church work programs to receive instruction in biblical stewardship designed to increase their ability to manage their personal finances wisely; and be it finally

Resolved, That individuals, groups, congregations, circuits, districts, CUS schools, and seminaries in the LCMS be encouraged to initiate or strengthen already-existing efforts to address seminary student/graduate educational debt through efforts designed to

- reduce the amount of educational debt students accrue prior to seminary enrollment;
- reduce the amount of debt students accrue during seminary enrollment; and,
- assist pastors in paying their educational debts following seminary graduation.

Board for Pastoral Education

4-06

To Establish KFUEO-FM Endowment Funds for Seminary Tuition

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture mandates that all congregations should be served by one of Christ's undershepherds—a pastor (Titus 1:5); and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Confessions also describe the absolute necessity of faithful and well-prepared pastors within every congregation (*The Power and Primacy of the Pope*, "The Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops," pp. 60-61); and

WHEREAS, One of the "Objectives" of the LCMS is to "[r]ecruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers ...", (Constitution, Art. III 3); and

WHEREAS, The Synod in convention in 1995 (Res. 5-02A) voted to set as a goal in the resolution's final resolve "the ingathering of funds sufficient to cover the cost of all tuition for every student enrolled in the seminaries for the purpose of entering LCMS pastoral ministry"; and

WHEREAS, To date the LCMS has been unable to implement that overture; and

WHEREAS, General ministry seminary students, due to the increasing costs associated with higher education and the decreased support of the Synod to the seminaries, are incurring and graduating with educational debt loads often well beyond the means of a pastor's average salary to repay; and

WHEREAS, Such debt loads place an added burden upon the pastor and his family and thus also upon his ability to serve joyfully and effectively in the parish; and

WHEREAS, General ministry seminary students incur the greatest proportion of educational debt in preparation for entrance to the pastoral office; and

WHEREAS, President Gerald Kieschnick has frequently warned the Synod that its future supply of pastors will be inadequate due to the retirement of the "baby boomer" generation of LCMS pastors and the need for pastors to serve new mission starts; and

WHEREAS, The sale of KFUEO-FM has brought to the Synod unexpected income; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention establish two KFUEO-FM endowment funds for the support of tuition payments on behalf of general ministry seminarians at our two seminaries by utilizing all

current and future funds received from the sale of KFUEO-FM to fund the endowments; and be it further

Resolved, That Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, each be allocated one-half of the proceeds received from the sale of KFUEO-FM for investment in respective separate endowment funds to be administered by each seminary.

St. Paul, Whitehall, WI; St. Peter, Osseo, WI; Peace, St. Louis, MO; Western Missouri District Pastors' Conference; Salem, Taylorsville, NC; Christ, Lampson/Trego, WI; Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Cupertino, CA; Circuit 3 Forum, North Wisconsin District; East Region Pastors' Conference, Northern Illinois District

4-07

To Affirm Integral Value of KFUEO and Seminaries

WHEREAS, Concerns have arisen about the desire to sell certain valuable assets of Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Rocky Mountain District affirm the integral value of radio station KFUEO and the campuses of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne and caution the Board of Directors of the Synod that the liquidation of such assets could be detrimental to the work of the LCMS.

Rocky Mountain District

4-08

To Re-Establish LCMS Board for Stewardship

WHEREAS, Res. 4-03 of the 1992 LCMS convention restructured the Department of Stewardship and the LCMS Foundation; and

WHEREAS, That restructuring caused stewardship ministry in the LCMS to have a less influential voice; and

WHEREAS, Res. 2-07A of the 2001 LCMS convention, in an attempt to increase stewardship influence, re-established the Department of Stewardship under the Board for District and Congregational Services; and

WHEREAS, Res. 4-01 of the 2004 convention called for a "Stewardship Ablaze" emphasis to raise awareness of faithful stewardship in all of the congregations; and

WHEREAS, Res. 4-02 of the 2007 convention indicated that the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Funding the Mission identified a significant need in the LCMS to strengthen the areas of stewardship in the life of every Christian within our church body; and

WHEREAS, Res. 4-02 mandated the coordination of national and district leaders and other assisting entities in the development of resources, training, and strategic components for an expanding stewardship renewal in the life of our church; and

WHEREAS, Res. 4-02, "To Begin a Stewardship Renewal through Enhanced Communication," was adopted in convention; and

WHEREAS, The Director of Stewardship Ministries of the LCMS will have a greater influence to help guide stewardship renewal in the LCMS by functioning at the executive staff level; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Nebraska District in convention encourage the LCMS at its 2010 convention to re-establish the Board of Stewardship, elevating the Director of Stewardship Ministries to executive staff level, and reporting to the LCMS President/Board of Directors.

Nebraska District

4-09

To Compile Report of Designated Gifts

WHEREAS, God has blessed the people of the LCMS in many and various ways; and

WHEREAS, God has moved the people of the LCMS to give generously in support of the work of the Synod and its various entities; and

WHEREAS, Support for the work of the various entities of the Synod in recent years has been in the form of direct gifts to those entities; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has committed itself to full financial disclosure; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Minnesota South District memorialize the Synod at its 2010 convention to direct the Vice-President-Finance—Treasurer to compile a report to the Synod, to be published in the *Convention Workbook* prior to each convention of the Synod, listing by district the sum of designated gifts received by all entities of the Synod, which includes but may not be limited to the following: Board for Mission Services; Board for Human Care Ministries; KFUEO; the Concordia University System; the Board for University Education; each of the colleges and universities of the Synod; the Board for Pastoral Education; the Joint Seminary Fund; Concordia Theological Seminary of Fort Wayne, Indiana; Concordia Seminary of Saint Louis, Missouri; the LCMS Foundation; and the Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That the Minnesota South District memorialize the Synod at its 2010 convention to ask each of the entities listed to cooperate with the Vice-President-Finance—Treasurer as he compiles this report.

Minnesota South District

4-10

To Curb Synod's Finances

WHEREAS, A statistical table titled "Two Decades of Change" on page 765 of the 2010 *Lutheran Annual* reports that in 2008, the LCMS had 701 clergymen on its roster not serving congregations as pastor but "Serving Synod, Districts and others"; and

WHEREAS, At least some of the church officials are receiving a salary several times that of the average pastor; and

WHEREAS, The high salary of many LCMS officials and executives is hurting contributions to the LCMS for mission work, causing a rapid decline in the number of full-time missionaries now being sent by the LCMS to lands foreign and domestic; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention declare that all full-time district presidents of the LCMS return to the parish ministry and become part-time presidents; and be it further

Resolved, That duties now assigned to the Council Of Presidents under the Bylaws be assigned to alternate bodies of the Synod or entirely dispensed with; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention declare that there be fewer full-time executives in our national LCMS headquarters and district offices; and be it finally

Resolved, That the moneys saved by these actions be used for foreign missions and mission starts in all districts.

Peace
Fort Atkinson, WI

To Amend and Restate the Articles of Incorporation

Rationale

Changes to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod advocated by the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance, if adopted, will require certain changes to the Synod’s Articles of Incorporation. This provides occasion to update also the entire document to describe more accurately the objectives, purposes, governance, and activities of the Synod. The Commission on Structure, whose responsibility it is to provide “direction for the ongoing maintenance and management of the *Handbook*” (Bylaw 3.9.5), proposes the following amendments.

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Amended and Restated
Articles of Incorporation
of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Article I. Name, Duration, Registered Office, and Agent

- a. The name of this corporation shall be “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.”
- b. The period of duration of the this corporation is perpetual.
- c. The address of the registered office of the this corporation is 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, Missouri.
- d. The name of the registered agent of the this corporation is CT Corporation System.

Article II. Objectives and Purposes

The objectives and purposes of this corporation ~~shall be~~ are:

- a. To unite in a corporate body ~~the congregations of the~~ Evangelical Lutheran Church congregations that acknowledge and remain true to the *Book of Concord* of the year of our Lord 1580 as a true exhibition of sound Christian doctrine.
- b. ~~To train ministers and teachers for service in the~~ assist in the establishment of Evangelical Lutheran Church congregations and preaching stations.
- c. To assist, ~~and advise, and protect member~~ congregations, ~~pastors, and teachers affiliated with and~~ ministers of religion—ordained and ministers of religion—commissioned of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, ~~and to exercise supervision over such pastors and teachers as to~~ to provide for their ecclesiastical supervision in matters of doctrine; and practice; and their performance administration of their official duties, and to acknowledge and assert the protections granted by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
- d. ~~To establish, build, conduct, and maintain support the establishment and maintenance of~~ theological seminaries, colleges, ~~academies, schools, universities,~~ and other institutions of learning to train ministers of religion—ordained, ministers of religion—commissioned, and laity for service in the Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- e. ~~To assist in the establishment of Lutheran congregations and preaching stations.~~
- e. To spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ ~~by means of radio and television broadcasting, visual education, and all other forms of missionary endeavor throughout the world by every means possible.~~
- f. To print, publish, purchase, sell, and otherwise disseminate Bibles, books, periodicals, literature, music, and other supplies for provide assistance and resources to the congregations, ~~schools, Sunday schools, preaching stations, and institutions and agencies of the Synod for the dissemination of the Christian Gospel.~~

- g. To establish and conduct all such enterprises and endeavors and to exercise such further power as may be necessary or expedient to carry out the objectives stated in the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Article III. Membership

Membership in the this corporation is held and may be acquired by congregations, ministers of religion—ordained, and ministers of religion—commissioned, as defined by the Constitution and Bylaws of this corporation, who confess and accept ~~the confessional basis of~~ Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The member congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall be the voting members of the this corporation. Congregations shall exercise their voting power through ~~clergy and lay~~ delegates distributed among representing the member congregations in such number as may be determined from time to time by in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Article IV. Meetings

This corporation shall have general meetings, called ~~synodical~~ conventions, at least once every ~~three~~ four years, or as often as may be determined by resolution of the ~~corporation~~ Synod in convention. Special meetings may be called in such manner as may be provided by the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. All officers, ~~the Board of Directors of corporate Synod, and all corporations, boards, and other subordinate bodies and agencies~~ of the Synod, defined in such Constitution or Bylaws, shall be responsible to the ~~synodical~~ Synod convention, which is the ultimate authority of the this corporation.

Article V. Officers

~~The~~ This corporation shall have a board of directors of such number and qualifications and who shall be elected in such manner and for such terms of office as shall be set forth in the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. In addition, ~~the~~ this corporation shall have other officers having such qualifications and who shall be elected or appointed in such manner and for such terms of office as provided for in the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The management authority and duties of the board of directors of the ~~Synod~~ this corporation shall be limited to the extent such authority and duties are delegated by the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to other officers and agencies of the Synod. The management authority and duties of the board of directors and such other officers and agencies shall be defined in the Constitution and Bylaws, and each of them shall be responsible to ~~the~~ The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for the proper and prudent fulfillment of the authority and duties so designated to them. In the case of any conflict or uncertainty in determining the authority and duties of the ~~Board of Directors and such other~~ officers and agencies, the opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod interpreting the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall be binding, unless and until overruled by a convention of the Synod. In case of any conflict or uncertainty relative to the applicability of the laws of the State of Missouri, such issues shall be resolved in accord with the provisions in the Constitution and Bylaws of ~~the~~ The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Article VI. Property

This corporation shall have power to acquire by gift, grant, demise, devise, bequest, purchase, or otherwise, property of every kind and description, real, personal, or mixed; to hold and use such property and deal with, or dispose of, any or all such property by sale, exchange, or gift, when necessary or expedient to carry out the objects and purposes of the this corporation; to receive, maintain, and administer endowments, legacies, pension funds, retirement funds, and such other general or trust funds as may be necessary for the operation of ~~the~~ this corporation or for the accomplishment of its purposes; provided that all such property shall be acquired, dealt with, or disposed of in a manner not in

conflict with the laws of the State of Missouri or of the laws of any State in which said property is located.

Article VII. Constitution and Bylaws

This corporation shall have ~~and make~~ such bylaws ~~constitution and bylaws~~ as may be necessary to accomplish its purposes and shall have power to create such corporations, boards, offices, and other subordinate bodies as may be necessary to accomplish its general and special objectives and in such bylaws assign responsibilities to those bodies.

Article VIII. Amendments

Amendments to these Articles of Incorporation may be made at any time at a ~~regular called general or special~~ meeting of this corporation by the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the delegates present and voting or by a simple majority of all delegates, whichever is less, provided such amendments are not inconsistent with the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or the Constitution and laws of the United States or the State of Missouri.

(Note: With all such changes in place, the final document as amended will read as follows.)

Amended and Restated
Articles of Incorporation
of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Article I. Name, Duration, Registered Office, and Agent

- e. The name of this corporation shall be “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.”
- f. The period of duration of this corporation is perpetual.
- g. The address of the registered office of this corporation is 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, Missouri.
- h. The name of the registered agent of this corporation is CT Corporation System.

Article II. Objectives and Purposes

The objectives and purposes of this corporation are:

- a. To unite in a corporate body Evangelical Lutheran congregations that acknowledge and remain true to the *Book of Concord* of the year of our Lord 1580 as a true exhibition of sound Christian doctrine.
- b. To assist in the establishment of Evangelical Lutheran congregations and preaching stations.
- c. To assist, advise, and protect member congregations and ministers of religion—ordained and ministers of religion—commissioned of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to provide for their ecclesiastical supervision in matters of doctrine and practice and their administration of official duties, and to acknowledge and assert the protections granted by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
- d. To support the establishment and maintenance of theological seminaries, colleges, universities and other institutions of learning to train ministers of religion—ordained, ministers of religion—commissioned, and laity for service in the Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- e. To spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world by every means possible.
- f. To provide assistance and resources to the congregations and agencies of the Synod for the dissemination of the Christian Gospel.
- g. To establish and conduct all such enterprises and endeavors and to exercise such further power as may be necessary or expedient to carry out the objectives stated in the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Article III. Membership

Membership in this corporation is held and may be acquired by congregations, ministers of religion—ordained, and ministers of religion—commissioned, as defined by the Constitution and Bylaws of this corporation, who confess and accept Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The member congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall be the voting members of this corporation. Congregations shall exercise their voting power through delegates representing the member congregations in such number as may be determined from time to time in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Article IV. Meetings

This corporation shall have general meetings, called conventions, at least once every four years, or as often as may be determined by resolution of the Synod in convention. Special meetings may be called in such manner as may be provided by the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. All officers and agencies of the Synod, defined in such Constitution or Bylaws shall be responsible to the Synod, convention which is the ultimate authority of this corporation.

Article V. Officers

This corporation shall have a board of directors of such number and qualifications and who shall be elected in such manner and for such terms of office as shall be set forth in the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. In addition, this corporation shall have other officers having such qualifications and who shall be elected or appointed in such manner and for such terms of office as provided for in the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The management authority and duties of the board of directors of this corporation shall be limited to the extent such authority and duties are delegated by the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to other officers and agencies of the Synod. The management authority and duties of the board of directors and such other officers and agencies shall be defined in the Constitution and Bylaws, and each of them shall be responsible to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for the proper and prudent fulfillment of the authority and duties so designated to them. In the case of any conflict or uncertainty in determining the authority and duties of the officers and agencies, the opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod interpreting the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall be binding, unless and until overruled by a convention of the Synod. In case of any conflict or uncertainty relative to the applicability of the laws of the State of Missouri, such issues shall be resolved in accord with the provisions in the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Article VI. Property

This corporation shall have power to acquire by gift, grant, demise, devise, bequest, purchase, or otherwise, property of every kind and description, real, personal, or mixed; to hold and use such property and deal with, or dispose of, any or all such property by sale, exchange, or gift, when necessary or expedient to carry out the objects and purposes of this corporation; to receive, maintain, and administer endowments, legacies, pension funds, retirement funds, and such other general or trust funds as may be necessary for the operation of this corporation or for the accomplishment of its purposes; provided that all such property shall be acquired, dealt with, or disposed of in a manner not in conflict with the laws of the State of Missouri or of the laws of any State in which said property is located.

Article VII. Constitution and Bylaws

This corporation shall have such constitution and bylaws as may be necessary to accomplish its purposes and shall have power to create such corporations, boards, offices, and other subordinate bodies as may be necessary to accomplish its general and special objectives and in such bylaws assign responsibilities to those bodies.

Article VIII. Amendments

Amendments to these Articles of Incorporation may be made at any time at a general or special meeting of this corporation by the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the delegates present and voting or by a simple majority of all delegates, whichever is less, provided such amendments are not inconsistent with the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or the Constitution and laws of the United States or the State of Missouri.

Commission on Structure

4-12

To Return LCEF Bylaw 3.6.4.4 to Pre-2004 Wording

Rationale

The Board for Church Extension, comprised of the members of the board of directors of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod, exists to provide assistance to the seven districts that continue to operate their own church extension funds. Prior to the revision of the *Handbook* of the Synod by the 2004 convention, the duties of the Board for Church Extension were delineated by Bylaws 3.509 and 3.511. Following the revision, they are now delineated in Bylaw 3.6.4.4 (2007 *Handbook*, pp. 116–17).

After discussion with the seven church extension funds that still operate independently, the Board for Church Extension and the seven district fund boards have noted that, contrary to the intention by the 2004 convention not to make substantial change during the *Handbook* revision process, a substantial change was made. The revised version of the *Handbook* places responsibility for compliance with Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod policies on the national Board for Church Extension rather than the district church extension fund boards and committees.

The Board for Church Extension and the seven district church extension fund entities therefore have requested that current wording be replaced with the pre-2004 wording to restore the pre-2004 intent of the bylaws in question, as follows.

Therefore be it

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Resolved, That 2007 Bylaw 3.6.4.4 (d) describing one of the responsibilities of the Board for Church Extension be deleted as follows: “~~(d) The board shall ensure that district church extension boards or committees administer the districts’ church extension programs in conformity with policies established by the Synod’s Board for Church Extension and in accordance with district regulations~~”; and be it further

Resolved, That the language of pre-2004 Bylaw 3.511 be inserted immediately following 2007 Bylaw 3.6.4.4 as a new Bylaw 3.6.4.5, as follows: “District church extension boards or committees shall administer the district’s church extension programs in conformity with policies established by the Synod’s Board for Church Extension and in accordance with district regulations.”; and be it finally

Resolved, That the remaining paragraphs of Bylaw 3.6.4.4 and the bylaws following new Bylaw 3.6.4.5 be re-lettered and re-numbered as appropriate.

Commission on Structure;
Lutheran Church Extension Fund

4-13

To Amend Bylaw 1.5.3 re Agency Meeting

WHEREAS, Bylaw 1.5.3 requires every agency of the Synod to meet, but does not specify the manner of meeting; and

WHEREAS, Some bylaws require face-to-face meetings in certain situations, others imply face-to-face meetings, and still others are silent as to the manner of meetings; and

WHEREAS, At times a mission can be achieved effectively, efficiently, and economically without a face-to-face meeting; and

WHEREAS, Agencies should have the freedom to meet in a manner that best balances several goals; therefore be it

Resolved, That current Bylaw 1.5.3 be amended to read as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

1.5.3 Every agency of the Synod shall meet at least quarterly unless otherwise stipulated in the Bylaws. Exceptions require the approval at least annually of the President of the Synod. All agencies shall announce their upcoming meetings. Unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, each agency is free to select a manner of meeting, consistent with Board of Directors policy, that best enhances its ability to accomplish its mission, taking into consideration fostering the open exchange of ideas, availability of technology to all members, stewardship of resources, perception of fairness, controversial nature of agenda items, and whether secret ballots might be used.

Commission on Structure

4-14

To Provide Definition for Term “Operating Board”**Preamble**

In a March 28, 2008 memorandum, the Commission on Structure requested an opinion from the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) on the use and application of the term “operating board” in paragraph (c) of Bylaw 6.2.1. After study of the use of the term in earlier handbooks of the Synod (1995–present) the CCM concluded in its Opinion 08-2515:

The term “operating board” is to be understood to apply to the Board of Directors and the boards of the synodwide corporate entities (including Concordia Plans Services) and to the program boards.

In keeping with the response of the CCM and in order to provide an official definition for the Synod’s current and future use, the Commission on Structure advocates the inclusion of the following definition as a new paragraph (m) under Bylaw 1.2.1.

Resolved, That a new paragraph (m) be added to current Bylaw 1.2.1 to provide a definition for the term “operating board,” as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

(m) **Operating Board:** The Board of Directors and program boards of the Synod, the Board of Directors of Concordia Plan Services, and the governing boards of the synodwide corporate entities.

and be it further

Resolved, That current paragraphs (m) through (w) of Bylaw 1.2.1 be re-lettered accordingly.

Commission on Structure

4-15

To Clarify Definition of “Governing Board”

WHEREAS, The Missouri Synod is a complex organization of agencies, commissions, councils, districts, members, officers, program boards, and synodwide corporate entities, as defined in Bylaw 1.2.1; and

WHEREAS, A program board is defined as “An officially established group of persons elected or appointed as prescribed in the Bylaws, charged with developing policies and programs for an operating function of the Synod and supervising their implementation.” The program boards of the Synod are (Bylaw 1.2.1 [o]):

- (1) Board for Pastoral Education
- (2) Board for University Education
- (3) Board for Black Ministry Services
- (4) Board for Communication Services
- (5) Board for District and Congregational Services
- (6) Board for Human Care Ministries
- (7) Board for Mission Services;

and

WHEREAS, A governing board is defined as “A board that directs an agency of the Synod and to which the staff of that agency is responsible. Governing boards are such as a board of directors, a board of trustees, a board of managers, or a board of governors” (Bylaw 1.2.1 [i]); and

WHEREAS, All governing boards and all program boards are agencies of the Synod, as defined in Bylaw 1.2.1 (a); and

WHEREAS, Over the years there occasionally has been confusion as to whether a program board is a governing board under the current definition in Bylaw 1.2.1 (i); and

WHEREAS, Confusion could be minimized by rewording the existing definition of a governing board; therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 1.2.1 (i) be reworded as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

(i) **Governing Board:** A board that directs ~~an separately incorporated agency of the Synod, and to which the staff of that agency is responsible.~~ Governing boards are such as a board of directors, a board of trustees, a board of regents, a board of managers, or a board of governors.

Commission on Structure

4-16

To Change Composition of CMGS

WHEREAS, The Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support (CMGS) exists to provide opportunity for the continuing education and vocational growth of the church’s workers, to advocate and facilitate care and counsel for the church’s workers to support them in the performance of their official duties, and to advocate and facilitate support for the personal well-being of the church’s workers and their family members; and

WHEREAS, The CMGS provides practical assistance for transitions in ministry to workers and their families (PALS, etc.), initiatives for developing and maintaining worker wellness and assisting retired workers to find fresh opportunities to serve (Next Steps); and

WHEREAS, The CMGS is investing significant resources and energy in nurturing relational vitality so that as Christ’s disciples in today’s culture, church workers live in trust, respect, and love for one another; and

WHEREAS, In accordance with the LCMS 2007 *Handbook* of Synod, the current CMGS consists of 13 members appointed by the President of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The CMGS wishes to be fiscally responsible in its stewardship of resources; therefore be it

Resolved, That the *Handbook* of Synod be amended to read as follows:

3.9.4.1 The Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support shall consist of seven members appointed by the President of the Synod:

1. Two lay persons
2. One ordained minister
3. One commissioned minister
4. One district president
5. One seminary faculty member
6. One Concordia University System faculty member

and be it further

Resolved, That the *Handbook* of Synod also be amended to read as follows:

3.9.4.1.1 The Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support shall be appointed as follows:

- (a) The ordained minister shall be a parish pastor.
- (b) The commissioned minister shall be in a parish setting.
- (c) One of the lay persons shall be a pastor’s wife.

Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support

4-17

To Change Auxiliary Terminology

Rationale

The International Lutheran Laymen’s League (ILLL), in considering changes to its governance and structure, is giving consideration to changing the title of its chief elected officer. Currently that officer is titled “president” in the Bylaws of the Synod (Bylaw 6.1.3 [a] and [b]). After consulting with the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, the ILLL has requested that the bylaw paragraphs in question be amended to provide more flexibility to the auxiliaries in referring to their chief elected officers.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the word “president” in paragraphs (a) and (b) of Bylaw 6.1.3 be replaced with the words “chief elected officer,” to read as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

6.1.3 An auxiliary assumes the following responsibilities:

- (a) It reports annually, through its ~~president~~ chief elected officer, to the President of the Synod and, upon his request, to conventions of the Synod.
- (b) It provides the Synod, through its ~~president~~ chief elected officer, with an annual program report for sharing with appropriate boards.

Commission on Structure

4-18

To Change the Way Convention Committees Are Selected

WHEREAS, The President of the Synod appoints the convention floor committees (Bylaw 3.1.7) and is responsible for the overall organization and operations of the conventions of the Synod (Bylaw 3.1.9); and

WHEREAS, This gives the President considerable influence, creates a potential conflict of interest, and would lead an unbiased observer to wonder if there is a level playing field for the consideration of all overtures; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS, beginning with its next convention, elect Synod convention committee members at district conventions, with the chairmen chosen by the committees at their first meetings.

Circuit 3 Forum
North Wisconsin District

4-19

To Invite Proposal for Fairer Method for Selecting Convention Floor Committee Members

WHEREAS, The President of the LCMS now selects the chairman and members of convention committees; and

WHEREAS, This gives the President far too much power; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention invite delegates at the convention to propose a fairer method of selecting convention committee chairmen and members.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

4-20

To Amend Bylaw 3.1.7 re Appointment of Convention Floor Committees

WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.1.7 of the Constitution of the Synod gives this entire responsibility of appointing floor committees to the President of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The business that will be conducted at Synod conventions is significantly determined by the decisions of the various floor committees; and

WHEREAS, This makes the appointment of faithful and capable floor committee members especially important; and

WHEREAS, The current practice is both a burden and leaves any President vulnerable to the accusation of “stacking” the floor committee to serve an individual agenda; and

WHEREAS, Others who hold representative offices in Synod, such as the members of the Praesidium have the ability and the breadth of experience to identify individuals for service on convention floor committees; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montana District of the LCMS memorialize the Synod in convention to amend Bylaw 3.1.7 so that it assigns responsibility for appointing floor committees to the entire Praesidium of the Synod.

Montana District

4-21

To Limit Convention Time of Incumbent President Prior to Presidential Election

WHEREAS, The secular world recognizes that campaign literature for one candidate at an election site would provide an unfair advantage for that candidate and therefore bans all campaign literature from such sites; and

WHEREAS, The secular world also recognizes that a continued presence at the polling site of only one candidate or his representative would provide an even greater unfair advantage and therefore also bars any such presence; and

WHEREAS, This church body should be at least as concerned about fairness in its elections as the secular world; and

WHEREAS, The current practice at Synod conventions provides a number of opportunities for the incumbent presidential candidate to appear before the delegates prior to the election (e.g., orientation sessions, opening worship, presidential report, etc.); and

WHEREAS, No time before the convention delegates is given to the other candidates for the Synod presidency; and

WHEREAS, It is impractical to provide equal time for all candidates for the presidency of the Synod to appear before the convention delegates prior to the presidential election; therefore be it

Resolved, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in convention establish a policy which limits the time an incumbent Synod president may appear before the delegates before the presidential election takes place, limiting that time to the declaration of the opening of the convention, after which he would be required to relinquish the chair to a vice-president who is not a candidate for the presidency until after the election of the Synod president takes place.

St. Peter, Swanville, MN;
Minnesota North District

4-22

To Revise Convention Election Process

Rationale

During recent conventions of the Synod, two related issues have surfaced during the election of members of the Board of Directors, both issues resulting from the provision in Bylaw 3.3.5.1 that “13 members are elected by the Synod in convention and serve a maximum of two six-year terms: four ordained ministers, one commissioned minister, and eight laypersons. No more than one of these may be elected from one district.”

When in past conventions elections for ordained, commissioned, and lay positions on the board were conducted simultaneously (as in 2001), the filling of some positions on early ballots disqualified candidates for other positions due to the only-one-member-per-district bylaw requirement, favoring candidates for those categories with fewer candidates (who were more likely to receive a majority of votes on an early ballot). When elections were conducted and positions filled one category at a time, this also disqualified candidates in other categories due to the only-one-member-per-district requirement, which favored candidates for positions that were filled early.

The following bylaw changes are advocated to help to alleviate adverse effects of the only-one-member-per-district requirement and to distribute more evenly among the three categories of candidates any remaining adverse effects.

Resolved, That the first paragraph of Bylaw 3.3.5.1 be amended to read:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

3.3.5.1 The Board of Directors shall consist of 15 voting members.

1. 13 members are elected by the Synod in convention and serve a maximum of two six-year terms: four ordained ministers, one commissioned minister, and eight laypersons. No more than one ~~of these member from each category and no more than two members total~~ may be elected from any one district.

2. The President and Secretary shall be voting members of the board.

3. The First Vice-President and the Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer of the Synod shall be nonvoting members.

and be it further

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.12.4.2 be amended to read:

3.12.4.2 The President shall determine and announce a period of time during the convention for the election of the members of all elective boards and commissions.

(a) After the election of the President, the First Vice-President, and the other vice-presidents in that order, ~~and the election by ballot of the Secretary, and the Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer shall next be conducted, and the elective members of the Board of Directors of the Synod, the members of all elective boards and commissions shall be elected.~~

(b) The election by ballot of the members of the Board of Directors shall next follow. Each category (ordained, commissioned, and lay) shall be elected separately, the order of the elections to be rotated to allow each category to be the first elected at every third convention, as monitored by the Secretary of the Synod.

(c) The election by ballot of the members of all elective boards and commissions shall next follow.

(d) A majority of all votes cast shall be required for election to all elective offices and elective board positions. Candidates receiving a majority on the first ballot shall be declared elected.

(e) Except in the elections of president and vice-presidents, when a second or succeeding ballot is required for a majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes and all candidates receiving less than 15 percent of the votes cast shall be dropped from the ballot, unless fewer than two candidates receive 15 percent or more of the votes cast, in which case the three highest candidates shall constitute the ballot.

(f) The tally of the votes cast for each candidate shall be announced after each ballot in all elections.

Commission on Structure; St. Peter, Swanville, MN;
Minnesota North District

4-23

To Allocate Investment Earnings Back to Human Care

WHEREAS, The Synod consolidates all available cash for investment purposes and does not allocate investment earnings back to the departments where the funding originated; and

WHEREAS, Currently all investment earnings are retained for general operations of Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Board for Human Care Ministries (BHCM) receives significant funding from donors that in some cases is expended over a period of years; and

WHEREAS, The BCHM believes that donors' gifts should receive an allocation of their investment earnings until such time as the gifts are expended for the designated purpose; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod require that investment earnings be allocated back to Board for Human Care Ministries donor-designated gifts; and be it further

Resolved, That the provision of the previous paragraph apply specifically to the bequest dollars and disaster relief funds on a pro rata basis from which the investments originated until the funds are expended for their designated purpose.

Board for Human Care Ministries



5. SEMINARY AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

5-01

To Retain Licensed Deacon Program

WHEREAS, Small congregations and preaching stations in Alaska and other parts of the Northwest District have been wonderfully blessed through the Word and Sacrament ministries of licensed deacons; and

WHEREAS, The Northwest District has over 47 congregations with an average of 50 members or fewer attending church; and

WHEREAS, The licensed deacon program removes some barriers of time, distance, and expense to service in these small and remote congregations; and

WHEREAS, Utilization of trained, licensed deacons is an effective way to do ministry in small and isolated areas as well as in various congregational ministries; and

WHEREAS, The present Leadership Advancement Process (LAP) program of the Northwest District continues to provide theological education relevant to congregations and preaching stations in the district and for training licensed deacons to serve in these settings; therefore be it

Resolved, That Northwest District congregations, agencies, organizations, and ministries recruit and enable faithful laity to enter the Northwest District lay ministry training program, known as the Leadership Advancement Process (LAP); and be it further

Resolved, That LAP graduates continue to be utilized by Northwest District congregations; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Northwest District in convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to retain the use of licensed deacons in ministry.

Northwest District

5-02

To Continue District Licensed Deacon Programs and Amend Bylaws of Synod re Licensed Deacons

WHEREAS, Projections show that, with the upcoming retirement of pastors and present seminary enrollments, the numbers of traditional seminary graduates will not meet the needs of the congregations of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, There is a projected need in the Rocky Mountain District for graduates from both the Synod's Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program and the district's Licensed Deacon Program; and

WHEREAS, The Synod is conducting a study of the situations currently served by licensed lay deacons and at its 2010 convention will be considering the continued need for such deacons; and

WHEREAS, Since the adoption of Res. 3-05B at its 1989 convention, the Synod's language and practice are not in agreement as to whether a licensed deacon requested by a congregation or district to serve in the public ministry of the Gospel with the approval of the district president meets the requirements of Augsburg Confession Article XIV; and

WHEREAS, The district's Committee on Licensed Deacons has drafted an overture to the 2010 Synod convention recommending among other things the continued need for the Synod's SMP program and district licensed deacon programs and is in the process of getting input from the Synod's Board for Pastoral Education, the seminaries, and others prior to refining the overture for consideration and approval by the district's board of directors; and

WHEREAS, The committee in its report to the 2009 district convention shared some of the matters being considered for that overture; and

WHEREAS, The committee's recommendations on these matters may change as a result of further input prior to the 2010 deadline for submitting overtures to the Synod; and

WHEREAS, A licensed deacon has not completed the seminary study of a regular pastor but has completed the required, approved course work of the district, is certified and recommended by the district president, and is under the supervision of a regular pastor; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Rocky Mountain District convention authorize the district, through an overture prepared by its Committee on Licensed Deacons and approved by its board of directors, to recommend to the Synod's 2010 convention the continuation of district licensed deacon programs and the amendment of the Synod's Bylaws to clarify the terminology, call, and ordination of eligible licensed deacons into the Pastoral Office in accordance with Augsburg Confession Article XIV, rostering them as ordained ministers and amending the Bylaws accordingly.

Rocky Mountain District

5-03

To Continue Licensed Deacon Program

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture is clear that the desire of our Lord is that "all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4) and that our Lord Jesus has commissioned us to "make disciples of all nations ... baptizing ... and teaching" (Matt. 28: 19-20); and

WHEREAS, God has both gifted and entrusted His Church on earth to administer the gifts of grace through the means of grace, namely, the clear proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments according to the institution of Christ (AC VII); and

WHEREAS, Our confessional documents declare that those who administer publicly those gifts of Word and Sacrament are to be "regularly called" (AC XIV); and

WHEREAS, The Synod in convention has chosen publicly to allow those who are trained, called, and supervised to publicly administer these gifts under the licensed deacon program (1989 Res. 3-05B); and

WHEREAS, There are approximately 700 congregations in our Synod who now are unable, due to lack of resources or other circumstances, to call an ordained pastor to serve them in this capacity; and

WHEREAS, There are currently dozens of congregations in 19 of our districts currently using licensed deacons effectively to bring the hope of the Gospel to thousands across our nation; and

WHEREAS, The elimination of the licensed deacon program would immediately either eliminate or severely reduce these Christians' access to the faithful preaching of the Word and correct administration of the Sacraments; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS continue gladly to provide for the identification, training, placement, and supervision of licensed deacons, especially in such congregations that are otherwise unable to obtain and support an ordained pastor; and be it further

Resolved, That the licensing, training, supervision, and ongoing education of licensed deacons be standardized and regularized with both district and seminary collaboration; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod in convention choose to refrain from requiring licensed deacons to enter into the Specific Ministry Pastor program, which mandates further initial training and an exponential increase in the cost of such training; and be it finally

Resolved, That we rejoice together and give thanks to God for equipping His Church both with the means of grace and with dedicated, called, and trained workers, lay and ordained, who faithfully and passionately reach all people in their communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Grace
Pocatello, ID

5-04

To Continue to Affirm Ministry of Licensed Deacons

WHEREAS, There is a shortage of pastors available currently to serve our parishes and a diminishing projection for new pastors for the future; and

WHEREAS, Those living in small and remote communities struggle financially to support a full-time pastor, and the licensed deacon program, approved by the 1989 LCMS convention, has helped ministry to thrive in many of these communities, lifting up the name of Jesus; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention continue to affirm licensed deacons and give thanks to God for the great service to the Kingdom performed by these brothers in Christ.

Peace
Estacada, OR

5-05

To Affirm Need for Licensed Deacon Program

WHEREAS, The Synod in convention established the licensed deacon ministry, thereby enabling congregations not having the necessary resources to hire a seminary-trained, ordained pastor to call a trained gifted person to meet their needs, including Word and Sacrament ministry needs; and

WHEREAS, We are a Synod that does significant ministry among rural communities that are experiencing a decline in residency; we are a Synod with many smaller churches whose membership and resources are dwindling; and we see a growing inability of these churches and communities to maintain a seminary-trained, ordained pastor for their ministry needs; and

WHEREAS, There are, among the priesthood of all believers in these communities and churches, persons who are qualified by experience and knowledge and have been trained to do Word and Sacrament ministry through the licensed deacon program of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Most ordained pastors have the theological training to support and supervise licensed deacons in their call to do Word and Sacrament ministry; and

WHEREAS, The Northwest District and other districts have a successful track record of having licensed deacons work effectively under trained pastors to do the ministry they have been called to do; and

WHEREAS, These districts have seen that most licensed deacons desire continued training and many have gone to our seminaries because of their service, yet some will not be able to attend seminary classes on campus or through the specific ministry pastor (SMP) program due to the cost and time restrictions; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Confessions recognize the right and need of each congregation to call a man to do Word and Sacrament ministry; therefore be it

Resolved, That our Synod affirm the need for the licensed deacon program to be continued in our Synod along with the development of SMP training.

St. John
Idaho Falls, ID

5-06

To Affirm and Support Need for Licensed Deacon Program

WHEREAS, We are a congregation in a small rural community that is experiencing declining income per capita, which translates into declining resources for our operating budget; and

WHEREAS, Our ability, in turn, to call a seminary-trained ordained pastor for our ministry needs is prohibited at this time by the inability to provide an adequate salary for him; and

WHEREAS, For three years, licensed deacons under the supervision of ordained pastors have been providing Word and Sacrament ministry to this congregation of about forty people who would have otherwise been without these means of grace; and

WHEREAS, Our ministry needs include teaching our youth and confirming them in the Christian faith; instructing adult newcomers in the Christian faith; training others from the priesthood of believers to serve by going out into the surrounding communities and, with the help of God, forming small groups and planting new churches; as well as Word and Sacrament ministry; and

WHEREAS, Two of our members are presently training in the Leadership Advancement Program offered by the Northwest District of the LCMS and, when qualified as licensed deacons, will be able effectively to provide for our ministry needs (including Word and Sacrament) under the support and supervision of an ordained pastor; and

WHEREAS, Our area is ripe for spreading the truth of the Gospel and the saving grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; therefore be it

Resolved, That our Synod in convention affirm and support the need for the licensed deacon program, along with the development of specific ministry pastor training.

Trinity
Saint Anthony, ID

5-07

To Affirm and Encourage Use of Supervised Licensed Deacons

WHEREAS, The triune God has revealed Himself and recorded His revelation for us in the Holy Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation (Gen. 1:1–3; John 20:30–31; Rom. 15:4–7; Rev. 22:6–21); and

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture documents how the triune God blesses, calls, selects, delegates, and equips persons to speak for Him and to serve His purposes, especially patriarchs, prophets, kings, disciples, apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers, elders and deacons (Gen. 1:26–28; Gen. 12:1–8; Ex. 4:10–17; Is. 6; Matt. 3:1–17; 4:18–22; 10:1–11:1; Acts 1:1–11; Acts 7; 20:17–37; 2 Tim. 2; Titus 1; Heb. 1:1–4); and

WHEREAS, God continues to multiply His work to, in, among, and beyond us so we can be Christ's "witnesses to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:1–8) and serve Him better as the "Lord of the harvest" (Luke 10:1–12); and

WHEREAS, The ministry of pastors and other Spirit-gifted church workers continues to nurture baptized believers and communing members and equip them for witness and service (1 Cor. 12 and 14; Eph. 4:1–16; 1 Peter 4:4–7; 1 Thess. 1:8); and

WHEREAS, The ministry of ecclesiastically supervised, licensed deacons, being Spirit-gifted church workers, continues to serve mission areas and small congregations in remote geographic areas in which no pastor is willing or able to provide Word and Sacrament ministry; and

WHEREAS, Crown of Life Lutheran Church is one such small congregation that cannot afford to pay for a full-time pastor and consequently has been blessed with the service of two Spirit-gifted, licensed deacons (one from 1997–2001 and the other from 2001 to the present) to provide Word and Sacrament; and

WHEREAS, Because Crown of Life Lutheran Church is a small congregation located in a rural area dominated by Mormonism, we feel it is critical for the people we reach with Word and Sacrament that the congregation remain in existence; and

WHEREAS, Crown of Life Lutheran Church strongly believes there is a continuing need for the district-licensed deacon program, not only here but throughout rural areas in the US; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has been greatly blessed for more than 20 years in numerous locations by the Spirit-gifted service of licensed deacons who have touched the lives of thousands of people with God's Word and Sacraments; and

WHEREAS, Because the Synod's Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program was implemented with a greatly increased number of courses and costs compared to the Northwest District program, it will clearly not meet the needs of all ministry areas such as Crown of Life Lutheran Church, based on the experiences of our currently serving licensed deacon—which in effect would mean that our people would be denied Christian Word and Sacraments; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS affirm and encourage districts, circuits, and congregations to continue the use of trained, examined, called, and supervised licensed deacons in ministry settings that cannot be served by ordained clergy; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS respectfully decline attempts to restrict or cancel district-authorized ministries served by licensed deacons and supervised by ordained pastors; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS respectfully decline attempts to require licensed deacons to enter the SMP program when this would restrict, hinder, or stop ongoing Word and Sacrament ministry in our local congregations and mission areas; and be it finally

Resolved, That delegates to the 2010 LCMS convention rise to thank the Lord of the harvest for the many gifts and blessings He has bestowed on our congregations and local ministries through the dedicated and faithful service of licensed deacons.

Crown of Life
Rigby, ID

5-08

To Encourage and Affirm Ministry of Licensed Deacons

WHEREAS, The need for proclaiming the Gospel is so urgent and vital to the salvation of men and women's souls that without such a proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments in a congregation's midst, the church ceases to exist and people are eternally lost; and

WHEREAS, The 1989 LCMS convention authorized district presidents to license certain laymen to perform functions belonging to the pastoral office—preaching, leading in public worship, and administering the Sacraments—under supervision of an ordained minister and in exceptional circumstances where no local pastor is available; and

WHEREAS, Currently 19 of our 35 districts make use of supervised licensed deacons to reach hundreds of people in small congregations and preaching stations that would be unable to support a pastor; and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther also advocated in his treatise ("That a Christian Assembly or Congregation Has the Right and Power to Judge All Teaching and to Call, Appoint, and Dismiss Teachers, Established and Proven by Scripture") that "where a congregation is without anyone to proclaim the gospel, that it is the duty of every believer to at once begin such a proclamation"; that "need knows no

law"; and that "Indeed, a Christian has so much power that he may and even should make an appearance and teach among Christians—without a call from men—when he becomes aware that there is a lack of teachers, provided he does it in a decent and becoming manner," as clearly described by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 14; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod encourage and affirm the ministry of licensed deacons and allow it to continue; and be it further

Resolved, That we rejoice and give thanks to God for the proclamation of Christ that is being faithfully carried out by licensed deacons for the sake of Christ's Church and as a witness for those who do not yet believe.

Faith, Monmouth, OR;
St. John, Salem, OR

5-09

To Affirm, Encourage, and Expand Supervised Licensed Deacons Ministry

WHEREAS, God has called us (1 Cor. 1:9; 7:15; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 1:8–9; 1 Pet. 2:9; 2:21; 5:10); and

WHEREAS, God sends called Christians to proclaim the Gospel (Matt. 28:19–20; Mark 16:15–16; Luke 24:46–47; John 20:19–23; Acts 1:8); and

WHEREAS, God has established the Office of the Ministry to strengthen and equip His people for the work of ministry (John 20:19–23; Eph. 4:11–13); and

WHEREAS, God also calls lay people to serve with pastors in performing works of ministry (Acts 6:1–6; Rom. 8:28; Eph. 4:11–12; 2 Tim. 2:1–2; 1 Pet. 2:9); and

WHEREAS, The 1989 LCMS convention empowered the congregations of the LCMS to expand their ministry through the training and use of lay ministers/licensed deacons; and

WHEREAS, The ministry of licensed deacons has assisted greatly in maintaining and expanding Word and Sacrament ministry in many remote or transportation-isolated areas that cannot be served by a full-time pastor (the congregations are too small to afford a pastor), has assisted with new mission plants not served by ordained pastors, and has assisted pastors in large and growing congregations; and

WHEREAS, Those serving as licensed deacons have grown in their faith, and many of these men have entered the seminary to pursue pastoral ministry; and

WHEREAS, Licensed deacons do not appoint themselves to administer Word and Sacrament but instead are called to service by their congregations through action of voters' assemblies, following the example of Acts 6:1–6 and satisfying Augsburg Confession XIV concerns that those who administer the Sacraments and proclaim the Word are "rightly called"; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS affirm and encourage districts, circuits, and congregations to support ministries and mission work served by supervised licensed deacons; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS reject attempts to restrict or cancel district-authorized ministries served by licensed deacons who are supervised by ordained pastors; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS reject attempts to force licensed deacons to enter the Special Ministry Pastor (SMP) program when this would restrict, hinder, or stop ongoing Word and Sacrament ministry in local congregations and mission areas; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS again affirm the actions of the 1989 and 2001 conventions that reaffirmed the ministry of licensed deacons; and be it finally

2010 Convention Workbook

Resolved, That delegates to the 2010 LCMS convention rise to thank the Lord of the harvest for the many gifts and blessings He has bestowed on our congregations and local ministries through the dedicated and faithful service of licensed deacons.

Faith, Juneau, AK;
St. John, Palmer, AK

5-10

To Continue and Expand Deacon Training Program

WHEREAS, There continues to be a critical shortage of pastors in the Mid-South District and the LCMS; and

WHEREAS, That shortage continues to increase as more pastors retire or leave the pastoral ministry for other reasons; and

WHEREAS, There are many small congregations that cannot afford a full-time or part-time pastor because of financial constraints; and

WHEREAS, The Mid-South District and the LCMS are opening new missions each year that require pastors; and

WHEREAS, The deacon program of the Mid-South District has, in the past ten years, effectively recruited, trained, and placed in supervised Word ministries a goodly number of gifted laymen; and

WHEREAS, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Dayton, Tennessee, and other congregations in the district have experienced great blessings through the deacon program; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS voice its deep thanks for the work of the deacon training program; and be it further

Resolved, That this vital program be continued and expanded to meet the critical need of qualified trained and supervised deacons in congregations and specialized ministries that cannot afford or obtain pastors; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS be requested to strengthen and expand the deacon training programs in the Synod's districts.

Prince of Peace
Dayton, TN

5-11

To Expand Supervised Ministry of Licensed Deacons

WHEREAS, The triune God has revealed Himself and recorded His revelation for us in the Holy Scripture from Genesis to Revelation (Gen. 1:1–3; John 20:30–31; Rom. 15:4–7; Rev. 22:6–21); and

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture documents how the triune God blesses, calls, selects, delegates, and equips persons to speak for Him and to serve His purposes—especially the patriarchs, prophets, kings, disciples, apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers, elders, and deacons (Gen. 1:26–28; Gen. 12:1–8; Ex. 4:10–17; Is. 6:1–13; Matt. 3:1–17; 4:18–22; 10:1–11:1; Acts 1:1–11; 7:1–60; 20:17–37; 2 Tim. 2:1–26; Titus 1:1–16; Heb. 1:1–4); and

WHEREAS, God continues to multiply His work to, in, among, and beyond us so we can be Christ's "witnesses to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:1–8) and serve Him better as the "Lord of the harvest" (Luke 10:1–12); and

WHEREAS, The ministry of pastors with vicars, deacons, elders, teachers, deaconesses, and other Spirit-gifted church workers continues to nurture baptized believers and communing members and equip them for witness and service (1 Cor. 12 and 14; Eph. 4:1–16; 1 Peter 4:4–7, 1 Thess. 1:8); and

WHEREAS, The ministry of ecclesiastically supervised licensed deacons currently being used in 19 out of 35 districts has assisted greatly in maintaining and expanding Word and Sacrament ministry in many

congregations and mission areas, especially for smaller congregations and new outreach areas unable to support the services of a full-time pastor or missionary; and

WHEREAS, The removal of the current licensed deacon program would immediately eliminate or severely reduce Word and Sacrament ministry in dozens of congregations, affecting thousands of congregational members and their efforts to serve their communities; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS affirm and encourage districts, circuits, and congregations to continue the use of called, trained, and supervised licensed deacons in ministry settings that cannot be served by ordained clergy; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS respectfully decline attempts to restrict or cancel district-authorized ministries served by licensed deacons who are supervised by ordained pastors; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS respectfully decline attempts to require licensed deacons to enter the Special Ministry Pastor (SMP) program, as this would restrict, hinder, or stop ongoing Word and Sacrament ministry in our local congregations and mission areas; and be it finally

Resolved, That the delegates to the 2010 LCMS convention rise to thank the Lord of the harvest for the many gifts and blessings He has bestowed on our congregations and local ministries through the dedicated and faithful service of licensed deacons.

Northwest District Board of Directors; Mount Olive, Shelton, WA; Immanuel, Tonasket, WA; St. John, Union, IL; St. John, Salem, OR; Our Savior, Waldport, OR

5-12

To Encourage Expansion of Licensed Deacon Program

WHEREAS, The need for licensed deacons to serve in congregations that cannot afford an ordained pastor is real; and

WHEREAS, There are numerous congregations being served by licensed deacons in Word and Sacrament ministry; and

WHEREAS, Many small congregations cannot financially afford the cost of licensed deacons to enter the Special Ministry Pastor (SMP) program; and

WHEREAS, Licensed deacons are called, trained in various programs, and supervised by ordained pastors; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention encourage congregations to recruit men to become licensed deacons and to support all avenues of training for licensed deacons; and be it further

Resolved, That small congregations that cannot afford an ordained pastor be encouraged to call a licensed deacon; and be it finally

Resolved, That the delegates to the 2010 LCMS convention rise and sing the Common Doxology, praising and thanking our Lord for the blessings He has bestowed through dedicated and faithful licensed deacons.

Trinity, Republic, WA

5-13

To Decline Attempts to Require Special Ministry Pastor Program for Licensed Deacons

WHEREAS, The need for proclaiming the Gospel is so urgent and vital to the salvation of men's and women's souls that without such a proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments in a congregation's midst, the church ceases to exist and people are eternally lost; and

WHEREAS, The 1989 LCMS Synod convention authorized LCMS district presidents to license certain laymen to perform functions belonging to the pastoral office—preaching, leading public worship,

and administering the Sacraments—under supervision of an ordained minister and in exceptional circumstances where no local pastor is available; and

WHEREAS, Currently nineteen of our thirty-five districts make use of supervised licensed deacons to reach hundreds of people in small congregations and preaching stations that would be unable to support a pastor; and

WHEREAS, The removal of the licensed deacon program would immediately eliminate or severely reduce the Word and Sacrament ministry in communities currently served by licensed deacons; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 Synod convention encourage and affirm the ministry of licensed deacons by allowing it to continue; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod respectfully decline attempts to require licensed deacons to enter the Special Ministry Pastor (SMP) program when this would restrict, hinder, or end ongoing Word and Sacrament ministry in our local congregations and mission areas; and be it finally

Resolved, That we rejoice and give thanks to God for the proclamation of Christ that is now being carried out by licensed deacons for the sake of Christ's Church and as witnesses for those who do not yet believe.

Hope
Woodburn, OR

5-14

To Reconsider 1989 Res. 3-05B re Licensed Lay Deacons

WHEREAS, In certain situations today the Synod approves of the preaching and administration of the Sacraments by men who have not been publicly called to and placed in the Office of the Ministry (this position is expressed in 1989 Res. 3-05B: "when no pastor is available, and in the absence of any specific Scriptural directives to the contrary, congregations may arrange for the performance of these distinctive functions [preaching and administering the sacraments] by qualified individuals"); and

WHEREAS, Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession reads, "Concerning church government it is taught that no one should publicly teach, preach, or administer the Sacraments without a proper [public] call," which includes both call and ordination; and

WHEREAS, The systematic theology faculties of both seminaries, acting jointly, have published a detailed statement on "The Office of the Holy Ministry" (*Concordia Journal*, 33.3, July 2007, pp. 242–255), which states in part,

The Confessions never use the truth that the whole church possesses the power of the keys to make the office of the holy ministry unnecessary or merely useful. On the contrary, this truth serves as the basis for the church's right to call, choose, and ordain ministers. ... [T]he Treatise [on the Power and Primacy of the Pope] does not imagine churches without ordained ministers of some kind, even in emergency situations or when no one else will call and ordain men for the office. As confessors of the same doctrine, neither should we. ... "[C]all and ordination" are essential for conduct of the ministry. ... What is the sign of authority for ministers today? It is their call and ordination, which assure that they act by divine right and on the authority of Christ. This truth makes such ideas as "lay ministers" invitations for difficulties and troubles to ministers whose authority is doubtful and to laypersons whose assurance of God's grace may be questioned. [pp. 253–254, 255];

and

WHEREAS, The Board for Pastoral Education and the two seminaries are now implementing the Specific Ministry Pastor Program mandated by the 2007 Synod convention; and

WHEREAS, The Board for Pastoral Education and the Council of Presidents are due to report to the 2010 Synod convention concerning "situations currently served by licensed lay deacons" (2007 Res. 5-02); therefore be it

Resolved, That the Northern Illinois District in convention express its concern about the current situation in the Synod at large concerning men who are conducting Word and Sacrament ministry without being publicly called to and placed in the Office of the Ministry; and be it further

Resolved, That the Northern Illinois District in convention memorialize the 2010 convention of the Synod to direct the Board for Pastoral Education and the Council of Presidents to develop a plan and lay out procedures (a) for how all men who are currently engaged in the public ministry of Word and Sacrament without being publicly called to and placed in the Office of the Ministry may either be enrolled in a regular seminary program or the Specific Ministry Pastor Program or cease from all forms of public Word and Sacrament ministry by the end of 2016; and (b) for how all current Synod and district tracks, programs, and licensing procedures which train men for public Word and Sacrament ministry without the benefit of being publicly called to and placed in the Office of the Ministry can be phased out in favor of the Specific Ministry Pastor Program or a regular seminary program by the end of 2016; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board for Pastoral Education report on this plan to the 2013 Synod convention for approval, emendation, and adoption; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Northern Illinois District memorialize the 2010 convention of the Synod to reconsider 1989 Res. 3-05B in light of the Scriptures, the Confessions, the report mandated by 2007 Res. 5-02, and the Specific Ministry Pastor Program.

Northern Illinois District;
Southern Illinois District

5-15

To Affirm Need for Continued Lay Leader and Deacon Training

WHEREAS, The Synod in convention established the licensed deacon ministry, thereby enabling congregations not having the necessary resources to hire a seminary-trained, ordained pastor to call a trained gifted person to meet their needs, including Word and Sacrament ministry needs; and

WHEREAS, We are a Synod that does significant ministry among rural communities that are experiencing a decline in residency; we are a Synod with many smaller churches whose membership and resources are dwindling; and we see a growing inability of these churches and communities to maintain a seminary-trained, ordained pastor for their ministry needs; and

WHEREAS, There are among the priesthood of all believers in these communities and churches persons who are qualified by experience and knowledge and have been trained to do Word and Sacrament ministry through the licensed deacon program of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Most ordained pastors have the theological training to support and supervise licensed deacons in their call to do Word and Sacrament ministry; and

2010 Convention Workbook

WHEREAS, The Northwest District and other districts have a successful track record of having licensed deacons work effectively under trained pastors to do the ministry they have been called to do; and

WHEREAS, These districts have seen that most licensed deacons desire continued training, and many have gone to our seminaries because of their service, yet some will not be able to attend seminary classes on campus or through the specific ministry pastor (SMP) program due to the cost and time restrictions; and

WHEREAS, There are other areas of our country and in foreign countries who would be without spiritual leadership if it were not for the dedicated men who have been trained through the lay minister and deacon programs of our Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Confessions recognize the right and need of each congregation to call a man to do Word and Sacrament ministry; therefore be it

Resolved, That our Synod continue to offer the training of lay leaders and deacons to serve in those areas where support of a full-time ordained pastor would be an impossibility and/or hardship.

Zion
Ashton, ID

5-16

To Provide to Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Students the Same Pre-Ordination Core Curriculum as Residential Seminary Students

WHEREAS, The 2007 Regular Convention of the LCMS *resolved* to establish the “Specific Ministry Pastor” program (Res. 5-01 B); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has the expertise to deliver such preparation, whether residentially or in the field; and

WHEREAS, The spiritual needs of those who will be served by SMP candidates are no different than those who will be served by any pastor who graduates as a residential student from one of the Synod’s seminaries, warranting a thorough education on the part of all who serve as pastors; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montana District in convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to direct the SMP program to provide the same pre-ordination core curriculum in Scripture content, theology, and the Lutheran Confessions as is currently in place for residential students at the Synod’s seminaries.

Montana District

5-17

To Recruit and Retain Full-Time Church Workers

WHEREAS, When our Lord said, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field” (Matt. 9:37–38), He indicated that His disciples were, and are now, to be active in supporting the recruitment and preparation of pastors and other full-time church workers; and

WHEREAS, One of the objectives of the LCMS is to “Recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” (LCMS Constitution, Art. III 3); and

WHEREAS, Three subsequent objectives of the Synod are

8. Provide evangelical supervision, counsel, and care for pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers of the Synod in the performance of their official duties;
9. Provide protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other church workers in the performance of their official duties and the maintenance of their rights;

10. Aid in providing for the welfare of pastors, teachers, and other church workers, and their families (LCMS Constitution, Art. III 8–10);

and

WHEREAS, The Concordia University System schools; Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne have programs that provide guidance and programs for church worker preparation and scholarships for church work students in the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The What a Way initiative of the Synod provides a positive and joyful approach both to rebuild active recruitment and retention of church workers as an integrated part of the LCMS culture and lifestyle at the local congregation level and to assist local congregations by providing and developing resources to facilitate deliberate activity, dialogue, and support of church workers (explore vocational guidance and resources at www.WhatWay.org); therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention thank the Lord of the Church for having answered the prayers of His people, and petition Him to continue to bestow the gifts of full-time church workers on His Church; and be it further

Resolved, That each congregation and district in general and each pastor and church worker in particular seek to identify, to encourage, and to recruit people within the Church to be full-time workers in the Lord’s harvest field; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations, districts, and individuals be expected to support and provide adequately for pastors, teachers, and other church workers—and their families; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations, districts, and individuals be urged to increase support for church work students, by sending offerings to college, university, and seminary endowments that support the training and education of church workers and by participating in the “For the Sake of the Church” and the Joint Seminary Fund efforts and in the adopt-a-student programs through our Synod’s schools; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention affirm, encourage, and support the What a Way initiative to foster active recruitment and retention of church workers.

Board for Pastoral Education; Board for District and Congregational Services; Board for University Education; Board of Regents, Concordia, St. Paul; Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support; Board of Regents, Concordia University, Texas; Faculty, Concordia University, Portland

5-18

To Celebrate and Support “For the Sake of the Church”

WHEREAS, The Objectives article of the LCMS Constitution includes these: “Recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” (Art. III 3); and “Aid congregations to develop processes of thorough Christian education and nurture and to establish agencies of Christian education such as elementary and secondary schools and to support synodical colleges, universities, and seminaries” (Art. III 5); and

WHEREAS, The Synod is in need of well-educated pastors, teachers, other professional church workers and laypersons to serve the church and community; and

WHEREAS, The Concordia colleges and universities are committed to providing a quality Christian education from a Lutheran perspective as they prepare Lutheran leaders for our congregations, schools, and communities; and

WHEREAS, Significant endowments are needed to maintain the fiscal strength of the Concordia colleges and universities and to provide income to reduce the educational costs of Lutheran students; and

WHEREAS, The objectives of the “For the Sake of the Church” initiative include increasing the number of Lutheran students at our

Concordias and developing an endowment of \$400 million for the support of student scholarships; and

WHEREAS, Many Lutheran students attending a Concordia college or university are in need of financial assistance to reduce the cost of their education; and

WHEREAS, The Lord of the Church has blessed the “For the Sake of the Church” initiative through the generous response of His people; and

WHEREAS, The “For the Sake of the Church” initiative has helped to increase the number of Lutheran students at our Concordias and has provided over \$200 million in endowment gifts and pledges over the past 10 years; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod give special thanks to the Lord of the Church for blessing these efforts to recruit Lutheran students for service to the church and society and for the stewardship gifts of His people to assist Lutheran students financially; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod encourage congregations and church leaders to assist in the recruitment of students to prepare themselves in a Lutheran Christian environment for a lifetime of service; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod celebrate the efforts of the “For the Sake of the Church” initiative, offering special encouragement to congregations and individuals to continue their support of this ministry program.

Concordia University System;
Board of Regents, Concordia St. Paul;
Board of Regents, Concordia University Texas;
Faculty, Concordia University Portland

5-19

To Encourage Pastors and Laity in Their Recruitment Role

WHEREAS, The Lord calls pastors to the role of servants of Christ and stewards of His mysteries (1 Cor. 4:1); and

WHEREAS, The Lord by His good order has chosen to use these men to rightly preach, teach, and administer these mysteries; and

WHEREAS, No man should take this task upon himself, and concerning church order it is taught that no one should teach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments unless properly called (AC XIV); and

WHEREAS, This role is thereby such an important one to be encouraged in the church; and

WHEREAS, Countless seminary students have indicated that their encouragement to enter the seminary has come from pastor and laity alike; and

WHEREAS, Those who play such a significant role in this encouragement often overlook this significance; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention recognize the importance of this office which the Lord has established; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod affirm the efforts of those who faithfully encourage men to consider preparation for the Office of the Ministry as highly significant; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod emphasize to pastors and laity the importance of intentionally engaging in this task; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod give thanks to the Lord of the harvest by rising and singing the Common Doxology, knowing that He will always keep His promise to raise up workers for His harvest— His mission to seek and save the lost.

Mount Calvary
Brentwood, MO

5-20

To Increase Impact of Vicarage Program

WHEREAS, The vicarage year of seminary formation is intended to provide a comprehensive opportunity for the student to learn to apply theology in a practical and specific context; and

WHEREAS, There are congregations whose context and location would provide for a rich and meaningful vicarage experience, but they may not be able to afford the cost of supporting a vicar; and

WHEREAS, It would be of great benefit to the seminaries, seminarians, and the Synod to have excellent locations for all vicars to increase the overall impact of this important year; therefore be it

Resolved, That the seminaries work collaboratively to identify the characteristics of congregations best suited to be vicarage locations; and be it further

Resolved, That the Council of Presidents work with both seminaries annually to identify the most suitable locations for vicars, based on the number and needs of students; and be it further

Resolved, That the president of each district in which such vicarage locations are identified ascertain the willingness and the financial capacity of such congregations to support a vicar; and be it finally

Resolved, That by 2012, the Synod, districts, and seminaries commit to finding and allocating financial resources to make it possible for congregations well suited to be learning environments to cover the cost of supporting a vicar.

Board of Regents
Concordia Seminary

5-21

To Include Disabilities Awareness Training in Seminary Curricula

WHEREAS, An estimated 30 to 40 million Americans experience disabilities to one degree or another; and

WHEREAS, The ministry of Christ reveals a special care for people with disabilities, and the Christian Church throughout the centuries has strived to extend hospitality to all people in the spirit of Christ; and

WHEREAS, An aging population brings to the local congregation a significant challenge of increasing disabilities; and

WHEREAS, That number is steadily increasing as American troops serving in foreign wars return with physical, emotional, and mental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, There is a need to equip professional church workers to minister effectively and confidently to people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Ministry to people with disabilities does not appear to be articulated in the required core curricula of our seminaries and universities; and

WHEREAS, The rich gifts of people with disabilities are thereby not being used in the Body of Christ; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Northwest District in convention memorialize the Synod’s 2010 convention to encourage LCMS seminaries and universities to incorporate in their core curricula for the training of pastors and other professional church workers an emphasis on ministry to, with, and through people who have disabilities; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod’s Board for Pastoral Education together with Synod’s Board for University Education take responsibility for assisting the seminaries and universities in articulating objectives to be included in their core curricula within the next triennium; and be it finally

Resolved, That the appropriate unit under the Synod’s Board for Human Care Ministries serve as consultant in the establishment of this training for professional church workers.

Northwest District

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5-22

To Direct President to Clarify Teaching of Six-Day Creation in Synod Schools

WHEREAS, Unconditional subscription to the authority of the Old and New Testaments requires that we confess and teach a 6-day creation; and

WHEREAS, Much of Christendom has fallen into the error of accommodating the clear teachings of Scripture with the lie of evolution; and

WHEREAS, The Synod owes students the best education it can provide, including the ability to recognize and critically analyze the faulty and non-scientific assumptions of evolutionary theory; and

WHEREAS, Any failure in the Synod's schools regarding the truth of a 6-day creation and the error of evolutionary theory will directly impact the faith and confession of elementary and high school students in LCMS parochial schools; and

WHEREAS, The Synod has previously in convention stated that it will review the teaching of creation and evolution in its colleges, universities, and seminaries; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montana District of the LCMS in convention memorialize the 2010 Synod convention to direct the President of the Synod to take direct and definite action to clarify what is and what is not being taught regarding evolutionary theory as fact in the Concordia University System during the next triennium and to report findings to the 2013 convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Montana District of the LCMS memorialize the Synod make good use of ecclesiastical supervision.

Montana District

5-23

To Oppose Evolution and Commend Creation Research Society and Creation Museum

WHEREAS, During 2009, the "Year of Darwin," most major Protestant denominations, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Orthodox Church did not oppose the antiscritptural evolutionary theories held by Charles Darwin; and

WHEREAS, More than 11,000 clergymen, including over 1,400 Lutheran clergy, signed a statement supporting the views of Charles Darwin and praising him¹; and

WHEREAS, the 2,112-page Lutheran Study Bible, published by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 2009, supports evolution (p. 50)²; and

WHEREAS, *Storms over Genesis—Biblical Battleground in America's Wars of Religion*, published by ELCA's Fortress Press in 2007, promotes evolution and says that the term "myth" is appropriate for the Genesis account of creation;³ and

WHEREAS, The ELCA evolutionist who wrote *Storms over Genesis* writes, "Our analysis of Genesis in this chapter would be acceptable in the mainline Protestant denominations—Methodist, ELCA Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopal, American Baptist, United Church of Christ, and others" (pp. 21–22); and

WHEREAS, The theory of evolution, the notion that man and the universe gradually evolved from primary substances, is taught as fact in many schools, publications, and churches; and

WHEREAS, The Creation Research Society, an organization of several hundred scientists with graduate degrees in various fields of science, says in its statement of belief:

1. The Bible is the written Word of God and because it is inspired throughout, all its assertions are historically and scientifically true in all the original autographs. To the student of nature

this means that the account of origins in Genesis is a factual presentation of simple historical truths.

2. All basic types of living things, including man, were made by direct creative acts of God during the creation week described in Genesis. Whatever biological changes have occurred since the creation week have accomplished only changes within the original created kinds.
3. The great Flood described in Genesis, commonly referred to as the Noachian Flood, was a historic event worldwide in its extent and effect.
4. We are an organization of Christian men of science who accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. The account of the special creation of Adam and Eve as one man and woman and their subsequent fall into sin is the basis for our belief in the necessity of a Savior for all mankind. Therefore, salvation can come only through accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior.

and

WHEREAS, Such members of LCMS congregations as Dr. Walter Lammerts, Dr. John Klotz, Dr. Paul Zimmerman, Dr. David Kaufmann, Dr. Wilbert Rusch, Dr. John Grebe, Dr. Raymond Surburg, and others were either instrumental in the formation of this statement of belief of the Creation Research Society or have expressed agreement with it; and

WHEREAS, *In Search of the Genesis World—Debunking the Evolution Myth*, by Erich A. Von Fange and published by Concordia Publishing House in 2006, ably defends the scriptural account of creation and opposes evolution; and

WHEREAS, The Creation Museum of Answers in Genesis, in Petersburg, Kentucky, marvelously defends the scriptural account of creation and opposes evolution as antiscritptural and unscientific; and

WHEREAS, The Creation Museum, which has an exhibit on Martin Luther, defends Luther's position on creation (as expressed in his eight volumes on Genesis in the 55-volume American Edition of Luther's Works) in the library of Answers in Genesis; and

WHEREAS, Dr. David Menton, who was a teacher of the year at Washington University, St. Louis, MO, and is a key speaker on the staff of Answers in Genesis, is an orthodox Lutheran;⁴ and

WHEREAS, Almost all major Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church allow their clergymen and professors to promote evolution, and none have expressed agreement with the statement of belief of the Creation Research Society; and

WHEREAS, The Bible (Matt. 19:4; Gen. 1:24–27; Ex. 20:11; Ps. 33:6, 9; Rom. 5:12–17; 1 Cor. 15:39) affirms the doctrine of creation and the historicity of the Genesis account of creation and leaves no room for evolution; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS "Brief Statement" declares:

Of Creation

We teach that God has created heaven and earth, and that in the manner and in the space of time recorded in the Holy Scriptures, especially Gen. 1 and 2, namely by His almighty creative word, and in six days. We reject every doctrine which denies or limits the work of creation as taught in Scripture. In our days it is denied or limited by those who assert, ostensibly in deference to science, that the world came into existence through a process of evolution; that is, that it has, in immense periods of time, developed more or less out of itself. Since no man was present when it pleased God to create the world, we must look for a reliable account of creation to God's own record, found in God's own book, the Bible. We accept God's own record with full confidence and confess with Luther's Catechism: "I believe that God has made me and all creatures"; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention commend the Creation Research Society and express agreement with its statement of belief; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention declare that all of the professors in LCMS colleges and seminaries must teach that evolution is contrary to the Bible and true science and that God created the world in six 24-hour days and not millions or billions of years; and be it further

Resolved, that the LCMS thank CPH for publishing *In Search of the Genesis World—Debunking the Evolution Myth* and Dr. Erich von Fange for his decades-long defense of creation and opposition to evolution; and be it further

Resolved, that the 2010 convention ask all science teachers in the LCMS to promote the work of the Creation Research Society and Answers in Genesis; and be it finally

Resolved, that the 2010 convention recommend that members of the LCMS consider visiting the Creation Museum.

¹The entire letter was published in the September 8, 2009, *Christian News*.

²*Lutheran Study Bible* was reviewed in the March 23, 2009, *Christian News*.

³*Storms over Genesis* was reviewed in the September 7, 2009, *Christian News*.

⁴The August 4 & 11, 2008, *Christian News* on creation and evolution featured the Creation Museum.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

5-24

To Provide Deaconess Colloquy at Seminaries

WHEREAS, The LCMS Board for Human Care Ministries is encouraging more LCMS church workers to serve in the specialized pastoral ministries of institutional chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, and supervision of specialized pastoral ministry training programs; and

WHEREAS, To become a certified member of professional pastoral care organizations, a person must have current ecclesiastical endorsement from their church body and have completed a graduate-level theological degree; and

WHEREAS, Deaconesses who serve in specialized pastoral ministries such as hospitals, nursing homes, hospices, prisons, congregational counseling centers, and LCMS Recognized Service Organizations need this ecclesiastical endorsement and professional certification; and

WHEREAS, The Synod has a deaconess colloquy program to prepare non-Synod-trained deaconesses for Synod certification at the under-graduate level; and

WHEREAS, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis train deaconesses at the level of Master's Degree, needed for professional certification; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS deaconess colloquy process additionally be offered at the Synod's seminaries so that deaconesses with graduate-level degrees can go through the process at the seminaries.

Circuits 20, 21, 30
Texas District

5-25

To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.5 re Commissioned Ministry Colloquy

Rationale:

It is proposed that the bylaw on commissioned minister colloquy should be revised to achieve three purposes.

1. Replacing the two college presidents with a representative from CUEnet and two faculty members will bring the committee membership into closer contact with the actual students and their instructional program.
2. Specifying two-year terms of service for committee members brings the committee into alignment with the proposed four-year convention cycle (two years will be an appropriate rotation of faculty members).
3. Specifying that the program policies and procedures are to be maintained by the committee and publicized by the Concordia University System places the responsibility upon the entities that manage the program and deliver the instruction.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaws 3.8.3.5.1–3.8.3.5.10.1 be revised to read:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

3.8.3.5.1 The Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry shall consist of the First Vice-President of the Synod, the executive director of the Board for University Education, and two college/university presidents. The President of the Synod shall appoint the vice-president of the Synod and the two college/university presidents serving on the committee. ~~the president of Concordia University System or a representative, a representative from CUEnet, and two Concordia University System faculty : one member of a theology department and one member of an education department, appointed to two- year terms by the president of the Concordia University System.~~ The First Vice-President appointed by the President shall be the chairman of the committee.

- (a) The committee shall direct the Synod activity in matters of colloquies for commissioned ministries.
- (b) The committee shall also establish and monitor academic and theological standards for each of the colloquy programs. The procedures and standards shall be documented by the Concordia University System and made available through its publications.
- (c) The committee shall consult the directors of the various programs offering colloquy at the Synod's colleges and universities when establishing or reviewing the standards, application and curriculum requirements, and procedures.
- (d) The committee, in its sole discretion, shall decide whether an objection to a colloquy candidate is valid.
- (e) The committee shall render a report on commissioned-minister colloquy activities to each convention of the Synod.

Application and Certification

3.8.3.5.2 Each individual college or university shall be responsible for acting upon applications and for establishing a prescribed program of study (including the requisite courses in theology) for each person admitted.

- (a) Each of the Synod's colleges and universities shall have a colloquy examining committee.
- (b) The institution's president shall appoint the committee, and it shall include the directors of the commissioned-ministry programs.

3.8.3.5.2.1 Persons seeking membership in the Synod through a colloquy program for commissioned ministry shall submit an application to one of the Concordia campuses offering the desired colloquy program or to Concordia University Education Network (CUEnet) when applicable. Determination of the applicant's eligibility to begin a course of study shall rest with each institution and/or with CUEnet. The student

shall also be notified regarding the remaining procedures outlined in this section:

(a) After the student's application has been reviewed and accepted and a course of study has been prescribed, the student may begin taking courses:

(b) As the student begins taking the courses prescribed, the endorsement of the district president (and others, depending upon program) shall be sought by the student:

3.8.3.5.2.2 After the prescribed course of study has been completed and all endorsements have been finalized, the student shall be examined by a faculty colloquy examining committee:

(a) If the faculty colloquy examining committee finds the student satisfactorily prepared for ministry, the committee shall recommend the student to the full faculty for certification:

(b) After the student has been certified, the chairman of the colloquy examining committee for commissioned ministry shall cause the name of the student to be published in an official periodical of the Synod:

(c) The chairman of the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry shall notify the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry of any objections received from the church:

3.8.3.5.2.3 The Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry, in its sole discretion, shall decide whether an objection is valid:

(a) The decision of the committee cannot be appealed:

(b) If no valid objection is submitted to the chairman of the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry within a period of four weeks following publication of notice, the student shall be declared eligible for placement:

Placement

3.8.3.5.3 When all requirements have been met, including a final oral examination, the faculty of the respective educational institution shall declare that the student is a candidate for placement as a minister of religion—commissioned:

(a) Such action shall be reported to the chairman of the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and the appropriate district president:

(b) Notice of the action shall be published in an official periodical of the Synod:

3.8.3.5.3.1 The Council of Presidents, acting as the Board of Assignments, shall assign a call to the candidate:

Teacher Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.4 Before submitting an application to the teacher colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. He or she shall have completed student teaching under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree in teacher education or one year of successful teaching in a school recognized by the Synod:

3.8.3.5.4.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the Lutheran teacher:

(a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education:

(b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to Lutheran teacher certification or one year of successful teaching in a school recognized by the Synod:

Director of Christian Education Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.5 Before submitting an application to the director of Christian education colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have

been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.5.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the director of Christian education:

(a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education:

(b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to director of Christian education certification or one year of successful Christian education ministry in an LCMS congregation:

Director of Christian Outreach Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.6 Before submitting an application to the director of Christian outreach colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.6.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the director of Christian outreach:

(a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education:

(b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to director of Christian outreach certification or one year of successful Christian outreach ministry in an LCMS congregation:

Deaconess Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.7 Before submitting an application to the deaconess colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution:

(a) Each applicant shall have already received training to do the work of a deaconess and shall have served at least three years in a recognized ministry of their previous church body:

(b) Applicants who do not meet these requirements are to be directed to a Synod institution that offers a deaconess program for enrollment in an undergraduate or alternate-route program:

(c) Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.7.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the deaconess:

(a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education:

- (b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to deaconess certification or one year of successful deaconess ministry in an LCMS congregation or an agency recognized by the Synod.

Lay Ministry Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.8 Before submitting an application to the lay ministry colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.8.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the lay minister.

- (a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education.

- (b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to lay ministry certification or one year of successful lay ministry in an LCMS congregation.

Director of Parish Music Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.9 Before submitting an application to the director of parish music colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.9.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the director of parish music:

- (a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education.

- (b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to director of parish music certification or one year of successful parish music ministry in an LCMS congregation.

Director of Family Life Ministry Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.10 Before submitting an application to the director of family life ministry colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.10.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the director of family life education:

- (a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education.

- (b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to family life

ministry certification or one year of successful family life ministry in an LCMS congregation:

Board for University Education;
Board of Regents, Concordia University Texas

5-26

To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.5 re Admission to Commissioned Ministry by Colloquy

Rationale:

It is proposed that the bylaw on commissioned minister colloquy should be revised to achieve three purposes.

1. Replacing the two college presidents with a representative from CUEnet and two faculty members will bring the committee membership into closer contact with the actual students and their instructional program.
2. Specifying two-year terms of service for committee members brings the committee into alignment with the proposed four-year convention cycle (two years will be an appropriate rotation of faculty members).
3. Specifying that the program policies and procedures are to be maintained by the committee and publicized by the Concordia University System places the responsibility upon the entities that manage the program and deliver the instruction.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, That Bylaws 3.8.3.5.1–3.8.3.5.10.1 be revised to read:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

3.8.3.5.1. The Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry shall consist of the First Vice-President of the Synod, the executive director of the Board for University Education, and two college/university presidents. The President of the Synod shall appoint the vice-president of the Synod and the two college/university presidents serving on the committee. the president of Concordia University System, a representative from CUEnet, two college/university presidents, one member of a theology department and one member of an education department appointed to two-year terms by the president of the Concordia University System. The First Vice-President appointed by the President shall be the chairman of the committee.

- (a) The committee shall direct the Synod activity in matters of colloquies for commissioned ministries.
- (b) The committee shall also establish and monitor academic and theological standards for each of the colloquy programs. The procedures and standards shall be documented by the Concordia University System and made available through its publications.
- (c) The committee shall consult the directors of the various programs offering colloquy at the Synod's colleges and universities when establishing or reviewing the standards, application and curriculum requirements, and procedures.
- (d) The committee, in its sole discretion, shall decide whether an objection to a colloquy candidate is valid.
- (e) The committee shall render a report on commissioned-minister colloquy activities to each convention of the Synod.

Application and Certification

3.8.3.5.2 Each individual college or university shall be responsible for acting upon applications and for establishing a prescribed program of study (including the requisite courses in theology) for each person admitted.

- (a) Each of the Synod's colleges and universities shall have a colloquy examining committee.
- (b) The institution's president shall appoint the committee, and it shall include the directors of the commissioned-ministry programs.

3.8.3.5.2.1 Persons seeking membership in the Synod through a colloquy program for commissioned ministry shall submit an application to one of the Concordia campuses offering the desired colloquy program or to Concordia University Education Network (CUEnet) when applicable. Determination of the applicant's eligibility to begin a course of study shall rest with each institution and/or with CUEnet. The student shall also be notified regarding the remaining procedures outlined in this section:

(a) After the student's application has been reviewed and accepted and a course of study has been prescribed, the student may begin taking courses:

(b) As the student begins taking the courses prescribed, the endorsement of the district president (and others, depending upon program) shall be sought by the student:

3.8.3.5.2.2 After the prescribed course of study has been completed and all endorsements have been finalized, the student shall be examined by a faculty colloquy examining committee:

(a) If the faculty colloquy examining committee finds the student satisfactorily prepared for ministry, the committee shall recommend the student to the full faculty for certification:

(b) After the student has been certified, the chairman of the colloquy examining committee for commissioned ministry shall cause the name of the student to be published in an official periodical of the Synod:

(c) The chairman of the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry shall notify the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry of any objections received from the church:

3.8.3.5.2.3 The Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry, in its sole discretion, shall decide whether an objection is valid:

(a) The decision of the committee cannot be appealed:

(b) If no valid objection is submitted to the chairman of the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry within a period of four weeks following publication of notice, the student shall be declared eligible for placement:

Placement

3.8.3.5.3 When all requirements have been met, including a final oral examination, the faculty of the respective educational institution shall declare that the student is a candidate for placement as a minister of religion—commissioned:

(a) Such action shall be reported to the chairman of the Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and the appropriate district president:

(b) Notice of the action shall be published in an official periodical of the Synod:

3.8.3.5.3.1 The Council of Presidents, acting as the Board of Assignments, shall assign a call to the candidate:

Teacher Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.4 Before submitting an application to the teacher colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. He or she shall have completed student teaching under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree in teacher education or one year of successful teaching in a school recognized by the Synod:

3.8.3.5.4.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the Lutheran teacher:

(a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education:

(b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to Lutheran teacher certification or one year of successful teaching in a school recognized by the Synod:

Director of Christian Education Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.5 Before submitting an application to the director of Christian education colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.5.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the director of Christian education:

(a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education:

(b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to director of Christian education certification or one year of successful Christian education ministry in an LCMS congregation:

Director of Christian Outreach Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.6 Before submitting an application to the director of Christian outreach colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.6.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the director of Christian outreach:

(a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education:

(b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to director of Christian outreach certification or one year of successful Christian outreach ministry in an LCMS congregation:

Deaconess Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.7 Before submitting an application to the deaconess colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution:

(a) Each applicant shall have already received training to do the work of a deaconess and shall have served at least three years in a recognized ministry of their previous church body:

(b) Applicants who do not meet these requirements are to be directed to a Synod institution that offers a deaconess program for enrollment in an undergraduate or alternate-route program:

(c) Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors:

3.8.3.5.7.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the deaconess:

(a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education:

(b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to deaconess certification or one year of successful deaconess ministry in an LCMS congregation or an agency recognized by the Synod:

Lay Ministry Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.8 Before submitting an application to the lay ministry colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors.

3.8.3.5.8.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the lay minister.

- (a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education.
- (b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to lay ministry certification or one year of successful lay ministry in an LCMS congregation.

Director of Parish Music Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.9 Before submitting an application to the director of parish music colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors.

3.8.3.5.9.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the director of parish music.

- (a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education.
- (b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to director of parish music certification or one year of successful parish music ministry in an LCMS congregation.

Director of Family Life Ministry Colloquy Admission and Curriculum

3.8.3.5.10 Before submitting an application to the director of family life ministry colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors.

3.8.3.5.10.1 Students shall complete eight courses in biblical interpretation, church history, the Lutheran Confessions, doctrine, the beliefs of other religious bodies, and the ministry of the director of family life education.

- (a) The courses shall be taken in a traditional classroom setting from a Synod college/university, with faculty of a Synod college/university teaching via CUEnet, or in another setting with the prior approval of the Board for University Education.
- (b) Students shall complete an internship under the supervision of a Synod institution offering a bachelor's degree leading to family life ministry certification or one year of successful family life ministry in an LCMS congregation.

Board of Regents
Concordia University St. Paul, MN

5-27

To Revise Bylaw re Admission to Commissioned Ministry by Colloquy

Preamble

The 2007 Synod *Handbook* (Bylaw 3.8.3.5) states:

Colloquy programs prepare men and women who are currently serving in ministry roles for membership in the Synod.

- (a) Colloquy programs ensure that those who seek to join the Synod have been educated in theology, have become oriented to service in the Synod, and have demonstrated the professional and spiritual attributes that the Synod expects of its members.
- (b) Qualified applicants are competent workers in the field for which they seek colloquy; therefore, *colloquy does not provide basic preparation for the field of service* (emphasis added). For example, colloquy does not provide courses in lesson preparation; rather, it provides a theological education to professionally qualified teachers.

As stated, the colloquy process was designed to accommodate teachers who had received teacher certification from a non-Synod school. Having met the same teaching preparation standards, these individuals needed only to add the missing theology courses. That operational paradigm fails when applied to other commissioned ministries.

Other than a very few programs in other denominations, “basic preparation” does not exist for directors of Christian education (DCEs) outside of those programs offered through our Synod’s schools. Our DCE preparation institutions provide the highest level of academic excellence in preparing individuals for ministry who possess a wide array of skills and understandings as related to educational ministry in the Church. Most of these programs consist of more coursework than is present in a typical major. To assume that an individual without these courses has an adequate knowledge base and needs only a set of theology courses along with two general “DCE courses” is akin to expecting a person prepared as an engineer to be certified as a teacher with just the theology courses and two teacher preparation courses.

All of the Synod’s schools offering DCE certification have the wherewithal to deliver postbaccalaureate programs for individuals seeking DCE certification (five of the six schools already manage their programs in this manner). The Board for University Education (BUE) has already entrusted these schools with the task of managing an appropriate curriculum to prepare DCEs—a committee of five individuals from a variety of backgrounds would be hard pressed to provide the necessary oversight to manage the intricacies of DCE preparation.

It is for these and other reasons that the DCE program directors from the six universities providing DCE certification seek to either:

- a) modify the existing BUE memorial to require a standardized DCE certification colloquy only at institutions that have DCE certification programs, so that curricular requirements can be maintained; or
- b) omit DCE certification from the commissioned ministries served through the colloquy option, allowing programs to certify individuals through a postbaccalaureate program.

WHEREAS, The 2007 Synod *Handbook* states that “colloquy does not provide basic preparation for the field of service” (3.8.3.5); and

WHEREAS, Director of Christian education (DCE) programs throughout the Concordia University System have a fairly standardized program of study consisting of up to 56 semester hours of DCE-specific course content (not including internship and standardized theology coursework); and

WHEREAS, Initial teacher colloquy programs were designed to provide theology coursework for individuals who had received a teaching certificate from a non-LCMS institution so that they could enter the commissioned ministry of the LCMS, and was not intended to provide an alternate route for acquiring a teaching certificate; and

WHEREAS, Very few non-LCMS DCE preparation programs are available; and

WHEREAS, Almost every DCE colloquy candidate would be entering the colloquy program with a significant deficiency in DCE-specific coursework; and

WHEREAS, Formal standardized expectations are indicative of established professions, rather than relying on subjective criteria that may vary with the perspectives of the individuals given the responsibility for oversight at any given time (e.g., “Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the [Synod] Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors” [Bylaw 3.8.3.5.5]); therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.3.5.5 be amended to read:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

3.8.3.5.5 Before submitting an application to the director of Christian education colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution. ~~Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors.~~

(a) ~~Each applicant shall have already received an undergraduate or graduate degree which focused specifically on parish religious education and shall have served at least three years as a paid worker in a DCE-related position in a previous Christian denomination.~~

(b) ~~Applicants who do not meet these requirements are ineligible for colloquy and are to be directed to a university of the Synod that offers a director of Christian education program for enrollment in an undergraduate or alternate-route program.~~

and be it further

Resolved, That DCE program directors be encouraged to develop and maintain postbaccalaureate programs of study to facilitate the preparation of nontraditional DCE students.

Faculty
Concordia University Nebraska

5-28

To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.5.5 re DCE Colloquy

WHEREAS, The LCMS *Handbook* states that “colloquy does not provide basic preparation for the field of service” (3.8.3.5 [b]); and

WHEREAS, Director of Christian education (DCE) programs throughout the Concordia University System have a fairly standardized program of study consisting of up to 56 semester hours of DCE-specific course content (not including internship and standardized theology coursework); and

WHEREAS, Initial teacher colloquy programs were designed to provide theology coursework for individuals who had received a teaching certificate from a non-LCMS institution so that they could enter the commissioned ministry of the LCMS—and were not intended to provide an alternate route for acquiring a teaching certificate; and

WHEREAS, Very few non-LCMS DCE preparation programs are available; and

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WHEREAS, Almost every DCE colloquy candidate would be entering the colloquy program with a significant deficiency in DCE-specific coursework; and

WHEREAS, Formal standardized expectations are indicative of established professions, preferable to relying on subjective criteria that may vary with the perspectives of the individuals given the responsibility for oversight at any given time (e.g., “Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the [Synod] Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors” [Bylaw 3.8.3.5.5]); therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.3.5.5 be amended as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Before submitting an application to the director of Christian education colloquy program, each prospective applicant shall have been a communicant member in good standing of a congregation of the Synod for at least the past two years and shall possess a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution. ~~Additional admission requirements may be established by the Board for University Education in consultation with the (Synod) Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry and campus program directors.~~

(a) Applicants who have already received an undergraduate or graduate degree from an equivalent program in Parish Religious Education and meet the criteria of the Concordia university through whom they are seeking certification shall have served at least three years as a paid worker in a DCE-related position in their previous Christian denomination. (b) Applicants who do not meet these requirements are ineligible for colloquy and are to be directed to an LCMS university that offers a director of Christian education program for enrollment in an undergraduate or alternative-route program.

and be it further

Resolved, That DCE program directors be encouraged to develop and maintain post-baccalaureate programs of study to facilitate the preparation of non-traditional DCE students.

Faculty
Concordia University Portland

5-29

To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.6.2 re Board of Regents Qualifications

Rationale:

Because of the increasing complexity of oversight and governance of higher education programs and facilities, individuals who serve as board members should be expected to possess appropriate specialized qualifications (in addition to the Bylaw 3.8.3.6.2 requirement that board members be members of member congregations of the Synod). These qualifications grow out of the many technical matters that must be understood and decided as a regent.

1. The Synod’s colleges and universities typically have hundreds of employees and thousands of students. Personnel, legal, and administrative issues are inherent in a complex organization.
2. The colleges and universities offer hundreds of majors and programs, including several at the doctoral level.
3. Seven of the colleges and universities manage operational budgets exceeding \$20 million, with two institutional budgets exceeding \$50 million. Fiscal management requires strategic decision-making to maintain fiscal viability.
4. Colleges and universities of the LCMS insure facilities with a replacement value exceeding \$1.5 billion, some of which is financed through state and local bond issues. Managing,

maintaining, and financing multiple facilities to minimize capital debt is essential.

5. Each board of regents has the fiduciary responsibility to set strategic directions for the institution and to govern the areas of academics, finance, student life, enrollment, and fund development.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.3.6.2 be amended as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

7. Persons elected or appointed to a board of regents should possess several of the following qualifications: be knowledgeable regarding the region in which institution is located; possess an advanced academic degree; have experience in higher education administration, administration of complex organizations, finance, law, investments, technology, human resources, facilities management, or fund development.

Board for University Education;
Board of Regents, Concordia St. Paul;
Board of Regents, Concordia University Texas;
Faculty, Concordia University Portland

5-30

**To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.7.2 re Election Process
for College and University Presidents**

Rationale

The Bylaws assign supervision of an institution's president to the board of regents. The regents are responsible for establishing the institution's priorities, setting its policies, and holding the president accountable for meeting the institution's objectives. The current Bylaws prescribe a presidential election process that is dominated by a search committee structure that is predominantly faculty members, and do not give the board of regents an appropriate level of leadership in the selection process. Therefore, the following revisions make the board of regents responsible for leading the presidential election process.

The current Bylaws prescribe in great detail how the selection process is to be conducted. Such details are more appropriately established by the board of regents rather than at the Synod level. The proposed changes simplify the process prescribed by the Synod while maintaining a legitimate level of participation by the Synod.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.3.7.2 be amended by replacing the current bylaw with the following:

3.8.3.7.2 The following process shall govern the selection of a college/university president.

- (a) When a vacancy or an impending vacancy in the office of president is known, the board of regents shall inform the campus constituencies, the Board for University Education, the President of the Synod, an official periodical of the Synod, and other parties as appropriate.
 - (1) The board of regents shall request that the Board for University Education authorize the institution to publish a request for nominations for the position of president.
 - (2) The board of regents shall request that the Board for University Education schedule a transition review of the campus. The review is to provide a report on the state of the campus for use by the search committee, the board of regents, and the candidates.
- (b) The board of regents shall oversee the process of defining the institution's needs, describing the desired characteristics of the new president, and issuing a request for nominations.

- (1) A search committee shall be formed that represents the board of regents, the faculty, and the staff.
 - (2) The search committee shall prepare a description of the needs of the institution based on listening forums, the findings of the Board for University Education's transition review, and other relevant information.
 - (3) The search committee shall develop written criteria that will be utilized by the committee to screen the candidates and will be utilized by the board of regents to guide the presidential election.
 - (4) A person designated by the board of regents shall act as its agent to issue a request for the nomination of candidates for the presidency of the institution. The request for nominations shall be submitted to the parties who are authorized to nominate. Candidates may be nominated by congregations of the Synod, the Board for University Education, the board of regents, and the faculty of the institution. The request for nominations shall state when the nominating period closes.
 - (5) After the nomination period has closed, the agent of the board of regents shall distribute an announcement to the congregations of the Synod that lists the names of nominees who have consented to nomination. The announcement shall contain contact information to submit correspondence regarding the nominees, and provide a reasonable deadline for receiving correspondence. The board of regents shall establish a procedure for processing correspondence regarding nominees.
- (c) The board of regents shall utilize the work of the search committee to establish a short list of candidates.
- (1) The search committee will provide a report to the board of regents regarding the qualifications of the candidates with its observations and recommendations.
 - (2) The board of regents shall prepare a list of no less than five candidates and submit that short list to the executive director of the Board for University Education.
- (d) The short list of candidates shall receive prior approval before the election.
- (1) The executive director of the Board for University Education shall convene a prior approval panel consisting of the President of the Synod, the district president serving on the institution's board of regents, and the chair of the Board for University Education.
 - (2) The prior review panel shall meet to consider the short list submitted by the board of regents. The panel may choose to remove names from the list, but only with a two-thirds majority vote.
 - (3) After the prior approval panel has completed its work, the executive director of the Board for University Education shall transmit the finalized list back to the agent of the board of regents. If the amended list contains less than two names, the election process is terminated. The board of regents shall determine whether it will utilize the original list of nominees or generate additional nominations as it resumes the election process.
- (e) The board of regents shall elect the president of the college or university using the slate that received prior approval as described above. The board of regents may require the president-elect to accept or decline within fifteen days.
- (f) If the president-elect declines the position, the board of regents is responsible for resuming the effort to fill the vacancy.

Board for University Education;
Board of Regents, Concordia University Texas;
Faculty, Concordia University Portland

To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.7.2 re Election of College and University Presidents

Rationale

The Bylaws assign supervision of an institution's president to the board of regents. The regents are responsible for establishing the institution's priorities, setting its policies, and holding the president accountable for meeting the institution's objectives. The current Bylaws prescribe a presidential election process that is dominated by a search committee structure that is predominantly faculty members, and do not give the board of regents an appropriate level of leadership in the selection process. Therefore, the following revisions make the board of regents responsible for leading the presidential election process.

The current Bylaws prescribe in great detail how the selection process is to be conducted. Such details are more appropriately established by the board of regents rather than at the Synod level. The proposed changes simplify the process prescribed by the Synod while maintaining a legitimate level of participation by the Synod.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.3.7.2 be amended by replacing the current bylaw with the following:

3.8.3.7.2 The following process shall govern the selection of a college/university president.

- (a) The board of regents shall inform the Board of University Education (BUE) that the office of the president is or soon will be vacant and notify the BUE of the board's intent, in collaboration with the BUE, to set the timetable for publication of a request for nominations for the position of president.
 - (1) The board of regents shall request that the Board for University Education authorize the institution to publish a request for nominations for the position of president.
 - (2) The board of regents shall request that the Board for University Education schedule a transition review of the campus. The review is to provide a report on the state of the campus for use by the search committee, the board of regents, and the candidates.
- (b) The board of regents shall oversee the process of defining the institution's needs, describing the desired characteristics of the new president, and issuing a request for nominations.
 - (1) A search committee shall be formed that represents the board of regents, the faculty, and the staff.
 - (2) The search committee shall prepare a description of the needs of the institution based on listening forums, the findings of the Board for University Education's transition review, and other relevant information.
 - (3) The search committee shall develop written criteria that will be utilized by the committee to screen the candidates and will be utilized by the board of regents to guide the presidential election.
 - (4) A person designated by the board of regents shall act as its agent to issue a request for the nomination of candidates for the presidency of the institution. The request for nominations shall be submitted to the parties who are authorized to nominate. Candidates may be nominated by congregations of the Synod, the Board for University Education, the board of regents, and the faculty of the institution. The request for nominations shall state when the nominating period closes.
 - (5) After the nomination period has closed, the agent of the board of regents shall distribute an announcement to the congregations of the Synod that lists the names

of nominees who have consented to nomination. The announcement shall contain contact information to submit correspondence regarding the nominees, and provide a reasonable deadline for submitting correspondence. The board of regents shall establish a procedure for processing correspondence regarding a nominee.

- (c) The board of regents shall utilize the work of the search committee to establish a short list of candidates.
 - (1) The search committee will provide a report to the board of regents regarding the qualifications of the candidates with its observations and recommendations.
 - (2) The board of regents shall prepare a list of no less than five candidates and submit that short list to the Executive Director of the Board for University Education.
- (d) The short list of candidates shall receive prior approval before the election.
 - (1) The executive director of the Board of University Education shall convene a prior approval panel consisting of the President of the Synod, the district president serving on the institution's board of regents, the chair of the Board for University Education and the chair [or a representative] of the board of regents of the institution submitting the list.
 - (2) The prior review panel shall meet to consider the short list submitted by the Board of Regents. The panel may choose to remove names from the list, but only with at least a three-fourth majority vote.
 - (3) After the prior approval panel has completed its work, the Executive Director of the Board for University Education shall transmit the finalized list back to the agent of the board of regents. If the amended list contains less than two names, the election process is terminated. The board of regents shall determine whether it will utilize the original list of nominees or generate additional nominations as it resumes the election process.
- (e) The reasons for the deletion of a name must be shared in written form with both the candidate whose name is deleted and the board of regents' search committee. The candidate and the board of regents search committee individually or together have fifteen days to reply if either or both wish to contest the data or rationale of the decision of the approval panel. The search committee has thirty days to determine whether or not to re-submit a name.
- (f) The board of regents shall elect the president of the college or university using the slate that received prior approval as described above. The board of regents may require the president-elect to accept or decline within fifteen days.
- (g) If the president-elect declines the position, the board of regents is responsible for resuming the effort to fill the vacancy.

Board of Regents
Concordia University St. Paul, MN

5-32

To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.7 re College/University President Responsibilities

Rationale

The LCMS bylaw outlining the responsibilities of presidents at our LCMS colleges and universities needs to be brought into conformity with current best practices and also into conformity with our Synod's position regarding who is eligible to serve as president.

The current bylaw reflects an era when an LCMS college president administered a small number of programs for a few hundred students, with a budget of a few hundred thousand dollars. Today several of our universities have thousands of students with dozens of programs and large faculties, and most of the institutions have budgets larger

than the Synod's unrestricted budget. The bylaw needs to reflect these new realities.

The size of the institutions and the complexity of their operations make it necessary for the president to rely on officers who have responsibility for leadership in the areas of finance, academics, student and spiritual life, recruitment, and fundraising. Although the president may personally evaluate individual faculty members, lead faculty meetings, counsel with every student, and direct the campus' spiritual life programs, it is unrealistic for the Bylaws to state or imply that the president must perform these routine tasks.

The current bylaw implies that the presidents of our colleges and universities must be male. However, it would not be contrary to our Synod's doctrinal position if a woman were to be elected to serve as a college or university president. The bylaw needs to be updated to permit this possibility.

The president of an LCMS college or university is not directly responsible for carrying out the official functions of the pastoral office. Currently, of the ten college and university presidents, two are commissioned ministers and one is a layman.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.3.7 be amended as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

3.8.3.7 The president shall be a member of an LCMS congregation and shall serve as the executive officer of the board of regents to operate the institution in an effective manner.

- (a) The president implements the mission of the institution in accordance with the decisions of the board of regents, utilizing faculty and staff to execute day-to-day activities.
- (b) The president develops resources for the institution and serves as the chief representative of the institution to external individuals and groups.
- (c) The president administers the institution's business and organizational activities through appropriate officers, staff, and committees.
- (d) The president promotes and facilitates academic excellence in the faculty and the instructional activities of the institution.
- (e) The president ensures that spiritual care is provided to the campus community.

3.8.3.7 The president of the institution shall be the executive officer of the board of regents. He shall serve as the spiritual, academic, and administrative head of the institution.

- (a) He shall represent the institution in its relations to the Synod and its officers and boards.
- (b) He shall supervise, direct, and administer the affairs of the institution and all its departments, pursuant to the rules and regulations of the Synod and its boards and agencies and the policies of the board of regents.
- (c) He shall bring to the attention of the board of regents matters that require consideration or decision and make pertinent recommendations.
- (d) He shall be the academic head of the faculty, preside at its meetings, and be an ex-officio member of all standing committees of the faculty and its departments with the exception of the standing hearings committee or of another standing committee to which the functions of such a committee have been assigned.
- (e) He shall periodically visit or cause to be visited the classes of professors and instructors, and in general secure conformity in teaching efficiency and subject matter to the standards and policies prescribed by the board of regents and by the Synod through the Board for University Education.
- (f) He shall advise and admonish in a fraternal spirit any member of the faculty found dilatory, neglectful, or exhibiting problems in his teaching. Should this action prove ineffective, he shall request selected members of the faculty privately to engage their colleague

~~in further fraternal discussion. If this results in failure to correct or improve the situation, the president shall report the matter to the board of regents with his recommendation for action.~~

- ~~(g) He shall delegate or reassign one or more of his functions to a member of the faculty or staff, although standing administrative assignments shall be made by the board of regents upon his recommendation.~~
- ~~(h) He shall be responsible for the provision of spiritual care and nurture for every student.~~
- ~~(i) He shall carefully watch over the spiritual welfare, personal life, conduct, educational progress, and physical condition of the students and in general exercise such Christian discipline, instruction, and supervision as may be expected at a Christian educational institution.~~
- ~~(j) He shall be responsible for the employment, direction, and supervision of all employees of the institution.~~
- ~~(k) He shall be responsible for the business management of the school and for the proper operation and maintenance of grounds, buildings, and equipment.~~
- ~~(l) He shall make periodic and special financial reports to the board of regents.~~

Board for University Education;
Board of Regents, Concordia St. Paul;
Board of Regents, Concordia University Texas;
Faculty, Concordia University Portland

5-33

To Require LCMS College and University Presidents to Be Male

WHEREAS, The Synod has traditionally insisted that a president of one of its institutions of higher education is the spiritual, academic, and administrative head of the institution; and

WHEREAS, Scripture assigns headship in both home and church (of which Synod colleges and universities are extensions) to the male; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention declare that those who are elected to be presidents of the Synod's colleges and universities must be male.

Salem
Taylorsville, NC

5-34

To Clarify Bylaw 3.8.3.8.2 re Promotion of Faculty

Rationale:

This bylaw regarding faculty candidates for advancement to "continuing status" needs to be revised in two ways.

1. The requirement that the names of candidates be published in an official periodical serves no useful role in the process—in fact, it delays the process unnecessarily. The relevant data is collected from the candidate's publications, teaching record, student evaluations, etc. Therefore the requirement that the names be published needs to be deleted.
2. The reference to "electors" in point (e) (4) is undefined and vague, and should be deleted. Because no one knows who those electors are, the current practice is to assign this responsibility to the board of regents as stated in point (e) (5).

Therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.3.8.2 (e) be revised to read:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

- (e) Steps in moving a faculty member from an initial-level appointment to a continuing-level appointment shall be the following:
- (1) If the board of regents, on recommendation of the president of the institution, determines that a faculty member meets the above requirements and is still at the initial-level appointment, it shall either carry forward the procedure for promotion to a continuing-level appointment or inform the faculty member of its decision not to do so, in which case the individual either may continue at the initial-level appointment or be terminated. Any continuation of employment at the initial-level appointment shall be on a year-to-year basis. Faculty employment during the initial-level appointment period may be terminated without disclosure of cause. In cases in which the decision is made to terminate the individual's contract, the contract shall be extended for at least six months beyond the time at which notice is given. If the board of regents does not take up the question of promotion to a continuing-level appointment at least nine months prior to the end of the sixth year of service, the faculty member may petition the board of regents to do so.
 - (2) ~~Notice of intent to promote to a continuing-level appointment status shall be announced in an official periodical of the Synod.~~
 - (3) ~~The faculty member shall be given the opportunity to respond to any comments or concerns that may have been raised relative to promotion to a continuing-level appointment.~~
 - (4) ~~At least six weeks after the notice is published, consent of the electors of the institution shall be given.~~
 - (5) (2) If the above steps have all been met, after After final review the board of regents may promote to a continuing-level appointment status.

Board for University Education;
Board of Regents, Concordia St. Paul;
Board of Regents, Concordia University Texas;
Faculty, Concordia University Portland

5-35

To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.8.3 (b) re Faculty Appointments

Rationale:

1. Bylaw 3.8.3.8.3 (appointment of members to faculties of Synod's institutions) was altered by the 1998 convention of the Synod. This action changed the former wording: "When, in exceptional cases, laypersons are involved, they should be persons who are solemnly pledged to the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God and to the Lutheran Confessions" to currently read (3.8.3.8.3 [b]): "When laypersons are employed in full-time teaching positions, they shall pledge to perform their duties in harmony with the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions, the Synod's doctrinal statements, and the policies of the Synod."
2. The expression "and the policies of the Synod" is imprecise and ambiguous since there are no centrally defined "policies of the Synod" to which anyone else is pledged.
3. All faculty members of Synod institutions are already pledged to "the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of

God, the Lutheran Confessions, [and] the Synod's doctrinal statements."

4. In addition, it is proposed that the convention delete the statement that "ordinarily" full-time faculty are rostered members of the Synod. In fact, in many disciplines of study the most qualified faculty members are not rostered members of the Synod.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the first sentence and the later phrase "and the policies of the Synod" be removed from Bylaw 3.8.3.8.3 (b) so that the Bylaw reads:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

- (b) ~~Ordinarily~~ candidates for full-time teaching positions ~~shall be rostered members of the Synod~~. When laypersons are employed in full-time teaching positions, they shall pledge to perform their duties in harmony with the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Synod's doctrinal statements, ~~and the policies of the Synod~~.

Board for University Education;
Board of Regents, Concordia St. Paul;
Board of Regents, Concordia University Texas;
Faculty, Concordia University Portland

5-36

To Remove an Ambiguous Expression from Bylaw 3.8.3.8.3 (b) re Appointment of Full-Time Faculty

Rationale:

1. Bylaw 3.8.3.8.3 (appointment of members to faculties of Synod's institutions) was altered by the 1998 convention of the Synod. This action changed the former wording: "When, in exceptional cases, laypersons are involved, they should be persons who are solemnly pledged to the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God and to the Lutheran Confessions" to currently read 3.8.3.8.3 (b): "When laypersons are employed in full-time teaching positions, they shall pledge to perform their duties in harmony with the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions, the Synod's doctrinal statements, and the policies of the Synod."
2. The expression "and the policies of the Synod" is imprecise and ambiguous since there are no centrally defined "policies of the Synod" to which anyone else is pledged.
3. All faculty members of Synod institutions are already pledged to "the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions, [and] the Synod's doctrinal statements."
4. In addition, it is proposed that the convention delete the statement that "ordinarily" full-time faculty are rostered members of the Synod. In fact, in many disciplines of study the most qualified faculty members are not rostered members of the Synod.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.3.8.3 (b) be amended to read:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

- (b) ~~Ordinarily~~ Candidates for full-time teaching positions, ~~shall be whether~~ rostered members of the Synod. ~~When or~~ laypersons are employed in full-time teaching positions, they shall pledge to perform their duties in harmony with the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Synod's doctrinal statements, ~~and the policies of the Synod~~.

Board of Regents
Concordia University, St. Paul, MN

6. HUMAN CARE

6-01

To Join Lutheran Malaria Initiative as Official Partner Organization

WHEREAS, Nearly one-half of the world's population is at risk of contracting malaria; and

WHEREAS, Malaria affects 500 million people a year and kills 1 million of them; and

WHEREAS, This death rate translates into 2,880 deaths a day, 120 deaths an hour, or 1 death every 30 seconds; and

WHEREAS, The vast majority of those affected by malaria are children in Africa; and

WHEREAS, Malaria is a largely preventable and treatable disease worsened by poverty; and

WHEREAS, Many of the world's wealthiest nations, including the United States, are largely unaware of the crisis of malaria; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) is an unprecedented collaborative effort to mobilize the nearly 8 million Lutherans in the United States to join in the battle against malaria; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Lutherans have been a powerful source of change as they are propelled by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and are called to reach out to others with this Gospel and to walk with the most vulnerable, as Christ calls us to work for justice, peace, and healing in the world; and

WHEREAS, The preventable deaths of 1 million people a year call out for a compassionate response; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran World Relief (LWR), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), with financial support from the United Nations Foundation, have been invited to participate in the initiative; and

WHEREAS, LMI's goal is to raise \$75 million over five years' time to combat malaria through intensified and comprehensive efforts in education, prevention, advocacy, and mobilization of resources; and

WHEREAS, The suggested fundraising breakdown is \$30 million from LWR, \$25 million from the ELCA, and \$20 million from the LCMS; and

WHEREAS, Funds raised by the LCMS for LMI will be channeled through existing partner churches and organizations in African countries where malaria is most prevalent, as we cooperate with and help to empower, engage, uplift, and support our partners in the battle to prevent and treat malaria; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS Board of Directors in August 2009 heartily endorsed the Lutheran Malaria Initiative as a priority of the Synod and encouraged support by LCMS leadership and the program boards of the Synod under the direction of the Synod President; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS Michigan District schools devoted their February "Hearts for Jesus" campaign to educating children about malaria and committed their chapel offerings to LMI; and

WHEREAS, Concordia Publishing House has expressed an interest in creating Vacation Bible School study materials around LMI; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS be prayerfully committed to the LMI goals of education, advocacy, and fundraising to prevent and contain malaria; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS through its agencies, congregations, schools, universities, and seminaries support LMI; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS join LMI as an official partner organization for five years, beginning in 2010.

LCMS Board of Directors

6-02

To State LCMS Position and Speak Up re Human Life Issues

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture teaches that human life begins at conception (Ps. 51:5); and

WHEREAS, In the sight of God and from the time of conception, living but unborn persons have lives given by Him that are to be ended only by Him; and

WHEREAS, The 5th Commandment celebrates God's gift of life; and

WHEREAS, Human beings are those for whom Christ has died and for whose salvation He has been bodily raised from the dead; and

WHEREAS, Christians are called "to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves" (Prov. 31:8-9); and

WHEREAS, Christians are called "to declare the praises of God" (1 Peter 2:9); and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama has signed the "Mexico City Policy," an executive order allowing for the use of federal tax dollars to fund abortions outside of the United States; therefore be it

Resolved, that with one voice the LCMS in convention denounce this action taken by President Barack Obama that is contrary to the sanctity of human life; and be it further

Resolved, That all LCMS congregations be encouraged to use the resources provided by Lutherans For Life; and be it finally

Resolved, That all LCMS congregations be encouraged to become actively involved in speaking up regarding human life issues.

Circuit Nine Forum
Kansas District

6-03

To Commend Lutherans For Life and Require Acceptance of LCMS Position on Abortion

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has always insisted that the Bible teaches that life begins at conception and that abortion is sinful killing; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life has championed the right to life and opposes abortion; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention declare that no supporter of abortion should be allowed to remain on the LCMS clergy roster; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention commend Lutherans For Life.

Trinity
New Haven, MO

6-04

To Amend Bylaws to Allow Calls to Institutional Chaplains and Counselors

WHEREAS, The LCMS currently calls ordained pastors to serve as military chaplains, VA chaplains, and Federal Bureau of Prison chaplains through the Board for Mission Services; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations has recognized the validity of the divine call in specialized fields of service, such as chaplains ("the call to proclaim Law and Gospel does not take place in a vacuum. It occurs within specific contexts and situations. According to the second principle [recognition of

the congregation's needs] we may conclude that, in addition to regular Word and sacrament ministry within congregations, the church's need for particular gifts or specialized skills at times is best met by something less than an open-ended call. We may proceed in this way [and have already done so] as long as we do not undermine the divine institution of the office or hinder in any way the proclamation of the whole counsel of God. Such has been the case within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for much of its history with regard to theological professors, District and synodical officials, military chaplains, campus pastors, missionaries, church planters, etc. Several examples can illustrate such situations" [CTCR "The Divine Call," February 2003, p. 39]); and

WHEREAS, LCMS institutional chaplains, pastoral counselors, and teachers of chaplaincy and pastoral counseling do not serve outside of the church's healing ministry of Christ, but rather are an integral part of a long tradition in the LCMS of providing specially trained ministers to carry out the mission and ministry of the church in very challenging and demanding settings in life; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS currently does not call ordained or commissioned ministers to serve as institutional chaplains, pastoral counselors, and teachers of chaplaincy and pastoral counseling, which has resulted in ordained and commissioned ministers currently serving in ministries of chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, and clinical education without a divine call for ministry; therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.7.2 be amended to allow the Board for Human Care Ministries to "function as a recruitment, liaison, and endorsement agency with the various professional pastoral care organizations, chaplaincy settings, pastoral counseling centers, and training centers, and as a liaison between these units and the Synod's chaplains, pastoral counselors, and teachers of chaplaincy and pastoral counseling"; and be it further

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.8.7.2 also be amended to allow the Board for Human Care Ministries to "provide, through call, a ministry to institutions, agencies, and districts that request chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, or teachers of chaplaincy and pastoral counseling"; and be it finally

Resolved, That Bylaw 2.12.1.4, which provides for district membership and ecclesiastical supervision, be amended to read:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

2.12.1.4

A missionary or chaplain serving under a call by the Synod through the Board for Mission Services, or an institutional chaplain, pastoral counselor, or teacher of chaplaincy and pastoral counseling serving under a call by the Synod through the Board for Human Care Ministries shall hold membership in the Synod through the district designated by the missionary or chaplain if approved by the president of that district after consultation with the Board for Mission Services respective calling board and the president of the district through which membership is currently held.

Board for Human Care Ministries

6-05

To Report Promptly the Deaths of Faithfully Departed Soldiers of the Cross

WHEREAS, The Scriptures encourage us to "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith" (Heb. 13:7) and "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep" (Rom. 12:15),

2010 Convention Workbook

also promising, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Matt. 5:4); and

WHEREAS, From the inception of our Synod, it has recognized the contributions of dedicated servants of the cross by publishing obituaries in official publications, listing areas of service and other gifts that have benefited the life and mission of the church; and

WHEREAS, These obituaries serve the dual purpose of (1) honoring the gifts God has brought to the church through the lives of these our sisters and brothers, and (2) informing the church of the deaths of church workers so their families may be ministered to by the body of Christ; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod, working through the Board for Communication Services (or its successor), the Synod's Department of Human Resources, and the districts, disseminate this important information promptly and electronically via *The Lutheran Witness* Web site rather than waiting to have it printed in *The Lutheran Witness* (a process that can take weeks), so that we, in more timely fashion, can honor the departed workers and provide prayer and other support for their mourning families; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention strongly encourage the districts to report immediately the deaths of current and retired church workers to the Synod in order to accomplish this work.

Board for Communication Services

6-06

To Support Efforts to End Human Trafficking/Slavery

WHEREAS, The United Nations reports that human trafficking is a thriving business today with a total annual market value of 32 billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations reports that any given time between 2.5–2.7 million people throughout the world are "recruited, entrapped, transported, and exploited" in a "process called human trafficking"; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations reports that persons from 127 countries become exploited in 137 nations; and

WHEREAS, Trading in "bodies and souls of human beings" is specifically condemned by the Bible (Rev. 18:13); and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul lists slave traders in 1 Timothy 1:10 ("enslavers" in the ESV) in his list of heinous sinners who oppose God's Law and are contrary to the sound doctrine of the Gospel (1 Tim. 1:8–11); and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul in his letter to Philemon urged Philemon to free the slave Onesimus, not under compulsion but as a free act of Christian charity (Phm. 12–16, 21); and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul urges us, as we have opportunity, to "do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10), freeing fellow men from human bondage certainly to be considered "doing good"; and

WHEREAS, As Christians living in the United States we have a history that enables us to understand the horrors and degradation involved in human trafficking/slavery; and

WHEREAS, The Southeastern District at its 35th Regular Convention in May 2009 adopted a resolution to petition the LCMS in convention to state that the Synod is opposed to the ongoing practice of human trafficking/slavery; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention direct the Synod's President to write a letter to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime expressing the Synod's prayerful support of that office's

efforts to end the ongoing practice of human trafficking/slave trade; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod in convention encourage all of its pastors and laity to send letters to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime expressing their prayerful support of that office's efforts to end human trafficking/slavery.

Southeastern District

6-07

To Provide Strategies and Resources re Gender Identity Issues

WHEREAS, The Bible says that the Christian Church will always suffer attacks when it takes a biblical stand for the truth; and

WHEREAS, Attacks on marriage and the family occur regularly in America; and

WHEREAS, A number of New England states have adopted same-sex marriage laws; and

WHEREAS, LCMS clergy and other church workers who echo the Bible's condemnation of same-sex marriage in light of the Sixth Commandment come into conflict with society's views in this matter; and

WHEREAS, The possibility exists that the day may come when churches and church workers will be persecuted and prosecuted for refusing to perform same-sex marriage ceremonies; therefore be it

Resolved, That the New England District (NED) develop and/or provide strategies, resources, and professionals—theological, psychological, and legal—for churches and church workers to (1) minister to those and their families who are struggling with gender identity issues, and (2) support and assist in the defense of those upholding the position of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That the NED memorialize the Synod to provide resources and strategies at the national level.

New England District

6-08

To Denounce Hate Crimes Legislation and Advocate Christian Freedom

Rationale

Current hate crimes legislation is worded ambiguously and could mean the end of First Amendment speech rights granted by the U.S. Constitution. This bill could also limit pastors' free speech from the pulpit when condemning homosexuality and other such sins.

Contrary to what is heard from main street media and liberals, the phrase "separation of church and state" appears nowhere in the First Amendment of the Constitution: "The phrase 'the separation of Church and State' actually comes from a letter Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1802 to the Danbury Baptists. He told them that no particular Christian denomination was going to have a monopoly in government. His words, 'a wall of separation of Church and State,' were not written to remove all religious practice from government or civic settings, but to prohibit the domination and even legislation of religious sectarianism. The Danbury Baptists had written to Thomas Jefferson seeking reassurance that their religious liberty would be guaranteed, not that religious expression on public grounds would be banned" (Chuck Norris, *Black Belt Patriotism—How to Reawaken America*; [Regnery, 2008], p. 23).

WHEREAS, Christian people are citizens in the world but not citizens of the world; and

WHEREAS, Christian people are called "to submit to the governing authorities" (Rom. 13:1); and

WHEREAS, Christian people are called "to speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15) so that "all might be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4); and

WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ calls for the repentance of sins (Matt. 4:17) because the "wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23); and

WHEREAS, Christian pastors are called to proclaim the whole council of God to sinners, including themselves; and

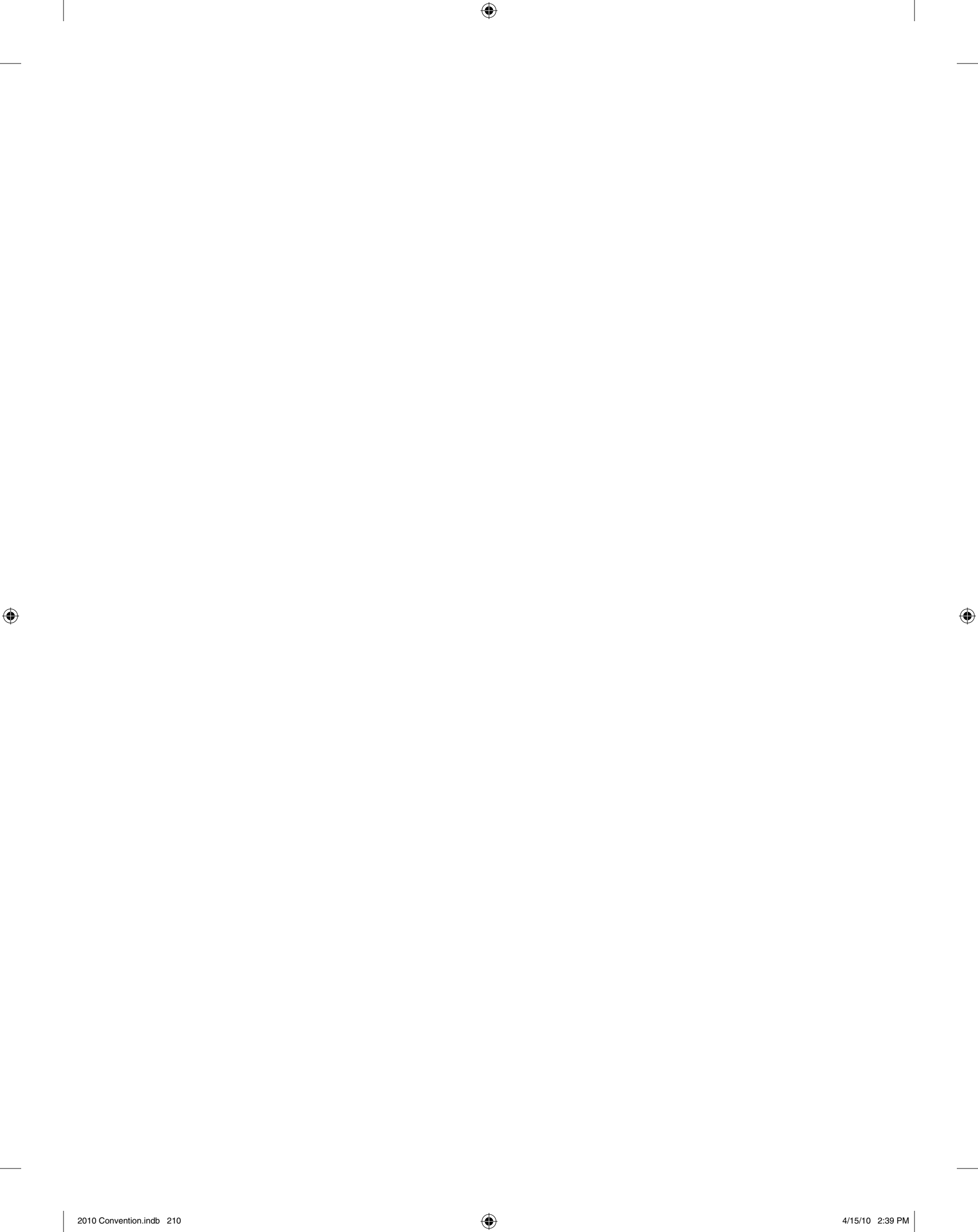
WHEREAS, The U.S. Declaration of Independence states, "That to secure these rights [i.e., life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness], Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness"; therefore be it

Resolved, That the pastors and people of the LCMS become politically informed, engaged, and active in their lives when such laws as the "hate crimes legislation" threaten to violate their freedom of speech; and be it further

Resolved, That the pastors and people of the LCMS take an active stand on such issues when government threatens to encroach upon their Christian freedom; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention direct the Praesidium of the Synod to continue to speak out against such actions through whatever media resources are available and to encourage the members of the LCMS to do the same as well, doing so in a Christian, God-fearing way so that the erring brother might be won over.

Circuit 9 Forum
Kansas District



7. ECCLESIAL MATTERS

7-01

To Add Wording to Bylaws re Expectations of Synod Membership

Rationale

As members of the Synod, “congregations together establish the requirements of membership in the Synod (Constitution, Art. VI)” and, in joining the Synod, “obligate themselves to fulfill such requirements, and diligently and earnestly promote the purposes of the Synod by word and deed” (Bylaw 1.3.4). Such obligations include upholding the confessional position of the Synod and committing to act in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod (Bylaw 1.3.4), participating in the Synod’s dispute resolution process (Bylaw 1.10.2), submitting congregational constitutions and bylaws for review (Bylaw 2.2.1), calling only rostered church workers (Bylaw section 2.5), and accepting the ecclesiastical supervision provided by the Synod (Bylaw 4.4.4).

Member congregations also agree “to assist in carrying out the objectives of the Synod” as delineated in Article III of its Constitution” (Bylaw 1.3.4) which, according to the bylaw, are “the objectives of the members themselves.” Carrying out the Synod’s objectives is facilitated by certain expectations of membership, including providing financial support and accurate statistical information on a regular basis.

Resolved, That Bylaw 1.3.4 be amended to read:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

1.3.4 Congregations together establish the requirements of membership in the Synod (Constitution, Art. VI). In joining the Synod, congregations and other members obligate themselves to fulfill such requirements and to diligently and earnestly promote the purposes of the Synod by word and deed, including financial support of the work of the Synod and the provision of annual statistical information to enable the Synod to plan current and future ministry efforts based upon an accurate picture of the results of current ministries “within our churches, communities, and world” (Mission Statement of the Synod).

1.3.4.1 Members agree to uphold the confessional position of the Synod (Art. II) and to assist in carrying out the objectives of the Synod (Art. III), which are the objectives of the members themselves. Thus, while congregations of the Synod are self-governing (Art. VII), they, and also individual members, commit themselves as members of the Synod to act in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod under which they have agreed to live and work together and which the congregations alone have the authority to adopt or amend through conventions.

Commission on Structure

7-02

To Affirm the Equal Dignity of All Congregations

WHEREAS, The church is “the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is purely taught and the sacraments are correctly administered” (Augsburg Confession, Article VII); and

WHEREAS, The Lord gathers His people as church around His means of grace in specific places, even if they are only of a small number (Matthew 18:17–20); and

WHEREAS, Each congregation, therefore, has all the dignity, gifts, and authority of the church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, No congregation has more of Christ and His Gospel gifts than another; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that the equal dignity of congregations before the Lord be shown in the ways they walk with one another in the Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 Synod convention encourage all Synod congregations to continue confessing and practicing these biblical and evangelical truths; and be it finally

Resolved, That The LCMS continue to uphold the equal dignity, gifts, and authority of its member congregations in its theology, reflecting these truths as its theology is applied in polity and day-to-day relations.

Trinity
Norborne, MO

7-03

To Rightly Understand “Doctrinal Position of the Synod”

WHEREAS, The existing LCMS Constitution does not require members of the Synod to “bind themselves to the doctrinal position of the Synod”; and

WHEREAS, Properly, we do not speak of the “doctrinal position of the Synod” (or of any other organization which may aspire to vote on doctrine) but, rather, of the doctrine of our Lord; and

WHEREAS, Our “doctrinal position” which we are given to preach, teach, and administer the Sacraments is not, properly understood, according to the “doctrinal position of the Synod,” but is rather the doctrine of our Lord Jesus, as our Lord has given to His Church in Holy Scripture (the Word of God) and is rightly expounded in the Confessions of the Church, the “Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church” (LCMS Constitution, Art. II); and

WHEREAS, While we are *bound* by the Word of God (the Holy Scriptures) and we willingly and publicly subscribe the Confessions, we are not *bound* by the words of men, the rules or resolutions of an organization, or the coercion of any movement; and

WHEREAS, The Synod does not exist to create, invent, or originate doctrine, but rather to conserve and promote the unity of faith; to strengthen congregations and their members; to recruit and train pastors and teachers, etc.; to aid congregations in education (including colleges and seminaries) and in defending their confessional unity in the true faith; to encourage congregations to strive for uniformity in church practice; to provide evangelical supervision, counsel, and care for pastors, teachers, and other church workers; to provide protection for congregations and servants of the church in their official duties and in the protection of their rights; and to aid in providing for the welfare of the servants of the church (LCMS Constitution, Art. III); and

WHEREAS, For the benefit of the Church and for the blessing of the Lord’s people, we should strive to speak clearly and plainly of the doctrine of our Lord Jesus as it is bestowed upon the Church in Holy Scripture and is expounded in the Confessions; therefore be it

Resolved, That we retain the time-tested words in our Constitution: “the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, . . . [but] is but an advisory body. Accordingly, no resolution of the Synod imposing anything upon the individual congregation is of binding force if it is not in accordance with the Word of God or if it appears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned” (LCMS Constitution, Art. VII); and be it further

Resolved, That the members of the Synod, with regard to doctrine, are to be understood as bound by the Word of God, as subscribing

to the Confessions, and as rejoicing in the full doctrinal fellowship of the Confessions, but as bound by no resolutions of men nor any coercion created by a convention inventing “the doctrinal position of the Synod.”

North and South Sandia Circuit Forum
Rocky Mountain District

7-04

To Rightly Understand Advisory Nature of the Synod

WHEREAS, The phrase “bind themselves to the doctrinal position of Synod” as used in the slide presentation of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance, “Walking Together,” concerns some as introducing coercive language; and

WHEREAS, While the *Handbook* does speak of a “confessional position of the Synod” and “members of the Synod” in Bylaw 1.6.1 and outlines in subsequent sections how doctrinal statements adopted by conventions are treated—including a process of dissent, in that the “doctrinal position of Synod” is spoken of because it is the doctrine of our Lord; and

WHEREAS, While members of the Synod are bound by the Word of God (the Holy Scriptures), and willingly and publicly subscribe to the Confessions because they are a true exposition of the Word of God, and willingly walk together as a Synod, confessing their shared faith and agreeing to receive the doctrinal statements adopted by conventions as advice for mission and ministry, they are not bound by the words of men, the rules or resolutions of an organization, or the coercion of any movement; and

WHEREAS, The Synod does not exist to create, invent, or originate doctrine, or introduce ideas, ideology, or terminology contrary to the doctrine of our Lord (e.g., “collective will”), but rather to conserve and promote the unity of faith; to strengthen congregations and their members; to recruit and train pastors and teachers, etc.; to aid congregations in education (including colleges and seminaries) and in defending their confessional unity in the true faith; to encourage congregations to strive for uniformity in church practice; to provide evangelical supervision, counsel, and care for pastors, teachers, and other church workers; to provide protection for congregations and servants of the church in their official duties and in the protection of their rights; and to aid in providing for the welfare of the servants of the church (Constitution, Art. III); and

WHEREAS, For the benefit of the church and for the blessing of the Lord’s people, the Synod should strive to speak clearly and plainly of the doctrine of our Lord Jesus as it is bestowed upon the Church in Holy Scripture and expounded in the Confessions; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod retain the time-tested words in its Constitution: “[T]he Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, . . . [but] is but an advisory body. Accordingly, no resolution of the Synod imposing anything upon the individual congregation is of binding force if it is not in accordance with the Word of God or if it appears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned” (Constitution, Art. VII); and be it further

Resolved, That the member of Synod, with regard to doctrine, is to be understood as being bound by the Word of God, as subscribing to the Lutheran Confessions, and as rejoicing in the full doctrinal fellowship of the Confessions, but as being bound by no resolutions of conventions or inventions of men contrary to the Word of God; and be it finally

2010 Convention Workbook

Resolved, That the Rocky Mountain District memorialize the Synod to this effect.

Rocky Mountain District

7-05

To Amend Bylaw 2.5.2 re Congregations Calling Pastors

WHEREAS, Current Bylaw 2.5.2 requires congregations to “call and be served only by ordained ministers who have been admitted to their respective ministries in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth in these Bylaws and have thereby become members of the Synod”; and

WHEREAS, Taken literally, this bylaw requires congregations to call only pastors rostered by the Synod, thereby prohibiting the calling of pastors rostered by any other church bodies; and

WHEREAS, Agreements are in place with certain partner churches (*i.e.*, The Lutheran Church—Canada [LCC] and The American Association of Lutheran Churches [AALC]) that permit LCMS congregations to call rostered pastors of these church bodies according to established agreements; therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 2.5.2 be amended to accommodate the calling of pastors rostered by partner churches and candidates of LCMS seminaries by LCMS congregations as follows:

PROPOSED WORDING

2.5.2 Congregations that are members of the Synod shall call and be served only by (1) ordained ministers who have been admitted to their respective ministries in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth in these Bylaws and have thereby become members of the Synod; (2) candidates for the pastoral ministry who have satisfied the qualifications and requirements for assignment of first calls by the Council of Presidents acting as the Board of Assignments; or (3) ordained ministers who are members in good standing of church bodies that have been formally recognized to be in altar and pulpit fellowship with the Synod when agreements for such calls are in place.

Commission on Structure

7-06

To Create a Means for Placement of Church Workers on Candidate Status

WHEREAS, The LCMS continues to have quite a number of congregations that are termed “calling congregations,” that is, congregations that are in the process of calling a pastor to serve them; and

WHEREAS, There are quite a number of men on the clergy roster of the LCMS who do not have calls, who are listed in *The Lutheran Annual* as “candidates”; and

WHEREAS, Such candidates live in a state of limbo, awaiting a call to serve—calls which are, all too often, not very forthcoming; and

WHEREAS, It is unfortunate that such candidates who are trained and qualified to serve as pastors are forced by their state of limbo to pursue other careers and are lost as full-time servants in the church; and

WHEREAS, Such a loss is a great waste of training and of a human resource that is available to the church; and

WHEREAS, Such a loss is detrimental to Christ’s mission for His Church, the mission of making disciples of all nations by baptizing and teaching; and

WHEREAS, Such candidates may be willing to be placed into a congregation in a manner similar to their placement following their seminary training; and

WHEREAS, Such a placement would provide a point in time when their state of limbo would come to an end; and

WHEREAS, Such placements could match like-minded pastors and congregations; and

WHEREAS, Congregations would then have another avenue to pursue to secure pastoral leadership; therefore be it

Resolved, That procedures be put into place by which pastors without calls may be placed into parishes in a manner similar to the placement of seminary graduates; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention request that an ad hoc committee be established to bring recommendations to the 2013 Synod convention for the creation of such a placement board for pastors listed as candidates in *The Lutheran Annual*.

St. Peter
Swanville, MN

7-07

To Clarify Bylaw re Specific Ministry Pastor Limitations

WHEREAS, According to 2007 Res. 5-01B, Specific Ministry Pastors (SMPs) are eligible to receive and accept calls and serve as SMPs in different geographic venues (Step 5, par. 2 [2007 Proceedings, p. 135]); and

WHEREAS, The intent of Bylaw 2.13.1 is to describe the limitations of SMPs as a result of their status as SMPs; and

WHEREAS, The word “location” is commonly understood to designate a specific geographic venue; and

WHEREAS, The use of the word in current Bylaw 2.13.1 (a) may be misunderstood to imply that SMPs are not eligible to receive and accept calls; and

WHEREAS, The word “context” is used throughout Bylaw 2.13 pertaining to the status of SMPs; therefore be it

Resolved, that Bylaw 2.13.1 (a) be clarified as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Specific Ministry Pastor Status and Limitations

2.13.1 A “specific ministry pastor” is a minister of religion—ordained who has completed the requirements for service as a specific ministry pastor and has been examined by one of the Synod’s seminaries, has received a regular call, and has been placed by the Council of Presidents into a specific Word and Sacrament ministry context. He is eligible to serve only in that specific ministry context for which he has been trained and may not be offered or accept a call for ministry for which he has not been certified as determined by his district president. He shall serve under the supervision of his district president and another pastor who is not a specific ministry pastor.

- (a) Because he is under supervision of another pastor and because a specific ministry pastor’s theological education has been formed in part by and for a specific ministry context, he may not be placed or called into ecclesiastical roles that exercise pastoral oversight outside the location context of his call.

Board for Pastor Education

7-08

To Revise Selection of CCM Members

WHEREAS, The Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) “exists to interpret the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod and ensure that the governing instruments of the Synod and

its agencies are in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2); and

WHEREAS, All five voting members of the CCM currently are appointed by the President of the Synod from the list of candidates presented by the Council of Presidents (Bylaw 3.9.2.1.1); and

WHEREAS, “An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [c]); and

WHEREAS, The President of the Synod also appoints the convention floor committees (Bylaw 3.1.7) and is “responsible for the overall organization and operations of the conventions of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.1.9); and

WHEREAS, The same man who currently appoints all CCM members also organizes and chairs the floor committees—the mechanism provided through which resolutions must be channeled within the LCMS for overruling CCM decisions; and

WHEREAS, This structure creates a potential conflict of interest which might cause an unbiased observer to wonder if unbiased opinions can be obtained through the CCM and/or if the review of a questioned opinion can be reasonably obtained through our present highest court structure, thereby creating doubt about our Synod’s system of adjudication; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS return to electing the members of the CCM at district and national Synod conventions, with nominations made at the district conventions and the five voting members elected at the national Synod convention.

Circuit 3 Forum
North Wisconsin District

7-09

To Clarify Which CCM Opinions Are Binding

WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) states that “[a]n opinion rendered by the commission [on Constitutional Matters] shall be binding on the question unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod”; and

WHEREAS, This in effect produces a body of law that is binding on members of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, This body of law, having accumulated since 1962, amounts to roughly 1,500 pages of material; and

WHEREAS, The opinions rendered by the CCM are not publicized; and

WHEREAS, Such opinions therefore are not regularly subject to review or revision; therefore be it

Resolved, That all existing CCM opinions be publicized; and be it further

Resolved, That the CCM publish its opinions when they are reached; and be it further

Resolved, That the Montana District in convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to begin the process of either ratifying or declaring void each opinion of the CCM by the Synod in convention, this process to be completed as of the completion of the next-following regular convention of the LCMS (2013); and be it finally

Resolved, That the Montana District in convention memorialize the LCMS in convention in 2010 to change Synod Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) so that CCM opinions are binding on the members of the Synod until the next regular convention of the Synod where such opinions must be ratified to remain in effect.

Montana District

7-10

To Require Consideration of Certain Requests for Review of CCM Opinions

WHEREAS, “The Commission on Constitutional Matters [CCM] exists to interpret the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod and ensure that the governing instruments of the Synod and its agencies are in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2); and

WHEREAS, “An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [c]); and

WHEREAS, A CCM opinion remains binding if a convention of Synod does not address it; and

WHEREAS, The provision to review CCM opinions is available but rarely happens; and

WHEREAS, There is currently no requirement that overtures or resolutions submitted regarding CCM opinions be given time for consideration by a convention of Synod, thus allowing an opinion to remain binding without any consideration by a convention of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Such opinions in effect end up changing the By-laws, while amendments to the Bylaws are the responsibility of only the conventions of the Synod (Bylaws 7.1.1 and 7.1.2); therefore be it

Resolved, That we memorialize the Synod so that any overtures/resolutions submitted to a convention of the Synod regarding opinions rendered by the CCM must be given time for consideration by the convention of Synod, and may not be removed from the docket when such overtures/resolutions are submitted by a circuit forum, an official district conference of ordained and/or commissioned ministers, the Board of Directors of the Synod, a district board of directors, or a district convention; and be it further

Resolved, That any contested CCM opinion which receives no time for consideration by a convention of the Synod be declared null and void upon the adjournment of that convention of the Synod.

Wyoming District

7-11

To Require Consideration of CCM-Related Overtures and Resolutions re Theological Matters

WHEREAS, “The Commission on Constitutional Matters exists to interpret the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod and ensure that the governing instruments of the Synod and its agencies are in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2); and

WHEREAS, “An opinion rendered by the [CCM] shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [c]); and

WHEREAS, There is a review procedure when “an opinion pertains to business, legal, or property matters and the Board of Directors of the Synod concludes that such opinion of the commission is contrary to the laws of the State of Missouri” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [c]); and

WHEREAS, The only remedy when an opinion pertains to theological matters is “consideration by the floor committee” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [c]), which does not necessarily result in consideration by the convention of Synod, thus allowing an opinion on theological matters to remain binding without review by the convention; and

WHEREAS, Amendments to the Bylaws are the responsibility of ONLY the conventions of the Synod (Bylaws 7.1.1 and 7.1.2); therefore be it

Resolved, That any overtures and resolutions submitted to a convention of Synod regarding theological opinions rendered by the CCM must be given time for consideration by the convention of Synod and may not be removed from the docket; and be it further

Resolved, That any CCM opinion that has been challenged as outlined above and which receives no time for consideration by the convention of Synod be declared null and void upon the adjournment of that convention.

Circuit 3 Forum
North Wisconsin District

7-12

To Overrule CCM Opinion 02-2309 re Ecclesiastical Supervision

WHEREAS, Commission on Constitutional Matters Opinion 02-2309 states that “the Synod is precluded from taking any action to terminate the membership of its member who, when performing his/her official duties, follows the advice and counsel of the ecclesiastical supervisor designated by the Synod”; and

WHEREAS, This opinion creates the possibility that the Synod could be precluded from action against a member of the Synod who is, in fact, acting contrary to conditions of membership outlined in Article VI of the Synod’s Constitution; and

WHEREAS, In issuing Opinion 02-2309 the CCM has therefore, in effect, improperly amended Article XIII of the Constitution of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, In issuing this opinion the CCM has granted district presidents and other ecclesiastical supervisors a new power, that of granting immunity to those who may violate the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Since the Constitution of the Synod states, “The officers of the Synod must assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by the Synod,” (XI A 1) giving ecclesiastical supervisors the right to grant immunity also amounts to an improper amendment to the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, These are substantive constitutional arguments; and

WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) states, “An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod”; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montana District memorialize the Synod in convention to overrule Opinion 02-2309 of the CCM.

Montana District

7-13

To Overrule CCM Opinions 02-2296 02-2309, and 02-2320

Rationale

The Synod’s Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) has opined that “The Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod do not allow or contemplate the expulsion of a member of the Synod on

the basis of an action taken with the full knowledge and approval of the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor” (Opinion 02-2296; 02-2320—2004 *Convention Workbook*, p. 345) and that even “[i]f an act is in fact contrary to Article XIII of the Constitution, the member who acted cannot be charged since he or she acted according to the advice of his or her ecclesiastical supervisor” (Opinion 02-2309, 2004 *Convention Workbook*, p. 352). The CCM drew this inference from various provisions in the Constitution of the Synod that treat ecclesiastical supervision. It stated that “the Synod, having designated to its members the individuals who will provide to them supervision and counsel, is itself responsible for the accuracy and content of such supervision and counsel. Having promised supervision and counsel, the Synod is precluded from taking any action to terminate the membership of its member who, when performing his/her official duties, follows the advice and counsel of the ecclesiastical supervisor designated by the Synod” (2004 *Convention Workbook*, p. 352).

While any CCM opinion is “binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [c]), there has been significant disagreement with the above-mentioned CCM opinions, as shown already in overtures to the 2004 Synod convention (see 2004 *Convention Workbook*, pp. 305–309). By 2007, eight of the Synod’s Districts (Central Illinois, Minnesota South, Montana, Nebraska, North Wisconsin, South Dakota, Southern Illinois, as well as Missouri) and other entities submitted overtures to the convention calling for it to overrule one or more of these opinions (Ov. 8–50 to 8–57, 2007 *Convention Workbook*, pp. 277–279). In 2007, the Synod took no action to overrule the CCM opinions in question on constitutional grounds. It referred the pertinent overtures to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations for theological study and report to the 2010 Synod convention (Res. 8-10, 2007 *Convention Proceedings*, p. 166). Nonetheless, a substantive case can be made from the Synod’s Constitution to urge the 2010 Synod convention to overrule these CCM opinions. Such substantive constitutional rationale follows:

1. The CCM has created the possibility that the Synod could be precluded from action against one of its members who is indeed acting contrary to the conditions of membership in the Synod as stated in Constitution Art. VI. Thereby in effect the CCM has amended Article XIII of the Constitution, which says that such members shall be expelled after previous futile admonition. The CCM says that such members shall not be expelled if they have followed the advice of their ecclesiastical supervisors.
2. With its binding opinion that members of the Synod cannot be charged if they violate the Constitution by acting according to the advice of their ecclesiastical supervisors, the CCM has granted district presidents and other ecclesiastical supervisors a new power. These ecclesiastical supervisors now have the right to provide a measure of impunity for those who violate the Constitution! No constitution is being treated *as a constitution* if it may be so violated.
3. Moreover, the Constitution of the Synod states, “The officers of the Synod must assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by the Synod” (Constitution, Art. XI A 1). The Synod has not expressly conferred upon any of its officers the right to provide anyone immunity from being charged or expelled from the Synod. The CCM’s argument in Opinion 02-2309 is an inference. The CCM’s inferential argument, however, must yield to the Synod’s explicit words in Constitution Art. XI A 1.

(It should be noted that in addition to the officers of the Synod listed by position in Constitution Art. X A, the CCM has opined—and it has not been overruled in its opinion—that district presidents, too, are officers of the Synod [see the CCM’s Feb. 21, 1975 opinion, 1975 *Convention Workbook*, p. 487]. If it should be claimed that district presidents are not “specified in the Bylaws” as officers of the Synod [Constitution, Art. X A 6] and that Article XI A 1 therefore does not apply to them, the question must be asked: Does the Synod grant more rights to officers who are not specified in the Constitution and Bylaws than it grants to those whose positions are specified there?)

The Missouri District has cautioned, “A confessionally based Synod cannot endure for long if its members cease to be held responsible for the words and actions by which they confess their faith” (Res. 2-03, 2006 Missouri District *Convention Proceedings*, p. 35; re-titled and printed as Overture 8-54, 2007 Synod *Convention Workbook*, p. 278–279). The Synod’s Constitution holds members of the Synod responsible. There are substantive constitutional arguments to overrule the CCM opinions at issue. Having made three such arguments in the numbered paragraphs just above, the Carrollton Circuit Forum submits the following resolution to the Missouri District in the hope that the district will adopt it for submission to the Synod in convention. Therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod overrule the CCM opinions referenced by numbers 02-2296, 02-2320, and 02-2309.

Missouri District;
Zion, Moberly, MO

7-14

To Ask the Synod to Overrule CCM Opinions

Rationale

The Synod’s Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) has opined that the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod “do not allow or contemplate the expulsion of a member of the Synod on the basis of an action taken with the full knowledge and approval of the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor” (Opinions 02-2296, 02-2320; 2004 *Convention Workbook*, p. 345) and even that “[i]f an act is in fact contrary to Article XIII of the Constitution, the member who acted cannot be charged since he or she acted according to the advice of his or her ecclesiastical supervisor.” The CCM drew this inference from various provisions in the Constitution that treat ecclesiastical supervision. It stated that “the Synod, having designated to its members the individuals who will provide to them supervision and counsel, is itself responsible for the accuracy and content of such supervision and counsel. Having promised supervision and counsel, the Synod is precluded from taking any action to terminate the membership of its member who, when performing his/her official duties, follows the advice and counsel of the ecclesiastical supervisor designated by the Synod” (Opinion 02-2309; 2004 *Convention Workbook*, p. 352).

While any CCM opinion is “binding on the question unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [c]), there has been significant disagreement with the above-mentioned CCM opinions, as shown already in overtures to the 2004 convention (*Convention Workbook*, pp. 305–9). By the 2007 convention, eight of the Synod’s districts (Central Illinois, Minnesota South, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Wisconsin, South Dakota, Southern Illinois) and other entities submitted overtures calling on the Synod to overrule one or more of these opinions (Ov. 8-50 to 8-57, *Convention Workbook*, pp. 277–79). The convention took no action to overrule

the CCM opinions in question on constitutional grounds. Instead, it referred the pertinent overtures to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) for theological study and a report to the 2010 convention (Res. 8-10, 2007 *Convention Proceedings*, p. 166).

Nonetheless, a substantive case can be made from the Synod's Constitution to urge the 2010 convention to overrule these CCM opinions. Such substantive constitutional rationale follows:

1. The CCM has created the possibility that the Synod could be precluded from taking action against one of its members who is indeed acting contrary to the conditions of membership stated in Constitution Art. VI. Thereby, the CCM has in effect amended Article XIII of the Constitution, which states that such members *shall* be expelled after previous futile admonition. The CCM says that such members shall not be expelled if they have followed the advice of their ecclesiastical supervisors.
2. With its binding opinion that members of the Synod cannot be charged if they violate the Constitution if acting according to the advice of their ecclesiastical supervisors, the CCM has granted district presidents and other ecclesiastical supervisors a new power. These ecclesiastical supervisors now have the right to provide a measure of impunity for those who violate the Constitution! No constitution is being treated as a *constitution* if it may be so violated.
3. Moreover, the Constitution of the Synod states, "The officers of the Synod must assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by the Synod" (Art. XI A 1). The Synod has not expressly conferred upon any of its officers the right to provide anyone with immunity from being charged or expelled from the Synod. The CCM's argument in Opinion 02-2309 is an inference. The CCM's inferential argument, however, must yield to the Synod's explicit words in Constitution Art. XI A 1.

(It should be noted that in addition to the officers of the Synod listed by position in Article X A, the CCM has opined—and its opinion has not been overruled—that district presidents also are officers of the Synod. [See the CCM's Feb. 21, 1975, opinion "Opinion re Removal of District Presidents from Office," 1975 *Convention Workbook*, p. 487.] If it should be claimed that district presidents are not "specified in the Bylaws" as "officers of the Synod" (Constitution, Art. X A 6) and, therefore, that Article XI A 1 does not apply to them, the question must be asked: Does the Synod grant more rights to officers who are not specified in the Constitution and Bylaws than it grants to those whose positions are specified there?)

Synod President Gerald Kieschnick told the 2009 Missouri District convention that he sympathizes with the third constitutional concern listed above, as expressed in a resolution presented to that convention. (A resolution eventually adopted by the 2009 Missouri District convention is the model for the present overture.) President Kieschnick added that he would be willing to bring a suitable overture on this subject to the particular attention of the appropriate Synod convention floor committee. Grateful for our president's expression of concern, and maintaining that the Synod has substantive constitutional reasons to overrule the CCM opinions at issue, the Carrollton Circuit Forum resolves as follows:

Resolved, That the Carrollton Circuit Forum ask the Synod to overrule the CCM opinion numbered "02-2296; 02-2320" and the opinion numbered "02-2309."

Carrollton Circuit Forum, Missouri District;
Zion, Moberly, MO

7-15

To Overrule CCM Opinions re Ecclesiastical Supervision

WHEREAS, There were 17 overtures that memorialized the Synod's 2004 convention concerning the CCM opinions regarding ecclesiastical supervision (Opinions 02-2296, 02-2320, 02-2309, 03-2338, 03-2338A, and 03-2338C); and

WHEREAS, Only one (Overture 8-30) encouraged affirming these CCM decisions, one (Overture 8-37) recommended review of these opinions, and the remaining 15 (including overtures from seven districts) asked that these CCM decisions be declared invalid, overruled, overturned, reversed, etc. (*Workbook*, pp. 303–9, 312); and

WHEREAS, The 2004 convention failed to address these overtures, having never brought them to the floor; and

WHEREAS, There were 23 overtures that memorialized the Synod's 2007 convention concerning these same CCM opinions regarding ecclesiastical supervision (*Convention Workbook*, pp. 264–271, 276–279); and

WHEREAS, Only one (Overture 8-46) affirmed these CCM decisions, two requested clarification (both by districts), and twenty petitioned for their overrule (including seven districts); and

WHEREAS, The 2007 convention again failed to address these overtures dealing with the CCM opinions on ecclesiastical supervision; and

WHEREAS, For over 150 years prior to these opinions, Scripture served as the authority in church governance in the LCMS; and

WHEREAS, The CCM ruled that the "Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod do not allow or contemplate the expulsion of a member of the Synod on the basis of an action taken with the full knowledge and approval of the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor" (*Reporter*, March 2003, p. 10) and further expounded this decision in the other mentioned opinions; and

WHEREAS, This ruling contradicts Holy Scripture, which repeatedly warns against "respect[ing] persons in judgment" (Deut. 1:17 [KJV]; also Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; James 2:1, 9), "making the word of God of none effect through [human] tradition" (Mk. 7: 13 [KJV]), and "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mk 7:7 [KJV]), and insiststhat "we must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29 [NIV]); and

WHEREAS, The CCM's stance is also incompatible with the Lutheran Confessions, which teach that "no man has the right to cancel an obligation which is derived from divine law" (AC XXVII 24, Tappert, p. 74) and deny that texts like Luke 10:16 and Heb. 13:17 grant ecclesiastical supervisors any authority beyond the Gospel itself (Ap XXVIII 17–21, pp. 283–84); and

WHEREAS, A confessionally based Synod cannot endure for long if its members cease to be held responsible for the words and actions by which they confess the faith; and

WHEREAS, District and Synod presidents can and may grant their approval to those under their supervision by way of confidential communications, making it difficult if not impossible for those who elect them to know about the immunities they have granted; and

WHEREAS, A Dispute Resolution Panel can and may take into account extenuating circumstances in which a member of the Synod has sought the advice of the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor in a difficult case; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 convention overrule Opinion 02-2296 and related opinions of the CCM dealing with ecclesiastical supervision.

Christ
Lampson/Trego, WI;
Circuit 3 Forum, North Wisconsin District

7-16

To Overrule CCM Opinions on Ecclesiastical Supervision

WHEREAS, The Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM), in its opinion “Consequences of Action Taken upon Approval of Ecclesiastical Supervisor” (02-2296; 02-2320) stated, “The Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod do not allow or contemplate the expulsion of a member of the Synod on the basis of an action taken with the full knowledge and approval of the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor”; and

WHEREAS, In its opinion “Ecclesiastical Supervision and Conflict of Interest” (02-2309), the CCM similarly stated that “the Synod is precluded from taking any action to terminate the membership of its member who, when performing his or her official duties, follows the advice and counsel of the ecclesiastical supervisor” and, again, that “the member who acted cannot be charged since he or she acted according to the advice of his or her ecclesiastical supervisor”; and

WHEREAS, The Constitution of the Synod places substantial weight on the need for doctrinal discipline to be carried out and for members of the Synod to be held accountable for their own actions when it sets forth “[c]onditions for acquiring and holding membership” (Article VI) and when it states, “The Synod at all times has the right to call its officers to account and, if circumstances require it, to remove them from office” (Article XI A 2), and when it states, “Members who act contrary to the confession laid down in Article II and to the conditions of membership laid down in Article VI or persist in an offensive conduct, shall, after previous futile admonition, be expelled from the Synod” (Article XIII 1); and

WHEREAS, These substantive constitutional arguments for doctrinal discipline may be thwarted by an appeal to the CCM opinions on ecclesiastical supervision, which could be used to allow a member of the Synod to violate the Constitution with impunity and immunity; and

WHEREAS, Opinions of the CCM are binding unless and until “overruled by a convention of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.9.2.2); and

WHEREAS, Many districts, congregations, circuit forums, and pastors conferences submitted overtures to the Synod’s 2004 and 2007 conventions to overrule the CCM opinions on ecclesiastical supervision; and

WHEREAS, These overtures were not brought forward by the floor committees for consideration by the 2004 and 2007 conventions; and

WHEREAS, The voice of so many districts, congregations, circuit forums, and pastors conferences, all submitting similar overtures on such a substantive constitutional matter, ought at least to be heard in the form of a proposed resolution at the convention, particularly when a convention vote is the only means available for overruling a CCM opinion; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod overrule CCM Opinions 02-2296, 02-2320, and 02-2309.

St. Matthew, Bonne Terre, MO;

St. John, Owensville, MO;

Farmington Circuit Forum, Missouri District;

Good Shepherd, Arnold, MO

7-17

To Consider Adding Time Limitations to Dispute Resolution Process

WHEREAS, It is God-pleasing that disputes, disagreements, or offenses between Christians, Christian organizations, or between Christians and Christian organizations be resolved in a God-pleasing manner (Matt. 5:23–24); and

WHEREAS, The Synod has in place a dispute resolution process to resolve such disputes as outlined in Bylaw section 1.10; and

WHEREAS, The needs of both sides in a dispute should be considered equally; and

WHEREAS, The process developed by the Synod admonishes that disputes, disagreements, or offenses “should be resolved promptly” (Bylaw 1.10.1); and

WHEREAS, The present process does not require either side in a dispute to initiate the formal process of dispute resolution within any given time frame, thus possibly placing the potential respondent in a position of never knowing if the dispute has been resolved or if action may be taken at some undetermined date in the future; and

WHEREAS, It is possible through a process of stalling to greatly extend the formal dispute resolution process beyond the stated time limitations; and

WHEREAS, Unnecessary delays in resolving disputes can inflict harm upon individuals and organizations; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention direct the Secretary of the Synod, in consultation with the CCM and the Council of Presidents, to study this issue and report to the 2013 convention of the Synod, making any recommendations that he believes would address this situation and improve the dispute resolution process.

Northern Illinois District

7-18

To Post Standard Operating Procedures Manuals on Synod Web Site

WHEREAS, A number of the Bylaws of the Synod call for the use of a *Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOPM)*; and

WHEREAS, Each *SOPM* gives clarification to the respective Bylaws of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The *SOPMs* are of benefit to members of the Synod in understanding the Bylaws of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Such *SOPMs* are not currently available on the Synod’s Web site; therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District in convention memorialize the Synod to post publicly on the Synod’s Web site all current *SOPMs* that are referenced in the Synod’s Bylaws.

Wyoming District

7-19

To Require Use of Investigation Committee, Reconciliation Committee, and Referral Panel in Expulsion Processes

WHEREAS, Art. XIII “Expulsion from the Synod” mandates, “Expulsion shall be executed only after following such procedure as shall be set forth in the Bylaws of the Synod” (Art. XIII 2); and

WHEREAS, Bylaw section 2.14 “Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod” prescribes a procedure

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for expulsion that is regarded as a “serious matter” (Bylaw 2.14.1); and

WHEREAS, The ecclesiastical supervisor is to “make every effort to protect the integrity of the process,” and “make every effort to be consistent and fair” (Bylaw Section 2.14 *Standard Operating Procedures Manual*, General Principles N, p. 3); and

WHEREAS, “The goal throughout is always one of admonition and reconciliation, of repentance and forgiveness” (Bylaw 2.14.3 [d]); and

WHEREAS, Bylaws 2.14.4 and 2.14.5 allow the district president to utilize an “investigation committee” (2.14.4 [a]), a “committee to assist in reconciliation efforts” (2.14.4 [c]), and a “Referral Panel” (Bylaw 2.14.5) prior to suspension but do not require it; and

WHEREAS, The district president is permitted unilaterally to be the accuser (Bylaw 2.14.2 [m]), the investigator (Bylaw 2.14.4 [a]), the one to make a determination to “commence formal proceedings” (Bylaw 2.14.6), and finally the one to suspend the accused (Art. XII 8); therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District in convention memorialize the Synod to rewrite Bylaw section 2.14 to require the formation and utilization of an investigation committee (Bylaw 2.14.4 [a]), a reconciliation committee (Bylaw 2.14.4 [c]), and a Referral Panel (2.14.5) prior to suspension (Art. XII 8).

Wyoming District

7-20

To Rescind 2004 Res. 8-01A and Develop a New Adjudication Process

Rationale

Res. 8-01A of the 2004 LCMS convention addressed the subject of ecclesiastical supervision and dispute resolution between LCMS members. The resolution provided for the creation of bylaws that outline the procedures for restricting, suspending, and expelling members of the Synod, as well as the removal of members of the Synod from elected positions.

The following concerns have arisen concerning Res. 8-01A and its resulting bylaws.

First, there is an inconsistent or incorrect use of Matthew 18:15–17. This passage of Scripture teaches the use of church discipline and excommunication by the local congregation, but it is used in Res. 8-01A and the resulting bylaws as a biblical “mandate” for the basis and guidelines for ecclesiastical supervision and dispute resolution within districts and Synod (Bylaw sections 1.10 and 2.13–2.17).

Second, Res. 8-01A and its resulting bylaws fail to adhere to the biblical and confessional distinction between public and private sins, so that public error and sin may be publicly corrected or rebuked as the Scriptures require (1 Tim. 5:20; also Gal. 2:11 ff.; John 2:14–17). Dr. Luther wrote at length concerning private sins and then added, “But where the sin is so public that the judge and everyone else are aware of it, you can without sin shun and avoid those who have brought disgrace upon themselves, and you may also testify publicly against them. For when something is exposed to the light of day, there can be no question of slander or injustice or false witness. ... Where the sin is public, appropriate public punishment should follow so that everyone may know how to guard against it” (Large Catechism, Eighth Commandment, par. 284). According to current bylaws, “face-to-face” meetings of disputants in a public matter are required before charges can be filed (Bylaws 1.10.5 and 2.14.3 [c]), all hearings involving public matters are “private” (Bylaws 1.10.7.4 and 2.14.7.7 [b]), and “records of disputes ... shall be sealed” (Bylaw

1.10.18.1 [g] 2.14.7.7 [j]), thus preventing open and public inspection of public matters.

Third, Res. 8-01A and its resulting bylaws fail to give clear direction to member congregations that seek to follow the process of ecclesiastical supervision or dispute resolution, since no explanation or instruction has been provided for a congregation to engage in a “face-to-face” meeting with the accused (cf. Bylaw 2.14.3c).

Fourth, Res. 8-01A and its resulting bylaws appear to have introduced a new governing polity in the LCMS by giving district and Synod presidents the sole responsibility of initiating the process of expelling members of the Synod (Bylaw 2.14.1) and sole responsibility of considering appeals and concluding the processes (Bylaw section 2.14). The Synod’s doctrinal statement Church and Ministry, by C. F. W. Walther, states in thesis 10 on the ministry, “To the ministry of the Word, according to divine right, belongs also the duty to judge doctrine, but laymen also possess this right. Therefore, in the ecclesiastical courts and councils they are accorded both a seat and vote together with the clergy.” The practice of Res. 8-01A is in conflict with this doctrinal statement. Furthermore, separate procedures are established for expulsion of a district president or officer or the President of the Synod from membership in the Synod (Bylaw sections 2.15 and 2.16 respectively). These procedures were “made purposely difficult” (2004 Proceedings, p. 165) in relation to the removal of pastors, for example, although the latter have a divine call to a congregation.

Fifth, Res. 8-01A and its resulting bylaws state, “Any opinion received from the Commission on Theology and Church Relations [CTCR] and the Commission on Constitutional Matters [CCM] must be followed” (Bylaw 1.10.18.1 [h]; also 1.10.5 [a]; 2.14.7.7 [k]). This requirement applies to district presidents, dispute resolution panels, appeal panels, review panels, and all hearing panels, that is, all who are involved in matters of ecclesiastical supervision and dispute resolution. In the case of the CTCR rulings, this requirement binds consciences to theological conclusions of one church council (commission), though these theological conclusions have neither been received, studied, nor confessed by the Synod as a whole and therefore cannot bind its members as does a freely confessed creed or symbol. Such was the confession of Martin Luther at Worms. In the case of the CCM, any rulings that may infringe on the doctrine and practice of the Scriptures or the Confessions, such as requiring an appeal panel to render a judgment based only on the Constitution and Bylaws and not on the Scriptures and the Confessions, also bind consciences contrary to God’s Word.

Resolved, That the LCMS Wyoming District memorialize the Synod in convention to rescind Res. 8-01A and its resulting bylaws; and be it further

Resolved, That a new adjudication process, based on the Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions, be designed to replace Res. 8-01A and be presented to Synod in a timely fashion for approval at its 2010 convention; and be it further

Resolved, That this new adjudication process take into account the biblical and confessional distinction between public and private error or sin; and be it further

Resolved, That this new adjudication process take into account not only the wisdom and necessity of biblical conflict resolution but also the wisdom and necessity of true ecclesiastical adjudication of public error as it was practiced in the first fourteen decades of our Synod; and be it finally

Resolved, That this new adjudication process remove all bylaws and procedures which bind consciences to the theological rulings of any commission, board, or other entity of the Synod.

Wyoming District

7-21

To Provide for Removal of Individual Board or Commission Members

WHEREAS, The purposes of the Synod are ecclesiastical and not secular, and the secular functions of the church exist only to serve those ecclesiastical purposes; and

WHEREAS, The Synod considers the process of selection and removal of all officers of the Synod and all members of its boards and commissions to be an ecclesiastical function; and

WHEREAS, Bylaw 1.5.2 (b) states that, in serving the Synod as board or commission member, director, or officer, “[r]esponsibilities shall be carried out in a manner reflecting the highest degree of integrity and honesty”; and

WHEREAS, There has been some confusion among some in the Synod regarding exactly what constitutes a potential conflict of interest (Bylaw 1.5.2 [a] [1]), and appropriate procedures may not always have been closely adhered to due to this confusion; and

WHEREAS, The Commission on Constitutional Matters, noting that proposals to add a section in the *Handbook* for the removal of board and commission members have not been acted upon by past conventions, requested that the Commission on Structure develop and propose such a process for inclusion in the Bylaws of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, There is an interest in bringing peace and order among the individual members and congregations of the Synod who hold various opinions regarding this issue; therefore be it

Resolved, That the following bylaw be added to the Bylaws of the Synod:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Removal of Individual Members from Board or Commission Membership

1.5.7 Individual members of the Synod’s commissions and the boards of its agencies, as well as the individual members of its Board of Directors, shall discharge the duties of their offices in good faith. The following are considered cause for removal pursuant to this bylaw:

1. Incapacity
2. Breach of the duty of loyalty to the Synod or agency
3. Neglect or refusal to perform duties of office
4. No longer satisfying any of the qualifications for directors set forth in the articles of incorporation or bylaws of the entity as in effect at the beginning of the member’s term

5. Conviction of a felony

6. Failure to disclose conflicts of interest to the Synod or agency

7. Conduct unbecoming a Christian

8. Advocacy of false doctrine (Constitution Art. II)

9. Failure to honor and uphold the doctrinal position of the Synod as defined in Bylaw 1.6.2

10. Accumulation of three unexcused absences within any term of office.

1.5.7.1 The procedure for removal of a member of a commission, agency board, or the LCMS Board of Directors pursuant to this section shall be as follows:

(a) Action for removal shall require written notice to each member of the relevant commission, agency board, or LCMS Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days prior to a special meeting of the commission, agency board, or LCMS Board of Directors called for that purpose. A copy of such notice shall be sent to the President and the Secretary of the Synod and to the ecclesiastical supervisor, if applicable.

(b) The special meeting shall be held no later than sixty (60) days after the provision of the written notice, unless extended by the mutual agreement of the parties.

(c) Removal shall be effected by (1) recommendation of such to the Synod’s Board of Directors by a vote in favor of removal by at least three-fourths of all current members (excluding the person whose membership is in question) of the applicable commission, agency board, or LCMS Board of Directors; and (2) by a vote in favor of the recommendation of removal by at least three-fourths of all current members (excluding the person whose membership is in question) of the Board of Directors of the Synod.

(d) Removal may be appealed by a member who has been removed from a commission, agency board, or the LCMS Board of Directors through the use of the Synod’s dispute resolution process as provided in Bylaw section 1.10.

(e) From the time that written notice is given until the commission, agency board, or the LCMS Board of Directors takes action with respect to the removal, the member(s) subject to removal may not vote on matters before the agency or LCMS Board of Directors.

1.5.7.2 To the extent that the application of this bylaw is limited by applicable law with respect to the removal of members of a commission, agency board, or the LCMS Board of Directors, the commission, agency board, or LCMS Board of Directors on which the member serves may recommend the removal and attempt to cause the appropriate procedures under applicable law, these Bylaws and the governing documents of the affected entity to be followed to permit the removal of such agency or LCMS Board of Directors member.

Commission on Structure



8. SYNOD STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

8-01

To Encourage Careful Consideration of BRTFSSG Proposals

WHEREAS, LCMS President Gerald Kieschnick in 2005 appointed a broad-based Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) to assess the Synod's current structure and governance and to recommend improvements that would "facilitate maximum operating efficiency in behalf of and in support of the members of our Synod in accomplishing the mission of our Lord and His church . . ."; and

WHEREAS, The task force has proceeded carefully and collaboratively, carrying out its assignment in a conscientious manner over the past four years, even recommending to the 2007 Synod convention that the process be given additional time beyond that convention to assure that any recommendations would be thoroughly discussed and understood by the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The task force has solicited input and suggestions by meeting with and interviewing congregation, district, and Synod leaders, including 80 parish pastors and 60 lay leaders of congregations; 16 delegates to the 2007 Synod convention; five present and former Synod executives; 10 chairmen and 10 executive directors of Synod boards and commissions; four presidents of Synod entities; the presidents of the 10 Concordia University System schools and two seminaries; the Council of Presidents on five occasions; and also twice meeting with all 35 district boards of directors; and

WHEREAS, The task force has widely disseminated its initial recommendations, is nearing completion of the arduous task of making presentations to and seeking feedback from the 2009 conventions of all 35 districts, has posted its preliminary report for all to see on its Web site at www.lcms.org/lcmsfuture, and has invited additional responses in various ways; and

WHEREAS, The task force will take into account all survey responses it receives; and

WHEREAS, In December 2009 and January and February 2010, all voting delegates to the 2010 Synod convention will be invited to attend one of the nine regional caucuses that will thoroughly discuss the final report of the task force, ensuring that every delegate will have opportunity to understand fully the task force recommendations and discuss and offer suggestions for revising them prior to the 2010 Synod convention; and

WHEREAS, The first two full days of the 2010 Synod convention have been set aside for still more discussion of any proposals for changes in the Synod's structure and governance; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Pacific Southwest District in convention assembled affirm and express its support for the process that has been followed by the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance, which has provided for everyone in the Synod an opportunity to read, understand, and comment on its proposals; and be it further

Resolved, That the district urge that there be no further delays, but that the 2010 Synod convention give careful consideration to any recommendation developed by the task force; and be it further

Resolved, That the Pacific Southwest District recommend to the 2010 Synod convention that the current LCMS Constitution's Art. II language be retained and remain unaltered, as it most fully expresses the confession of our church; and be it finally

Resolved, That the district thank the members of the task force for their dedication to their task, for the conscientious and careful way they have carried out their assignment, and for establishing and

following a process to ensure that the members of Synod are being heard and that the will of the Synod is being carried out.

Pacific Southwest District

8-02

To Allow Time for Reasonable Conversation and Consideration of Changes to Structure

WHEREAS, Conversation, dialogue, consideration, and encouragement should always be rejoiced and supported in our Synod; and

WHEREAS, Proposals for serious and profound changes in our Synod's practice and structure should be freely discussed, debated, and considered by all; and

WHEREAS, All of our districts should allow reasonable opportunity for free and open review, dialogue, and conversation regarding the profound changes being proposed for our Synod's practice and structure; and

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has succinctly stated this concern by helpfully alerting the Synod that the proposals "involve proposed changes to parts of the Synod's Constitution—changes too lengthy and detailed to be described adequately in the task force's presentations at the district conventions" ("Introductory Note" of the BRTFSSG's document for proposed changes); and

WHEREAS, Most congregations and pastors and circuits are being exposed to the BRTFSSG proposals only shortly before their own respective district conventions, many aren't even being exposed to them *until* their own district conventions, and even then the proposals they are exposed to aren't clear and final but are often ambiguous and are presented as being in flux; and

WHEREAS, Clarity and consistency are needed in the documents to be considered by the Synod in order to have serious consideration and beneficial conversation and dialogue; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG's own documents give proposals and recommendations that are often inconsistent, even in conflict with each other, so that within the same documents the reader is confronted with serious ambiguities and contradictions, for example,

- a. In the "Walking Together" Presentation Format from the LCMS website, power-point slide 17 proposes that "commissioned ministers" be considered to be "members of the Synod" alongside ordained pastors, yet slides 27 and 28 recommend that at conventions these same "commissioned ministers" would be treated not as ordained pastors but, rather, as lay persons; or,
- b. BRTFSSG's "Walking Together" presentation, slides 20-22, recommends a change in the name of the Synod, even stating the rationale, while the BRTFSSG's document "Provisional Proposal" recommends the opposite, stating, "The name of the Synod organized under this constitution shall be: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod";

and

WHEREAS, Reasonable time and place and opportunity has not been given and established for beneficial debate, dialogue, discussion, and mutual consideration of the serious and profound changes to our Synod's practice and structure (as found in the recently released but still not final proposals of the BRTFSSG); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 Synod convention establish a time period and a method in which these profound changes to practice and structure may be openly considered throughout the Synod, so that all may be allowed the time and opportunity to review and consider the work of the BRTFSSG.

North and South Sandia Circuit Forum
Rocky Mountain District

8-03

To Foster Greater Unanimity in Decisions re Structure

WHEREAS, Votes on matters that deeply impact the whole Synod should not be seen as exercises of political power of one group or party over another, nor as attempts to establish organizational control in the Synod or over the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Even the report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) itself recognizes and publicly states the principle that “close majority votes on doctrinal matters do not promote unity and are conducive to increased internal conflict and consternation”; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Matthew Harrison, Executive Director, LCMS World Relief and Human Care, in evident agreement with the BRTFSSG statement above, has helpfully counseled the Synod that “Bylaw and constitutional matters should come to the floor of the convention only if they have been previously recognized across the broad spectrum as non-political and not given to exacerbate an already tense situation. And once on the floor they should be adopted only by a minimum 85% approval” (*It’s Time, LCMS Unity and Mission*, p. 15); and

WHEREAS, The effort and goal of the Synod convention is to speak in a way that will not lead to “increased internal conflict and consternation” (BRTFSSG), but will allow a joyful and free conversation not ruled over by the will of a majority but welcoming to all voices in a way that seeks unanimity; therefore be it

Resolved, That at the 2010 LCMS convention, all changes to the Constitution and Bylaws which affect the structure of the Synod will be adopted by a vote of 85% or greater; and be it further

Resolved, That even though a majority vote may be used to revoke said resolution (resulting from this overture), the resolution, having been passed by a majority of the convention, will receive the cooperation and fraternal assent of all those voting on Constitution and Bylaw changes affecting changes to structure at the 2010 LCMS convention.

North and South Sandia Circuit Forum
Rocky Mountain District

8-04

To Postpone Consideration and Implementation of Task Force Report

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) was appointed by President Gerald Kieschnick in March of 2005 to propose recommendations for changes to the Synod’s structure and governance; and

WHEREAS, A recommendation for using different constitutional language which implements substantive changes within the Constitution is given for consideration without rationale or declaring the deficiency of the current Constitution; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has put forward proposals which continue to change; and

WHEREAS, The rationale given for perceived problems or deficiencies is not quantified and no evidence of perceived problems is given; and

WHEREAS, No evidence is given as to how the recommended solutions will rectify perceived problems and deficiencies; and

WHEREAS, There is not sufficient time for any meaningful discussion or consideration of significant changes to the Synod’s Constitution or final proposals; and

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WHEREAS, Without a final proposal clearly communicating each proposed change, little or no meaningful comment or action can be expected from the districts; and

WHEREAS, There is insufficient time for congregations and districts thoroughly to consider final proposals prior to the 2010 Synod convention; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Circuit Forum of North Wisconsin District Circuit 20 memorialize the LCMS in its 2010 convention to postpone until the 2013 Synod convention consideration of any final report, recommendations, or proposals of the BRTSFFG in order to give congregations and districts time to consider all final proposals; and be it further

Resolved, That the Circuit Forum of North Wisconsin District Circuit 20 request that the President of the Synod cancel the two-day extension of the 2010 Synod convention, in accordance with Constitution Art. VIII; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Circuit Forum of North Wisconsin District Circuit 20 request that the BRTFSSG provide all final proposals for action, including their rationale and quantifiable evidence for perceived problems or deficiencies as well as evidence as to how proposals will rectify problems, directly to all congregations no later than January 1, 2011, for study during the next triennium by congregations and districts, prior to any action by districts and/or the Synod.

St. Paul, Whitehall, WI; St. Peter, Osseo, WI;
Wyoming District; Circuit 20 Forum,
North Wisconsin District

8-05

To Exercise Care and Delay Implementation of Structure Changes

WHEREAS, In 2005 LCMS President Gerald Kieschnick appointed a Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, The task force’s proposals, as presented to the district conventions of 2009 and now in completed form, have been far-reaching in scope and significant in importance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that careful attention must be given to detail and wording in making adjustments or changes that involve structure and governance; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with careful and prayerful caution in considering any changes; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance be urged to submit to the Synod the precise language being proposed for any and all Constitution and Bylaw changes as well as the complete text of any enabling resolutions in time for inclusion in the 2010 Convention Workbook; and be it further

Resolved, That the report of the task force not be acted on until the 2013 Synod convention, thus allowing optimum time for congregations, boards, commissions, and other Synod entities to study the report and consider all of its implications.

Trinity, Norborne, MO; Missouri District; Iowa District East;
Carrollton Circuit Forum, Missouri District; Circuit 6 Forum,
North Wisconsin District; Trinity, Freistatt, MO; Immanuel,
Merrill, WI; Zion, Moberly, MO; Our Savior, Muscatine, IA;
St. John, Brunswick, MO; Zion, Wilton, IA; Southern Illinois
District; Mon-Clair Circuit, Southern Illinois District

8-06

To Allow Time to Study Task Force Recommendations

WHEREAS, In 2005, LCMS President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, The task force's preliminary proposals of August 2008 were far-reaching in scope and significant in import; and

WHEREAS, Attention and adequate time must be given to detail and wording in making adjustments or changes that impinge on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; therefore be it

Resolved, That the South Wisconsin District in convention memorialize the 2010 convention of the Synod to direct the task force to give detailed reasons for its recommendations; and be it further

Resolved, That the South Wisconsin District in convention memorialize the 2010 convention of the Synod not to consider adopting any of the task force's final recommendations to change the Synod's structure until the congregations of Synod have had a complete three-year convention cycle to study and discuss such recommendations and implications.

South Wisconsin District

8-07

To Submit BRTFSSG Report to All Congregations for Study and Defer Action until Following Convention

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) was appointed by Synod President Kieschnick in 2005 to "do a thorough zero-based assessment of governance and organizational structure...[with] recommended improvements [that] suggest a form of structure and governance for the decades ahead that is appropriately representative, incorporating sufficient checks and balances of authority without being cumbersome, clumsy or excessively complex"; and

WHEREAS, On August 20, 2008, under a covering document, the BRTFSSG released "Walking Together—The LCMS Future: Proposals and Possibilities for Consideration and Discussion"; and

WHEREAS, On October 15, 2009, the BRTFSSG released "The Final Report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance" containing twenty-one recommendations in six sections; and

WHEREAS, These range from revisions to the Preamble to the Synod's Constitution and Articles II, III, V, VI, and VII to the congregational principle; future district configuration; allowing commissioned ministers to serve as voting delegates; congregational representation at conventions based on congregational membership; creation of five (5) Synod regions, each with a part-time Synod vice-president; four-year convention cycles; election of Synod delegates at district conventions rather than at circuit meetings; fixing the number of delegates to Synod conventions at 650; four-year terms of office; election of the Synod President and First Vice-President by direct vote of congregations; changing the makeup of the Synod's Board of Directors; giving priority to circuit and district overtures over those of congregations and boards; requiring a two-thirds vote approval of whatever are termed resolutions of "special significance and doctrinal statements"; realigning boards and commissions of the Synod with

reporting to the Synod president; adopting a procedure to rename the Synod; and mandating the Council of Presidents, the administration, and the seminaries to study how to best certify clergy and hold them accountable for a lifetime of professional education; and

WHEREAS, The October 15, 2009 final report fails to establish that the present organization, structure, and governance has failed or is cumbersome, clumsy, or excessively complex; and

WHEREAS, It is essential to keep in mind that it is the very congregations who created the Synod, using the example of the apostolic Church and the will of our Lord that diversities of gifts should be for the common profit, and not the Synod creating the congregations; and

WHEREAS, The final report, if adopted, would fundamentally change not only the structure and governance of the Synod and the procedures related thereto, resulting in a vast concentration of power in the office of the Synod President, but also, by changes to its Constitution, affect the Synod's confession, objectives, membership, conditions of membership, and the relation of the Synod to its members; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod submit to the congregations of the Synod, for study during the first Synod convention cycle *after* the 2010 LCMS convention, the BRTFSSG proposals presented by a 2010 convention floor committee—this before any adoptive action is taken by a Synod convention—for to do otherwise would effectively mean that the congregations, which created the Synod to serve them, would be deprived of meaningful opportunity to consider major changes to the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws, which the members of the Synod are not only expected to conform to but to support by word and deed.

Faith

Chesapeake, VA

8-08

To Proceed with Task Force Proposals Only If Full and Timely Disclosure of Proposed Revisions Is Provided

WHEREAS, The President of the Synod in 2005 appointed a Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) to "do a thorough, zero-based assessment of the entirety of the system of governance and organizational structure" and provide "recommended improvements [that] ... suggest a form of structure and governance for the decades ahead"; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has consequently published several documents for consideration and discussion: "Congregation—Synod—Church: Basic Theological Principles Underlying LCMS Structure and Governance" (May 2007), "Who Is The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod? Congregations Walking Together" (August 2008), and "Walking Together—The LCMS Future: Proposals and Possibilities for Consideration and Discussion" (August 2008); and

WHEREAS, The aforementioned documents provide conceptual ideas (and, in some cases, rationale) for possible changes to current LCMS structure and governance; and

WHEREAS, The aforementioned documents do not propose any specific wording for revisions to the Synod's Constitution or Bylaws to implement such changes to structure and governance, and experience teaches that prayerful and appropriate care ought to be exercised and that thorough attention and discussion ought to be given to details and

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wording in making revisions to the Synod's Constitution or Bylaws; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District respectfully request that by January 15, 2010, the BRTFSSG make publicly available specific wording for all proposed revisions to the Synod's Constitution or Bylaws, including the complete text of any enabling convention resolutions to implement such revisions, as well as its rationale for such revisions; and be it further

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District memorialize the Synod that at its 2010 convention it consider the BRTFSSG's proposed revisions to Synod Constitution or Bylaws only under the condition that this aforementioned request for information be fulfilled by the date specified; and be it further

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District respectfully request that the BRTFSSG's full and final report be immediately posted on the Synod's Web site upon its submission for inclusion in the 2010 *Convention Workbook*; and be it finally

Resolved, That within one week of the completion of this 2009 Minnesota North District Convention, its district president contact the head of the BRTFSSG and request that the summary that was passed out to the convention yesterday (April 28), the PowerPoint rationale report, and the accompanying survey be sent to all other district presidents so that they may provide hard copies to their delegates before their conventions meet.

Minnesota North District

8-09

To Reject Blue Ribbon Task Force Recommendations

WHEREAS, We are in agreement with the historical position of the LCMS that the Synod is not a church, and we wholeheartedly endorse the desires of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) to advance Christ's mission and keep our confessional basis unchanged (LCMS Constitution, Art. II); and

WHEREAS, We recognize and affirm the entirety of the objectives of the Synod (LCMS Constitution, Art. III) for the purposes of growing disciples in Christ; and

WHEREAS, We agree that congregations are the primary mission centers for reaching our communities and the world, and that the districts are the closest source of resources to the congregation; and

WHEREAS, We make this resolution in harmony with the same spirit that the task force offered its recommendations (Php. 1:27; 2:1-4); and

WHEREAS, President Kieschnick appointed the BRTFSSG in 2005; and

WHEREAS, The preliminary recommendations of the task force were disseminated in 2008; and

WHEREAS, Said recommendations are significant changes from past policies in governance, including but not limited to the number and size of districts, congregational voting and representation, convention frequency, number and voting of advisory delegates, changing the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, voting procedures for doctrinal resolutions and statements, the seminaries as sole certification bodies of pastoral candidates, election of vice-presidents, priority and consideration of overtures; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS affirm its present Constitution and *Handbook* and maintain its current structure of governance; and be it further

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Resolved, That the Indiana District memorialize the Synod to reject the presented proposals of the BRTFSSG.

Indiana District

8-10

To Defer Proposed Restructure/Reorganization to 2013 Convention

WHEREAS, The best and clearest attempt to date to articulate the proposals for the restructuring of the Synod took place at the district conventions held in 2009; and

WHEREAS, Little or no time for discussion or debate was provided in these conventions for this important matter; and

WHEREAS, There are many members of the Synod, both clergy and congregations, who have strong objections to significant parts of the proposals; therefore be it

Resolved, That the decision to reorganize or restructure the Synod be deferred to the 2013 LCMS convention to allow time for discussion and debate to take place at the district convention level before the matter is brought before the Synod.

Circuit 14 Forum

Pacific Southwest District

8-11

To Delay Implementation of Certain BRTFSSG Proposals

Rationale

The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) appointed by President Kieschnick has made several recommendations that will prove to be difficult if not impossible to implement quickly. It has proposed the elimination of the Synod's program boards, the creation of partially elected mission commissions, a change in the nominations process for some members of the Synod's Board of Directors, and the nomination and election of the Synod's vice-presidents on a regional basis.

The BRTFSSG issued its final report after the October 10, 2009 bylaw deadline for providing names of potential board and commission nominees to the Committee for Convention Nominations. No call for nominations has been issued to the Synod concerning the new mission commissions.

Bylaw 3.12.3.7 (f) advocates that, whenever possible, the Committee for Convention Nominations should be ready with a slate of candidates for a new board or commission likely to be established at a Synod convention. In this case, however, it should be noted that the task force is recommending that more than half of the members of the proposed mission commissions as well as some members of the LCMS Board of Directors are to be elected from among regional nominees who have been nominated at district conventions. These regions have not yet been officially determined, since the task force's proposed bylaws regarding regionalization cannot be adopted prior to the 2010 LCMS convention. Nor have such nominations been made at the district level as the task force proposal envisions.

One other point should be added. The districts also have not made nominations for proposed regional vice-presidencies.

At the LCMS 2010 convention, it will therefore be impossible to elect regional vice-presidents, LCMS Board of Directors members, or members for each of the mission commissions according to

the precise process proposed by the task force. The Committee on Convention Nominations may attempt to bring to the Synod a regionally based slate of candidates for the Board of Directors. It may also try to cobble together regionally-based slates for the proposed mission commissions, but it will be doing this work in the absence of responses to a synod-wide call for nominations for worthy prospective candidates to serve on these commissions. In any case, none of these slates will be available for 2010 convention delegates to see and consider until the convention is underway.

Haste makes waste.

Resolved, That the Synod, if it adopts any of the BRTFSSG recommendations in the following areas, do so clearly asserting its will that any resulting new offices are not to be implemented until Sept. 1 following the next convention of the Synod. The nominations process preceding the next convention and the elections at that convention could thus take place with the new offices in view. The areas are

- Elimination of any current boards and commissions (thus, even if the task force recommendations are adopted, the current boards and commissions would remain for one more term).
- Creation of new boards and/or commissions involving regional representation/elections.
- Change in the composition of the Synod's Board of Directors involving regional representation/elections.
- Regional vice-presidencies for the Synod.

Carrollton Circuit Forum, Missouri District; Zion, Moberly, MO;
Springfield Circuit Forum, Missouri District

8-12

To Consider Recommendations of BRTFSSG as Separate Items to Be Voted on Individually

WHEREAS, The final report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has been received and discussed by the Sandia Circuits Forum; and

WHEREAS, The Sandia Circuits Forum finds some of the recommendations unacceptable but others beneficial; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Sandia Circuits Forum requests the 2010 LCMS convention to allow each recommendation of the BRTFSSG to be voted on separately and not as a package.

North and South Sandia Circuit Forum
Rocky Mountain District

8-13

To Consider Alternate Restructure Plans and Proposals and Decline Recommended Changes to Synod Constitution

WHEREAS, Concerns about the governance and structure of the LCMS gave rise to the Synod President's forming of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) to address areas which might need adjustment or correction; and

WHEREAS, The proposed changes, as summarized by the BRTFSSG itself, go to the heart of who and what The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is, to wit:

- A. The Synod's reason for existence;
- B. The Synod's confession;
- C. The Synod's mission and purpose;

D. Conditions for membership in the Synod;

E. The relation of the Synod to its members; and

F. The process whereby resolutions are made and accepted by Synod in convention;
and

WHEREAS, These proposals will profoundly impact and alter the Synod's theology and practice, as well as its structure, process, and membership; and

WHEREAS, The final proposals will not be available until the fall of 2009 after the district conventions, preventing the districts in convention from considering the final proposals; and

WHEREAS, The currently proposed changes may well necessitate further and unforeseen changes, the BRTFSSG itself having stated that "it is likely that more constitutional paragraphs will require change depending on the outcome of the task force's work"; and

WHEREAS, The number, substance, and impact of these changes is unknown and impossible to predict; and

WHEREAS, There has been no clearly demonstrated necessity for immediate action; and

WHEREAS, There has been limited opportunity for broad-based timely analysis and discussion across the congregations and districts of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, We in the Montana District would be unable to accept these proposed changes to the Constitution of the LCMS with a clear conscience, as has also been stated by the Wyoming district in convention; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montana District in convention request the President of the Synod to suspend the current timeline for consideration of the current BRTFSSG proposals, and not to bring a plan for restructure before the 2010 convention, and to consider alternate proposals for addressing the problems plaguing the Synod, including the proposals put forward in the document "It's Time: LCMS Unity and Mission II" by Rev. Matthew Harrison; and be it further

Resolved, That the Montana District in convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to consider none of the recommended changes to the Constitution of the Synod proposed by the BRTFSSG.

Montana District

8-14

To Retain Existing Synod Constitution

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, The task force's proposals in its final report of October 15, 2009, are far reaching in scope and significant in import; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, The existing Constitution has served the Synod well for many years; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church of Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod not to change any part of the Synod's Constitution.

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA; Zion, Wilton, IA

To Reject Proposed Changes to Articles II, III, and VI

Rationale

The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG), as part of its first two proposals to the districts of the Synod, has proposed significant changes to the Synod's Constitution. The alterations in the "Provisional Proposal" for changes to the LCMS Constitution are founded upon and thoroughly imbedded with a significant departure from the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. This error is simply the separation of faith from doctrine, that is, the severing of saving faith from the object of faith and the means by which faith is created and sustained. The separation of faith and doctrine is imbedded particularly in the proposed "Article II Confession." This separation between faith and doctrine is developed further in the proposed "Article III Mission and Purpose," and may be seen also in the proposed "Article VI Requirement of Membership" and the proposed "Article VII Relation of the Synod and Its Members." This separation was scrupulously avoided in the previous Constitutions of the Synod, as seen in comparison with the current Constitution.

The problem is that this new arrangement creates two levels of confession: first, saving faith, and second, doctrine. Saving faith is designated in the proposed Article II as "Confession of Faith" (II A), and doctrine is designated as "Confessional Basis" (II B). "Confession of Faith" (II A) is described as personal faith in Jesus (*fides qua*). "Confessional Basis" (II B) speaks of Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions only in terms of judging faith and providing a true exposition of the Word of God, that is, doctrine (*fides quae*). The immediate result of separating doctrine (II B) from faith (II A) is that only faith gives the things of "forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation" (II A). Doctrine (II B) is marginal or secondary to these essential things and constitutes, in comparison to faith (II A), a lower level concern for congregations, synods, and the church in comparison to faith.

Church Fellowship

This separation of doctrine from faith has an extremely important consequence for the Church (including congregations and synods) and her fellowship. The proposed new arrangement would separate the fellowship of the Church into two levels, corresponding to the two levels of confession.

The primary level would be the level of saving faith, where the so-called "unity of the church" is found (*unitas*; see "Congregation—Synod—Church" [CSC]—see "Basis Theological Principles" 8, p. 10). This level would be essentially invisible, corresponding to faith (not doctrine!), and would be the level of fellowship worked invisibly by God.

The secondary level of church fellowship would be the level of doctrine and external church arrangements, where the so-called "unity in the church" is found (*concordia*—see CSC, 8, p. 10). This level would be essentially visible, corresponding to doctrine (not saving faith!), and would be the level of fellowship worked by man, "which believers seek to manifest and express in their lives and confession" (CSC, p. 10).

This separation is illustrated sharply in the proposed "Article III Mission and Purpose," where under section A 1 the focus is entirely on the "Gospel witness" and the "saving faith relationship." No reference to purity of doctrine and practice is given here, because it

would have no relevance to faith itself because of the separation of doctrine from faith.

Art. III A 2, as proposed, continues this point by speaking of the "unity of the true faith in Jesus Christ," referencing Eph. 4:3–6 and John 17:11, 21–23. We note that this Ephesians passage was used differently in Augsburg Confession VII to speak of the Church and her unity where "the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel." The proposed citation of John 17 deliberately omits reference to verses 17–19, where Jesus speaks of the true unity of faith in terms of the truth of His Word, that is, pure and unadulterated doctrine. The proposed changes do not confess that "the Gospel purely preached and the sacraments administered according to the Gospel" are necessary for the true "unity of the church" (*unitas*). Instead, this proposed change constitutes a clear rejection of this teaching of AC VII.

Proposed Art. III A 3, however, speaks of the other kind of unity, the secondary and merely external "confessional unity within the Synod." Only after this other kind of unity is named does the new proposal speak of working toward church fellowship with other church bodies and, finally, providing "a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy." The former first priority (Art. III 1) would be relegated to an indefinable afterthought in the second level, external unity.

In sharp contrast to this proposed new scheme, the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions describe faith and its object together, distinguishing but not separating the two. Pure and unadulterated doctrine is simply the Gospel itself, by which God creates faith, forgives sins, bestows the Holy Spirit, gives birth to the church and her fellowship, and saves eternally. "Pure and unadulterated" is not merely a standard of the Law imposed by the Holy Spirit upon the Church but simply the way of saying that we are receiving God's Gospel in all its articles, without any corruptions or additions to the Gospel. Church fellowship is both created and marked by the same external Sacraments and oral Gospel that work forgiveness of sins, deliver from death and the devil, and give eternal salvation. No human efforts, regardless of how noble and pious, can nurture or manifest this fellowship, for it is nurtured and manifested only by the Gospel "purely preached" and the holy Sacraments "administered according to the Gospel" (AC VII). The current Constitution's Objective 1, "Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith," etc., simply refers to the due diligence given to keeping our doctrine pure and free from error, corruptions, additions, or omissions.

Pure Doctrine

This separation of faith and doctrine, which attaches faith only to the personal confession ("saving faith relationship" of a minimized Second Article of the Creed), is a new kind of Gospel reductionism, the idea that only certain narrow teachings about Christ constitute the essential Gospel, and that all else is secondary in importance for salvation. In other words, when doctrine is separated from faith, purity of doctrine can no longer be a concern for the preservation and distribution of God's saving work (Gospel). It becomes essentially a legal requirement (Law) that measures obedience.

One clear consequence of this change is that purity of doctrine and practice would be relegated to a lower level of importance in the proposed changes to the Constitution. The current "Article III Objectives" of the Synod begins with this primary objective:

1. Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy.

In the proposed changes, this primary objective is broken up and moved toward the end of Article III as a secondary objective.

This dismissal of the necessity and centrality of purity in doctrine is seen even more clearly in the proposed “Article VI Requirements of Membership.” First, the Constitution of the Synod is raised to the same level as the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Art. VI A 1 and VI B 1), something that has never been done before in a Lutheran church and must be vehemently rejected. Second, the clear description of unionism and syncretism given in the current Constitution (Art. VI 2) has been replaced by broad and ill-defined language of “practicing church fellowship” and “supporting organizations and causes” (Art. VI B 3 [a] and [b]). Third, the current Constitution uses the demarcating language of “orthodox” and “nothing contrary to the Scriptures or the Confessions” as opposed to “of mixed confession” or “heterodox.” The proposed new Constitution speaks only of “holding a different confession” and organizations that “promote a position contrary to the confessional position of Synod.” Fourth, and very telling, is the change to the old Condition of Membership 4: “Exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymnbooks, and catechisms in church and school,” to “Use of worship and catechetical resources that are in harmony with the confessional basis of the Synod.” The exclusivity of pure doctrine in worship and catechesis would no longer be emphasized.

We note, furthermore, that as the proposed changes to the Constitution marginalize the purity of doctrine and practice in the teaching and practice of the church and her fellowship, the fellowship of the church becomes increasingly man-centered and man-worked. In the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, the Church and her fellowship is simultaneously created and manifested by God alone in the pure preaching of the Gospel and right administration of the Sacraments (AC VII). Congregations, synods, and the church can do no more than recognize this unity by that purely preached Gospel and Sacraments. In the proposed changes to the Constitution, however, church fellowship must not only be conserved and promoted but nurtured, manifested, and worked toward by human effort.

These proposed changes would be the end of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as a confessional Lutheran church. All declarations about the Lutheran Confessions, the Word and the Sacraments, or purity of doctrine and practice, would be relegated to a marginal or secondary level in our Synod’s self-understanding and mission. Under the proposed new Constitution, the old and historic language and doctrine could be tolerated, resolutions passed, and doctrinal statements made, but the new Constitution itself would remove all these corrective measures and doctrinal statements to a secondary level, forcing them to yield always to the primary matters of missions and personal saving faith.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District in convention declare that they would be unable to accept these proposed changes to the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with a clear conscience; and be it further

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District urge the Synod and the BRTFSSG to reject all proposed changes to the Synod’s Constitution, as well as the change in doctrine that is embedded in these proposed changes; and be it further

Resolved, That this resolution be forwarded immediately to the BRTFSSG for incorporation into its ongoing work; and be it finally

Resolved, That this resolution be sent as an overture to the 2010 LCMS convention.

Wyoming District

8-16

To Retain Current Constitution Articles II–IV, VI–VII

WHEREAS, Articles II–IV and VI–VII of the current Constitution are not articles based on church structure and human governance, regarding which Holy Scriptures are silent; and

WHEREAS, Articles II–IV and VI–VII are about the very foundation of the reason and purpose of Synod and are not subject to changing social standards, economics, or administrative styles; and

WHEREAS, Current lack of enforcement of provisions is not a legitimate reason for change; therefore be it

Resolved, That Articles II–IV and VI–VII of the current Constitution not be changed through reduction or addition in any new edition of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That Articles II–VII hold precedent over other articles of the Constitution, and that no changes can be made in these articles without the dissolution of the Synod.

Deshler Circuit Forum
Nebraska District

8-17

To Align Synod Structure with Walther’s Church and Ministry

WHEREAS, The Synod in 1851 declared C. F. W. Walther’s *Theses on Church and Ministry* to be the position of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Synod in its 1852 convention also declared C. F. W. Walther’s book *The Voice of Our Church on the Question of Church and Ministry* (1852) to be the pure doctrine (*reine Lehre*) of church and ministry; and

WHEREAS, The 2001 convention of the LCMS adopted Res. 7-17A “To Affirm Synod’s Official Position on Church and Ministry”; and

WHEREAS, The first resolve of 2001 Res. 7-17A states, “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod meeting in convention in the year of our Lord 2001 affirm[s] the above referenced writings of C. F. W. Walther as the definitive statement under Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions of the Synod’s understanding on the subject of church and ministry”; and

WHEREAS, The second resolve of 2001 Res. 7-17A states, “That the LCMS in convention reaffirm[s] the decision of the 1852 convention in recognizing C. F. W. Walther’s book *The Voice of Our Church on the Question of Church and Ministry* as the official position of the LCMS”; and

WHEREAS, Thesis X of Part Two, “Concerning the Holy Ministry or the Pastoral Office,” in Walther’s *Church and Ministry* affirms the following: “To the ministry of the Word, according to divine right, belongs also the duty [*Amt*] to judge doctrine, but laymen also possess this right. Therefore, in the ecclesiastical courts (consistories) and councils they are accorded both a seat and vote together with the clergy”; and

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance publication *Congregation–Synod–Church: Basic Theological Principles Underlying LCMS Structure and Governance* does not make one single reference to Walther’s *Church and Ministry*; therefore be it

Resolved, That the South Wisconsin District assembled in convention in 2009 memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to make

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no changes in the Synod's structure that are not in conformity with Walther's *Church and Ministry*; and be it further

Resolved, That the South Wisconsin District assembled in convention in 2009 memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to ensure that the Synod's Bylaws are in conformity with the contents of Walther's *Church and Ministry*.

South Wisconsin District

8-18

To Affirm Integrity and Dignity of All Congregations

WHEREAS, The church is "the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly" (AC VII); and

WHEREAS, The Lord gathers His people as church around His means of grace in particular places, even if they are only few in number (see Matthew 18:17–20); and

WHEREAS, Each local congregation therefore has all the dignity, gifts, and authority of the church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, No congregation has more or less of Christ and His forgiveness than any other; and

WHEREAS, C. F. W. Walther summarized the matter thus in *The Form of a Christian Congregation*: "All congregations and pastors as such have equal authority, and therefore no congregation or minister as such is either superior or inferior to the others. This fact is attested by Luther when he writes, 'We know that in Christendom it is so arranged that all congregations are equal. . . . Wherever there is a church, no matter where it may be in the whole world, it has no other Gospel or Holy Scripture, no other Baptism or Sacrament, no other faith and Spirit, no other Christ and God, no other Lord's Prayer and intercession, no other hope and eternal life, than we have here in our congregations at Wittenberg'" (CPH, 1961; reprint 2005, p. 192); and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that congregations' equal dignity before the Lord be manifested in the ways they walk with one another; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Missouri District encourage all of its congregations to continue to recognize and practice these biblical and evangelical truths; and be it further

Resolved, That the Missouri District memorialize the Synod to continue upholding the equal dignity, gifts, and authority of its member congregations in its theology and reflecting these truths as its theology is applied in polity and in day-to-day relations.

Missouri District; Carrollton Circuit Forum, Missouri District;
Zion, Moberly, MO; St. John, Brunswick, MO

8-19

To Respect All Congregations Equally

WHEREAS, Pastor Jon Braunersreuther, Assistant to Pastor Gerald Kieschnick, President of the LCMS, in speaking on behalf of the President of Synod and on behalf of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has stated clearly and repetitively, "It's about the congregations. Congregations are the key" (see "Introductory Remarks: The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance Report"); and

WHEREAS, Professor Leopold A. Sanchez of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, speaking as a professor of systematic theology and as Director of the Center for Hispanic Studies at Concordia Seminary

and writing with a heart for missions and a concern for those congregations in danger of being marginalized "on the borderlands," has given the good counsel that "the principle of mission on the borderlands will not promote a proposal for greater representation based on number of members per congregation, but rather continue the current practice of providing each congregation of Synod the same voice at the table" (*Concordia Journal*, Winter 2009, 35:1, p. 32); and

WHEREAS, The Synod has always been understood as a synod of congregations serving one another and not as a mass of people demanding purely democratic representation for the division of organizational control; and

WHEREAS, As a Synod, we want to show the highest respect to all congregations, regardless of demographics or size; and

WHEREAS, Voting in the Church should be understood not as a way to exercise political power, nor to establish organizational control (as are the ways of the world; cf. Mark 10:42–43), but rather as the opposite, the way for congregations to give their joyful assent and bear witness of their unity and their service to one another, especially to the smaller congregations and those doing mission work on the margins (on "the borderlands," to use Professor Sanchez's phrase); and

WHEREAS, Examples of larger congregations exercising electoral power over smaller congregations is found wanting in both Scripture and in Church history (as also in Missouri Synod history); therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS, continuing in its historic doctrine and practice of respecting all congregations equally, will give favored voting status to none of them but will listen to all of their voices with equal honor and respect and will show this equal honor and respect also in the allotment of voting rights in our Synod.

North and South Sandia Circuit Forum

Rocky Mountain District

8-20

To Give Congregation Overtures Equal Consideration

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG acknowledges that "the Synod considers the local congregation to be the basic unit of Synod polity"; and

WHEREAS, The Synod exists to serve our congregations; and

WHEREAS, We need grassroots support for our Synod's policies and actions; and

WHEREAS, The most grassroots entities in the Synod are the local congregations; therefore be it

Resolved, That floor committees give all resolutions from congregations, circuit forums, and Synod boards or commissions equal consideration.

Mount Hood Circuit

Northwest District

8-21

To Reject All Proposals That Limit or Hinder Participation of Congregations

WHEREAS, "The Synod considers the local congregation to be the basic unit of Synod polity" and "the [BRTFSSG] recommendations seek to broaden the voice and participation of the congregations in the Synod" (BRTFSSG Final Report, p. 15); and

WHEREAS, The report from Bredholt & Co. and Epley Research & Consulting concludes, "For the LCMS, a four-part approach is

recommended: (1) Focus on congregational mission ... and (4) Affirm congregations as the principal stakeholders in the Synod” (Ibid., pp. 18–19); and

WHEREAS, The Bredholt & Co. and Epley Research & Consulting report specifically concludes, “Put in place a system of governance that aims for *a wider congregational voice within the functioning of the Synod* [emphasis added]. Give congregations a more direct say in the affairs of the church. This includes voting on Synod leadership and key policy issues” (Ibid.); and

WHEREAS, In its final report, the task force reiterates that congregations “historically are the basic unit of the Synod” and that “structure is intended to broaden and amplify the participation and voice of the congregations” (Ibid., p. 21); therefore be it

Resolved, That any recommendation that limits or hinders the participation of congregations be rejected; and be it further

Resolved, That BRTFSSG Recommendation 3 be modified to read:

Current Recommendation	Modified Recommendation
“... Because circuit counselors are the ecclesial extension of district presidents, the task force recommends that circuit counselors be nominated by district presidents in consultation with the respective district praesidium.” (p. 23)	“... Since circuit counselors serve as connections between the circuit congregations and the district, circuit counselors are elected by the member circuit congregations.”
and be it further	

Resolved, That Recommendation 13 (“Increase Congregational Participation in the Election of the Synod President and First Vice-President,” p. 33) be adopted; and be it further

Resolved, That Recommendation 16 (p. 36) be modified by eliminating the second sentence as follows: “Congregations are encouraged to submit overtures to their district conventions through circuit forums and to the national convention through their district conventions. ~~Although all submitted overtures shall still be considered, resolutions from circuit forums and district conventions will receive priority at district and national conventions, respectively.~~”; and be it finally

Resolved, That all recommendations of the BRTFSSG be reviewed to maintain the congregational basis of the Synod.

Circuit 2
Southeastern District

8-22

To Retain Congregational Orientation of Synod

Rationale

Proposal 3 of the report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) to district conventions rightly notes, “Congregations are the *voting* members of the Synod.” This has been the conception of the Synod since its beginning. A congregation, defined simply for the purposes of our Synod’s doctrine, is the regular gathering of a called and ordained preacher and his hearers (i.e., pastors and laity). This definition is rooted firmly in the confessional Lutheran definition of the church and ministry (AC V, VII, XIV, and XXVIII). The beauty of this definition is that the understanding of the congregation is founded not upon the Law but upon the Gospel, that is, the local distribution of Christ’s work of salvation in the oral Word, Baptism, Absolution, and Holy Communion.

While it is true that neither the Scriptures nor the Lutheran Confessions mandate a particular form of church structure and governance, our Synod has used its congregational nature to express the basic Lutheran understanding of the church and her ministerial office. The local congregation (i.e., preachers and hearers together) is divinely mandated and therefore has in itself all the gifts which belong to the whole church (see *Congregation–Synod–Church [CSC]*, 12 and 13, pp. 11–12). The congregational nature of our Synod has always been expressed by a governance in convention that represents our congregations equally by pastors and laity. It is in this way, in particular, that the congregation is the basic unit of Synod (see *CSC*, 12, p. 12).

The proposals of the BRTFSSG repeatedly verbalize the ideal that the Synod retain and strengthen its congregational orientation. But the proposals themselves seriously undermine “the congregational nature” of our Synod. It must be noted here that none of the enumerated “current problems or deficiencies” are new to the Synod, and each existed in some form when the Synod’s first Constitution was written. At the heart of the proposed changes is a program of replacing this theological definition of the congregation and its governance in the Synod with a definition based on political ideals that tend toward the centralization of influence and taking voice away from the local congregation. We note this pattern in the following proposals of the BRTFSSG to district conventions:

Proposal 6: “Determine Equitable Congregational Representation at District Conventions”—This proposal sweeps away congregations as “the *voting* members of Synod” and replaces it with a principle of “equitable representation.” The congregation would be defined by its numerical membership, and large congregations would be counted as super-congregations in the structure and governance of Synod and awarded additional votes at convention. The proposals regarding vacancies and multiple-point parishes should not be designed to upset the Synod’s historic congregational balance.

Proposal 8: “Determine Congregational Representation to National Conventions”—The determination of a district’s delegation by counting the membership of its individual congregations flatly denies that it is the congregations that are “the *voting* members of Synod.” The basis for the governance of the Synod, in this radical change, would be the individual members of a congregation, not the congregation itself. A related problem in this proposal is the suggestion that districts be allowed to choose delegates in a way that rejects the current localized (circuit) method of choosing delegates.

“Proposal 9: “Amend the Process of Submitting Overtures to National and District Conventions”—This proposal prioritizes the legislative work of the Synod away from the local congregation toward the larger political entities (e.g., districts). The voice of the local congregation should be heard as clearly as that of circuits and districts. Overtures submitted to conventions should be received on their own merit, regardless of origin.

Proposal 12: “Consider Future District Configuration”—The proposal for forming larger, rather than smaller, districts would remove the district leadership and supervision farther from the local congregation (both numerically and geographically). The necessary consequence would also be the further centralization of district and Synod work away from the local congregation, contrary to the verbalized intention of the BRTFSSG.

These examples suffice to illustrate that the BRTFSSG proposals signal a fundamental change in the theological and political orientation of our Synod’s structure and governance.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District in convention urge the Synod and the BRTFSSG to abandon this new orientation as represented in the proposals listed above; and be it further

Resolved, That this resolution be forwarded immediately to the BRTFSSG for incorporation into its ongoing work; and be it finally

Resolved, That this resolution be sent as an overture to the 2010 LCMS convention.

Wyoming District

8-23

To Remove Task Force Proposal re Constitutional Subscription

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 1: Affirm and Clarify Governing Documents in the task force's final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import; and

WHEREAS, This recommendation appears to contradict proposed Article VII A 1, which states that the Synod "is but an advisory body"; and

WHEREAS, Subscription to the Synod's Constitution renders Synod more than "advisory" power; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod to remove the phrase "and to its Constitution" from proposed Article VI A 1 and proposed Article VI B 1.

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA; Zion, Wilton, IA

8-24

To Delete Reference to Constitution from Proposed Article VII

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 1: Affirm and Clarify Governing Documents in the task force's final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import; and

WHEREAS, Several statements in Article VII appear contradictory to Article VII A 1, which states that the Synod "is but an advisory body"; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod to delete "and the Constitution" from proposed Article VII B and delete proposed Article VII B 2 in its entirety.

Our Savior
Muscatine, IA

8-25

To Reject Coercive Language in Handbook

WHEREAS, The unity of the Church is founded upon words of theology, not ideology; and

WHEREAS, The proposed wording for the constitution as created and recommended by the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) states that members of Synod will have to agree (by accepting the new polity prescribed by the new constitution) to "abide by, honor, and uphold the collective will of the Synod as expressed in its Constitution, Bylaws, and convention resolutions"; and

WHEREAS, "Collective will" is a term not of theology but of ideology (Marxist ideology and socialism, etc.); and

WHEREAS, The ideological idea of the collective will (and other terms of collectivism, centralization, and statism) is an idea that marginalizes or excludes those who do not assent (or give their agreement) to the collective will as that collective will may be imposed at any particular time; and

WHEREAS, The ideological words and concepts of collectivism are by their very nature intended to establish control and coercion; and

WHEREAS, The congregations of the LCMS are not under the control or coercion of the Synod structure or bureaucracy but, rather, are congregations having freely joined themselves in the Synod in order to better serve one another and with one another; therefore be it

Resolved, That all requirements imposed by the Constitution comport in both spirit and letter to the statement that "the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and...is but an advisory body" (LCMS Constitution, Art. VII); and be it further

Resolved, That at every point applicable in the documents (Constitution, Bylaws, proposals, etc.), the language employed clearly speaks not coercively but of the fellowship we have in the doctrine of Holy Scripture as expounded in the Lutheran Confessions, freely subscribed by all our congregations and pastors; and be it finally

Resolved, That the term "collective will," as also any other terms of ideology or collectivism, be removed from any proposals for additions or changes to the Constitution or Bylaws or other resolutions or documents of the LCMS.

North and South Sandia Circuit Forum
Rocky Mountain District

8-26

To Use "between" to Describe Relationship of Synod and Its Members

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 1: Affirm and Clarify Governing Documents in the task force's final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import and speaks of the relation "of" the Synod and its members; and

WHEREAS, This relationship is BETWEEN the Synod and its members; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod to replace the proposed “Relation of the Synod and Its Members” in Constitution Art. VII with “Relation between the Synod and Its Members.”

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA; Zion, Wilton, IA

8-27

To Retain Current Congregational Representation

WHEREAS, From its inception, the LCMS has been an organization of equal congregations; and

WHEREAS, There have been significant differences in the sizes of member congregations from the very beginning of the history of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The proposal of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) to give larger congregations more votes at district conventions changes a foundational assumption of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG does not explain the implications of this change to the nature of the Synod or what the benefits would follow for the Synod as a whole; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Southern Illinois District in convention urge the BRTFSSG to retain equal representation for all parishes at district conventions.

Southern Illinois District; Zion, Wilton, IA

8-28

To Maintain Present Form of Delegate Representation

WHEREAS, There is an attempt to change the present procedure of selecting delegates to the LCMS convention (e.g., the 2006 Texas District convention voted to send a resolution to the Synod urging a “study and implementation of a new system of convention representation, based on ‘more equitable’ representation of congregations” [July 2006 *Reporter*]); and

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has issued a report titled “Proposals and Possibilities for Consideration and Discussion”; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG proposes that the Synod “allow congregations with more than 750 confirmed members to be represented [at district conventions] by two additional delegates for each additional unit of 750 members or majority thereof”; and

WHEREAS, This plan proposes the elimination of electoral units, **thus** affecting delegate representation at both district and national Synod conventions; and

WHEREAS, The plan would grant larger congregations more voting power than smaller congregations; and

WHEREAS, Jesus says, “Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there I am in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20); and

WHEREAS, In God’s sight a small congregation is just as important as a large congregation; and

WHEREAS, A small congregation possesses the same Office of the Keys as a large congregation; and

WHEREAS, The size of a congregation, be it large or small, is no guarantee that it is more faithful to God’s Word and thus entitled to more power and more authority and influence, et cetera; and

WHEREAS, The 2001 LCMS convention adopted and reaffirmed that Walther’s *Church and Ministry* is our Synod’s “official” position on church and ministry; and

WHEREAS, Walther in his *Church and Ministry* quotes Luther: “In short, God does not want to be bound to a multitude, greatness, height, power, and whatever else is personable among people, but He wants to be only with those who love and keep His Word, even if they were mere stableboys. What does He care for the high, great, and mighty lords? He alone is the greatest, highest, and mightiest.... Here we have the Lord Himself, [ruling] over all angels and other creatures, who says that they should all have the same power, keys, and office, even two humble Christians gathered together in His name” (p. 89); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS Convention reject the report of the BRTFSSG; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention reaffirm that its present form of selecting voting delegates, regardless of the size of the congregation (both small and large congregations have equal power, authority, and representation), is biblical and in agreement with the Lutheran Confessions as well as our Synod’s “official” teachings as found in Walther’s *Church and Ministry*; and be it finally

Resolved, That the convention retain the present form and practice of selecting delegates to conventions of the Synod.

Salem

Taylorsville, NC

8-29

To Retain Voting Delegates as Lay and Pastoral

WHEREAS, One of the basic foundations of the structure of the LCMS was a balance of power between the laity and the clergy; and

WHEREAS, This is maintained by having voting representation at conventions consist of one pastor and one lay delegate from each parish or electoral circuit; and

WHEREAS, The change suggested by Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) making voting representation one ordained and one nonordained, which allows commissioned ministers to replace a lay delegate, is an essential change of this basic foundation of a balance of power between the laity and the clergy and would give professional church workers a preponderance of voting power; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has not demonstrated why maintaining this balance of power is no longer important; and

WHEREAS, The only justification given by the BRTFSSG is that it would enfranchise commissioned ministers; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Southern Illinois District request the BRTFSSG to abandon the proposal of changing voting categories to ordained and non-ordained.

Southern Illinois District

8-30

To Retain Current Article V of Constitution

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 5 in the task force's final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import; and

WHEREAS, This recommendation will reduce the voice of the commissioned ministers and deprive the Synod of their vast experience; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church of Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod NOT to change Article V of the Synod's Constitution.

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA; Zion, Wilton, IA

8-31

To Reject Any Proposed Changes re Voting Delegates to Synod Conventions

WHEREAS, The President of the Synod in 2005 appointed a Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) to "do a thorough, zero-based assessment of the entirety of the system of governance and organizational structure" and provide "recommended improvements [that] ... suggest a form of structure and governance for the decades ahead"; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has brought forward the following for consideration and discussion: "Elect national convention delegates at district conventions"; and

WHEREAS, If adopted, this new procedure for electing national convention delegates at district conventions would necessarily eliminate the current procedure whereby national convention delegates are elected by electoral circuits; and

WHEREAS, Under the current procedure, congregations have a direct and immediate voice in the election of their delegates to national conventions; and

WHEREAS, Under the new procedure put forward by the BRTFSSG for consideration and discussion, congregations would have a more indirect and less immediate voice in the election of their delegates to national Synod conventions; and

WHEREAS, Under the new procedure put forward by the BRTFSSG for consideration and discussion, delegates to national conventions would in effect be representing their districts rather than their electoral circuit congregations; and

WHEREAS, Under the new procedure put forward by the BRTFSSG for consideration and discussion, the potential exists for the development of "voting blocs" within the districts, thereby fostering unnecessary division and discord; and

WHEREAS, Under the new procedure put forward by the BRTFSSG for consideration and discussion, a "majority bloc" with a very narrow voting margin over a "minority bloc" could, in effect, be in a "winner take all" position with regard to the makeup of a district's delegation to a national Synod convention, thereby effectively disenfranchising members within the "minority bloc"; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to reject any proposal of the BRTFSSG that provides for a congregation to be represented in any other way than by one pastor and one lay delegate at the circuit forums which elect one pastoral and one lay delegate for the national conventions of the Synod.

Minnesota North District

8-32

To Reject Proposed Change re Voting Delegates to District Conventions

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has submitted "Walking Together—The LCMS Future: Proposals and Possibilities for Consideration and Discussion" to each congregation of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has stated that these "proposals/possibilities are not final by any means" and therefore seeks the input of the local member congregations of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Several parts of the proposals/possibilities of the BRTFSSG could lead to an uneven balance of congregational representation on the district level; and

WHEREAS, Larger congregations are not better or more important to Christ, and smaller congregations are not inferior or less important to Christ and His mission; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to reject any proposal of the BRTFSSG that each parish in a district be represented at the district conventions of the Synod in any other way than by one pastor and one lay delegate.

Minnesota North District

8-33

To Reject "Associate Members" Recommendation

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG), in its final report, lists as Recommendation 2 the proposal to combine ministers of religion—ordained and ministers of religion—commissioned as "associate members" (p. 22; cf. *Appendix I*, pp. 1.4–1.5; 1.12); and

WHEREAS, The proposal for "associate members" implies that ministers of religion—ordained and ministers of religion—commissioned are of equal status and suggests that their role is somewhat interchangeable; and

WHEREAS, Such an implication or suggestion is not reflective of the historic LCMS definition of Word and Sacrament ministry as maintained by C. F. W. Walther's theses on ministry—especially Thesis VIII, which maintains that the pastoral office is the highest office in the church and that all other offices stem from it; and

WHEREAS, The ministry of Word and Sacrament is identified as the "ministry" proper, which describes the pastoral office (AC V), and the marks of the church are the Word and Sacraments (AC VII); and

WHEREAS, Historically, the LCMS has consistently maintained that congregations should be represented by one pastor and one lay delegate (LCMS Constitution, Art. V); therefore be it

Resolved, That Recommendation 2 and its proposal for "associate members" be rejected; and be it further

Resolved, That resolution of the important issue of representation on the part of ministers of religion—commissioned flow from a different approach that does not imply or suggest the equality of the pastoral office with those offices that "stem from it."

Circuit 2

Southeastern District

8-34

To Clarify Voting Rights of the Preaching Office

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in 1851 declared C. F. W. Walther’s *Theses on Church and Ministry* to be the position of the LCMS; and

WHEREAS, The 1852 LCMS convention also declared C. F. W. Walther’s book *The Voice of the Church on the Question of Church and Ministry* to be the pure doctrine (*reine Lehre*) of church and ministry; and

WHEREAS, The 2001 LCMS convention adopted Res. 7-17A, “To Affirm Synod’s Official Position on Church and Ministry”; and

WHEREAS, The first resolve of Res. 7-17A states, “That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod meeting in convention in the year of our Lord 2001 affirm the above referenced writings of C. F. W. Walther as the definitive statement under Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions of the Synod’s understanding on the subject of church and ministry”; and

WHEREAS, The second resolve of Res. 7-17A states, “That the LCMS in convention reaffirm the decision of the 1852 convention in recognizing C. F. W. Walther’s book, *The Voice of Our Church on the Question of Church and Ministry*, as the official position of the LCMS”; and

WHEREAS, Thesis X of Part Two, “Concerning the Holy Ministry or the Pastoral Office,” in Walther’s *Church and Ministry* affirms the following: “To the ministry of the Word, according to divine right, belongs also the duty [*Amt*] to judge doctrine, but laymen also possess this right. Therefore, in the ecclesiastical courts (consistories) and councils they are accorded both a seat and vote together with the clergy”; and

WHEREAS, *The Ministry: Offices, Procedure, and Nomenclature*, a 1981 report of the LCMS CTCR, does not equate the Office of the Public Ministry and “auxiliary offices” but rather asserts the opposite when it asks and answers the following question (p. 30): “5. May teachers be franchised at synodical and district conventions? We see no theological reason why they may not be allowed to vote, provided that this is not done to the exclusion of those who hold the office of the public ministry. In that case the church would be making its decisions without the advice and registered voting opinions of those who are specifically trained, called, and charged with the spiritual and doctrinal oversight of the churches. Likewise, to exert an egalitarianism that equates all ‘professional’ offices in the church is to ignore the divinely ordained nature of the office of the public ministry and equate it with those offices that are auxiliary to it”; and

WHEREAS, Even the final report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) cites evidence that “clergy will increasingly become the guardians of denominationalism” and that the LCMS “is a pastor-led synod” (p. 47); therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention clarify that the duty to judge doctrine belongs to the “ministry of the Word” and to “laymen” and that it is by divine right and not a matter of adiaphora; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS clarify that the Office of Public Ministry (i.e., the *Predigtamt* or “minister of religion—ordained”) is not to be equated with auxiliary offices; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS reaffirm and apply its position that the “duty to judge doctrine” belongs to the “ministry of the Word” and to “laymen” by rejecting any voting rights being given to “auxiliary offices” that result in depriving either ministers of religion—ordained or laymen of their divine right.

Circuit 3 Forum
South Wisconsin District

8-35

To Preserve Fifty Percent Lay Vote

WHEREAS, Since its beginning, the Synod has wisely provided that 50 percent of votes at Synod conventions are to be cast by laypeople, members of the “priesthood of all believers”; and

WHEREAS, Several proposals currently under consideration would open up the lay vote to professional church workers; and

WHEREAS, These proposals would almost certainly cause the lay vote to become a minority in district and national Synod conventions; and

WHEREAS, God has richly blessed the Synod by using faithful lay voting representatives to preserve our Synod in times of doctrinal controversy; and

WHEREAS, Lay members of our Synod’s congregations vastly outnumber the professional church workers who are members of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Such lay members provide the vast majority of the financial support to the church when compared with professional church workers; and

WHEREAS, Opening the lay vote to professional church workers would often put those who receive their living from the church (i.e., professional church workers) in the majority when district salary scales and other financial matters are determined; and

WHEREAS, Professional church workers are really not laypeople in the strictest sense, since they serve the church by means of a divine call (as do pastors) and the auxiliary offices flow from the one divinely established office—the Office of the Public Ministry (the pastoral office); therefore be it

Resolved, That proposals to open up the lay vote to professional church workers be respectfully declined; and be it further

Resolved, That 50 percent of votes at Synod conventions continue to be reserved for laypeople.

St. John
New Minden, IL

8-36

To Expand Voting Membership to Other Members of Synod

WHEREAS, Article V of the LCMS Constitution provides for membership in the Synod for “congregations, ministers of religion—ordained, and ministers of religion—commissioned”; and

WHEREAS, Article V A provides for representation of congregations at district meetings and groups of congregations at national Synod meetings by pastoral and lay delegates; and

WHEREAS, Article V of the Constitution does not allow ministers of religion—commissioned, who also are members of Synod, to serve as voting representatives of their congregations at district meetings or of groups of congregations at national Synod meetings; and

WHEREAS, Allowing ministers of religion—commissioned to be voting members would allow districts and the national Synod to make full use of the talents of ministers of religion—commissioned; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Kansas District meeting in convention in 2009 recommend to the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance that it continue its study of the right of franchise of commissioned ministers of the Synod; and be it further

2010 Convention Workbook

Resolved, That the Kansas District meeting in convention in 2009 commend to the Synod convention of 2010 that ministers of religion—commissioned be eligible to be chosen as voting delegates to the conventions of the national Synod and its districts while maintaining the balance of voting between laymen and clergy.

Kansas District

8-37

To Provide for Equitable Representation and Voice for Commissioned Ministers

WHEREAS, Bylaw 2.6.1 defines individual members of the Synod as “Ministers of the Gospel,” designated by the Synod as “ministers of religion—ordained” (ordained ministers) or “ministers of religion—commissioned” (commissioned ministers),” who are eligible for membership in the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Synod has recognized the ministry contributions of teachers, deaconesses, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of parish music, parish assistants, certified lay ministers, and directors of family life ministry through their inclusion as “ministers of religion—commissioned”; and

WHEREAS, The contribution and needs of commissioned ministers are distinct from those of the clergy and the laity as demonstrated by their inclusion as a distinct category on the board of directors of the Pacific Southwest District; and

WHEREAS, The voice of the commissioned minister is held negligible due to the Synod’s definition of voting delegates as “one a pastor and one a lay delegate”; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Pacific Southwest District convention memorialize the Synod in convention to seat one commissioned minister per district as a voting delegate to the national Synod convention and one commissioned minister per circuit to district conventions.

Pacific Southwest District

8-38

To Allow Ministers of Religion—Commissioned to Serve as Voting Delegates

WHEREAS, God has called His people to be workers in His kingdom as ministers of religion—commissioned (teachers, directors of Christian education, family life ministers, *etc.*); and

WHEREAS, Ministers of religion—commissioned are looked upon to provide leadership in many schools, congregations, and agencies of the LCMS; and

WHEREAS, There has been a long tradition of service from such ministers of religion—commissioned; and

WHEREAS, The Synod *Handbook* does not allow such individuals to serve as voting delegates at either district or national Synod conventions; and

WHEREAS, Ministers of religion—commissioned are allowed to be advisory delegates to national Synod conventions at a ratio of one commissioned minister per sixty (60) rostered ministers of religion—commissioned in each district (Bylaw 3.1.3.1); and

WHEREAS, The members of the Northwest District consider this voting privilege to be a high priority because of the ministry of the ministers of religion—commissioned and the issue of equity; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Northwest District in convention urge the national Synod in convention and the Blue Ribbon Task Force on

2010 Convention Workbook

Synod Structure and Governance to provide commissioned ministers an opportunity to serve as district and national convention voting delegates.

Northwest District

8-39

To Establish Process for Electing Commissioned Ministers as Voting Delegates to District Conventions

Preamble

Commissioned ministers are the only members of Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregations that may not serve as voting delegates to its district conventions. While many have recognized that this is basically unfair, no one has offered a proposal that has been found acceptable to correct it. As a compromise, commissioned ministers have been given advisory status with no voting rights.

Many LCMS congregations today face the situation of non-rostered individuals filling roles traditionally filled by commissioned ministers. A school with ten teachers may have six rostered commissioned ministers and four lay teachers. Each of the four lay teachers is eligible to be elected as a congregation’s lay voting delegate, while the six commissioned ministers can never be elected as voting delegates.

The issue of voting by commissioned ministers has been one that the Synod has attempted to address many times over the years without success. Difficulty has always arisen because of the Synod’s practice of maintaining a balance between clergy and lay voters. Commissioned ministers do not fit comfortably into either category. This resolution is crafted in such a way as to respect that balance and impact it as little as possible.

A secondary related issue is the consideration that all congregations should be represented equally. How would congregations that have no commissioned ministers be fairly represented? This resolution maintains that, as much as possible, all congregations should have an equal voice in selecting delegates regardless of whether or not a particular congregation is served by commissioned ministers.

Resolved, That there be a voting commissioned minister from each circuit for district conventions; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention adopt the following process for selecting commissioned ministers to serve as voting delegates to district conventions.

1. Each circuit shall meet at the call of the counselor to elect its commissioned minister not later than six months prior to the opening day of the district convention.
2. In the announcement for the meeting the circuit counselor shall call for nominations of commissioned ministers to be elected as the circuit voting delegate from that circuit. Any member of Synod who is also a member of the circuit may make a nomination.
3. The election shall be by written ballot.
4. The privilege of voting shall be exercised by one pastor and one layperson from each member congregation of the circuit, both of whom shall have been selected in the manner prescribed by the congregation.
5. Multiple parishes shall be entitled to a lay vote from each member congregation.
6. Each voter may write in the names of two commissioned minister nominees on the initial ballot. The three commissioned ministers (or more, in case of a tie vote for third place) who received the highest number of votes in

7. On the next ballot each voter shall vote for only one candidate. Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least votes being removed from each succeeding ballot until one commissioned minister shall have received a simple majority of all votes cast, whereupon he or she shall be declared the commissioned minister delegate.
8. The congregation from which the commissioned minister delegate has been elected shall then be removed from consideration for supplying an alternate commissioned minister delegate to that particular convention unless there are no other commissioned ministers available from other congregations.
9. All other commissioned ministers who received at least one vote on the initial ballot shall be eligible for election as the alternate.
10. Each voter shall now vote for only one candidate.
11. Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least votes being removed from each succeeding ballot until one commissioned minister shall have received a simple majority of all votes cast, whereupon he or she shall be declared the alternate commissioned minister delegate.
12. The counselor shall report the results of the election to the secretary of the district in writing immediately after said election.
13. If neither the delegate nor the alternate can serve, the vacancy may be filled by the district president in consultation with the respective circuit counselor.
14. Circuits that have no commissioned ministers that hold membership in circuit congregations will have no commissioned minister delegate for the district convention.
15. All direct costs for the commissioned minister in participating in the district convention shall be born by the district.
16. The voting delegates shall replace the previous advisory delegate status of commissioned ministers.

And be it finally

Resolved, That the CCM make such changes to the Bylaws of the Synod as are necessary to implement this resolution.

Board of Directors
Northern Illinois District

8-40

To Establish Process for Electing Commissioned Ministers as Voting Delegates to Synod Conventions

Preamble

This resolution presupposes the adoption of the resolution “To Establish Process for Electing Commissioned Ministers as Voting Delegates to District Conventions.”

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention adopt the following process for selecting commissioned ministers to serve as voting delegates to conventions of the Synod.

1. Each district shall elect (a) commissioned minister(s) at its district convention to serve as (a) voting delegate(s) to the national convention.
2. Each commissioned minister who has served as a voting delegate to the district convention shall be considered as nominated to be elected as a voting delegate to the Synod

convention unless he/she removes himself/herself from consideration by notifying the district secretary.

3. The commissioned minister(s) who receive(s) a majority of the votes cast shall be elected as delegate(s) to the Synod convention.
4. If further balloting is necessary, the ballot shall contain two names for every remaining position to be elected, determined by who received the highest number of votes on the first ballot. On all subsequent ballots, the commissioned minister with the lowest number of votes shall be removed from the ballot.
5. All districts shall be entitled to at least one commissioned minister voting delegate.
6. Districts with more than ten non-exceptional circuits shall be entitled to one extra commissioned minister delegate and one more in every multiple of four above that (*i.e.*, districts with 11 circuits will have two delegates; if there are 15 eligible circuits they receive 3 delegates, etc.).
7. Non-exceptional circuits are those that meet all the numerical numbers in Bylaw 3.1.2 without exception.
8. Six months prior to the district convention the Secretary of the Synod shall determine and notify each district how many commissioned ministers it is entitled to elect;

and be it further

Resolved, That the CCM shall make such changes to the Bylaws of the Synod as are necessary to implement this resolution.

Board of Directors
Northern Illinois District

8-41

To Provide for Commissioned Minister Representation at Conventions

WHEREAS, God led the framers of the LCMS Constitution through Pastor Martin Stephan and the Marbach controversy to establish an equal lay and pastoral balance at all conventions; and

WHEREAS, Additional categories of church professionals, all under the heading “ministers of religion—commissioned,” have arisen to meet the opportunities and challenges of congregational ministry over the years; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has struggled with the challenge of giving voting authority to its ministers of religion—commissioned; and

WHEREAS, The congregations served by many of these workers are larger than congregations served only by ministers of religion—ordained; therefore be it

Resolved, That each congregation be permitted to send to each circuit forum and district convention one “ministers of religion—ordained” delegate, one lay delegate, and one “ministers of religion—commissioned” delegate and one additional lay delegate if they have one or more such workers; and be it further

Resolved, That each circuit having “ministers of religion—commissioned” delegates be permitted to send one “ministers of religion—commissioned” delegate and one additional lay delegate to Synod conventions; and be it finally

Resolved, That all circuit forums have advisory “ministers of religion—ordained” delegates and one advisory “ministers of religion—commissioned” delegate, but that all advisory delegates be eliminated from district and national Synod conventions.

Deshler Circuit Forum
Nebraska District

8-42

To Allow Advisory Members to Be Named Voting Delegates in Place of Voting Pastors

WHEREAS, It is “Our Lord’s will that the diversities of gifts should be for the common profit. 1 Cor. 12:4–31” (Preamble to Constitution); and

WHEREAS, Under our current system, advisory members of the Synod (rostered church workers such as assistant pastors, ministers not in charge of congregations, professors at the Synod’s educational institutions, teachers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, deaconesses, and others as listed in Constitution Art. V B) are not allowed to cast a ballot in a circuit forum, district convention, or national Synod convention; and

WHEREAS, Many of these faithful servants have extraordinary God-given talents, theological acumen, and extensive real-world experience; and

WHEREAS, There is no theological reason why these church professionals should not judge doctrine every bit as much as pastors or laypeople; and

WHEREAS, Many of these servants of Christ are “of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (Acts 6:3); and

WHEREAS, Casting a ballot at a convention is not a distinctive function of the pastoral office; and

WHEREAS, Other called workers serve in offices that are auxiliary to the pastoral office, offices which flow from and have their root in the pastoral office; and

WHEREAS, These workers serve by virtue of a divine call every bit as much as pastors; and

WHEREAS, At the district level, lay delegates have an alternate to serve in case they are unable to serve at a convention but pastors do not; therefore be it

Resolved, That in circuit forums and district conventions, when there is a pastoral vacancy in a given congregation, that congregation shall be entitled to name as “proxy” one of its called, rostered workers (who is otherwise an advisory member of Synod) to represent that congregation with all the rights and privileges of a pastoral delegate, serving in addition to the lay delegate from that congregation; and be it further

Resolved, That in circuit forums and district conventions, in cases of necessity or expediency (e.g., illness, leave of absence, sabbatical), a pastor of a given congregation may designate as his “proxy” another called servant of the congregation (otherwise an advisory member of Synod) to vote in his place, serving with all the rights and privileges of a pastoral delegate, in addition to the lay delegate from that congregation; and be it finally

Resolved, That when circuit forums are called in order to elect delegates to the national convention of Synod, a congregation may nominate, in addition to one layman in the circuit, also an advisory member of Synod called by one of the circuit congregations (whether called directly by a congregation or by a school association sponsored by congregations in the circuit), who shall be considered a possible “proxy” to serve as pastoral delegate or alternate for that circuit.

St. John
New Minden, IL

8-43

To Have Every Congregation Represented at Synod Conventions

WHEREAS, Every LCMS pastor is a member of the Synod, as is every LCMS congregation a member of Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That, when the Synod meets in convention, its members be present and vote.

Trinity
Tryon, NC

8-44

To Elect Delegates by Regions within Districts

WHEREAS, One of the circuits of the Southern Illinois District submitted to the 2007 LCMS national convention a suggestion similar to that of the BRTFSSG for congregational representation at national conventions, tying the number of pairs of delegates to a national convention with a formula based on the number of congregations and communicant members of a district, which would eliminate all exceptions; and

WHEREAS, It is critical that these delegate pairs be chosen in a uniform way throughout the Synod; and

WHEREAS, It is critical that the process of choosing these pairs not be open to the possibility of eliminating views differing from the majority, such as by electing all delegate pairs at large; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Southern Illinois District encourage the BRTFSSG to pursue the proposal to assign delegate pairs to districts based on a formula of number of congregations and number of communicant membership; and be it further

Resolved, That in the proposal the delegate pairs be elected by region within a district, the regions being established by district convention action; and be it further

Resolved, That in the proposal the actual selection of the delegates be done by the congregations of the region, with a pastor and a lay delegate of each congregation voting; and be it finally

Resolved, That in the event either the delegate or alternate delegate is unable to serve, the district president shall appoint a replacement in consultation with the circuit counselor(s) of that region.

Southern Illinois District

8-45

To Allow Vacant Congregations Two Lay Delegates

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 6 in the task force’s final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import; and

WHEREAS, It is important that each congregation maintain two voting delegates; and

WHEREAS, ordained ministers comprise less than 0.5 percent of baptized members; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod allow those congregations without a called pastor to send TWO lay delegates to conventions.

Zion
Wilton, IA

8-46

To Retain Current Article III 7 of Constitution re Church Practice

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 1: Affirm and Clarify Governing Documents in the task force's final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import; and

WHEREAS, This recommendation will impact and modify Art. III 7 of the Synod's existing Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Uniformity in church practice is extremely important; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod to replace proposed Art. III B 8 with Art. III 7 of the existing Constitution.

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA; Zion, Wilton, IA

8-47

To Amend Article III of Constitution

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has identified various weaknesses in Article III "Objectives" of the Constitution of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The task force has suggested replacing the current "Objectives" wording with an expanded and radically altered Article III entitled "Mission and Purpose"; and

WHEREAS, A more simple revision of the historic objectives would be easier to understand and would define the Synod's God-given purposes more clearly; therefore be it

Resolved, That the proposed "Mission and Purpose" wording for Article III not be added to the Constitution, but that the following "Objectives" wording be adopted to replace the current wording of Article III:

Article III Objectives

1. The conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith within and outside of the Synod (Eph.4:3-6; 1 Cor. 1:10) and a united defense against schism, sectarianism, and heresy (Rom. 16:17).
2. The united extension of the Kingdom of God by the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. The recruitment, education, and continued training of pastors and other servants for the Evangelical Lutheran Church.
4. Thorough Christian education through catechesis and the promotion of Lutheran primary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education.
5. Publication and distribution of orthodox Lutheran literature and media.
6. The highest possible uniformity in church practice, church usages, and in general in congregational matters.
7. The evangelical supervision of the doctrine and practices of those who teach God's Word in the Synod.
8. The protection of congregations, pastors, and other called workers in the performance of their duties.

9. Provision of aid to people in need through coordinated acts of mercy.

Zion

Taylor Ridge, IL

8-48

To Retain Current Wording of Article VI 4

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 1: Affirm and Clarify Governing Documents in the task force's final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import; and

WHEREAS, Existing Constitution Art. VI 4 is more concise in its requirements than the proposed Article VI B 2; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod to replace proposed Article VI B 2 with existing Article VI 4.

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA; Zion, Wilton, IA

8-49

To Return to Previous Definition of Function of Doctrinal Resolutions

Rationale:

The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG), appointed by President Gerald Kieschnick, has proposed amending Article VIII C of the Synod's Constitution to include some of the material currently treated in Bylaw 1.6.2, namely, the distinction between doctrinal resolutions and doctrinal statements. The task force's proposed wording for Article VIII C 2 b mentions "certain doctrinal resolutions of special significance" and requires that these special doctrinal resolutions be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote. In its proposed Bylaw 1.6.3, the task force gives as examples of doctrinal resolutions of special significance "those initiating, modifying, or repealing specific positions or practices of the Synod."

The task force's presentation to the 2009 district conventions indicated that "close majority votes on doctrinal matters do not promote unity and are conducive to increased internal conflict and consternation." This observation makes a great deal of sense if such close votes are to initiate, modify, or repeal aspects of the Synod's position. However, the task force's observation does not trace the roots of any recent difficulties the Synod may have experienced over doctrinal resolutions adopted by relatively small majorities.

In 1975, the Synod called for the appointment of a Special Committee on Doctrinal Statements to clarify the status of doctrinal statements. This committee consisted of August Suelflow (chairman), Henry Eggold (vice-chairman), Ralph Bohlmann, Herbert Mueller, Frederick Niedner, and Norman Troyke. Harold Olsen was a consultant and Samuel Nafzger served the committee as staff person and secretary. This committee brought its recommendations to the Synod in 1977 (*Convention Workbook*, pp. 71-73.) It proposed bylaws on

doctrinal resolutions and statements, and the Synod adopted almost all of the wording proposed by the committee (1977 Res. 3-07). Most of this wording remains in the Synod's current Bylaws 1.6.1 and 1.6.2.

However, in 1986 a change was made in the Bylaws' paragraph on doctrinal resolutions. In 1977, the Synod had adopted the following proposal made by the special committee:

Doctrinal *resolutions* may be adopted for the information, counsel, and guidance of the membership. They shall reiterate the corporate position of the Synod and shall ordinarily cite the pertinent passages of the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and any previously adopted official doctrinal statements or resolutions of the Synod. [underlining added]

1986 Res. 5-02A amended the wording of the bylaw as follows:

Doctrinal *resolutions* may be adopted for the information, counsel, and guidance of the membership. They shall conform to the confessional position of the Synod as set forth in Article II of its Constitution and shall ordinarily cite the pertinent passages of the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and any previously adopted official doctrinal statements or resolutions of the Synod. [underlining added]

As a result of this 1986 amendment, it became possible for a doctrinal resolution to do something other than *reiterate* the Synod's position. The wording as modified in 1986 remains in current Bylaw 1.6.2 (a).

Why was this amendment proposed in 1986? Based on the official record, it is difficult to say. This amendment was one of many bylaw amendments proposed at the time by the Commission on Structure, which offered no specific statement of rationale for this particular change (Overture 5-163, 1986 *Convention Workbook*, pp. 249–50).

The 1986 bylaw amendment introduced the possibility that the Synod could change its position through doctrinal resolutions, including doctrinal resolutions adopted by relatively close votes. Concerned about this, the task force has now recommended requiring a more substantial majority for such votes. Yet it should not be overlooked that between 1977 and 1986 the Synod *had* a solution to the problem that the Task Force has recently identified.

The basic wisdom offered by the special committee in 1977 and adopted by the Synod that year was in effect for the Synod to avoid initiating, modifying, or repealing aspects of its doctrinal position through doctrinal resolutions, however great or small the majority that adopts them. If necessary, the Synod could do such initiating, modifying, or repealing, but by means of the more thorough procedure for processing doctrinal statements. This procedure, originally adopted in 1977, remains in the Bylaws. The task force suggests changing this latter procedure somewhat so as to require a two-thirds vote (instead of a simple majority) for a convention to adopt a doctrinal statement. In any case, it should be noted that the current bylaw requires, and the task force wishes to retain, a positive response from at least a two-thirds majority of the Synod's congregations within six months after a convention in order to ratify a doctrinal statement.

The present overture simply proposes that in 2010 the Synod return to the way it determined to handle these matters in 1977. This "1977 solution" was very well considered when it was recommended then. The official record offers no clear reason why it was abandoned in 1986.

The 1977 solution is less complicated than the task force's proposal to invent a new category of doctrinal resolutions, namely, "doctrinal resolutions of special significance." Returning to it would also obviate the difficulty inherent in the task force's recommendations, namely its proposed requirement that the Synod in convention muster a two-thirds majority to overrule a categorizing recommendation made by one of its own floor committees (proposed Bylaw 1.6.3

[b])—a recommendation, it might be added, upon which that floor committee could have decided by a narrow majority!

Resolved, That the Synod be asked to decline the proposals of the BRTFSSG to change Constitution Art. VIII C and all of the task force's proposed changes for the section of the Bylaws that bears the overall heading "1.6 Confessional Position of the Synod"; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod make the following amendment to Bylaw 1.6.2 (a):

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

(a) Doctrinal resolutions may be adopted for the information, counsel, and guidance of the membership. ~~They shall conform to the confessional position of the Synod~~ They shall reiterate the corporate position of the Synod as set forth in Article II of its Constitution and shall ordinarily cite the pertinent passages of the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and any previously adopted official doctrinal statements or resolutions of the Synod. Such resolutions come into being in the same manner as any other resolutions of a convention of the Synod and are to be honored and upheld until such time as the Synod amends or repeals them.

Carrollton Circuit Forum, Missouri District;
Zion, Moberly, MO

8-50

To Strike "of Special Significance" from Doctrinal Resolution Proposal

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 17 in the task force's final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import; and

WHEREAS, Doctrinal resolutions that have no "special significance" will without doubt be adopted by at least a two-thirds vote; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod to strike "of special significance" from this recommendation.

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA;
Zion, Wilton, IA

8-51

To Conduct Feasibility Study for Model Merger of Districts

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) is recommending to the 2010 LCMS convention that the "convention direct the Synod President to convene a special task force to work in consultation with the Council of Presidents and the Synod's Board of Directors to submit to the next Synod convention a recommendation with respect to the function, number, and configuration of districts, including the impact on funding the national Synod"; that the special task force "follow the direction given in Bylaw 4.1.1.3"; and that the task force

“recommendations should include a transition plan for any property and personnel changes”; and

WHEREAS, “The Synod is not merely an advisory body in relation to a district, but establishes districts in order more effectively to achieve its objectives [cf. LCMS Constitution, Art. III] and carry on its activities” (Bylaw 4.1.1.1); and

WHEREAS, “A district is the Synod itself performing the functions of the Synod,” with resolutions of the Synod “binding upon the districts” (Bylaw 4.1.1.1); and

WHEREAS, “The Synod decides when and whether a district shall be formed, divided, realigned, or merged with another or other districts, or dissolved; determines the boundaries of a district; and approves the name of a district” (Bylaw 4.1.1.3); and

WHEREAS, Districts are large ecclesial clusters (congregations and circuits) established by the Synod for providing the most efficient and effective care, support, advice, ecclesiastical encouragement, service, coordination, and counsel that will foster the congregation’s greater participation in God’s mission, while also being the primary leaders in providing to congregations certain congregational services (such as youth, stewardship, education, and outreach), coordinating North American mission efforts (including all ethnic ministries), leading North American human care ministries, providing ministerial growth and support services, and giving worship guidance and leadership; and

WHEREAS, Circuits are small ecclesial clusters established by districts for providing the most efficient and effective visitation, care, support, advice, ecclesiastical encouragement, service, coordination, counsel, and unity that will foster the congregation’s greater participation in God’s mission—the BRTFSSG is recommending that this original purpose (bringing together such clusters of congregations that “walk together”) be restored and revitalized (cf. Bylaws, Chapter 5); and

WHEREAS, Any proposal for reconfiguration of districts initiated by a national convention of the Synod shall “include a substantiated description of the nonviable aspects of the current district(s) on the basis of general principles of viability adopted from time to time by conventions of the Synod, and shall specify the problems or factors which make the adoption of the proposal advisable or necessary”; shall “provide evidence that the proposed change is the best of the options available”; shall “provide a specific and realistic development plan for the proposed district(s), including detailed proposals for staff personnel and financial operations”; and shall “be the object of an evaluation prepared by the Board of Directors of the Synod and submitted to the convention” (Bylaw 4.1.1.3 [b] [3]–[6]); and

WHEREAS, Such a study would determine whether districts that are more uniform in size and more equitably equipped with human and fiscal resources would be better able to carry out their responsibilities, including the new responsibilities that are being proposed; and

WHEREAS, The boards of directors of the Atlantic, Eastern, New England, and New Jersey Districts desire to have a proactive involvement in such a feasibility study as proposed by the BRTFSSG; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Atlantic, Eastern, New England, and New Jersey Districts, through their boards of directors and under the leadership of the four respective district presidents, form a joint districts feasibility study commission as soon as possible following the 2010 LCMS convention to study the feasibility of a merger in order to carry out the above criteria for the function, number, and configuration of districts, in consultation and collaboration with the Synod’s

Task Force on District Function, Number, and Configuration; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force on District Function, Number, and Configuration, in consultation and collaboration with the joint feasibility study commission of the Atlantic, Eastern, New England, and New Jersey Districts, develop a template for a model merger of districts; and be it further

Resolved, That the joint feasibility study commission of the Atlantic, Eastern, New England, and New Jersey Districts report the results of its study, its recommended template, and any other recommendations to its respective district conventions in the year prior to the next convention of the Synod; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod’s Task Force on District Function, Number, and Configuration include the template for a model merger of districts, together with any other results or recommendations of the study developed by the joint feasibility study commission, in its own recommendations to be evaluated by the Board of Directors of the Synod and submitted to the next convention of the Synod (Bylaw 4.1.1.3 [b] [6]).

Board of Directors
Atlantic District

8-52

To Oppose Dissolution of English District

WHEREAS, Rumors of dissolving the English District are again being heard in geographic districts of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The English District is one of two non-geographic districts in the Synod, serving in 17 states and Canada; and

WHEREAS, The entrance of the English District into the LCMS differs from that of geographic districts in that the English District was an existing entity, the English Synod, before joining the Synod in 1911; and

WHEREAS, The English District brought not only existing congregations into the Synod, but also two colleges for ministerial education, several publications, including *The Lutheran Witness* and *The Lutheran Guide*, publishing rights for *The Sunday School Hymnal*, and the complete manuscript for the first English hymnal of the Synod, which served as its English hymnal until 1941; and

WHEREAS, The English District has resources and experience to carry out rapid, intensive, and proactive mission work in the United States, Canada, and foreign countries; and

WHEREAS, The English District’s purpose from the beginning has been to provide for pastoral education and give guidance to parish education through materials and programs; and

WHEREAS, The English District fulfills a servant role to local parishes, other districts, and the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The English District provides an extraordinary option for parishes and individuals who thrive better in a non-geographic setting than a geographic one in that it is able to be about mission work and more fully using God-given talents; and

WHEREAS, The Synod has benefitted from the many blessings the Lord has heaped upon Lutheran Christianity through the existence of a well-run, non-geographic district; therefore be it

Resolved, That the English District encourage The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to lay to rest rumors of dissolving the English District and encourage all districts to work together shoulder to shoulder, using strengths from both non-geographic and geographic districts in bringing the Gospel to waiting citizens of all nations; and be it further

Resolved, That the English District encourage the Synod to adopt a policy that if dissolution of the English District ever becomes a viable course of action, the idea must originate from within the English District itself at such time as a majority of members of the English District deem its mission to have been fulfilled.

English District

8-53

To Retain Present District Structure

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has raised the possibility of significantly increasing or significantly decreasing the number of districts; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has presented little detailed analysis of the strong points and the weak points of each suggestion; and

WHEREAS, The geographical diversity of the Synod makes establishing a single pattern which would function best everywhere impossible; and

WHEREAS, The suggestion to do this restructuring has not come from the congregations of the districts themselves; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Southern Illinois District in convention request the BRTFSSG to leave the current number of districts as they are; and be it further

Resolved, That if the BRTFSSG is convinced that a change to district structure is necessary, that it present a detailed analysis of the strong and weak points of the proposed change.

Southern Illinois District

8-54

To Retain Current District Alignment

WHEREAS, There are concerns at the national level of our Synod about continued viability of smaller districts; and

WHEREAS, The Wyoming District rejoices that there is fundamental agreement in matters of doctrine and practice among the congregations and pastors of the district; and

WHEREAS, Any realignment or amalgamation of districts that would divide or dissolve the Wyoming District would hurt the already existing unity we share; and

WHEREAS, The first objective of the Synod is to “Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy” (Constitution, Art. III 1); and

WHEREAS, The Wyoming District as it now exists is fulfilling this objective; therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District gathered in convention encourage the Synod to retain the current alignment of the Wyoming District.

Wyoming District

8-55

To Retain or Increase Number of Districts

WHEREAS, The wisdom of our world is impressed with numbers and size, while often denigrating that which is small and insignificant in worldly eyes as being less “effective” or “efficient”; and

WHEREAS, We learn from the wisdom of our world that things that are bigger are by nature more efficient and effective, so that worldly

wisdom teaches us of such things as “efficiencies of scale” and “economies of size”; and

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) speaks of our current district configuration as being “a problem or deficiency” (slide 63 of the presentation format, “Walking Together”); and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG recommends that we “configure districts that are most effectively and efficiently sized,” even reducing to 15 to 25 districts (slides 62–64); yet

WHEREAS, Even in the world, large size does not necessarily lead to any effectiveness or efficiency but more often to ineffectiveness and deficiency, so that anyone can see how, for instance, China or Russia (the larger parties) are not more effective and efficient than, say, Taiwan or Germany (the smaller parties), or how Citigroup or AIG (the larger) are not more effective and efficient than, say, the little bank in town that keeps personal contact with its investors; and

WHEREAS, Not only in the world but also in church history large size does not necessarily lead to any effectiveness or efficiency, so that anyone can see how, for instance, Egypt or Babylon (the larger parties) are not more effective and efficient than, say, Israel, or how the large church of the Pope in Rome is not more effective and efficient than a small church in, say, Wittenberg, even as something greater would not be expected to come out of Greece than, say, out of Nazareth; and

WHEREAS, Making districts larger and more able to support larger bureaucracies will not necessarily make our districts more effective or efficient or conducive than beneficial and supportive personal conversation among district pastors and congregations and with district servants; and

WHEREAS, The Church rejoices in the promise of the Gospel and in the gifts brought to us “through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren” (*Smalcald Articles*, IV), so that personal contact and conversation is beneficial and should be encouraged in our districts; therefore be it

Resolved, That we retain at least the current amount of districts; and be it further

Resolved, That we increase the amount of districts in order to be of better support and foster personal (as opposed to less personal and more bureaucratic) conversations of support and encouragement among our pastors, congregations, and district servants, rejoicing in “the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren.”

North and South Sandia Circuit Forum

Rocky Mountain District

8-56

To Amend Bylaws re Formation of Circuits

WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.1.2 allows the Synod President the authority to grant exceptions to circuits for electing delegates to national Synod conventions; and

WHEREAS, The irregularity for circuit exceptions has caused problems that have resulted in suspicion, mistrust, and even lawsuits; and

WHEREAS, Such problems besmirch the reputation of the church and are unfitting for the Body of Christ; and

WHEREAS, It would be of great benefit to the Synod and her President if there were further guidance and more specific regulations regarding the formation of circuits; therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaws 3.1.2 (b) , 5.1.1 (a) and 5.1.1 (b) all be eliminated; and be it further

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.1.2 (a) be changed to read

A circuit, which has both electoral and visitation functions, shall consist of from 10 to 15 congregations in geographical proximity. The district in convention shall have the duty to determine the number of circuits and the membership in those circuits by congregations of the district.

Prior to each district convention, the district president shall meet with the circuit counselors to determine if and where there is a need for circuit adjustments. If so, he shall forward a proposal for such specific adjustments to the district board of directors, which shall consider it and amend it (if necessary). The district board of directors then shall present it to the district convention for further amendment (if necessary) and adoption. Delegates of circuits affected by such adjustments shall meet prior to the closing of the district convention to elect the counselors of these revised circuits.

The procedure for circuiting shall start with the largest metropolitan areas in a district. The goal is to produce circuits that are compact, i.e., not elongated along any axis. All circuits shall consist of contiguous congregations. Since unusually large congregations (over 2,000 baptized members) possess an unusually large number of resources, an attempt shall be made to have no more than one of these per circuit, or as few as possible per circuit, while still adhering to the principles of compactness and contiguity. When the metropolitan areas have been circuitied, circuits shall be drawn out into the rural areas of the district, using the same principles of compactness and contiguity. Congregations in the outer suburbs of metropolitan areas may be circuitied with rural congregations.

If congregations in certain rural areas are so dispersed that driving time to a central location for circuit meetings exceeds three hours one way, those areas may be divided into two parts for visitation circuits of five to eight congregations. In these cases, two visitation circuits shall be one electoral circuit of 10 to 15 congregations. In each district, when necessary, two rural electoral circuits may also be formed with eight or nine congregations each, in order to accommodate odd numbers of congregations, as well as expansion or contraction in the number of congregations in a district.

Congregations in remote places, such as the Hawaiian Islands or northern Alaska, or where there are less than five congregations in a three-hour driving radius, shall be considered as exceptions to these rules. They will be organized as visitation circuits according to the number of congregations in closest proximity (i.e., not limited to groups of five to eight if that is not practical). They shall participate in their electoral circuit meetings via conference call or other electronic means, according to the electoral circuit standard of 10 to 15 congregations.

St. Paul, Milford Center, OH;
St. John, Champaign, IL

8-57

To Amend Bylaw 5.3.2 re Voting Representation at Circuit Forums

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance has provided its report to the Synod and has proposed bylaw changes to carry out its recommendations; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation #2 advocates changing the Constitution and Bylaws regarding who is eligible to represent member congregations of the Synod with the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, The task force recommends that commissioned as well as ordained ministers be eligible to represent congregations as voting delegates under the category of “associate” members; and

WHEREAS, Bylaw 5.3.2, which provides for congregational voting representation at circuit forums, is not included in the task force’s proposals for bylaw changes, although Bylaw 5.3.2 currently stipulates that congregations are to be represented by “a pastor of each congregation and one member of each congregation,” without mention of commissioned ministers; and

WHEREAS, For the sake of good order and consistency, providing for congregational representation by “associate” members at circuit forums would allow a congregation to designate a commissioned minister as its voting representative; therefore be it

Resolved, That current Bylaw 5.3.2 be amended to read as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

5.3.2 The circuit forum consists of an pastor associate member of each congregation and one lay member of each congregation, both to be designated by the congregation.

Commission on Structure

8-58

To Continue Current Practice of Election of Circuit Counselors

WHEREAS, The Synod is an association of congregations and ordained and commissioned ministers who are bound together not by an overarching organizational structure that exercises power and authority over its members but by agreement in the doctrine of the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, The Synod is its congregations walking together; and

WHEREAS, The only power and authority which is to rule and govern in the Synod is the Word of God, and

WHEREAS, The Constitution of the Synod provides freedom for its members from any coercive kind of power exercised by elected officers of the Synod (Constitution, Art. VII 1); therefore be it

Resolved, That the South Wisconsin District in convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to reject the recommendation of The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) under “Congregations and Districts” that proposes to “involve the district president in the selection of circuit counselors”; and be it further

Resolved, That the South Wisconsin District in convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to continue the current process of electing circuit counselors by the vote of circuit congregations.

South Wisconsin District

8-59

To Return to Use of Title “Circuit Visitor”

WHEREAS, The congregations of the Wyoming District at the 1991 Wyoming District convention adopted Res. 1-03-91, “To Continue Visitation of Pastors and Congregations,” articulating the following points:

1. A concern for unity and purity of doctrine and practice, as well as the welfare of congregations and pastors prompted Dr. Martin Luther to draw up instructions for, and make provisions for, visitation of parishes and pastors;
2. Dr. C. F. W. Walther and his colleagues had the same concerns, and thus organized our Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in order to provide for such support and assistance, unity and protection for congregations and pastors through visitation and oversight;
3. Our Wyoming District has had the same concerns for unity in doctrine and practice, and assistance and support for congregations and pastors, and has therefore gone back to this visitation process.

and

WHEREAS, The same Wyoming District convention also adopted Res. 1-04-91 “To Change the Name of Circuit Counselor in the Wyoming District to Circuit Visitor” based on the following points:

1. The majority of a circuit counselor’s work is visitation of the circuit congregations and their pastors and their families;
2. The circuit counselor shall “visit” each congregation once in three years, and as he feels necessary;
3. The Wyoming District has initiated the “Episcopate” program among the congregations—visiting congregations on a personal level and visiting the pastor and his family;
4. The circuit counselor in past history was referred to as a “circuit visitor” and not a counselor, (as his task is the support and supervision of the pastors and congregations in his circuit).

and

WHEREAS, Eighteen years later, the Synod’s *Handbook* still speaks of the circuit counselor making a “triennial visitation of the congregations of the circuit” (Bylaw 5.2.3.1) and “an official visit” and “visits” (Bylaw 5.2.3.1 [c]); and

WHEREAS, The 1991 Wyoming District convention (Res. 1-04-91) adopted the use of “circuit visitor” in place of “circuit counselor” in the Wyoming District *Handbook*, which has been the Wyoming District’s eighteen-year terminology and practice; and

WHEREAS, The same Res. 1-04-91 memorialized the Synod to make this same change in terminology and practice; therefore be it

Resolved, That the congregations of the Wyoming District in convention once again memorialize the Synod to return to the use of the historic words “circuit visitor.”

Wyoming District

8-60

To Increase Convention Quorum Requirement

WHEREAS, Constitution Art. VIII A 2 requires the presence of one-fourth of the constitutionally elected voting representatives for a legal convention; and

WHEREAS, The Synod will, during its 2010 LCMS convention, be considering lowering the number of elected voting representatives to 650; and

WHEREAS, This could result in as little as only 163 representatives being required to be present to decide upon the important theological and practical matters placed before the convention; and

WHEREAS, The Synod in convention makes decisions that could impact the entire Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That all the voting representatives be lovingly and strongly encouraged to fulfill their responsibilities throughout the entire proceedings of conventions; and be it further

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention consider raising the percentage of elected voting representatives by amending Art. VIII A 2.

St. James

Lexington, TX

8-61

To Change Terminology of National Convention

Rationale

Most organizations refer to their supreme legislative and policy-making bodies with phrases like “house of delegates” or “delegate assembly.” The phrase “Synod in convention” is not very specific and implies that related organizations such as mission societies, women’s

groups, and alumni associations could be involved in the decision-making process if they were present at the convention. It is important to be accurate and specific when referring to the group that is making decisions and doing the electing.

Resolved, That the phrase “LCMS House of Delegates” be substituted for “Synod in convention” in all formal documents and communications of the LCMS when referring to the supreme legislative and policy-making body.

St. John

Aurora, IN

8-62

To Continue to Allow Congregations to Choose Vice-Presidents

WHEREAS, St. Paul reminds us to “live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:1–3); and

WHEREAS, St. Paul reminds us that the “acts of the sinful nature are obvious . . . selfish ambition, dissensions, factions . . . and the like” (Gal. 5:19–21); and

WHEREAS, The great apostle criticizes the party spirit of some of the Corinthians because some were following Paul, others Apollos, others Cephas, and still others Christ; and

WHEREAS, Our Lord Himself tells us, “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all” (Mark 9:35); and

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance rightly seeks “to broaden the voice and participation of the congregations in the Synod”; and

WHEREAS, The great apostle seems to trust the judgment of even the most humble Christian when he asks, “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial matters? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!” (1 Cor. 6:2–3); therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod not force the President of the Synod as its servant to judge the qualifications of potential vice-presidents of the Synod, but rather that the Synod be allowed to judge the qualifications of its servants directly through the vote of the delegates to its convention or through some other form of direct election by the Synod.

Mt. Hood Circuit

Northwest District

8-63

To Elect Officers by Direct Vote of Congregations

Rationale

Since the LCMS is a membership organization, it is important that all members participate in the major elections of the Synod.

Resolved, That the President, First Vice-President, and all members of the Board of Directors be elected by laymen and associate members of self-sustaining congregations. Each congregation would be given one vote for its pastor and one vote for its voters’ assembly or equivalent. Congregations having over a thousand communicants would be allowed one extra vote from its voters’ assembly. Commissioned members from each district would collectively elect

representative voters equal to the number of extra congregational lay voters from the large congregations in their district, thus assuring an equal number of associate member and lay voters in each district; and be it further

Resolved, That nominations for these offices would be made by the congregations as is done now for President. The two nominees receiving the greatest number of nominations for each position would be on an e-mail ballot sent to each congregation. All ballots would have to be signed by the president and the secretary of each congregation and possibly notarized.

St. John
Aurora, IN

8-64

To Change Composition and Increase Duties of Board of Directors

WHEREAS, The present structure of the LCMS has been identified as working inefficiently or without proper checks and balances; and

WHEREAS, This has resulted in much dissension throughout the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Too much responsibility and authority is in the hands of the President; and

WHEREAS, A structure that is efficient and has sufficient checks and balances is desirable; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS be governed by a Board of Directors under the authority of the Synod in convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Directors be composed of an equal number of well-qualified pastors and laymen elected by ministerial officers and laymen of self-sustaining congregations of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That the President of the Synod preside over the group without the right to vote except in case of a tie; and be it further

Resolved, That all officers of the Synod, commissions, boards, councils, divisions, colleges, seminaries, and all other Synod entities serve under the authority of the Board of Directors; and be it further

Resolved, That all appointments be made by the Board of Directors after receiving nominations from appropriate entities and its own members; and be it finally

Resolved, That the executive staff include the President, Secretary, Chief Administrative Officer, and Chief Financial Officer.

St. Paul
Milford Center, OH

8-65

To Operate with a Board of Directors Serving as National Consistory

Rationale

The present structure of the LCMS does not seem to be working efficiently or with proper checks and balances and has resulted in much dissension throughout the Synod. Too much responsibility and authority is in the hands of the President. A structure that is efficient and has sufficient checks and balances is desirable. If we are going to restructure, we should do it in a way that does not exacerbate the present problems and dissensions. The proposal that follows gives us the opportunity for an efficient structure and a more harmonious walking and working together.

Resolved, That the LCMS be governed by a board of directors serving also as a national consistory under the authority of its supreme legislative body. The board/national consistory would be composed of an equal number of well qualified pastors and laymen. All would be elected by pastors and laymen of self-sustaining congregations of the Synod. The President of the Synod would preside over the group without the right to vote except in case of a tie. All officers, commissions, boards, councils, divisions, colleges, seminaries, and all other entities of the Synod would serve under the authority of the board/national consistory. All appointments would be made by the consistory after receiving nominations from appropriate entities and their own members. The national office operating team would include the President, Secretary, Chief Administrative Officer, and Chief Financial Officer.

St. John
Aurora, IN

8-66

To Establish Chief Executive Officer Position

WHEREAS, The proposals of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) place even greater authority and governance in the Office of the President; and

WHEREAS, The gift of administration is not necessarily a prerequisite for the theological leadership of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS Board of Directors adopted the following resolution at its May 14-15, 2009 meeting:

Resolved, That the Board of Directors strongly recommend that the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance include in its final report the establishment of the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under this organizational plan (a) the president of the Synod will supervise all ecclesiastical aspects of the Synod; and (b) the CEO will supervise all business, legal, and property aspects of the agencies of the Synod to the extent such authority is assigned to the Board of Directors and the program and services entities of the Synod.

therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2010 LCMS convention revise its Constitution and Bylaws to establish the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) separate from the ecclesiastical structure to handle the business of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That under this organizational plan (a) the President of the Synod will supervise all ecclesiastical aspects of the Synod and (b) the CEO will supervise all business, legal, and property aspects of the agencies of the Synod to the extent such authority is assigned to the Board of Directors and the program and services entities of the Synod.

Circuit 3 Forum
South Wisconsin District

8-67

To Give Careful Consideration When Addressing BRTFSSG Recommendation 18

WHEREAS, The LCMS is considering a restructuring of the Synod and such restructuring has both short- and long-term implications for ministry (regarding which the Board for Human Care Ministries [LCMS World Relief and Human Care] respectfully requests that careful consideration be given); and

WHEREAS, In 2010, Haiti experienced an earthquake of overwhelming proportions, following which LCMS World Relief and Human Care (WRHC) had the expertise, ground resources, and contacts to respond by providing some of the first mercy medical teams to

meet the needs of the Haitians, and WRHC was among the first relief organizations on the ground with a network of volunteer medical and pastoral personnel (Will the restructuring plan improve the Synod's ability to initiate and nurture a sustainable network on the ground in the United States and around the world that can be as responsive to an earthquake, tsunami, flood, or hurricane as the current structure has allowed?); and

WHEREAS, A significant portion of the work of WRHC involves domestic grants to churches, pastors, church workers, and RSOs that experience significant human care needs; and

WHEREAS, Responding to these needs requires experience and resources (Will the restructuring plan improve the Synod's ability to attract, maintain, and foster the expertise and resources that have been developed over the past several years?); and

WHEREAS, Domestically, the inter-Lutheran collaboration known as Lutheran Services in America provides nearly \$16 billion of service to communities and individuals with assistance that leadership from the LCMS provided to this network; and

WHEREAS, LCMS RSOs depend upon this human care network to improve quality and maintain and provide advocacy and care for the most vulnerable citizens in America (Will the restructuring plan improve the Synod's ability to strengthen, oversee, encourage, and advance this network and thereby serve increased needs as an expression of God's love in Christ?); and

WHEREAS, In a rapidly shrinking world where global interaction is increasingly common and long-standing values and cultural perspectives are being challenged and eroded, WRHC has been at the forefront of discussions of and advocacy for life issues (Will the restructuring improve the Synod's ability to lead, speak, and partner in such a way that God's plan for humankind is advanced and He is honored?);

WHEREAS, WRHC has met external benchmarks established by the Better Business Bureau regarding administrative and fund-raising costs, receiving the best possible rating for combined administrative/communication expenses according to *Charity Navigator* (Will the restructuring improve the Synod's ability to meet these external benchmarks?); and

WHEREAS, Disaster work, human care, mercy medical teams, life ministries, and many other ministries of mercy are global and interconnected national and international efforts (Does splitting whatever work of WRHC that remains after the restructuring into domestic mission and international mission advance the global work of mercy of the church?); therefore be it

Resolved, That the delegates to the 2010 LCMS convention be encouraged to prayerfully consider these questions when deliberating upon "*Recommendation #18: Realign the National Synod Ministries around Two Mission Commissions.*"

Board for Human Care Ministries

8-68

To Delay Implementation of BRTFSSG Recommendation re National Office Structure

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

2010 Convention Workbook

WHEREAS, Recommendation 18 in the task force's final report of October 15, 2009, has far-reaching and significant import; and

WHEREAS, It is not clear what areas of responsibility may/will be transferred to districts and/or "other entities"; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod to delay acting on this recommendation until at least the 2013 national convention.

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA;
Zion, Wilton, IA

8-69

To Reject Proposal for Advisory Boards

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has proposed that all program boards on the national level be advisory and function to encourage and support a ministry rather than have any administrative role; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has proposed that all executive staff at the national level report directly to the President of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has not indicated how these executive staff would be chosen, presumably by the President; and

WHEREAS, This proposal would be a significant centralization of power; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Southern Illinois District in convention request the Synod in convention to reject this proposal.

Southern Illinois District

8-70

To Consolidate Current National Boards and Commissions

WHEREAS, In his response to the final report of the BRTFSSG, President Kieschnick has pointed out that the national offices are difficult to manage, expensive to operate, and programmatically redundant; and

WHEREAS, There are several boards and commissions that perform similar and overlapping functions; and

WHEREAS, In the interest of good stewardship of the financial resources God has granted to our Synod, it would be prudent to eliminate such redundancy; therefore be it

Resolved, That the number of boards and commissions be reduced; and be it further

Resolved, That the current boards and commissions be consolidated according to the following recommendations:

1. A Board for Higher Education, which would include supervision of the seminaries, pre-sem programs, commissioned church-worker training programs, universities, distance learning, and continuing education, including the functions of the current Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support;
2. A Board for Missions, which would include supervision over international missions, national ethnic missions and ministries, special needs ministries, campus ministry, and armed forces ministry;
3. A Board for Human Care and Relief, which would include supervision over international and domestic relief, deaconess organizations, coordination of social ministry organizations and RSOs, and work with human rights organizations;
4. A Board for Parish Services, which would supervise Synod programs in the areas of evangelism, stewardship, fiscal management, lay leadership training, parochial schools, youth, singles, worship (including the current Commission on Worship), and Laborers for Christ;
5. A Commission on Theology and Church Relations, which would combine the current functions of the CTCR with the Commission

on Doctrinal Review;

6. A Commission on Constitutional Matters, which would include the current functions of the CCM as well as the Commission on Structure; and be it further

Resolved, That the members of these boards and commissions be elected by the national convention in the normal fashion; and be further

Resolved, That the number of members of each commission be fixed at five members and the number of members for each board be fixed at seven members; and be it further

Resolved, That where this consolidation eliminates current boards or commissions or reduces them in size, the members of the current board or commission be permitted to remain until the end of their terms in spite of a temporary larger size; and be it finally

Resolved, That where this consolidation results in a board or commission that does not have enough members for the next triennium, new members be elected at this 2010 convention based on nominations received from their pre-merged boards or commissions.

St. Paul
Milford Center, OH

8-71

To Assign Oversight of Program Boards to First Vice-President

WHEREAS, In his response to the final report of the BRTFSSG, President Kieschnick has outlined several concerns regarding the LCMS national offices; and

WHEREAS, Those concerns include “greater expenditures than revenue by amounts totaling millions of dollars,” “travel budgets in the hundreds of thousands of dollars,” budget management and revenue coordination that is “quite complex,” a difficulty of “collaboration between and among boards,” and an excessive amount of time spent by the executive directors in “dealing with commission matters rather than accomplishing the work they are called to do”; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has proposed a solution to this problem wherein the national offices are eliminated and replaced with an Office of National Mission, International Mission, Seminaries, and Communication; and

WHEREAS, These new offices would be placed under the supervision of a new officer, the Chief Mission Officer (CMO); and

WHEREAS, The CMO would not be accountable to the Synod but would rather be accountable only to the President of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Synod has always maintained a concern that the national presidency in the Synod “might precipitate and even initiate a power that, instead of promoting true unity of spirit, might turn into a spirit of servitude” (Fredrick Wyneken, “Can We Divide and Remain United?”); and

WHEREAS, The duty of the Synod President as defined by our current constitution is to represent the Synod to other church bodies, oversee doctrine and ecclesiastical practice and the working of the district presidents, and represent the Synod to national and international authorities; and

WHEREAS, The creation of a new area of oversight would make the office of the Synod President too large and complex for one man; and

WHEREAS, The only given duty of the First Vice-President of the Synod is to be chairman of the colloquy committee; therefore be it

Resolved, That the First Vice-President of the Synod be given the administrative task of overseeing the program boards and commissions as well as their executive directors; and be it further

Resolved, That the First Vice-President be given the responsibility to ensure that the program boards and commissions are mutually cooperative, efficient, and fiscally cooperative with the Synod’s Chief Financial Officer and the Board of Directors; and be it further

Resolved, That in the event a given executive director fails to adequately perform his duties, the First Vice-President shall adhere to the following procedure:

1. Take private counsel (and, if necessary, private reprimand) with such executive director.
2. If step 1 fails, report to the respective board.
3. If step 2 fails, bring an official report to the Synod via the *Convention Workbook*.

St. Paul
Milford Center, OH

8-72

To Provide for Orderly Transition for District and Congregational Services

WHEREAS, God desires all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:3–4); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has developed numerous programs to support districts and congregations as they empower God’s saints in the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, The Board for District and Congregational Services (DCS) has faithfully created, implemented, and managed these programs in the areas of schools, youth, families, children, and stewardship, which have helped congregations lead people through the work of the Holy Spirit to saving faith in Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance has proposed that “the Commission on National Mission be responsible for coordinating the national office ministry directed toward or serving domestic ministries, especially congregations and schools through their districts” (Report, p. 40); and

WHEREAS, Some districts have programs ready to continue vital work in the these ministry areas, but many districts do not have the resources to provide congregational support in one or more of these ministry areas; and

WHEREAS, Districts may be realigned in the future with smaller or larger staff structures; therefore be it

Resolved, That, in the event the LCMS adopts the plan for a newly formed Commission on National Mission, the convention encourage that commission to partner with districts and DCS staff to create a strategic plan that includes consideration of the following:

- DCS ministries requiring a national presence versus ministries that can be transferred to districts;
- Additional ministries that could benefit the LCMS by having national or district leadership;
- Plans for transferred ministries to move smoothly from a national to a district or regional presence;
- Structures that would allow districts to partner together when they do not have the financial means to support all transferred ministries;
- A network to grow and share ministry resources for the entire LCMS; and
- Continued funding necessary for LCMS personnel to implement this strategic plan.

Board for District and Congregational Services

2010 Convention Workbook

To Retain Board for Pastoral Education

Rationale

In its final report, the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG), appointed by President Gerald Kieschnick, has recommended eliminating the Synod's existing program boards. It has further recommended that "functions currently performed by the program boards...be realigned into a new two-office ministry structure, or assigned to the LCMS Board of Directors, districts, or other LCMS agencies" (BRTFSSG Report, p. 39).

A current program board whose functions the task force does not recommend transferring to the new two-office ministry structure is the Board for Pastoral Education. Upon its elimination, the Task Force recommends assigning some of its responsibilities to the respective seminary boards of regents. Other responsibilities are not reassigned to any of the agencies listed by the task force but rather to the President and Praesidium of the Synod.

The Board for Pastoral Education is relatively new. It had its origin in 2004 when the Synod created both it and the Board of University Education in an effort better to handle the workload borne for years by the Board for Higher Education. It should be well noted that only six years ago the Synod was convinced that separate boards were needed to give adequate attention both to university education and pastoral education.

The Board for Pastoral Education has a particular mandate for and interest in coordinating the roles and responsibilities of the Synod's two seminaries. In its absence, for example, final approval of new academic programs would lie with each seminary's board of regents (proposed Bylaw 3.10.4.4 [c]). How will this step promote coordination and avoid duplication of effort or waste of resources?

An important current responsibility of the Board for Pastoral Education is to grant approval for initial appointments of current seminary faculty members (Bylaw 3.8.2.3 [g]). The task force's proposed bylaws do not seem clear on who, if anyone, would carry out this important responsibility if the Board for Pastoral Education is eliminated.

In the absence of this board, the task force proposes that the President of the Synod give consent to issue a call for nominations for a seminary presidency (proposed Bylaw 3.10.4.5.2). In addition, the President of the Synod would provide leadership and coordination not only for pre-seminary programs and post-seminary continuing education but also for seminary education (proposed Bylaw 3.3.1.3 [f]). The President is also to require certification of theological and professional competency for full-time seminary faculty members (proposed Bylaw 3.10.4.6.3). Do these responsibilities in effect require a new level of competence among candidates for the Synod's presidency?

At times in its history, the Synod has elected a seminary president to be its President, but in most instances those who have served have not had extensive background or experience in higher education, either as faculty members or as administrators. Is it wise to take these previous duties of the Board for Higher Education, now of the Board for Pastoral Education, and simply add them to the Synod President's responsibilities? In 2004, the Synod determined that those duties should be given not to an individual officer of the Synod but to a board with specific responsibility for pastoral education.

Similarly, proposed Bylaw 3.10.4.3 (c) gives to the Praesidium (the President and vice-presidents of the Synod) the current Board for Pastoral Education responsibility to fill a vacant position on a

seminary board elected by the Synod in convention. The task force offers no rationale for this recommendation. There seems to be no compelling reason to give this responsibility to the Praesidium other than that *someone* has to take it over if the Board for Pastoral Education is eliminated.

The alternative to all of the above changes is to retain the Board for Pastoral Education.

Resolved, That the Synod retain the Board for Pastoral Education.

Carrollton Circuit Forum, Missouri District;
Zion, Moberly, MO

8-74

To Reject Any Proposal for Name Change

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has submitted "Walking Together—The LCMS Future: Proposals and Possibilities for Consideration and Discussion" to each congregation of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has stated that these "proposals/possibilities are not final by any means," and therefore seeks the input of the local member congregations of Synod; and

WHEREAS, We are a church body known for its faithfulness to God's Word, the name "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" distinguishing us from the many other Lutheran church bodies with different understandings and doctrine of God's Word; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District request the BRTFSSG to discontinue further time and research of the subject under "Items for Further Attention": "Changing the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to better reflect who we are today, a church body that serves throughout North America and in partnership with 30 other Lutheran church bodies around the world"; and be it further

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to reject any proposal to change the name "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" as it is specified in the LCMS Constitution, Art. I and Article I of the Synod's Articles of Incorporation.

Minnesota North District

8-75

To Keep the Name "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod"

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has submitted its report "Walking Together—The LCMS Future: Proposals and Possibilities for Consideration and Discussion" to each congregation of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has stated that these "proposals/possibilities are not final by any means" and therefore has sought the input of the local member congregations of Synod; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS is a church body known for its faithfulness to God's Word, its name known throughout the world, distinguishing it from the many other Lutheran church bodies with different understandings and doctrine of God's Word; and

WHEREAS, The name "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" identifies the Synod for what it is today, a church body that takes seriously the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions in the midst of other Lutheran church bodies that do not; and

WHEREAS, A name change from “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” to another may indicate a shift from not only our historical heritage but also from the first objective of the Synod, to “[c]onserve and promote the unity of the true faith” (Constitution, Art. III 1); therefore be it

Resolved, That the South Wisconsin District memorialize the 2010 Synod convention to retain the name “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.”

South Wisconsin District

8-76

To Retain Name “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod”

WHEREAS, There is worldwide recognition of the name “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” among Lutherans and other denominations; and

WHEREAS, We are known for our scriptural and confessional position under that name, and our position is a reflection of our history under the grace of God; and

WHEREAS, Altering the name of the Synod would promote confusion within and outside the Synod and require much explanation; and

WHEREAS, The cost of changing publications, letterheads, signs, insignia, and other media would be costly and questionable stewardship; and

WHEREAS, The name of a church body is neutral as far as the Gospel is concerned, it being clear that Roman Catholics are not found only in Rome, and Southern Baptist are found all over the United States, and Missouri Synod Lutherans are found all over the world; therefore be it

Resolved, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod retain its name.

East Region Pastoral Conference
Northern Illinois District

8-77

To Decline Further Study of LCMS Name Change

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG recommends in its final report to the 2010 LCMS convention that the Synod “adopt a process leading to the renaming of the Synod” (*Congregations Walking Together in Mission: The Final Report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Synod Structure and Governance*, October 2009, p. 43); and

WHEREAS, Overtures have been submitted to conventions of the Synod since 1962 calling for a renaming of the Synod (*ibid.*, p. 45); and

WHEREAS, The Synod’s Board of Directors studied the matter extensively during the 1998–2001 triennium, receiving the Name Change Task Force’s report that while 78 percent of Synod and district leadership thought a name change would have an impact on the ability to reach out to the unchurched, 58 percent of those serving on the front lines of work with the unchurched in congregations indicated that “a name change would have *no impact* on their ability to reach the unchurched,” (*ibid.*, p. 46, emphasis added); and

WHEREAS, The 1999 report of the Name Change Task Force indicated that congregational respondents “were about evenly divided on whether the name should be changed,” (*ibid.*, p. 46); and

WHEREAS, The 2009 survey conducted by the BRTFSSG at district conventions indicated a continued even divide (45 percent favorable,

40 percent unfavorable, 15 percent unsure) (*ibid.*, Appendix 7, p. 4); and

WHEREAS, The task of the BRTFSSG was to study and make recommendations regarding “significant fiscal implications relative to the Synod’s current structure” (*ibid.*, p. 10); and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG’s own estimates of the financial impact of their recommendations is a total per year savings of about 83 dollars per congregation and about \$990,000 for Synod, Inc. (*ibid.*, Appendix 4, p. 4.1); and

WHEREAS, The cost of changing the name of the Synod was estimated in 1999 to be about \$3–5 million to the Synod, Inc. (*ibid.*, p. 46); therefore be it

Resolved, That we, the Board of Directors of the Central Illinois District, memorialize the 2010 Synod convention to reject any proposals working toward or further studying a change in the name of the LCMS; and be it further

Resolved, That we memorialize the 2010 Synod convention to place a three-convention moratorium (9–12 years) on any further study of, consideration of, or other expenditure of money toward a name change for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Board of Directors
Central Illinois District

8-78

To Retain the Name “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod”

WHEREAS, In 2005, President Gerald Kieschnick appointed the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance; and

WHEREAS, The task force’s proposals in its final report of October 15, 2009, are far-reaching in scope and significant in import; and

WHEREAS, Experience teaches that maximum attention must be given to details and wording in making adjustments and/or changes impinging on structure; and

WHEREAS, The Synod would do well to proceed with prayerful and appropriate care in considering any changes; and

WHEREAS, “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” is generally acknowledged around the world to be the name of THE confessional Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, That Our Savior Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA, memorialize the Synod to retain the name “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.”

Our Savior, Muscatine, IA;
Zion, Wilton, IA

8-79

To Reject Any Proposal to Change Pastoral Candidate Certification

WHEREAS, The President of the Synod in 2005 appointed a Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) to “do a thorough, zero-based assessment of the entirety of the system of governance and organizational structure of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” and to make recommendations for improvements that “suggest a form of structure and governance for the decades ahead” (BRTFSSG Report, pp. 6–7); and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG has published a document for consideration and discussion, “Walking Together—The LCMS Future: Proposals and Possibilities for Consideration and Discussion”; and

2010 Convention Workbook

WHEREAS, In this document the task force states that it “is very interested in what the people of the LCMS have to say” concerning a number of issues listed under a section titled “Items for Further Attention”; and

WHEREAS, An item listed in this section is “Expanding responsibility for the certification of pastoral candidates to include district presidents and congregations being served by such candidates”; and

WHEREAS, Bylaw section 2.7 adequately defines eligibility for individual membership in the Synod, including the certification of pastoral candidates by the appropriate seminary faculty or colloquy committee; and

WHEREAS, Expanding the pastoral certification process to include district presidents and congregations being served by such candidates has the unwanted potential of adding inconsistency and uncertainties to the certification process; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District respectfully request that the BRTFSSG not do further research or consider the possibility of expanding responsibility for the certification of pastoral candidates to include district presidents and congregations being served by such candidates; and be it further

Resolved, That the Minnesota North District convention memorialize the 2010 LCMS convention to reject any proposal to change the certification process for pastoral candidates as it is currently specified in Bylaw section 2.7.

Minnesota North District

8-80

To Amend Bylaws 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 re Amendments to Bylaws

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has provided its report to the Synod and has proposed bylaw changes to carry out its recommendations; and

WHEREAS, In its report the task force recommends changes to the responsibilities of the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) and the current Commission on Structure (COS, renamed “Commission on Handbook,” COH), proposing to move the content of current Bylaw 3.9.2.2.1 to proposed Bylaw 3.9.4.2; and

WHEREAS, This proposed change places the primary responsibility for managing and revising the Synod’s *Handbook* upon the COH after consultation with the CCM; and

WHEREAS, Current Bylaws 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 do not reflect this responsibility advocated for the COH; and

WHEREAS, The bylaw changes advocated by the BRTFSSG do not include changes to current Bylaws 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 consistent with the recommendation in its report; therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaws 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 be amended as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

7.1.1 Amendments may be made by conventions of the Synod.

- (a) They shall be presented in writing to a convention of the Synod.
- (b) They shall be specified as bylaw amendments and considered by a convention floor committee.
- (c) They shall be examined by the Commission on Handbook and the Commission on Constitutional Matters prior to presentation to the convention to determine that they are not in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod.
- (d) They shall be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting.

7.1.2 In exceptional circumstances and upon the express direction of a convention of the Synod, amendments may be made by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors.

- (a) Such amendments to the Bylaws shall be necessary to implement resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod.
- (b) Such amendments shall be drafted by the Secretary of the Synod and shall be reviewed by the Commission on Handbook and the Commission on Constitutional Matters.

Commission on Structure

8-81

To Retain CAO and CCM Representative on Commission on Handbook

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) has provided its report to the Synod and has proposed bylaw changes to carry out its recommendations; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation #18 advocates changing the name of the Commission on Structure to the Commission on Handbook; and

WHEREAS, The BRTFSSG recommendation reduces the number of members on the commission from eight (8) to six (6)—no longer including either the Chief Administrative Officer of the Synod or a voting member of the Commission on Constitutional Matters; and

WHEREAS, The recent Commission on Structure has found the presence of these two current members to be of tremendous resource and assistance in carrying out the work of the commission and would be lacking such resource without their presence; therefore be it

Resolved, That the membership positions of the Chief Administrative Officer and a voting member of the Commission on Constitutional Matters be retained on the Commission on Handbook; and be it finally

Resolved, that these two membership positions be reflected in the BRTFSSG-proposed Bylaw 3.9.4.1

Commission on Structure

APPENDIX I

OPINIONS OF COMMISSION ON CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

Consequences of Action Taken Upon Approval of Ecclesiastical Supervisor (02-2296; 02-2320)

A Dispute Resolution Panel in a letter dated December 20, 2002, forwarded the following question to the Commission from a party to a dispute. The question is identical to a question submitted by a Vice-President of a District in an August 16, 2002, letter.

Question: Do the Constitution and/or Bylaws of Synod allow or contemplate the discipline of any pastor or contemplate the discipline of any pastor of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who has taken an action with the full knowledge and approval of his superior, where the superior's approval is based upon the superior's interpretation of a synodically approved document, where the interpretation is not plainly or knowingly erroneous, especially where the superior himself has not been formally found in error and disciplined?

Opinion: The Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod do not allow or contemplate the expulsion of a member of the Synod on the basis of an action taken with the full knowledge and approval of the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor. For a thorough treatment of this issue, see Opinion 02-2309.

Adopted Jan. 20–21, 2003

Ecclesiastical Supervision and Conflict of Interest (02-2309)

A District President, in a September 27, 2002, letter that included the signatures of twelve other members of the Council of Presidents, asked a series of questions regarding the constitutional provision of ecclesiastical supervision and the consequences of following the advice of an ecclesiastical supervisor.

Question 1: May a District President who has acted in a matter after receiving the advice of and authorization of the synodical President be charged under Bylaw 2.27 for such act, which charge could result in his removal from his position as District President as well as from the roster of the Synod?

Opinion: After the example of the apostolic church, Acts 15:1–31, the Synod was formed “to unite in a corporate body the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church that acknowledge and remain true to the *Book of Concord* of the year of our Lord 1580 as a true exhibition of sound Christian doctrine” (Articles of Incorporation, Article II a). The Synod's objectives include: “The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall—1. Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith. ... 8. Provide evangelical supervision, counsel, and care for pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers of the Synod in the performance of their official duties. ... 9. Provide protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other church workers in the performance of their official duties and the maintenance of their rights” (Constitution, Article III). Recognizing the objectives for which it was organized, the Synod obligated itself “to assist and advise congregations, pastors and teachers affiliated with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and to exercise supervision over such pastors and teachers as to doctrine, practice, and performance of their official duties” (Articles of Incorporation, Article II c).

“Committed to a common confession and mission, congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod join with one another in

the Synod to support one another and work together in carrying out their commonly adopted objectives” (Bylaw 1.01). According to Bylaw 1.05 d, “members agree to uphold the confessional position of the Synod (Art. II) and to assist in carrying out the objectives of the Synod (Art. III), which are objectives of the members themselves.” Bylaw 1.05 e states: “Membership is held in the Synod itself. However, in accordance with the objectives of the Synod, each member enjoys certain privileges and accepts certain responsibilities also in and through the respective District and Circuit.” According to Bylaw 2.35, “every member of the Synod shall diligently and earnestly promote the purposes of the Synod by word and deed.” Bylaw 2.39 adds that “the Constitution, Bylaws, and all other rules and regulations of the Synod apply to all congregational and individual members of the Synod.” This includes doctrinal resolutions that “are to be honored and upheld until such time as the Synod amends or repeals them” (Bylaw 1.09 b).

Mindful of the objectives of Synod, the conditions of membership, the need for and benefit of supervision, and the concern for unity of faith and confession, the Synod also provided ecclesiastical supervision in its Constitution. Article XI B 1 specifically identifies the President as the ecclesiastical supervisor of all officers of the Synod, all such as are employed by the Synod, the individual Districts of the Synod, and all District Presidents. Article XII 7 specifically requires that District Presidents “especially exercise supervision over the doctrine, life, and administration of office of the ordained and commissioned ministers of their district and acquaint themselves with the religious conditions of the congregations of their district.”

Bylaw 3.101 A 1 summarizes the ecclesiastical powers and duties of the President of the Synod when it states that the President shall “supervise the doctrine taught and practiced in the Synod, including all synodwide corporate entities. In the Districts of the Synod, he shall carry out his ecclesiastical duties through the District's President. The President of the Synod has ecclesiastical supervision of all officers of the Synod and its agencies, the individual Districts of the Synod, and all District Presidents.” Bylaw 2.41 i states: “Except as expressly otherwise provided in this section, a member shall be under the ecclesiastical supervision of the President of the District through which synodical membership is held.”

Ecclesiastical supervision intrinsically includes all of the following: “supervision regarding the doctrine and the administration” of all officers, employees, Districts, and District Presidents (Art. XI B 1); “to admonish all who in any way depart from [the Synod's Constitution], and, if such admonition is not heeded, to report such cases to the Synod” (Art. XI B 2); “power to advise, admonish, and reprove” (Art. XI B 3); to “see to it that the resolutions of the Synod are carried out” (Art. XI B 4); “supervision over the doctrine, life, and administration of office of the ordained and commissioned ministers ... visit and, according as they deem it necessary, hold investigations” (Art. XII 7); “supervise the doctrine taught and practiced in the Synod ... officially visit or cause to be visited all the educational institutions of the Synod ... meet regularly with the Council of Presidents ... to see to it that they are in accordance with Article II of the Constitution, synodically adopted doctrinal statements, and doctrinal resolutions of the Synod” (Bylaw 3.101 A); and such other constitutional terminology as “counsel,” “care,” and “protection” (Art. III 8 and 9).

As indicated above, the Synod has promised its individual members supervision and counsel when the member is performing his/her official duties. The Synod has further decided that such supervision

(and supervision of necessity includes counsel and admonishment) shall be the responsibility of the synodical or District President, as the case may be. The President of the Synod and District Presidents are officers of the Synod. Thus, the Synod, having designated to its members the individuals who will provide to them supervision and counsel, is itself responsible for the accuracy and content of such supervision and counsel. Having promised supervision and counsel, the Synod is precluded from taking any action to terminate the membership of its member who, when performing his/her official duties, follows the advice and counsel of the ecclesiastical supervisor designated by the Synod.

It would be inconsistent with the above constitutional provisions to place the membership of an individual or congregation at risk where that member relies on the ecclesiastical supervision and counsel of the person called and chosen for that role or function. If an act is in fact contrary to Article XIII of the Constitution, the member who acted cannot be charged since he or she acted according to the advice of his or her ecclesiastical supervisor. It should be noted, however, that when an ecclesiastical supervisor discovers error in his counsel, it is incumbent upon that supervisor to correct or amend it. The member should then be held to consider the corrected counsel. Failure to consider such amended admonition could form the basis for disciplinary action as provided in Article XIII.

Where members of Synod have doctrinal disagreements and disputes, mechanisms are in place to allow for dialogue and discussion and the adoption of doctrinal positions (Bylaws 1.09 and 2.39). Such disagreements or disputes, however, are not intended to lead to the bringing of charges under Bylaw 2.27 or the implementation of dispute resolution process under Chapter VIII of the Bylaws.

Question 2: May an ordained or commissioned minister or a member congregation who has acted in a matter after receiving the advice and authorization of his/her District President be charged under bylaw 2.27 for such act, which could result in removal from the roster of the Synod?

Opinion: The answer to this question, as already stated in the response to question 1, is “no.” The District President has ecclesiastical supervision of the ordained and commissioned ministers and member congregations within his District as set forth in Article XII 7 and Bylaws 4.71, 4.73 and 4.75. When an ordained or commissioned minister or member congregation has acted in a manner that is consistent with the counsel of the District President, the Synod is precluded from taking any action to terminate the membership of its member who, when performing his/her official duties, follows the advice and counsel of the ecclesiastical supervisor designated by the Synod.

Question 3: May any person, member or board of the Synod, by invoking Bylaw 2.27 or Chapter VIII of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod, be allowed to disrupt, hamper or harass the synodical President who is responsible to the Synod (Art. XI A) in carrying out his duties and responsibilities for ecclesiastical supervision as stated in synodical Constitution Article XI B 1-4 and Article III 8, including advising a District President concerning a doctrinal position of the Synod and/or a question of administrative action, thus assuming only the rights and duties conferred on him by the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions.

Opinion: The Commission notes that Bylaw 2.27 cannot be invoked in the case of the President of the Synod (see CCM Opinion 01-2240). Whereas there may be occasions when the use of Chapter VIII of the Bylaws may be appropriate (see Opinion 03-2325),

implementation of the dispute resolution process should never be intended or allowed to disrupt, hamper, or harass the President as he carries out the duties and responsibilities of his office, including those of ecclesiastical supervision. It is never appropriate to assume rights and duties that have been conferred upon another by the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.

Question 4: If the answer to the previous question is “yes,” then under what circumstances can a District President or synodical President carry out their duties without being harassed and hampered by the invoking of Bylaw 2.27 or Chapter VIII?

Opinion: In the case of the President of the Synod, see the answer to question 3 above. In the case of charges brought against a District President, if he has been carrying out his responsibilities and the charges clearly are not supportable, the investigating officer may act quickly to dismiss the matter. Should members of the Synod abuse the Bylaws by bringing clearly unsupportable charges or complaints, such conduct may itself give offense and should be dealt with accordingly.

Question 5: May any person, member, or board of the Synod, after invoking Bylaw 2.27 and receiving a perceived “unfavorable” result, then invoke Chapter VIII against a District President and/or the synodical President although both were providing ecclesiastical supervision and seeing to it that the doctrinal position and the resolutions of the Synod were being carried out before Bylaw 2.27 was invoked in the first place?

Opinion: If an individual makes an allegation under Bylaw 2.27 against a member of the Synod, that allegation is given to the member’s ecclesiastical supervisor, either the President of the Synod or the appropriate District President. If the ecclesiastical supervisor declines to take any action, the party that has made the allegation may appeal that decision to the Praesidium of the Synod. Should the Praesidium also decline to take any action on the allegation, in the words of Bylaw 2.27 b, that “shall terminate the matter.” In other words, the matter is dead and there is no way that the complainant can invoke any of the provisions of Chapter VIII.

Question 6: If the synodical President or District President are carrying out ecclesiastical supervision according to the Constitution and Article XI and Article III 8 or Article XII and seeing to it that the resolutions of the Synod are being carried out (honored and upheld), under what constitutional provision may the President be recused from any subsequent involvement?

Opinion: There is no such constitutional provision.

Question 7: When the Synod has clearly stated its position or when an ecclesiastical supervisor has expressed his judgment concerning an issue based on a resolution adopted by the Synod, does a dissenter have the right to invoke Bylaw 2.27 or Chapter VIII rather than 2.39 c, the stated procedure for dissent referred to in Bylaw 1.09 d?

Opinion: Bylaw 2.27 is not the method provided by the Bylaws to resolve disputes as to what the doctrines of the church should be. Rather, it provides procedures for expulsion from the Synod according to Article XIII of the Constitution. Where there is disagreement by the complainant about the doctrines of the church, the action is one of a dissenter, which is governed by the provisions of Bylaw 2.39 c.

Question 8: Is it a conflict of interest when a District President and/or synodical President are carrying out their duties of ecclesiastical supervision and seeing to it that the

resolutions of the Synod are being carried out? If the answer is “yes” in what sense is it a “conflict of interest” and how is conflict of interest then defined?

Opinion: The answer to the first part of this question is “no.” An ecclesiastical supervisor carrying out his responsibilities of ecclesiastical supervision is not creating a conflict of interest with respect to his duties and responsibilities imposed by the Constitution or Bylaws.

A Bylaw 2.27 action against a District President falls within the provisions of Bylaw 2.27 g, and the synodical President becomes the investigating officer. Disqualification of the President of the Synod, as with the District President, occurs where he is a party to the matter in dispute, has a conflict of interest, or is otherwise unable to act. The fact that the investigating officer, whether a synodical or District President, has been involved in performing his ecclesiastical responsibilities in supervising the accused party is in and of itself not a basis for disqualification. In fact, the Constitution of the Synod presupposes that since or when there is prior supervision, advice, or futile admonition regarding the activity giving rise to a charge, the synodically designated ecclesiastical supervisor would have been involved in that advice or admonition. Carrying out such responsibility does not make the ecclesiastical supervisor a party to the matter in dispute nor give rise to a conflict of interest. Rather, the duty to investigate flows from and is a natural outgrowth of the District or synodical President’s ecclesiastical supervisory responsibility.

Question 9: Under what constitutional provision, if any, may any person or group, any board or commission, or any other entity assume de jure or de facto the responsibility of ecclesiastical supervision in the Synod that has been given alone to the synodical President or the District President in his respective District? In other words, may any entity that does not have the ecclesiastical supervision, which is the sole responsibility of the synodical President or a District President, publicly reprove or admonish another entity? If the answer is “yes” how may the Synod avoid havoc, disorder and confusion?

Opinion: There is no constitutional provision that allows any person, group, board, commission or other entity to assume the responsibility of ecclesiastical supervision in the Synod that has been given to the President of the Synod under Article XI B or the District President under Article XII 7. This includes the formal or official constitutional responsibility to admonish or reprove members of the Synod. No one is to interfere in the work of another.

Adopted Jan. 20–21, 2003

Concerns re Opinion 02-2309 (03-2338B)

In a March 3, 2003, letter, a pastor of the Synod expressed concern regarding an opinion of the CCM which he believes “has an unnecessarily pejorative spin to it” when it states that “implementation of the dispute resolution process should never be intended or allowed to disrupt, hamper, or harass the President as he carries out the duties and responsibilities of his office, including those of ecclesiastical supervision” (02-2309 response to question #3). He asked the Commission to “show specific proof from Scripture, the Confessions, and the Constitution and Bylaws” that the opinion is justified, or, if that cannot be done, to modify the opinion.

Opinion: The Commission notes that in its response to question #3 of Opinion 02-2309 it repeated the words of the question to which it was responding when it used the words “disrupt, hamper, or harass.” It was not the intent of the Commission to disparage the questioner or to discourage proper use of the dispute resolution process. In fact, in the same response to question #3 the Commission

acknowledges that there may be occasions when the use of Chapter VIII of the Bylaws is appropriate.

The Commission has never opined that one brother should be denied the right or responsibility to admonish another brother over matters of the soul. However, when it comes to ecclesiastical supervision by the Synod, such supervision is to be provided by those whom the Synod has given that responsibility in its Constitution and Bylaws. Adopted Aug. 15–16, 2003

Reconsideration of Opinions re Ecclesiastical Supervision (03-2338, 03-2338A, 03-2338C)

In a letter received February 27, 2003, a pastor of the Synod encouraged the Commission to reconsider its decision regarding “Ecclesiastical Supervision.” The stated reason for encouraging the reconsideration was that for him the decision leaves the impression that no one can be held responsible for his actions when he has received prior permission from his ecclesiastical supervisor, that everyone must give an account of his actions before the throne of God and that no one can claim as an excuse that an ecclesiastical supervisor condoned his action. He further asked these questions: “Should not the Scriptures supersede any interpretation of the Bylaws? Is a decision of the CCM valid when it contradicts the Word of God? Can the church allow them (ecclesiastical supervisors) to be considered above accountability? Can those who follow approval by their ecclesiastical supervisor claim this same immunity from challenge to their action?”

Secondly, in a letter received March 1, 2003, a pastor of the Synod encouraged the Commission to reconsider its January 20–21, 2003, decisions regarding “Consequences of Actions Taken Upon Approval of Ecclesiastical Supervisor” (02-2296; 02-2320) and all others in any way pertaining to ecclesiastical supervisors. He stated: “In some cases, I fear ecclesiastical supervision may even exceed the boundaries of the Holy Scriptures.”

Thirdly, in a letter received April 7, 2003, a voters assembly of a member congregation of the Synod offered “An Appeal to the [Commission] on Constitutional Matters of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to Declare Invalid Opinions 02-2296; 02-2320; and 02-2309,” expressing concern that these opinions leave the supervised member or an officer of the Synod free from responsibility or accountability and thereby change the public nature of the Synod. The congregation stated, “In this way the Synod, then, can hold no individual under such supervision accountable.”

And finally, input that came as a result of the Commission’s invitation expressed: “One effect of the CCM opinion is to preclude the Synod from expelling one of its members that engages in offensive conduct (also referred to in the same communication as ‘unacceptable conduct’ and ‘scandalous conduct’) ... if that member acted with the advice or counsel of the member’s ecclesiastical supervisor,” and also, “CCM Opinion 02-2309 will certainly be used as a defense to members of Synod who may be charged with scandalous behavior.”

Although the above letters were received by the Commission in March and April, 2003, as indicated, and a draft response was considered at the Commission’s June 23, 2003, meeting, publication of a response was delayed because of the Commission’s invitation to the Board of Directors to provide “information, if any, related to the issues that have been raised” (CCM Minutes, June 23, 2003, agenda item #161). That information was provided at the Commission’s meeting August 15–16, 2003, as reflected in those minutes (Agenda item #180). Having considered the questions, the communications, and the additional input, the Commission on October 30, 2003, drafted its response to the requests for reconsideration and the matters presented, and now issues it on this date, December 13, 2003, upon a scheduled conference call.

Opinion: Opinion 02-2309 (cf. Opinions 02-2296 and 02-2320) concluded that the Synod, having promised evangelical supervision and counsel to its members, is precluded from taking any action to terminate the membership of its member who, when performing his/her official duties, follows the advice and counsel of the ecclesiastical supervisor designated by the Synod. In other words, the opinion addressed the fact that a member of the Synod had the right to rely on the advice and counsel of his/her ecclesiastical supervisor in taking official actions without fear of being expelled from the Synod.

After prayerful consideration and for the following reasons, the Commission reaffirms its prior opinions 02-2296, 02-2309, and 02-2320. In reviewing the nature and function of Synod, the Synod, which is “collectively ... an ... association of self-governing Lutheran congregations” (Bylaw 3.51 a) expresses its collective understanding (and interpretation) of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions through its doctrinal resolutions and statements in convention (Bylaw 1.09 a) and also expresses its collective will through its Constitution, Bylaws and other resolutions (Bylaw 3.01).

On the basis of the Synod’s Constitution and Bylaws, if the Constitution and Bylaws or resolutions of the Synod contradict God’s unchangeable Word or exceed the boundaries of Holy Scripture, “the only rule and norm of faith and of practice” (Article II), it is incumbent upon the Synod in convention to amend or repeal such. And any action or decision of officers, boards or commissions may be appealed to the Synod in convention (Bylaw 3.73).

As set forth in Bylaw 3.905 d, the Commission on Constitutional Matters is charged with the duty to “interpret the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions.” It does not interpret the Scriptures. Thus the Synod has limited the Commission in its responses to the specific provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of the Synod. The Synod has reserved unto itself the right to determine whether a decision of the Commission is valid or in error or if it contradicts the Synod’s Constitution and Bylaws. Bylaw 3.905 d provides that “an opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a synodical convention.”

Further, regarding the issues of evangelical and ecclesiastical supervision, responsibility, and accountability, the Commission calls attention to the following: In the formation of our synodical union, “the Synod, under Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions” established various objectives including “evangelical supervision, counsel, and care for pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers of the Synod in the performance of their official duties” and “protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other church workers in the performance of their official duties and the maintenance of their rights” (Article III 8 and 9). [Emphasis added]

Bylaw 3.51 k defines ecclesiastical supervision as follows: “... ecclesiastical supervision shall be determined exclusively by those Bylaws pertaining to ecclesiastical supervision.” Among the bylaws that primarily address this issue are Bylaw 3.101 which relates to the President of the Synod and Bylaws 4.71–4.75 which relate to District Presidents. Both segments of the Bylaws indicate that the President of the Synod and a District President have the duty to “supervise the doctrine” and “see to it that” the Constitution and Bylaws and resolutions of the Synod are carried out as part of their respective areas of responsibility (cf. Constitution Article XI b and Article XII 7 and 8).

Therefore, this Synod-provided ecclesiastical supervision, which is neither a matter of giving permission nor exercising legislative control or coercive power (Article VII) but is one of giving advice and counsel, is circumscribed and exercised not by the will of the ecclesiastical supervisor, not by individual interpretation, and not

by public opinion or by groups within or outside of Synod but by the collective will of the congregations of the Synod in convention. This also holds true in administering the supervisory and disciplinary provisions of the Bylaws in carrying out Article XIII of the Constitution. Under the authority of the Synod, the ecclesiastical supervisor does what he has been authorized and directed to do on behalf of the Synod and is accountable to the Synod in convention.

Thus, Opinion 02-2309 opined that in the forming of the Synod, one of the objectives and protections of the Synod itself was that the Synod was to provide for ecclesiastical supervisors, and inherent in such supervision is that those so supervised can reasonably rely on the counsel and advice in the performance of their official duties without having to fear that actions taken in accord therewith will place their very membership in the Synod at risk. That is not to say, however, that the advice will always be correct and that therefore the member’s action is correct. It is noted in Opinion 02-2309 “that when an ecclesiastical supervisor discovers error in his counsel, it is incumbent upon that supervisor to correct or amend it. The member should then be held to consider the corrected counsel.” The protections of the Synod as expressed in Opinion 02-2309 are protections of one’s membership in the Synod and not a protection from the duty and responsibility to constantly consider the appropriateness of one’s actions in view of the Word of God. No one is immune from responsible, God-pleasing conduct and behavior or personal accountability before God.

The Commission also calls attention to the language of Opinion 02-2309. Both in the second to last paragraph of the answer to Question 1 and in answer to Question 2, the opinion specifically references official duty and action, not personal offensive conduct. The opinion notes in Question 1 that “the Synod has promised its individual members supervision and counsel when the member is performing his/her official duties.” The answer to Question 2 concludes that “the Synod is precluded from taking any action to terminate the membership of its member who, when performing his/her official duties, follows the advice and counsel of the ecclesiastical supervisor designated by the Synod” (emphases added). Thus, personal offensive conduct or conduct that is illegal or criminal can certainly not be included in the context of the quoted prior opinion.

In addressing accountability of the District President and the President of the Synod, Article XII 7 of the Constitution provides that “the District President shall, moreover, especially exercise supervision over the doctrine, life, and administration of office of the ordained and commissioned ministers of their District. ...” Who then exercises ecclesiastical supervision over a District President? Bylaw 3.101 A 1 provides, “The President of the Synod has ecclesiastical supervision of all officers of the Synod and its agencies, the individual Districts of the Synod, and all District Presidents.” Who then has ecclesiastical supervision of the President of The Synod? Neither the Constitution nor the Bylaws provide a specific answer to that question. However, in 1992 the Commission issued an opinion (Ag. 1915), which has not been overruled by any subsequent convention of the Synod. That opinion provided in part as follows: The Synod has a right to call its officers to account and to remove them from office in accordance with Christian procedure (Article XI 2). The Commission then commented, “It would seem that the only recourse is an appeal to the convention of the Synod. ...”

Adopted Dec. 13, 2003

Authority of the Board of Directors re Radio Station KFUE (03-2357)

In a letter received June 9, 2003, a District President questioned the right of the Board of Directors of the Synod to assume direct responsibility for the operation of KFUE radio in light of past convention actions. He also inquired regarding the possibility of a similar

action by the Board of Directors over against entities owned by Districts, such as a radio station or resource center.

Question 1: Since 1986 Resolution 1-12 explicitly delegated responsibility for the management of KFUE to the Board for Communication Services, may the Board of Directors of the Synod reverse that delegation and assume direct control of the administration of KFUE under Bylaw 3.183 c?

Opinion: A general discussion of authority as between the Board of Directors and various agencies and boards of the Synod is set forth in Opinion 03-2358. The specific functions of the Board for Communication Services are set forth in Bylaw 3.813. Those functions may be expanded by synodical resolution, as in the case of 1986 Resolution 1-12. Where an express delegation of authority has been made by bylaw or resolution of the convention, the general authority of the Board of Directors under Bylaw 3.183 c (the Board is “authorized to take on behalf of the Synod any action related to such business and legal affairs which has not been expressly delegated ... to other officers and agencies of the Synod”) is inapplicable. Rather, the authority of the Board of Directors in such circumstances is under Bylaw 3.183 d 2, “to call up for review, criticism, modification, or revocation any action or policy of a program board, commission, or council,” and under Bylaw 3.183 b, to “communicate to the appropriate boards and commissions suggestions for improvement.” Absent a voluntary relinquishment of authority from the Board for Communication Services to the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors may not reverse the delegation of authority as described.

Question 2: If the Board of Directors is able to do this, may it also take over responsibilities for entities owned by the various Districts (such as our radio station and resource center)?

Opinion: The division of the Synod into Districts was established by Article XII of the Constitution. The procedure for the formation and realignment of Districts is the subject of Bylaw 4.03. Bylaw 4.07 sets forth the relationship between the Synod and the Districts, including the manner in which the Synod exercises its authority over the Districts. Bylaw 3.185 a 1 directs the Board of Directors to “delegate to District boards of directors the authority to buy, sell, and encumber real and personal property in the ordinary course of performing the functions which the District carries on for the Synod in accord with general policies (which shall be applicable to all Districts) established from time to time by itself or the Synod in convention.” With respect to entities owned by a District, the Bylaws provide in Bylaw 4.07 d that “upon dissolution of a District, all property and assets to which the District holds title or over which it has control shall be transferred forthwith to the Synod or to the Synod’s nominee. Upon dissolution of a corporation controlled by a District, the assets of such corporation shall be distributed to the District.” Article XII 12 indicates that “the Districts are independent in the administration of affairs which concern their District only, it being understood, however, that such administration shall always serve the interests of the Synod.” As such, the Board of Directors may not take over responsibility for entities owned by the various Districts.

See also the answer to Question 1.

Adopted September 30, 2003

Authority of Board of Directors to Direct Allocation of Funds (03-2358)

In a letter received May 28, 2003, the Executive Director of the Board for Higher Education/Concordia University System asked

whether the Board of Directors has the authority to require the Board for Higher Education/Concordia University System to distribute a specified amount of allocated unrestricted dollars to other entities under the direct supervision and oversight of the BHE/CUS Board.

Question: Does the Synod’s Board of Directors have authority to “require” the Board for Higher Education/Concordia University System to distribute a specified amount of allocated, unrestricted dollars to other entities under direct supervision and oversight of the BHE/CUS Board (cf. Bylaws 3.183 d and 3.409 e)?

Opinion: In fulfilling its ecclesiastical purposes, the Synod in convention has identified the authority of the Board of Directors of the Synod in Article XI F of the Constitution and Bylaw 3.183. With respect to the financial affairs of the Synod and its entities, that authority includes, under Bylaw 3.183 c, the responsibility for the general management of the business and legal affairs of the Synod and, under Bylaw 3.183 d, responsibility to allocate available funds to the program boards, commissions, councils, and departments of corporate Synod and to hold them accountable therefor. To perform its function, the Board has the authority under Bylaw 3.183 d 2 to call up for review, criticism, modification, or revocation any action or policy of a program board, commission, or council, except opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters. Bylaw 3.183 f also provides the Board the responsibility to assure itself that audits are performed by internal auditors or independent certified public accountants for the synodwide corporate entities, colleges and universities, seminaries, Districts, and Worker Benefit Plans.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is a church body, entitled to the fullest autonomy allowed under the Constitution of the United States. Historically, in order to hold title to property and conduct civil affairs in a secular society, churches have been required in many states to have a civil status as well as a religious status. To further its primarily ecclesiastical functions, our Synod authorized the formation of a civil entity known as The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, incorporated under the civil laws of the State of Missouri. The Articles of Incorporation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reference the Bylaws and Constitution of the Synod no less than seven times each and identify the purpose of the corporation, to “unite in a corporate body the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. ...”

While the Synod could have adopted for its governance a corporate model, with power concentrated in a board of directors, subject only to election or reelection every three years, the Synod instead chose as its church governance structure a system which places ultimate authority in its members in convention assembled, very much consistent with the pre-incorporation polity of the Synod. In fulfilling its function as “church,” the Synod has determined in convention to establish boards and commissions as the best way to carry out various church purposes and functions, as it reserved the right to do in Article VII of the Articles of Incorporation. Bylaw 3.01 indicates that the Synod in convention “establishes general synodical positions and policies, provides overall program direction and priorities, and evaluates all such positions, programs, policies, directions, and priorities in order to provide responsible service for and on behalf of its members.” The Synod has chosen to allocate duties, powers, and responsibilities among various officers, boards (including the Board of Directors of the Synod), and commissions, holding each ultimately responsible to the national convention of the Synod (Bylaw 3.73).

The Synod in convention has chosen to retain authority to identify and elect those persons whom it, as a church body and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, believes will most effectively carry out its mission and ministry. The Synod in convention has identified specific mechanisms for the selection of others to be called into the service of the church. In specialized areas of ministry, it has created program boards. Bylaw 3.51 h defines a program board as “an officially established group of persons elected or appointed as prescribed in the Bylaws, charged with developing policies and programs for an operating function of the Synod and supervising their implementation.” The Board for Higher Education is one such program board.

Historically, because of the ecclesiastical nature of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, it has operated as “church” and not simply as a non-profit entity. It has reserved in its governance structure the right through the Synod in convention to control itself, delegating pursuant to its historic procedures the authority and responsibility of church functions between conventions. Because of its primary identity as a church and not simply a non-profit corporation, the Synod has authority and autonomy to limit the authority of the Board of Directors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in ways which directors of secular non-profit corporations may not be limited. Even a secular non-profit corporation may limit the power of its board of directors with detailed limitations in the Articles of Incorporation themselves.

In fulfilling its ecclesiastical purposes, the Synod in convention has identified in its bylaws the duties and responsibilities of each of the separate boards and commissions of the Synod, as well as synod-wide corporate entities. With respect to the Board for Higher Education/Concordia University System, those duties and responsibilities are described in Bylaws 3.401 through 3.415. With respect to fiscal issues, the Board for Higher Education/Concordia University System has specific responsibility under Bylaw 3.409 e to “establish policy guidelines involving distribution of synodical subsidy and efforts for securing additional financial support from other sources,” and under Bylaw 3.409 i to “approve capital projects in terms of constituency priorities and system and institutional needs in accordance with campus property-management agreements.”

The issue of balancing responsibilities between the Board of Directors and the responsibilities of program boards and commissions has been dealt with in past opinions of the Commission. For example, Opinion 02-2315, after reviewing the general balance of responsibilities, observed:

The Commission concludes that the Board of Directors has been given “general oversight responsibility” over the colleges, universities, and seminaries of the Synod as its agencies (see CCM Opinion 02-2259). As part of this general oversight, the Board has a legitimate interest in any contemplated action of an agency which results in the spending of funds beyond those currently budgeted or which will obligate future spending. By a request for such information, the Board exercises its right to call up an action for review, but this request is to be made, in this case, to the BHE/CUS Board. The role of the BHE/CUS Board and its staff will be to provide the requested information to the Board of Directors through its chairman and chief executive officer.

The issue of balancing responsibility between the Board of Directors, charged with overall fiscal responsibility of the Synod, and the responsibility of program boards, commissions, councils, and departments of corporate Synod, charged with use of those allocated funds, has also been dealt with in past opinions of the Commission. A series of opinions dating back to 1976 involving implementation

of New Orleans Resolution 6-31 (Ag. 591, Ag. 591A-B, Ag. 927, Ag. 9-27A, Ag. 934, and Ag. 934B-J) recognize that the Synod in convention is the highest legislative authority of the Synod, both as to program and fiscal matters. Later, in Opinion Ag. 1934 (December 5, 1992), the Commission wrote:

Bylaw 3.183 dealing with the authority of the Board of Directors states among other things, the Board of Directors shall ... be authorized to take, on behalf of the Synod, any actions not expressly or by reasonable implication delegated to other officers, boards, or commissions. When, for fiscal reasons, an action such as the transfer of the editorial functions and the editors is deemed necessary, there appears to be no other officer or group which would have the authority to take such action. In addition, Bylaw 3.189 c states that the Board of Directors makes the final determination if conflicts develop in the plans and policies of two or more boards or commissions of the Synod.

The Board of Directors is required to act in a fiscally responsible and prudent manner. Included in that responsibility is the establishment of a budget as outlined in Bylaw 9.55 which includes the adoption of a final budget by the Board of Directors. That final budget may involve the allocation of limited funds in such a way that it would be impossible for a Board to carry out a specific function or at least to do so following the normal procedure which may have been followed for many years.

In further review of the issue, the Commission was asked in 1998 to review the effort of the Board of Directors to move the video studio of the Synod from the Board for Communication Services to General Services. In Opinion Ag. 2094 (May 22, 1998) the Commission ruled:

Bylaw 3.817 sets forth the functions of the Board for Communication Services (BCS). Subsection “g” thereof states that the BCS shall “serve as a resource ... by providing ... production facilities, and other assistance for ... electronic media.” Therefore, if operation of the video studio is part of the “production facilities,” it is one of the designated functions of the BCS and cannot be removed from the BCS without a change of the bylaw by a convention of the Synod.

Later in that same opinion the Commission noted:

Each board or commission is solely responsible for the organization of its own staff. The Board of Directors of the Synod does allocate available funds to the respective boards and commissions (Bylaw 3.191, d) but the usage of such funds is the responsibility of the governing board of each board or commission.

Given the specific question presented, under the present bylaws, without consideration of emergency issues arising during the execution of a fiscal year’s budget and consistent with the prior opinions of the Commission, the Board of Directors does not have authority to “require” that allocated unrestricted dollars be spent in a particular fashion. It is certainly anticipated that the Board of Directors will communicate its suggestions and the priorities it perceives within the overall programs of the Synod, as is recognized as its authority under Bylaw 3.183 b, to “communicate to the appropriate boards and commissions suggestions for improvement.” While a particular board or entity is responsible to determine the use of allocated funds, each board must keep in mind its responsibility to consider input from the Board of Directors, the responsibility of the Board of Directors to call up for review and modification any action it takes, and ultimately the authority of the Board of Directors to make allocations in future years based on its perception of the stewardship of given boards in prior years.

Adopted September 30, 2003

Authority of Board of Directors to Direct Use of Funds (Board for Communication Services) (03-2359)

The chairman of the Board for Communication Services, in a letter received June 9, 2003, submitted a series of questions based upon the following background:

In the recent allocation of restricted funds to the various synodical program boards, commissions, councils, and departments, the Synod's Board of Directors (BOD) included a requirement that the Synod's Board for Communication Services (BCS) maintain the monthly REPORTER newspaper at "current levels"—i.e., that circulation and frequency of publication stay the same and that REPORTER remain both a paper publication as well as an electronic one. At the same time, the BOD reduced the BCS allocation of unrestricted funds by more than \$150,000 from current-year levels, which means that BCS staff and programs not related to REPORTER must be cut or eliminated. The effect is that the Board of Directors, rather than the BCS, is determining the communication-program priorities of the Synod.

There seems to be a lack of clarity between the role of the Board of Directors and that of the BCS regarding the management and prioritization of BCS activities, including oversight of REPORTER. While the Synod's Bylaws direct the Board of Directors to "allocate available funds to the program boards, commissions, councils, and departments of corporate Synod and hold them accountable therefore" (3.183 d), those same Bylaws direct the Board for Communication Services to:

"organize the communications activities of the church ..." (3.183 a); "authorize and supervise the production of the necessary print and broadcast materials for the church and its publics" (3.813 b); and "have responsibility for the official periodicals of the Synod" (3.813 c).

The questions submitted to the Commission were as follows.

Question 1: Does the Synod's Board of Directors have the authority to hold a program board "accountable" to the extent that it, the BOD, can dictate how the unrestricted funds allocated to that program board specifically are to be spent?

Opinion: See Opinion 03-2358. The Board of Directors may suggest priorities in the use of funds and ultimately has responsibility for the allocation of available funds. However, the Board of Directors may not mandate specific use of funds allocated to a program board or commission where the Synod in convention has given responsibility for carrying out a particular function of the Synod to a particular program board or commission.

Question 2: Does the Board of Directors' action usurp the prerogatives of the Synod acting in convention to make bylaws delegating responsibility for the management of synodical programs to synodical program boards?

Opinion: The responsibilities of the Board of Directors as described in Bylaw 3.183 have been discussed in other opinions (see Opinions 03-2357 and 03-2358). With respect to the general authority of various boards and commissions, Bylaw 1.07 d states: "Each board and commission or other agency that serves the Synod or a District in a specific area of program or ministry in accordance with the Synod's Constitution and applicable Bylaws adopts programs in its assigned area of responsibility; administers the programs and resources as provided or authorized by the Constitution and applicable Bylaws, or as assigned by the respective convention or agency; and proposes modifications thereto. It also provides program policies, as well as directions, for its staff and shall establish, together with staff, evaluation criteria for its programs."

An action of the Board of Directors dictating, as opposed to suggesting, how the unrestricted funds allocated to a program board specifically are to be spent would be a usurpation of the prerogatives of the Synod acting in convention to make bylaws designed to achieve its primarily ecclesiastical purposes by delegating responsibility for management of synodical programs to synodical program boards created by the Synod in convention to achieve the convention's stated goals.

Question 3: May the Board of Directors in the exercise of its constitutional mandate to supervise the business affairs of

the Synod "micro-manage" the policy, program, and other day-to-day decisions of the program boards to which the Synod in convention has delegated such responsibilities?

Opinion: While the Board of Directors is responsible to hold others accountable under Bylaw 3.183, the Board of Directors is not authorized to "micro-manage" the policy, program, and other day-to-day decisions of the program boards to which the Synod in convention has delegated such responsibilities.

Question 4: May the Board of Directors require what in effect are unfounded mandates of the program boards by not providing along with its requirements the funds to carry out those requirements? Is this, in effect, order the same number of bricks but without providing any straw (Ex. 5:6-8)?

Opinion: Please refer to the answers above.

Adopted September 30, 2003

Synod Governance Issues (07-2486)

In a letter received January 5, 2007, a pastor of the Synod asked a series of questions regarding Synod governance issues. The first specifically relate to Bylaw 1.2.1 (d) (4), which states: "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in referencing the laws of the State of Missouri in these Bylaws and in the Synod's Articles of Incorporation, intends to acknowledge its responsibility to be subject to civil authority. In all such references, however, the Synod intends to retain all authority and autonomy allowed a church under the laws and Constitution of the United States and the State of Missouri."

[Note: Along with his questions the pastor provided a background memorandum regarding constitutional First Amendment issues, referencing quotations from various United States Supreme Court opinions as well as State of Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Law Section 355.316 (2).]

Question 1: (a) If the Synod wishes "to retain all authority and autonomy allowed a church" under various laws, what laws should the Synod more closely observe, especially if there is a conflict between the laws and Constitution of the U.S. granting "free exercise" and the non-profit laws of the State of Missouri? (b) What then takes greater priority for the Synod's Board of Directors to follow? The non-profit laws of the State of Missouri, or the "free exercise" rights as ruled by the U.S. Supreme Court in order "to retain all authority and autonomy allowed a church under the laws and Constitution of the United States"?

Opinion: The role and responsibility of the Commission on Constitutional Matters under Bylaw 3.9.2.2 includes the interpretation of the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions. The Commission does not have the authority to interpret the laws and Constitution of the United States or the State of Missouri. The Commission does certainly attempt, however, to be cognizant of that constitution and those laws. For example, where two reasonable interpretations of a resolution of the Synod would be possible, one of which would clearly violate state or federal law and one of which would not, a fundamental rule of interpretation that is assumed is that the Synod intended to follow a lawful course of conduct rather than one which is unlawful.

In fulfilling its specific service function to the Synod, the Board of Directors is required to follow the directions of the Synod in convention. Presumably in doing so, to the extent some challenge whether actions of the Synod are contrary to Missouri state law, the Board of Directors will inquire, through legal counsel, whether or not the

Synod can legitimately and in good faith urge that the rights granted under the state and federal constitution supersede or preempt an apparent conflict with non-profit laws of the State of Missouri. To the extent considered necessary or appropriate, the board may choose to interact with secular authorities to assure that the State of Missouri recognizes the validity of the governance model chosen by the Synod.

Question 2: Bylaw 3.3.5.2 states: “The Board of Directors shall have the powers and duties that have been accorded to it by the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod, and the laws of the State of Missouri. If there is a conflict between the “governing” documents of the Synod and “the laws of Missouri,” should the Synod’s Board of Directors, as the Synod’s legal representative, defend the Synod’s right to govern itself (granted under its First Amendment rights) or turn over the governance of the Synod’s ecclesiastical and secular business to a “secular” state government’s directives (laws)?

Opinion: See the answer to question 1.

[Note: After again referencing Bylaw 1.2.1 (d) (3) and Bylaw 3.3.5.2, as well as sections of the Missouri Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the writer referenced excerpts from section 175 of the November 2006 Board of Directors minutes:

The chair ruled that the motion was in order because it was not included in the previous action. After discussion, the resolution was adopted as follows (Yes: 7; No: 6):

Resolved, That in consideration of the Board’s discussions of its authority held on November 16, 2006, the Board reaffirms its responsibility to abide by civil law, recognized in Bylaw 1.2.1 (d) (3).]

Question 3: (a) In addition to honoring the non-profit laws of the State of Missouri (Chapter 355), would not the Board of Directors also have to protect the rights of the Synod as granted in Missouri Law as found in Section 1.303, 1.307, and 1.020 (11)? (b) Even if Missouri’s non-profit laws are considered “laws of general applicability,” would the laws of the State of Missouri’s own Religious Freedom Restoration Act (as found in the Missouri Code Section 1.302 [and 1.307]) serve to maintain the Synod’s “authority and autonomy”?

Opinion: In response to part (a) of this question, the Synod has expressed clearly in Bylaw 1.2.1 that it intends to retain all authority and autonomy allowed a church under the laws and Constitution of the United States and the State of Missouri. It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to carry out that bylaw. Regarding part (b) of this question, again, the Commission is not charged with the responsibility for interpretation of the laws of the state of Missouri.

[Note: The questioner here quotes in part Bylaw 3.9.2.2 of the Synod’s Bylaws: “The Commission on Constitutional Matters shall interpret the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions upon the written request of a member ... of the Synod.” He then notes that the “Brief Statement” was adopted in a resolution by the Synod in 1932 and quotes from it:

Accordingly we condemn the policy of those who would have the power of the State employed “in the interest of the Church” and who thus turn the Church into a secular dominion; as also of those who, aiming to govern the State by the Word of God, seek to turn the State into a Church.]

Question 4: What is meant in Chapter 34 of the “Brief Statement” by the phrase “turn the Church into a secular dominion,” as in the statement: “Accordingly, we condemn the policy of those who would have the power of the

State employed ‘in the interest of the Church’ and who thus turn the Church into a secular dominion”?

Opinion: The full text of the referenced section of the “Brief Statement” reads:

34. Although both Church and State are ordinances of God, yet they must not be commingled. Church and State have entirely different aims. By the Church, God would save men, for which reason the Church is called the “mother” of believers Gal. 4:26. By the State, God would maintain external order among men, “that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty,” 1 Tim. 2:2. It follows that the means which the Church and State employ to gain their ends are entirely different. The Church may not employ any other means than the preaching of the Word of God, John 18:11, 36; 2 Cor. 10:4. The State, on the other hand, makes laws bearing on civil matters and is empowered to employ for their execution also the sword and other corporal punishments, Rom. 13:4.

Accordingly we condemn the policy of those who would have the power of the State employed “in the interest of the Church” and who thus turn the Church into a secular dominion; as also of those who, aiming to govern the State by the Word of God, seek to turn the State into a Church.

In the abstract, it would be impossible for us to discuss or delineate all of the implications of this section of the “Brief Statement.” Fundamentally, the Synod recognizes that the church is ordained by God to save men, and the state is ordained by God to maintain civil order among men. The questioned reference is to those who would have the state assume the responsibilities and functions of the church, and attempt to make the functions of the church the functions of the state.

Question 5: After making further references to excerpts from the October 30, 2006, and November 15–17, 2006, minutes of the Board of Directors regarding motions made and not adopted, the questioner raised issues regarding the potential applicability of the earlier quoted section from the “Brief Statement” to the action proposed and defeated.

Opinion: Because the motions from the minutes of the Board of Directors quoted by the questioner were defeated and therefore never adopted by the board, the commission believes that it would be unhelpful to the Synod to comment on such failed motions.

[Note: The questioner here quotes from Synod Constitution Art. XI, Section A, line 1: “Officers of the Synod must assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by the Synod,” and from the minutes of the October 30, 2006, and November 15–17, 2006, Board of Directors meetings: “This can be accomplished by a declaration of the board explicitly stating that it will at all times and in all respects follow Missouri Law and not allow the CCM to usurp the legal authority of the Board of Directors” (sections 162 and 172 of the minutes). The questioner then adds that this specific request was made in the minutes by a member of the Board of Directors seemingly to restructure the Synod and more specifically to restructure the authority of the Commission on Constitutional Matters supposedly to comply with Missouri non-profit law without convention approval.]

Question 6: (a) Since the Synod’s structure was established by the convention of the Synod, is this particular request by a member of the Board of Directors to restructure the Synod an exceeding of its authority and responsibility as granted to the board by the Synod? (b) Does the Board of Directors of the Synod have constitutional authority as found in the Synod’s organizational documents (Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws) to even demand such a change in the Synod’s structure and disavow rulings of the Commission on Constitutional Matters without Synod convention approval? (c) Is

this proposed request and/or motion of the Board of Directors also in direct violation of Bylaw 3.3.5.5 (a) (2), and possibly 3.9.2.2 (b), and even more so Article V of the Articles of Incorporation? And (d) Can the Synod's Board of Directors restructure the Synod's governance without the approval of the Synod in convention?

Opinion: Again, the Commission on Constitutional Matters believes it would be unhelpful to the Synod to comment on such a failed motion, the board majority having rejected the proposed restructuring.

Question 7: Bylaw 1.4.1 states: "The delegate convention of the Synod is the legislative assembly that ultimately legislates policy, program, and financial direction to carry on the Synod's work on behalf of and in support of the member congregations. It reserves to itself the right to give directions to all officers and agencies of the Synod." (a) Is there a specific reason(s) that the Synod is structured in such a manner with no individual officer or board having "ultimate authority or control" and all being accountable to the Synod in convention? (b) Does the Synod's Board of Directors have "sole authority" in even "secular or legal matters" or should it still be subject to the opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and ultimately answerable to the convention of the Synod? (c) What course of action should be employed by the Synod if an officer and/or a board of the Synod presumes, on its own, to rewrite the Synod's structure and governance? And (d) What would be a more correct and appropriate constitutional procedure if an officer or a board of the Synod wished to change the Synod's structure of governance?

Opinion: (a) It is not the authority or responsibility of the Commission on Constitutional Matters to speculate as to why the Synod has chosen to structure itself in the manner it has. (b) The Synod in convention chooses its governance model and determines whether or not the Synod's Board of Directors should have "sole authority" even in "secular or legal matters." Under the Synod's current governance model, the Board of Directors is to be subject to the opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and ultimately answerable to the Synod in convention. (c) No officer and/or board of the Synod is authorized to rewrite the Synod's structure and governance. It remains the responsibility of the President, who has supervision regarding the doctrine and administration of all officers of the Synod, as well as all such who are employed by the Synod, to assure that such actions are not taken. Actions taken by a board or officer of the Synod are ultimately subject to the review of the Synod in convention, which ultimately has the authority to declare any such action taken beyond the authority of an officer or board as null and of no fact. (d) Amendments to the Constitution of the Synod may be made pursuant to Article XIV and the processes described therein. Amendments to the Bylaws may be made pursuant to Chapter VII of the Bylaws and the processes described therein.

Adopted April 21–22, 2007

Clarification of Opinion 06-2477, "District Convention Resolution re CCM 'Guidelines'" (07-2487)

The Commission on Constitutional Matters has been made aware of confusion resulting from its Opinion 06-2477, "District Convention Resolution re CCM Guidelines." In the opinion, the Commission called attention to its statement in its *Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations*, "A congregation's confessional standard must not go beyond that of the Synod." It also restated an earlier commission opinion (August 2003 Opinion 03-2352) that

"individual members or congregational members of the Synod may not add to or remove items from Article II [of the Synod's Constitution]" and that "other confessional statements, confessions of faith, or common confessions may in fact be correct interpretations of our Lord's teaching and may be used for a variety of purposes, but such other confessions may not be used as a condition for acquiring and holding membership in the Synod." The Commission recognizes that imprecise use of terminology has caused the confusion that has resulted from Opinion 06-2477 and therefore offers this clarification.

When a congregation becomes a member of the Synod and thereby subscribes to the Synod's Constitution, it also subscribes to the confessional basis of the Synod as articulated in the Synod's Constitution, Article II (see Constitution Art. V, "who confess and accept the confessional basis of Article II," and Article VI [1], "Acceptance of the confessional basis of Article II"). In Bylaw 1.6.1, the same is referred to as the "confessional position of the Synod [as] set forth in Article II of the Constitution, to which all who wish to be and remain members of the Synod shall subscribe." In Bylaw 1.3.4, the same is again referred to as the "confessional position of the Synod." The intent of Opinion 06-2477 was to reiterate from prior commission opinions the important point that this confessional "basis" or "position" may not be added to or subtracted from by a member congregation. Subscription to Article II of the Synod's Constitution is a condition of membership in the Synod.

If, therefore, a congregation wishes to restate this "confessional basis" in its own Constitution, it should do so (as the Commission's guidelines suggest) by staying as close as possible to the language of the Synod's "Article II Confession," so that its confessional basis is demonstrated to be the same as that of the Synod. There is, however, no essential need for the congregation to reiterate this confessional basis, since this is already established by its membership in the Synod.

Congregations may and often wish to, however, include in their official documents a confessional statement of their own, perhaps using words like "inspired" and "inerrant" to emphasize important aspects of their confession. This is appropriate so long as such statements, as well as all of the content of their Constitutions and Bylaws "are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures, the Confessions, and the teachings and practices of the Synod" (Bylaws 2.2.1 [b]; 2.4.1 [b]). Care should therefore be taken in congregational documents that terminology used properly differentiates between a confessional "basis" paragraph which may be included and which mirrors the Synod's Article II and confessional "statement" paragraphs that may be included to emphasize certain aspects of the confession of the congregation but must be in harmony with the Holy Scriptures, the Confessions, and the teachings and practices of the Synod.

It is the responsibility of district constitution committees to review constitutions and bylaws when a congregation initially applies for membership (Bylaw 2.2.1) and when a congregation revises its official documents (Bylaw 2.2.1). The committees should pay careful attention to terminology that is used, to differentiate between "confessional basis" paragraphs and "confessional statement" paragraphs, and to advise congregations accordingly as part of their review process.

For its part, the Commission recognizes the need to revise its *Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of a Lutheran Congregation* as follows:

3.0 CONFESSATIONAL BASIS OR STATEMENT

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod requires that its member congregations accept the confessional basis of the Synod. Congregations do so when they become members of the Synod, which includes subscription to the Synod's Constitution (Constitution Art. V and VI [1]; Bylaws 1.3.4 and 1.6.1). If a congregation chooses to reflect this

confessional basis in its own constitution, it is recommended that Article II of the Synod's Constitution be adopted for inclusion in congregations' constitutions. A congregation's confessional *basis* must not go beyond that of the Synod.

Example:

This congregation accepts without reservation:

- 3.1 The Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice.
- 3.2 All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

If a congregation chooses to do so, it may also include confessional *statements*, even when it does not restate its confessional basis. Should a congregation do so, it is the responsibility of the district constitution committee to assure that such confessional *statements* are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures, the Confessions, and the teachings and practices of the Synod.

Adopted April 21–22, 2007

Gender of University Provost (07-2489)

In a letter dated February 26, 2007, a chairman of a board of regents of a university of the Synod, after quoting several bylaws of the Synod, concluded that the provost of the school must be male given that position's responsibility to serve as acting and/or interim president when the president is unable to serve. He asked the Commission for its opinion, stating his intention to provide the response of the Commission to the Provost Search Committee of the school.

Opinion: In a March 16, 1984 opinion, the Commission on Constitutional Matters stated:

The Synod has stated that a woman is not to exercise authority over man, particularly in spiritual matters. It is true that the president of an institution may delegate certain responsibilities to staff members. One of these responsibilities that may be delegated is that of spiritual leadership of the institution. However, for the reason that the power to delegate is just that and is not a release of the responsibility, and ultimate responsibility for supervision is that of the person delegating the responsibility, the Commission rules that on the basis of present bylaws and resolutions of the Synod, a woman may not serve as president since the president is to serve as the spiritual academic and administrative head of the institution according to Bylaw 6.15. The board of regents may not delegate this ultimate responsibility either since the bylaws specifically assign it to the president of the institution.

When asked to reconsider this opinion, the Commission on April 6, 1984, reaffirmed its previous decision, stating "that when Bylaw 6.15 designates the president as the 'spiritual head' of the institution, service in the position of president by a woman would be in conflict with the position of the Synod as stated in Resolution 2-17 of the 1969 Denver convention, and reaffirmed in conventions which followed." This opinion was reaffirmed by a later commission in a September 14, 1999, opinion (99-2160), which stated in part:

It is the opinion of the Commission that until the Synod clearly indicates that the term, "spiritual head," does not involve the president of the institution in the distinctive functions of the pastoral office and/or exercising authority over men in spiritual matters, its decision is consistent with the position adopted by previous conventions.

In response to the current question, the commission therefore answers that because current Bylaw 6.12 retains the content and terminology of the Bylaw 6.15 referred to in the 1984 opinion, including the requirement that a president of an institution serve as its "spiritual

head," the 1984 ruling of the Commission stands because it was never overruled by a synodical convention.

Noting these earlier commission opinions, and noting that a president of an educational institution continues to "serve as the spiritual, academic, and administrative head of the institution" (Bylaw 3.8.3.7), remains "responsible for the provision of spiritual care and nurture for every student" (Bylaw 3.8.3.7 [h]), and "shall carefully watch over the spiritual welfare ... of the students and in general exercise such Christian discipline, instruction, and supervision as may be expected at a Christian educational institution" (Bylaw 3.8.3.7 [i]), the Commission concludes that it continues to be necessary for a university president to be male. And given the fact that the job description of the position in question (provost) requires that person to serve as acting and/or interim president when the president is unable to serve, the Commission further concludes that this position (provost) must also be held by a male, since the responsibilities of the position remain with the position, even were they to be delegated to another person for a period of time.

The Commission notes that the above response pertains to the matter as it stands, with the provost serving as "acting or interim president" during a vacancy in the office of president. It is conceivable that the responsibilities of a provost during a vacancy in the office of president could be defined/described in such manner as would avoid using the terms "acting or interim president," instead specifying certain functions of the office of president to be carried out by the provost while excluding those particular functions of the office that exercise authority over men in spiritual matters and assigning them to a male member of the administration or faculty during a vacancy.

It may also be helpful, given developments in the Synod pertaining to the service of women, to request counsel also from the Commission on Theology and Church Relations.

Adopted April 21–22, 2007

Calling a Special Convention of the Synod (07-2490)

In a letter dated February 16, 2007, a district president asked a series of questions related to the calling of a special convention of the Synod, especially in light of Constitution Article VIII and Bylaw section 3.1.

Question 1: Is "the Synod" in convention authorized by the Constitution to call a special session?

Opinion: Yes. Constitution Article VIII B 1 states: "The Synod may under circumstances call a special session if two-thirds of the voting representatives so decide" (emphasis added). In referring to the regular meetings of the Synod, Article VIII A 1 uses the same term: "The Synod convenes every three years for its regular meeting" (emphasis added). And Bylaw 3.1.1, in setting forth the provisions for a national convention, states:

The national convention of the Synod ... is the principal legislative assembly, which amends the Constitution and Bylaws, considers and takes action on reports and overtures, and handles appropriate appeals. It establishes general positions and policies of the Synod, provides overall program direction and priorities, and evaluates all such positions, programs, policies, directions, and priorities in order to provide responsible service for and on behalf of its members ... " (emphasis added).

Question 2: Is there any definition of the "circumstances" necessary for calling a special session of the Synod?

Opinion: No. The Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod are silent with respect to the definition of "circumstances" in this Article VIII B 1. Thus, the Synod in convention determines the conditions that affect the calling of a special session.

Question 3: Is "a special session" of the Synod the same as or different from a convention of the Synod?

Opinion: The only difference is terminology. In one case the term used is a “regular meeting” (Art. VIII A 1) and in another a “special session” which can be called in different ways (Art. VIII B). Whether a “regular meeting” or a “special session,” either one is a convention of the Synod, and the appropriate provisions under Constitution Art. V, VIII, and IX and Bylaw section 3.1 apply to both in the same way.

Question 4: Do the existing bylaws (3.1.2–3.1.5.2; 3.1.6–3.1.10.1; 5.3.3) provide for the implementation of Article VIII B?

Opinion: Yes. See the answer to question #3 above.

Question 5: As long as any amendments to the Bylaws are in harmony with Constitution Art. VIII B 1, Art. IX, Art. V, may bylaws be added or amended in order to provide for the implementation of “special sessions of the Synod” only?

Opinion: Yes. However, the amendment process must be in accord with Chapter VII of the Bylaws, “Amendments to Bylaws” (Cf. 2004 *Handbook*, pp. 202–203).

Question 6: Is any specific process delineated to appoint delegates or representatives to a “special session” of the Synod?

Opinion: No. Bylaw 3.1.2.2 states that “voting delegates shall serve a three-year term. . . .” The delegates elected to attend the convention at the beginning of a triennium continue to serve as needed throughout their three years of service.

Question 7: Do the existing bylaws call for the election of “new” delegates for a special session of the Synod or do they require the delegates from the “previous” convention to be the delegates to a special session of the Synod?

Opinion: No, the existing bylaws do not call for the election of new delegates. See the answer to question #6 above.

Question 8: If circumstances warrant, would it be possible to elect different voting delegates to the special session?

Opinion: There is no such provision under the current Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod.

Question 9: If so, what would the process be?

Opinion: If the convention desired to develop a procedure to elect new voting delegates for a special session of the Synod, this would require the adoption of the necessary amendments to the Constitution and/or Bylaws of the Synod.

Question 10: Could that process include the election by district conventions of voting delegates to the special session?

Opinion: Yes, such an election would be possible if a process were adopted by a convention of the Synod that would be consistent with the Constitution of the Synod, specifically Articles V, VIII, and IX, and with all applicable bylaws.

Adopted April 21–22, 2007

Status of “Visiting Faculty” (07-2491)

In a February 2, 2007, e-mailed letter, a professor of one of the Synod’s educational institutions noted that some members of the faculty on which he serves are termed “Visiting Faculty” and, because they have not received “initial level appointments” (Bylaw 3.8.3.8.2), do not enjoy some of the rights that are granted to faculty members with such appointments.

Question: For the purposes of Bylaw 3.8.3.8 (b), are these “Visiting Faculty” temporary faculty members, and therefore ineligible to vote in faculty matters during the time that they do not hold an initial level appointment? Or to put the question another way, is the university free to classify faculty members as non-temporary, even if

they do not hold an initial level appointment, or do the bylaws require that they be classified as temporary faculty members until such time as they receive an initial level appointment? If these faculty members who do not hold initial level appointment are not considered temporary according to synodical bylaws, are they eligible to serve on faculty committees that certify church worker students for the roster of the Synod?

Opinion: Bylaw 3.8.3.8 provides two categories for the faculty of colleges and universities of the Synod, “the full-time faculty and the part-time faculty.” Paragraph (a) of the bylaw further defines the sub-categories to be included under “part time or temporary faculty members” including those who are distinguished by the prefix or suffix “visiting.” Paragraph (b) makes clear that all such part-time or temporary faculty members “hold nonvoting membership on the faculty.”

The Commission concludes that the “Visiting Faculty” referred to in the question are therefore referenced in Bylaw 3.8.3.8 (a) when it speaks of “visiting” with reference to “part-time or temporary faculty members.” They are therefore to be regarded as such and, according to Bylaw 3.8.3.8 (b), hold nonvoting membership on the faculty until such time as they receive an initial level full-time appointment. In view of their nonvoting status, they are not eligible to serve on faculty committees that certify church worker students for the roster of the Synod under Bylaw section 2.7.

Adopted May 18–20, 2007

CCM Model Constitution re Excommunication Vote (07-2492)

A pastor of the Synod in an April 9, 2007, letter raised an issue regarding paragraph 5.4.2 of the commission’s 2006 *Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations* pertaining to standards for excommunication, i.e., whether a unanimous vote of the congregation is required for an excommunication. He judged that “the model constitution . . . provided by [the] Synod contradicts [the] Synod’s position on excommunication under Article II of [the] Synod’s Constitution” and suggests that “the model constitution” be revised and congregations be advised to revise their constitutions to reflect the “Synod’s doctrinal position.”

Question: [Does] the model constitution provided by the Synod contradict the Synod’s position on excommunication under Article II of the Synod’s Constitution?

Opinion: While the pastor did not formally request an opinion from the Commission on Constitutional Matters (Bylaw 3.9.2.2), the commission regards the communication with having the intention to ask the above question.

The Commission on Constitutional Matters regards the 2006 *Guidelines* to be consistent and in harmony with Article II of the Synod’s Constitution, including the Synod’s position on excommunication under Article II. The 2006 *Guidelines* state:

Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15–20 and the congregation’s stated and adopted guidelines. If they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case of excommunication or self-exclusion shall be presented to the voters assembly for a decision. A two-thirds majority vote of the voters assembly shall be required.

The “two-thirds majority vote” reflects concern by the commission that excommunication not occur by a simple majority vote because of the gravity and great importance of the matter.

Historically, the 1956 and 1963 *Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations* do suggest a “unanimous vote” by the voters assembly for excommunication. However, the 1985

and 2000 *Guidelines* do not suggest what the vote should be, stating: “Each case shall be presented individually to the voters assembly for a decision.”

It should be noted that the *Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations* are indeed “guidelines” only and should not be regarded as a “model constitution.” Constitutional polity has traditionally been considered an adiaphoron by the Synod.

In preparation for its response to the April 9, 2007 communication referenced above, the commission requested input from the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR). The response of the CTCR follows:

CTCR Response

The CTCR has previously provided “input” regarding this issue in its 1985 report *Church Discipline in the Christian Congregation*. In response to the question “Does excommunication have to be unanimous?” the CTCR says:

Our synodical fathers argued in the affirmative, pointing out that since such a verdict, reached on the basis of a clear Word of God and representing God’s own judgment on the sinner, must be accepted by every Christian and that any who might vote against such action be dealt with (if necessary, excommunicated themselves) before the matter in question is resolved. Although ideally all members will see the justice of what has been resolved (assuming that the congregation has acted on the basis of the Word of God, and the lack of repentance on the part of the one being dealt with is evident), we believe that excommunication may be carried out without unanimous vote. Shall the ignorance and/or weakness of any dissenting member invalidate either the verdict of the Lord through His church or their own eternal salvation? In all such instances, of course, those not in agreement should be dealt with evangelically in the hope of persuading them that the action of the congregation was truly Scriptural. And if it is evident that a congregation is not sufficiently instructed, with the result that a considerable number would at the time not be ready to favor excommunication in any case, the action should be postponed until such instruction can have its good effect. (p. 22)

The CTCR does not believe that the position taken in the response quoted above (“that excommunication may be carried out without unanimous vote”) contradicts the doctrinal position of the Synod. As Walther himself maintained in defending an unconditional (*quia*) subscription to the Lutheran Confessions, complete agreement with the *doctrinal content* of the Confessions does not imply or necessitate complete agreement with every line of argumentation or every exegetical interpretation employed in support of a specific doctrinal position.¹ This principle also applies to doctrinal statements and resolutions adopted by the Synod.

In *Church and Ministry* Walther sets forth the theological principle that “the minister must not tyrannize the church. He has no authority to introduce new laws or arbitrarily to establish adiaphora or ceremonies. He has no right to inflict and carry out excommunication without his having first informed the whole congregation.”² Walther goes on to share his view that, according to Matthew 18:15–18, a verdict of excommunication is to be pronounced by the pastor “only when the congregation has *unanimously* decided to excommunicate” the unrepentant sinner.³ However, Matthew 18:15–18 does not specifically address the issue of congregational “unanimity” in matters of excommunication. Despite Walther’s personal views regarding this matter,

A unanimous ballot does not appear to be a Biblical requirement, though it may check impetuous action . . . Unanimity does not seem to be a Biblical requirement. When evidence of sin and impenitence are indisputable, the congregation is not bound to that traditional rubric.⁴

In its report on *Church Discipline in the Christian Congregation*, the CTCR also responds to the question, “Is it proper for the congrega-

tion to delegate to the elders, to the church council, and/or to the pastor the authority to excommunicate?” Whether it is wise to do this may well depend on the circumstances, says the Commission, but “it is no doubt within the power of the congregation to ask the Board of Elders and/or pastor to act in its behalf.” (p. 25) The CTCR notes in this connection that “a kind of delegation has already taken place when the voters’ assembly, as is generally the case, is authorized to act in the name of ‘the church.’” (p. 25) This principle seems relevant in view of the pastor’s claim that “Synod’s position under Article II states that . . . there must be unanimity not only of the voters but there must be unanimity of the congregation.” In other words, the position taken by the pastor (which he claims to be “the Synod’s position under Article II”) would not give the congregation itself the power to delegate to others—even to the voters’ assembly—the authority to carry out excommunication on its behalf.

The CTCR shares this input with the CCM in support of the view that one can affirm the doctrinal position set forth by Walther in Thesis IX of *Church and Ministry* regarding congregational consent in cases of excommunication without necessarily agreeing with the view that Matthew 18:15–18 implies or requires a “unanimous” decision on the part of the congregation.

Notes

1. “Why Should Our Pastors, Teachers and Professors Subscribe Unconditionally to the Symbolical Writings of Our Church,” reprinted in the *Concordia Journal* (July, 1989: 274–284).

2. Thesis IX “Concerning the Holy Ministry,” *Church and Ministry*, trans. J. T. Mueller (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987): 303.

3. *Church and Ministry*, 322.

4. *Pastoral Theology*, ed. Norbert H. Mueller and George Kraus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1990), 183.

Adopted April 4–5, 2008

Calling a Special Convention of the Synod (07-2494)

During floor committee meetings for the 2007 convention of the Synod, a member of the Synod serving on a floor committee submitted the following question regarding the calling of special conventions of the Synod.

Question: If the Synod in convention adopts an enabling resolution encouraging the President of the Synod and the Council of Presidents (Constitution Art. VIII B 2) to call a special convention of the Synod if all necessary preparations have been completed, can it do so by simple majority or does it require a two-thirds vote?

Opinion: Article VIII B regarding “Special Sessions of the Synod” reads as follows:

1. The Synod may under circumstances call a special session if two-thirds of the voting representatives present so decide.
2. In cases of urgent necessity a special session may be called by the President with the consent of two-thirds of the district presidents or by three-fourths of the district presidents without the consent of the President; however, all congregations and other members of the Synod must be notified 30 days in advance and told for what purpose this extra meeting is being convened.

This article provides methods for the calling of a special session of the Synod. Under the first, the Synod itself—that is to say, the Synod in convention—may call a special session if two-thirds of the delegates so decide. In doing so, the convention itself may decide the circumstances under which such a special session is to be convened. If the convention were to identify that a special session will be held at a particular time, subject to certain circumstances having been

met in advance, it may do so by two-thirds vote. Circumstances may include, for example, the concurrence of the President, the Council of Presidents, the Board of Directors, the receipt by a certain deadline of a report from a particular group, or any other condition the convention itself deems prudent.

A second method described for the calling of a special session is for the President, under cases of urgent necessity, to call a special session with the concurrence of two-thirds of the district presidents. While the convention may by majority vote adopt a resolution encouraging the President to call a special session and suggest that he should find “urgent necessity” under circumstances the convention describes, Article VIII B 2 would nonetheless require the President himself to concur that such urgency exists, and the President could then call a special session only with the concurrence of two-thirds of the district presidents.

Adopted May 18–20, 2007

Attendance at Special Sessions of the Synod (07-2495)

On May 21, 2007, a member of a convention floor committee asked a series of four questions regarding attendees of a special convention of the Synod if one were to be called.

Question 1: With reference to Article VIII, Article IX, Bylaw 3.1ff and any other pertinent articles or bylaws, in the calling of a special session of the Synod, who would be required to be in attendance in addition to voting delegates?

Opinion: The Commission on Constitutional Matters in Opinion 07-2490 has stated in answer to the question: “Is a ‘special session’ of the Synod the same as or different from a convention of the Synod?” **Opinion:** “The only difference is terminology. In one case the term used is a ‘regular meeting’ (Art. VIII A 1) and in another a ‘special session’ which can be called in different ways (Art. VIII B). Whether a ‘regular meeting’ or a ‘special session,’ either one is a convention of the Synod, and the appropriate provisions under Constitution Art. V, VIII, and IX and Bylaw section 3.1 apply to both in the same way.” All of those required to attend a regular meeting would also be required to attend a special session. (Art. IX 1–3.)

Question 2: In the case that nonvoting, advisory delegates are to be in attendance at a special session of the Synod, would they be the same delegates from the prior regular convention of the Synod as the voting delegates selected by their electoral circuits who serve a three-year term would be?

Opinion: The Bylaws are silent on this question. Voting delegates have a specific function to carry out after the regular meeting as set forth in Bylaw 3.1.2.2, and that same bylaw specifically identifies their term as three years. No mention is made in the Bylaws concerning such a responsibility or term of service for advisory delegates. By way of clarification the attendance of advisory delegates at a convention is not determined by an election of the circuit.

Question 3: If nonvoting, advisory delegates do not serve the three-year term as voting delegates do, would it be up to the individual district’s determination in the course of time between the regular convention and the special session who would represent their advisory members?

Opinion: Advisory delegates and representatives are selected by various entities or serve by reason of their office according to Bylaws 3.1.3.1–3.1.4.5. This would also be the case for a special session of the Synod.

Question 4: According to the Constitution and Bylaws, is it possible that any advisory delegates from the districts or national

leadership may be excluded from attendance, as a cost reduction for the special session?

Opinion: The same representation required for a regular meeting of the Synod is also required for a special session (Art. IX). See opinion to question 1.

Adopted July 13–19, 2007

Voting Delegate and Restricted Status (07-2497)

On June 13, 2007, the Commission on Constitutional Matters received a request from the President of the Synod with respect to a pastor on restricted status serving as a voting delegate to a Synod convention.

Question: Does such restricted status, imposed after the pastor was duly elected to be a voting delegate, affect his status as a voting delegate to the convention?

Opinion: Under the provision of *Restricted Status*, Bylaw 2.13.3.2 states:

An individual member of the Synod on restricted status is ineligible to

- (a) perform functions of ministry except in the position of service, if any, held at the inception of restricted status and otherwise only if approved by the district president; and
- (b) accept a call to any other position of service in the Synod.

This provision (Bylaw 2.13.3.2), unlike the provision under *Suspended Status* (Bylaw 2.13.5.2), does not explicitly relieve an individual member of the Synod of one’s membership duties (e.g., as a delegate to a district or Synod convention or as a member of any district or Synod board or commission).

Thus restricted status does not affect one’s status as a voting delegate to a convention of the district or national Synod.

Adopted July 13–19, 2007

Specific Ministry Pastor Program (07-2499)

A pastor of the Synod, in a letter dated July 9, 2007, asked a question regarding the proposed Specific Ministry Pastor Program to come before the 2007 convention. After introductory comments regarding the status of specific ministry pastors and their relationship with other pastors, he asked the following question.

Question: In view of the foregoing, would not the implementation of the Specific Ministry Pastor Program require a change of the Synod’s Constitution, and would that not require a two-thirds majority approval of the congregations of the Synod after the convention?

Opinion: The implementation of the program will not require a change of the Synod’s Constitution and therefore will not require a two-thirds majority approval of the congregations of the Synod after the convention.

Adopted July 13–19, 2007

Specific Ministry Pastor Program (07-2500)

A pastor of the Synod, in a letter dated July 9, 2007, asked the following question regarding the proposed Specific Ministry Pastor Program to come before the 2007 convention.

Question: Should not the specific ministry pastor have to be listed in Article V B of the Constitution? Simply changing Bylaw 2.13 to accommodate this new category of pastor would seem to be very contrary to the purpose of Article V—namely, to list every sort of member of the Synod that there can be. The proposed Specific Ministry Pastor Program pastors are not envisioned as an existing category of pastor put on restricted status (the purpose of Bylaw section 2.13) but a wholly new category of

pastor. Therefore, wouldn't amending Article V B to add a new category of pastor be necessary? And thus, wouldn't avoiding amending Article V B by trying to fit the Specific Ministry Pastor Program into Bylaw 2.13 in fact be unconstitutional?

Opinion: All specific ministry pastors would be ordained and their relative placement under Constitution Art. V A or B would depend upon their ministry role. If in charge of a congregation, they will fall within Article V A; if not, they will fall under Article V B in one of the categories listed.

Adopted July 13–19, 2007

Amendments for Specific Provisions of Special Sessions of the Synod (07-2501)

In a letter received July 9, 2007, a member of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Structure and Governance submitted the following question regarding possible bylaw changes governing special sessions of the Synod.

Question: Is it in harmony with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod to add or amend bylaws which establish specific provisions (such as the provisions set forth in Bylaws 3.1.6–3.1.10.1) for the implementation of a special session (convention) of the Synod?

Opinion: Yes, it is in harmony with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod to add or amend the Bylaws to establish specific provisions for implementation of a special session of the Synod. Article VIII of the Constitution does not specify the manner in which special sessions are to be held or conducted. The specifics of Synod conventions are left to the provisions of the Bylaws.

Any amendment to the Bylaws must be presented to and examined by the Commission on Constitutional Matters prior to presentation to the convention to determine that it is not in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod, as required by Bylaw 7.1.1 (c).

Adopted July 13–19, 2007

Certification of Voting Delegates (07-2502)

In a letter dated July 10, 2007, the President of the Synod submitted a series of questions regarding the certification process for voting delegates to Synod conventions.

Question: Does Bylaw 3.1.3.2 constitute the entirety of the process of certification of all voting and nonvoting delegates to a convention of the Synod who are duly elected in accordance with Bylaws 3.1.2, 3.1.2.1, 3.1.3.1, and 3.1.4ff.?

Opinion: Yes. Bylaw 3.1.3.2 states,

All district voting and nonvoting advisory delegates and representatives and their alternates shall be certified before attending a convention of the Synod.

- (a) The names and addresses of all voting and nonvoting advisory delegates and representatives and their alternates shall be forwarded by the district secretary before the announced registration deadline to the Secretary of the Synod on registration forms provided by the latter.
- (b) This procedure shall constitute certification.

This is the sole provision for and completes the certification of convention delegates.

Question 2: Would it be a violation of the Constitution or Bylaws of the Synod for a convention of the Synod to declare ineligible or in any other way to challenge or remove the certification of any delegate elected in accordance with the bylaws referenced in question #1 above and certified by the process defined in Bylaw 3.1.3.2 or in any other bylaw of the Synod?

Opinion: Once a delegate is certified pursuant to Bylaw 3.1.3.2, there is no express provision in the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws to challenge said certification at a convention. In the absence of such a provision, accepted parliamentary procedure applies. Bylaw 3.1.9 (i) (3) requires the President to "conduct the sessions according to accepted parliamentary rules."

Question 3: May a convention of the Synod violate the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod?

Opinion: No, a convention may not violate the Constitution or Bylaws of the Synod.

Adopted July 13–19, 2007

Elections Restrictions (07-2503)

During the course of the 2007 convention, a member of the Commission on Constitutional Matters reported that the chairman of Committee 9: Registration, Credentials, and Elections had requested opinions regarding the following election issues:

Question 1: Based on the election of a candidate to become a member of the Synod's Board of Directors, may another candidate from the same district remain on the ballot or be elected?

Opinion: No. Bylaw 3.3.5.1 (1) precludes the election of more than one elected member of the Board of Directors from any one district. The election of one member from a district renders ineligible any other candidate from the same district. Other candidates from that district must be removed from the ballot as ineligible.

Question 2: If the number of candidates remaining eligible for election to a category (i.e., ordained, commissioned, or lay) on the Synod's Board of Directors is less than two times the number of positions to be elected because of the prior election of another candidate from the same district, must additional nominations be added before the election?

Opinion: No. Bylaw 3.12.3.6 (a) requires the Committee for Convention Nominations to make initial nominations of at least two candidates for each such position. Once those candidates have been nominated at the convention, that bylaw has been fulfilled. Should a candidate become ineligible, withdraw, or in some other manner the number of candidates is narrowed before balloting, there is no provision in the Constitution or Bylaws which requires or allows the nominations committee to add additional names.

Question 3: In what order should the election of members to the Synod's Board of Directors take place?

Opinion: Bylaw 3.12.4 (c) provides: "The committee shall be empowered to adopt procedures and methods that will insure efficiency and accuracy, including the use of mechanical, electronic, or other methods of casting, recording, or tabulating votes." The Committee on Elections must therefore determine the order in which it chooses to present the slate for election.

Adopted July 13–19, 2007

Convention Presidential Elections Procedure (07-2504)

During the course of the 2007 Synod convention, the chairman of the convention requested clarification of an earlier opinion of the Commission.

Question: What is the reason why the Commission on Constitutional Matters previously opined that a motion from the floor to require 10 minute presentations by presidential candidates would be inconsistent with the bylaws, but that requiring disclosure of whether a floor nominee was plaintiff in litigation against the Synod is

consistent with the Bylaws. The Commission responded as follows:

Opinion: The proposal to require a 10 minute presentation by candidates for President would change the process directed by the Bylaws for election, as described in CCM Opinion 04-2396. The request for information requiring disclosure as to whether a potential nominee was a plaintiff in the lawsuit is a request for information regarding qualifications and does not change the process of elections. Bylaw 3.12.3.6 (c) requires the Committee for Convention Nominations to provide information such as age, occupation, etc. Nothing precludes the convention from requesting or requiring additional information to be supplied as a condition of their consideration of floor nominations.

Adopted July 13–19, 2007

Amendments to the Bylaws of the Synod (07-2505)

The following questions were submitted by the President of the Synod during the course of the 2007 convention of the Synod.

Question 1: To which sorts, kinds, or types of amendments to the Bylaws of the Synod do the provisions of Bylaw 7.1.1 apply?

Opinion: Bylaw 7.1.1 applies to all amendments to the Bylaws. The Synod has long recognized the importance of careful consideration of changes to its governing documents. At least as early as 1966, the Bylaws required that amendments be “submitted to the Commission on Constitutional Matters for clearance prior to presentation to the convention.”

During the 1983 convention, the issue arose regarding proposed bylaws establishing a Board of Theological Education and a separate Commission on Church Literature. The opinion included the following:

In the case of the proposal for a Board of Theological Education, the Commission ruled that these proposed bylaws had not been submitted to the Commission on Constitutional Matters for clearance prior to presentation to the convention (Bylaw 14.01 d) and could not therefore properly be brought before the convention.

In the case of the proposed Commission on Church Literature, the Commission ruled that since the proposal and the proposed bylaws had not been submitted to the President of the Synod no less than sixteen weeks prior to the opening date of the convention, it could not properly come before the convention unless it were adjudged a matter of overriding importance and urgency and had been accepted for convention consideration by the committee consisting of the President, First Vice-President, and Secretary of the Synod (Bylaw 2.19 2 b). Furthermore, the Commission ruled that it could not be properly considered because it had not been submitted to the Commission on Constitutional Matters for clearance prior to presentation to the convention (Bylaw 14.01 d).

In 1997, the bylaw now numbered 7.1.1 (d) was considered as the basis for a proposed special standing rule which read:

The chair shall require written or oral certification that proposed constitutional or bylaw amendments have been examined by the Commission on Constitutional Matters and found not to be in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod.

The process required for amending the Bylaws is contained in Bylaw 7.1.1 (a) which requires that said amendments be presented in writing to the convention. Paragraph (b) requires that such bylaw changes are specifically identified as bylaw amendments, and that they be considered by a convention floor committee. Bylaw 3.1.7 (f) then requires the floor committee to consider the proposed amendment and report its findings and recommendations to the conven-

tion. Next, Bylaw 7.1.1 (c) requires that such amendments must be considered by the Commission on Constitutional Matters prior to presentation to a convention.

Question 2: May a convention of the Synod consider a minor amendment to a proposed amendment to the bylaws (which proposed amendment has been moved by the Synod in compliance with Bylaw 7.1.1) without following the provisions of Bylaw 7.1.1?

Opinion: All amendments to the Bylaws must follow the process of Bylaw 7.1.1. No exception has been made in the bylaw for “minor” amendments. However, if the “minor” amendment is considered by the floor committee as fairly within the scope of that which the floor committee considered prior to bringing the matter to the floor, and is within the scope of what the Commission on Constitutional Matters examined in advance and found not to be in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws, no separate referral need be made.

Adopted July 13–17, 2007

Res. 8-07S Requirement for Consultation by the President of Synod

Chairman Marcis called attention to the purpose of the meeting, to continue consideration of an earlier conference call discussion with the President of the Synod (August 15, 2007) in response to 2007 convention Resolution 8-07S, which directed the President to consult with, among others, the Commission on Constitutional Matters regarding the calling of a special convention.

After discussion, the commission agreed to provide the following response to the President of the Synod:

- The Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) again affirms the constitutionality of special conventions, verifies that the requirement of Resolution 8-07S for consultation by the President with the commission has been met, and reaffirms its availability to respond to questions that may arise regarding such special conventions.
- While the commission recognizes that the current structure and governance of the Synod has developed over the past 150 years in a patchwork manner without the benefit of comprehensive study of the whole picture of the Synod’s work, and while the commission further recognizes the role that CCM opinions have sometimes played in that process, it also recognizes that its responsibilities do not include advising regarding the “urgent necessity” (Constitution, Art. VIII B 2) of holding a special session of the Synod.
- While the commission does not view its role as to advocate any particular changes, it does, based on the commission’s experiences in fulfilling its assigned responsibilities, recognize the following potential benefits:
 - Restructuring in order to be better organized to work more effectively in support of and on behalf of congregations, to assist them in carrying out their ministries as they seek to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, the members of His body, and the world which stands in need of the Word and the impact of His redeeming love.
 - Restructuring in order to simplify and clarify responsibility and accountability.
 - Restructuring in order to empower and enable those given responsibility (officers, agencies, etc) for the benefit of the mission.
 - Restructuring for the best use of all the resources available to the Synod.

The decision whether the current “circumstances” (Constitution, Article VIII B 1) satisfy the urgent necessity requirement for calling a special session of the Synod (Constitution, Article VIII B 2) rightly belongs to the President and district presidents of the Synod.

Adopted Aug. 22, 2007

“Close(d) Communion” as a Constitutional Requirement (07-2508)

In a letter received September 14, 2007, a pastor of the Synod, after introductory comments, asked whether it is a constitutional requirement to practice close(d) communion in order to maintain status in the Synod. The letter was accompanied by an essay authored by the questioner, “A R[e]examination of Admission to the Lord’s Supper[.] Another Look at Some of the Biblical and Confessional Texts.”

Question: Does a pastor or congregation on the roster of the Synod have to practice close(d) Communion as a constitutional requirement for maintaining proper status in the Synod, or is this not set in cement and the members are asked merely to honor the position?

Opinion: The Constitution of the Synod does not address “close(d) Communion.” However, the Synod affirmed in 1986 convention Res. 3-08 and reaffirmed in 1995 convention Res. 3-08 “that the pastors and congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod continue to abide by the practice of close Communion, which includes the necessity of exercising responsible pastoral care in extraordinary situations and circumstances” (1998 Res. 3-05—emphasis added). In the same resolution, the Synod resolved that it “pleads with its members by the mercies of God to abide by the historic practice of the church and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod concerning admission to the Lord’s Supper” (emphasis added).

Among the conditions for acquiring and holding membership in the Synod is “1. Acceptance of the confessional basis of Article II” (Constitution Art. VI). While doctrinal resolutions of the Synod are not the basis for acquiring and holding membership in the Synod, under Article II the Synod, in seeking to clarify its witness or to settle doctrinal controversy, understands that it has the right to adopt doctrinal resolutions and statements which are in harmony with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions (Cf. Bylaw 1.6.2 and 1973 convention Res. 2-12). 1973 Res. 2-12 also resolved that the Synod “reaffirm its position (Milwaukee *Proceedings*, Res. 2-21 and 5-24) that such [doctrinal] statements, insofar as they are in accord with the Scriptures and the pattern of doctrine set forth in the Lutheran Symbols, are, pursuant to Article II of the Synod’s Constitution, binding upon all its members (Cf. also Article VII)” (emphasis added). On April 18–19, 1974, the Commission on Constitutional Matters addressed positively the constitutionality of 1973 Res. 2-12.

According to Bylaw 1.7.2, “The Synod expects every member congregation of the Synod to respect its resolutions and to consider them of binding force if they are in accordance with the Word of God and if they appear applicable as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned. The Synod, being an advisory body, recognizes the right of a congregation to be the judge of the applicability of the resolution to its local condition. However, in exercising such judgment, a congregation must not act arbitrarily, but in accordance with the principles of Christian love and charity.” In joining the Synod, the members voluntarily agree that “[t]he Constitution, Bylaws, and all other rules and regulations of the Synod apply to all congregational and individual members of the Synod” (Bylaw 1.7.1).

The Synod does provide for brotherly dissent, which does not put one’s membership or status in jeopardy. However, those who join the Synod agree that “[w]hile retaining the right of brotherly dissent, members of the Synod are expected as part of the life together within the fellowship of the Synod to honor and uphold the resolutions of the Synod” (Bylaw 1.8.1). Referring to 1971 convention Res. 2-21, Bylaw 1.6.2 (b) (7) defines “honor and upheld” as “to abide by, act, and teach in accordance with” (emphasis added). It is also agreed that “[w]hile the conscience of the dissenter shall be respected, the

conscience of others, as well as the collective will of the Synod, shall also be respected” (Bylaw 1.8.2—emphasis added).

1995 convention Res. 3-08 concludes, “*Resolved*, That because we are ‘eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’ (Eph. 4:3), any members of the Synod who advocate a different practice of Holy Communion be fraternally reminded of the commitment all members of the Synod make to one another by subscribing to the Constitution of the Synod to honor and uphold its doctrine and practice and, where there is disagreement, to follow the proper channels of dissent as outlined in synodical Bylaw 2.39 c [2007 Bylaw 1.8]” (emphasis added). The Bylaws of the Synod call upon us to “honor and uphold” the resolutions of the Synod and not, in the words of the questioner, “merely honor.”

Therefore, in response to the question asked, yes, members of the Synod are expected to honor and uphold the resolutions of the Synod, including those regarding Communion practice. The Synod has resolved that its members abide by the practice of close(d) Communion, exercising responsible pastoral care in extraordinary situations and circumstances.

Adopted Nov. 15–16, 2007

Congregational Polity (07-2511)

In a letter dated October 10, 2007, the chairman of a district’s constitution committee asked whether a district is required to examine a congregation’s documents if they are policy-based governance documents rather than the usual constitutions and bylaws.

Question: Since the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod only reference constitutions and bylaws of member congregations, does their new policy-based governance document fall under the same review process as their former Bylaws? Also, when a member congregation places items that could be included in bylaws into a policy manual, does the policy manual fall under the same review process as a constitution and/or bylaws?

Opinion: Bylaw 2.2.1 states as follows:

2.2.1 To apply for membership in the Synod a congregation shall have an approved constitution and bylaws.

- (a) The congregation shall submit its constitution and bylaws to the appropriate district president, who shall refer such to the standing constitution committee of the district. ...
- (b) The Constitution Committee shall examine the constitution and bylaws to ascertain that they are in harmony with Holy Scripture, the Confessions, and the teachings and practices of the Synod in order that any necessary changes may be made by the congregation before the application is acted upon. ...

Furthermore, Bylaw 2.4.1 states:

2.4.1 A congregation desiring to retain membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall continue to have a constitution and bylaws approved by the Synod.

- (a) A member congregation which revises its constitution or bylaws or adopts a new constitution or bylaws shall, as a condition to continued eligibility as a member of the Synod, submit such revised or new constitution and/or bylaws to the district president.
- (b) The district president shall refer such to the district’s constitution committee for review to ascertain that the provisions are in harmony with Holy Scripture, the Confessions, and the teachings and practices of the Synod. ...

Nowhere in the Constitution or Bylaws of the Synod is the term “bylaws” defined. The *Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary—10th Edition* (2000) defines “bylaw” as follows: “a rule adopted by an organization chiefly for the government of its members and the regulation of its affairs.” Likewise, the *American Heritage Dictionary—3rd Edition* (1994) defines “bylaw” as “a law or rule governing the internal affairs of an organization.”

If in the opinion of a district constitution committee a specific policy manual or policy-based governance document performs the function of bylaws as commonly defined, the district constitution committee has the same responsibility to review these documents as it does those specifically denominated “constitution” or “bylaws.” It is the function of the document, not its specific title, which determines whether it shall be reviewed by the district constitution committee.

The Secretary of the Synod was asked to incorporate into his orientation materials for district constitution committees a discussion of the responsibilities of the committees as discussed in this opinion. Adopted Nov. 15–16, 2007

Application of “Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations” (07-2512)

In a letter received October 18, 2007, a member of the Synod asked a series of questions regarding application of the commission’s “Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations,” specifically paragraphs 4.0 and 12.3:

4.0 Synod Membership

Although not essential since membership in the Synod is not determined by a statement in a congregation’s constitution, congregations are advised to designate their membership in the Synod.

Example:

This congregation shall be a member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to the congregation’s confessional standards as set forth in this constitution.

- 12.3 The revised constitution shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the president of the district for review by the district’s constitution committee and favorable action by the district’s board of directors before being implemented by the congregation.

Question 1: If a congregation included the above two sections in its constitution, could it terminate its membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod without the consent of the district’s constitution committee and the district’s board of directors?

Opinion: The answer to this question is “yes.” The congregation’s decision to terminate its membership in the Synod, which would necessarily include the changing of its bylaws to remove the two paragraphs in question, would render moot the Synod’s requirements for membership, including its requirement that constitution and bylaw changes first be submitted for review and approval.

Question 2: If the answer to question 1 is “no,” does this change the voluntary nature of the Synod and can a congregation be required to include it in their constitution by the district?

Opinion: The answer to question 1 was “yes.”

Question 3: My district committee that reviews constitutions has made the following request before approving our congregation’s Constitution and Bylaws:

Constitution, Article XII

(Please add.) C. Review

Any amendments to the constitution must be submitted to the NID Polity Commission for review, and then to the NID Board of Directors for approval. Amendments are not to be placed into practice in the congregation until they are reviewed and approved by the district.

Bylaws, Article XII

(Please add.) Any amendments to the bylaws must be submitted to the NID Polity Commission for review, and then to the NID Board of Directors for approval. Amendments are not to be placed into practice until they are reviewed and approved by the district.

Does the wording above from the district in any way change the answers to questions 1 and 2?

Opinion: These paragraphs requested by the district committee do not change the answers to questions 1 and 2. The language suggested by the district’s committee assumes continued membership in the Synod and correctly points out that a congregation has covenanted with the Synod not to implement changes to its governing documents until approved by the district, as provided in paragraph (d) of Bylaw 2.4.1:

- (d) Upon favorable action by the district board of directors, the congregation shall be notified that the changes are acceptable to the Synod and that the congregation is entitled to continue to function as a member of the Synod in good standing under the new or changed constitution or bylaws.

The suggested language could be construed to require district approval before withdrawal of membership, and the specific language could have binding effect under state law to that effect. A congregation is not required by the Synod to do so. Should the members of a congregation desire to include such a provision voluntarily, limiting the possibilities of withdrawal by future members, it may certainly do so.

Adopted Nov. 15–16, 2007

Dispute Resolution Process (08-2514A)

A series of questions related to Opinion 08-2514 was submitted by the Secretary of the Synod as follows:

Question 1: When a congregation removes a church worker and the worker requests the appointment of a reconciler, are the decision of the congregation and any related actions to be considered placed “on hold” until the Synod’s dispute resolution process has produced a final decision regarding the propriety of the congregation’s action, as suggested by CCM opinion 02-2308?

Opinion: The action of a congregation in removing a minister of religion—ordained or a minister of religion—commissioned is effective upon such date as determined by the action of the congregation. The initiation of a dispute resolution process under Bylaw section 1.10 does not change that action or its effective date. The position previously held by the worker is vacated, and the worker is eligible for candidate status and a further call. By requesting the dispute resolution process, the worker would be asking the Synod to review the appropriateness of the action of the congregation and asking that the Synod through the dispute resolution process recommend that the congregation review and revise its completed action.

This issue was dealt with, at least in part, in prior CCM Opinion 02-2308. The opinion in the matter was as follows:

Question: When the formal dispute resolution process of Chapter VIII of the Bylaws of the Synod has begun, are related matters placed on hold until reconciliation or a final decision is reached?”

Opinion: By accepting membership in the Synod, members have committed to be governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod, including the use of the dispute resolution process outlined in Chapter VIII of the Bylaws. Members have agreed that they will be bound by the process even to the extent that “no person or entity to whom or to which the provisions of this chapter are applicable because such person, entity or agency is a member of the Synod may render the provisions of this chapter inapplicable by terminating that membership” (Bylaw 8.01).

In cases in which a pastor has challenged the termination of his call and has initiated the dispute resolution process under Chapter VIII, the

pastor and the congregation, both being members of the Synod, are committed to resolving that dispute according to the process provided for in the Bylaws. While Bylaw 8.11 recognizes the congregation's right of self-government, which includes the discharge of a pastor, it also includes the expectation that the congregation will honor and act upon the decision of a Dispute Resolution Panel, which is final only after all opportunities for request for review have been exhausted.

Were a congregation to act upon a decision of a Dispute Resolution Panel prior to the completion of the appeal process, and were an Appeal Panel to grant reconsideration of that decision by a Review Panel, and were the Review Panel to arrive at a different final decision, confusion would result due to the congregation's action on the basis of the earlier decision. Congregations therefore are advised to place on hold matters related to the underlying dispute and to defer any actions that might prevent the effective implementation of the final decision from the dispute resolution process.

The purpose of advising that a congregation not replace the worker pending a dispute resolution process decision is not to suggest that the action of the congregation is incomplete or on hold. Rather, in our walking together, it is simply a recognition that replacing the worker before the dispute resolution process is complete may effectively limit or prevent the congregation from meaningfully reviewing and, if they choose to do so, revising the action disputed.

Question 2: When a reconciler prepares his written report in a dispute case, does the administrator of the dispute resolution process have the responsibility or authority to find fault with and override the reconciler's report other than to make certain that the report contains "the actions of the reconciler, the issues that were resolved, the issues that remain unresolved, and whether reconciliation was achieved" (Bylaw 1.10.6.5)?

Opinion: The role of the administrator of the dispute resolution process is described in Bylaw 1.10.4 (a) as one who "...manages the dispute resolution process but who does not take leadership, declare judgments, advise, or become involved in the matter in dispute." The administrator is not a fact-finder as to the underlying dispute, but rather is charged to review the report of the reconciler to determine that it complies with the procedural requirements of the bylaw. This includes the requirement to assure that the report contains the actions of the reconciler, the issues that were resolved, the issues that remain unresolved, and whether reconciliation was achieved. As Bylaw 1.10.6.5 further indicates, he is also to assure that the report contains as an attachment to the report (a) the statement of the complainant as to informal reconciliation efforts, (b) the statement of the matter in dispute, and (c) any reply by the respondent. The administrator is also charged with responsibility to see to it that "[t]he report and the attachments shall be forwarded to the parties to the dispute and the secretary of the Synod or district as appropriate."

Question 3: When a party to a dispute submits questions to the Commission on Constitutional Matters during the pre-panel stages of the dispute resolution process, do the time limitation provisions of Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (h) apply?

Opinion: The timelines dictated by the dispute resolution process, beginning with Bylaw 1.10.8, do not provide for or allow the process to be postponed by submission of a question to the Commission on Constitutional Matters or the Commission on Theology and Church Relations prior to the formation of a Dispute Resolution Panel. Rather, should such questions be submitted through the panel during the pendency of a Dispute Resolution Panel as provided by Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (h), the time limitations then existing at that stage of the proceedings do not apply until the requested opinion is rendered. The bylaw reads, "When an opinion has been

requested, the time limitations will not apply until the opinion has been received by the parties."

Question 4: What is the status of the decision of the congregation when its decision or a decision of the dispute resolution process has been appealed?

Opinion: The status of the decision of the congregation is within its authority to decide. Please see the answer to Question 1.

Question 5: What is the status of a minister of religion—ordained or a minister of religion—commissioned who has been removed from office when that decision and action of the congregation is submitted to the dispute resolution process pursuant to Bylaw section 1.10?

Opinion: As discussed above, the action of the congregation is complete once taken by the congregation. A worker may continue to hold membership in the Synod by application for candidate or non-candidate status under Bylaws 2.11.2.2 or 2.11.2.3, unless otherwise qualifying as an active member by reason of another call or other responsibilities as described in Bylaw 2.11.1.

Question 6: When must the face-to-face meeting required by Bylaw 1.10.5 take place in order to fulfill the requirements of the dispute resolution process, and who represents the congregation in that process?

Opinion: Since the purpose of the meeting is to resolve the dispute prior to submission to a formal dispute resolution process, the face-to-face meeting can happen only after the action which is the subject of the dispute has occurred. If the dispute is to a worker's dismissal, that meeting cannot occur until the dismissal has occurred. As described in Bylaw 1.10.5, it is the responsibility of the district president to see to it that this meeting occurs before allowing the matter to proceed to appointment of a reconciler. Upon appointment, the reconciler is further required under Bylaw 1.10.6.2 to assure that such a meeting has occurred, and further determine whether additional informal efforts should be made. Only when the reconciler is satisfied that informal efforts did not resolve the matter may the reconciler direct the respondent to submit to the reconciler and the complainant a written reply to the statement of the matter in dispute, and simultaneously move into a formal dispute resolution process as described in Bylaw 1.10.6.3.

Where it is an action of a congregation which is subject to a dispute resolution process, the congregation itself is the respondent. While it might be beneficial for face-to-face meetings with multiple parties or constituencies within a congregation in an attempt to resolve a conflict with the congregation, the process ultimately contemplates that a single representative of the congregation represent it in the dispute resolution process, including the face-to-face meeting required. As the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual* for the dispute resolution process indicates in Section V:

D. Parties to the Matter: If a party is a member of the Synod and not an individual, it shall be represented by its chairman or a designated member. If a party is a board or commission of the Synod or its districts, it shall be represented by its chairman or designated member.

The *Standard Operating Procedures Manual* was prepared by the Commission on Constitutional Matters in consultation with the Council of Presidents and the Secretary of the Synod as mandated by the Synod under Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (j). Thus, for the purposes of the dispute resolution process, the congregation is to be represented by the chairman of the congregation unless the congregation designates another member of the congregation.

Question 7: May the Dispute Resolution Panel in its proceedings consider issues raised by the parties pertaining to the total process of dispute resolution?

Opinion: The goal of the entire dispute resolution process is reconciliation. Any action which might assist in that process should be considered by the panel. It is the responsibility of each participant in the process to maintain and assure the integrity of the process. As the panel works toward a final decision, it should consider and resolve any issue raised pertaining to the process of dispute resolution.

Adopted April 4–5, 2008

Definition of Term: “Operating Board” (08-2515)

In a March 28, 2008 memorandum, the Commission on Structure requested an opinion from the Commission on Constitutional Matters regarding the use of the term “operating board” in Bylaw 6.2.1. At the commission’s April 2008 meeting, it was agreed that this question should be submitted to the Board of Directors and to legal counsel for their input (Bylaw 3.9.2.2 [b]) prior to a response from the commission.

The Secretary reported on research that he provided to the Board of Directors, including a history of the board’s involvement in the recognition of service organizations over the past 30 years and a history of terminology associated with the recognition process, a report adopted by the board as its own statement of record. He also reported that legal counsel responded positively to the results of the research.

After discussion of the results of the research, the commission determined its response to the question submitted by the Commission on Structure.

Question: How is the use of the term “operating board” in Bylaw 6.2.1 to be understood and to whom does it apply?

Opinion: The term “operating board” occurred for the first time in the 1995 *Handbook* of the Synod in place of the term “program board” in the 1992 *Handbook*. The 1995 *Handbook*, after listing the Synod’s Board of Directors and the boards of the synodwide corporate entities, listed as “Other Operating Boards” those boards that essentially are today the program boards of the Synod. The 1995 *Handbook* for the first time also used the term “operating board” in Bylaw 14.03 d, what is today Bylaw 6.2.1.

The 1998 *Handbook* reverted back to the use of the term “Program Boards” as the title for these boards, but it also retained the term “operating board” in Bylaw 14.03 d (2007 Bylaw 6.2.1). It is the opinion of the commission that the term “operating board” as it appears today in Bylaw 6.2.1 is therefore to be applied accordingly. The term “operating board” is to be understood to apply to the Board of Directors and the boards of the synodwide corporate entities (including Concordia Plan Services) and to the program boards. Today’s synodwide corporate entities and program boards are listed in current Bylaw 1.2.1, paragraphs (o) and (u).

Adopted June 6–7, 2008

District Constitution Committee Responsibilities (08-2516)

In a letter dated April 8, 2008, a pastor member of the Synod serving as a member of a district’s constitution committee asked whether a committee has the right to mandate that a congregation include a clause in its constitution requiring it to submit revisions to the district committee.

Question: Can a [district board of directors] and its [constitution committee] mandate that the congregation include a clause in its constitution that requires the [congregation] to submit its revisions to the [constitution committee]?

Opinion: The judgment and responsibility to determine what is acceptable in a congregation’s constitution and bylaws has been given by the Synod only to a district board of directors, upon recommendation of the district president and upon the advice of the

district constitution committee. With respect to retaining membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Bylaw 2.4.1 (c) states:

(c) Upon advice of the constitution committee and recommendation by the district president, the district board of directors shall determine if the changes are acceptable to the Synod.

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod do not mandate a clause in a congregation’s constitution and/or bylaws that requires the congregation to submit its revisions to the constitution committee. However, the document, “Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Lutheran Congregations” (which is just that: “guidelines”), does suggest wording for the congregation’s constitution and bylaws for the sake of unity and harmony, for benefiting the congregation in its responsibilities and in its relationship to the Synod, and for the sake of avoiding any potential future conflict or potential legal difficulties.

When determining what changes are acceptable concerning the provisions in a congregation’s constitution, a district board of directors must follow no more than the criteria set forth in the Bylaws of the Synod, which state:

The district president shall refer such to the district’s constitution committee for review to ascertain that the provisions are in harmony with Holy Scripture, the Confessions, and the teachings and practices of the Synod (Bylaw 2.4.1 [b]).

It should be noted that even if the clause in question is not in the congregation’s constitution, a member congregation is required to submit a revised or new constitution and/or bylaws for continued membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The Bylaws of the Synod clearly state in Bylaw 2.4.1:

A congregation desiring to retain membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall continue to have a constitution and bylaws approved by the Synod.

(a) A member congregation which revises its constitution or bylaws or adopts a new constitution or bylaws shall, as a condition to continued eligibility as a member of the Synod, submit such revised or new constitution and/or bylaws to the district president.

Adopted June 6–7, 2008

Congregations’ Right to Suspend Bylaws (08-2519)

As a result of the proposed congregation transformation process that is currently underway in some districts and is being considered by several more, a number of district presidents, in an e-mailed June 2, 2008 letter following their participation in a training session, raised a series of questions regarding some of the recommendations proposed as part of the revitalization process. Included with the questions was the following paragraph providing background regarding said process:

The revitalization process recommends that congregations suspend those portions of their bylaws that address election, officers, and governance structures. All other bylaws and, of course, the Constitution and/or Articles of Incorporation remain intact. The intent is to put the pastor, not a committee, in a position of responsibility and authority for the congregation to pursue a new vision for mission and ministry.

Also included with the questions were the following comments from the questioners:

Since part of the Synod’s *Ablaze!* initiative includes the revitalization of 2,000 congregations, the Transforming Congregations Network was put together. It stems from a process begun by Dwight Marable, President of Missions International. It comes primarily from a Baptist background and has a different polity behind it, enabling it to perhaps do things the LCMS is not able to do, or at least may not be able to do as easily. The intent of the above paragraph is to enable a congregation to implement an “accountable leadership model” of governance for an

interim period. If it proves successful, then a congregation may choose to adopt that model as a more permanent structure for mission and ministry. Please note that it calls for the suspension of only certain bylaws, not the entire set of bylaws.

Question 1: May a congregation of the Synod suspend or hold in abeyance some of their bylaws, specifically those dealing with elections, officers, and governance structure, in order to pursue a new vision for mission and ministry?

Opinion: The Commission on Constitutional Matters is allowed to give opinions only regarding issues arising under the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. The conditions for membership in the Synod are contained in Article VI of the Constitution and Bylaws 2.2 through 2.4. Assuming the constitution and bylaws of an individual congregation allow the suspension or holding in abeyance of some of its bylaws, then so long as a congregation does not seek to suspend or hold in abeyance those bylaws necessary for membership in the Synod, the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod do not prohibit such holding in abeyance or a temporary suspension. Should the congregation determine to amend its bylaws or constitution, however, the proposed constitution and/or bylaw changes would need to be submitted for approval as required by Bylaw 2.4.1 (a).

In the more likely situation where there is no provision in the existing governing documents allowing for such suspension or holding in abeyance, no matter how well intended and no matter how “short term” the suspension is intended to last, such action would result effectively in an amendment of those governing documents. Bylaw 2.4.1 (a) requires such amendments to be submitted to the district president, who in turn is required to refer the proposed amendments to the district’s constitution committee for review and to provide a recommendation to the district’s board of directors for final action under Bylaw 2.4.1 (c).

This is not to say, should it determine that the proposed experimentation is to be encouraged, that the district could not adopt an expedited procedure to facilitate a speedy review of such proposed governance changes.

Question 2: If a congregation were to suspend or hold in abeyance select bylaws, would this have a negative impact on its 501 (c) (3) status?

Opinion: The answer to this question is not dependent upon the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. Questions regarding this issue should be addressed to local legal counsel or the Internal Revenue Service.

Question 3: If a congregation were to suspend or hold in abeyance select bylaws, would this have a negative impact on its membership in the Synod?

Opinion: As described above, so long as the congregation honors the conditions of membership as set forth in Article VI of the Constitution of the Synod and the eligibility requirements of Bylaws 2.2 through 2.4, a congregation’s action to suspend or hold in abeyance select bylaws would not have a negative impact on a congregation’s membership in the Synod.

Question 4: Is it legal in the eyes of the state, which has granted non-profit corporation status, for a congregation to suspend or hold in abeyance select bylaws?

Opinion: This question is again a matter of state law and not an issue under the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. Questions should be submitted to local legal counsel or the state corporation governing body.

Adopted June 6–7, 2008

District President Authority during Appeal Process (08-2520)

In a letter dated June 11, 2008, a pastor member of the Synod asked for an opinion from the commission regarding the authority of a district president to restrict the activities of a pastor of a congregation during Bylaw section 2.14 or 2.17 expulsion processes.

Question: When a district president suspends a pastor for allegations of sexual misconduct (or otherwise), after a proper investigation of the situation(s), does the district president have the authority to restrict the activity of a parish pastor in the congregation prior to completion of the full appeal process?

Opinion: According to paragraph 8 of Article XII of the Constitution of the Synod, district presidents are empowered to suspend or dained and commissioned ministers from membership in the Synod “for persistently adhering to false doctrine or for having given offense by an ungodly life.” The suspension must be in accordance with procedures set forth in the Bylaws of the Synod.

When formal proceedings are commenced under the procedures set forth in Bylaw sections 2.14–2.17, the accused member has suspended status (Bylaws 2.13.4; 2.14.6 [a]; *et al.*), which continues until the formal proceedings are completed or until membership is duly terminated. A suspended member continues to hold all rights under the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod except, according to the provisions of Bylaw 2.13.4.2 (a–c): (a) the member is relieved of duties as a member of the Synod; (b) the member is relieved of any duties and responsibilities with the Synod, the district, or another agency of the Synod; and (c) the member is ineligible to accept a call to another position of service in the Synod.

Under the suspended status provision of the Bylaws, a district president does not have the authority, either under Article XII or Bylaw 2.13.4.1, to limit the activities of the pastor of a congregation in that member congregation. Bylaw 2.13.4.3 states: “The member on suspended status shall continue to be eligible to perform those duties and responsibilities of any other position which such member held at the time when placed on suspended status, including a position with a member congregation.”

Under the provision, a district president must also advise the congregation being served by the suspended member to take appropriate action so that the rights of both the member and the congregation are preserved (Bylaw 2.13.4.3 [a] [3]).

Adopted Nov. 20–21, 2008

2004 Res. 3-05A “To Affirm Marriage as Union of One Man and One Woman” (08-2524)

In a letter dated June 10, 2008, a district president asked the commission to interpret 2004 convention Res. 3-05A (“To Affirm Marriage as the Union of One Man and One Woman”) as it relates to the California Supreme Court decision overturning the California ban on same sex unions and as it relates to the implications for ecclesiastical supervision as required by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod.

Questions:

1. Please share with me your interpretation of Resolution 3-05A, “To Affirm Marriage as Union of One Man and One Woman” (2004 *Proceedings*, p. 130). What is the authority of this resolution and its implications for ecclesiastical supervision?
2. Given your definition and interpretation of Res. 3-05A, what do the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod describe as the remedies on the part of a district president if a pastor in the district should perform a “marriage” for a same sex couple?

Opinion: With respect to the society demanding legal recognition of same-sex unions as “marriages” (cf. the Supreme Court of the State of Massachusetts Feb. 4, 2004 decision and the California Supreme Court 2008 decision), 2004 LCMS convention Res. 3-05A declares “homophile behavior as intrinsically sinful” and that “homosexual behavior is prohibited in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9–20; 1 Tim. 1:10) as contrary to the Creator’s design (Rom. 1:26–27).” The resolution urged the Synod’s members “to give a public witness from Scripture against the social acceptance and legal recognition of homosexual ‘marriage’” and resolved “[t]hat the LCMS, in convention, affirm, on the basis of Scripture, marriage as the lifelong union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:2–24; Matt. 19:5–6).”

Under the assumption that 2004 Res. 3-05A is in accordance with the Word of God, the Synod expects every member congregation of the Synod to respect the resolution and consider it of **binding force** (Cf. Bylaw 1.7.2). Bylaw 1.6.2 (a) states, “Such resolutions come into being in the same manner as any other resolutions of a convention of the Synod and are to be **honored and upheld** until such time as the Synod amends or repeals them” (emphasis added; cf. also Bylaw 1.8.1). And Bylaw 1.7.1 further states, “The Constitution, Bylaws, and all other rules and regulations of the Synod apply to all congregational and individual members of the Synod.”

1971 convention Res. 2-21 confirmed the binding nature of such resolutions: “[P]rovided a doctrinal resolution is in fact in harmony with the Word of God, which is ‘the *only* rule and norm of doctrine,’ the content of such a resolution is *intrinsic* to the Synod’s confessional basis. . . . It is fully in accord with Article II of the Constitution to insist that such a resolution has binding force for all members, and in accord with Article XIII to deal with those who refuse to honor such a resolution as ‘members who act contrary to the Confessions laid down in Article II . . .’” (1971 *Proceedings*, p. 118).

With respect to the congregation’s right of self-government and the matter of expediency as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned (Constitution Art. VII), 1971 Res. 2-21 also declared “[t]hat the Synod does not intend the exceptions to apply to doctrinal resolutions is evident from the fact that doctrine does not properly belong to the area of self-government, and from the fact that doctrine may not be accepted or rejected upon the basis of considerations of expediency. The provision that allows a member to reject a doctrinal resolution of the Synod is that such a resolution is ‘not in accordance with the Word of God’ (Article VII of the Constitution).” See also the CCM Opinion 05-2444, “Proper Dissent and Dispute by Members of the Synod.”

Resolution 3-05A, together with all of the resolutions of the Synod, has implications for ecclesiastical supervision. This responsibility, primarily of the President of the Synod and district presidents, is to supervise on behalf of the Synod the doctrine, life, and administration of its members, officers, and agencies. Such supervision, subject to the provisions of the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions, includes visitation, evangelical encouragement and support, care, protection, counsel, advice, admonition, and, when necessary, appropriate disciplinary measures to assure that the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod are followed and implemented (Bylaw 1.2.1 [g]).

In ministering to the pastor (and/or congregation) that performs or sanctions a “marriage” for a same sex couple, the district president will want to carry out the guidance and spirit of Res. 3-05A, which encouraged the church’s proper evangelical work to proclaim the reconciliation of the sinner to God in the death of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:18–19) and to minister to homosexuals and their families in a spirit of compassion and humility, recognizing that all have sinned and fall

short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:23–24), and which encouraged that the members of the Synod deal with sexual sins with the same love and concern as all other sins, calling for repentance and offering forgiveness in the Good News of Jesus Christ when there is repentance.

If a pastor or congregation should, after appropriate admonition, fail to honor and uphold a doctrinal resolution of the Synod, the district president shall act under Constitution Art. XIII 1, which states, “Members who act contrary to the confession laid down in Article II and to the conditions of membership laid down in Article VI or persist in an offensive conduct, shall, after previous futile admonition, be expelled from the Synod.” Article XII empowers district presidents “to suspend from membership ordained and commissioned ministers for persistently adhering to false doctrine or for having given offense by an ungodly life, in accordance with such procedure as shall be set forth in the Bylaws of the Synod.” Bylaws 2.13.2–2.13.2.4 (restricted status), 2.13.4–2.13.4.3 (suspended status), and 2.14 (expulsion of congregations or individuals from membership in the Synod) provide the “remedies” or provisions with respect to a district president’s ecclesiastical supervision.

Adopted Aug. 18, 2008

Interpretation of “Position of Service” in Bylaw 2.13.2.2 (a) (08-2528)

In an August 18, 2008 letter, a district president asked for an interpretation of the words “position of service” in Bylaw 2.13.2.2 (a) as it pertains to pastors serving congregations with pastoral vacancies.

Question 1: Under Bylaw 2.13.2.2 (a), does “position of service” regularly reference a called position filled by a member on the “active” roster of the Synod?

Opinion: Bylaws 2.13.2.2 (b) and 2.13.4.2 (c) associate the term “position of service” with a call by speaking of eligibility to “accept a call.” In addition, Bylaw 2.11.1, which governs the “active” roster of church workers of our Synod, uses “serving” and “call” terminology interchangeably, indicating that “active” members of the Synod, including ordained ministers “serving a congregation of the Synod” (paragraph [a]), must also be “regularly performing duties” of service, thereby assuming the existence of a regular call. Further, only ordained ministers “who have been duly called to a position of full-time service shall be installed upon authorization by the appropriate district president” (Bylaw 4.4.3 [e]) and rostered accordingly (Bylaw 4.4.7). Therefore, yes, “position of service” in Bylaw 2.13.2.2 (a) references a regularly called full-time position filled by a member on the “active” roster of the Synod.

Question 2: Does “position of service” also reference a congregation’s pastoral vacancy being filled by a member on the “inactive” roster of the Synod—emeritus, candidate, or non-candidate?

Opinion: No, a pastoral vacancy is not a “position of service” referenced in Bylaw 2.13.2.2 (a). If a pastor filling a pastoral vacancy does not qualify for “active” membership under Bylaw 2.11.1 due to the lack of a regular call to regularly perform the duties of one of the bylaw’s listed categories, he may make application to be placed on one of the “inactive” rosters of the Synod (Bylaws 2.11.2ff). While the service that a pastor provides during a pastoral vacancy is valuable service, it is not a “position of service” that qualifies a pastor for “active” roster status.

Question 3: Can a pastor on candidate status serving a vacancy, if he is placed on restricted status by his district president, not be granted approval for such service and thus not be eligible to continue as vacancy pastor?

Opinion: Because a pastor on candidate status who serves a vacancy does not thereby hold one of the positions of service listed under Bylaw 2.11.1, such vacancy service, should he be placed on restricted status by his district president, is not to be included under the general exception granted for “position[s] of service” by Bylaw 2.13.2.2 (a). His district president may approve his continued performance of such “functions of ministry,” but without such approval he is ineligible to continue to serve as a vacancy pastor.

Adopted Aug. 18, 2008

**Face-to-Face Meeting Requirement
(08-2527; 08-2529; 08-2529A)**

In letters dated July 31, August 20, and September 9, 2008, a pastor of the Synod asked a series of questions related to the initiation and processing of an action which could result in the expulsion of a member from the Synod. Pursuant to the provision of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (b), the commission advised the questioner’s ecclesiastical supervisor of the submission of the questions and provided opportunity to submit information believed to be important for the commission to know in providing its response. This input clarified that the questions were purely hypothetical, that no action under Bylaw section 2.14 had been initiated, and that the ecclesiastical supervisor, in an attempt to avoid the need to initiate such action, had requested that the member come to his office to discuss an issue of concern regarding information that was being published by the member concerning the ecclesiastical supervisor. The commission responded to the questions that were submitted as follows.

Question 1: Does a privately or publicly stated personal opinion concerning the actions of a district president constitute a basis for the initiation of an action which may result in the expulsion of a member from the Synod?

Opinion: The grounds for expulsion from the Synod under Article XIII of the Constitution are provided by paragraph 1 of the article:

1. Members who act contrary to the confession laid down in Article II and to the conditions of membership laid down in Article VI or persist in an offensive conduct, shall, after previous futile admonition, be expelled from the Synod.

A personal opinion concerning the actions of a district president, whether privately or publicly stated, may only form the basis of the initiation of an action for a removal from membership if it meets one of the grounds as stated in Article XIII, paragraph 1.

Question 2: In accord with Bylaw 2.14.2 (e), does a failure on the part of a district president (the accuser) to hold a face-to-face meeting with an accused member of the Synod within the specified 30 day limit result in the dismissal of the complaint if the accused has repeatedly affirmed his desire to meet with the district president regarding a matter in a manner described in Matthew 18:15?

Opinion: Bylaw 2.14.2 (e) defines a face-to-face meeting as follows:

(e) **Face-to-face:** A face-to-face meeting in person between the accuser and the accused in the manner described in Matthew 18:15. E-mail, regular mail, fax, or telephone call (or any combination thereof) does not satisfy this requirement. (Note: Failure to conduct a face-to-face meeting within 30 days or within such extension as may be established by the involved ecclesiastical supervisors shall result in dismissal if the fault lies with the accuser or movement to the next stage if the fault lies with the accused.)

As indicated in the bylaw, failure to conduct a face-to-face meeting within 30 days, if the accuser is responsible for the failure, results in dismissal unless the 30-day period has been extended by the

involved ecclesiastical supervisor(s). Since no Bylaw section 2.14 action has been initiated in the questioner’s case, this question is, of course, hypothetical at present.

Question 3: If a district president is the accuser in a matter which may result in the expulsion of a member of the Synod, and if the district president is requesting a face-to-face meeting in a manner not described in Matthew 18:15, but demands that the brother whom he believes has wronged him appear in the district president’s office without any assurance the district president will meet just between the two of them as brothers, and if the accused desires to challenge this arrangement as an abridgement of the manner described in Matthew 18:15 in order to fulfill Bylaw 2.14.2 (e) and Bylaw 2.14.3 (c), and also referenced in Bylaws 2.14.7.1 and 2.14.7.6, in what way can the accused challenge the accusing district president and ask for clarification that Matthew 18:15 be carried out in the manner actually described in that passage (that is, that the brother who believes himself to be wronged goes to the brother whom he believes has wronged him and that such a meeting would only be between the two of them)?

Opinion: Under Bylaw 2.14.4, the district president may commence an action which could lead to the expulsion of a member, either by becoming aware of such information by his own personal knowledge or when a complaint has been initiated by a member congregation or individual member of the Synod pursuant to Bylaw 2.14.3. In the latter circumstance, where the complaint is brought by a member congregation or individual member of the Synod, the district president is required to assure that the complaining member follows the requirements of Bylaw 2.14.3, including assuring, under Bylaw 2.14.3 (c), that the accuser has met face-to-face with the accused in the manner described in Matthew 18:15. Where the district president initiates the action based on his own personal knowledge and is both accuser and district president, he must as district president assure that he as accuser has complied with Bylaw 2.14.2 (e) and that a face-to-face meeting has occurred.

The face-to-face meeting required by Bylaw 2.14.2 (e) is to occur within 30 days or within such extension as may be established by the involved ecclesiastical supervisors. Failure to conduct the face-to-face meeting within that 30-day period, or such period as may be extended by the involved ecclesiastical supervisor(s), would result in dismissal of the complaint.

If the matter is not yet a formal Bylaw section 2.14 action, the ecclesiastical supervisor is, in his judgment, free to request such face-to-face or other meetings as he deems appropriate within the scope of his ecclesiastical supervision.

Question 4: If such a matter which may result in the expulsion of a member of the Synod must comply with the bylaw requirement that first a face-to-face meeting in person between the accuser and the accused must take place in the manner described in Matthew 18:15 (Bylaw 2.14.2 [e]), and that “...the district president shall ensure that the accuser has met face-to-face with the accused in the manner described in Matthew 18:15” (Bylaw 2.14.3 [c]), and it is also necessary that the chairman of the Council of Presidents agree that there “...was compliance with the guidelines provided in Matthew 18:15–16...” (Bylaw 2.14.7.1), then the manner described in Matthew 18:15 must be clearly defined and understood in order for an accusation to go forward. I am seeking the assurance provided by our Constitution

and Bylaws which ensure that such an action actually is completed in a manner described in Matthew 18:15.

Opinion: See the answer to question 3.

Adopted Nov. 20–21, 2008

Final Hearing Panel Procedure (08-2534)

The secretary of a Final Hearing Panel, in accordance with Bylaw 2.14.7.7 (k) [“If any part of the dispute involves. . . questions of constitution or bylaw interpretation, each party shall have a right to an interpretation from the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM)”], submitted two questions in an October 8, 2008 letter to the commission.

Question 1: Is a Final Hearing Panel required to conduct a *de novo* hearing in which the matter is heard anew as if it had not been previously heard and as if no decision had previously been made by the initial Hearing Panel?

Opinion: The answer to this question is “no.” While the bylaws assume that the Final Hearing Panel will conduct a hearing (e.g., Bylaw 2.14.8.2), Bylaw 2.14.8.1 (b) provides: “The procedures for the final hearing shall be the same as prescribed in Bylaws 2.14.7.5–2.14.7.7.” There is no provision for any *de novo* hearing in these bylaws. Rather, Bylaw 2.14.7.7 (i) provides: “The panel shall determine the number of witnesses necessary for a full and complete understanding of the facts involved in the matter.” Also, Bylaw 2.14.8.1 (c) states: “The chairman of the Hearing Panel shall provide the Final Hearing Panel with a written statement of the matter and the Hearing Panel’s report, minutes, records, and proceedings.” This is the material to be reviewed by the Final Hearing Panel unless it feels the need to hear from additional witnesses. The Final Hearing Panel therefore is to determine for itself what further information, if any, it needs to acquire in order to have a complete understanding of the facts at issue. It is up to the panel to determine if it needs to hear from any additional witnesses in order to fulfill its bylaw responsibilities.

Question 2: May the parties call hostile/adverse witnesses during a hearing before a Final Hearing Panel?

Opinion: The answer to this question is founded upon the understanding of the bylaws reviewed in the answer to the previous question. It is up to the judgment of the panel whether it needs to hear from any witnesses. While the bylaws provide that “each party involved shall be given an opportunity fully to present its respective position” (Bylaw 2.14.7.7 [c]), the parties may not automatically call any witness, hostile/adverse or otherwise, during a hearing before a Final Hearing Panel unless the panel has indicated that it wants to hear from said witness.

Adopted Nov. 20–21, 2008

Time Requirements for Dispute Resolution Process (08-2535)

In an e-mailed letter dated October 30, 2008, a congregation of the Synod involved in dispute resolution submitted the following question regarding the right of the Secretary of the Synod as administrator of the dispute resolution process to allow a Dispute Resolution Panel to exceed the 60-day time limit for providing its decision.

Question: In view of the fact that the Dispute Resolution Panel failed to make a decision for 60 days as required by the LCMS bylaw, what LCMS bylaw allows the LCMS Secretary or any LCMS official to suspend Bylaw 1.10.7.4 (b) and give an extension for that decision without any agreement from the respondent? As stated another way, do the LCMS Bylaws allow any official or even the CCM without bylaw authority to accept a Dispute Resolution Panel decision after the panel has

failed to make a decision within 60 days, and if so, what bylaw can be interpreted to allow that exception?

Opinion: Bylaw 1.10.7.4 (b) requires: “Within 60 days after the final hearing, the panel shall issue a written decision that shall state the facts determined by the panel and the reasons for its decision.” There is no provision in the Bylaws for a suspension or extension of the 60-day obligation to issue a decision, and no provision for any official of the Synod to grant such suspension or extension. Should the panel fail to render its decision within that time frame, it would be appropriate to bring that issue to the attention of the administrator of the proceeding.

Bylaw 1.10.4 (a) identifies the administrator to be:

(a) **Administrator:** The secretary of a district or of the Synod or an appointee (Bylaw 1.10.6) who manages the dispute resolution process but who does not take leadership, declare judgments, advise, or become involved in the matter in dispute.

The administrator would be expected to make inquiry as to the reason for the failure, and to encourage the panel to fulfill its responsibility. Should the administrator believe that the panel is neglecting its duties, and the panel continues to fail to issue its decision, the administrator should bring the matter to the attention of the President of the Synod.

It should be noted that a failure of the panel to issue its decision within the time prescribed does not terminate the proceedings or prohibit the reception of a decision not timely rendered. Unlike the process set forth in Bylaw 2.14.2 (e), for example, which can result in dismissal of a proceeding should the accuser fail to meet the accused face-to-face within 30 days, the Synod has imposed no such requirement for the delayed issuance of a decision as described in the question submitted.

Adopted Nov. 20–21, 2008

Continuation of Candidate Status (08-2537)

The Secretary of the Synod, in a memorandum dated November 21, 2008, requested clarification of Bylaw 2.11.2.2 (a) regarding candidate status for church workers.

Question: Bylaw 2.11.2.2 (a) authorizes a district president to continue a candidate on the roster for a period not to exceed four years. Does the bylaw allow the district president to extend that status of such candidate member beyond four years?

Opinion: No. Bylaw 2.11.2.2 describes who is eligible for placement on “candidate” status, *i.e.*, a rostered member of the Synod who is eligible to perform the duties of an active member of the Synod in one of the offices of ministry specified in Bylaw 2.11.1 but who is not currently an active member or an emeritus member. Paragraph (b) provides that such a candidate member is required to file an annual report by January 31 of each year. Based on that report and the district president’s evaluation of the criteria identified under paragraph (c), the district president may, under paragraph (a), continue the candidate status for a period not to exceed four years.

If no longer qualifying for candidate status, a member may, if eligible, be continued on the roster as a non-candidate member pursuant to Bylaw 2.11.2.3.

Adopted Nov. 20–21, 2008

Binding Force Resolutions (08-2542)

Referencing CCM Opinion 08-2524, which referred to 2004 Res. 3-05A, “To Affirm Marriage as Union of One Man and One Woman,” a pastor of the Synod in a letter dated December 30, 2008, asked the commission whether other resolutions in the same category were equally binding with similar attending disciplinary action.

Question: I would appreciate your opinion on other convention resolutions and whether they are to be considered in the same category, *i.e.*, equally binding; in addition, I request that your opinion include similar disciplinary action as given in 08-2524, as well as directions for district presidents (and circuit counselors) in monitoring and supervising parish pastors and other rostered ministers and minimum standards for doing so, with attending disciplinary action for district presidents who do not follow such direction.

Opinion: Opinion 08-2524 is not only applicable to the matter of 2004 convention resolution 3-05A but to all resolutions, as already stated in the bylaw quotations included in the opinion:

Under the assumption that 2004 Res. 3-05A is in accordance with the Word of God, the Synod expects every member congregation of the Synod to respect the resolution and consider it of binding force (Cf. Bylaw 1.7.2). Bylaw 1.6.2 states, "Such resolutions come into being in the same manner as any other resolutions of a convention of the Synod and are to be honored and upheld until such time as the Synod amends or repeals them" (emphasis added; cf. also Bylaw 1.8.1). Bylaw 1.7.1 further states, "The Constitution, Bylaws, and all other rules and regulations of the Synod apply to all congregational and individual members of the Synod."

Opinion 08-2524 also referenced 1971 Res. 2-21 which confirmed the binding nature of such resolutions. In addition to the pertinent quotes from the 1971 resolution in the above opinion, the convention resolution also stated, "Meanwhile every member of the Synod is held to abide by, act, and teach in accordance with the Synod's resolutions. ... The Synod has repeatedly declared that all members should 'honor and uphold' its resolutions (cf.: 1962, 3-17; 1965, 2-08; 1967, 2-04; 1969, 2-27). ... To 'honor and uphold' means not merely to examine and study them, but to support, act, and teach in accordance with them until they have been shown to be contrary to God's Word" (1971 *Convention Proceedings*, p. 119).

Ecclesiastical supervision by the President of the Synod or by the district presidents, including any needed disciplinary measures, as indicated in the CCM opinion (08-2524), is not limited to 2004 Res. 3-05A: "Resolution 3-05A, together with all of the resolutions of the Synod, has implications for ecclesiastical supervision" (emphasis added). The provisions for such ecclesiastical supervision (Bylaw 1.2.1 [g]) are set forth in Articles XI, XII, and XIII of the Constitution as well as in the Bylaws of the Synod, including but not limited to Bylaw section 2.1; Bylaws 2.14.1 and 3.3.1–3.3.1.3, and Bylaw section 4.4 (Synod *Handbook*, pp. 50, 62–62, 101–104, and 189–191).

Any district president who fails to carry out his responsibility of ecclesiastical supervision is subject to the measures of Constitution Art. XI B and Bylaw sections 1.10 and 2.15 (*Handbook*, pp. 15–16, 37ff., and 71ff.).

Adopted April 29–30, 2009

Voting Rights of Congregations (09-2545)

In a January 18, 2009 e-mailed letter, a parish pastor requested an opinion with respect to the representation of a four-congregation partnership (a multiple parish) at a district convention.

Question: Four congregations have formed a partnership. They each have called the two pastors who serve this partnership. Can each of the four congregations send a lay delegate to our district convention which is in June? Also, what is the status of the two pastors in regards to being the pastoral delegate or delegates to the district convention?

Opinion: The four-congregation partnership is entitled to two votes, that of a pastor who serves the four-congregation partnership and a lay delegate, both chosen by the four-congregation partnership.

Article V of the Synod's Constitution states: "At the meetings of the districts of the Synod every congregation or parish is entitled to two votes, one of which is to be cast by the pastor and the other by the lay delegate."

In its Opinion 03-2327 (January 20–21, 2003) the Commission on Constitutional Matters opined with respect to Article V the opinion, "Voting Rights of Congregations," included the definition of the term "parish" and addressed a multiple-congregation arrangement:

In the May 3–4, 1985 ruling (Ag. 1748), the commission ratified an opinion that had been offered by the Secretary of the Synod regarding the voting rights of congregations at district conventions when several congregations form a dual or multiple parish, namely, "that a multiple parish has only two votes, that of the pastor who serves the parish and a lay delegate chosen by the parish."

This opinion took into consideration earlier versions of the *Handbook* that had provided a definition of the term "parish," e.g., "If a pastor serves two or more congregations, these shall be regarded as one parish and shall be entitled to only one lay vote" (1963 *Handbook*, Bylaw 3.09). The term [parish] therefore refers to a dual or multiple congregation arrangement served by the same pastor and is not synonymous with "congregation." As such, two or more congregations served by one pastor share the right of representation by one lay delegate and one pastoral delegate to a district convention."

The four-congregation partnership constitutes one "parish" as defined above.

Other opinions of the commission are also helpful to understand the representation provision of the Synod. In an October 1–2, 1970 opinion (item 226 in the minutes), the commission stated that the matter of "two or more congregations served by one pastor shall be regarded as one parish entitled to only one set of delegates" is not contrary to the Constitution (see also Opinions Ag. 1275A, B [June 9, 1978]; Ag. 1734 [Feb. 1, 1985]; Ag. 1809 [March 27, 1987]; Ag. 2104 [May 22, 1998]). And in a review of a district's proposed bylaw changes (02-2321 [Jan. 20–21, 2003]), the commission noted that a proposed change does not appear to clarify voting status as intended. In the case of a dual parish served by two called pastors, the proposed bylaw would seem to allow each congregation to have both a lay delegate and a pastoral delegate. Please note Article V of the Synod's Constitution: "At the meetings of the districts of the Synod every congregation or parish is entitled to two votes, one of which is to be cast by the pastor and the other by the lay delegate." (See also Opinion 03-2327.)

Adopted Feb. 7–8, 2009

Eligibility to Receive a Call While on Non-Candidate Status (09-2546)

In a letter received January 26, 2009, a district president asked follow-up questions to the commission's Opinion 08-2537 which clarified that candidate status cannot be extended beyond four years (Bylaw 2.11.2.2 [a]).

Question 1: Is it the opinion of the CCM that placement on non-candidate status in all cases means that the worker is not eligible to receive a call?

Opinion: No. A church worker on non-candidate status is eligible to receive a call. A church worker on non-candidate status is "eligible to perform the duties of any of the offices of ministry specified in Bylaw section 2.11" (Bylaw 2.11.2.3). In every case, the rostered church worker on non-candidate status remains a member of the Synod and, like all rostered church workers, is eligible to

receive a call or appointment to any of the offices of ministry identified in Bylaw 2.11.1. The guidelines established by the Council of Presidents of the Synod for non-candidate members of the Synod (Bylaw 2.11.2.3 [c]) should reflect this eligibility.

Question 2: What specific remedy does the commission find in the Bylaws for a situation in which a worker has exhausted four years of candidate status, does not wish to voluntarily choose non-candidate status or to resign from the roster, and wishes to be eligible to receive a regular call to active service and has not received such a call?

Opinion: If a rostered church worker has exhausted four years of candidate status, does not wish to resign from the roster of the Synod, and is not eligible for emeritus status (Bylaw 2.11.2.1), he or she must request to be placed on non-candidate status in order to remain eligible to receive a regular call to active service (Bylaw 2.11.2 [b]). The Bylaws of the Synod do not limit eligibility to receive a call to a particular roster status. Congregations (as well as other calling and appointing entities) may call and be served by any minister of religion, ordained and commissioned, who has been admitted to his or her respective ministry in accord with the rules and regulations set forth in the Synod's Bylaws and remains a rostered member of the Synod (Bylaws 2.5.2 and 2.5.3).

Adopted Feb. 7–8, 2009

Agency Resolutions and Synod Actions (09-2556)

A pastor of the Synod, in an e-mailed March 18, 2009 letter, asked the following questions regarding an agency's possible negative response to an action taken by the Synod.

Question 1: May an agency of the Synod (such as a district), by defeating a resolution to participate in a Synod initiative or action (or by any other means) opt not to participate in an initiative or action passed by the Synod in convention? What would be the effect of an agency's resolution to participate in an initiative or action passed by a resolution of the Synod in convention, which is defeated by the agency? How should the members of the Synod regard an agency's resolution to participate in an initiative or action passed by a resolution of the Synod in convention, which is defeated by the agency? How should the officers of the national Synod and/or the various districts of the Synod regard such a resolution?

Question 2: May an agency of the Synod (such as a district), by passing a resolution not to participate in a Synod initiative or action (or by any other means) opt not to participate in an initiative or action passed by the Synod in convention? What would be the effect of an agency's resolution not to participate in an initiative or action passed by the Synod in convention? How should the members of the Synod regard an agency's resolution not to participate in an initiative or action passed by the Synod in convention? How should the officers of the national Synod and/or the various districts of the Synod regard such a resolution?

Opinion: An agency of the Synod is defined in Bylaw 1.2.1 as follows:

(a) **Agency:** An instrumentality other than a congregation, whether or not separately incorporated, which the Synod in convention or its Board of Directors has caused or authorized to be formed to further the Synod's objectives.

(1) Agencies include each board, commission, council, seminary, university, college, district, Concordia Plan Services, and each synod-wide corporate entity.

As defined, an agency is an instrumentality authorized, formed, or created by the Synod in order to fulfill or further the Synod's objectives. As suggested by the questions, a district is certainly an agency of the Synod.

Bylaw 1.4.1 describes the relationship of the Synod to all of its officers and agencies:

The delegate convention of the Synod is the legislative assembly that ultimately legislates policy, program, and financial direction to carry on the Synod's work on behalf of and in support of the member congregations. **It reserves to itself the right to give direction to all officers and agencies of the Synod** [emphasis added]. Consequently, all officers and agencies, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, shall be accountable to the Synod for all their actions, and any concerns regarding the decisions of such officers or agencies may be brought to the attention of the Synod in convention for appropriate action. This provision does not apply to specific member appeals to the Concordia Plans, which has its own appeal process for such cases.

Certain agencies of the Synod, including districts, have particular authority to make recommendations to the Synod through its national convention. In doing so, however, agencies of the Synod, including districts, are not allowed to ignore or overrule the decisions of the Synod, but rather to influence or seek to influence the Synod through its conventions. Bylaw 1.4.2 reads as follows:

The delegate convention of each district of the Synod receives reports and counsel from the national Synod, makes recommendations thereto, assists in implementing decisions of the Synod, and adopts or authorizes programs to meet the unique needs of the district.

With respect to districts as agencies of the Synod, districts hold a special relationship to the Synod. As indicated in Bylaw 4.1.1: "The Synod is not merely an advisory body in relation to a district, but establishes districts in order more effectively to achieve its objectives and carry on its activities." Bylaw 4.1.1.1 is even more explicit as it relates to districts: "A district is the Synod itself performing the functions of the Synod. Resolutions of the Synod are binding upon the districts." Bylaw 1.3.6 makes clear a district's responsibility over against resolutions of the Synod: "Districts and circuits as component parts of the Synod are obligated to carry out resolutions of the Synod and are structures for congregations to review decisions of the Synod, to motivate one another to action, and to shape and suggest new directions."

Some resolutions of the Synod are intended to require participation by every agency of the Synod. Others are intended to encourage, but not require, participation by agencies of the Synod. Yet others may identify specific goals or objectives of the Synod, leaving to agencies of the Synod to determine whether or not the initiative falls within their area of expertise or responsibility.

To the extent that a resolution of the Synod establishes an initiative directing action or participation by an agency of the Synod, whether a district or other agency, it is not the prerogative of the agency to determine whether it wants to participate. Rather, it is required as part of its covenant with the Synod to do so. The refusal of an agency of the Synod, including a district, to follow or accept the resolutions of the Synod is without authority and should be considered null and void.

This issue has been raised in the past. For example, in Ag. 632 (1974) the Commission on Constitutional Matters opined: "All resolutions of districts which provide for district action which is in conflict with the above are unconstitutional and therefore null and void (Article XII, 2; Bylaw 3.07). Districts and district presidents are obligated to carry out the resolutions of the Synod (Article XII, 9, a; Bylaw 3.07, a)." [The referenced Bylaw 3.07 is now Bylaws 4.1.1 and 4.1.1.1 in the 2007 *Handbook*.]

Similarly, with respect to doctrine taught and practiced by the Synod through its resolutions, the issue has previously been raised in Opinion 00-2212, as follows:

Bylaw 2.39, c [2007 *Handbook* Bylaw section 1.8] describes the procedure for dissent to doctrinal resolutions of the Synod by members of the Synod. Districts are not members of the Synod but are divisions of the Synod, “the geographical boundaries of which are determined by the Synod and are altered by it according to circumstances” (Article XII, 1). “The Synod establishes districts in order more effectively to achieve its objectives and carry on its activities” (Bylaw 4.01) [2007 Bylaw 4.1.1]. As such, districts “as component parts of the Synod are obligated to carry out the resolutions of the Synod” (Bylaw 1.05, f) [2007 Bylaw 1.3.6]. An official action by a district, therefore, to file an expression of dissent to the Synod regarding a doctrine taught and practices by the Synod is out of order and, therefore, null and void.

In circumstances where the Synod has adopted a resolution calling for action or participation by a specific agency of the Synod, or by all its agencies, the agency is not at liberty to ignore that resolution. Any attempt by the agency to pass a resolution calling for the agency’s disobedience of such resolution is without authority and thus should be considered null and void. Under such circumstances, the matter should be brought to the attention of the President of the Synod, who is charged under Bylaw 3.3.1.2: “The President shall oversee the activities of all officers, executives, and agencies of the Synod to see to it that they are acting in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.”

Adopted April 3–4, 2009

Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) Implementation Guidelines

A draft guidelines document to help those convention floor committees assigned overtures proposing the overturn of CCM opinions to understand how the commission carries out its responsibility for interpretation of the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod was reviewed. After discussion, the following guidelines document was adopted, to be provided to convention floor committees as appropriate and appended to the internal governing documents of the commission.

BYLAW 3.9.2.2 (c) GUIDELINES

Overtures may be submitted to a convention of the Synod requesting the overturn of a formal opinion of the Commission on Constitutional Matters. Floor committees assigned such overtures must consider them in light of the provisions set forth in Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c):

(c) An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action.

In order to assist floor committees receiving such assignments, the commission respectfully offers the following background and information outlining how, based on substantive rationale, the commission arrives at its opinions.

1. Understanding the Role of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and its Responsibility for Interpretation

Dr. C. F. W. Walther stated in his 1879 essay, “Duties of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod,” presented to the first Iowa District convention: “Therefore, anyone who joins a synod knows in advance: ‘I am now becoming a member of an organization that is charged with the responsibility of supervising church affairs; I am also joining an organization that operates with a specific system of regulations

[*Ordnung*], for without regulations it could not exist.’” (*Essays for the Church*, C. F. W. Walther, Vol. II, CPH, 1992).

Through the delegation of responsibilities, the members of the Synod carry out what they themselves decide, which is expressed and set forth in the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions. Historically, the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) has been responsible for providing the important service of interpretation of the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions, thereby assisting the members of the Synod in carrying out in a fitting and orderly manner the Synod’s “church affairs” through its “system of regulations.”

The commission does not develop policies or programs, nor does it supervise their implementation. The commission does not see to it that the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod are carried out, nor does it interpret the Scriptures. Through its opinions, however, the commission does carry out its particular responsibility to interpret (between conventions) the collective will of the Synod as specified in the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. And while having no authority over any officer, board, or commission, the commission does state through its opinions/interpretations precisely what authority this Synod of self-governing congregations has reserved unto itself alone and what the Synod has delegated specifically to others.

In the commission’s important function of interpreting, it thereby assists in the clarification and understanding of the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions for the members of the Synod, thereby helping to promote harmony and to prevent self-will, self-ambition, controversy, dissension, and division. This function of interpretation is stressed in the Bylaws of the Synod:

The Commission on Constitutional Matters exists to interpret the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod and ensure that the governing instruments of the Synod and its agencies are in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod. (Bylaw 3.9.2; see also Bylaw 3.9.2.2.4)

The Commission on Constitutional Matters shall interpret the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions upon the written request of a member (congregation, ordained or commissioned minister), official, board, commission, or agency of the Synod. (Bylaw 3.9.2.2)

The Commission on Constitutional Matters shall examine all reports and overtures to the Synod asking for amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod or which in any manner affect the Constitution and Bylaws, to determine their agreement in content and language with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod. (Bylaw 3.9.2.2.1)

[Amendments to bylaws] shall be examined by the Commission on Constitutional Matters prior to presentation to the convention to determine that they are not in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod. (Bylaw 7.1.1 [c])

Underscored words and phrases in the preceding paragraphs (emphasis added) call attention to the need for interpretation to “ensure that the governing documents of the Synod and its agencies are in accord,” to “determine their agreement in content and language,” and to “determine that [amendments] are not in conflict” with the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions.

2. Understanding the Rules and Principles of Interpretation Used by the Commission on Constitutional Matters in Carrying Out its Responsibility for Interpretation

The commission, whose opinions substantially are or are based upon interpretation, follows rules or principles of interpretation to arrive at its opinions, including the following:

- Grammatical exegesis (deriving the meaning of a text), looking at the text as a literary document with a literary context and historical set-

ting. Grammar, logical discourse, word meaning, and word usage are of utmost importance.

- Intended sense, recognizing that the author intended one, simple, seminal, certain, literal, ordinary, natural sense—not several meanings.
- Immediate context, noting the “passages,” titles, subtitles, and section(s) immediately surrounding the text.
- Broader context, taking into consideration the entire chapter and/or document and its interrelationship with the text in question.
- Self-interpretation, allowing the governing document to interpret itself and its parts.
- Unity, recognizing the overall polity of the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod and their unity of authorship, content, function, and purpose.
- Constitutional priority, allowing the Constitution of the Synod to control and supersede the Bylaws and all other rules and regulations.
- Clarity, granting that a text’s clarity or lack thereof may be due to the blindness of the interpreter (“The sun is not less bright because a blind man cannot see it”—Gerhard).
- History, taking into consideration the genesis and historical context of a passage from the Constitution, Bylaws, or resolutions of the Synod.

3. Understanding the Use of Research by the Commission before Arriving at an Opinion/Interpretation

The commission is careful to utilize, as much as possible, basic and thorough research before arriving at its opinions. Such research includes in every case:

- The handbooks of the Synod, past and present. The first English language *Handbook* was produced and published in 1924. A collection of handbooks is maintained in the Office of the Secretary and is consulted regularly.
- Convention workbooks and proceedings to study resolutions past and present—their origin and intended purpose. A collection of workbooks and proceedings is maintained in the Office of the Secretary and is consulted regularly.
- All relevant CCM opinions from 1965 to the present, honoring their binding nature while noting relevant constitution and bylaw changes/amendments since they were issued. Members of the CCM have access to an electronic collection of CCM minutes from 1965 to the present.

Adopted Oct. 31–Nov. 1, 2009

Authority re Sale of Synod Assets (09-2564)

In an August 11, 2009, letter, a member of the Synod submitted a series of questions relating to information that was then beginning to be made public about a potential sale of the KFUE radio station or one of its licenses. The member identified some of the prior decisions of the CCM, including CCM Opinion 03-2357, which addressed issues relating specifically to KFUE and the involvement of the Board of Directors (BOD).

Following receipt of the questions, the CCM, pursuant to Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (b), notified both the chairman of the BOD and the chairman of the Board for Communication Services (BCS) of the questions submitted. A response and input was received from both the BOD and the chairman of the BCS. In addition, following the commission’s August 29–30 meeting, during which public announcements began to be made through the Synod’s news and information services about a potential sale, the CCM notified the Synod’s legal counsel of the questions before the commission and received her input. Members of the BOD and the CCM were also able to meet and discuss the issues during recent overlapping meetings.

Question 1: Does the BOD have the authority to sell the KFUE station licenses?

Opinion: The simple answer to the question is “yes,” the BOD does have the authority to sell the KFUE FM license. Article XI F

2 of the Synod’s Constitution defines the general authority of the BOD as follows:

2. The Board of Directors is the legal representative of the Synod. It is the custodian of all the property of the Synod, directly or by its delegation of such authority to an agency of the Synod. It shall exercise supervision over all the property and business affairs of the Synod except in those areas where it has delegated such authority to an agency of the Synod or where the voting members of the Synod through the adoption of bylaws or by other convention action have assigned specific areas of responsibility to separate corporate or trust entities, and as to those the Board of Directors shall have general oversight responsibility as set forth in the Bylaws.

This authority is mirrored in Bylaws 1.4.4¹ and 3.3.5. While 1986 Res. 1-12 delegated responsibility and authority to the BCS (through its Standing Committee on Broadcast) to “manage and operate the business and affairs of broadcast facilities owned by the Synod,” neither that nor any other resolution of the Synod has restricted the authority of the BOD to sell the license in question.

Question 2: Does the Board for Communication Services (BCS) have any input or authority in such a decision?

Opinion: The Board for Communication Services has input in such a decision, but not authority. The BCS has those responsibilities and that authority granted under Bylaw 3.8.5ff. and as described for each program board under Bylaw 1.2.1 (o), authority for “developing policies and programs for an operating function of the Synod and supervising their implementation.” In Opinion 98-2094, the CCM previously recognized that the concept of parallel management structure of the Synod prevented the BOD from assuming the management responsibility of the “production facilities” of the Synod, which the Synod in convention placed under the supervision of the BCS, a position that was reasserted in Opinion 03-2358. The same analysis would apply to the management of the FM license in question. As the BOD performs its mandated review, coordination, and consultation functions under Bylaws 3.3.5.3² and 3.3.5.5 (a) (2)³, it will of necessity consider the input of the BCS board and others on the ability of that agency to fulfill its mandated functions without an asset currently being managed and operated by that agency.

Question 3: Should a decision to sell an “instrument of delivery” used by the BCS to carry out a “designated function” be a decision of a convention of the Synod, since it was the Synod in convention that approved the following directive:

- 3.8.5.2 The Board for Communication Services shall provide resources to the various boards, commissions, congregations, and other agencies of the Synod ... (a) It shall provide creative ideas and information along with program, production facilities, and other assistance for print and electronic media. (Emphasis added by questioner)

While the decision may be submitted to the Synod in convention, unless the Synod reserves to itself or otherwise restricts the right to sell an asset, the Board of Directors as legal representative of the Synod has that power. Whether the FM license of KFUE is an asset which is sold or continues to be managed by the BCS, the BCS will continue to have the responsibility to fulfill the duties assigned by the quoted bylaw. The continued ability of an agency to fulfill its convention-mandated responsibilities without an asset whose management has been entrusted to that agency by the Synod in convention is a necessary issue which the BOD, in its fiduciary responsibility to honor the will of the Synod, must consider in exercising its discretion to sell any asset, including the license in question.

(The secretary was instructed by the commission to send early copies of Opinion 09-2564 to the President of the Synod, the chairmen of the Board of Directors and the Board for Communication Services, the member of the Synod who submitted the questions, and legal counsel of the Synod.)

Notes

1. “The Board of Directors serves the Synod as its legal representative and as custodian of all property of the Synod, and upon it is incumbent the general management and supervision of the business affairs of the Synod, except to the extent that management authority and duties have been delegated by the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Bylaws, or resolutions of a convention of the Synod to other officers and agencies of the Synod or to separate corporate or trust entities. Each other board of directors, board of regents, and board of trustees also serves the Synod with respect to the property of the Synod, to the extent of its jurisdiction, as provided or authorized in these Bylaws. Upon each such board of the Synod is incumbent the general management and supervision of the business affairs of the Synod to the extent of its jurisdiction. Any issues relative to the applicability of the laws of the State of Missouri shall be resolved in accord with the provisions in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod.” (Bylaw 1.4.4)

2. “The Board of Directors shall provide for the review and coordination of the policies and directives of the Synod authorized by the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod, evaluating plans and policies and communicating to the appropriate boards and commissions suggestions for improvement, and, in the case of program boards and commissions, require changes for compliance with Board of Directors’ policies within the sphere of its responsibility.” (Bylaw 3.3.5.3)

3. “(a) [The Board of Directors] shall have the right to request review of any action or policy of a program board, commission, or council which primarily relates to business, property, and/or legal matters and, after consultation with the agency involved and when deemed necessary, require modification or revocation thereof, except opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters.” (Bylaw 3.3.5.5 [a] [2])

Adopted February 26–28, 2010

Interpretation of “Another Capacity” in Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 (b) (09-2565)

In a letter dated September 14, 2009, a member of the Synod who was terminated from her position pursuant to Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 (reduction in force) asked the commission whether Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 (b) requires that such a terminated faculty member must be offered another position for which that terminated faculty member has credentials and qualifications, whether that position is part-time, full-time, or considered to be an adjunct position.

Question: Does Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 (b) refer to any position, or only a full-time position? Does it apply to part-time or adjunct positions?”

Opinion: Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 (b) states: “The opportunity to serve the college or university in another capacity for which the terminated faculty member has credentials and qualifications shall be offered the terminated faculty member if such a vacancy exists at the time of termination or becomes available within two academic years.”

In response to a question regarding reductions in force (RIF) on February 18, 1998 (Ag. 2093), the commission stated: “Neither Bylaw 6.44 c, or 6.44 e [2007 Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 (b) and (d)] are violated if full-time faculty positions are terminated under a RIF policy and then replaced with part-time adjunct faculty in the same academic field.”

In that same opinion, the commission also stated: “Bylaws 6.44 c and 6.44 e [2007 Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 (b) and (d)] are violated if, under the circumstances described, former full-time faculty members are not offered the opportunity to teach as many of the new part-time adjunct courses available for which former faculty members are qualified and eligible to teach.”

The answer to the question therefore is “yes” under the circumstances presented. Whether the position is considered part-time, full-time, or adjunct, the position must be offered to the terminated faculty member so long as the terminated faculty member is qualified for the position and the position has become available within two years from the time of that faculty member’s termination.

Adopted January 23–24, 2010

Interpretation of Constitution Article XIV re Proposing Amendments (09-2566)

In a September 24, 2009, e-mailed letter, the chairman of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance, speaking on behalf of the task force, requested an interpretation of the words “each proposed change shall be voted on separately” in paragraph 2 of Article XIV of the Constitution of the Synod.

Question: Since the task force has several constitutional changes which it will be presenting to the 2010 convention, and some of those related, does each change, no matter how small, have to be presented and voted on separately?

Opinion: Amendments to the Constitution are governed by Article XIV, paragraphs 2 and 3:

2. All proposed changes and amendments must be submitted in writing to the Synod assembled in convention, and each proposed change shall be voted on separately. A two-thirds majority of all votes cast shall be necessary for adoption.
3. After adoption by the convention, such amendments shall be submitted to the congregations of the Synod by means of three announcements in the official periodical within three months after the close of the convention.

In researching past opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters, the commission noted that the issue raised by this question has never been previously considered. Prior to 1917, the Constitution of the Synod allowed amendments without reference to the phrase under consideration. Therefore, the commission has looked at the practice of the Synod since 1917, such practice reflecting the sense and intent of the Synod since that time.

As recently as the 2004 convention, the Synod considered and acted on two constitutional amendments. Resolution 7-21 sought to amend a single article of the Constitution, Article XI F 2. The second, Resolution 5-04A, sought to add directors of family life ministry to the list of those eligible for membership in the Synod. In doing so, the resolution called for amendments in Articles V, VI, and XII.

In view of the foregoing, the commission finds that the phrase “each proposed change shall be voted on separately” may be properly interpreted in at least two ways. First, all changes to a single article can be submitted as a single change. Because, by reason of the structure of the Constitution, each article intentionally deals with a single subject, all amendments to a single article may always be considered a single change.

Second, as with 2004 Res. 5-04A, changes in multiple articles reflecting a single thematic change may also be considered a single change.

Adopted Oct. 31–Nov. 1, 2009

Reductions in Force (09-2567)

In an e-mailed letter dated October 19, 2009, a Dispute Resolution Panel submitted the following request for an opinion.

Question: Could the provisions of Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 of the LCMS be used as a model throughout the Synod in implementing reductions in force?

Opinion: Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7, like Bylaw 3.8.2.7.7, lists “reduction of the size of staff in order to maintain financial viability in compliance with policies concerning fiscal viability” as an allowable cause for the termination of faculty positions by the boards of regents of the Synod’s institutions of higher education.

The intention of these bylaws stated in the 1989 convention action that introduced “reduction in force” into the Bylaws of the Synod, that is, to provide “guidance to boards of regents regarding termination of faculty or staff positions at synodical colleges and seminaries because of external institutional circumstances which do not reflect on the competency or faithfulness of individuals holding the positions” (1989 Res. 6-10 “To Add Bylaw 6.44 re Termination of Position”).

The provisions of Bylaw 3.8.3.8.7 (and 3.8.2.7.7) were not specifically intended to be used as a model throughout the Synod in implementing reductions in force. However, the Synod has recognized the right of other entities to eliminate positions no longer deemed necessary by the hiring entity.

Adopted Oct. 31–Nov. 1, 2009

Application of Bylaw 3.8.8.2.2 to Recognized Service Organizations (09-2568)

In a letter dated September 26, 2009, a pastor of the Synod requested an opinion of the commission regarding the application of the Board for Mission Services Bylaw 3.8.8.2.2 to Recognized Service Organizations of the Synod. He asked the commission to take into consideration Bylaws 1.2.1 (a) and (d) and 6.2.1.

Question: Does Bylaw 3.8.8.2.2 in the Board for Mission Services section of the “Program and Service Boards” section of the 2007 *Handbook* of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod apply to Recognized Service Organizations of the Synod?

Opinion: Bylaw 3.8.8.2.2 states that the Board for Mission Services “shall serve as the only sending agency through which workers and funds are sent to the foreign mission areas across the Synod.” This includes calling, appointing, assigning, withdrawing, and releasing “missionaries (ordained and commissioned ministers) and other workers for the ministries and areas within its direct responsibility” (paragraph [a]). This also includes “serv[ing] as the sending agency even though programs are supported by districts or other agencies” (paragraph [b]). The question posed is whether a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) is one of the “other agencies” mentioned in the bylaw.

In 1993 the commission responded to a similar question, *i.e.*, whether then-Bylaw 3.809 c (2007 Bylaw 3.8.8.2.2) applied to “organizations independent of the Synod, such as the Association of Loyal Lutheran[s], Northwest, Inc.,” an organization consisting of persons who were members of Missouri Synod congregations. The commission responded as follows:

It is obvious that the Synod cannot control the actions of individual members of member congregations of the Synod. The Synod can, however, expect congregations and pastors to act in conformity with the bylaw.

With this in mind, the commission concludes that while it is not specifically contrary to the Bylaws for individuals or organizations made up of individual members of member congregations of the Synod (other

than rostered church workers who are members of the Synod) to send missionaries, it is entirely contrary to the spirit of the bylaw. However, the bylaw does apply to organizations or entities, whether or not related to or sponsored by Synod, whose membership includes members of the Synod, *i.e.*, rostered church workers of LCMS congregations. This conclusion is indicated by Bylaw 2.39 a–c [2007 Bylaw sections 1.7 and 1.8].

It should finally be noted that there is nothing which prevents actions being taken by groups such as those referred to above if those actions are coordinated through the Board for Mission Services which then, in effect, becomes the sending agency.

(The commission notes that while the bylaw in question has been re-numbered, the language of the bylaw has not changed and the above-quoted opinion has not been overruled by a convention of the Synod.)

Synod Bylaw 2.11.1 (k) gives a Recognized Service Organization the right to call rostered workers and gives such workers the right to remain on the roster of the Synod. At the same time, Bylaw 3.8.8.2.2 requires that the Board for Mission Services “serve as the only sending agency through which workers and funds are sent to the foreign mission areas of the Synod.” To honor these bylaw rights and responsibilities, the Board for Mission Services, acting under Bylaw 6.2.1 (c) which allows it to adopt additional policy, requires a commitment from the governing boards of its RSOs that before an RSO calls rostered workers into foreign service, that RSO must consult with and receive approval from the Executive Director of LCMS World Mission. This is entirely in keeping with the Bylaws of the Synod and the spirit of former CCM Opinion Ag. 1969. The answer to the current question, therefore, is “yes,” Bylaw 3.8.8.2.2 does apply to Recognized Service Organizations of the Synod.

Adopted Jan. 23–24, 2010

Regional Gatherings (09-2569)

In an e-mailed letter dated October 21, 2009, a pastor of the Synod requested “an expedited opinion” on a series of questions regarding “the proposed special meetings the Synod President has called prior to the 2010 convention.”

Question 1: Are the proposed regional “gatherings” in regards to the work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance to be considered “special sessions of the Synod,” as defined/explained in Article VIII B of the Synod’s Constitution? Or are they something else? If not “special sessions of the Synod,” under what section of the Constitution or Bylaws does the President of the Synod call these meetings? If these meetings do not fall under the category of a regular Synod convention, or a special session of the Synod, by what authority are the districts assessing their circuits for the cost of these meetings?

Opinion: These are not “special sessions of the Synod” as defined in the Synod’s Constitution. Nor are they early “sessions” of the 2010 convention. These are informational meetings to be attended by those invited, especially the elected voting delegates to the 2010 convention. Synod Bylaw 3.1.9 places the responsibility “for the overall organization and operations of the conventions of the Synod” on the President of the Synod. If he determines that convention business is of such significance and/or complexity that it will require pre-convention informational meetings, calling and arranging such meetings is his prerogative.

Question 2: May informational meetings designed to assist delegates understand the issues, such as these are described, preclude alternate delegates or interested visitors from attendance? If so, based upon what part of the

Constitution or Bylaws? Are advisory delegates allowed to attend these meetings and have voice, as they would at a convention?

Opinion: It is the commission's understanding that a two-way flow of information is intended at these meetings. Those in attendance will receive a presentation regarding the final report of the task force. They will also be provided opportunity to respond to the chairman and vice-chairman of the convention floor committee to which the task force report will be assigned. The President may invite whom he chooses to accomplish these purposes.

Question 3: Bylaw 3.1.2.2 says that delegates begin their term "with the convention." Would these meetings conflict with that by moving the start of their terms to these regional meetings?

Opinion: The commission notes that it is not unusual for delegates to be involved in convention activity prior to the official opening of a convention, e.g., when they are appointed to serve on convention floor committees.

Adopted Oct. 31–Nov. 1, 2009

Review and Summary of Former CCM Opinions re Ecclesiastical Supervision (09-2570)

The President of the Synod in a November 5, 2009 letter made the following request of the commission:

As you are aware, CCM Opinion 02-2309 has been questioned by numerous individuals and in resolutions adopted at a number of district conventions. While many are also aware of additional CCM opinions that clarify Opinion 02-2309, others are either unaware of or see as insufficient or unsatisfactory these clarifying opinions. ...

Accordingly, I respectfully request that the commission prepare a succinct yet comprehensive review and summary of the topics addressed by CCM Opinions 02-2309 and any subsequent opinions, reports, resolutions, or other documents that pertain thereto.

Although Opinion 02-2309 was issued over seven years ago and has been reviewed by two subsequent conventions of the Synod, the fact that it continues to attract attention and misunderstanding warrants this further review and summary. As noted, this subject has also been periodically addressed in prior Opinions 02-2296, 02-2320, and 03-2338 A–C.

Opinion: In forming the Synod, the founding members established both the conditions and requirements for joining and the circumstances under which membership could be removed against a member's will. For the protection of its members and in order to avoid unintended, unwarranted, or arbitrary attempts to terminate membership, the Synod also established as part of its initial formation a system of ecclesiastical supervision, and imposed upon the supervisors it selected the responsibility on behalf of the Synod itself to keep members apprised of those actions which might place membership in jeopardy.¹

Article XIII 1² of the Synod's Constitution protects members from unwitting loss of membership by requiring prior futile admonition before expulsion. The term "admonition" by definition suggests that one is advised of the appropriateness or inappropriateness of a course of action. Admonition cannot by definition be futile until given and subsequently ignored or rejected. The Synod's theological positions are determined by the collective understanding of the Synod as expressed in convention, not by the individual understanding of ecclesiastical supervisors. Opinion 02-2309 is not an expression of our theology, but rather of our ecclesiastical polity. As a Synod it grants that a member can look to the ecclesiastical supervisors provided by the Synod for such counsel, advice, and admonition as may be necessary to avoid taking actions which might result in one's unintended expulsion.

The Synod and all its members have acknowledged the joint confession contained in Article II of the Constitution³ and the conditions of membership as set forth in Article VI.⁴ A necessary corollary to the discussion above recognizes the duties, responsibilities, and implications for ecclesiastical supervisors. Neither the Synod itself nor its chosen ecclesiastical supervisors may grant anyone the right to violate the Scriptures with impunity. The Synod through its ecclesiastical supervisors provides counsel and advice—not immunity, approval, or permission, much less license. To the extent that an ecclesiastical supervisor's counsel and advice is contrary to Holy Scripture, such supervisor must himself be held accountable. And to the extent that the Synod becomes aware that one of its chosen and delegated ecclesiastical supervisors has given erroneous advice which has been relied upon by a member, the Synod must provide that member with corrected advice and give the member the opportunity to take corrective steps before expelling such member.

Notes

1. Constitution, Article III Objectives
The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall—...
 8. Provide evangelical supervision, counsel, and care for pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers of the Synod in the performance of their official duties;
 9. Provide protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other church workers in the performance of their official duties and the maintenance of their rights; ...
2. Constitution, Article XIII Expulsion from the Synod
 1. Members who act contrary to the confession laid down in Article II and to the conditions of membership laid down in Article VI or persist in an offensive conduct, shall, after previous futile admonition, be expelled from the Synod.
3. Constitution, Article II Confession
The Synod, and every member of the Synod, accepts without reservation:
 1. The Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice;
 2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.
4. Constitution, Article VI Conditions of Membership
Conditions for acquiring and holding membership in the Synod are the following:
 1. Acceptance of the confessional basis of Article II.
 2. Renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description, such as
 - a. Serving congregations of mixed confession, as such, by ministers of the church;
 - b. Taking part in the services and sacramental rites of heterodox congregations or of congregations of mixed confession;
 - c. Participating in heterodox tract and missionary activities.

3. Regular call of pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, deaconesses, certified lay ministers, and parish assistants and regular election of lay delegates by the congregations, as also the blamelessness of the life of such.
4. Exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymn-books, and catechisms in church and school.
5. A congregation shall be received into membership only after the Synod has convinced itself that the constitution of the congregation, which must be submitted for examination, contains nothing contrary to the Scriptures or the Confessions.
6. Pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, deaconesses, certified lay ministers, or candidates for these offices not coming from recognized orthodox church bodies must submit to a colloquium before being received.
7. Congregations and individuals shall be received into membership at such time and manner, and according to such procedures, as shall be set forth in the bylaws to this Constitution.

Adopted Jan. 23–24, 2010

Dispute Resolution Process Appeal Panel Decision (09-2571)

In a letter dated November 16, 2009, a member of the Synod recently involved in the dispute resolution process submitted a series of questions to the commission regarding the final decision rendered by the panel.

Question 1: If the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOPM)* rule of directly contacting the Appeals Panel were violated by one side of the dispute during the Appeal Panel deliberations, do the Bylaws permit that Appeal Panel be declared invalid? And do the Bylaws permit that another Appeal Panel be formed? And by whom?

Opinion: There is no provision in the Bylaws providing that an Appeal Panel be declared invalid or a new panel formed should a party directly communicate with members of an Appeal Panel without the knowledge of the other party in the dispute in violation of Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (c), which states that “[n]o party and/or parties to a dispute nor anyone on the party’s behalf shall either directly or indirectly communicate with the reconciler, the hearing facilitator, or any member of the Dispute Resolution Panel, Appeal Panel, or Review Panel without the full knowledge of the other party to the dispute.” Any member of the Appeal Panel so contacted should promptly notify all other members of the panel, the other parties involved, and the administrator to report the contact. Paragraph 4.2 of the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual* states, in part, that “[i]f the request for reconsideration is not granted, the decision of the Dispute Resolution [Panel] shall be regarded as final and binding upon the parties to the dispute.”

Question 2: If the *SOPM* rules of directly contacting the Appeal Panel were violated by one side of the dispute, and a final decision is rendered by the Appeal Panel, do the Bylaws permit that the decision of that Appeal Panel be declared invalid? And by whom?

Opinion: There is no provision in the Bylaws providing that an Appeal Panel decision is to be declared invalid because Bylaw 1.10.18.1(c) was violated by one of the parties to the dispute.

Question 3: If the *SOPM* rules of directly contacting the Appeal Panel were violated by one side of the dispute, and the content of the message is construed as disparaging to the process or towards the other party (in other words, taints the overall process), do the Bylaws allow that Appeal Panel to be declared invalid, and do they allow that the decision of that Appeal Panel be declared invalid? And by whom?

Opinion: There is no provision in the Bylaws that provides that an Appeal Panel is to be declared invalid if a party communicates with panel members in violation of Bylaw 1.10.18.1(c). Should an individual member of the panel determine that the inappropriate contact has tainted the individual’s ability to fairly carry out his responsibilities, the member may recuse himself, the matter then determined by the balance of the panel as described in *SOPM* section IV paragraph Q Should an Appeal Panel find that improper communication has tainted its ability to carry out its responsibility in a fair manner, the panel itself may disband and request the formation of a new panel.

Question 4: If the *SOPM* rules of directly submitting additional new evidence to the Appeal Panel and not through the administrator were violated by one side of the dispute during the Appeal Panel deliberations, do the Bylaws permit that Appeal Panel be declared invalid? And do the Bylaws permit that another panel be formed? And by whom?

Opinion: There is no provision in the Bylaws that provides that an Appeal Panel is to be declared invalid or that permits a new panel to be formed should a party violate a provision of the *SOPM*. The panel itself retains responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the process and addressing any violation or attempted violation of the *SOPM*.

Question 5: If the *SOPM* rules of directly submitting additional new evidence to the Appeal Panel and not through the administrator were violated by one side of the dispute during the Appeal Panel deliberations, and a final decision is rendered by the Appeal Panel, do the Bylaws permit that the decision of that Appeal Panel be declared invalid? And by whom?

Opinion: No. See above. Please also note Bylaw 1.10.18.1(i):

Any member participating in this bylaw procedure who intentionally and materially violates any of the requirements in this bylaw ... is subject to the disciplinary measures as set forth in the appropriate Bylaw sections 2.14–2.17. Any member of the Synod who has personal factual knowledge of the violation shall inform the appropriate district president as the ecclesiastical supervisor.

Adopted Jan. 23–24, 2010

Notes

1. Although he did not serve as administrator of the Dispute Resolution Process in the particular matter underlying this question, the Secretary of the Synod recused himself from consideration of this matter. Another member of the commission had been designated as administrator for this matter and also recused himself from participation in the opinion. The minutes for this portion of the meeting were kept by commission member Daniel Lorenz.

2. **Q. Inability of Panel Members to Serve:** If a panel member withdraws or is unable to perform required duties after a panel has begun its work, the remaining panel members shall continue without the vacancy being filled.

Responsibilities of Appeal Panels in Dispute Resolution Process (09-2572)

With a letter dated November 19, 2009, a pastor of the Synod asked a series of questions regarding the responsibilities of an Appeal Panel in the dispute resolution process in light of Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (a) and a statement in the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual* accompanying the process which states, “The panel shall make its decision on the basis of the minutes and written decision of the Dispute Resolution Panel and any documentary evidence that was received and reviewed.”

Question 1: Does Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (a) (*Handbook*, p. 48) which allows not only a Dispute Resolution Panel and Review Panel for witnesses to testify and review records and documents related to a dispute, also allow for an Appeal Panel to have witnesses testify before it, and review records and documents related to a dispute?

Opinion: Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (a) provides that “any member of the Synod, officer of a congregation, or officer of any organization owned or controlled by the Synod shall, when called upon” by one of the three panels, including an Appeal Panel, must testify or produce records related to the dispute.

Question 2: Should the rules and procedures that are developed by a smaller group of officials in the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOPM)* of the dispute resolution process, as granted in Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (j), override and/or conflict with any other bylaws as found elsewhere in the dispute resolution section or any other bylaws approved by the Synod?

Opinion: The *Standard Operating Procedures Manual*, “a comprehensive procedures manual for Bylaw section 1.10,” (Bylaw 1.10.18.1 [j]), does not override and should not conflict with any bylaws approved by the Synod.

Question 3: (a) Does not the rules and procedures of the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual*, of the dispute resolution process as granted in Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (j) in which section 4.1 states:

The panel shall make its decision on the basis of the minutes and written decision of the Dispute Resolution Panel and any documentary evidence that was received and reviewed.

greatly curtail the Appeal Panel Process in that it can only make its decision solely on the minutes and decision of the original Dispute Resolution Panel and only on any documentary evidence that was received and reviewed by the first panel, even though Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (a) may grant the Appeal Panel other sources of witnesses and/or records related to the dispute?

(b) Does not Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (a) allow an Appeal Panel not only to look at the written record of the Dispute Resolution Panel, but in spite of the *SOPM* rules/procedures, it may also call its own witnesses to testify and review any records/documentary evidence that is related to the dispute in order to seek the truth, and thus render its final decision?

(c) Should not the procedures/rules as found in the *SOPM* section 4.1 (Nov. 2008) be revised to conform to the stated intent of Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (a)?

Opinion: The questioner is correct that the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual* could more clearly reflect the provision of Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (a) that allows an Appeal Panel to obtain testimony directly from members of the Synod, officers of congrega-

tions, or officers of any organization owned and controlled by the Synod, such to be included in a proper understanding of the words of the bylaw, “any documentary evidence that was received and reviewed.” On the rare occasion (given the 30-day requirement) that an Appeal Panel is not able to arrive at its decision regarding the granting of a reconsideration of the earlier panel’s decision without additional testimony or records, Bylaw 1.10.18.1 (a) does grant that opportunity. This lack of clarity in the *Standard Operating Procedures Manual* will be taken into consideration when the manual is next reviewed by the commission (Bylaw 1.18.18.1 [j]).

Adopted Jan. 23–24, 2010

Reconsideration of Response to Second Question of Former Opinion 99-2157 (09-2573)

Omnibus Res. A of the 2007 convention referred Overture 8-44 “To Request CCM Reconsideration of Opinion 99-2157 re Art. VII” to the Commission on Constitutional Matters (cf. 2007 *Proceedings*, p. 169; 2007 *Convention Workbook*, p. 275). Opinion 99-2157, “Questions re Rights of Individuals and Congregations” (Sept. 14, 1999), responded to seven questions submitted by a Dispute Resolution Panel.

This reconsideration of Opinion 99-2157 addresses the commission’s response to the second question: “What does the phrase ‘inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned’ mean, and how is it applied to matters relating to the right of self-government of LCMS congregations?” The commission responded to that question with the following two paragraphs:

What then is meant by a “congregation’s right of self-government”? Since 1854, conventions of the Synod have refused to adopt resolutions which were thought to interfere with the “self-government” of the local parish, explaining that the Synod “is an advisory body.” Historically, four areas of self-government have been recognized: (a) the calling of pastors, teachers, etc., from a list of those accredited by the Synod itself; (b) the owning and maintaining of congregational property without granting any rights of it to the Synod; (c) church discipline; and (d) the administration of a congregation’s programming and financial affairs.

Thus, in answer to the question to the commission, the phrase “inexpedient as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned” does not refer to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod and is restricted to resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod which are non-doctrinal in nature. [For the complete text of the commission’s response, see *Appendix I*.]

The fourth “whereas” paragraph of Ov. 8-44 states the reason for the reconsideration request: “Whereas, Opinion 99-2157 of the CCM, namely, ‘In answer to the question to the commission, the phrase “inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned” does not refer to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod and is restricted to resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod which are non-doctrinal in nature’ exceeds the intent of the Constitution as it limits the second of the dual consequences mentioned above to what is not doctrinal” (emphasis added). [Note: The “second of the dual consequences” referred to is the second sentence of Article VII, the first sentence of Article VII being the first of the “dual consequences.”]

The phrase in question is taken from Article VII of the Constitution of the Synod, which reads:

Article VII Relation of the Synod to Its Members

1. In its relation to its members the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and with respect to the individual congregation’s right of self-government it is but an advisory body. Accordingly, no resolution of the Synod imposing anything upon the individual congregation is of binding force if it is not in accordance with the Word of God or if it ap-

pears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned.

Focus on Article VII

At times it is said or implied that Article VII maintains that the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government, or that it does not exercise legislative powers, or that it is only an advisory body. However, such statements do not reflect what Article VII says. It states that the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers “in its relation to its members,” and that the Synod is but an advisory body “with respect to the individual congregation’s right of self-government” (emphasis added).

Not every action taken by the Synod deals with its relation to its members or with matters that a congregation decides in the course of governing itself. Many actions of the Synod pertain to the direction, management, and position of the Synod as an association of congregations, such as those resolutions directed toward its districts, officers, boards, commissions, staffs, conventions, employees, other church bodies or church organizations, or the general public. When the Synod takes such actions, it is not acting merely as an advisory body, but it is acting properly as an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative and, at times, coercive powers.

However, as its title implies, the focus of Article VII, including the phrase addressed in this opinion, is on the Synod’s relation to its members, especially its congregational members. As such, Article VII is intended to assure its members that the Synod is not an organization that forces its collective will upon its congregations and ministers, but rather that it employs the power of the Word of God as it advises, encourages, and assists them to do what they have voluntarily promised to do when they became members of the Synod by signing its Constitution. Note that the word “accordingly” at the beginning of the second sentence of Article VII provides a strong link between the above emphases and the “inexpedient” concept stated in the second sentence of Article VII.

Congregational Self-Government

With respect to “the right of self-government of LCMS congregations,” the Synod understands that congregations are divinely instituted and possess all spiritual authority (cf. 1851 convention resolution that adopted *Church and Ministry*, reaffirmed by 2001 Res. 7-17A). Such self-governing congregations are the basic unit of the Synod (Bylaw 1.3.1). While there is a common understanding that a congregation exercises its self-government in calling pastors and other church workers, in owning and maintaining property, and in carrying out church discipline and its own ministry programs and financial affairs, Article VII and Bylaw 1.7.2 do not restrict the areas of self-government. While CCM Opinion 99-2157 listed four historic areas of self-government, the commission wishes to clarify that this list is not exhaustive. A report of the Survey Commission in the 1962 convention’s *Reports and Memorials* listed six areas of self-government (p. 232). And in the 1990 CCM opinion Ag. 1905, the commission included this area: “Consequently, the congregation has a right to organize itself as it wishes to in carrying out its mission.” No article of the Constitution, bylaw, or resolution of the Synod limits the areas of a congregation’s self-government.

It should also be noted that it is an act of congregational self-governance when a congregation elects to join the Synod. In exercising its self-government, a congregation which voluntarily joins the Synod and subscribes to its Constitution thereby agrees to be bound by all the provisions of the Synod’s Constitution as long as it retains its membership in the Synod. The congregation thereby limits or subordinates the subsequent exercise of its intrinsic right of self-

government, if necessary, in all matters explicitly addressed by the Synod’s Constitution.

Since the self-governing congregations of the Synod recognize the authority of the state as God’s servant in His temporal kingdom, they will also accept and obey the laws of the state unless they are contrary to scriptural principles, conscience, or the constitutions of the congregation and the Synod. In so doing, congregations do not surrender their right of self-governance to the state (cf. thesis 34 of the *Brief Statement* adopted by the 1932 convention).

Meaning of “Inexpedient”

In answer to the question of the meaning of “inexpedient as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned,” it is important to understand the meaning of the word “inexpedient” as used in this sentence of Article VII.

In Opinion Ag. 1833 (Feb. 5, 1988), the commission noted “first, that the term ‘inexpedient’ is no longer used in the 1986 *Handbook* but has been replaced with the word ‘applicability,’ a term which is more properly the translation of the word *uneigentlich*, the word which occurs in the German language in which the Constitution was originally written” (emphasis added).

Thus, reflecting the 1986 Bylaws, 2007 Bylaw 1.7.2 reads,

- 1.7.2 The Synod expects every member congregation of the Synod to respect its resolutions and to consider them of binding force if they are in accordance with the Word of God and if they appear applicable as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned. The Synod, being an advisory body, recognizes the right of a congregation to be the judge of the applicability of the resolution to its local condition. However, in exercising such judgment, a congregation must not act arbitrarily, but in accordance with the principles of Christian love and charity. (Emphasis added)

While the word “inexpedient” had not been revised in Constitution Art. VII, it is recognized that the Bylaws, such as Bylaw 1.7.2 above, while subordinate to the Constitution, elucidate, clarify, and “flesh out the basic principles” (CCM Opinion Ag. 1826, Nov. 6–7, 1987) and explain the meaning of the Constitution.

To understand properly the meaning and use of “inexpedient” constitutionally and historically in the Synod, it is important to realize that the German word *ungeeignet* in the 1854 Constitution was properly translated “unsuited” into the English (cf. *Moving Frontiers*, p. 151). An editorial committee in 1923, not the convention of the Synod, changed the word to “inexpedient.” The original word *ungeeignet* meant “unsuited, not suited for, does not fit.” Therefore it should be noted that the use of the word “inexpedient” in our contemporary culture appears to have a different connotation such as “not advantageous, not profitable, inconvenient.”

It is the congregation itself, not the Synod, that may decide that a given resolution is not suited for the congregation’s condition. The language of this article in the 1854 Constitution made this very clear when it stated: “Should a congregation find a synodical resolution not in conformity with the Word of God or unsuited for its circumstances, it has the right to disregard, that is, reject it” (*Moving Frontiers*, p. 152). Likewise, the 1920 English text of Article VII states that no congregation shall be bound by any resolution of the Synod “that to such congregation appears unsuited to its condition” (*The Lutheran Witness*, XXXVI 20). Therefore, the congregation and not the Synod may assess the congregation’s condition and judge the applicability of any resolution of the Synod. The congregation, not the Synod, determines whether or not a resolution is unsuited. “The Synod, being an advisory body, recognizes the right of a congregation to be the judge

of the applicability of the resolution to its local condition” (Bylaw 1.7.2, emphasis added).

Following Dissent Procedures and Honoring and Upholding the Resolutions of the Synod

A resolution of the Synod lacks binding force when a congregation determines that the resolution “is not in accordance with the Word of God or if it appears to be inexpedient [unsuited] as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned” (Article VII). If, in exercising its self-government, the congregation has determined that a resolution of the Synod is not in accordance with God’s Word, the congregation, in joining the Synod, has also retained the right of brotherly dissent and in exercising that dissent (to the extent that it wishes to do so) has bound itself to the provisions set forth in the Bylaws (Bylaw section 1.8). If, in exercising its self-government, the congregation has determined that a resolution of the Synod is not “applicable” as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned, the congregation, in joining the Synod, has also agreed to honor and uphold the collective will of the Synod as expressed in its Constitution, Bylaws, and convention resolutions, and pledged its active involvement and support of the Synod’s efforts to carry out its mission and purpose (cf. *Appendix II*).

“Non-Doctrinal” Resolutions

CCM Opinion 99-2157 states that the “inexpedient” phrase of Article VII is “restricted to resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod which are non-doctrinal in nature.” Many of the concerns submitted to the 2001, 2004, and 2007 conventions of the Synod regarding Opinion 99-2157 have focused on this statement, including the overture to the 2007 convention which has led to this reconsideration of the response to the second question in that opinion.

The Synod has long held that doctrine is determined by and drawn only from God’s Word, and that it is not established either by a decree or by a majority vote of the self-governing congregation or an association of such congregations. Article VIII of the Synod’s Constitution makes this very clear when it states: “All matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God.” It is also the Synod’s conviction that “doctrine may not be accepted or rejected upon the basis of considerations of expediency” (1971 Res. 2-21).¹ The current CCM recognizes that the phrase in question in Opinion 99-2157 seeks to express this understanding.

The terms “doctrinal” and “non-doctrinal” have caused uncertainty or confusion in certain contexts, including their use to identify certain resolutions. Conventions have struggled to find a consensus definition of what is a doctrine (cf. 1964 CTR report, *What Is a Doctrine?* with its reference to 1944, 1953, and 1962 convention resolutions; also the May 2004 study document, “CONGREGATIONS AND SYNOD—Background Materials on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS”). For example, some resolutions simply restate biblical and confessional teaching, while others apply that teaching to certain circumstances or situations. Are both types “doctrinal,” or is the latter “non-doctrinal”? Is a resolution on practical or programmatic matters that simply cites one or more Bible passages in the “whereas” paragraphs to be considered a “doctrinal” resolution on that account, or is it “non-doctrinal,” or is it both? Are resolutions dealing with social or ethical issues or expressing moral judgments to be considered “doctrinal” on that account, even if they contain no biblical or confessional references? Such questions and many others like them can easily lead to disagreement and even discord within the Synod. Therefore, because of terminological ambiguities, because Article II simply says “no resolution of the Synod,” and because Bylaw 1.7.2 simply says “its resolutions” and “the resolution,” the commission

withdraws this formulation (non-doctrinal) and replaces it with the language found in this revised opinion.

Conclusion

In response to the question under consideration, the commission also states that the Article VII phrase “inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned”—

- is applicable only to resolutions that are adopted by the Synod, not to its Constitution (and, by implication, its Bylaws), which all members have accepted as a condition of membership. Because the second sentence of Article VII says, “no resolution of the Synod” (cf. also Bylaw 1.7.2), no limitation should be placed on the type or category of resolution that a congregation may wish to consider under this provision. However, because all congregations of the Synod have accepted Article II of the Constitution and thereby have pledged their acceptance of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the Article VII phrase in question may not be applied by congregations to resolutions of the Synod that consist primarily of citations from Holy Scripture or the Lutheran Confessions or simply restate the clear teaching of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions (cf. also Bylaw 1.6.2 quoted in *Appendix II*). Similarly, since all congregations of the Synod, in becoming members of the Synod, have subscribed to the Constitution of the Synod, the Article VII phrase in question may not be applied by a member congregation to resolutions of the Synod that are primarily explicit reaffirmations of other constitutional positions or provisions;
- deals only with resolutions of the Synod “imposing anything upon the individual congregation” (Article VII). The many resolutions of the Synod that deal with the management and direction of the Synod and its component parts, as distinguished from resolutions that are addressed to its member congregations (see above), are not included in this provision. Moreover, taking the language of this phrase quite literally, it must be said that very few resolutions of the Synod intend to “impose” anything upon its member congregations, inasmuch as the Synod does not exercise “legislative or coercive powers” (Article VII) in relation to its members and clearly recognizes the congregation’s right of self-government; and
- is limited to a congregation’s judgment that a resolution is unsuited or inapplicable to the “condition of the congregation” (Bylaw 1.7.2). The Synod has not limited in any way what a congregation might consider to be such a condition (whether it be a lack of resources, tension within the congregation, or some other important factor).

If a congregation determines that a resolution of the Synod is unsuited or inapplicable as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned, the congregation has also committed itself to “not act arbitrarily, but in accordance with the principles of Christian love and charity” (Bylaw 1.7.2), as well as to respect the collective will of the Synod as expressed in its resolutions (cf. Bylaws 1.7.2 and 1.8.2).

The commission also notes that Article VII states that no resolution of the Synod imposing anything upon the individual congregation is of binding force “if it is not in accordance with the Word of God.” Should a congregation reach this conclusion about any resolution of the Synod, it should also realize that, by becoming a member of the Synod, it has bound itself (to the extent the congregation wishes to carry out the right of brotherly dissent) to express and deal with its dissent according to the provisions of the Bylaws of the Synod.

Note

1. The quote from 1971 Res. 2-21 in its immediate context:

The Synod, in stating the *circumstances* under which a member is not obligated to adhere to the general rule that “the Synod expects every member congregation to respect its resolutions and to consider them of binding force” (Bylaw 1.09 b [2007 Bylaw 1.7.2]), grants exceptions only with respect to such resolutions as may be accepted or rejected as a matter of *expediency* depending upon a congregation’s *condition* and

locality, as well as such resolutions that affect a congregation in the area of *self-government* (Constitution, Article VII). That the Synod does not intend the exceptions to apply to doctrinal resolutions is evident from the fact that doctrine does not properly belong to the area of self-government, and from the fact that doctrine may not be accepted or rejected upon the basis of considerations of expediency.

The provision that allows a member to reject a doctrinal resolution of the Synod is that such a resolution is “not in accordance with the Word of God” (Article VII of the Constitution). The Synod, therefore, holds that every member, by virtue of his agreement when he *voluntarily* joined the Synod and *freely* placed himself under the provisions of the Synod’s Constitution and Bylaws, is bound by the Word of God expressed in the Synod’s resolutions until it can be demonstrated that a resolution is *in fact* “not in accordance with the Word of God.” Otherwise the Synod holds that its resolutions are to be considered “of binding force if they are in accordance with the Word of God” (Bylaw 1.09 b [2007 Bylaw 1.7.2]), and the Synod permits no member to teach or practice in violation of a resolution simply on the grounds that he does not agree with it or that it is in conflict with his private persuasion.

Appendix I—Response of Opinion 99-2157 to Question 2

Question 2: What does the phrase “inexpedient as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned” mean, and how is it applied in matters relating to the right of self-government of LCMS congregations?

Response to Question 2: The phrase in [the] question is taken from Article VII of the Constitution of the Synod, which states:

In its relation to its members the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and with respect to the individual congregation’s right of self-government it is but an advisory body. Accordingly, no resolution of the Synod imposing anything upon the individual congregation is of binding force if it is not in accordance with the Word of God or if it appears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned

It should be noted that the second sentence of Article VII states, “... no resolution of the Synod ...” (emphasis added). It does not speak of the Constitution or Bylaws of the Synod. “The right of a congregation to exercise the right of expediency (Bylaw 1.09b [2007 Handbook 1.7.2]) applies only to resolutions of the Synod and not to the Constitution and Bylaws” (1969 Res. 5-23).

Bylaw 1.05, d [2007 Handbook 1.3.4] elaborates on the principle set forth in Article VII:

Congregations together establish the requirements of membership in the Synod (Art. VI). In joining the Synod, congregations and other members obligate themselves to fulfill such requirements. Members agree to uphold the confessional position of the Synod (Art. II) and to assist in carrying out the objectives of the Synod (Art. III), which are the objectives of the members themselves. Thus, while congregations of the Synod are self governing (Art. VII), they, and also individual members, commit themselves as members of the Synod to act in accordance with the synodical Constitution and Bylaws under which they have agreed to live and work together and which the congregations alone have the authority to adopt or amend through conventions.

Bylaw 1.09 [2007 Handbook 1.6.2], addressing the topic of doctrinal resolutions and statements, provides:

The Synod, in seeking to clarify its witness or to settle doctrinal controversy, so that all who seek to participate in the relationships that exist within and through the Synod may benefit and may act to benefit others, shall have the right to adopt doctrinal resolutions and statements which are in harmony with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

Regarding such doctrinal resolutions, Bylaw 1.09, b [2007 Handbook 1.6.2 (a)], states, “Such resolutions come into being in the same manner as any other resolutions of a synodical convention and are to be honored and upheld until such time as the Synod amends or repeals them.” As to doctrinal statements, Bylaw 1.09 c 7 [2007 Handbook 1.6.2 (b)(7)] states, “They shall be honored and upheld (“to abide by, act, and teach in accordance with” [1971 Res. 2-21]) until such time as the Synod amends or repeals them.”

This relation of the Synod to its members, where its resolutions are concerned, is further defined in Bylaw 2.39 a–c [2007 Bylaw sections 1.7 and 1.8]:

a. The Constitution, Bylaws, and all other rules and regulations of the Synod apply to all congregations and individual members of the Synod. ...

b. The Synod expects every member congregation to respect its resolutions and consider them of binding force if they are in accordance with the Word of God and if they appear applicable as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned. The Synod, being an advisory body, recognizes the right of the congregation to be the judge of the applicability of the resolution to its local condition. However, in exercising such judgment, a congregation must not act arbitrarily, but in accordance with the principles of Christian love and charity.

c. While retaining the right of brotherly dissent, members of the Synod are expected as part of the life together within the synodical fellowship to honor and to uphold the resolutions of the Synod. If such resolutions are of a doctrinal nature, dissent is to be expressed first within the fellowship of peers, then brought to the attention of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations before finding expression as an overture to the convention calling for revision or rescission. While the conscience of the dissenter shall be respected, the consciences of others, as well as the collective will of the Synod, shall also be respected.

What then is meant by a “congregation’s right of self-government”? Since 1854, conventions of the Synod have refused to adopt resolutions which were thought to interfere with the “self-government” of the local parish, explaining that the Synod “is an advisory body.” Historically, four areas of self government have been recognized: (a) The calling of pastors, teachers, etc., from a list of those accredited by the Synod itself; (b) The owning and maintaining of congregational property without granting any rights of it to the Synod; (c) Church discipline; and (d) The administration of a congregation’s programming and financial affairs.

Thus, in answer to the question to the commission, the phrase “inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned” does not refer to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod and is restricted to resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod which are non-doctrinal in nature.” (Emphasis is added due to the concern expressed in 2007 Overture 8-44 requesting reconsideration.)

Appendix II—Selected Article and Bylaw Citations re Resolutions of the Synod

The following phrases from the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod help to understand both the meaning and the application of Article VII in the life of the Synod:

Article VIII C All matters of doctrine and of conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God. All other matters

- shall be decided by a majority vote. In case of a tie vote the President may cast the deciding vote.
- Bylaw 1.7.1 The Constitution, Bylaws, and all other rules and regulations of the Synod apply to all congregational and individual members of the Synod.
- Bylaw 1.7.2 The Synod expects every member congregation of the Synod to respect its resolutions and to consider them of binding force if they are in accordance with the Word of God and if they appear applicable as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned. The Synod, being an advisory body, recognizes the right of a congregation to be the judge of the applicability of the resolution to its local condition. However, in exercising such judgment, a congregation must not act arbitrarily, but in accordance with the principles of Christian love and charity.
- Bylaw 1.8.1 While retaining the right of brotherly dissent, members of the Synod are expected as part of the life together within the fellowship of the Synod to honor and uphold the resolutions of the Synod.
- Bylaw 1.8.2 Dissent from doctrinal resolutions and statements is to be expressed first within the fellowship of peers and then brought to the attention of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations before finding expression as an overture to the convention calling for revision or rescission. While the conscience of the dissenter shall be respected, the consciences of others, as well as the collective will of the Synod, shall also be respected.
- Bylaw 1.6.1 The confessional position of the Synod is set forth in Article II of its Constitution, to which all who wish to be and remain members of the Synod shall subscribe.
- Bylaw 1.6.2 The Synod, in seeking to clarify its witness or to settle doctrinal controversy, so that all who seek to participate in the relationships that exist within and through the Synod may benefit and may act to benefit others, shall have the right to adopt doctrinal resolutions and statements which are in harmony with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. (Emphasis added)
- (a) Doctrinal resolutions may be adopted for the information, counsel, and guidance of the membership. They shall conform to the confessional position of the Synod as set forth in Article II of its Constitution and shall ordinarily cite the pertinent passages of the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and any previously adopted official doctrinal statements and resolutions of the Synod. Such resolutions come into being in the same manner as any other resolutions of a convention of the Synod and are to be honored and upheld until such time as the Synod amends or repeals them. (Emphasis added)
- (b) Doctrinal statements set forth in greater detail the position of the Synod especially in controverted matters. A proposed statement or a proposal for the development of such a statement shall be ...
- (7) Such adopted and ratified doctrinal statements shall be regarded as the position of the Synod and shall be “accepted and used as helpful expositions

and explanations” (FC SD Rules and Norm 10). They shall be honored and upheld (“to abide by, act, and teach in accordance with” [1971 Res. 2-21]) until such time as the Synod amends or repeals them.

- Bylaw 1.3.4 Congregations together establish the requirements of membership in the Synod (Art. VI). In joining the Synod, congregations and other members obligate themselves to fulfill such requirements and to diligently and earnestly promote the purposes of the Synod by word and deed. Members agree to uphold the confessional position of the Synod (Art. II) and to assist in carrying out the objectives of the Synod (Art. III), which are objectives of the members themselves. Thus, while congregations of the Synod are self-governing (Art. VII), they, and also individual members, commit themselves as members of the Synod to act in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod under which they have agreed to live and work together and which the congregations alone have the authority to adopt or amend through conventions. (Emphasis added)

Adopted February 26–28, 2010

Women as Presidents of LCMS Colleges and Universities (10-2576)

In a letter dated February 22, 2010, the Synod’s Director of University Education submitted on behalf of the Concordia University System two questions for response from the commission. The questions were accompanied by extensive background information and a bylaw amendment proposal.

Question 1: Do the LCMS Bylaws prohibit women from serving as the president of an LCMS college or university, apart from Bylaw 3.8.3.7?

Opinion: Outside of Bylaw 3.8.3.7, there are no current bylaws that specifically prohibit women from serving as president of an LCMS college or university. However, care will need to be taken to locate and make changes to any other bylaws with pronouns referring to the office of college or university president that are not gender-neutral (as in Bylaw 3.8.3.7.1 [b]).

Question 2: Is the attached draft memorial to the 2010 LCMS convention consistent with the LCMS *Handbook*, apart from Bylaw 3.8.3.7?

Opinion: Any bylaw amendment(s) intended to allow women to serve as president of an LCMS college or university will need to address spiritual versus gender dimensions associated with the expectations and duties of this office and satisfy the concerns articulated in prior CCM opinions, as in Opinion 07-2489:

When asked to reconsider this opinion, the commission on April 6, 1984, reaffirmed its previous decision, stating “that when Bylaw 6.15 designates the president as the “spiritual head” of the institution, service in the position of president by a woman would be in conflict with the position of the Synod as stated in Resolution 2.17 of the 1969 Denver convention, and reaffirmed in conventions which followed.” This opinion was reaffirmed by a later commission in a September 14, 1999 opinion (99-2160), which stated in part:

It is the opinion of the commission that until the Synod clearly indicates that the term, “spiritual head,” does not involve the president of the institution in the distinctive functions of the pastoral office and/or exercising authority over men in spiritual matters, its decision is consistent with the position adopted by previous conventions.

Noting these earlier commission opinions, and noting that a president of an educational institution continues to “serve as the spiritual, academic, and administrative head of the institution” (Bylaw 3.8.3.7), remains “responsible for the provision of spiritual care and nurture for every student” (Bylaw 3.8.3.7 [h]), and “shall carefully watch over the spiritual welfare ... of the students and in general exercise such Christian discipline, instruction, and supervision as may be expected at a Christian educational institution” (Bylaw 3.8.3.7 [i]), the commission concludes that it continues to be necessary for a university president to be male.

It is the opinion of the commission that the proposed draft does satisfy the concerns previously articulated by the commission, amending Bylaw 3.8.3.7 in a manner that is consistent with the Handbook of the Synod, so long as care is also taken, perhaps delegated to the Commission on Constitutional Matters as it prepares the 2010 edition of the *Handbook*, to locate and make changes to any other bylaws with pronouns referring to the office of college or university president that are not gender-neutral (as in Bylaw 3.8.3.7.1 [b]).

Adopted February 26–28, 2010

Questions re District Overtures to Synod Conventions (10-2577)

With a February 27, 2010 e-mailed letter, the President of the Synod submitted a series of questions related to overtures and memorials received for consideration by the 2010 convention. After reviewing pertinent constitutional and bylaw passages, he requested the following opinions.

Question 1: May a district of the Synod adopt a resolution rejecting a resolution of the Synod? What would be the effect of such a resolution?

Opinion: A district may not adopt a resolution rejecting a resolution of the Synod, and any attempt to do so should be considered null and void. This issue has been touched on in a number of prior CCM opinions. In Opinion 00-2212, the CCM addressed the question, “Since a district of the Synod is in reality ‘Synod in that place,’ may a district take official action to file an expression of dissent to a doctrine or practice of the Synod? Members of the Synod have the privilege of doing so, but a district is not a member of the Synod.” The commission responded as follows:

Bylaw 2.39 c [2007 Bylaw section 1.8] describes the procedure for dissent to doctrinal resolutions of the Synod by members of the Synod. Districts are not members of the Synod but are divisions of the Synod, “the geographical boundaries of which are determined by the Synod and altered by it according to circumstances” (Article XII 1). “The Synod establishes districts in order more effectively to achieve its [objectives] and carry on its activities” (Bylaw 4.01 [2007 Bylaw 4.1.1]). As such, districts “as component parts of the Synod are obligated to carry out the resolutions of the Synod” (Bylaw 1.05 f [2007 Bylaw 1.3.6]). An official action by a district, therefore, to file an expression of dissent to the Synod regarding a doctrine taught and practiced by the Synod is out of order and, therefore, null and void.

This issue was most recently and even more directly addressed in CCM Opinion 09-2556, which discussed the nature of districts and indicated, in part:

With respect to districts as agencies of the Synod, districts hold a special relationship to the Synod. As indicated in Bylaw 4.1.1, “The Synod is not merely an advisory body in relation to a district, but establishes districts in order more effectively to achieve its objectives and carry on its activities.” Bylaw 4.1.1.1 is even more explicit as it relates to districts: “A district is the Synod itself performing the functions of the Synod. Resolutions of the Synod are binding upon the districts.” Bylaw 1.3.6 makes clear a district’s responsibility over against resolutions of the Synod: “Districts and circuits as component parts of the Synod are obligated to carry out resolutions of the Synod and are structures for

congregations to review decisions of the Synod, to motivate one another to action, and to shape and suggest new directions. ...”

To the extent that a resolution of the Synod establishes an initiative directing action or participation by an agency of the Synod, whether a district or other agency, it is not the prerogative of the agency to determine whether it wants to participate. Rather, it is required as part of its covenant with the Synod to do so. The refusal of an agency of the Synod, including a district, to follow or accept the resolutions of the Synod is without authority and should be considered null and void.

The Bylaws of the Synod are also the primary bylaws of a district (Bylaw 4.1.1.2), and the district president under Bylaw 3.1.6.2 also has a duty to refuse consideration of an overture in violation of the Bylaws of the Synod:

3.1.6.2 (c) The President of the Synod shall determine if any overture contains information which is materially in error or contains any apparent misrepresentations of truth or of character. He shall not approve inclusion of any such overture in the *Convention Workbook* and shall refer any such overture to the district president who has ecclesiastical supervision over the entity submitting the overture for action. If any unpublished overture or resolution is found to be materially in error or contains a misrepresentation of truth or of character, it shall be withdrawn from convention consideration and referred by the President of the Synod to the appropriate district president for action.

The President of the Synod under Article XI B of the Constitution has the duty to see to it that district presidents refuse to allow attempts to engage in such improper actions and the duty to admonish a failure to do so.

Question 2: May a district of the Synod adopt a resolution redirecting its congregations not to abide by, honor, or uphold a resolution of the Synod? What would be the effect of such a resolution?

Opinion: For the same reasons, a district is prohibited from adopting a resolution directing or even suggesting that congregations should not abide by, honor, or uphold a resolution of the Synod, and any such resolution is null and void.

Question 3: May a district of the Synod adopt a resolution directing its president not to abide by, honor, or uphold a resolution of the Synod? What would be the effect of such a resolution?

Opinion: For the same reasons, a district is prohibited from considering, much less adopting, a resolution directing or even suggesting that a district president or anyone else should not abide by, honor, or uphold a resolution of the Synod, and any such resolution is null and void.

Question 4: Is there a distinction between an overture submitted by a district that seeks to revise or rescind a resolution of the Synod and an overture that rejects a resolution of the Synod? If so, what is the distinction?

Opinion: Yes, there is such a distinction. While a district may not reject a resolution of the Synod, it may always request that the Synod in convention reconsider and review a prior resolution. That right was reaffirmed by the first “resolved” of 2001 Res. 7-22A: “Resolved, That the Synod assembled in convention affirm the right of a district delegate convention to submit overtures, including recommendations to reconsider and review doctrinal resolutions of the Synod, and to make other requests to the Synod assembled in convention.”

Question 5: Would an overture submitted to a convention of the Synod in the form of a resolution adopted by a convention of a district that rejects a resolution previously adopted by a convention of the Synod be considered to be “materially in error” (Bylaw 3.1.6.2 [c])? Would

such an overture be considered to contain a “misrepresentation of truth”? Shall the President of the Synod include such a resolution in the *Convention Workbook*?

Opinion: As discussed above, such a resolution is null and void, and as such it is materially in error under the terms of Bylaw 3.1.6.2 (c) and should not be published. It would therefore be irrelevant whether any of the “whereas” or “resolved” paragraphs of the overture contained material representations of truth and therefore a separate reason to withdraw it from consideration by the convention. Such a district resolution must not be included in the *Convention Workbook* and should be “referred by the President of the Synod to the appropriate district president for action.”

Question 6: May a district of the Synod adopt a resolution that rejects an opinion of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and/or declares such opinion not of binding force on the congregations and pastors of its district? What would be the effect of such a resolution?

Opinion: While a district may challenge a decision of the CCM and submit an overture seeking to overrule a decision of the CCM, as provided by Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c), a decision of the CCM is “binding on the question unless and until it is overruled by a convention of

the Synod.” Such a resolution of a district, rejecting rather than seeking to have a convention of the Synod overrule a decision of the CCM, is improper and out of order and therefore null and void.

Question 7: Would such a [district] resolution [that rejects a CCM opinion], if submitted as an overture to the Synod in convention, be considered to be “materially in error” or a “misrepresentation of truth”? Shall the President of the Synod print such a resolution in the *Convention Workbook*?

Opinion: For the reasons discussed above, such a resolution would also be null and void and, as such, is materially in error under the terms of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c), should not be published in the *Convention Workbook*, and should be “referred by the President of the Synod to the appropriate district president for action” (Bylaw 3.1.6.2 [c]). It would therefore be irrelevant whether any of the “whereas” or “resolved” paragraphs of the overture would also be considered a material misrepresentation of truth and therefore a separate reason to withdraw the overture from consideration by the convention.

Adopted February 26–28, 2010

APPENDIX II
THEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTS
COMMISSION ON THEOLOGY AND CHURCH RELATIONS

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Defending Pre-Implantation Human Life in the Public Square:

A Response to Wyoming District Concerns about the CTCR report

Christian Faith and Human Beginnings

At its 2006 convention the Wyoming District adopted Resolution 3-09 “To Emphatically State the Biblical Position Regarding the Unborn.” In March of 2007 this resolution was submitted by the Wyoming District to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations [CTCR] “for a response.” The resolution adopted by the Wyoming District includes the following “resolveds” pertaining to the CTCR’s 2005 report *Christian Faith and Human Beginnings* [CFHB]:

RESOLVED, That the Wyoming District thank the CTCR for their work in the past on issues relating to the sanctity of human life, and for their work in this [2005] document, which uses scripture to remind us that all life begins at conception; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Wyoming District caution its pastors against an injudicious use of this document, and urge the pastors and congregations of the district to use caution when referring to this report, and express its regret that this document is not clear enough to receive an unqualified commendation for use by pastors and congregations; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Wyoming District formally request that the CTCR revisit its report, “Christian Faith and Human Beginnings” so that this report would make clear and unambiguous the scriptural teaching on this issue that “the living but unborn are persons in the sight of God from the time of conception. . . .”

The CTCR is grateful, first of all, for the seriousness with which the Wyoming District has approached this crucial issue, and for the attention it has given to the CTCR’s 2005 report. The Commission also appreciates the Wyoming District’s recognition that its report CFHB (like its previous reports on beginning-of-life issues) “uses scripture to remind us that all life begins at conception.” As the CTCR states at the very outset of its report: “The Commission will be defending the position that pre-implantation embryos in laboratories are to be accorded protection on the same basis as live-born humans” (7, fn. 4). This position is reaffirmed in the concluding paragraph of the report. “Human embryos,” says the Commission, “beginning with conception, are set on a course of development that leads continuously to an unfolding of a unique human life” (47). “We have found no moment in this unfolding where a convincing line can be drawn between embryonic life that need not be protected and embryonic or fetal or live-born life that should be protected” (47). The report closes with the affirmation that “the Bible speaks of God’s love and care for an individual from even before the earliest physical moment. We therefore apply the principle ‘Always to care, never to kill’ to pre-implantation human life” (47).

From the Commission’s perspective, in fact, clear and unambiguous statements such as these stand at odds with the Wyoming District’s expression of “regret that this document is not clear enough to receive an unqualified commendation for use by pastors and congregations” and its view that this report needs to be “revisited” in order to “make clear and unambiguous the scriptural teaching on this issue that ‘the living but unborn are persons in the sight of God from the time of conception.’”

At the same time, the Commission recognizes the fact that certain aspects of this report might be misread and/or misunderstood,

including such critical issues as the specific focus of this report and its usage (within the context of this specific focus) of the “burden of proof” argumentation. Misunderstandings of this nature seem especially evident in the “whereases” of the Wyoming District resolution, which identify specific issues underlying the concerns expressed in the final resolveds. In the response that follows, therefore, the Commission seeks to address these issues, which fall into two major categories: 1) concerns about terminology and 2) concerns about argumentation.

Before addressing these specific concerns, a preliminary word may be helpful. At the very beginning of its report on CFHB, the CTCR references its work in previous reports on human beginnings and then states that “in the present report . . . our focus is on Christian participation in *public debate* concerning the use of embryos for medical research and therapy” (4, fn. 1; emphasis added). This is a critical point for understanding the approach taken by the Commission in its 2005 report. In The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, we regard the Holy Scriptures as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm for faith and practice. Because of our faith in God’s Word, which is rooted in our faith in Christ, we are compelled to serve our neighbors in both church and society. This includes speaking and acting in the public square in ways that promote the common good and demonstrate care and compassion for all human life.

Effective Christian activity in the public square, furthermore, involves making use of arguments and strategies that are grounded not simply in “what the Bible says” but in human reason and natural law (which are accessible to all people). The Commission is convinced that what it says in CFHB regarding the value of human life at every stage of its development is completely consistent with what it has said in its previous reports regarding this issue. What is new in this report is the “focus on Christian participation in *public debate* concerning the use of embryos for medical research and therapy” (4, fn. 7; emphasis added). Christian participation in *public debate* requires the use of language, argumentation, and strategies that—according to Scripture itself—are most appropriate and effective for interaction in the secular realm, where God’s Word is not regarded as authoritative. The response offered below seeks to “flesh out” these presuppositions and distinctions in ways that help to make more clear the nature and purpose of the Commission’s approach in this report.

Concerns about Terminology

In its fourth whereas, the Wyoming District resolution says: “Previously the CTCR has been unequivocal in its statement that life begins at conception, but in this document speaks of . . . ‘development that leads to . . . a human life.’”

Unfortunately, the partial quotation of this sentence results in the impression that it is saying just the opposite of what it actually says. The entire sentence (quoted earlier in this response) reads as follows: “Human embryos, *beginning with conception*, are set on a course of development that leads *continuously* to an *unfolding* of a unique human life” (47; emphasis added). The *continuous unfolding* of a *unique human life*, asserts the Commission, *begins* with embryonic human life at the moment of conception. As the CTCR says in its 1984 report *Abortion in Perspective*: “Human beings come into existence and then gradually *unfold* what they already are” (28, fn. 17; emphasis added). There is absolutely no “equivocation” in the statement on page 47 of CFHB or in the report as a whole regarding the fact that human life begins at conception. The very sub-title of the Commission’s report is “Christian Care and Pre-Implantation *Human Life*” (emphasis added), and the Commission’s unyielding position throughout this report is that human life

at every stage of its development, beginning with conception, is human life that is created and valued by God and that deserves our protection and care.

In its sixth whereas, the Wyoming District resolution criticizes the CTCR for “refraining from the use of the word ‘person’ when referring to the unborn, although the synod itself used the term to describe the unborn in 1979, and reaffirmed its use in 1981.”

As is explained in a lengthy footnote (#4) on page 7 of *CFHB*, the Commission itself has no objection to the use of the word “person” to refer to the unborn. It is well aware that the Synod itself has used this language in official resolutions adopted in 1979 and 1981. Already in its 1984 report *Abortion in Perspective*, however, the Commission cautioned against relying too heavily on the language of “personhood” in defending the value of all human life in the public square because of the way this language is often used (and understood) in the public square. Unfortunately, notes the Commission, in recent years the term “person” has been muddled by political and philosophical distinctions and debates that often seek to *undermine* the position that all human life is worthy of protection. Rather than being drawn into these futile debates, says the Commission, it may be advisable to use language that is virtually incapable of being misunderstood or qualified—e.g., language like the term “human being.” As the Commission says in footnote 4 (quoting from its 1984 report):

Whatever we may say of personal qualities, human beings do not come into existence part by part as do the artifacts we make. Human beings come into existence and then gradually unfold what they already are. It is human beings who are made in God’s image and valued by God—and whose inherent dignity ought also to be valued by us.

Thus in this as in previous reports (which are strongly commended in the Wyoming District’s resolution), the Commission consistently uses the term “human being” to refer to embryonic human life. As it explains at length in *Abortion in Perspective* and *Christian Faith and Human Beginnings*, it does this not to avoid clarity but precisely “for the sake of clarity and to avoid unnecessary and futile disputes.”

In its fifth whereas, the Wyoming District resolution faults the CTCR for suggesting “that we should not use the term ‘murder’ regarding the killing of those persons that have not been implanted in their mother’s womb, even though the synod used that term repeatedly regarding the killing of the unborn.”

It should be noted first of all that synodical resolutions that use the term “murder” with reference to the issue of abortion (e.g., 1979 Res. 3-02A; 2001 Res. 6-02A) consistently do so in the context of citing or quoting the fifth commandment, “You shall not murder.” The CTCR nowhere asserts or suggests that the fifth commandment does not apply to the killing of human embryos or that it is inappropriate to cite this commandment in synodical resolutions that set forth our church body’s official position on this issue. In footnote 68 on page 42 of its 2005 report, however, the CTCR states that “the goal of *this report*”—with its deliberate “focus on Christian participation in *public debate* concerning the use of embryos for medical research and therapy” (4, fn. 1; emphasis added)—is to “make use of an argument that will not immediately divide the readers into those who already agree with us and those who just knew we would not understand them. *In this light*,” says the Commission, “we advise against the use of the language of ‘murder’ in regard to the discarding of pre-implantation human life.”

In the Commission’s view, arguments by Christians in the *public square* regarding highly sensitive issues such as stem cell research are not likely to be advanced in persuasive ways through the use of terms like “murder.” The use of such terms in the public

square, in fact, may well result in our arguments not being heard or being taken seriously at all. Furthermore—as was noted above and will be discussed further below—arguments by Christians in the public square regarding such issues are not likely to be effective if they rely solely or exclusively on Bible passages like the fifth commandment, even though Christians themselves must remain cognizant of the normative authority of Scripture alone for the church’s doctrine and life.

Concerns about Argumentation

Perhaps the most serious concerns expressed in the Wyoming District’s resolution have to do with the argumentation used in the CTCR’s report—particularly the “burden of proof” argumentation. The final three whereas of the resolution set forth this concern in very strong terms:

WHEREAS, The CTCR suggests a burden of proof argument to protect the unborn, implying that, should new and more convincing arguments be developed, then the synod could reject the position that all life, from the moment of conception, should be befriended, and is worthy of our help and compassion; and

WHEREAS, The burden of proof approach is a significant departure from the historic practice of the church, which is to clearly proclaim God’s Word, in keeping with our Lord, who “taught as one with authority, and not as the scribes and the Pharisees”; and

WHEREAS, The recent report by the CTCR although not blatantly contradicting the firmly established testimony of Scripture, could be misconstrued as not speaking clearly enough to this issue; therefore be it [“Resolved” as quoted above].

The Commission is puzzled and troubled by the suggestion that the argumentation employed in its 2005 report implies that “the synod could reject the position that all life, from the moment of conception ... is worthy of our help and compassion.” It also disagrees with the suggestion that its use of certain arguments based on human reason is “a significant departure from the historic practice of the church” or is incompatible with the clear proclamation of God’s Word.

Such conclusions, the Commission believes, stem from one or more of a number of apparent misunderstandings, including a misunderstanding of the stated focus and purpose of this report, a misunderstanding of the role played by the “burden of proof” argumentation within the context of this specific purpose, and/or a misunderstanding of the historic Lutheran approach to addressing issues in the public square on the basis of the principles underlying the Scriptural distinction between the two realms. It is the Commission’s hope that the following discussion will help to alleviate these misunderstandings and the faulty conclusions stemming from them.

As was stated earlier, the Commission notes at the beginning of its report that “our focus is on Christian participation in *public debate* concerning the use of embryos for medical research and therapy” (fn. 1, page 4; emphasis added). From a historic Lutheran perspective, Christian participation in *public debate* regarding moral and social issues is by no means limited to proclaiming “what the Bible says” about these issues. In fact, attempting to affect or effect public policy solely on the basis of “what the Bible says” runs directly contrary to the historic Lutheran understanding of the proper (and Biblical) distinction between the two kingdoms and the two kinds of righteousness. As the CTCR says in its 1995 report *Render Unto Caesar ... and Unto God: A Lutheran View of Church and State*:

The two-kingdom distinction of Lutheran confessional theology requires that the basic *principles* of the church’s public message be carefully discerned. Is the message concerned with spiritual righteousness or

with civil righteousness? Is it focused on sin and grace or on the neighbor and social justice? Is it grounded in the revelation of God in Christ or in human reason and natural law as well? As we have already seen, *for Lutherans the normative principles of the civil order are reason and justice*. When speaking to different audiences, the church's message must be sensitive to the biblical principles that are most appropriate to each audience. (64; second emphasis added)

When addressing issues of social justice and human care in the secular public square, the "right question" to ask is not simply "What does the Bible say?" Rather (as the CTCR's 2005 report puts it) we must also ask how we can "find ways of articulating our pro-life position that can command attention from persons who may have thought that they could easily dismiss our pro-life reasoning" (CFHB 9). One reason such people often "easily dismiss" pro-life reasoning is precisely because they question the premise—understandably so—that "what the Bible says" should necessarily serve as the basis for public policy in our country, the United States of America.

For this reason, the attempt to find persuasive arguments that are not explicitly grounded "in the revelation of God in Christ" but in "human reason and natural law" is by no means an illegitimate task or venture which is somehow at odds with the clear proclamation of God's Word. On the contrary, it is a critically necessary task in which Christians must be engaged "in the context of the political realities of our pluralized society" (CFHB 9). Confessional Lutherans, equipped with the biblical and historic distinctions noted above, are wonderfully poised and positioned to engage in this effort. But it requires some "hard thinking" about how to communicate foundational ethical truths and principles in a way that can be meaningful and persuasive even in contexts where (according to God's own design) the Bible is not recognized as "the normative authority" for determining what is right and wrong.

As the CTCR points out in *Render Unto Caesar*:

For Luther, the normative principles of the church are faith and love, while the normative principles of the civil order are reason and justice. With regard to spiritual righteousness, Luther had a well-known contempt for human reason. When it came to civil righteousness, "Luther was quite confident that human rationality could and often would find a good set of positive laws and upright customs to serve a society—no matter how many or few Christians lived in it." Luther was confident that natural law would provide human reason all that it required for social justice. Social justice, therefore, must be grounded in the Law and human reason rather than in the Gospel and faith. (35–36)

The foregoing discussion provides the context for understanding the nature and purpose of the "burden of proof" argumentation used in the Commission's report. "Social justice," says the CTCR in *Render Unto Caesar*, "must be grounded in the Law and human reason *rather than* in the Gospel and faith" (36). Arguments about the worth and value of human life in the secular public square are most appropriately and effectively made not on the basis of "faith in God and His Word" but on the basis of rational arguments that are accessible to all human beings, whether or not they have faith in Jesus Christ.

The Commission makes use of "burden of proof" argumentation in CFHB in order to *expose* the fact that (whether they realize it or not) those who *advocate* the killing of embryos for research are using this same line of human reasoning. As the Commission says on page 30:

Without always realizing or acknowledging their strategy, people advocating the use of embryos for research tend to be making an implicit "burden of proof" argument. They claim that because the health and well-being of people afflicted by disease and injury might be improved through embryonic stem-cell research, a heavy burden of proof lies upon those who would stop the research. Their hope is that by casting

some doubt upon the pro-life arguments, they can claim that the burden has not been met and therefore the research can go forward.

The Commission's report, however, argues on the basis of human reason (on which those who advocate embryonic stem cell research would stand) that "destruction of human life cannot be justified by pointing to promising outcomes for other humans" (47). To argue that it is morally justifiable to *kill* some human beings in order to ("possibly") *save* other human beings is actually the crassest form of "the end justifies the means" argumentation. The Commission seeks to expose such fallacious reasoning by "turning the tables" on those who demand "proof" from those who seek to *protect* human life.

As a matter of fact, says the Commission, no "proof" has been offered by science or philosophy—and certainly not by Scripture!—to overturn the presupposition that "human embryos, beginning with conception, are set on a course of development that leads continuously to an unfolding of a unique human life" (47). Therefore, unless and until proof can be offered to the contrary, human reason itself tells us that all human beings, from the earliest moment of their existence at conception, merit our care and protection "on the same basis" as live born humans (7, fn. 4). Thus, while the "burden of proof" argument does, to some extent, "cut both ways," it certainly does not cut both ways *equally*. There is a *greater* burden on those who advocate *killing* human life (even for allegedly "humanitarian" purposes) than on those who advocate the *protection* of human life (even at the risk of "impeding" potentially beneficial research).

As Christians, of course, we know and believe that "God's Word makes plain that God cares for human lives from beginning to end" (42) and that "Scripture offers no guidelines for exempting certain lives from God's interest and care" (34). Scientific research and proposals in this area are changing constantly (for better and/or for worse); God's Word does not change. Obviously and unfortunately, however, not everyone in the public square recognizes the clarity or authority of God's Word regarding this issue. This is the point the Commission seeks to make in quoting Oliver O'Donovan's comment that IVF and cloning technologies puzzle us by "presenting to us members of our own species who are doubtfully proper objects of compassion and love" (35). Neither O'Donovan (a strong, Roman Catholic defender of the value of all human life) nor the Commission are suggesting that people *ought* to have doubts about showing compassion and love to human beings from the moment of conception. But, obviously, such doubts do exist in the minds of many people today. Even some Bible-believing Christians (and Lutherans) may be "taken in" by arguments about the "possible benefits" of embryonic stem-cell research. The Commission's intention is that by exposing the fallacious reasoning of those who support the killing of embryos for so-called "therapeutic" purposes, Christians may be better equipped to participate "in *public debate* concerning the use of embryos for medical research and therapy" (4, fn. 1)—and in so doing, to undermine what many in our society regard as the strongest argument used by those who support embryonic stem cell research.

It is not true, therefore, that the Commission's use of this argumentation implies that "should new and more convincing arguments be developed, then the synod could reject the biblical position that all life, from the moment of conception ... is worthy of our help and compassion" (eighth whereas). The Commission explicitly states that "God's Word makes plain that God cares for human lives from beginning to end" and that "Scripture offers no guidelines for exempting lives from God's interest and care" (42). Nor is it true that "the CTCR suggests that ... at some point, embryonic stem cell research might be appropriate should other

avenues of research not yield results.” On the contrary, the Commission argues that “destruction of human life *cannot* be justified by pointing to promising outcomes for other humans” (45). At the same time, the Commission recognizes that it is not speaking in this document *only* to Christians who share its presuppositions—based on God’s Word alone—about the value of all human life. Even those who view embryonic stem cell research as an area of “moral uncertainty” must acknowledge that such research is “by no means the final hope for helping those who are suffering” (45).

We urge scientists, policy makers, potential embryo donors, and politicians to examine with more care whether the best course in the face of moral uncertainty is to press full steam ahead with morally problematic research. This question should trouble not only Christians but also anyone who tries to think clearly about human life. The practical course at the current time should be to shift resources away from this morally troublesome research to other promising lines of research [e.g., recent research into obtaining stem cells from skin cells for therapeutic use] in the pursuit of healing for suffering humans. (45)

Of course, the Commission’s report also has as one of its purposes to help Christians (both within and outside the LCMS) who have questions about the range or relevance of specific Bible passages that speak of God’s care for human life (see, e.g., the section “The Relevance of Specific Bible Passages” on pages 31–34). Because the primary focus of the Commission’s report is on “Christian participation in *public* debate” regarding these issues, it is not intended to be a thorough biblical analysis of beginning-of-life issues. In the very first footnote of its 2005 report (page 4), the Commission points to its previous reports on *Christians and Procreative Choices* (1996) and *What Child Is This? Marriage, Family and Human Cloning* (2002) as providing further discussion of the Biblical principles that are assumed—but not reiterated in detail—in its 2005 report. In footnote 2 (page 5), the CTCR refers to previous reports on *Christian Care at Life’s End* (1993), *Guidelines for Crucial Issues in Christian Citizenship* (1968), *Report on Capital Punishment* (1976), and *Render Unto Caesar... and Unto God: A Lutheran View of Church and State* (1995) that also set forth basic scriptural principles that are relevant to this issue.

The discussion of Scripture passages in the 2005 report is focused specifically on those texts that are most often used by Christians to defend the value of human life in its earliest forms (e.g., Jer. 1:5; Psalm 139: 13–16; Job 10:8–12). The Commission explic-

itly acknowledges here—as it did in its 1984 report on *Abortion in Perspective*—that these passages “do not directly speak about every fertilized egg.” Its goal, however, is not to “cast doubt” on these passages or their relevance to this issue, but to “show how to extend the range of reference” and to “let Scripture guide us into more general insights into God’s care for human life” (32–33).

It bears repeating that the Commission’s conclusion in this regard is unambiguous: “God’s Word makes plain that God cares for human lives from beginning to end” (42). “Human embryos,” says the Commission, “beginning with conception, are set on a course of human development that leads continuously to an unfolding of a unique human life” (47). “Scripture offers no guidelines for exempting certain lives from God’s interest and care” (34). The CTCR acknowledges that this truth may not be patently “obvious” to everyone. It will certainly not be obvious to those who do not accept the Word of God as authoritative. And it may not even be obvious to all Christians—hence the need for arguments that show more clearly *how* the Word of God speaks to this issue, and that can respond to the easy dismissal of these passages and their relevance to the sanctity of all human life by those who argue in favor of embryonic stem cell research.

In closing, the Commission expresses its gratitude to the Wyoming District for taking the time to read and study the Commission’s report and to share its thoughts and concerns regarding this extremely important and sensitive issue. It is the Commission’s hope and prayer that this response will be helpful in clarifying the nature and purpose of this report and its multi-faceted approach to defending the value of every single human life as God’s creation from the earliest moment of its existence and the need to care for and protect human life at every stage of its development. The Commission is convinced that this report is one that should be commended for use by pastors and congregations of our Synod for engaging this issue in the public square.

Adopted Unanimously by the CTCR
December 4, 2007

CTCR Response to 2007 Res. 3-05 regarding “Serial Prayer”

The Synod at its 2007 convention adopted Res. 3-05 “To Provide Further Discussion and Guidance on the Matter of Serial Prayer.” This resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, In 2004 Res. 3-06A, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod commended for study *Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events*, a report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR), “to help pastors, teachers, and church workers make decisions about participation in civic events” (2004 *Proceedings*, p. 131); and

WHEREAS, Congregations of the Synod have requested further clarification regarding serial prayer; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention assign to the CTCR the task of providing further guidance for participation in civic events that includes the offering of serial prayer.

At its Dec. 11–13, 2008 meeting, the CTCR adopted the following response to this request by the Synod:

The Commission has carefully re-examined the discussion of “‘serial’ or ‘seriatim’ prayers” on pages 19–20 of its report *Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events* (April 2004).^{*} Although some “further clarification” (cf. 2007 Res. 3-05) may be possible in terms of applying the “conditions” discussed in this section of the report to various events and situations that have arisen in the past, it is impossible to provide specific guidance for any and all events that may arise in the future. We simply cannot anticipate the precise nature, purpose, or context of every occasion that may arise in the future or set forth specific parameters surrounding participation in these types of events beyond what is already stated in the 2004 report. Ultimately, this is a matter that requires the exercise of pastoral judgment at a particular time and place. When presented with such a situation, a pastor is, of course, urged to consult with other pastors and advisors for counsel with regard to how to respond to such requests within his particular context.

Adopted Unanimously by the CTCR
Dec. 13, 2008

^{*}The text of the CTCR’s discussion of serial prayer on pages 19–20 of its 2004 report reads as follows:

The members of the Commission disagree about the issue of so-called “serial” or “seriatim” prayers involving representatives of different religious (Christian and/or non-Christian) groups or churches. Some members of the Commission believe that under no circumstances is it permissible for LCMS pastors to participate in any type of an event in which various Christian and/or non-Christian leaders “take turns” offering prayers, holding that such an activity by its very nature constitutes “joint prayer and worship.” The majority of the Commission believes that in some instances it may be possible and permissible for LCMS pastors to participate in such an event as long as certain conditions are met (e.g., when the purpose of the event in question is clearly and predominately civic in nature, and when it is conducted in such a way that does not correspond to the LCMS understanding of a “service”; when no restrictions are placed on the content of the Christian witness that may be given by the LCMS pastor; when a sincere effort is made by those involved to make it clear that those participating do not all share the same religious views concerning such issues as the nature of God, the way of salvation, and the nature of religious truth itself).

It should be noted in this connection that all members of the Commission agree that, understood from a Christian perspective, prayer is always in some sense “an expression of worship.” The question is whether it is possible under any circumstances for an LCMS pastor to offer a prayer in a public setting involving a variety of religious leaders without engaging in “joint prayer and worship.” Some believe that this is not possible. The majority believes that it may be possible depending on such factors as how the event is arranged and understood and how the situation is handled by the pastor in question, in order to make it clear that “joint prayer and worship” is not being conducted or condoned.

Membership in Certain Fraternal Organizations

A Pastoral Approach

The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) has prepared this document as a basic initial resource for pastors, church workers, and lay leaders as they inform congregational members about questions and concerns that may arise regarding membership in certain fraternal organizations. In previous evaluations of specific fraternal societies the CTCR has noted with appreciation that these organizations are typically “engaged in many commendable humanitarian efforts . . . and social opportunities that contribute significantly to the common good of our society.”¹ This word of commendation stands. The primary concern of this document, however, has to do with participation in lodge rituals and ceremonies that involve a Christian in a contradictory confession regarding central truths of the Christian faith: the doctrines of the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, and/or justification by grace through faith in Christ alone. Such a contradictory or inadequate confession occurs most specifically when a generic Supreme Being is invoked in religious rituals apart from any reference to Jesus Christ and/or when the saving work of Christ is denied by teachings that assert or imply that living a moral life together with lodge membership assures an eternal reward.²

The Historic Position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

“[I]t is taught that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God through our merit, work, or satisfactions, but that we receive the forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God out of grace for Christ’s sake through faith when we believe that Christ has suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us” (AC IV, 1–2). With these words the Augsburg Confession expresses what the Apology of the Augsburg Confession identifies as “the most important topic of Christian teaching” (Ap IV, 2). In the Lutheran church the doctrine of justification by grace through faith has been identified historically as the doctrine upon which the church stands or falls.

The Ecumenical Creeds emphasize that a right confession of the doctrine of the Trinity is equally essential to the Christian faith. “Whoever wants to be saved must, above all, hold the catholic faith . . . that we worship one God in trinity and the Trinity in unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance” (Athanasian Creed, 1, 4).³

In light of the centrality of the doctrines of the Trinity and the work of Christ—as well as other theological and pastoral concerns—The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has historically taken a strong position in opposition to pastors and congregations allowing congregational members to have “membership or participation in any organization that in its objectives, ceremonies, or practices is inimical to the Gospel of Jesus Christ or the faith and life of the Christian Church.”⁴ In practice this position has been applied with reference to lodges and other fraternal organizations which in their initiation rituals, prayers, and other religious ceremonies (e.g., funeral services) require a Christian—by participation in such ceremonies—publicly to compromise his or her confession of faith in the Triune God and in the doctrine of salvation only through faith in Christ. Accordingly, upon the dissolution of the LCMS’s Commission on Organizations at the LCMS’s 2001 convention,⁵ the bylaws of the Synod charge the CTCR with

assisting pastors and congregations of the Synod in implementing the above stated position.

Bylaw 3.9.6.3.1 of the LCMS's official *Handbook* (2007) provides the following guidelines:

- It is the solemn, sacred, and God-given duty of every pastor properly to instruct his people concerning the sinfulness of all organizations that
- (1) explicitly or implicitly deny the Holy Trinity, the deity of Christ, or the vicarious atonement;
 - (2) promise spiritual light apart from that revealed in the Holy Scripture;
 - (3) attach spiritual or eternal rewards to the works or virtues of men; and/or
 - (4) embrace ideologies or principles that clearly violate an express teaching of the Holy Scriptures concerning the relationships of men to one another.⁶

How seriously the LCMS considers this matter is especially clear from guidelines for ministering to prospective members who are already members of such organizations. "The responsibility of diligent and conscientious pastoral care requires that pastors of the Synod do not administer Holy Communion to nor admit to communicant membership members of such organizations who, *after thorough instruction*, refuse to sever their affiliation with such organizations." Direction is given that ongoing efforts should be made to bring individuals to recognize "their *contradictory confessions*."⁷

Recognition is given to exceptional cases which may permit the pastor to administer Holy Communion to a person who is outwardly connected with a lodge or other fraternal organization. However, in such cases the individual concerned should be under the pastoral care of the congregation and should be willing to renounce the anti-Christian character of the organization's rituals and ceremonies. The final paragraph of the bylaw noted above includes the following statement: "The Synod instructs its officials to exercise vigilant care and urges all pastors and congregations to carry out these provisions and faithfully *eradicate all compromise or negation of the Gospel* through members' identification with objectionable organizations."⁸

Confessing Christ Alone⁹

The preceding summary of the LCMS's historic position regarding membership in certain lodge and fraternal organizations shows that the Synod's central concern has been that pastors and congregations (and their individual members) give a clear, truthful, and uncompromising witness, both publicly and privately, "to the one and only Gospel set forth in Holy Scriptures. . . ."¹⁰ By holding membership in such organizations a Christian is not to give a public witness that contradicts what he or she otherwise publicly confesses by virtue of holding membership in a Christian congregation—namely biblical truth concerning the Holy Trinity, the person and work of Christ, and eternal salvation only by God's grace received through faith in Christ alone.

Holy Scripture clearly teaches that God's love and His gift of eternal salvation is for all people. All people have sinned. That sin has separated sinners from a holy God (Is 59:2). Man's sinful human nature places him under God's condemnation (Rom 5:16–18), and the sinful transgression of God's Law brings death (Rom 6:23). What hope can a sinner have of being saved from the deserved wrath and punishment of God? God planned the salvation of sinners from eternity (Eph 1:3–10). He began working out His plan by choosing Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob to bring His blessing of salvation to all peoples (Gen 12:1–3). God continued working out His plan through one particular nation, His chosen people Israel. Yet, His salvation would be brought "to the

ends of the earth" (Is 49:6). God brought His saving plan to fulfillment when He "so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16). While it is certainly true that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23), it is also true that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim 1:15). The Christian confesses by virtue of membership in a Christian congregation that he or she believes that there is only "one God and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all" (1 Tim 2:5). Further, a Christian confesses that "in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor 5:19). Christ "is the propitiation . . . for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn 2:2).

God's plan of salvation is universal. Indeed, Christ "died for all" (2 Cor 5:15). It is equally true that "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name [other than the name of Jesus] under heaven, given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). God's work and gift of eternal salvation is universally *inclusive*; it is for all people. Yet, the gift of salvation is also *exclusive*; it is given *only* through faith in Christ. In response to the Philippian jailer's question "What must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas responded, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:30–31). Jesus made clear the exclusive nature of God's work of salvation when He said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (Jn 14:6).

Christians who confess Christ alone as the only hope of eternal salvation are compelled by His love to "no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised" (2 Cor 5:15). Such living for Christ means that Christians in all they do will seek first the kingdom of God (Mt 6:33). They will strive in thought, word, and deed in every area of life, both private and public, to bring honor to the triune God (Jn 5:23). To be sure, the individual Christian will fall short in such striving. Perfection does not exist on this side of heaven. However, that reality does not give the disciple of Christ permission knowingly and willingly to engage in actions and associations that will, in one way or another, compromise his or her witness to and for Christ. Clearly, Jesus expects His followers to deny themselves and lose their life for Him (Mt 16:24). The allegiance that Jesus requires, and the serious consequence for failing to give that allegiance, are summed up in Jesus' words: "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 10:32–33).

Membership in Masonic Lodge Organizations

When Christians join in the public worship assembly of the congregation in which they hold membership, they are in effect saying by such participation, with St. Paul: "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Rom 1:16). It would be a compromise of this public witness to their faith given in corporate worship for them publicly to associate with an organization that through its religious rituals, ceremonies, and prayers "waters down" or obscures this Gospel. By holding membership in such an organization a Christian may, in effect, be saying, "I am ashamed of the gospel."

The most "religious" fraternal organization when it comes to rituals and ceremonies that contradict or compromise the Gospel of Christ is the Masonic Lodge and its various related organizations such as the Shriners, the Eastern Star, and Job's Daughters.¹¹ Many in Masonic leadership would contend that while Freemasonry has religious elements—an altar, a sacred book (which varies based on the dominant religion in the culture where the local lodge is

located), a chaplain, prayers—Freemasonry is not a religion. This contention, however, has been challenged from within the ranks of Freemasonry itself. We may cite, for example, a book titled *Light Invisible* authored by an adherent of Freemasonry who identifies himself only by the title Vindex. *Light Invisible* is a response to the book *Darkness Visible* written by a Rev. Walton Hannah, an Anglican clergyman who was attempting to alert the Church of England to the contradictions between the practice of Freemasonry and the teachings of the Christian church. Vindex writes this in response to Hannah's description of the Christian faith: "Christianity, [Hannah] says again and again, is an exclusive faith. Christ opened the only gate of heaven to man below. ... In His name only is salvation to be found. ... If true religion is thus to be narrowed down to salvation in no other name under heaven, ... then any such 'Christian' must indeed be straining his conscience to the breaking-point by accepting initiation into the broader and deeper mysteries of Freemasonry. I for one can never understand how anyone who takes an exclusive view of Christ as the only complete revelation of God's truth can become a Freemason without suffering from spiritual schizophrenia."¹²

The writings of Henry W. Coil, a 33rd-degree Mason, have brought him recognition as an accepted authority on Freemasonry by many state Grand Lodges. In his book *A Comprehensive View of Freemasonry*, Mr. Coil addresses the question "What is Freemasonry?" He writes: "Freemasonry, in its broadest and most comprehensive sense, is a system of morality and social ethics, a primitive religion and a philosophy of life, ... incorporating a broad humanitarianism, ...; it is a religion without a creed, being of no sect but finding truth in all; ... it is moderate, universal, and so liberal as to permit each individual to form and express his own opinion, even as to what Freemasonry is or ought to be, and invites him to improve it if he can."¹³ In other words, according to Mr. Coil Freemasonry is a universalistic religion that combines whatever "truth" it finds in the various sects.

In his *Masonic Encyclopedia*, under the topic "Religion," Mr. Coil further writes: "Freemasonry certainly requires a belief in the existence of, and man's dependence upon, a Supreme Being to whom he is responsible. What can a church add to that, except to bring into one fellowship those who have like feelings? ... [T]he difference between a lodge and a church is one of degree and not of kind."¹⁴

The unchristian character of Masonic Lodge teachings is shown by the following selected quotations from various rituals and services. In its rituals Freemasonry replaces the biblical teaching of salvation by grace through faith in Christ with a salvation by works. In the very first degree of the Masonic Order (the Entered Apprentice) the symbol of the lambskin is used to impress upon the candidate that: "In all ages the lamb has been deemed an emblem of innocence; he, therefore, who wears the Lambskin as a badge of Masonry is continually reminded of that *purity of life and conduct which is necessary to obtain admittance into the Celestial Lodge above*, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides."¹⁵ The rituals for the second and third degrees (a person is considered a full Mason upon completing the 3rd degree) include similar references to purity of heart and rectitude of conduct necessary to gain the approval of the Grand Architect of the Universe and thus enter into heaven. The ritual of the Masonic funeral service reminds the family members of the deceased that by means of the white apron given to a Mason "he was constantly reminded of that purity of life and that rectitude of conduct so necessary to his gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge Above."¹⁶ Such religious teaching is contrary to the Holy Scriptures which clearly teach, "by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it

is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one can boast" (Eph 2:8–9). Works (rectitude of conduct) are certainly the necessary evidence of faith. The apostle James writes, "... I will show you my faith by what I do" (James 2:18). But works are not the basis for a person's admission into heaven (cf. Rom 3:28).

Masonry denies the doctrine of the Trinity revealed in Holy Scripture by the names it uses to address God, and by its failure to refer in any way to the person and divine nature of Christ. As a result, the religious rituals of Freemasonry fall under the judgment of Jesus when He says: "Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him" (Jn 5:23). Since it is Freemasonry's intent to allow each person to have his own opinions in religious matters, it does not permit its rituals to teach any specific doctrine regarding the nature of God. Henry Coil writes: "Men have to decide whether they want a God like the ancient Hebrew *Jahweh*, a partisan, tribal God, ... or a boundless, eternal, universal, undenominational, and international, Divine Spirit, so vastly removed from the speck called *man*, that He cannot be known, named, or approached."¹⁷ The god of Masonry is a generic Supreme Being identified by such names as the Almighty Father of the Universe, the Grand Architect of the Universe, etc. Masonry's god is a universalistic "God" that can be accepted by all applicants for membership so as not to offend those who would reject the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

With respect to the person and work of Jesus Christ, Freemasonry must be faulted principally for its silence or lack of reference to Christ, rather than for any direct statements about Him. All prayers directed to the Grand Architect of the Universe are offered apart from any reference to Jesus Christ. For the Christian, of course, such practice contradicts the Scripture's teaching concerning prayer. Jesus taught: "... whatever you ask of the Father *in my name*, he will give it to you" (Jn 16:23). In addition, whenever Scripture passages are quoted in Masonic rituals, any references in the text of Scripture to Jesus Christ are intentionally omitted. The reason for such omission is that Freemasonry does not want to give offense to those who participate in those rituals who may not be of a Christian persuasion. Moreover, any rituals that imply or directly affirm a salvation by human conduct deny Christ's complete and perfect work of atonement through which sinners are reconciled to a holy God.

Freemasonry as a general principle prohibits its members from bearing witness to Christ in lodge meetings. When discussing the 10th degree of the Scottish Rite, Albert Pike, a prolific Masonic author, writes: "The Mason's creed goes further than that. No man, it holds, has any right in any way to interfere with the religious belief of another."¹⁸ In other words, in the midst of a lodge's religious rituals a Christian would not be allowed to bear witness to Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior lest such witness offend a fellow lodge member. By accepting a required silence regarding such witness, he is, in effect, denying Jesus before others.

Perhaps the denial of Christ in Masonry can best be summed up in the following statement from the Maundy Thursday ritual of the Rose Croix (18th degree) of the Scottish Rite: "We meet this day to commemorate the death (of Jesus), not as inspired or divine, for this is not for us to decide."¹⁹ A Christian who subscribes to Lutheran confessional teaching believes that the Heavenly Father's gift of eternal life in heaven can only be received through faith created by the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation completed by God's Son, Jesus Christ.

On the basis of considerations such as the above, it is the official position of the LCMS that a member of an LCMS congregation should not hold membership in any organization whose rituals

teach a salvation by works, invoke a generic Supreme Being, and deliberately omit any reference to the truth regarding the person and work of God's Son.

Membership in Other Fraternal Organizations

Other lodge-based organizations such as the Odd Fellows and the “animal lodges”—Moose, Elks, Eagles—have over the years reduced the use of religious ritual and ceremony. Nevertheless, since such organizations have continued to include statements and practices in their rituals, prayers, and special services that conflict with Christian truth, it would be contradictory for a confessing Christian to hold membership in such organizations. A sampling of such statements and practices, as well as statements made by officials of such organizations, follows.

Odd Fellows. Odd Fellowship is often referred to as “the poor man’s Masonry.” Its ritual contains a rather heavy religious emphasis with frequent and lengthy quotations of Bible passages. The following excerpts are taken from “The Religion of the Ritual” section of the evaluation of the Odd Fellows in the files of the CTCR. “There appears to be little dispute among Odd Fellow authors as to whether the Order is religious or not. At least two books entitled ‘The Religion of Odd Fellowship’ and ‘The Religion of Fraternity’ have been written by members. Both present the basic religious tenets of the ritual: God is the Father of all men, His goodness dictates that He deals in mercy with all, and all men can look forward to eternal life if they have the hope of such life within them. In Odd Fellowship man can find that hope.” “The Order has no concept of sin as it is described in the Bible. . . . Man is described as being in darkness and chains and void of wisdom, yet is it not through faith in Jesus Christ and the knowledge of the Scriptures that man is brought to light and wisdom but rather through learning the lessons of Odd Fellowship.”²⁰

Elks. Among the “animal” lodges, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks in its rituals and ceremonies gives most obvious expression to religious universalism. A chaplain opens a lodge meeting with a prayer addressed to a heavenly Father. However, this prayer, along with all other prayers in the Elks’ ritual and special services, makes no reference to Jesus Christ as the only mediator between a holy God and sinful human beings. In the initiation ceremony a prayer is offered that concludes with the words, “In all our endeavors for good, lead us and all Elks into the green pastures of knowledge, and beside the still waters of peace.” Again, no mention is made of Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep and through whom alone we are led into God’s eternal peace. Wording in the ceremony that announces the death of a brother Elk and in the funeral service ritual implies that the deceased lodge member has “passed into the light which is beyond the valley of the shadow of death” and that devotion to fraternal duties offers the hope that all Elks will one day be united in bonds of eternal peace.²¹

In response to a request for updated information regarding Elks rituals, a letter from the Grand Lodge in the files of the CTCR indicates that since “our Jewish brethren” do not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, and in order to avoid insulting an individual’s sensitivities, the Elks rituals use the generic term Supreme Being when referring to God. That same letter also includes the following statements that identify the universalistic religious position of the Elks based on salvation by works: “Adherence to these Ten Commandments with faith in God assures every individual person a heavenly reward. . . . Elkdom is not a religion. It is an organization of fraternal brothers who must . . . acknowledge a Supreme Being

whom some may call ‘God,’ ‘Exalted Ruler of the Universe,’ . . . or whatever they wish to call Him.”

Moose. The Loyal Order of Moose, in recent years, has significantly reduced the religious tone of its rituals. Yet it continues to include in its prayers and services references to the concept of the reward of an eternal life given to those who have lived a good life here on earth. The prayer opening a meeting is offered to a Supreme Being without any reference to Jesus Christ. That prayer concludes with the words “Remind us each day that *the greatest good we can do* is to serve you through service to our fellow man.” However, the Bible teaches that the greatest “work” (good) that God requires is “that you believe in him [Jesus] whom he [God] has sent” in order to have eternal life (John 6:28–29; 40). In burial services for a member of the Moose lodge, and in the annual memorial service to remember a deceased Moose of the past year, statements are made professing that the “Circle of Moose” broken by death will be renewed and restored in eternity. A burial service prayer includes the following thought: “Give us the strength to bear the burden Your wisdom has placed upon us, and *make us strong to battle with the temptations and struggles of this life*, so, that when our day has come, we too may be gathered into Your presence.” In other words, it is an individual’s success in battling the temptations and struggles of this life that leads to his being gathered into God’s presence. Significantly, no reference is made in this prayer to the One [Jesus Christ] who has defeated Satan’s temptations and conquered the greatest struggle—death itself—for us. The memorial service extols the virtues of the departed brother Moose and then states: “Upon the faces of *the great and good* there shines a light reflected from the golden hills of heaven, which death cannot efface or dim, and *for such* for all eternity there waits a peer’s place upon the Seats of the Mighty.”²²

Eagles. Over the years the Fraternal Order of Eagles has also made some changes in its rituals which have reduced somewhat this lodge’s conflict with Christian teaching. However, the same general concerns remain: prayers are offered apart from any reference to Jesus Christ; a kind of righteousness before God by works is taught in prayers and various ritual statements; the teaching concerning God is one that any person who believes in a Supreme Being could accept. The prayer offered by the chaplain as part of the opening ceremony of the lodge includes the following thought: “If we believe all men equal in Thy eyes, we shall be the more worthy of Thy loving care.” Once again, as with other lodge rituals, a person’s worthiness before God is determined not by the saving work of Christ, but by what one does—in this case believing all men to be equal. The initiation ceremony reminds the candidate for membership that death is the grand equalizer of all men and that “you must go naked to the Throne of God.” Yet the ceremony assures the candidate, “you shall enjoy eternal rest.” This assurance is given without any reference to the Savior of the world who alone clothes us with His righteousness to make such eternal rest possible. The memorial service includes this statement concerning the deceased: “He believed in the existence of a Supreme Being, the Father of us all, . . . and in this belief he died in the hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. . . . For him eternal rest remains.” This statement would imply that merely believing in a Supreme Being brings one a blessed eternity and that such a belief applies to all deceased members of the Eagles’ lodge regardless of their relationship to Christ.²³

Pastoral Approach

As noted at the outset, this document has been prepared as a basic resource that pastors might use as they address issues that exist in their situation regarding membership in fraternal organiza-

tions. The synodical bylaw previously quoted indicates that it is the duty of every pastor to “properly to instruct his people” on the basis of the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions concerning the conflict that membership in lodge and fraternal organizations creates for congregation members. A pastoral approach to this issue should begin with a patient and loving discussion that seeks to inform congregation members or prospective members regarding the implications of lodge membership. Since a Christian has been called “to live for Christ” and to confess the Savior in all actions, associations, and relationships, the integrity the Christian’s confession will be seriously compromised by membership in fraternal organizations adhering to tenets that are contrary to the scriptural Gospel. The pastoral approach urged by the Synod is in keeping with the approach of C. F. W. Walther who advises great patience and pastoral care in dealing with individual cases.²⁴

Those who wish to study in more detail the scriptural and confessional basis for the Synod’s position on membership in fraternal organizations as presented in this document may wish to make use of a study titled “Christians and Their Affiliations” (available from the CTCR’s office). An especially helpful section of this resource provides questions for a Christian to consider when contemplating membership, or evaluating membership currently held, in a fraternal organization. These questions include:

- Does the organization require any kind of religious subscription or make any religious pronouncements? (See 1 Jn 4:1–3; 2 Pet 2:1)
- Does it teach or imply that all religions offer a way of salvation which are equally valid before God? (See Gal 1:6–9; Acts 4:10–12)
- Does it teach or imply that the one true God can be worshipped under any name or concept of God? (See 1 Ki 18:21; Gal 4:8–9)
- Does it promise or imply eternal rewards for observing the virtues or principles extolled by the organization? (See Eph 2:8–9; Rom 8:7–8)
- Does the organization teach or imply some kind of universal salvation for all who believe that there is a God? (See Jn 3:36; James 2:19)
- Does it speak in terms of heaven being an advanced lodge or as an eternal re-assembly of the brotherhood (sisterhood)? (See Jn 17:3; Rom 6:23)

These questions and others are intended to help the Christian determine whether membership in an organization will allow a person “to give witness to the exclusive and distinctive character of the Christian faith.”²⁵ Pastors will likely find it necessary, from their personal study and preparation and in their particular context, to expand such material as they seek faithfully and pastorally to deal with the problems that arise in this area.

In cases involving lodges whose religious rituals play a less prominent role than in Freemasonry, other factors may be involved. Local practices and the degree to which prospective lodge members are exposed to the official teaching and rituals of the lodge may vary. Because these organizations continue to be unwilling to share publicly information about their rituals and practices, it is difficult to determine if changes in their official positions have occurred. In many cases it appears that lodges are less rigid in the enforcement of their membership requirements. Some local lodges may allow what are in effect “social” memberships to be issued to those who do not wish to participate in initiation rites or in other rituals. In addition, in recent times individuals tend to be less conscientious about examining the specific beliefs and practices of organizations they join. Therefore, the pastor should try to meet with those involved in the situation, as well as with local lodge officials, to determine the extent to which the local lodge adheres to the organization’s official standards and practices. In this way the pastor, as

he seeks to provide appropriate counsel, can also determine what requirements of a religious nature are being placed upon members. What is crucial here is that no Christian should participate in any ritual or ceremony that is contradictory to the Gospel. Christians need seriously to consider the public witness they give by belonging to such an organization.

Education and discussion will perhaps need to continue for a lengthy period of time, especially where lodge membership has already been established. It is hoped that when a person is led to see how seriously one’s confession of Christ is to be taken (“to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it”²⁶) he will want to separate himself from association with religious rituals that compromise that confession. Pastoral care will need to be exercised patiently yet firmly in asserting the need for Christians “to honor the Son even as they honor the Father” (Jn 5:23).

Eventually it will be necessary to establish a timetable and the minimal action that will need to be taken with regard to congregation members who have chosen to unite with a fraternal organization whose rituals and services include direct or implied teachings that contradict the fundamental teaching of the Christian faith. If deemed necessary, the administration of Holy Communion to those so involved may temporarily need to be suspended until a final resolution is achieved.

One of the goals of pastoral instruction and guidance regarding membership in certain fraternal organizations is to help the Christian to be faithful to the principle established by St. Paul in Romans 16: “watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught” (16:17). Here, too, we need to honor our God and His Word concerning those who have a form of godliness but deny its power (2 Tim. 3:5). At the same time, pastors must always take care to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15), and to present and defend the truth of God’s Word “with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:16). Such loving concern on the part of the pastor will strengthen the sheep of his flock to “be faithful, even to the point of death” so that they might receive from the Good Shepherd His gift of “the crown of life” (Rev 2:10).²⁷

Adopted by the CTCR
April 25, 2009

Notes

1. See page 4 of the CTCR’s evaluation of the *Loyal Order of the Moose*, which is available online at <http://www.lcms.org?2150> together with evaluations of *The Lodge* in general (focusing on Masonic Lodge organizations), the *Fraternal Order of the Eagles*, and the *Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks*. The CTCR commends the continuing use of these resources in conjunction with the present document. Also recommended is *How to Respond to the Lodge* by L. James Rongstad (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1995; order number 12-6003 [www.cph.org]).

2. This document grows out of a request from the 2006 convention of the Nebraska District (Res. 1.05) that the CTCR prepare a “study on the issue of ‘Secret Society’ or Lodge membership, including but not limited to information pertaining to possible changes in teaching and practice in the last 50 years and also the differences between the wide varieties of these organizations” and “that the CTCR study include practical guidelines” for pastors and congregations to follow when dealing with this issue.

3. The confessional citations here are taken from *The Book of Concord*, Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000).

4. 2007 Handbook, 176 (Bylaw 3.9.6.3.1 [a]).

5. 2001 Res. 7-27A “To Combine Commission on Organizations and Commission on Theology and Church Relations and Revise CTCR Bylaws” (2001 Convention Proceedings, 174–75).

6. 2007 Handbook, 176 (Bylaw 3.9.6.4.1 [a]).

7. Ibid., 176-77 (Bylaw 3.9.6.3.1 [b]). Emphasis added.
8. Ibid., 177 (Bylaw 3.9.6.3.1 [e]). Emphasis added.
9. All biblical quotations in this document are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) of the Bible (Crossway Bibles, 2001).
10. Ibid., 175 (Bylaw 3.9.6.3).
11. Another helpful resource for evaluating the Masonic Lodge is a booklet authored by LCMS pastors George A. Mather and Larry Nichols titled *Masonic Lodge* in the series titled *Zondervan Guide to Cults and Religious Movements*, edited by Alan W. Gomes (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995).
12. *Light Invisible: The Freemason's Answer to Darkness Visible* (Boston, New York: Poemandres Press, 1996), 35. Cf. Walton Hannah, *Darkness Visible: A Christian Appraisal of Freemasonry* (London: Saint Austin Press, 1998).
13. Henry Wilson Coil, *A Comprehensive View of Freemasonry* (New York: Macoy Publishing, 1954), 234.
14. Henry Wilson Coil, *Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia*, edited by Dr. William Moseley Brown, Dr. William L. Cummings, and Harold Van Buren Voorhis (New York: Macoy Publishing, 1961), 512. The discussion in the preceding paragraphs is based largely on evidence provided in an article in the files of the CTCR titled "Is Freemasonry Religion? Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia." As the CTCR notes in its evaluation of "The Lodge" (<http://www.lcms.org?2150>), "Lodge organizations commonly insist that they are not a 'religion' and that they do not establish a set of 'doctrines' to which adherence is required for membership." In that evaluation, as in this document, the CTCR "does not focus on these claims—however true or not true they may be in actual practice—but points to *religious tenets or themes* present and even espoused, both explicitly and implicitly, in the official rites and literature of the organization in question."
15. Raymond Lee Allen, et al., *Tennessee Craftsmen or Masonic Textbook*, 14th edition (Nashville, Tennessee: Board of Custodian Members, 1963), 17. Emphasis added.
16. Allen, *Tennessee Craftsmen*. Quoted in John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 82.
17. Coil, *Masonic Encyclopedia*, 516. Emphasis in original.
18. Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogmas of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (Charleston, SC: The Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, 1906), 167. Many State *Monitors* (handbooks of lodge rituals) agree with the Texas *Monitor* that Freemasonry's position is correct in "forbidding all sectarian discussion within its lodge rooms."
19. Rose Croix degree of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. Quoted in Ankerberg and Weldon, *The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge*, 132.
20. *Independent Order of Odd Fellows*. Prepared from the theological

perspective of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

21. Quotations from *Rituals of the Subordinate Lodge under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America*, revised 1990.

22. *Ritual of the Loyal Order of Moose*, revised May 1998. *Service of Tribute and Memorial Services*, revised September 1993. Emphasis added.

23. *Rituals for Fraternal Order of Eagles Opening of Meeting and Initiation of Members*, 1955. *Ritual for Final Tribute to Deceased Members*. Emphasis added.

24. In an oft-cited (and much discussed) letter dated August 16, 1864, Dr. C. F. W. Walther gives his personal counsel to a "dear brother" on dealing with individuals who are wrestling with this matter. In this letter, Walther insists that "publicly and privately, we must with zeal speak against the secret orders." "But," Walter continues, "let us not push away those who are still enmeshed in them and cannot at once convince themselves of the sinfulness of these orders and free themselves from them, but otherwise show themselves to be penitent Christians" (*Lehre and Wehre*, Sept. 1913 [59:394–95]. Translated by Dr. Jerald C. Joersz, March 2002 [file copy in the files of the CTCR]). Walther's letter must be read in its historical context, and legitimate questions have been raised about the applicability of certain aspects of Walther's counsel in this letter to more contemporary issues surrounding lodge membership, beliefs, and practices. The pastoral care and concern displayed by Walther in this letter—his concern for souls, his wisdom, his patience—can be affirmed without qualification and continue to serve as a model for pastors today in dealing with specific individuals and situations in this regard.

25. "Christians and Their Affiliations." Files of the Commission of Theology and Church Relations. Another resource for working with members of the Masonic Lodge is the Response Series booklet *How to Respond to the Lodge* referenced in footnote 1 above.

26. Quoted from the rite of Confirmation in the LCMS's *Lutheran Service Book*, 173.

27. The ultimate concern of this document is for the salvation of souls for whom Christ died. Membership in an organization that obviates the Gospel has the potential of endangering people's souls and salvation. Souls can be lost through trusting in false beliefs. One cannot limp along on both sides of contradictory religious beliefs. Either the generic god of the lodge is the true god or the triune God of Holy Scripture is the true God. Both cannot be true. Faith in the god of the lodge is faith in a non-Trinitarian god, in a Jesus who is not the sinless, divine Son of God, and in salvation by human works. Faith in the God of Scripture is faith in the triune God and faith in Jesus Christ—the divine, sinless Son of God who is the world's only Savior. Such faith believes salvation comes only by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and not in any way by human works. Justifying grace also empowers holy living by God's people (Eph 2:8–10).

Response to “A Common Word Between Us and You”

We in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod receive “A Common Word Between Us and You” with thanksgiving. In a world tragically filled with violence and hatred the invitation of “A Common Word” to work for greater peace and harmony between Muslims and Christians is most welcome.

“A Common Word” invites Christians and Muslims to move beyond the sound bytes and engage in a serious study of their respective faiths. Its exposition of the Muslim teachings about love for God and one’s neighbor will help Christians grow in their understanding of these basic beliefs of Islam. Its exposition of the Christian teachings about love for God and one’s neighbor illustrates a deep understanding of these beliefs on the part of the Muslim scholars and clerics who wrote and signed “A Common Word.” The commands to love God and the neighbor are found in all of the Abrahamic traditions—as is noted by the quotations in “A Common Word” which come from Moses and the prophets, the Apostles of Jesus Christ, and the Qur’an.

With the authors of “A Common Word,” we are also grieved that some today use religion to promote discord and division. Violence and hatred exercised in the name of religion are misuses and violations of religion itself which turn faith and religious fervor into the opposite of their original purpose. With the signers of “A Common Word” we desire to live “in righteousness and good works.” We pray that we would “respect each other, be fair, just and kind to” one another, and that we would in love “live in sincere peace, harmony and mutual goodwill” with our fellow Christians and Muslims throughout the world. With the signers of “A Common Word” we desire that all people living in every land would be able to exercise “freedom of religion” without fear, coercion, or the threat of violence for their beliefs.

It is true that Christians and Muslims believe that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, that He performed miracles, that He was pure/faultless, and is called the Word of God and the Messiah. (Qur’an 3:42, 45–51, 59; 4:157, 171–172; 5:11; 6:85; 19:16–34; Isaiah 7:14; 53:11; Jeremiah 23:6; Matthew 1:18–25; 8:14–17; John 1:1, 40–42; 1 Peter 2:22–24; 3:15, 18) Though these teachings are jointly affirmed, “A Common Word” recognizes that Muslims and Christians do not see Jesus in the same way. Christians confess Jesus as the risen Lord and God, the second person of the Trinity. “A Common Word” invites Christians and Muslims to discuss what they believe in common about love for God and the neighbor. From that common ground Muslims and Christians can begin discussing other religious positions which are not shared. We welcome the invitation of the signers of “A Common Word” to be involved in studies that will bring about greater respect and understanding of our common beliefs and our differences, and greater peace and harmony between Christians and Muslims. With the signers of “A Common Word” we too desire that our differences would “not cause hatred and strife between us.”

Christians and Muslims who come together to speak and discuss matters of faith with a frank and open spirit will learn greater respect for one another. Let us strive to walk together in civility and respect that will bring about greater harmony and understanding between Muslims and Christians for the good of the world.

“Come now, let us reason together,” says the Lord” (Isaiah 1:18).

Adopted by the CTRC
April 25, 2009

Living to Serve

We know and believe that we are saved by God’s grace grasped in faith, not by our works, so no patting ourselves on the back. Ephesians 2:8–9 says so. It’s a great joy and relief knowing that our salvation is not up to us. We could work and work and never find the end. Instead, Jesus Christ has paid the price and made us one with God.

But when we think of our new life in Christ, don’t stop with verse 9. Read on to verse 10: We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Saved from sin also means saved for service, doing works called good because they are done by people made good by God’s grace. Good fruit coming because of a good tree is the way Jesus pictured it.

So service comes naturally from faith. Martin Luther put it another way in a famous pair of sentences:

1. The Christian is the perfectly free lord of all, subject to none.
2. The Christian is the servant of all, subject to all.

The first sentence speaks of our salvation: since Christ has freed us, no one can burden us with something to do to be saved. But because we *are* saved, we turn right around and serve the people around us. Being saved by Christ’s grace means we now have a lot of time freed up to find ways to serve others.

We serve God by serving for him in his place. How so? God gives us all sorts of “callings” in life—“vocations” in theological talk from the days when theologians spoke Latin. “Vocatio” = “Calling.” That’s not just a job, how someone makes a living. Vocations are all sorts of roles people fill in daily life. Ever since God created this world, both before and after the fall into sin, he has had people doing things to take care of his world and make things run. Adam and Eve had callings: care for Eden, care for each other, and care for the family they started—really the start of society as people multiplied.

Service in vocations has continued ever since. Think of the Small Catechism explanations to the commandments, where we read not only of what God’s people don’t do, but also how they help others. It’s not that God couldn’t do things directly himself. He could reach down and teach a class, but he uses teachers. He could build a building, but he uses construction workers. He could plow the field, but he uses farmers. He could manage a home, but he uses homemakers. He could help around the house, befriend older people, walk the dog, baby sit, and more, but he uses kids. Yes, you have vocations, too. The Bible does not say much about Jesus’ childhood, but we know that as he grew up, he found approval in the eyes of God and people—he filled all the vocations that fell to him along the way.

We like to say God works through means. The Means of Grace are his Word spoken, read, and heard, as well as his Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These Sacraments also give us his promise of salvation. In matters of daily life, God also works through means to get things done, through people he puts in different roles. Some of the many examples have already been mentioned.

But there are other means that are important because they also help communicate the Means of Grace. We are talking about vocations within the church. Here, too, God uses people to work for him, to communicate his message of sin and grace. So Christ gave us the role, or office, of pastor to preach and teach, to carry out the Sacraments in behalf of Christ’s people—in short, to make sure we know that while we are sinners, we also have God’s eternal forgiving love in Christ—and to remind us of verse 10 in Ephesians 2. In and since New Testament times, the church has found it useful to set up other roles, or callings, to work with pastors, to extend God’s work through teachers, deacons and deaconesses, evangelists, and more. These serve as God’s hands and do his work now in this world and for the eternal good of those they serve, teaching and telling and showing Christ’s love.

“For all which it is our duty to thank and praise, to serve and obey him,” says the Small Catechism on the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed. Vocation is service. Think about that when doing life’s tasks great and small. And think about service also in the church, in vocations there to build up the body of Christ. But whether with deeds or with words witnessing to what God has done for me, we know that for his children, vocation is thanks and praise. This is most certainly true!

Adopted April 23, 2009
Commission on Theology and Church Relations
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

POLICY
for
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
Declaring
ALTAR AND PULPIT FELLOWSHIP
with
ANOTHER CHURCH BODY*

Article III of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod lists as the first objective of the Synod that

The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall—Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy.

This policy statement describes the procedure which The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod follows in declaring Church Fellowship with another church body.

I. Delineation of Responsibilities

1. The President of the Synod

The President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is responsible for all church relations matters involving the Synod and other church bodies. He is to

- represent the Synod, in consultation with the appropriate Board or Commission, in official contacts with all partner churches by aiding, counseling, and advising them and strengthening the relations with and among them;
- be the chief ecumenical officer of the Synod. He or his representative shall represent the Synod in official contacts with other church bodies. (Bylaw 3.101A 4 and 5) [Cf. also Bylaw 3.3.1.1.2 (a)(b) 2007 *Handbook* of the Synod].

2. The Commission on Theology and Church Relations

The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) is “to assist the President of the Synod in matters of church relationships” (Bylaw 3.923) [Cf. also Bylaw 3.9.6. 2007 *Handbook* of the Synod]. The Commission is to “assist the President at his request in discharging his constitutional responsibilities for maintaining ... doctrinal integrity as he relates to other church bodies” (Bylaw 3.925a) [Cf. also Bylaw 3.9.6.2.2 2007 *Handbook* of the Synod]. The Synodical Bylaws specifically state that the CTCR shall address itself to and evaluate existing fellowship relations for the purpose of mutual admonition and encouragement. When a church body applies for formal recognition of altar and pulpit fellowship with the Synod, such recognition shall be proposed at a Synodical Convention only after the approval of the Commission.

3. The Synod in Convention

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Convention, acting on the basis of a recommendation of the CTCR, declares Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with another church body.

So that these provisions may be carried out with consistency and in faithfulness to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, a relationship of altar and pulpit fellowship between another autonomous church body and the Synod shall be declared in the following manner.

II. Basic Considerations

In considering whether the Synod should declare altar and pulpit fellowship with another church body, the President of the Synod and the CTCR shall take into consideration the following criteria.

1. Altar and Pulpit Fellowship is a relationship that has as its basis agreement “in doctrine and in all its articles.” (FC SD X 31)
“While the church’s internal unity is perfect and known only to God (Eph. 1:4), the limits of external fellowship are determined by whether the Gospel is preached purely and the sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution. The Gospel and the sacraments are in themselves always pure. In this way they create and preserve the church in her hidden unity throughout the world. Yet, when church bodies make public confession of the Gospel and

the sacraments, tragically some obscure or explicitly contradict the teaching of the Gospel and the proper administration of the Sacraments. For this reason the limits or boundaries of the external fellowship are creeds and confessions. Churches in altar and pulpit fellowship share the same confession, including the rejection of errors that contradict this confession. Where churches cannot agree on a common confession, the basis for church fellowship does not exist.” (*Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship*, p. 5)

2. Altar and pulpit fellowship is a relationship which signifies agreement not only in a church body’s formal statements but also agreement in the implementation of the formal confessions of a church body in its actual life and practice.

“*Confessional ecumenism recognizes the importance of practice as the application of doctrine to life.* Proper formulations of the meaning of the Gospel on the basis of the Scriptures, necessary as such formulations are, are no substitute for actually preaching, teaching, and living the Gospel and using the sacraments. Practice is a fair indication of fidelity to the Gospel. For example, it does little good to point to an excellent formulation of the lodge problem in a synodical constitution if in fact that policy is not being followed in the parishes. It means little to point to a fine statement on the inerrancy of Holy Scripture in the *Brief Statement* or the *United Testimony of Faith and Life* if, in fact, that position is no longer consistently followed. We need to remember that the Augsburg Confession (VII) is talking about a Gospel that is actually taught and proclaimed and about sacraments that are actually administered. Why? Because it is through the ‘practice’ of the Gospel, if you will, that the Holy Spirit creates and sustains His church. To be sure, not all items in the area of practice are clearly defined in the Word of God, and this needs to be recognized. But where they are, or where they clearly relate to the Gospel, there can be no ecumenical retreat to the safety of written formulations at the expense of what is actually happening in the church’s parishes as well as its seminaries, colleges, publishing houses, boards and commissions. Herein lies one of the chief reasons why The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod holds doctrinal discussions with other Lutheran groups prior to the establishment of altar and pulpit fellowship.” (Ralph Bohlmann, “Celebration of Concord” in *Theologian’s Convocation Formula for Concord*, 1977, pp. 69–70)

3. Altar and pulpit fellowship is a formal relationship between two autonomous church bodies that are institutionally viable.

In addition to agreement in confession, factors to be taken into account in making a recommendation for altar and pulpit fellowship with another church body include its history, size, self-understanding, and confessional and organizational maturity.

4. Altar and pulpit fellowship is a relationship which affects all those church bodies with which each of the two newly related church bodies holds church fellowship.

Early on in the process of contemplating the possibility of altar and pulpit fellowship, the churches with which the Synod is already in church fellowship are to be informed of this prospect and their input requested. The President of the Synod and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations will take into account the responses of the Synod’s sister churches in reaching its recommendation regarding the possibility of church fellowship with this church body.

III. Procedures

1. When relationships between the Synod and another church body have reached the point that church fellowship between them is contemplated, the President of the Synod, following consultation with the CTCR, is responsible for formally initiating this process. He will inform the CTCR of this decision, as well as the Synod itself and, immediately thereafter, the partner churches of the LCMS.
2. The President will invite the sister churches of the Synod to provide input to him and to the CTCR regarding possible altar and pulpit fellowship with this church body.
3. Working together with the head of the church body with which church fellowship is contemplated, the President of the Synod shall arrange for formal doctrinal discussions between representatives of the two church bodies. Synodical representatives to these discussions shall be appointed by the President of the Synod, two of which shall be members of the CTCR.

4. The Synodical representatives to these formal doctrinal discussions shall present regular reports on these conversations to the President of the Synod (if he is not himself one of the official representatives) and to the CTCR.
5. At the conclusion of these discussions, a comprehensive written report shall be prepared by the Synodical representatives to these discussions for presentation to the President of the Synod, with a copy given to the CTCR.
6. The President of the Synod shall formally forward this report to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations together with his recommendation regarding church fellowship with this church body.
7. Following its review of this report and the President's recommendation, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations shall either recommend that the Synod declare altar and pulpit fellowship with this church body, or that it decline to approve altar and pulpit fellowship.
8. If the Commission on Theology and Church Relations recommends that the Synod enter into altar and pulpit fellowship with this church body, it shall immediately report this to the President of the Synod. The President shall inform this church, and also all of the Synod's partner churches, about this recommendation.
9. If the Commission on Theology and Church Relations recommends that the Synod enter into altar and pulpit fellowship with another church body, it shall prepare an overture to this effect for inclusion in its Report to the next Synodical Convention.
10. If the Commission on Theology and Church Relations declines to approve altar and pulpit fellowship with this church body, it shall prepare a statement delineating the reasons for this decision, which is to be shared with the President of the Synod. The President shall inform this church body of the Commission on Theology's action. If the concerns which caused the Commission to decline to approve altar and pulpit fellowship are not able to be resolved, the President will inform the members of the Synod and the Synod's sister churches, regarding this action of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations.
11. The Executive Director of the CTCR, in consultation with the heads of the two church bodies, is to coordinate the preparation of a Protocol Document in the language of each church body to be signed by the heads of the respective churches following the declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship at the next Synodical Convention.

IV. Glossary

1. **Altar and Pulpit Fellowship** is used synonymously with **Church Fellowship**.
2. **Sister Church**—A church with which the Synod is in altar and pulpit fellowship.
3. **Partner Church**—A sister church with which the Synod has a mutually prepared and signed Protocol Document.
4. **Protocol Document**—A statement jointly prepared by the Synod and a sister church which delineates the specific relationship between the two church bodies.
5. **Operating Agreement**—A document jointly prepared by the Synod and another church body delineating the terms of agreement on a specific project.

Adopted April 30, 2003

Commission on Theology and Church Relations
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Note

* This document was adopted by the CTCR in April 2003 in response to a request from the President of the Synod. Citations from the LCMS Constitution and Bylaws, therefore, are taken from the 2001 *Handbook* of the Synod which was in use at that time. Included in square brackets are parallel references to the most recent (2007) Synod *Handbook*.

Church Relations in the 21st Century

Introduction

Throughout its history, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has expressed its agreement in doctrine and practice with other church bodies through formal declarations of altar and pulpit fellowship. This practice has served the Synod well with respect to its church fellowship with other church bodies.¹ This approach has also, however, shown itself to be somewhat problematic in situations where *doctrinal agreement exists* but where a formal declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship may not be appropriate or feasible. Situations such as the following suggest the need for a more nuanced, differentiated approach to expressing a relationship of doctrinal agreement other than a formal declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship:

1. A church body earnestly seeks support, encouragement, and theological guidance from the LCMS, even while it is still in the formative stages of developing its own theological and ecclesial identity.
2. An emerging church body (e.g., a group of congregations established or gathered by an LCMS missionary) has a strong and clear confessional commitment (nurtured, perhaps, with the help of the LCMS itself), but it is not yet structured and organized in a way that would allow it to engage in the formal process of seeking to establish “altar and pulpit fellowship.”
3. An established church body sincerely desires a closer relationship with the LCMS because of its appreciation for the theology and practice of the LCMS, but various political, geographical, institutional, and/or ecclesial factors make it difficult (or even impossible) to enter into a formal relationship of “altar and pulpit fellowship” with the LCMS.
4. A confessional group or association of congregations (e.g., within what have historically and popularly been called “state churches”) seeks closer ties with the LCMS, but since it has no legal or official independent status as a “church body,” it is not possible under these circumstances for the LCMS to enter into formal and official “altar and pulpit fellowship” with this group.

The President is the chief ecumenical officer of the Synod and represents the Synod in official contacts with all partner/sister churches and with other church bodies. The President’s Office carries out these duties in consultation with the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR).² Recognizing the emerging contexts in which we now find ourselves in church relations, on April 26, 2004, President Gerald Kieschnick gave this assignment to the CTCR: “Would it be biblically and confessionally appropriate for the LCMS, in certain circumstances, to seek to establish some kind of formalized relationship with another church body, a group of Christians, or an emerging church body other than a declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship? If so, what would be the basis, nature, and parameters of such a relationship?” In responding to this assignment, the CTCR shares “Church Relations in the 21st Century” with the Office of the President, that its guidance may be utilized in consultation with the CTCR, as he carries out his ecumenical responsibilities.

Basic Considerations

1. The unity of the church *coram deo*³ (in the eyes of God) is a gift and work of the Holy Spirit because the church itself is the Spirit’s creation. Thus the Small Catechism describes the Spirit as the one who gathers the church and “keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith” (SC II, 6). The Large Catechism describes it as being “called together by the Holy Spirit in one faith, mind, and understanding. It possesses a variety of gifts, and yet is united in love without sect or schism” (LC II, 51).
2. In creating the church, the Holy Spirit works through external means. Thus Augsburg Confession Article 7 describes the true unity of the church as agreement “concerning the pure teaching of the

gospel and the right administration of the sacraments.” It appends to the article the Apostle Paul’s description, “One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all . . .” (AC 7, 2–4). This clarifies *how* the Holy Spirit establishes and maintains the unity of the church: He does so through the word of Christ as it is rightly proclaimed and as it is authentically made visible in the sacraments. These oral and sacramental words create and sustain the faith in Jesus Christ that justifies. Justifying faith ties and binds us together in unity under one head, Jesus Christ.

3. It is important to emphasize that the gospel and sacraments that bring about this unity are not mere doctrinal or documentary formulations. They constitute the word that is actually preached and the sacraments that are actually administered. They are the very instruments that the Holy Spirit uses to bring people to Jesus Christ. The spoken and administered word and sacrament, which create and unite the church *coram deo*, also create and unite the church *coram mundo* (within the world). The church *coram mundo* is a visible assembly gathered by God around word and sacraments. Therefore we can extract three non-negotiable principles with regard to manifesting the true unity of the church *coram mundo*.
 - a. Church fellowship is always **altar and pulpit fellowship** within the world (*coram mundo*) because the Gospel and the sacraments are the very means by which the unity of the church *coram deo* is given and maintained. Therefore, they are the infallible marks of where the church may be found within the world and wherein the expression of its unity consists *coram mundo*.
 - b. Altar and pulpit fellowship presupposes agreement in **public confession** (the body of public doctrine, “united in teaching and in all the articles of the faith,” FC X, 31). Because the unity created by the Spirit is hidden from view to human eyes, we only know that we have heard the same word in common with one another to the extent that we confess it and test it against the Scriptures. The proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments cannot be separated from the entire body of doctrine any more than the head can be separated from a body and survive. Therefore church fellowship *coram mundo* always flows out of unity in confession.
 - c. Confessional agreement is agreement in doctrine *and* **practice**, since the true unity of the church *coram deo* is not created or maintained apart from the actual proclamation of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. Only doctrine that is put into practice is in actuality the *public* doctrine of a church, and only such doctrine and practice can genuinely serve as a standard to determine where there is doctrinal agreement. (This does not ignore the fact that there may be some variety in practices—in the realm of adiaphora and Christian freedom—that are consistent with a doctrinal position. Neither does it deny that circumstances sometimes produce less-than-perfect implementation of doctrine, even as Christians strive to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” Eph. 4:3.)
4. **How** we determine or assess agreement in confession with other church bodies can vary from situation to situation. Given the vastly different situations that are increasingly encountered in today’s ecclesial context, it seems necessary and appropriate to avoid a “one size fits all” approach and instead develop different ways of assessing agreement that are appropriate to the church body or group in question. Such an assessment would take into account factors such as the following:
 - a. Different histories with different assumptions.
 - i. In the United States and Canada there is a history of confessional differences between Lutheran church bodies, whose congregations exist within the same geographical area. In fact, many of them were formed out of those confessional differences. Thus we have a tendency to approach the matter of church fellowship with the assumption that we are *not* in confessional agreement (we assume that such church bodies disagree with us until proven otherwise). This assumption may lead us to approach fellowship discussions in a way that impels us to go probing into every corner of a church body’s life in order to find every theological issue on which we may disagree.

- ii. It does not seem appropriate to impose our synod's history or church orders upon Lutheran church bodies in other countries, or to view them through the lenses of the histories of Lutheran churches in North America (e.g., Germans and Norwegians with reference to the Formula of Concord). Where we do not share histories of theological disagreement or controversy (especially with "emerging church bodies"), it may be more appropriate to begin with the assumption that we *are* in confessional agreement with those who have subscribed unconditionally to the entire *Book of Concord* until we are shown otherwise. In cases where an emerging church body does not have vernacular access to the entire *Book of Concord*, a similar assumption of agreement may be in order with those who have subscribed only to the parts of the *Book of Concord* which are available to them. Finally, in cases where a church body has chosen not to subscribe to a confessional writing (such as the Formula of Concord), we should seek to determine whether the reason for non-subscription has more to do with custom or history before simply assuming that it represents substantive, doctrinal disagreement (e.g., churches which were planted by Scandinavian missionaries and which are in agreement with the teachings of the entire *Book of Concord*, without formally subscribing to the entire book).
- b. The need for a variety of mechanisms for assessing confessional agreement with "emerging church bodies" or church bodies in their formative stages.
 - i. In the United States, Lutheran church bodies often developed similar structures in order to take into account the separation of church and state as well as the need to rely upon the volunteerism of its lay members. Moreover, Lutheran church bodies have developed structures and formulated theological positions over a period of many decades, resulting in parallel commissions and officials to meet with each other when they enter into dialogue. Typically, these entities then take the results back to the respective church bodies for approval by their church-wide assemblies or conventions. In addition, because of their past histories, they may have documents and established theological positions that serve as starting points for dialogue.
 - ii. In dealing with younger church bodies outside the United States, many of which are either developing different structures or already have structures that do not parallel our own, a different method of assessing confessional agreement is needed. Three methods in particular come to mind. First, LCMS representatives could visit the congregations and theological institutions (if they exist) in that church body for doctrinal discussions and in order to hear what is being actually preached and taught. This may reveal that confessional agreement exists. Second, documents that our church body has produced and adopted could be shared for study, and we should study any materials they might have to offer, to see whether either church body has any objections or disagreements. Third, the church body could be asked to prepare brief statements of doctrine and descriptions of practice for consideration by the LCMS.
- c. The need for different procedures by which a relationship of altar and pulpit fellowship is "declared" or recognized by the LCMS.
 - i. In the United States a formal declaration of church fellowship by the LCMS in convention has followed formal dialogues and a recommendation by the CTCR for entering into altar and pulpit fellowship. This approach has assumed a history of confessional and theological differences that had to be resolved. This has also typically been the case in the history of Lutheranism in North America and Western Europe.
 - ii. In dealing with emerging or recovering Lutheran churches in other parts of the world, there frequently is little or no history of theological differences or division. In such circumstances, something other than a formal declaration of church fellowship by the Synod in convention may be appropriate, given differences in structure and differing states of theological development. Many of these Lutherans work from the assumption that as Christians who accept the teachings of the *Book of Concord*, they are already in confessional agreement with other Lutheran Christians such as the LCMS. Perhaps the establishment of some kind of "preliminary fellowship agreement" with the LCMS in that place would be appropriate, based upon the fact that no church-dividing doctrine or practices are apparent.

Such an agreement could be reassessed periodically for the purpose of mutual accountability and to review and foster confessional agreement that will continue to manifest itself in the pulpit and at the altar. Ongoing study and discussion would be the means of fostering and furthering the unity that already exists and determining whether and when a more formal fellowship agreement would be possible and appropriate.
- d. The need for more regional or local involvement of congregations, districts, and officials in carrying out the ecumenical responsibility of the church.
 - i. In the United States and Canada, Lutheran congregations are not confined to geographical regions in isolation, but instead overlap in any given region with congregations belonging to other church bodies. In this situation, it is necessary that theological discussions be coordinated by the central church body and declarations of church fellowship take place at the national level of the church body in order to represent all of the congregations within the church body. It is also most appropriate that the results of those dialogues be brought to the national convention or assembly of that church body for approval or disapproval of church fellowship as this decision will affect all the congregations within the church body.
 - ii. When dealing with emerging church bodies in other countries, it may be feasible and helpful to have dialogues take place at the local level as well as nationally in order to assess whether or not we are united in the public confession of the faith. Local dialogues could be accomplished, for example, by regional mission directors (or other Synodical officials) along with a theologian from the church body. They would report the results of their dialogue and decision to enter into altar and pulpit fellowship to the Synod for evaluation and possible ratification.
 - iii. With respect to developing relationships with individuals, congregations, groups, or entities from other church bodies, it is important to avoid either the actuality or the appearance of interference in the affairs and relationships of those church bodies. While the Synod seeks to encourage strong confessional theology and practice, it should do so in ecclesially responsible ways, without encouraging internal dissension or purposefully undermining prior relationships with other church bodies or groups. For example, if a confessional group from within a national church invites LCMS representatives to provide theological training or support, it is proper to inform the national church body's appointed leaders of the request and seek a course of action that does not cause offense or ill will while encouraging and supporting the cause of confessionally Lutheran theology and practice.
- e. In connection with the previous section (4.d), we recognize and emphasize the need to keep our partner/sister churches informed about conversations and potential agreements and seek their counsel, even as we ask them to do the same. In some situations, partner/sister churches can play an important role and help to coordinate conversations, especially when they have a geographical, linguistic, or cultural connection and ongoing contact with such emerging churches.
- f. The LCMS respects the formal relationships and fellowship agreements of its partner/sister churches, noting that they have the right to establish such relationships with other churches. The LCMS will take these agreements into account as it interacts with those churches who have established formal relationships with our partner/sister churches.
- g. In many cases emerging church bodies strongly desire contact with larger groupings of Lutherans beyond their borders. Involving such churches in the theological conferences of

- the International Lutheran Council (ILC) on a regular basis, or even allowing some form of associate membership in the ILC (if not full membership), may reap many benefits down the road as these church bodies continue to develop their theological and confessional identity.
- h. Prior to establishing some form of fellowship agreement or formal declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship, the LCMS could encourage and develop a number of avenues of cooperation including:
 - i. Regular contacts at the church governing level
 - ii. Meetings and joint theological work among professors and clergy
 - iii. Meetings and exchange of students of theology
 - iv. Support of and participation in mission projects
 5. Dealing with confessional groups within another church body raises a number of very different and very difficult questions that may or may not be capable of solution. At the very least, study and discussion needs to take place regarding issues such as the following:
 - a. The relationship between public confession and public membership in a church body. This is particularly acute in state churches where there is no history of independently supported congregations as in America. But this also is becoming an issue in the United States where some national church bodies are functioning (at least in practice) somewhat like European state churches and within which groups may establish a distinctive confessional identity that differs from the public position of the national church body. Such groups often choose to remain within their church body in difficult and even oppressive conditions, seeking to be leaven and offering courageous witness to biblical and confessional truth while protesting what they believe to be false doctrine or practice. Although they choose not to leave the structures of the national church body, they still seek fellowship, encouragement and theological dialogue and guidance from like-minded confessional individuals, groups, and church bodies.
 - b. This situation creates the possibility of two avenues of relationship. On the one hand, the LCMS has historically dealt with the official church structures of a given church body when assessing confessional agreement and establishing altar and pulpit fellowship. On the other hand, it may have much in common with the confessional groupings within a national church body. Which avenue to pursue in such conflicted circumstances and how to do so with theological and ethical integrity and sound churchmanship will almost certainly be

decided on a case-by-case rather than a policy basis, but we should realize that such situations are likely only to increase in the future.

Conclusion

Christians who share a common confession express that confession nowhere more clearly or visibly than when they kneel at the same altar to receive the body and blood of Christ and when they share a common pulpit. The process and protocols leading to a formal declaration of church fellowship by the Synod in convention have served us well when declaring with established church bodies with whom we have shared something of a common history. As we move into more fluid situations in the 21st century, we need additional ways to identify and acknowledge agreement in confession that are appropriate to the history and nature of ecclesial communities that are emerging in various parts of the world but which do not share the same kind of institutional habits and identities. In these ways we seek to manifest our agreement and so confess our unity at the altar and pulpit in a manner that is faithful to our theology of the church.

Adopted September 23, 2009 (unanimously)
Commission on Theology and Church Relations
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Notes

1. The LCMS's procedure in establishing formal altar and pulpit fellowship is described in the Commission on Theology and Church Relations' document "Policy for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod declaring Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with Another Church Body" (April 30, 2003). This document is available online at www.lcms.org/ctcr.
2. According to the present way of proceeding, the President's Office includes the Church Relations Cabinet.
3. The creeds of the church refer to this unity when they speak of "the one holy Christian church," the "communion of saints." Theologians often speak of it as the *una sancta*. In each case, these expressions refer to the unity of the church that God alone sees.

The Creator's Tapestry

*Scriptural Perspectives on Man–Woman Relationships
in Marriage and the Church*

Preface

The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has prepared the present document in response to a 1995 synodical convention request that the Commission “prepare a comprehensive study of the scriptural relationship of man and woman” (Res. 3-10).

The Commission has completed a number of significant assignments since 1995 that address certain aspects of the scriptural relationship between man and woman specifically referenced in 1995 Resolution 3-10.¹ Thanks to a grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, the CTCR was able to assemble individuals with various expertise and a common interest in this topic for a series of four consultations on the relationship of man and woman. This process enabled the collection and discussion of a wide variety of valuable insights and opinions.

The Commission recognizes that this document does not fully address many issues that can and should be discussed regarding a Christian understanding of the relationship of man and woman. It does not provide thorough answers to many specific questions and concerns, including some of those raised by members of the CTCR and its consultation groups.

Without in any way denying the importance of such concerns, the Commission determined that it could not address all of them fully in this study. This is a foundational document. Its purpose is to provide the scriptural basis for the Christian understanding of man and woman. In this document we have attempted to address questions raised in 1995 Resolution 3-10.² It is our prayer that it will help to build consensus on the biblical starting point for addressing additional questions before us.

The Commission intends to continue the work begun here by providing additional resources to address specific areas of concern under the general topic of “Man and Woman in the Contemporary World.”

Among the questions and concerns which could be addressed are the following:

- the influence of culture on the Christian understanding of man and woman;
- the study of passages and arguments often cited in support of both an “egalitarian”³ view of marriage and the ordination of women to the pastoral ministry;
- the understanding and value of such ideas as “order of creation” and “headship”;
- violence and oppressive behavior toward women in society, home, and church;
- general and specific roles/responsibilities of men and women in variable contexts (society, home, church);
- the relationship of men and women outside the context of marriage;
- the significance of Jesus’ relationship with women;
- the Christian understanding of such contemporary issues as pornography, online relationships, “hooking-up,” and so forth;
- continuity and discontinuity between such theological questions as ordination of women and ordination of practicing homosexuals.

Such concerns must be respected and cannot be ignored. The Christian faith has a beautiful vision of human relationships, particularly the relationship of men and women in Christ. That vision is one to be shared with each new generation.

Introduction

Imagine an eye-catching tapestry hanging on a wall. Its maker uses two kinds of threads: warp threads and weft threads. Warp threads are stretched on a loom, and weft threads are interwoven through them. The creator of the tapestry is able to take these two different kinds of threads and weave them together into magnificent patterns.

The biblical perspective on man and woman resembles a patterned tapestry, woven with multicolored threads both alike and different. Within the Creator’s design, man and woman share a common human nature. They also differ in significant ways. In their sameness yet difference they interrelate beautifully—most intimately within the one-flesh union of marriage. The Creator “weaves” one man and one woman into a pattern that produces a rich harmony to His glory and their good.

The physical and social sciences can provide helpful perspectives on the relationship between man and woman that Christians can readily affirm. Recent research, for instance, indicates that there are significant ways in which males and females have essentially equal abilities and tendencies. There are also strong tendencies among men and women to have differences in such things as the emphasis each group gives to power versus values, justice versus relationships, and analytical versus process-oriented thinking.⁴ Above all, Christians want to hear what God’s Word has to say and pray that the Holy Spirit will weave our relationships as men and women into a God-pleasing tapestry.

From beginning to end

As we consider the biblical perspective on man-woman relationships, we confront a difficult question: How do we organize a wide array of biblical materials on a huge topic like this? The Bible is a library of books written by many authors, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and spanning different times and places. We have chosen to follow Scripture’s overall story summarized in the creeds of Christianity. They speak of God’s dealings with His creatures from beginning to end. In these creeds we confess the God who begins, rescues, and restores His own creation through His Son and by His Spirit. Thus, we want to consider the topic as follows:

- First Article: God Creates Man and Woman
- Second Article: God Redeems Man and Woman
- Third Article: God Renews Man and Woman

This creedal outline is more than a convenient way to organize the biblical data. Theological reasons underlie this arrangement. First, the creeds focus our attention on what the Creator does. Second, the very terms “man” and “woman” designate a created distinction—without which we could not even speak of man and woman in relationship to each other. In the beginning God created man and woman in relation to each other. This is also true of our personal story. Before baptizing us, God created us. He knit us in our mothers’ wombs as a male or female. By beginning with creation, we acknowledge the foundational nature of God’s first actions.

Tragically, God’s good creation underwent a cataclysmic change. Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, rebelled against their holy Maker. This rebellion has had devastating effects on all creation, including the relationship between man and woman. Thanks be to God that He did not abandon them to their plight. Out of His boundless mercy He reconciled all sinners to Himself through Jesus of Nazareth, His Son in human flesh. In this way, God also reconciled man and woman to each other in Christ. Baptized into Christ, they are together members of Christ’s one body, the church.

2010 Convention Workbook

By the power of His Spirit, God renews His created and re-deemed men and women for life in various callings. The Scriptures focus significant attention on relationships within marriage and the church in the present time, but Christians also live in the hope of Christ's second coming and the bodily resurrection from the dead.

Big picture and details in reading the Scriptures

A scene in the comic strip "Calvin and Hobbes" features Calvin sitting in class, raising his hand. "Miss Wormwood," he says, "I have a question about this math lesson." "Yes?" the teacher asks. "Given that, sooner or later, we're all just going to die, what's the point of learning about integers?" Ignoring him, the teacher says, "Turn to page 83, class." Calvin, depressed, looks down at his book and says to himself, "Nobody likes us 'big picture' people."

Calvin makes a good point. It is important to see the big picture. On the issue of man-woman relationships, we need to be big picture people who see the entire tapestry. We affirm the coherence and unity of the scriptural writings. Therefore, we let Scripture interpret Scripture. The perspective of each book fits together in a unified whole. Calvin's teacher, however, is also right. God speaks in the details. It is important to pay attention to the particulars of a passage, much like taking a magnified look at individual strands of the tapestry.

A faithful reading of God's Word requires, above all, that we always approach it with humility and reverence. As sinful human beings, we are all naturally prone to impose our own preconceived ideas and sensitivities upon the Bible. Understandably, we also tend more readily to accept some texts but view others as less important, even pitting one passage against another. May the Holy Spirit give us—both men and women—hearts and minds willing to receive all that the Scriptures teach, even when we find something difficult to accept or understand. May He also help us to discover the joy and delight of studying God's Word and following God's design for our relationships to each other.

**FIRST ARTICLE:
GOD CREATES MAN AND WOMAN**

*"I believe that God has made me and all creatures ..."
Luther's Small Catechism*

Genesis 1

The biblical account of the creation of man and woman is itself part of an exquisite tapestry that pictures God's goodness and wisdom toward His creatures. In the beginning everything had its distinct place and purpose which contributed to the harmony of the whole. Through His creative acts, God revealed that He is a God of order, not of chaos. Day upon day, God declared the works of His hands "good"—resounding testimony to how much He loved and esteemed all that He made. Consider how the Creator, by His Word, made from nothing all things in six days and arranged them in a very orderly and symmetrical way.

- Day 1:** light separated from darkness, called "day and night"
- Day 2:** an expanse separating waters above from below, called "heaven" [sky]
- Day 3:** gathering of waters and appearance of dry land ("earth and seas") and vegetation on earth
- Day 4:** lights in the sky to give light, separating day from night, marking seasons
- Day 5:** fish in waters and birds in sky
- Day 6:** living creatures on the earth and human race, male and female.

Let us make man

With ascending complexity and beauty, God's creative activity reaches its high point on the sixth day: the creation of the human race—male and female. After creating the land animals, God said:

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.
And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth (Gen 1:26).⁵

Important details of this beautiful passage are worthy of note. First, the Hebrew noun *adam* (translated "man" above), occurring here for the first time in the Bible, is used as a "collective"—a singular noun referring to a category of creatures. That *adam* functions as a collective is shown by "them" in the words immediately following: "let *them* have dominion." This detail is important because it shows that the word *adam* in this passage has a generic sense denoting "the human race." It embraces the first man and woman from whom the rest of humankind would descend.⁶

Significantly, God said "let there be" for other creative actions in Genesis 1. Here—in sharp contrast—God says, "*Let us* make ... in *our* image, after *our* likeness" (emphasis added). Now God takes deliberate counsel to create the human race, that is, there is reflection among the Persons of the Trinity. The human race does not come into existence by accident, nor is a human being just another earth creature. Humankind is the pinnacle of the Creator's magnificent work, indeed, His showpiece—amazingly—in the entire universe. The majestic Creator of this cosmic expanse made the tiny speck called "man" "a little lower" than Himself and crowned him as a king with great honor. Psalm 8 declares:

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him [man] a little lower than God⁷ and crowned him with glory and honor. You gave him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! (Ps 8:3–9)

Genesis 1:26 intimates that the Creator is none other than the Triune God whom we worship and confess. The Christian Church has traditionally understood verse 26 this way and with good reason. Genesis 1:2 mentions "the Spirit of God" hovering over the waters, and God creates through His Word. The words "let us make"⁸ indicate that the Father is speaking to His Son (the Word) and the Holy Spirit. The implicit Biblical teaching regarding the Trinity here is more clearly revealed later in the Scriptures (see, for example, John 1:1–3).

Created in God's image

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen 1:27–28).

That God created human beings—male and female—"in His image" means that among all God's creatures they are in a category by themselves. They are, indeed, the crown of His creation. God made the human race in His "image," according to His "likeness."⁹

Both of these expressions emphasize that humanity was created *unlike* the animals, birds, and fish. There are different “kinds” of animals but only one human race patterned after its Creator. God created only one human race, one *adam*: “... in the image of God he created *him*”—one humanity that derives from one common ancestor, whose personal name is the same word, Adam (*adam*). Every individual human creature, male or female, belongs to this one humanity and, therefore, is created in God’s image.

How was humanity patterned after its Creator? How did human beings resemble God? On the basis of Genesis 1 several things can be said. The Creator wanted to have a special, unique communion with these particular creatures that He did not have with His other creatures. He made humans to be His companions, creatures who would know Him, live in righteousness and holiness before Him, and look to Him as the Giver of every good gift (see also Eph 4:24 and Col 3:10). God spoke to His human creatures in an extended conversation (Gen 1:28–30). By conversing directly with them, the Creator shows that the human creatures are capable of relating to Him and responsible to Him for what takes place. Because they alone were made in God’s image,¹⁰ they were not simply another category of earthly creatures but were given dominion over the birds, fish, and land animals. Although the word “image” itself does not mean “to rule over,” this unique status given the human creatures resulted in their having dominion over the animals. In order to exercise this dominion as responsible stewards of the earth, they were given wisdom and the capacity to make judgments.

Created male and female

Although God indeed created humanity in His image, the human race was at the same time clearly *unlike* Him. In God there is no sexual differentiation,¹¹ but He created man in a duality as “male and female,” and He continues to do so. This fundamental distinction precedes all other distinctions of ethnicity, nationality, language, culture, and customs—which are mentioned later in Genesis (for example, Gen 10).

A person’s sexual identity is a given and not a matter of human choice. It is not simply a social construct or the invention of society. A human being is not an independent soul or mind that just happens to be encased in a male or female body. An individual’s sexual identity and the sexual distinction between male and female are wonderful gifts of God established at creation.

The sexual difference within humanity serves a good purpose in God’s grand design. It enables human creatures to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Precisely through this sexual difference, male and female together can procreate, which makes possible the continuation of the human race. In His wisdom, the Creator has thus provided for the care of His creation. Psalm 115 confesses one of the chief purposes of the Creator’s work highlighted in Genesis:

The heavens are the LORD’s heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man (Ps 115:16).

God made His human creatures male and female so that together they might enjoy one another’s companionship, multiply, populate the earth, and rule¹² over it. Both male and female have received this task, responsibility, stewardship, and privilege. They are the Creator’s representatives and are accountable to Him for how they exercise the responsibilities entrusted to them.

Genesis 2

We have viewed with amazement and wonder God’s creation tapestry pictured broadly in Genesis 1. Now we are invited to step forward for a closer look. In Genesis 2 the Scriptures give us a close-up, in zoom-lens fashion, of God’s creation of the human

race as male and female on the sixth day. Taken together, these two chapters present a coherent and complementary portrait of our Creator’s majestic work.

As we look closely at Genesis 2, we cannot leave unnoticed the warmth and personal nature of the Creator’s touch—reflected in the very name by which He reveals Himself and does His work. Genesis 2 calls the Creator not just “God” (*Elohim*) but “the LORD God” (*Yahweh Elohim*). “The LORD” is the conventional English rendition of “Yahweh,” God’s personal name in the Old Testament.¹³ In Genesis 1, He reveals Himself by the generic title “God/Deity,” the God of transcendent power, but in Genesis 2 He also discloses Himself to us in His personal name, “Yahweh” (“the LORD”).

The creation of the man

Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature (Gen 2:7).

The transcendent and all-powerful Creator of the universe reaches down and as a master artisan forms the first man from the ground. The man was carefully fashioned from the same earth he was later to till (Gen 2:5). The Hebrew text shows the connection: “The LORD God formed the *adam* [the man] of dust from the *adamah* [the ground].” Or, as we might capture it in English: “The LORD God formed the earth-man of dust from the earth.” In the Creator’s deft hands, the ground He had created becomes the raw material from which the man is shaped. The verb translated “formed” denotes to “shape, forge” and often refers to the work of a potter. The language connotes the great care that God devoted to the creation of His creatures, both animals and human beings (see Gen 2:19). Into the man He had formed, however, the Creator Himself directly “breathed ... the breath of life.” Through this intimate act of his Creator, “the man [the *adam*] became a living creature.” Unlike the creation of the animals (Gen 1:20–25; 2:19), God’s own breath makes Adam a breathing and living creature.

The first man stands on the earth from which he is made and for which he is to care (2:5). We have seen that in Genesis 1 the Hebrew word *adam* (ESV “man”) was used generically to denote the human race: “Let us make man [human race—*adam*] in our image, after our likeness. And let *them* have dominion over” the other animals. Now in Genesis 2 the word *adam* designates the first human creature. This *adam* was not an androgynous creature; a kind of male and female packaged in one and later split in half. Rather, the word *adam* here refers to the first male from whose side will be created the first female. Because the human race descended from this first man, the word designating the human race (*adam*) appropriately became his personal name “Adam.” The opening verses of Genesis 5 show this connection:

This is the book of the generations of Adam [*adam*]. When God created man [*adam*], he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man [*adam*] when they were created. When Adam [*adam*] had lived 130 years, he fathered a son (Gen 5:1–3).

Adam, therefore, became the one through whom the human race began and to whom it is ultimately tied. In this sense, he may be regarded as the representative of the entire human race (cf. Romans 5). God gave His word to this man standing before Him in the garden. He gave Adam the command to live in obedience to Him, setting a boundary for his freedom: “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die’” (Gen 2:16–17). The man was held responsible and accountable to God

for obedience to the Creator's word given prior to the creation of woman. The subsequent narrative in Genesis 3 indicates that even this prohibition was meant for the good of God's human creatures. The Creator is good and so are His prohibitions.

The answer to the man's aloneness

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a helper fit for him" (Gen 2:18).

Against "the background of all the stately cadences"¹⁴ in Genesis 1 pronouncing God's creation "good," we now hear a different word from God: "It is *not good* that the man should be alone." The Creator desired to make a world in which everything would fit properly and correspond to His intent. Before the final "very good" of the sixth day, the Creator Himself says that something was "not good": the man's aloneness—which Adam himself realized after naming God's creatures (2:20). To this profound need, for which the man himself was able to give no answer, God responds: "I will make him a helper fit for him" (Gen 2:18).

Understood within the context of God's desire that His creation of the man be completely good, "helper" takes on special meaning. The Hebrew word translated "help" (*'ezer*) is itself a fairly general word that is used in a variety of contexts in the Scriptures and means to "assist and support" another. The word implies that two individuals share the same goal but that the strength or wherewithal of the one to be helped is inadequate in some way. The one needs the help of the other. The word does not imply that the helper is inferior to the one being helped. In fact, the Scriptures often speak of God as our "helper," signifying that God places Himself in the service of our needs. Nor does the word imply that the helper is superior. The two parties can be equal, as is the case here (Gen 2:8; see also Josh 10:3–5). The word focuses on the assistance and support provided by another. To the man's aloneness, God will bring a companion devoted to his good, not just a person to keep him company.

The creation of the woman

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man (Gen 2:21–22).

The answer to the man's aloneness came to him in a way far beyond what he could envision or would have been able to design. He would soon discover in awe what was embedded in God's promise to make a helper "fit for him" (literally, in Hebrew, "like-his-counterpart"). The man who had just actively named the animals now became completely passive, immersed in a deep sleep induced by God. Then like an expert surgeon, the Creator took out one of his ribs and sewed up his flesh. Since this partner must be "fit for him," the Creator appropriately took a rib from his side, the bone closest to his heart.¹⁵ That rib God "made" (or as the Hebrew says, "built") into a woman. As an expert builder God constructed the woman. Then God "brought her to the man" (2:22), prompting the man to cry "with joyous astonishment"¹⁶ and delight:

"This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Gen 2:23).

These words, the first recorded words uttered by the man, stand in sharp contrast to what he will say about his wife later in Genesis 3:12. Here he gladly and fully receives her as a precious gift, another human creature like himself, made of his own substance—"bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh," as he put it. Both the

man and the woman bear God's image and live in fellowship with Him.

God created this "helper fit for him" in a distinctive way. Unlike the creation of the man directly from the earth, God created the woman from the man. God had given Adam the responsibility of naming the other creatures. Now Adam names his fellow human being "woman, because she was taken out of man." This English translation captures the Hebrew text: "she shall be called *ish-shah*, because she was taken out of *ish*." The name corresponds to his prior exclamation: "This is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Adam rejoices as much in their difference as in their sameness. Through God's gift of the woman, the man is enabled to grow in his understanding of himself as a man. "She is the mirror in which the man will come to know himself as man. The man and woman have been created toward fellowship, and neither can come to know the self rightly apart from the other. . . . [They] know themselves in relation to one who is other than self."¹⁷

The institution of marriage: husband and wife

The creation of man and woman, in the Creator's design, now leads to ("therefore," Gen 2:24) the creation of marriage.¹⁸ The Creator joins one man and one woman in what he intends to be a union not to be ended until death. This union is a good gift established by the Creator Himself and designed by Him to be the foundation for society and the continuation of the human race. The creation narrative now closes with these words:

Therefore a man [*ish*] shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife [*ish-shah*], and they shall become one flesh. And the man [*adam*] and his wife [*ish-shah*] were both naked and were not ashamed (Gen 2:24–25).¹⁹

We can now see most clearly the aptness of the tapestry metaphor for picturing the relationship of man and woman as God intended. In the most intimate way, man and woman are intertwined and interwoven in marriage like the warp and weft threads of a tapestry. They are joined together in a one-flesh union that is a profound unity of persons created by God Himself. This truth is strongly affirmed by Jesus when He said, "'So they are no longer two but one flesh.' What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate" (Matt 19:6). God joins them together as the husband and wife give themselves wholly to each other and become one flesh. Neither two males nor two females can become one flesh, but only a male and a female.

Sexual intimacy of husband and wife is a good gift from our Creator, not only for procreation but also for human companionship and enjoyment. It is an expression of their deep love for one another. Perhaps no book of the Bible displays the goodness of sexual intimacy and the unity of husband and wife more profoundly than The Song of Songs in the Old Testament. With rich poetry and compact imagery, the book exuberantly sings of the passionate love between the man and the woman.²⁰

Man and woman, therefore, belong to and are dependent upon one another. First, the man was created. Later, the woman was made from the man's side as a companion for him. The woman subsequently gives birth to a man. A man leaves his father and his mother and "holds fast" to his wife, caring for her. Paradoxically, their difference gives birth to their interdependence. As the apostle Paul so eloquently stated centuries later: "Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God" (1 Cor 11:11–12; see also 1 Cor 11:7–10).

SECOND ARTICLE: GOD REDEEMS MAN AND WOMAN

*"I believe that Jesus Christ ... has redeemed me,
a lost and condemned person. ..."*
Luther's Small Catechism

Genesis 3 and the Fall

The creation narrative in Genesis closes with the seemingly insignificant fact that man and woman were both naked and not ashamed (Gen 2:25). The first couple lived together in a state of holiness and innocence. As a consequence, they lived in complete harmony with God and each other. As Luther reminds us, God uses this "little statement" to show "how much evil followed after the sin of Adam."²¹ The sudden and ominous intrusion of the serpent into the picture immediately following this perfect scene signals a horrific tragedy about to happen. The unraveling and shredding of the Creator's tapestry is about to begin.

The serpent's deception

The serpent's demonic spin on the LORD God's original command is introduced: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Gen 3:1 KJV).²² God had indeed generously provided for food by saying "You may surely eat of *every tree* of the garden" except one tree (Gen 2:16). The serpent, however, perversely twists God's general permission and single prohibition into a general prohibition: "Ye shall not eat of *every tree* of the garden." He insinuates, "If there is an exception, then in fact you may not eat of every tree"—as if the one exception cancels out God's lavish generosity and permission. By this subterfuge, the serpent frames the question to instill doubt in God's Word and His generous provision.

The LORD God had given the prohibition to the man before the woman was created (Gen 2:17). After creating the woman, both are to live in accord with God's Word and will. The woman's response, however, goes beyond God's Word and will:

We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, "You [plural] shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you [plural] touch it, lest you [plural] die" (Gen 2:2–3).

The deadly slippage has begun. The Tempter, camouflaged in a snake, has the woman's ear. She tries to correct the serpent but adds to, and subtracts from, God's Word. From her lips, "the LORD God" becomes the distant and impersonal "God." She diminishes God's generosity by omitting "every" from the original permission (God had said "you *may eat* of *every tree*"; Gen 2:16). And she makes God look overly rigid by adding "neither shall you touch it" to the original prohibition.

And now comes the demonic spin in its most deadly form, loaded with ambiguity and saturated with half-truths: "You [plural] will not surely die. For God knows that when you [plural] eat of it your [plural] eyes will be opened, and you [plural] will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:4–5).

We note carefully the subtleties and half-truths. The devil hints (plural of "you" again!) that the woman should make sure they both eat of it. Then the first half-truth (the clever art of telling a lie by telling part of the truth): "You will not surely die." Well, of course, they did not physically die—not *that* day. Adam lived 930 years. And, another half-truth: "Your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Well, yes, their eyes were indeed opened (3:7), and they did become like God in knowing good and evil, as God admits in 3:22. Conspicuous by its absence,

however, was any hint of the sudden and precipitous descent into sin and its consequent separation from the LORD God who had been so good to them.

Failed in their callings to each other and to God

The sad account continues:

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden (Gen 3:6–8).

Caught in the satanic web of deceit, the woman and her husband failed in their responsibilities toward each other and rebelled against their Creator. By listening to the voice of the serpent instead of God's Word, the woman ate the forbidden fruit and became the first to sin. She then gave the fruit to Adam and, without protest, he also ate.

Though Eve's sin is apparent, Adam's should not be minimized. Rather than warning his wife not to eat, or interceding for her with the Lord after she had eaten, he ate willingly, in clear defiance against God, without protest. In the end, neither Eve nor Adam can be excused. Their hands reached for what their hearts truly desired—the only thing God had denied them. Created in "God's likeness," they desired to wrest from God a prerogative belonging only to Him: to decide what is good and what is evil. In wanting to become "like God" ironically they were no longer like Him. Having thoroughly corrupted God's image, they fled from Him in fear and hid in shame.

The original harmony lost

The first indication of "how much evil" followed Adam's sin was the torn relationship between the man and his wife.²³ When the Lord sought out His rebellious and fleeing creatures, He spoke first with the man, to whom the responsibility for obedience was originally given. Adam tried to excuse himself by shifting the blame to the woman (in whom was his earlier delight), and even to God Himself: "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate" (Gen 3:12). When the Lord held the woman to account, she cast blame on the serpent, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate" (Gen 3:13). And so, creatures who covet divinity and reject accountability to God begin the blame game—an insidious trend that has wreaked havoc on the man-woman relationship ever since. God's splendid tapestry had now become tattered and unsightly.

God's righteous judgment

The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband,

and he shall rule over you. And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you [singular], ‘You [singular] shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you [singular]; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” (Gen 3:14–19)

The righteous God will not be mocked, nor will He be hoodwinked by Satan’s schemes (2 Cor 2:11). God’s pronouncement of judgment begins with Satan. The day will come when Satan will receive in full what he deserves. As he deceived the woman and led her into sin, so through her seed (offspring) his head will be crushed. This judgment is accomplished through Jesus, the seed of the woman, who crushed Satan’s power through His death and resurrection.

To the woman, part of God’s judgment is that pain will accompany childbirth. Furthermore, the LORD God said to her: “Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you” (Gen 3:16).²⁴ With the perfect harmony of marriage destroyed, competition and conflict now corrupt the husband and wife relationship. The painful effects of sin will be evident in her vocation as mother and wife.

God’s judgment was also addressed to the man. The “ground” (*adamah*) from which Adam (*adam*) was taken is cursed. Only with difficulty will the ground cooperate, however hard he struggles to reap its produce. It will grow thorns and thistles so that by the sweat of his brow he will have to fight the ground until the day he physically dies. Adam’s sin, as he was duly warned, would ultimately lead to physical death. Like a drumbeat, “and he died” becomes the repeated refrain in the history of Adam’s descendants (see Gen 5). Tragically, the individual judgments imposed on the man and the woman, and the burdens they bore, affected them both by virtue of their one flesh union.

Against the dark backdrop of God’s righteous judgment, the Genesis 3 narrative contains rays of light and hope for humanity’s future. In addition to the first Gospel promise, God lovingly provides garments to cover their shame. Adam gives the woman an honorable name: Eve (which means in Hebrew, “the mother of all the living”). Whereas Adam is the origin of the human race, Eve is the mother of the human race. They will remain together as husband and wife, still able to have children. They will continue to know the joy of love, though now tempered by the brokenness of sin.

Salvation in Christ

Through Adam’s rebellion sin and death entered into human history and spread to the whole human race (Rom 5:12). Yet from the very beginning the LORD God was intent on re-weaving His tapestry so that human relationships, including man-woman relationships, would reflect His original design. Already in the garden, the Lord promised that the woman’s seed would crush the evil one’s head. Faithful to this promise, He chose Abraham and promised that through him and his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen 12:1–3; 22:18; Gal 3:16–18). In Moses and the Prophets, God repeated His promise and showed forth His work of redemption throughout the history of ancient Israel.

The Incarnation

When “the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman” (Gal 4:4) to rescue human beings from their

plight. The God of Israel entered into the history of Israel. The Second Person of the Trinity took to Himself our human nature and made it His own. Incredible as it sounds, the Creator of the human race became a member of the human race (John 1:14). He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. The Son of God became the true obedient Israel, the seed promised to Adam and Eve, and later to Abraham.²⁵ He became Israel’s righteous messianic king, of the house and lineage of David.

The public ministry of Jesus

Baptized by John, Jesus of Nazareth entered His public ministry as Israel’s messianic king. Through His Son’s public ministry, God the Father inaugurated His end-time saving reign promised and foreshadowed centuries earlier. Now God’s kingly reign was invading the world in the One whose name meant “Savior” of sinners (Matt 1:21). He lived up to His name. Jesus, at a very personal level, brought the kingdom of God to both men and women. He healed the sick—a man named Bartimaeus and Peter’s mother-in-law. He raised the dead—Lazarus and Jairus’ daughter. He drove out demons—from Mary Magdalene and a man blind and mute in a synagogue. He forgave sinners—a paralytic in Capernaum and a woman stigmatized as “sinful.” He publicly conversed with and dined with sinners—a Samaritan woman and a tax collector named Levi. To assist in carrying out His ministry, Jesus called 12 men to be His disciples. Luke points out that a number of women also “were with him” and “provided for them out of their means” (8:1, 3).

The last Adam

Once again we see the warmth and engagement of a God who reaches down to love those whom He has made, but in a way no human mind can fully grasp. In the words of St. Paul, “Oh the depth of the riches and wisdom of God ... how inscrutable his ways!” (Rom 11:33). The Word through whom the first Adam was made became the *Last Adam* Himself (1 Cor 15:45), the origin and representative of the new human race. He lived a perfectly obedient life so that He might reverse and undo the disobedience of the first Adam and his descendants. Just as sin and death came into the world through the first Adam, so through the Last Adam came righteousness before God and eternal life (Rom 5:12–21). Apart from Christ, no man or woman is righteous before God, because “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). By His grace and because of Christ’s all-sufficient work, God has forgiven His wayward creatures—a gift which we personally receive through faith. As St. Paul expressed it in another place, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them” (2 Cor 5:19).

Regenerated and renewed

Men and women, especially in their relationship to each other, desperately need the power of Christ’s rescue and restoration in their lives. Sin makes people “stuck” on themselves—often obsessively so. This ugly sickness has the potential to sap the life out of once healthy relationships and to tear people apart, sometimes irreparably. This bondage to the sinful self must be broken, and Christ alone can do it.

Through Holy Baptism, sinners are joined to Christ and His death and resurrection. “The old self” was crucified with Christ “so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin” (Rom 6:6). As a result we are now dead to sin and alive to God in Christ (Rom 6:11). By Baptism, God regenerates and renews us by His Spirit (Titus 3:5). We have been born anew by water and the Spirit (John 3:1–8). Everyone in Christ is a new creation. Baptism means death to practices that make love grow cold and undermine a trusting

companionship. In the language describing the baptismal life, Paul writes to the Colossians:

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old man with its practices and have put on the new man, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all (Col 3:9–11).

Through daily repentance, Christian men and women, whether single or married, whatever their place in life, become more like the One who created them.

Image of God

In the towering confession of Christ in Colossians 1:15–20, Paul speaks of the incarnate Son of God as the visible image or mirror of God the Father. To see Him is to see the Father (John 14:9). To see Him is also to see the image of what men and women are and will be in Christ. As the apostle reminds us, God is conforming us “to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Rom 8:29; cf. 2 Cor 3:18). Finally, on the last day Christ will come again in glory and “transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body” (Phil 3:21). Baptism unites us with Christ through whom God restores His image in us. Through this precious treasure God also places us in His family of believers, with whom we are one in Christ:

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews and Greeks, slave and free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor 12:12–13).

We are adopted children of God, with the same Brother and the same heavenly Father.²⁶

Reconciled to God and each other

The New Testament everywhere teaches that God has not only reconciled us to Himself but also to each other as baptized Christians. St. Paul calls the Gospel he proclaims the “message of reconciliation,” with specific reference to the relationship of Jew and Gentile. Christ has broken down the wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile “that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility” (Eph 2:15–16). Note Paul’s language: God has created “one new man.” The word “man” denotes humanity: one new human race, one huge new person. In this new humanity created by Christ, the old divisions between Jew and Gentile no longer separate.

The New Testament applies this reconciliation of Jew and Gentile also to male and female. Men and women in Christ are at peace with God and, therefore, with each other. They belong to Christ and are members of His one body, the church, “co-heirs of the grace of life” (1 Pet 3:7).

The apostle Paul presents this exalted vision of oneness in Christ that transcends human differences in his letter to the Galatians:

Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you

are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise (Gal 3:23–29).

This paragraph is a tightly written unit of thought. Apart from Christ and faith, the Jews were held captive, enslaved to the law. Now that Christ and faith have come, they are no longer under the law. “In Christ Jesus,” says Paul, “you are all sons of God, through faith.” All the Galatian Christians are now free as mature “sons of God.” This “sonship” is the same for everyone—both Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female. All who are baptized have “put on Christ,” like a new garment. Each man and woman has been given a new identity before God as a child of God clothed in Christ, the Son of God.

Paul makes his argument with mounting rhetorical force. He first insists that the old division between Jew and Gentile no longer counts in the Galatians’ position before God. He then states that the Greco-Roman division between slave and free no longer divides Christians before God. And to top it all, he proclaims that not even the created distinction between male and female determines their standing in God’s sight.

The apostle’s emphasis on the unity of the church is made crystal clear in this one little sentence: “You are all one in Christ Jesus.” This oneness is paradoxical, for it does not change our gender, stations in life, or ethnicity. Rather, our oneness in Christ influences how we are to live out these differences in life.

THIRD ARTICLE: GOD RENEWS MAN AND WOMAN

The Holy Spirit “calls, gathers, and enlightens the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.”

Luther’s Small Catechism

To the Christians at Ephesus, St. Paul wrote:

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (4:1–3).

In the chapters that follow these words the apostle reveals, like new handiwork unfurled, how God by His Spirit forms the new life in Christ. We are God’s “workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,” says the apostle (Eph 2:10; cf. Ps 143:5, 10). In this creative work, God conforms us to the image of His Son (Rom 8:29), not on some abstract spiritual plane but in everyday earthly callings (e.g., as citizens, governing authorities, children, parents, employers and employees, and wives and husbands). Though seemingly mundane callings, they are the very places in daily life where God does His work in and through His sanctified people.

Jesus said, “You are the light of the world ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven” (Matt 5:14–16). Several New Testament epistles contain a “table of duties”²⁷ that unfolds what life “in the Lord”²⁸ looks like in our varied callings. The words “table” and “duties” may connote to some today a catalog of suffocating rules intended to stifle healthy relationships, not enrich them. To regard them this way would be to misunderstand seriously the content and intent of these scriptural sections. In them, God is actually inviting us to know and experience the restoration of His original creation through Christ, now made possible by the Holy Spirit’s power—including especially God’s creation of man and woman in their re-

lationship to each other. When the pattern of life set forth in these instructive words forms us, we have the high privilege to “adorn [literally, ‘decorate’] the doctrine of God our Savior” (Titus 2:10) so that those outside the church may have “nothing evil to say” (Titus 2:8; cf. v. 5).

Restoring God’s Design in Marriage and Family

Ephesians 5

From the earliest centuries of the Christian era, believers have looked to Ephesians 5 (and its parallel in Col 3:18–19) for the Christian perspective on man and woman in the marriage relationship, and rightly so. Nestled in this chapter is the most sustained and exalted discussion in the New Testament of God’s design for Christian marriage which is intended to mirror the relationship between Christ and His church.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Eph 5:21–33 NIV)²⁹

In discussing the relationship between husbands and wives, the apostle begins by encouraging wives to submit themselves to their husbands. Paul introduces us here to a word that the New Testament writers use often to describe various human relationships—all of them God-pleasing. Here are some representative examples:

- Jesus submits to His earthly parents while growing up (Luke 2:51)
- Christians submit to political authorities (Rom 13:1,5; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13)
- The church submits to Christ (Eph 5:24)
- Servants submit to masters (Titus 2:9; 1 Pet 2:18)
- Younger men submit to elders in the church (1 Pet 5:5)
- The church submits to its faithful leaders (1 Cor 16:16).

In Ephesians 5:21, Paul encourages Christians to submit “to one another out of reverence for Christ.” The expression “to one another” can be interpreted in two different ways. It might mean “everyone to everyone.” In this case, every Christian should be willing to yield to every other Christian. As Paul says elsewhere, “in humility count others more significant than yourselves” (Phil 2:3). Or the expression might mean “some to others as appropriate” (see also Gal 6:2; Luke 12:1; Rev 6:4). In this case, the expression would be applicable for wives to husbands, children to parents, and servants to masters. In either case, Paul’s encouragement in Ephesians 5:21 is addressed to Christian readers in general and does not set aside the specifics of the relationship between husband and wife that begins in Ephesians 5:22.³⁰

The original Greek verb for “submitting to” is appropriately translated “subject yourself to” another. The word (*hypotassō*) is a combination of the Greek preposition *hypo* (“under”) and the verb *tassō* (“to arrange”), signifying an ordered place or arrangement. Foreign to this good and common word in the Scriptures are negative thoughts of inferior human ability or worth, of lesser intelligence or competence. Still more foreign are ideas of oppressive bondage or coerced servitude—as if to make of someone a mere doormat or slave. Rather, viewed in its full biblical context, and particularly when it describes Christian conduct in life’s callings, the word signifies willingly yielding to the other, “an attitude of looking to another; of putting first the desires of another, of seeking another’s benefit.”³¹

The apostle adds that wives are to submit to their husbands “as to the Lord,” or as he puts it in Colossians, “as is fitting in the Lord” (Col 3:18). A Christian woman’s devotion to the Lord Jesus determines why and how she will relate in a God-pleasing way to the husband God has given to her. Such submission, however, must not be understood in the unqualified sense of subservience. All too frequently situations arise where wives, too, must “obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29)—obedience requiring, for instance, that they not endanger their own lives or their children because of a husband’s violence.

Christ loves His bride, the church, with a self-sacrificial love, and because He is her Savior He presents her to Himself “brilliant in purity”³² (ESV, “in splendor”; v. 27). Just as the church gladly and wholeheartedly submits to and serves Jesus Christ her “head,” so also the wife submits herself to her husband as her head. Hence, the church models *for her* the kind of relationship she seeks to have and enjoy with her husband. Depending on Jesus as her Lord and Savior, she is freed to regard her submission to her husband as an expression of willing devotion to Christ. Hers is a high and honorable calling, for when she subjects herself to her husband she reflects for others to see—in a way beyond our power to grasp fully (Eph 5:32)—how the church subjects herself to Christ.

The Apostle Paul calls the husband “the head” of the wife as Christ is “the head” of the church (Eph 5:23). It should be noted that the Greek term translated as “head” (*kephalē*), when used metaphorically, denotes the ruler or leader of another—not, as is sometimes claimed, a source (e.g., the head of a river) or a culminating point (e.g., bringing matters to a head).³³ For example, earlier in Ephesians Paul uses the term “head” to refer to Christ as the ascended Lord of all: “And he [God the Father] put all things under his feet and gave him [the risen and ascended Christ] as head over all things to the church” (Eph 1:22; see also Col 2:10). The analogy of Christ’s relationship to the church as “head” implies that authority belongs to the husband’s headship. When paired with “body,” the term “head” denotes what leads the body (see also 1 Cor 12). The character and exercise of this authority, however, needs to be understood carefully. He is not to dominate, rule harshly, exploit, or embitter her life (Col 3:19). The strength of his love determines the husband’s conduct as head of his wife. As Christ, the Head of the church cares for all the members of His body, so also the husband, as head, is to care for and value his wife as himself.

Paul’s directive to wives to submit to their husbands is a challenging one. Just as challenging is Paul’s directive to husbands: “love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Eph 5:25; see also Col 3:19). The word used for “love” here is the well-known Greek word *agapé*. Contrary to what one may expect, the command to show *agapé* is addressed here only to the husband. This *agapé* love denotes something much more profound than emotional or romantic love. A person does not “fall in” or “out of” this love (*agapé*). Distinctive to the character of this

love—which mirrors the love of God—is that it is not motivated by the object of affection (cf. Deut 7:6–9; Rom 5:6–8). Rather, it is a self-sacrificial act of the will (Eph 5:28, “husbands *should* love their wives”), the nature of which Paul eloquently unfolds for all Christians in 1 Corinthians 13 (see also John 13:34–35).

Paul points to Christ as the most profound example of *agapé* love. Christ showed his love for the church by willingly giving himself up on the cross for her (Rom 5:6–9), despite her faults and blemishes. Indeed, He did this “so that he might present [her] to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be without blemish” (Eph 5:27). The Lord Jesus models *for the husband* the kind of relationship he seeks to have and enjoy with his wife. The husband gives himself in selfless commitment to his wife for her well-being and not for any personal gain. Such love nourishes and cherishes the person with whom he has been made one (Eph 5:29). In a word, he should love her just as Christ loved the church.

When a husband exercises his headship with *agapé* love after the example of Christ, he will do so as one “gentle and lowly in heart.” We recognize that Christ, as the head of the church, calls the church to follow Him. But unlike some of His contemporaries who laid burdens on others impossible to bear, Jesus is the kind of Lord or Leader whose “yoke” is easy and light. We remember well His words: “Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Mt 11:29). Christians therefore sing, “Christ be my leader by night and by day, Safe through the darkness, for He is the way. Gladly I follow, my future His care, Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.”³⁴

Paul goes on to say that the husband should love his wife as his own body, just as Christ loves the church as His own body. Paul even says, by quoting Gen 2:24, that Christ and the church become one flesh. In like manner, by loving his wife, the husband loves himself, his own flesh. Paul then concludes: “let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband” (Eph 5:33).

1 Corinthians 7

The “one flesh” unity receives tangible expression in the sexual relationship of husband and wife, a subject Paul expressly treats in 1 Corinthians 7. Although the apostle seems to be addressing problems not in every respect like ours today,³⁵ his counsel remains as pertinent as ever:

But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control (1 Cor 7:2–5).

In the backdrop of this advice lies Paul’s deep concern about the sexual immorality taking place among the Corinthians—sexual crudities of a kind “not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father’s wife” (1 Cor 5:1). Some men consorted with prostitutes and, what was even worse, regarded their conduct as morally of no consequence. They claimed to be Christians but acted as if the human body is unimportant—as if to say that what you do with your own body

is your own business. Some most likely said that the Christian life is, after all, about the inner soul, not the body. Others, no doubt, argued that when it comes right down to it, the body is spiritually irrelevant. Paul’s response to such conduct was sharp and to the point:

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute. Never! ... Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body (1 Cor 6:15, 19–20).

Through the benefits of Christ’s redemptive work given in Holy Baptism, the physical body becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit. Because we are now owned by God, we are called to glorify Him in our body. This is the godly response to the twisted temptations of Satan, such as pornography, foul language, marital infidelity, and sexual immorality. In keeping with God’s original design, and with His help, Christian men and women in mutual love and respect seek to honor Him by regarding each other as *persons* whose bodies have been created and redeemed by Him.³⁶

1 Peter 3

God intends that the lives of Christian men and women in their relationship to each other will become to their neighbors and friends a vivid testimony to the transformative power of the Gospel of His dear Son. As the maker of a tapestry yearns for more than merely “a private showing,” God desires that the new life He has created in us be displayed for others to see. Echoing the words of Jesus (Matt 5:16), Peter writes: “Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” (1 Pet 2:12). In this context of witness and mission to the world, Peter talks about the potential for a loving Christian marriage to reveal the love of Christ and the church, and so submits his “table of duties.” The section speaking about husbands and wives must especially have come like an encouraging breath of fresh air to the early Christians, who evidently were suffering public ridicule from pagan critics:

Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives—when they see your respectful and pure conduct. Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair, the wearing of gold, or the putting on of clothing—but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious. For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening (1 Pet 3:1–6).

Like Paul, Peter urges wives to submit to their husbands, even those who are not Christians. Textured with the imperishable threads of a quiet and gentle spirit, the respectful submission of wives to their unbelieving husbands has the potential of drawing them to the Lord. Peter lifts up the matriarch Sarah to illustrate how a wife’s respectful relationship to her husband is an adornment highly pleasing to God. In sharp contrast to outward displays of self-importance, a wife’s holy conduct becomes a model of the new life into which all Christians have been baptized.

Husbands, too, receive a strong exhortation from Peter:

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel,³⁷ since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered (1 Pet 3:7).

Whereas Paul emphasized that husbands are to *love* their wives, Peter now calls on them to *honor* their wives and asks each of them to regard his wife “as a fellow heir of the grace of life.” To neglect honoring and respecting his wife can imperil the husband’s relationship to the Lord. As fellow heirs of “the grace of life,” their marriage will surely be strengthened as they deepen their relationship with God through worship and prayer.

In his Large Catechism Luther said of the relation of children to their parents: “Not only has [God] commanded us to love parents but to honor them . . . it is a much higher thing to honor than to love. Honor includes not only love, but also deference, humility, and modesty directed (so to speak) toward a majesty concealed within them” (LC I, 105–6). Surely, what Luther said of children can also be said of husbands toward their wives. Husbands are to honor them, for they, too, as a dear spouse have “a majesty concealed within.”

In every way husbands are to relate to their wives as fellow Christians who have received eternal life through God’s undeserved favor revealed in Jesus their Savior. This means that each man must be kind and considerate toward his wife. In an age when women are often exploited and abused under the strength of men, both physically, mentally, and spiritually, Christian husbands are called to bear witness in word and action to the redeeming and restorative power of Jesus Christ. As they bestow both love and honor on their “fellow heir of the grace of life,” God’s tapestry is unfurled for display.

Reflecting God’s Design in the Church

1 Corinthians 11

When St. Paul heard of a series of problems in the congregation that he founded in Corinth (cf. 1 Cor 1:11), he wrote the Christian men and women there a letter to help them understand and reflect God’s design for their life together in Christ. He loved them dearly (2 Cor 2:4) and for this reason was concerned about unsettling trends there. One such development was revealed in their gatherings for worship: a discrepancy between God’s created design for men and women in marriage and the way they related to each other in public worship. Paul expresses his concern like this:

But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as if her head were shaven. For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man

is now born of woman. And all things are from God

(1 Cor 11:3–12).

In a context of commendation (see 1 Cor 11:2), Paul expresses his desire that the Corinthians understand this: that even in the sacred time of worship when Christians engage in activities enlivened and empowered by the Holy Spirit, they are to honor the created distinction between husband and wife.

The individual strands of Paul’s good counsel above fit into a *general pattern* given to us by God: “... the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.” At a first glance, we may think that Paul is lining up some kind of power structure, an organizational chart with God at the top, woman at the bottom, and man as Christ’s co-mediator in the middle. This hierarchical understanding of “headship”—a superior over an inferior—will not mesh with God’s design, for even Christ has a head. Jesus Christ, God’s incarnate Son, willingly submitted Himself to God His Father for the sake of His body the church. As Martin Franzmann explained, “Christ is ‘subordinated’ as the freely obeying, loving Son who seeks the glory of His Father. . . .”³⁸ The relationship between God the Father and Christ demonstrates that submission to a head must not be seen as something servile or degrading but as a calling to willing and joyful service (Heb. 12:2; 1 Cor 15:28). It also reveals that the position of headship does not justify treating a person in a demeaning or oppressive manner.

What prompted Paul’s discussion was a very practical issue. Like men, women in worship were being led by the Spirit to pray and prophesy.³⁹ Some in the congregation evidently reached the conclusion that in worship it was no longer important for them to reflect the Creator’s original design that the husband serve as head of his wife, and that she serve in respectful submission to her husband. It is possible that some women were trying to make a statement by deliberately removing their veil when praying and prophesying (see the reference to “contentiousness” in 1 Cor 11:16).

In ancient cultures, as in varying degrees also today, customs of dress and public conduct were powerful indicators of inner attitudes and convictions (note the term “custom” in 1 Cor 11:16). Manners mattered. Recent studies have shown that the veiling of women in Greco-Roman culture signified marital status, modesty, and chastity.⁴⁰ Today this practice has no such meaning in most western societies. Paul’s response to behavior in Corinthian worship assemblies indicates that manners do indeed matter, but not merely for propriety’s sake. In the context of the time-bound custom of headcoverings reflecting marital status and chastity, Paul articulates the timeless truth that a Christian wife is to show respect for the authority of her husband.⁴¹ Here Paul’s counsel rests on God’s design in creation for the relationship of husbands and wives, not on human custom and practice of the day. God desires that Christian behavior in worship would uphold the created design rather than subvert it. The Creator’s design, presented in Genesis 1 and 2, is reiterated by Paul:

For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head. . . . (1 Cor 11:7–10)

Paul seeks to raise the sights of both husbands and wives to God’s tapestry designed for their good and His praise. Redeemed by Christ, Christian men and women share equally in the hope of glory (Rom 5:2; 2 Thess 2:14). Created by God, they are distinguished from one another. Created as “the image and glory of

God,” the man testified of his loving headship by respectfully not covering his head or wearing long hair, both of which were cultural signifiers.⁴² Created as “the glory of man,”⁴³ the woman testified of her loving submission to her husband by wearing a veil.⁴⁴ The distinctive purpose and origin of each justified neither masculine suppression nor feminine rebellion, but served as testimony to the beauty of their intended relationship.

Mutual gratitude and thankful recognition of their interdependence in marriage mark the new perspective in Christ:

Nevertheless, *in the Lord* woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. (1 Cor 11:11–12)

In the Lord, Christians affirm that the interdependence of men and women in marriage does not erase the uniqueness of each. Nor does the uniqueness of each erase their interdependence. In His creative excellence, God has richly bestowed on both men and women His gifts which they are called to use in ways that each one is uniquely able to do.

1 Corinthians 14

After Paul’s poem exalting the beauty of genuine, godly love in 1 Corinthians 13, he addresses practical ways to “pursue” such love (1 Cor 14:1). Chapter 14 shows that when love is the “aim” (RSV), the Church is clearly proclaiming the Word of God’s love without disorder or confusion. Language which is not understood fails the test of love because it does not build up the church, nor does it enhance Gospel outreach (1 Cor 14:1–25, esp. 14:12, 23–25). Disorderly, confusing speech and practices are also inconsistent with the God of peace (1 Cor 14:26–33a).

Lastly, Paul discourages confusion in the relationship of men and women in public worship. Paul writes:

As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached? (1 Cor 14:33–36)⁴⁵

In many ways the church at Corinth was Paul’s “wayward child,”⁴⁶ engaging in practices that departed from his teaching and from church-wide practice. With a pastoral heart, he again takes up a sensitive matter having to do with conduct in public worship assemblies. Paul says, “[Women] are not permitted to speak but should be in submission.” This is a challenging passage which is understood in various ways among Christians. The LCMS has consistently understood that the verb “to speak” means “to speak with the church’s authority.”⁴⁷ The issue was women stepping forward to engage in official proclamation (preaching) before the assembly.⁴⁸ This Paul does not permit, and for reasons not merely of custom or even good order. He regards such conduct as inconsistent with the Word of God and its teaching regarding man/woman relationships (1 Cor 14:34, 36) as well as inconsistent with the pursuit of godly love. It is loveless for men to abdicate the responsibility of leadership in the public ministry of Gospel proclamation and for that responsibility to be usurped by women.

The chapter which begins with the words, “Pursue love,” closes with the appeal, “All things should be done decently and in order” (1 Cor 14:40). Bracketed this way, the chapter reminds us that good order and the mutuality of Christian love are woven together in a congregation blessed by God.

1 Timothy 2

Not only in Corinth, but elsewhere in the early churches founded by the apostles the relationship of man and woman was an issue of importance. For example, some people wanted “to forbid marriage,” apparently advocating some form of enforced asceticism (1 Tim 4:3). Consequently, the matter of proper male-female relationships merited specific apostolic instruction. In his first letter to Timothy, Paul devotes one whole chapter to instructions intended for “the household of God, the church of the living God,” and therefore these instructions are not limited to only that time or place (1 Tim 3:14–15; cf. “in every place” in 1 Tim 2:8).

Once again for Paul, conduct and demeanor distinctive to the daily life of men and women in whom Christ lives will also be reflected in their public worship life. In this regard Paul advises Timothy to teach:

I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; likewise also the women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works (1 Tim 2:8–10).

Paul underscores the spiritual leadership role that men have in both home and church. Both male and female are called to fight against their sinful natures. Men, too often inclined towards violence and discord, are instead to lift their “holy hands”—which represent the whole sanctified life—to God in prayer.⁴⁹ Women, too often inclined to emphasize physical, external adornment of their bodies, are commanded to show forth the beauty of good works. Evidently, such instruction was a regular part of apostolic tradition taught also by others (see 1 Pet 3:2–6).

Paul thought it necessary to address another aspect of public worship, this time with Genesis 2–3 as the basis for his instruction:

Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through child-bearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control (1 Tim 2:11–15).

Such instruction may sound offensive to some modern ears, reflecting attitudes demeaning and dismissive of women. Surely we can trust that Paul, “a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth” (2:7), seeks by this biblical word to honor God and adorn the church’s life with what pleases Him. With reverence, we are invited to give Paul a patient and understanding ear.

The Scriptures presuppose that all Christians, men and women, are to be students of the Word of God. In 1 Timothy 2:11–15, Paul is addressing a more specific situation. Within the church’s public worship service, says Paul, women are to learn God’s Word “quietly with all submissiveness.” An individual woman is not subject to every man in the church. Like every other believer, she is to place herself willingly under the authority of the Word of God as it is believed, taught, and confessed in the church.⁵⁰

Paired with a woman learning with all submissiveness is the prohibition that woman may not “teach” or “exercise authority” over man. In the Pastoral Epistles, the term “teach” (Gk: *didaskō*) has a technical sense denoting public and authoritative transmission of scriptural and apostolic teaching. It is the kind of teaching done by Paul (1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11), Timothy (1 Tim 4:11, 13; 6:2; 2 Tim 4:2), Titus (Titus 2:1), and the overseers and elders (1 Tim 3:2; 5:17; 2 Tim 2:2, 24; Titus 1:9). Concerning the exercise of

authority, that is, the *spiritual* authority of the church as established by God (AC XXVIII),⁵¹ the entire church possesses the Office of the Keys from God, but only certain men (i.e., pastors) may publicly exercise it on behalf of the entire church. Women are not to exercise the unique authority of the pastoral office. Only men may be pastors and hold other church offices that are charged with assisting the pastor in carrying out his pastoral authority.⁵²

Men and women together thus give honorable witness to the Creator who made them for each other in the beginning. Paul does not base his instruction on a false notion of intellectual inferiority or mere accommodation to time-bound cultural norms. He grounds his instruction on the original creation and fall recorded in Genesis 2–3: “For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.” The very sequence of the original creation of Adam and Eve indicates the creator’s will. To this Paul adds an example to avoid. Listening to Satan rather than the Word of God, Eve instead gave in to the serpent’s deception (see 2 Cor 11:3) and became a transgressor.

Nothing here, however, implies that women bear a greater guilt before God or are more easily deceived than men, an erroneous deduction made by some of Paul’s contemporaries in Judaism and by many in the Christian tradition. On the contrary, Adam, who was not deceived by the serpent, willfully disobeyed the Word of God. Paul attributes the entry of sin into the world to Adam (Rom 5:12–21). Furthermore, Paul’s sternest and most explicit warnings in the pastoral letters are against false teachers who are male, not female (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17–18; 3:5–9).

Far from denigrating woman, Paul goes on to speak of her high calling. With a possible allusion to Eve as “the mother of all living” (Gen 3:20),⁵³ the apostle says “she will be saved through child-bearing” (1 Tim 2:15). Here he affirms the vocation of motherhood as God-pleasing within the new creation. “Through child-bearing” here should not be understood as “the means of salvation but as an important God-ordained role of women established in creation that is not set aside through redemption.”⁵⁴ Paul commends marriage and motherhood later in this epistle (1 Tim 5:10, 14), even though marriage was disparaged by some (1 Tim 4:3). Motherhood is a wonderful way through which God continues to act as our Creator and bestows on women a unique honor.⁵⁵ As the Lutheran Confessions remind us in their commentary on this verse (1 Tim 2:15), “Thus the duties of a woman please God on account of faith, and a believing woman who faithfully serves in these duties of her calling is saved” (Ap XXIII, 32).

In conclusion, the English Standard Version appropriately gives 1 Timothy 2 the section title “Prayer for All People.” At the outset Paul makes known his overwhelming desire that the church—men and women—pray for all people, “that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way” (1 Tim 2:2). This is pleasing to “God our Savior who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all. . . .” (1 Tim 2:3–6). The Apostle’s instructions are given so that the church will adorn its public life with godliness and dignity, and the Gospel of God’s Son will be preached and believed without hindrance.

Summary Reflections on Man and Woman in the Bible

We have considered key scriptural texts that speak to the man-woman relationship using the framework of the creeds, which confess the creating, redeeming, and sanctifying work of the Holy Trinity. The Triune God makes humanity in His image. He makes a single humanity composed of many very different persons, origi-

nating in the first man and first woman. Humanity (the tapestry) is personally created in God’s likeness, reflecting Him as His beloved companions, relating and responsible to Him, given a dominion to exercise rightly from the One who holds all dominion. Humanity is personally created as male or female. This is a gift, not a choice, so that we might “be fruitful and multiply.” The very act of the first creation of man and woman shows the intention God has for His individual persons to dwell in community with one another. Thus the tapestry’s pattern is clearly seen—different persons interwoven together into the whole, beautifying and strengthening the other. This is true for the marriage God gives. This wholeness and harmony are also what God intends to be true for all humanity.

The Triune God redeems humanity despite our fall into sin and separation from Him and from one another. What is true for our first parents is true for us all. In sin, we add to and subtract from God’s Word, losing it as we seek to “improve” it, and—more importantly—losing the One Whom we no longer hear or heed. The fall from Him is the fall from life, the loss of the eternal life He intends, and the demise of the life even now which would meet our deepest needs. So it is that even the two who are one flesh tear apart from one another: she is deceived by the Tempter’s lies to forget the Word of God which was intended to bless her and her husband; he blames God and also attacks the one who is, in effect, his own body.

The destruction is so complete that only a new Adam, a new Man, can repair it. He comes in the person of Christ, the person of the Word made flesh. He takes on our human flesh to restore the torn flesh that is reflected in the violent and destructive ways God’s persons-made-for-community treat one another. This is true not only in wars with “the enemy and stranger,” but even in violence and hate between the two-person unity of man and woman. It is His flesh—the flesh that is torn, suffers, and dies—which, in stunning paradox, heals the torn flesh and tapestry of humanity. So also, it is only by such forgiving, selfless, submissive love, that man and woman find their personhood and their community with one another fully and graciously restored, in marriage and in every relationship made whole by Christ.

That restoration begins as the worn and dirty tapestry of humanity is washed, sanctified, and renewed in the waters of Baptism. By the power of Word and Spirit, male and female persons become fully the persons God intended. Beginning here and completed in the resurrection, embodied males and females find that we have been made living stones and holy priests. Whatever our place in life, we have new dignity, and in every place in life it shows its effects. Man and woman now find God’s original earthly intentions to be more beautiful than our wildest dreams, for we come to know the goodness of serving one another according to who we are as persons, united in the community Christ creates, whether in the home or the church. Submitting to one another, we also submit always to Christ and so accept in faith the particular responsibilities He gives to us here and now, as father or mother, husband or wife, brother or sister, employer or employee, citizen or governor, pastor or parishioner. Structure becomes wholesome, not hierarchical in any power-grabbing sense. Order remains, but people are newly transformed in the way of Christ’s holiness. Such is the transformation reflected in the tapestry that God is weaving in His people. This is what the Bible says of the embodied persons—male and female—whom God has made and longs to redeem and renew.

In *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis observes that God became human not simply to improve His human creatures, but to produce something new—creatures who are His very sons and daughters. “It is not like teaching a horse to jump better and better but like turning a horse into a winged creature.” Christ’s work, says Lewis,

is “not mere improvement but Transformation.”⁵⁶ In the language of the Apostle Paul, God’s sons and daughters in Christ are not upgraded versions of the old: “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God . . .” (2 Cor 5:17–18a). “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:4–5). The new life we live as men and women has its source in Christ Jesus. May He conform our relationships to the Creator’s tapestry.

MAN AND WOMAN IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Scriptural Affirmations and Implications

The goodness of man and woman: individuality in community

At the end of the sixth day, Genesis 1:31 declares that all God had made was “very good.” The very good stands apart after five days of creation had been declared “good.” God pronounces His creation of man and woman on the sixth day “very good,” for they perfectly reflected His very image. Despite the subsequent fall into sin and the total loss of our “likeness to God” with respect to righteousness, holiness and purity, it is still true that creation—humanity included—is judged to be “good” in some sense. Fallen man and woman are “good” not because we are in any way righteous, but because we reflect God in other ways specific to human nature. Both Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9 refer to the image or likeness of God, even in fallen humanity, and so condemn the taking of human life and any cursing of human beings. From this comes an understanding reflected both in early orthodox teachers and our Lutheran Confessions:

- That human righteousness has been totally lost after Adam, so also the image of God’s righteousness in all people is lost and must be restored by new birth.
- That in terms of natural abilities (for example, reason, intellect, speech, and physical abilities that distinguish man from the rest of creation) the image of God continues, although marred, deformed, and debilitated by sin.⁵⁷

One more aspect of goodness from the image and likeness of God is still clearly reflected in humanity, despite our fallen nature. Man is created not merely as the male, Adam, but as “male and female.” Genesis 1:26–27 makes reference to humanity both in the singular, “man” and “him,” and in the plural, “male and female,” “them.” Both in our individuality (or “personhood”) and relationships, particularly the relationship of male and female, essential aspects of the goodness of God’s creation of humanity are revealed.

Individual personhood, therefore, must be distinguished from the fullness of *humanity*. Every individual is fully human, but an individual alone cannot express the fullness of humanity. St. Augustine argued for peace and unity in society in the remembrance that all men were created from one man, and “this fact should teach mankind to preserve a harmonious unity in plurality.”⁵⁸ Or, as C. S. Lewis put it: “Jointly the two become fully human. ‘In the image of God created he *them*.’ Thus, by a paradox, this carnival of sexuality leads us out beyond our sexes.”⁵⁹

Our creation as male and female therefore tells us that “We are created not for life in isolation but for community, a community which binds those who are different.”⁶⁰ God’s “very good” work of human creation continues to be seen in this beautiful fact that from

the beginning, we are made not to stand alone, but together. As individuals, we were made not to be isolated tangled threads, but to be part of a divine tapestry reflecting His beautiful design.

This determines how Christians understand human personhood. In contemporary society personhood is often understood autonomously, in isolation from relationship. “I am my own person,” is our declaration, by which we intend to assert a measure of independence from accountability to others. Such a perspective does not acknowledge that individual identity is thoroughly connected to relationships. Especially within marriage, but also in our other relationships, to make autonomous personhood the ideal is dangerous.⁶¹ To the contrary, our creation as male and female shows that while each individual is unique and fully human, personhood is not distinct from, but dependent upon relationships. I am not some autonomous person against the world—I am a person who is always united in relationship to other persons as son or daughter, father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, coworker, friend. I am not and cannot be a human person apart from my relationships. Individuality cannot be separated from community.

The procreative paradigm

The human individuality-community connection is clearest with respect to our nature as male and female. In the unique combination of male and female persons there is a completed humanity which is able to procreate and pass on the image of God (albeit in a marred and corrupted sense). Moreover, in our male and female uniqueness, humanity exhibits two very different types of individual personhood which are able to live with one another in a community that is enriched, not diminished, by our differences. “[T]he fellowship for which we are created is a fellowship of those who are different and who yet are joined in a personal community of love.”⁶²

If we are to draw implications from creation as male and female for a proper understanding of the complementarity of human individuality and community, we are compelled by Scripture’s story to highlight marriage, as this document does. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Gen 2:24 NIV). Both our Lord Jesus and His apostle Paul draw the proper understanding of marriage from Genesis 2:24. Marriage requires a loosing of the bond with father and mother for the sake of a new bond: the faithful union of man and woman which culminates in their becoming one flesh. From this text, Jesus identifies divorce as a sign of sin in its failure to observe that what God has joined, man must not separate (Matthew 19:1–9). From it, Paul insists that husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies since the two are one flesh (Eph 5:29–31). When God blesses a marriage with the birth of a child, the child is in every sense the “one flesh” of his or her mother and father. There, in the little child, we see the most obvious earthly result of the goodness of individuality in community.

Implications beyond the paradigm

The goodness of individuality in community goes beyond procreative marriage itself. A childless couple is also able to exhibit, richly and beautifully, the blessings and goodness of individuality in community. Every marital union of faithful, committed love will make known God’s intention that all individuals are called into community. Godly marriage takes us beyond our individual identities, so that we give ourselves to another. Indeed, the childless couple may more easily model a life of service to others than couples whose commitment to their children makes it more difficult to engage in generous love toward the wider communities of church and society.⁶³

Similarly, the single person who lives respectfully and honorably in relationship with the other sex as “brother or sister” also reflects the goodness of individuality and community. Our Lord commends the chaste single life as a blessing “for the sake of the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 19:10–12) and He Himself models it. St. Paul also both commends and models single chastity (see 1 Cor 7:8, 32–35) as a means to free an individual to please the Lord without distraction. Consider the difference between these biblical perspectives toward singleness and the prevalent perspectives of a sinful world. Singleness in our society is frequently viewed as an opportunity to live “for myself” without responsibility toward others (sexual or otherwise) or as a mark of personal failure for not having attracted someone. God’s Word views singleness as an opportunity and calling for service to Him and His world.

What is clear is that individuals, whether male or female, married or single, are called to exercise their individual spiritual gifts in a way that pleases God and benefits others (1 Cor 12:7, 27; 1 Pet 4:10). Similarly, they are freed and empowered by God’s grace to exercise their individual responsibilities in daily life in church, employment, and society in ways that benefit the whole (Eph 6:1–9; Col 3:22–4:1; 1 Pet 2:13–22).

All this is indeed true of every individual Christian and must not be minimized, but neither should we ignore specific responsibilities God has given us as male and female. Older men and women should be treated as fathers and mothers, respectively. Younger men and women should treat one another as brothers and sisters—all of which is done in sexual purity (1 Tim 5:1–2). Christian individuals will approach their everyday life with an understanding that God’s Word addresses what human experience recognizes as typical masculine and feminine traits. So men will take seriously the biblical counsel not to neglect prayer and to discipline their tendency toward anger and competitiveness. Women will not ignore the warning to avoid dress and conduct that are immodest or irreverent (1 Tim 2:8–10).⁶⁴ Notice that, in such ways, sexual identity remains intact, but it is disciplined by Christian morality and responsibility.

Disrespect toward individual identity

When individuality in the context of community is not rightly understood or practiced, one or the other suffers. A single-minded pursuit of community—ecclesial, marital, societal, or otherwise—will minimize the individual person and his or her needs, gifts, and abilities. In the name of marriage, frequently the wife’s individuality has been stifled as her needs are ignored and her potential gifts to marriage, family, and wider society are scorned or unappreciated. The same is true in the church, where institutional concerns can overwhelm and undermine individual needs and gifts. In particular, our Synod, in keeping with Scripture and historical church practice, rightly does not ordain women to the office of the ministry. At the same time, some within our Synod have wrongly ignored, minimized, and devalued the gifts and talents of women. Women who have lectured on various topics such as abortion, teaching techniques, or theological issues have sometimes been vilified as violating “the order of creation” and refusing to accept their “proper place.” The rights and responsibilities of women—as full members of the priesthood of believers—to serve God in various earthly vocations, not just the family, have been ignored or implicitly denied. There is a legitimate frustration that women’s theological questions, concerns, and insights have sometimes been treated disrespectfully or as illegitimate. Right practice with respect to ordination to the pastoral office does not legitimize or excuse wrong or abusive practices elsewhere.

The Bible’s clear direction regarding responsible male leadership in the home and male ordination to pastoral ministry may not be assumed to mean that only men can exercise any kind of leadership or authority in home, church, or society. Some view this as an inconsistency, but it is not. In Baptism every believer is called to service in his or her vocations within the various spheres of life. The body of Christ requires that its individual members exercise the wide variety of their gifts, whether that individual is male or female (1 Cor 12:7). Therefore our church has affirmed the calling of women teachers, deaconesses, professors, and missionaries. We have endorsed such organizations as the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League and the Women’s Leadership Institute. We have affirmed the freedom of congregations to grant women’s suffrage and have opened to women various lay leadership positions in congregations, districts, and Synod. We have recognized and encouraged the leadership of women in business, government, the professions, and other sectors of society.⁶⁵

Such leadership of women is not inconsistent with Scriptural teaching. On the contrary, it exists in the very context of our church’s life and teaching which upholds and promulgates the divinely ordered responsibility of pastors and husbands. When women serve in this way they are enhancing the work of the priesthood of all believers, serving as members of the body of Christ, and not usurping pastoral authority or violating the “order of creation.” Scripture provides numerous examples of such service, for instance Priscilla’s instruction of Apollos (Acts 18:26) or the teaching Timothy received from his mother and grandmother (2 Tim 1:5).

This also helps to address the circumstance of single women in the church.⁶⁶ Paul’s advice to wives which urges them to endorse and encourage their husband’s spiritual responsibility obviously does not apply to unmarried women (1 Cor 14:35). However, single women are encouraged to seek spiritual counsel from their pastor or those who assist him in ministry. Moreover, a single woman, like a single man, is reminded by the Word of God that she has a special opportunity for service to Christ (see 1 Cor 7:32–35). The church ought not place unbiblical restrictions on those whom God has uniquely enabled to provide “undivided devotion to the Lord” (1 Cor 7:35). Even as Paul joyfully commended numerous women for their work in the Lord among the Christians of Rome (see Rom 16:3–16), so today the God-given individual gifts and talents of women are a blessing for the church to celebrate and utilize.

The breakdown of community in the name of individualism

The gifts of the Holy Spirit given to individuals, both male and female, are intended for service to God and His church. The tapestry of a Christian marriage provides living witness to the intention of God for men and women to complement one another in service to Him and His people. As a couple lives in chaste, life-long fidelity and love, exercising their individual gifts and responsibilities in complementary ways, forgiving one another and maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, a tapestry of the beautiful marriage of Christ with His Church is portrayed (see Eph 4:3; 5:21ff.). Thus, a Christian marriage becomes a living witness and testimony to the love of Christ and His bride, the church.

Sadly, unrestrained individualism is a very real danger to God’s beautiful tapestry of marriage. Statistics become dated as soon as they are published, but three aspects of current North American marital life are inarguable: (1) the high rate of divorce; (2) the prevalence of sexual relationships outside of marriage (with consequent results: widespread abortion and increasing numbers of children growing up in single-parent households);⁶⁷ and (3) the ongoing attempt to redefine marriage as any legal romantic bond between two persons (e.g., “same-sex marriage”). Each of these indicators

may be viewed, at least in part, as marks of individuality taking precedence over community (in specific, the marital/familial community, but also societal community). This is not simply nor even primarily a religious observation, but is an assessment by researchers at secular universities, who sometimes describe the trend as “secular individualism.”⁶⁸

Consider divorce. Some divorces are unavoidable—for instance, where a spouse abandons the marriage, or persists in stubborn infidelity, or physically drives away the other spouse through abuse. Yet, divorce always involves sin on the part of one or both spouses. Such sin represents a triumph of selfish individualism over the well-being of the spouse and their marriage and family, and it occurs at a significant cost to society.

Secondly, sexual relationships outside the bond of marriage and cohabitation without marriage also involve a decided refusal to make the generously self-giving commitments to another that marriage requires. Because of overriding individual fears, desires, or priorities, another individual is treated only as a potential or occasional partner, and not as the one to whom a life-long commitment has been made and kept. If and when pregnancy occurs, abortion is far more prevalent among unmarried than married women. When a woman gives birth to a child outside marriage, the child from the single-parent household suffers under the parents’ failure to make or keep a commitment to one another. This child is burdened with uncertainty about at least one parent’s presence and commitment to him or her, learning implicitly that the parent’s individual desires are more important than the security and well-being of the family, a problem also occurring all too often in cases of divorce. Moreover, the “single-parent household” will, on average, experience significantly greater economic distress than a married household.

Finally, homosexual relationships, regardless of how they are labeled or the level of commitment existing between partners, are also examples of individualism over community.⁶⁹ Central to the moral inappropriateness of homosexual behavior is that it ignores the created purposes and functions of our bodies. Homosexual activity is not a joining of different persons, but of *like* persons; it involves the *same* sex, not the God-given *opposite* sex. In their sameness, homosexual partners, whether two males or two females, deny the gift of their creation as male or female.

Homosexual relationships are therefore by definition non-procreative. Man and woman rightly enter marriage not only to be in community with one another, but also, depending upon the will of God, to be partners in the procreation of a family. Children are a natural extension of the marital community and they become part of a wider community. While not every marriage will bear children, only the marriage of a man and a woman can affirm the procreative purpose for marriage (Gen 1:28). Rejection of the procreation and nurture of children as a purpose and intention of marriage is an example of individualism at the expense of community.⁷⁰ It ignores or denies the role of marriage within the wider community of humanity.

In light of these remarks, it is important to note that while homosexual behavior is identified by Scripture as sin (Rom 1:21–27), it is one sin among many,⁷¹ and just as the Gospel frees every other kind of “immoral” person (see 1 Cor 6:9–11) for new life in the community of the church, it does the same for the homosexual. God’s desire for the homosexual is the same as it is for the heterosexual: repentance of *all* sins, new birth in Christ Jesus, and full incorporation into the body of Christ.

The unmarried person with sexual desires who nonetheless restrains those desires exercises an exemplary sacrificial love. The challenge of celibate chastity confronts every unmarried person, homosexual or heterosexual.⁷² This is God’s command for all peo-

ple in order to preserve marriage and for the well-being of society. A comment on the witness to Christ and to the beauty of the Creator’s design which brought a homosexual woman to faith and to chastity is a salutary reminder also to everyone as we seek to share God’s truth about life as male and female:

They knew I was gay, and that I was pretty vocal about it. They tried, when I asked, to explain church teaching on homosexuality, but did it very poorly. I’m glad that they instead wanted to talk with me about the Crucifixion as the reconciliation of justice and mercy, or Creation as an explanation of the goodness and intrinsic, poetic meaning of the physical world.⁷³

Christians, whose bodies are claimed in Baptism as temples of the Holy Spirit by which God is glorified (1 Cor 6:19) should be especially aware that they have a unique opportunity in today’s society to give a much-needed witness to the world. Chaste singleness testifies that our individual personhood does not find its completion in the pursuit of individual self-fulfillment and personal desires. Its witness has both an eternal and a practical element. The enduring element of celibate chastity is its testimony to the Word of Christ that marriage does not continue in eternity so that marriage is not placed on par with our relationship to God.⁷⁴ The practical witness consists in the ability of the Christian single person to devote undivided attention to God and His church.⁷⁵

Failure to address the inherent gifts and weaknesses of man and woman

Man and woman are uniquely created. Their individuality is in some measure an aspect of their sexual nature. It is true that each is made in the image of God and so shares a likeness to Him that is more similar than dissimilar to one another. Yet each also has within his or her created nature particular avenues for the destructive power of sin to show itself. It is the nature of temptation to be individualized. The physically strong and powerful person will know an individualized temptation to assert that physical strength in selfish ways that violate God’s will and the communities He seeks to create. The individual who is intellectually gifted or particularly articulate will be tempted to assert these gifts to humiliate, confuse, or cheat those who are less gifted.

It is the same with our sexual embodiment. Men, typically stronger than women physically, too often misuse their strength in violence toward women. According to the Center for Disease Control, women are twice as likely as men to be the victims of all forms of abuse, and three times more likely than men to die from domestic violence.⁷⁶ Women are designed by their Creator to carry, give birth, and provide the earliest nurture to a child. This means a woman may be tempted to abort an inconvenient child or to believe that she is the only parent a child needs.

These are two examples of how sexual embodiment becomes a vehicle for sin’s power. The social sciences and popular books, even in an environment of sexual politics, have made plain many of the disparate ways men and women act and think, because of their gender.⁷⁷ Such sexual differences are, in virtually every case, both great gifts from God and also areas where men and women must recognize their vulnerability as sinners.

Simple observations may be pertinent here with respect to Christian life in the home and the church. To some degree such observations are stereotypical and—certainly—have countless exceptions in the relationships of Christian men and women. Nonetheless, there may be some value in the following considerations.

Men have frequently used women sexually and exploitatively, for example, in pornography, prostitution, and other anonymous sexual relationships, as well as in more long-term relationships and even within marriage. Men have abandoned their children without support or involvement more frequently than women. Men tend to be less inclined than their wives to attend church or Bible study or to provide spiritual direction and nurture for children. While churches have focused appropriate attention on the role of women in home, church, and society, we should not ignore the significant problem of declining responsibility by men in each of these spheres of human life. Male abdication of responsibility in home, church, and society is at crisis levels.⁷⁸

Women may also have some troubling tendencies more frequently than men. Recent studies indicate that women initiate divorce more often than men. Women seem more likely to reject any need for men than men are to reject any need for women. Increasing numbers of women intentionally choose to have and raise children without a husband.⁷⁹

Such observations may help us to understand better certain portions of Scripture. Some passages are viewed as offensive because they are not egalitarian between the sexes. Men are told to honor women as the weaker sex and to love women sacrificially. Husbands are commanded to care for their wives' material needs and told that they are to raise their children with gentleness. Such commands are fitting in light of a male potential for abuse, neglect of children, and abdication of responsibility toward women and children.

Wives are cautioned not to take over the spiritual authority and responsibility of their husbands. Instead they are to support and encourage their husband's Christ-centered leadership. Given the increasing tendency by men to avoid such responsibility, this, too, seems particularly relevant.

In these ways, men, often disinclined toward matters of the home and of spiritual things, are compelled to take responsibility for these very things as husbands and fathers. Women are reminded not to neglect what only they can do and be as wives and mothers. However, where men are absent or persistently abdicate spiritual responsibility, women then must accept the full responsibility of spiritual leadership in the home. Moreover, male abdication of responsibility should not be used as an argument against women's responsible leadership in home and church.

Submission to Christ

A Christian husband and father is called to submit to Christ, not only as any Christian would be called, but also because he is responsible for setting a pattern of submission in his household (1 Cor 11:3). In faithful, submissive love for Christ and according to His own example, the husband loves his wife as Christ loves His bride, the church (Eph 5:25). He provides a leadership of love, establishing a caring, safe environment for his wife and children. A Christian woman's willingness to honor and recognize her husband's leadership occurs with the recognition that her submission is following the pattern of the submission of her husband to Christ (1 Cor 11:3). In her respect for her husband's sacrificial leadership, she exhibits the perfect submission of the Bride of Christ to Christ's own loving sacrifice (Eph 5:22–24). As warp and weft threads in a tapestry of divine love, both husband and wife are therefore submitting to Christ and making a home for their children in which Christ and His loving self-sacrifice are at the center. Both are living in submission, which is but another description of a life that does "nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider[s] others better than yourselves" (Phil 2:3)—which is to say: both are living in the way of Christ Jesus.⁸⁰

Clarifications

The foregoing study and practical implications affirm the ongoing validity of several theological emphases, including the priesthood of all believers, the order of creation, the meaning of vocation, and the third use of the Law. Each of these teachings deserves a brief explanation.

Priesthood of all believers

"Let everyone, therefore, who knows himself to be a Christian, be assured of this, that we are all equally priests ..." says Martin Luther, reminding us of the biblical teaching we call by such names as "the priesthood of all believers" the "spiritual priesthood," or "the universal priesthood" (see 1 Pet 2:5, 1 Pet 2:9. Rev 1:5–6).⁸¹ This teaching is anchored in the truth that there is but one true and perfect priest, the Great High Priest, Jesus Christ. By His atoning work, we are baptized into the holy priesthood to pray for, teach, and forgive one another in our daily lives.⁸² Above all, this priesthood is a matter of sacrificing ourselves—the whole of our lives—to God, which is a calling not only for those ordained to the pastoral ministry, but to all believers.⁸³ To be a priest of God is to have all the rights and responsibilities of priests—and this is true of all the baptized, male or female.⁸⁴ Every woman as well as every man has this calling equally, for all are baptized into Christ. This shows itself in the common life of the church, particularly in prayer and praise: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in [all of!] you richly, as you teach and admonish one another and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts toward God" (Col 3:16).

Order of creation⁸⁵

The "order of creation," as we have presented it here, is the basic and important truth that what God has done in the creation of the world continues to be relevant and paradigmatic for today—and until the end of time. The order of creation may be compared and contrasted with the "order of redemption" or the Biblical idea of a "new creation."⁸⁶ Through our redemption in Christ Jesus, we are a new creation and "the old is gone" (2 Cor 5:17). This reminds us that none of our human differences—race, age, intellect, sex, and so forth—are relevant to our baptismal regeneration, our redemption in Christ, our membership in the Body of Christ, or our responsibility to serve Christ and one another.

We are aware that the idea "order of creation" is not an expression used in the Bible and that it may be used in various ways, some of which are objectionable from and even contrary to a Lutheran theological perspective. Future study of this terminology, its history, its potential for misunderstanding, and its value as a means of communicating biblical truth effectively may be of benefit. What is emphasized here, however, is that redemption does not diminish the importance of God's work of creation. His created design has continuing significance in the lives of men and women today.⁸⁷ Different created traits enable God's redeemed humanity to live rightly within the order of creation.

As noted above, God's creation as "male and female" informs our identity as God's redeemed children. Our inherent identity includes our sexuality, for we are embodied creatures. God's creation of marriage, beginning with our first parents, provides a pattern (paradigm) for what marriage will always be. The responsibilities God gives to us as humanity in community and in our personal individuality continue to reflect the pattern begun with creation: we are to be fruitful and to exercise responsible stewardship of the world God has made. The husband should recognize his very body/flesh in his wife and so care for her sacrificially, respecting her as a fellow heir to the kingdom and supporting her use of the spiritual

gifts and responsibilities God has given her. A wife is to respect, support, and help her husband, willingly acknowledging his spiritual gifts and responsibilities in marriage and home. Such spiritual leadership would be undermined if the church did not also reflect it. The New Testament pattern for church leadership complements the Biblical requirement for leadership in the home, by ordaining qualified men to pastoral ministry.

Vocation

This study affirms Luther's emphasis on vocation, which is connected with the previous two teachings. All believers are equally God's priests. Our priestly service, however, is unique to our own individuality and circumstances—our created identity and our individual callings—so that the Christian life is not one of self-serving chaos. One of the Reformation's great "rediscoveries" was this truth: that every Christian—ordained or lay person—is intended to serve God in his or her individual circumstances, not only in the church, but also at home, at work, and in society. I don't serve God as a priest "in general," but in the *specifics* of my own life and circumstance, serving the specific people that I encounter. So the Augsburg Confession declares specific ways of serving God here and now: "for example, that the father of a family works to support his wife and children and raises them in the fear of God; that the mother of a family bears children and looks after them ..." (AC XXVI 10). Gustaf Wingren explains: "Vocation means that those who are closest at hand, family and fellow-workers, are given by God: it is one's neighbor whom one is to love. Therein vocation points toward a world which is not the same for all people."⁸⁸ This important insight is perhaps best known from the biblical Table of Duties which concludes Luther's Small Catechism. It also shows itself in the variety of vocations in ministry established by churches through the ages, most of which were and are open to both men and women. In a similar fashion, this study reaffirms the continuing importance of our individual calling as man and woman today.

Third use of the law

The fourth teaching underlying this study is the use of the law as a guide. Recent years have seen a growing number of Christians reject this teaching, often called "the third use of the law."⁸⁹ The idea is basic: although we are redeemed in Christ, by grace, through faith, apart from the law, and the law has no more condemning power over us, believers continue to obey God's commands and guidance.⁹⁰ Therefore we have sought to reaffirm and apply what the Bible teaches us about man and woman, including its specific directions for how we are to relate as male and female.

Avoiding misunderstanding

The preceding emphases help to correct misunderstandings or abuses of biblical teaching in our daily lives. The biblical teachings of male headship and ordination are fraught with potential for abuse. Therefore it must be clearly stated that any understanding of male leadership in the home or the church as a personal privilege or claim to power is a contradiction of Christ. Any emphasis upon female submission that ignores the command to *all Christians* to do nothing "out of selfish ambition or vain conceit" (Phil 2:3) inevitably misinterprets leadership as privilege or power instead of the service Jesus teaches (Lk 22:26–27).

For a man to abuse his leadership is an affront to Christ and the Word of God. Martin Luther recognized that marriage dare not ground itself in selfishness, but only in sacrifice and gentle love. He scolded men for seeing headship as the equivalent of a worldly office of command and power and privilege.⁹¹ When men are au-

thoritarian and selfish, women may find it impossible to respect their husbands and, perhaps, morally necessary to reject his sinfully enacted "authority." Similarly, where Christian women, out of pride or other sinful emotions, reject the Word's command to submission "as to the Lord," the Church's witness to Christ suffers.

Additionally, the foregoing understanding should not be misconstrued as implying male superiority or female incompetence in any way. Some of the earliest teachers of the Bible cautioned against such misunderstanding—cautions just as necessary in our day. We should not fail to see the responsibility of both men and women to "obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29) and to witness to the Christian faith. We should not allow male incompetence or falsehood to stand unchallenged in the name of submission.⁹² A husband should listen to his wife with the recognition that her wisdom, insight, understanding, and piety as a human person, holy priest, and sister in Christ will complement his own.

Due to the rapidly changing environment of the contemporary world, the discussion of male-female relationships must continue also in the church. It is important that it genuinely be a *discussion*, and that women be afforded full opportunity to take part. For this reason, as indicated in the preface, the CTCR intends to continue the process begun by this document, in whatever formats seem most effective, to address both the questions and concerns of Christian men and women regarding their relationship with Christ and one another. Women as well as men should be asked to provide insights, concerns, and questions in the ongoing discussion. Our goal is that questions—some old and others new—will be patiently and effectively considered, and that young men and women in particular will be offered timely, constructive, and helpful guidance according to the Word of God.

Conclusion: Centrality of the Gospel

In the end, our discussions and affirmations regarding our creation as male and female and our church's public teaching and practice must find their place within the life of faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the greatest challenge for us is to speak about these matters from the standpoint of the Cross. We dare not forget that the heart of the Christian message is not guidance for marriage or sexuality or any other current issue, but the truth of an irreparably broken world that finds forgiveness, hope, and salvation only in Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection.

Whatever we say about sexuality, it must not overshadow the Gospel of Christ and His Cross. After all, the culmination of any true appreciation of our creation as male and female goes beyond the blessings that come of our sexual embodiment for this life, as much as we rejoice in the gifts of marriage, disciplined sexuality, and sanctified masculinity and femininity.

All these are good things—good gifts of God to be honored. Yet, there is no higher honor given to humanity as male and female—no greater good—than that which was identified at least as early as St. Augustine (354–430 AD). Augustine's insight was that in the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, God honors and blesses His work of making man, male and female. By the means of Mary's embodiment as a woman, and our Lord Jesus' embodiment as a man, the whole of humanity, both male and female, plays a role in nothing less than the salvation of the world.⁹³ If God Himself gives such dignity to man and woman, then each of us, whether male or female, is also called to live within his or her individual, sexual personhood, uniquely, yet toward God's own eternal purposes within the tapestry He has woven.

APPENDIX: 1995 Resolution 3-10**To Prepare a Comprehensive Study
of the Scriptural Relationship
of Man and Woman****Overtures 3-70–71** (*CW*, p. 174)

WHEREAS, It is apparent that confusion exists in the Synod, as well as in our culture regarding the relationship of male and female. This is evident from the overtures received by the convention. These overtures deal with a diversity of subjects: ordination of women, woman suffrage in our congregations, use of female assistants in the public worship. Additional overtures ask for a definition of the orders of creation as they relate to the priesthood of believers in the service of women in the church.

The committee therefore recommends a comprehensive study and offers the following resolution. Among the questions which might be included in such a study are:

1. Creation, Gen. 1:26–30: Does the image of God here apply to each individual person, or to the race? Are male and female together in their relationship to each other the image of God?
2. Is subordination inherent in the very nature of a creation done by the Triune God, or is subordination a consequence of sin?
3. Is the dominion given in Gen. 1:26, 29 given to both male and female, and what is the significance of this for their relationship to each other?
4. Does Gen. 3:16 imply that the male is to have dominion over the female in the race?
5. Does the subordination of the Son to the Father (1 Cor. 15:27–28) speak of some sort of subordination in the Trinity and what are the implications of this for the unity of the Trinity? What implications does this have for the distinction of persons within the Trinity?
6. Does the image of God (Gen. 1:26, 29) in some way reflect the unity of the Trinity and the distinction of persons within the Trinity, and what implications does this have for the relationship of male and female?
7. In the light of the above, must a distinction be made between the way in which the Adamic cultures understand the relationship of male and female, and the way in which the distinction between male and female is to be understood and expressed within the chosen race (1 Peter 2:9)?
8. What is the meaning and implication of “head” in Eph. 5:20–33, and in what way is this illuminated by Eph. 1:22 and Eph. 5:20?
9. May the words *submit* or *subordinate* in Eph. 5:21–22 be interpreted as meaning obedience as this word is understood by the Adamic cultures?
10. In what way are the findings of this study to be applied to the church, as she orders her life and worship?
11. In what way are the findings of this study to be applied to marriage and the life of the family?

Resolved, That the CTCR coordinate a comprehensive study of the scriptural relationship of man and woman, together with the faculties of both seminaries, making use of other persons who are competent in the area of theology, including women.

Action: Adopted (10).

(During discussion an amendment, Resolved, That this issue be commended to the next convention of the Synod with the recommendation that an early session be scheduled for that purpose and that an entire session be set aside for the debate, was declined. This occurred after the delegates agreed to cease debate on the amendment but not on the main motion. A further amendment calling for

deletion of the entire paragraph containing a list of possible questions for consideration was declined. A number of delegates asked that their negative votes be recorded. These are attached to the official copy of the minutes.)

Notes

1. For a list of documents prepared by the CTCR since 1995 which address various topics or questions pertinent to the relationship of man and woman, see the following. Most are available on the CTCR website at www.lcms.org/ctcr (“Reports and Opinions”). Please note: *Biblical Revelation & Inclusive Language* (1998); Response to expressions of dissent on woman suffrage (2002) and the ordination of women (2002, 2003) [see 2004 *Convention Workbook*, 75–77]; Response to Questions of BHE/CUS on Lay Teachers of Theology (2003); Women in Combat (2003); Response to Minnesota South District request on “The Service of Women in Congregational Offices of Executive Director/President or Assistant Director/Vice President (2004); CTCR report on *Authentein* (2004); *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices—Guidelines for Congregations* (2005 [published text of 1994 report of the CTCR]). See also CTCR’s 1987 report on *Divorce and Remarriage*, its 1985 report on *Women in the Church: Scriptural Principles and Ecclesial Practice*, its 1981 report, *Human Sexuality: A Theological Perspective*, and the 1968 report on *Woman Suffrage in the Church*.

2. See the Appendix for a copy of 2007 Res. 3-10.

3. An “egalitarian” view may be contrasted with a “complementary” view of marriage. The first assumes that the Bible’s command to be submissive within marriage is identical for the husband and the wife, so that the husband is not understood to be in a position of authority or leadership any more than the wife. In the complementary view the command for a wife’s submission does entail leadership or “headship” on the part of the husband. The complementary view is developed in this report.

4. Barbara Brunworth, “Men and Women in the Contemporary Culture: The Intersection of Theology and the Social Sciences” (CTCR Archives). Unpublished essay, presented to the CTCR December 4, 2006, 15–19.

5. English Standard Version (ESV); used hereafter, unless otherwise noted.

6. Gen 5:2 states: “Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and he named them Man [*adam*] when they were created.” See also Gen 6:1.

7. ESV text reads “lower than the heavenly beings.” “[L]ower than God” is offered as an alternate reading in the ESV margin.

8. When God speaks, He uses the first person plural, “let us make.” When the narrative recounts what God did in the third person, it does not use a plural form and write “they created man in their own image.” That would express polytheism. Instead the text uses the singular, “God created man in *his* own image.” When speaking of the true God in the third person, the Old Testament employs the masculine singular verb form, “he did” or “he said” (see CTCR *Biblical Revelation & Inclusive Language*). There is only one God, one Creator, not many gods and goddesses.

9. The term “image” is a strong concrete word that can denote a statue, for example, a statue/image of a god or king. It is often used to refer to idols. The English translation “image” can be a little misleading in that we can use it as a verb, one “images” A to B. The original Hebrew word *tselem* and the Greek word *eikōn* do not convey the verbal idea. The terms simply mean that one is a “replica” or “resemblance” of another. The other word “likeness” (Hebrew *demuth*) is usually used in a weaker more abstract way that denotes “similarity.” Both “image” and “likeness” can be used interchangeably. Genesis 1:27 and 9:6 use only “image,” while Gen 5:1 uses only “likeness.”

10. With the Fall into sin, the fellowship with the Creator was completely lost. Yet the distinction from animals still remains even after the Fall. The Creator continues to knit every human creature in the mother’s womb and thereby still creates every human creature in His own image, in distinction from animals. Although human nature is thoroughly corrupted by sin, it is still human nature, not animal nature. Genesis 9 reveals that human beings even after the Fall are still made in God’s image, which has been ruined by the Fall and is restored by God’s saving activity. After the flood God repeated His original mandate to Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (see also Gen 8:17). God granted them per-

mission to kill animals for food, but He prohibited the shedding of human blood: “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God *made man in his own image*” (Gen 9:6; emphasis added). Whereas animals may be killed for food, Adam’s descendants remain created in God’s image even after the Fall. To murder a human being made in God’s image is to offend God Himself. James 3 also shows that human beings remain created in God’s image after the Fall. “For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people *who are made in the likeness of God*. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so” (James 3:7–10; emphasis added). James warns against misusing the tongue to curse people. Animals can be tamed but no one can tame the tongue. With the tongue we can bless God but we can also curse people. When we do that, James reminds us, we are cursing humans (*anthrōpous*, literally, “men”), who, in contrast to animals, are made according to God’s likeness. In the original Greek, the verb “are made” is a perfect tense, emphasizing that people remain in God’s likeness. To curse humans who are made according to God’s likeness is also to offend God Himself. What James says applies to the way we Christians treat everyone, including non-Christians, in the business world, politics, school, the marketplace, and in all walks of life.

11. It was commonly thought in the ancient Near East that there were gods and goddesses who procreated and filled the heavens with additional gods and goddesses. The biblical writers inspired by the Spirit strongly opposed such a notion. Sexual differentiation does not exist within the Creator. The Creator does not procreate, filling the heavens with baby gods and goddesses. Sexual procreation belongs only to creatures.

12. Genesis 1 uses two verbs to emphasize the task. One verb (Hebrew *radah*) conveys the general sense of “ruling over, having dominion over.” It can denote a dignified and honorable exercise of royal authority, used of a king ruling over his people (1 Ki 4:24; Ps 72:8). The other verb (Hebrew *kabash*) has the more narrow meaning of “subdue.” It designates the activity of intentionally bringing the earth under human control.

13. Note that all capitals are used for “The LORD” when it translates the proper name *Yahweh*. “Lord” without capitals is used to translate the Hebrew word *Adonai*.

14. *Human Sexuality*, 14. Online at http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/Human_Sexuality1.pdf.

15. “She was not taken from his head to rule over him or from his feet to be trampled on by him. She was taken from his side to be his companion, from under his arm to be protected by him, from near his heart to be loved by him.” Attributed to Augustine, this statement may be of more recent origin. (See http://www.archive.org/stream/bathfablesnmora00wils/bathfablesnmora00wils_djvu.txt which suggests something similar from “The Bath Fables.”) Augustine does say of the creation of the woman from the man: “the fact that a woman was made for the first man from his own side shows us clearly how affectionate should be the union of man and wife.” *City of God*, Book 12, 27.

16. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 1, trans. James Martin (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, n.d., reprinted by Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), 90.

17. *Human Sexuality*, 14–15.

18. See *Human Sexuality and Divorce and Remarriage*, online at http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/Divorce_Remarriage1.pdf.

19. Genesis 2 describes the creation of the first man and woman and at the same time the creation of the first husband and wife. In fact, the same Hebrew words for “man/human-male” (*ish*) and “woman/human-female” (*ish-shah*) also denote “husband” and “wife.” She is his “woman” (*ish-shah*) and he is her “man” (*ish*). Also in Greek the terms for “man/human-male” (*anōr*) and for “woman/human-female” (*gynō*) can mean “husband” and “wife.” Throughout Genesis 2–3 and often elsewhere, when the Scriptures speak of “man and woman,” they are also referring to “husband and wife.”

20. See, for example, Song of Songs 1:2–3, 15–16; 2:16; 4:10; 6:3; 7:10. This book is also rightly understood as pointing to the relationship between Yahweh and Israel, Christ and the Church (see Eph 5:31–32). See Christopher W. Mitchell, *The Song of Songs* (St. Louis: CPH, 2003), 20–23.

21. AE 1:139–40.

22. Notice how the serpent just calls Him “God” instead of using God’s personal name Yahweh, “the LORD God.” The serpent subtly creates a distance between Yahweh and the woman.

23. AE 1:139.

24. Two interpretations of Gen 3:16 are found in Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1987), 81–82: That she will physically desire her husband, even though he “rules her” (oppressively) or that she will desire to dominate her husband, but instead he will rule over her (compare Gen 4:7).

25. See the explanatory diagram in the CTCR’s *The End Times: A Study on Eschatology and Millennialism*, 1989, 14 (online at: <http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/endtme-2.pdf>).

26. See Gal 4:5–7, Heb 2:11–17, and John 1:12–13.

27. The tables or, “household codes,” can be found in these passages: Eph 5:22–6:9; Col 3:18–4:5; 1 Tim 2:8–15; 6:1–10; Titus 2:1–10; 1 Pet 2:18–3:7.

28. See the use of this phrase in the ethical sections of Paul’s epistles (e.g., Eph 5:8; 6:1; Phil 4:1–2; Col 3:17).

29. The NIV is quoted for ease of reading. The ESV renders the verb “submit” as a participle in v. 21, which completes the previous sentence beginning at v. 18: “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

30. Daniel B. Wallace suggests that Eph 5:21 acts as “a hinge” between 5:15–20 and 5:22–6:5, noting, “the participle [translated “submitting”] ESV belongs equally to both.” *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 650–51.

31. 1985 report of the CTCR on *Women in the Church*, 31. The call to “submission” in the NT indicates “that the general rule demands readiness to renounce one’s own will for the sake of others” and so it is an aspect of *agapē*. Gerhard Delling, *hypotassō*, in Gerhard Kittel, ed. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, (hereafter TDNT) 8:45. See 27–28 below.

32. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (hereafter BDAG), rev. and ed. by Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 332.

33. For a detailed discussion of the semantic issues regarding *kephalē*, see Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 139–45.

34. *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), 861.

35. Paul’s response to the Corinthian slogan “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman” (1 Cor 7:1) suggests that some of the Corinthians may have been influenced by a Platonic soul-body dualism that disparaged the body and encouraged asceticism.

36. See *Human Sexuality*, 14–17.

37. “The weaker vessel” here probably signifies the general gender difference of physical strength, not that women are “weaker” in other ways (e.g., intellectually, emotionally, spiritually).

38. Martin H. Franzmann, *Concordia Bible with Notes* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971), 309.

39. After all, the prophet Joel had announced this very thing (Joel 2:28–29). Paul refused to quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19–21). As he says a little later to the Corinthians, “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor 12:13).

40. See, e.g., the work of Bruce Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 77–96 (esp. footnote 1 and its listing of newly published studies). See also Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 121–41.

41. For example, justification was expounded in Galatians in the context of the debate over circumcision. See James W. Voelz’s discussion of culture-bound assertions with temporary authority versus underlying theological concerns with enduring authority. See *What Does This Mean?* (St.

Louis: CPH, 1995), 436–37.

42. Bruce Winter writes, for example: “The adult male inhabitants of Roman Corinth did not wear their hair long, for to do so indicated their denial of their masculinity—they were parading as homosexuals” (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 132).

43. Woman was taken out of man and was created for man, to answer his aloneness and be a helper fit for him. She therefore exists as a testimony that brings “glory” and honor to the man. Paul does not say that woman is the “image” of the man, since that would not be true. She is not a mirror image or replica of the man. Neither does Paul deny that woman was also created in the image of God (see Gen 1:26 and 5:1–2; cf. “God creates man and woman” above, 8ff.).

44. In 1 Cor 11:10, the ESV translates the Greek word *exousia* (literally, “authority”) with “symbol of authority.” BDAG (353) points out that various opinions are held regarding the meaning of the term. Some think Paul chose the term for the veil because it meant figuratively “means of exercising power.” Others think that as a term for the veil it conveyed the sense “symbol of womanly dignity.” Whatever the term’s precise meaning, the custom of wearing of the veil in that time and culture was an appropriate way of signifying the created relationship of wife to husband.

45. We have discussed this text in earlier documents; e.g., see *Women in the Church* (32–33). See also note 1.

46. Franzmann, 288. Paul’s rhetorical question in v. 36 suggests the congregation’s excesses contained an element of defiance or thumbing its nose at the broader church.

47. Concerning “to speak” in 1 Cor 14:34, see *Women in the Church*, 32–33. Also, Henry P. Hamann states: “*Lalein* [“to speak”] is not really contrasted with the idea of order. The contrast in the Greek sentence marked by the *ou gar ... alla* [“for not ... but”] sets in opposition *lalein* and *hypotassethōsan*, speaking and being subordinate. A speaking is involved which is the opposite of being subordinate, speaking with authority, teaching, preaching with the implicit demand for obedience.” Henry P. Hamann, “The New Testament and the Ordination of Women,” in *Women Pastors? The Ordination of Women in Biblical Lutheran Perspective*, Second Edition, ed. Matthew C. Harrison and John T. Pless (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), 17–18.

48. The verb “to speak,” as Paul uses it here and in many other places, designates official proclamation to a group (Rom 15:18; 1 Cor 2:6–7; 2 Cor 12:19; Eph 6:20; Phil 1:14; Col 4:3–4; 1 Thess 2:2, 4, 16; Titus 2:1, 15). As Paul’s counsel elsewhere shows, however, Paul does not command the absolute silence of women in public worship assemblies (e.g., 1 Cor 11:4–6; Eph 5:19; Col 3:16). See also 44–46 below and also *Women in the Church*, 33.

49. For an example of the wrong use of one’s “hands,” see what Paul says about his former life in 1 Tim 1:12–15.

50. While the (male) pastor exercises the responsibility to teach and preach the Word of God, a woman is not subject to him as a man (his individual authority), but only to the authority of the Word of God as he rightly proclaims it. See C. F. W. Walther, *Church and Ministry* (St. Louis: CPH, 1987), Thesis 9.

51. The Greek word, occurring only here in the NT, is *authentēin*. See the CTCR’s report on this word at <http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/041505%20AUTHENTEIN%20FULL%20TEXT.doc>. Recent research has shown that the most defensible translation of the term is “to exercise authority over.”

52. See previous CTCR reports, *Women in the Church: Scriptural Principles and Ecclesial Practice* (1985), *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices* (1994), *The Service of Women in Congregational Offices of Executive Director/President or Assistant Executive Director/Vice-President* (2004), and *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices with Guidelines for Congregations* (2005), all online at www.lcms.org/ctcr.

53. As some exegetes, ancient and modern, have pointed out, Paul may also be alluding to Gen 3:15. That is, the woman’s Seed will win salvation for both men and women.

54. Charles A. Gieschen, “Ordained Proclaimers or Quiet Learners? Women in Worship in Light of 1 Timothy 2,” in *Women Pastors? The Ordination of Women in Biblical Lutheran Perspective*, Second Edition, ed. Matthew C. Harrison and John T. Pless (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing

House, 2009), 86. Paul makes it clear that salvation is through “faith” and not “child-bearing” by mentioning “faith and love” (1 Tim 2:15).

55. What is said here about a mother’s calling does not imply that childless or unmarried women cannot be saved or occupy a place in life less pleasing to God. See *Human Sexuality* regarding the single state, 8–9, and with regard to childlessness, 18–20.

56. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1960), 167, 169.

57. See footnote 10 above. Franz Pieper refers to orthodox theologians employing a wider and proper sense of the image of God, with the wider sense continuing after the Fall, although he prefers only a narrow usage. *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. 1 (St. Louis: CPH, 1950), 518. Ep. VI, 2 offers creation in God’s image as cause for the law written on the human heart, something that continues after the Fall. Luther also preferred a more constricted use of image, but was unwilling to condemn Augustine’s contention that the image of God, more broadly conceived, continues after the Fall. “Lectures on Genesis,” AE 1:60.

58. *City of God*, Book 12, 27.

59. See also C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966), 40ff., quoted in Gilbert Meilaender, *Things That Count* (Wilmington, Del.: ISI Books, 1999), 57.

60. *Human Sexuality*, 7.

61. See “The Breakdown of Community in the Name of Individualism,” below.

62. *Human Sexuality*, 7.

63. *Human Sexuality*, 18–19.

64. This does not suggest that these temptations are exclusive to one sex and unknown to the other.

65. See 1969 Res. 2-17; 1986 Res. 3-09; 2004 Res. 3-08A and *Women in the Church*, 44–47; and *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices with Guidelines for Congregations*.

66. The circumstance of a Christian woman married to an unbelieving or unchurched man is similar to that of a single woman with respect to the concerns of this paragraph.

67. The U.S. divorce rate has been declining modestly in recent years, yet it remains significant. Despite questions about how to interpret divorce data, even conservative estimates suggest that at least one third of marriages end in divorce. Moreover, the decline in divorce is misleading, since a growing number of couples live together apart from marriage. It is much more likely for such relationships to be dissolved than it is for marriages to end in divorce. See David Popenoe, “The Future of Marriage in America,” Rutgers National Marriage Project, <http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/SOOU/TEXTSOOU2007.htm>. The percentage of children born to unmarried mothers in the U.S. currently is 39.7%. See the National Center for Health Statistics, May 2009; at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db18.htm>.

68. See Popenoe.

69. By “homosexual relationship” we are referring to individuals of the same sex who engage in sexual activity together.

70. There is more to consider concerning a Christian view of homosexual behavior and “marriage.” For example, see *Human Sexuality*, 32–36.

71. Although, in Rom 1:24, Paul notes that homosexual conduct has a certain unique seriousness in its “dishonoring” of the body God has created.

72. This same challenge exists for a married person whose spouse is unable to engage in sexual relations.

73. Eve Tushnet, “Experience and Tradition,” *Commonweal*, June 15, 2007, 21.

74. In Luke 20:34–36 (also Matt 22:23–33; Mark 12:18–27), Jesus teaches that marriage and the natural family are only for this present age. His followers now belong to two families, natural families and the family of God. In the ages to come that begin with the bodily resurrection there is only the family of God.

75. As Paul emphasizes in 1 Cor 7:35.

76. “Understanding Intimate Partner Violence Fact Sheet,” 2006 <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/IPV-FactSheet.pdf>.

77. E.g., the popular work by John Gray, *Men Are from Mars; Women Are from Venus* (New York: Harper, 1993).

78. David Blankenhorn, whose research supports the assertions of this entire paragraph, calls the declining numbers of men who raise the children they beget “our most urgent social problem,” *Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem* (New York: Basic Books, 1995). One may also consult The National Marriage Project website at www.marriage.rutgers.edu regarding the problem of fatherlessness in America. On the problem of comparatively less male than female commitment to Christianity, see also David Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005).

79. See Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, *The Divorce Culture* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, Inc., 1996), 50–64, on changing female attitudes regarding divorce. David Popenoe and the Rutgers University National Marriage Project studies state that roughly two-thirds of divorces are initiated by women (see “The Top Ten Myths of Divorce,” <http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/pubtopenmyths.htm>). More men than women are using internet services to seek a spouse. See graphs attached to Carl Bialik, “Marriage-Maker Claims Are Tied in Knots,” *Wall Street Journal* (July 29, 2009), A11. On growing numbers of intentional single motherhood, see Emily Yoffe, “And Baby Makes Two,” *Slate* (March 20, 2008), online edition at www.slate.com/id/2185944/pagnum/all/.

80. See Phil 2:5–11. Note the connection between Christian submission and humility. *TDNT*, Vol. 8: 45.

81. AE 36:116.

82. “To this congregation and to every member of it belong the keys, the power to forgive sins, and to proclaim the gospel—privately, and publicly if one is required to do so by others having equal authority.” AE 36:298.

83. AE 36:138–139, 145.

84. See *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, 1. The priesthood also requires that all Christians, male and female, are to judge the doctrine of their pastors. C. F. W. Walther, “The Sheep Judge Their Shepherds,” at www.reclaimingwalther.org/articles/sheep.htm.

85. *Women in the Church* provides a brief background to the concept on p. 9. The term is sometimes used in the plural, “orders of creation,” with reference to the fact that creation includes the establishment of such various orders as marriage and economic vocation. Either in the singular or the plural, “The point of this doctrine is to affirm that Christians like all other human beings exist in a framework of universal structures that are there prior to and apart from the fact that Christians believe in Christ and belong to his Church.” Carl Braaten, *No Other Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 120.

86. The “order of redemption” reminds us that in Christ, by faith, we are all “one in Christ”—not Jew, Greek, male, female, etc. (Gal 3:28). See *Women in the Church*, 22–27, which concludes its comparison of the orders: “The individual characteristics of believers are not abolished by the order of redemption,” 27.

87. Mickey L. Mattox in “Luther on Eve, Women, and the Church” notes that the reformer develops his understanding of women primarily

from the Old Testament, not the New Testament, and, specifically, from Eve. *The Pastoral Luther: Essays on Martin Luther's Practical Theology*, Timothy J. Wengert, ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009), 255.

88. Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957, reprint CPH, Concordia Heritage Series, n.d.), 172.

89. Lutherans have referred to three “uses” of the Law of God. The first is the Law’s use as a curb or check against human sinfulness as it condemns sin and threatens punishment. The Law’s ability to show us our sin and bring us to repentance is its second use. The third use is the guidance it offers for Christian living that pleases God. Formula of Concord, Ep and SD, Article VI.

90. A helpful survey of this topic in recent LCMS history is found in Scott Murray, *Law, Life, and the Living God: The Third Use of the Law in Modern American Lutheranism* (St. Louis: CPH, 2002).

91. “Here one should also note that Abraham says that he spoke most respectfully to his wife. He did not give an order and did not say: ‘You must obey me; I compel you; I demand from you.’ No, he said: ‘I beg you,’ and he does not consider her action obedience; he considers it a favor, as though by a superior person, in accordance with Peter’s precept (1 Peter 3:7): ‘Bestow honor on the female sex.’ But why did Moses record this? Doubtless in order to present an example of a very fine marriage, something which is indeed a rarity on earth but is most pleasing both to God and to men. Therefore by means of this very example Peter exhorts spouses to learn to love each other and to treat each other with respect and not as people are now in the habit of doing. Husbands generally are lions in their homes and are harsh toward wives and domestics. Similarly, the wives generally domineer everywhere and regard their husbands as servants. But it is foolish for a husband to want to display his manly courage and heroic valor by ruling his wife. On the other hand, it is also unbearable if wives want to dominate. Such marriages—where both are capricious—are common, as the proverb has it: ‘Three things are rare, but they are pleasing to God: harmony among brothers, love among neighbors, and accord between spouses.’ The reason is that people generally enter into this kind of life without prayer and, like swine, regard only what is carnal. Therefore the wife does not see what is truly good in her husband. On the other hand, the husband sees in his wife only what displeases him. Since there is no mutual tolerance between them, quarrels and countless outbursts of anger arise.” AE 3:353–54.

92. For example, Jerome questions false views of submission: “[F]requently wives are found to be much superior to husbands at ordering and running the house, and educating the children, and maintaining family discipline, while the husbands live in luxury and pursue mistress after mistress. Whether wives of such caliber should rule, or fear, their husbands, I leave to the reader’s judgment.” Quoted by J. C. Cavadini, “The Sacramentality of Marriage in the Fathers” *Pro Ecclesia* 17:4 (Fall 2008), 445.

93. See Augustine’s *Eighty-three Different Questions* in *Fathers of the Church*, vol. 70, 42 and also his *The Christian Combat*, in *Fathers of the Church*, vol. 21, 338–39, as referenced and quoted in Thomas C. Oden, *Life in the Spirit* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992), 8.

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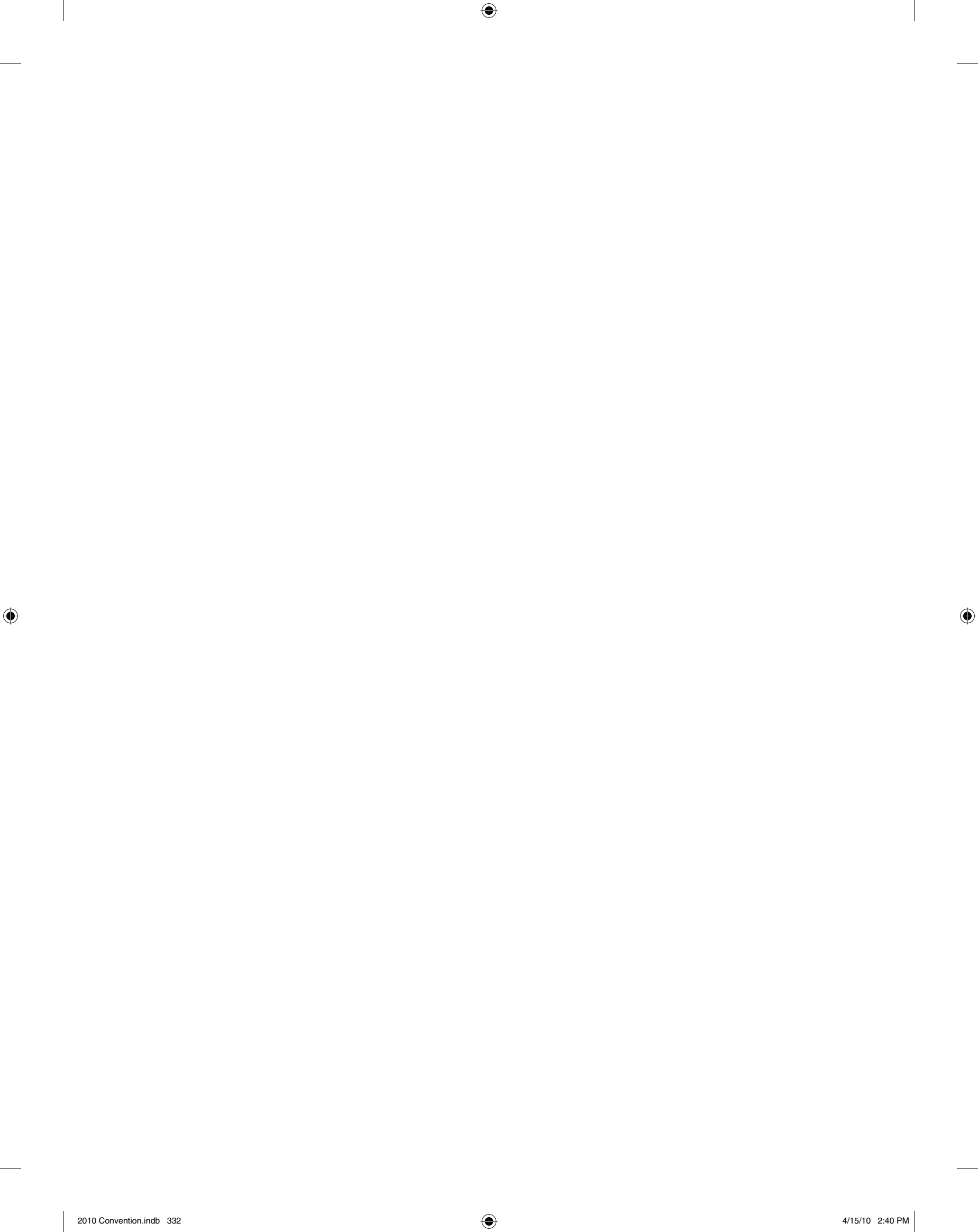
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CORRECTION IN REGISTRATION LISTING
(For Delegates Only)

It is important that the delegate lists published after the convention in the *Convention Proceedings* be as accurate as possible. Please use this form to report any correction to your personal listing in the front of this *Workbook*.

The lower section of this page serves as your notice to the Office of the Secretary to report corrections. Remove it from your *Workbook* and hand it to the Secretary at the convention or mail it within two days of the close of the convention to:

Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
1333 South Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295

(Please note that this form is not to be used when there is a change of delegates. In such cases necessary documentation is required from the Secretary of the District.)

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My personal listing in the front of the 2010 *Convention Workbook* is not accurate and should be corrected as follows (please print):

On page _____, column _____, under District _____,

the present reading: _____

should be changed to: _____

Thank you for making this correction.

Signed: _____

Date: _____