

# Proceedings & Bylaws



**“NOURISHED for the JOURNEY ... Remember · Renew · Return”**

**104th Michigan District Convention  
Concordia University Ann Arbor  
June 22-24, 2025**



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*People of Hope...Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ*

*“Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel ...” (1 Kings 19:18a)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ of the Michigan District:

Over two and a half very warm days near the end of June, the saints of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod gathered together once again for the 104th Regular Convention of the District on the beautiful campus of Concordia University Ann Arbor. With a tumultuous year and half behind us, and facing an uncertain future, it is safe to say that it was a Convention like no other.

Under the theme “Nourished for the Journey: Remember – Renew – Return” (1 Kings 19), 450 voting delegates, 225 advisory delegates, and 146 guests joined together for worship, fellowship, learning, discussion, and prayer. Beginning with the Opening Worship service in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity on Sunday evening and concluding with a tearful closing devotion on late Tuesday afternoon in the Convention Hall, especially recalling God’s abundant blessings upon CUAA over the years, it was a busy and at times emotional two and a half days.

During the Convention, delegates participated in elections, discussed resolutions, voiced concerns, expressed thanksgivings, and made important decisions pertaining to our life together both within the District and the Synod. Along the way, attendees were encouraged, we were challenged, and we had to fight back tears at times, but finally we were reminded that, like Elijah, we are not alone, and we were urged to look forward rather than behind. The Convention provided opportunities for us to remember, to be renewed, and to be prepared to return to our homes, communities, and ministries.

And did I mention that it was hot? We were blessed with the warmest stretch of weather of the season, and lots of water bottles were handed out and consumed! We were indeed “Nourished for the Journey!”

The Proceedings detailed here are a record and reflection of significant effort on the part of many committed servants of the Lord, both in the months leading up to the Convention and during the Convention itself, to carry forward faithfully the work of Christ’s Church both here in Michigan and beyond. From vibrant ministries in nearly every corner of our beautiful state, to an amazing District staff, to a marvelous crew of volunteers, we are abundantly blessed within the Michigan District. And by His grace God continues to be at work among us and through us! Thanks and praise be to Him!

These Proceedings also remind us of the work God has called us to do, and that we have pledged with His help to do as His beloved people, during the triennium ahead. May our gracious Lord continue to bless and guide our efforts towards the furthering of His Kingdom!

Together we have been “Nourished for the Journey!” And in spite of the many challenges both behind and before us, we remain People of Hope!

Yours in Christ’s service,



Rev. J. Derek Riddle  
District Secretary

# Officers

## The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President (2026)  
1st Vice-President: Rev. Peter K. Lange (2026)  
2nd Vice-President: Rev. Benjamin T. Ball (2026)  
3rd Vice-President: Rev. Dr. Scott Murray (2026)  
4th Vice-President: Rev. Nabil S. Nour (2026)  
5th Vice-President: Rev. Christopher S. Esget (2026)

6th Vice-President: Rev. Dr. John C. Wohlrabe, Jr. (2026)  
Secretary: Rev. Dr. John W. Sias (2026)  
Chief Administrative Officer: Mr. Felix Loc (Appointed)  
Chief Financial Officer: Mr. Nathan Haak (Appointed)  
Chief Mission Officer: Rev. Kevin D. Robson (Appointed)

## Michigan District

Rev. David A Davis, President (2028)

1st Vice-President: Rev. Darryl L. Andrzejewski (2028)  
2nd Vice-President: Rev. Erik K. Cloeter (2028)  
Secretary: Rev. J. Derek Riddle (2028)

3rd Vice-President: Rev. Craig L. Bickel (2028)  
4th Vice-President: Rev. Andrew D. Gruenhagen (2028)  
Treasurer: Mrs. Bonnie L. Mann (Appointed)

## Michigan District Circuit Visitors (2028)

1. Charles B. Burhop  
2. Jason L. Mandley  
3. Frederick T. Cordts  
4. Timothy J. Sheridan  
5. Daniel A. Kempin  
6. David A. Jung  
7. Matthew H. Durance  
8. Michael D. Boyer  
9. Cameron K. Steele  
10. Charles F. Buckhahn  
11. Tyge C. Zucker  
12. Matthew C. Hein  
13. Todd I. Frusti  
14. Gerhardt A. Doroh

15. Nikolai J. Gibbons  
16. Norman A. Koy  
17. Paul J. Undlin  
18. Evan P. Gaertner  
19. Mark W. Hetzner  
20. Harold A. Avers  
21. Richard E. Robinson  
23. Jason D. Cashmer  
24. Kyle E. Jones  
26. Jake B. Bellinghausen  
27. Steven M. Newton  
28. Daniel W. Pezzica  
29. Bryan K. Schindel  
30. Zachary J. Holdorf

31. Matthew A. Peters  
32. Michael M. Goers  
33. Brennan A. Woell  
34. Paul A. Tonn  
35. William R. Wangelin  
36. Edward W. Filter  
38. William C. Lahrman  
39. Christopher M. Boehnke  
40. Glenn E. Schaeffer  
41. Brian D. West  
42. Karl N. Strenge  
43. Michael J. Roth  
44. Kurt P. Kuhlmann

# Boards and Committees

## Board of Directors

### Region

Metro East: (2031)  
West: (2031)  
Metro West: (2028)  
North & East: (2028)

### Ordained

Stephen D. Grafe  
A. Trevor Sutton  
Joel H. Sarrault  
Dennis W. Matyas

### Commissioned

Jennifer L. Blickensdorf  
Kyle J. Smith  
Daniel R. Burk  
Jennifer L. Krause

### Laypersons

Nicholas DeMiro  
Scott Liggett  
Scott Beam  
John W. Nutzmann  
Daniel Nickodemus  
O. Dennis Sohn  
Robert V. Brooks, Jr.  
Jeffrey S. Reinbold

**Advisory Members:** Rev. David A. Davis, Rev. Darryl L. Andrzejewski, Rev. Craig L. Bickel, Rev. Erik K. Cloeter, Rev. Andrew D. Gruenhagen, Mrs. Bonnie L. Mann, Rev. J. Derek Riddle, Rev. Michael J. Roth

## Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees

### Rostered

Bradley B. Hubbard (2028)  
Eric W. Majeski (2031)  
David P. E Maier (2028)

### Laypersons

Laura J. Davis (2028)  
Rebecca Holnagel (2028)  
Kurt C. Kuck (2028)

Amy Engelhardt (2031)  
Albert D. Kaul (2031)  
Julian H. Petzold (2031)

**District President Representative:** Rev. Erik K. Cloeter

**Staff:** James R. Saalfeld, CEO; John Bates, President; Andrew Sohn, VP – Strategy & Marketing; Zachary Werner, Controller; Rod Barodte, Director of Relations

## 2028 Convention Nominating Committee

### Region

Metro East:  
Metro West:  
North & East:  
West:

### Ordained

Eric W. Majeski (Chairman)  
Aaron W. Roggow  
Paul R. Biber  
Paul C. Appold

### Commissioned

David S. Kusch  
David A. Nelson  
Brian J. Heinlein  
Lori S. Wieneke

### Laypersons

Stephen R. Boergert  
Robert Bourassa  
Steven Kern  
Timothy Haberling

## Commission for Church Worker Care

### Ordained

Daniel W. Ramthun  
Robert E. Kasper

### Commissioned

Christie L. Hansard  
Andrea E. Johnson  
Stacy J. McGhee  
Dawn M. Rupe

### Laypersons

Lauren Kelly  
Amanda Vergin

Ex-Officio: Rev. David A. Davis

## Commission on Deacon Qualification

### Ordained

Todd I. Frusti  
Kenneth A. Huner  
Robert E. Kasper, Advisory

### Commissioned

Mrs. Kathy A. Schurig

### Laypersons

Mr. Alfred H. Renard  
Mr. Christopher G. Townley

## District Reconcilers

Rev. Joel F. Hoyer, Mrs. Ruth E. Richert Martin, Mr. G. Michael McCain, Rev. Michael J. Roth

## New/Revised Constitution Committee

Mr. Keith M. Altenburg, Mr. Aaron J. Baylis

## District Legal Counsel

Mr. Mark W. Doran

## District Standing Committees

### Stewardship Committee:

Rev. Douglas M. Adams, Mrs. Julia A. Burgess, Mr. Ronald J. Chewning, Rev. John M. Duerr,  
Rev. Daniel C. Meckes, Mr. Andrew P. Menz, Mrs. Laura L. Thomas, Rev. Dr. Richard J. Wolfram

## District Committees

### Endowment Advisory Council:

Mr. Scott Hans, Mr. Greg Hildebrand, Mrs. Peggy Korzen, Mrs. Bonnie Mann,  
Mrs. Cheri McConomy, Mr. Daniel Nickodemus, Mr. Thomas Schulz  
Non-Voting Members: Rev. David A. Davis, Mrs. Laura L. Thomas, Mr. Chad R. Woltemath

### Junior High Gathering Planning Committee:

Mr. J. Chuck Anderson, Mrs. Nola Auernhamer, Rev. Joel Eden, Mrs. Rose Ferguson,  
Mr. Daren Kaschinske, Mrs. Janelle Meckes, Mr. Tyler Schlitzkus

### Senior High Gathering Planning Committee:

Mr. J. Chuck Anderson, Rev. James Bruner, Mrs. Kristin Hardy, Rev. Aaron Roggow,  
Mrs. Jennifer Rossi, Mrs. Stephanie Rummel, Ms. Bernadette VanOverbeke

### Lutheran Adult Gathering Planning Committee:

Rev. Bill & Kristin Wangelin (Lansing), Katrina & Daren Kaschinske (Frankenmuth),  
Katie & Chris May (Arcadia), Kim and Brad Scott (Arcadia) Keith & Kim Waller (Detroit  
area), Chad & Heidi Woltemath (Saline), Rev. Robert Kasper (MI District office)

### School Accreditation Committee:

Mr. Levi Bringold, Mrs. Jacqueline Brooks, Mrs. Cynthia Brown, Mr. Robert Burgess,  
Dr. Kyle Chuhran, Mrs. Mary Eifert, Mr. Travis Grulke, Mr. Gregory Johnson, Mr. Kyle Smith

### Early Childhood Cabinet:

Mrs. Greta Bower, Mrs. Kelley Fehn, Mrs. Courtni Holst, Mrs. Kathryn Pearson,  
Mrs. Emily Ritchie, Ms. Jennifer Welch

### State Basketball Committee:

Mr. Justin Garcia, Mr. Travis Grulke, Mr. Eric Hagenow, Mr. David King, Mr. Joel Neumeyer,  
Mr. Scott Neumeyer, Mr. Timothy Siekmann, Mr. Jeffrey Young

### State Track Committee:

Mr. John Boldt, Mr. Travis Grulke, Mr. David King, Mrs. Mr. Timothy Siekmann,  
Mr. Eric Smith

### Finance Committee:

Mr. Scott Beam, Rev. David A. Davis, Mrs. Bonnie L. Mann, Rev. Joel H. Sarrault,  
Mr. Chad R. Woltemath

# Staff

## **Rev. David A. Davis – President**

### **Office of the President**

Laurie A. Brown – Executive Assistant to the President  
Barbara Laughlin Adler – District Archivist  
Kathleen A. Graham – Assistant to the District Archivist  
Rev. Norman A. Koy – Call List Support  
Hannah M. MacAfee – Receptionist / Administrative Assistant  
Rev. Donald O. Neuendorf – Special Project Assistant to the President  
Rev. Peter S. Nickel – Call List Support  
Martha F. Wohlfeil – Administrative Assistant – President’s Office

### **Business/Finance**

Chad R. Woltemath – Vice President of Finance  
Debra R. Cameron – Event Coordinator / Accountant  
Linda J. Fritsch – Administrative Assistant – Business and Development  
Stacy L. Furgerson – Assistant Business Manager  
Chad E. Moyer – Properties Manager

### **Communications**

Debby S. Fall – Director of Communications  
Linda M. Ekong – Art Director / Web Director  
Elisa L. Schulz – Staff Writer / Copy Editor / Photographer  
Adele S. Werner – Video Journalist / Digital Media Manager

### **Development**

Laura L. Thomas – Director of Development  
Linda J. Fritsch - Administrative Assistant – Business and Development

### **District Facilitators**

Rev. Randy L. Johnson – Director of District Facilitators/ District Facilitator – West Region  
Rev. Mark D. Brandt – District Facilitator – North & East Region  
Rev. Daniel C. Meckes – District Facilitator – Metro East & Metro West Region

### **Leadership Development**

Rev. Dr. Robert E. Kasper – Director of Leadership Development  
Rev. Kenneth A. Huner – Dean of Instruction – Michigan School of Missional Formation  
Deaconess Christie L. Hansard – Mental Health Case Manager / Parish Nurse Coordinator  
Rev. Dr. Richard J. Wolfram – Stewardship Education

### **Lutheran Education and Commissioned Worker Support**

Travis G. Grulke – Superintendent of Schools  
Kyle B. Chuhuran – NLSA Commissioner  
Luke M. Esselman – Commissioned Ministry Advocate  
Kelley J. Fehn – Early Childhood Consultant  
Jennifer A. Rumberger – Administrative Assistant – Education / Database Specialist

### **Mission Development**

Rev. Dr. Scott E. Yakimow – Director of Mission Development  
Rev. Christopher R. Bodley – Missionary at Large to Detroit  
Dr. Ingrid Draper – A2E Educational Coordinator  
Rev. J. Ricardo Granado – Missionary Pastor for Hispanic Ministries  
Julie Nielsen-Schmidt – Lutheran Chaplain – Michigan Medicine  
Peter E. Prochnow – District Facilitator for Worship Arts & Community Engagement

# List of Registrants

by: Rev. J. Derek Riddle, District Secretary

This list contains only the names of those who actually registered and attended the convention. The entire list of professional church workers and congregations of the Michigan District appeared in the Convention Workbook and is not repeated here.

## Ministers – Ordained, Voting

Abatelli, Kirk W. - St. Mark, Saginaw  
Adams, Douglas M. - St. Peter's, Eastpointe  
Ahlersmeyer, Peter C. - Trinity, Fenton  
Alexander, Arul J. - Faith Tamil, Troy  
Andrzejewski, Darryl L. - Historic Trinity, Detroit  
Andrzejewski, Jakob A. - St. Paul, Royal Oak  
Appold, Paul C. - Trinity, Muskegon  
Appold, Robert B. - Mount Calvary, Greenville  
Baerwolf, Phillip A. - Zion, Bay City  
Bagnall, George Stevens - Good Shepherd, Cass City  
Bangert, Joseph L. - Immanuel & St. John, Rogers City  
Bartholomew, Andrew P. - St. Mark, Kentwood  
Barz, Daniel S. - St. Paul, Buchanan  
Bauer, Jason C. - Redeemer, Interlochen  
Baughman, Terry A. - Crown Of Life, Rochester Hills  
Bayer, Timothy A. - St. Peter, Saint Johns  
Behnke, Timothy J. - Faith, Bridgeport  
Bellinghausen, Jake B. - Cross of Christ, South Lyon  
Bentz, Tyson V. - St. Peter's, Big Rapids  
Biber, Paul R. - Good Shepherd, Saginaw  
Black, Eric S. - Messiah, Grand Rapids  
Blevins, Scott L. - St. Paul's, New Boston  
Bollinger, Timothy R. - Shepherd's Gate, Shelby Township  
Bookshaw, John A. - Trinity, Paw Paw  
Boyer, Michael D. - Immanuel, Sebawaing  
Brand, Timothy J. - Trinity, Conklin  
Brandon, Kurt A. - Holy Cross, Saginaw  
Bromm, Glen W. - Our Savior, Glennie / Living Word, Mio  
Brooks, Micah J. - St. Luke, Nunica  
Bruner, James R. - St. Paul, Millington  
Burge, Benjamin R. - Trinity, Clinton Township  
Burgess, Jeffrey S. - St. Paul, Hamburg  
Burhop, Charles B. - Sault Sainte Marie / Kincheloe  
Burhop, Daniel G. O. - Trinity, Reese  
Canion, Matthew J. - Living Water, Whitmore Lake  
Cashmer, Jason D. - Christ The King, Southgate  
Casiglia, Joseph A. - Faith, Troy  
Chinery, James D. - Faith, Bay City  
Chittick, Aaron B. - St. Paul, Coldwater  
Cloeter, Erik K. - Messiah, Clio  
Courson, Larry G. - Open Arms, Belleville  
Cullen, D. Lee, Jr. - Holy Ghost, Monroe  
Dangba, Moses C. - Living Word, Lansing  
Davenport, Dean M. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia  
Dent, Matthew T. - Bethlehem, Standish  
Dodge, David A. - St. John, Port Hope  
Doede, Mark R. - Huntington Woods, Huntington Woods  
Doellinger, Paul M. - St. Paul, Cassopolis  
Doerner, Edward F. - Messiah, Midland  
Dohanyos, Franklin J. - St. Augustine, Troy  
Dueker, Jonathan A. - Peace, Rogers City  
Dufon, Dennis L. - Drummond Island, Drummond Island  
Dumbrille, Dean G. - Christ The King & St. Paul, Flint  
Durance, Matthew H. - Zion, Harbor Beach  
Esterline, Sean M. - First, Charlotte  
Fairbairn, Christopher D. - St. Paul, Northville  
Faith, Scott M. - St. Mark, Muskegon  
Fienen, Daniel H. - Grace, Baldwin  
Fink, Samuel V. - Heart of the Shepherd, Howell  
Flanick, Adam R. - Our Savior, Gladwin  
Frusti, Todd I. - Trinity, Davison  
Gaertner, Evan P. - Our Shepherd, Birmingham  
Garcia, Adan C. - Immanuel, Bay City  
Garland, Curtis D. - Immanuel, Monroe  
Garrett, Morgan J. - St. Mark, Flint  
Garrison, Thomas B. - St. John & St. Peter, Sebawaing  
Gauthier, Gerald A., II - St. John, Bay City  
Geraci, Coleman K. - St. Thomas, Ann Arbor / St. Paul, Milan  
Gibbons, Nikolai J. - Immanuel, Macomb  
Gilson, Mark E. - Chapel Of The Lakes, Mecosta  
Gladden, Dietrick A. - St. Thomas, Eastpointe  
Goehmann, David P. - St. John's, Ludington  
Goers, Michael M. - Trinity, Traverse City  
Graves, K. Frank - Redeemer, Fremont  
Greenhagen, Jesse R. - Zion, Mount Pleasant  
Grenz, Greyson D. - Trinity, Monroe  
Gustafson, Thomas M. - Immanuel, Grand Rapids  
Haak, Joel D. - St. John, Fraser  
Hales, Henry J. - Trinity, Minden City / St. John, Palms  
Haller, Joshua T. - Grace, Fairgrove  
Harrison, Daniel H. - Christ, New Baltimore  
Heidt, Brian F. - St. Philip, Owosso  
Hein, Matthew C. - NewLife Community, Swartz Creek  
Herter, Paul W. - Hope, Adrian  
Hill, James M. - Family of God & St. Stephen, Detroit  
Hoerr, Steven R. - St. Peter, Fair Haven  
Hoffman, Charles R. - Christ, Boyne City  
Hoffman, Robert A. - St. Stephen, Waterford  
Hoffmeyer, Alex W. - Salem, Coloma  
Holdorf, Zachary J. - Redeemer, Jackson  
Hopfensperger, Bryan L. - Peace, Sandusky  
Howard, Daniel C. - Hope, Warren  
Hoyer, Joel F. - Grace, Coopersville  
Hubbard, Bradley B. - St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth  
Huff, Mark L. - Faith, Port Huron  
Hughes, Michael W. - St. Matthew, Spring Lake  
Huner, Kenneth A. - Trinity, Pinckney / Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Hutter, Erwin M. - Pilgrim, Essexville  
Hyatt, Gregory D. - St. John, Pinconning  
Johnson, Andrew M. - Christ, Milford  
Johnson, Russell D. - Christ Our Savior, Holland  
Jones, Kyle E. - St. John's, New Boston  
Jung, Christopher D. - St. Matthew, Lexington  
Kaiser, Seth C. - Trinity, Bay City  
Kempin, Daniel A. - St. John's, Midland  
Kern, Timothy D. - Our Savior, Marlette  
Khan, Khurram M. - All Nations, Clinton Township  
Klingbeil, Kurt C. - Trinity, Gaylord / Mount Hope, Grayling  
Knea, Keith E. - St. Michael's, Richville  
Kollek, Paul K. - Hope, Linden  
Korte, Michael R. - Bethlehem, Saginaw  
Krengel, Douglas A. - Immanuel, Bridgman  
Kruse, Paul G. - St. John, Houghton Lake  
Kuehl, Kyle I. - Bethlehem, Engadine / Grace, Germfask / Trinity, Newberry  
Kuhlmann, Kurt P. - St. John's, Burr Oak  
Lambart, Kurt E. - Peace, Ann Arbor  
Latham, Mark E. - St. Michael's & All Angels, Traverse City  
Lett, Randy D. - St. John, Port Sanilac  
Liebich, Jonathan A. - Trinity, Buchanan  
Llewellyn, Joseph J. - St. Paul, Hubbard Lake  
Loest, Mark A. - Immanuel, Saginaw  
Lyvere, Gary D. - Our Savior, Midland  
Madson, Mark J. - Trinity, Port Huron  
Magneson, Scott S. - Light of Christ, Marysville  
Mandley, Jason L. - St. John, Hillman  
Martin, Gabriel J. - Zion, Tawas City  
Matyas, Dennis W. - St. Paul, Bay City  
McCarty, David J. - Emmanuel, Britton  
McCoy, Sean Q. - Ascension, East Lansing  
Measel, Martin P. - Christ, Stevensville  
Meckes, Daniel C. - Journey, Oxford / Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Menz, Andrew P. - Zion, Auburn  
Meyer, Edward A. - Faith, Prescott

Meyer, Jonathan C. - St. Matthew, Grand Rapids  
 Miller, David L. - St. Paul, Caledonia  
 Moldenhauer, Paul M. - St. Matthew, Walled Lake  
 Morales, Eddie - Outer Drive Faith, Detroit  
 Moran, David R. - Christ, Marshall  
 Morris, William L. - St. Peter, Hemlock  
 Muhle, Dean R. - St. Paul, Hale  
 Mundorf, Christian Q. - Messiah, Saginaw  
 Murr, James O., Jr. - Immanuel, Saint Clair  
 Murray, Daniel P. - Immanuel, Dearborn Heights  
 Naumann, Paul R. - St. Michael, Portage  
 Nelson, Eric M. - St. James, Montague  
 Nevis, E. Enwood - St. Timothy, Otisville  
 Newton, Steven M. - Grace, Canton / Salem National, Westland  
 Nies, Jared R. - St. Paul, Lapeer  
 Oelschlaeger, Benjamin G. D. - Good Shepherd, Lake Orion  
 Overway, Kurt R. - St. Stephen's, Shelby  
 Paavola, Christopher K. - St. Mark, Battle Creek  
 Pearl, James M. - St. John's, Saint Johns  
 Peters, Matthew A. - Zion, Petoskey  
 Peterson, Jason P. - St. Peter's, Rockford  
 Pezzica, Daniel W. - Our Savior, Chelsea  
 Phillips, Michael G. - Grace, Romeo  
 Phillips, Thomas P. - St. Paul, Kalkaska / St. Matthew, Mancelona  
 Poellet, Dean R. - St. Matthew, Holt  
 Polzin, Joseph W.B. - Christ Our King, Saline  
 Pretznaw, Mark E. - Lamb of God, Flint  
 Prout, David L. - GoodLife, Rochester Hills  
 Rahn, Dennis D. - Trinity, Manistee  
 Ramthun, Daniel W. - Guardian, Dearborn  
 Richter, James F. - The Vine, Walker  
 Riddle, J. Derek - Trinity, Jackson  
 Riggs, Robert V. - St. Martin, Birch Run  
 Riley, Jimmy K. - Trinity-St. James, Munger  
 Rittner, Philip R. II - St. Paul's, Centreville  
 Roberts, Benjamin A. - St. Paul, Trenton  
 Robinson, Richard E. - St. John, Detroit  
 Roggow, Aaron W. - St. Paul, Ann Arbor  
 Roland, Ronald B. - St. Andrew, Memphis  
 Rosche, Bryce S. - St. Matthew, Westland  
 Roth, Michael J. - Trinity, Saint Joseph  
 Sarrault, Joel H. - St. John's, Adrian  
 Schaedig, Michael W. - St. John, Cheboygan  
 Schaeffer, Glenn E. - St. James, Grand Rapids  
 Schian, Aaron T. - Grace, Auburn  
 Schilke, Stephen E. - Trinity, Oscoda  
 Schindel, Bryan K. - Brooklyn / Ypsilanti  
 Schmidt, Erik R. - Peace, Saginaw  
 Schrader, Alexander A. - Our Saviour, Armada  
 Schultz, Joshua M. - Immanuel, Alpena  
 Schumm, Mark E. - Prince Of Peace, Farmington Hills  
 Schwichtenberg, Marc N. - St. John, Rochester  
 Scott, Robert G. - Faith, Grand Blanc  
 Shanburn, Eric J. - Holy Cross, Warren  
 Sheridan, Timothy J. - St. Luke, Harrison  
 Sherry, Jacob T. - Trinity, Onkama  
 Sikora, E. Anthony - Hope, DeWitt  
 Sommerfeld, Scott G. - Shepherd Of The Lakes, Brighton  
 Stainbrook, Michael S. - St. Luke, Haslett  
 Steele, Cameron K. - St. Paul, Caro  
 Stolarczyk, Steven M. - St. Paul, Unionville  
 Storck, Timothy D. - Good Shepherd, Chesterfield  
 Straub, Roger K. - St. Andrew, Portland  
 Strenge, Karl N. - Redemption, Battle Creek  
 Suggitt, Christopher S. - Good Shepherd, Caseville / St. Paul, Pigeon  
 Swem, Jeremy M. - Our Savior, Grand Rapids  
 Tkac, Russell S. - Peace, Waterford  
 Todd, Kelly D. - Christ, Goodrich  
 Tonn, Paul A. - Trinity, Reed City  
 Townes, Richard A., Jr. - Bethel, Howard City  
 Undlin, Paul J. - St. Trinity, Clarkston  
 Veen, Evan C. - Holy Redeemer, Dryden  
 Vergin, Aaron H. - St. John's, Grand Haven  
 Vossler, Christopher P. - St. Paul, Sanford  
 Wagner, Robert V. - Holy Cross, Belding

Walworth, Tyler A. - Our Savior Deaf / Emmanuel, Dearborn  
 Wangelin, William R. - Our Savior, Lansing  
 Warsinski, Larry A. - Zion, Hemlock  
 Weeks, Kyle T. - St. Luke, Ann Arbor  
 Wenzelburger, Kurt R. - St. Peter, Macomb  
 Werner, Mark A. - Messiah, Holt  
 West, Brian D. - Holy Cross, Jenison  
 Williamson, Kenneth L. - Our Savior, Scottville  
 Willman, Sean A. - St. Paul's, Hillsdale  
 Winningham, Ryan A. - Zion, Holland  
 Witte, Mark K. - Grace, Monroe  
 Wittig, Brandon M. - Trinity, Sawyer  
 Woell, Brennan A. - Emmanuel, Cadillac  
 Wollberg, Trenton N. - Holy Cross, Onaway  
 Wright, Chad E. - Trinity, Utica  
 Wright, James F. - Trinity, Berrien Springs  
 Wurst, Robert W., Jr. - Good Shepherd, Middleville  
 Yaeger, Kaleb J. - Trinity, Sturgis  
 Zeile, Richard A. - St. John's, Taylor  
 Zucker, Tyge C. - Holy Cross, Flushing

## Ministers – Ordained, Advisory

Auernhamer, Mark E. - Emeritus, Bridgeport  
 Avers, Harold A. - Emeritus, Grosse Pointe Farms  
 Azzam, Timothy P. - Emeritus, Oscoda  
 Banjor, Elamin M. - St. Luke, Haslett  
 Beck, Gary L. - Emeritus, Flint  
 Bendewald, Jon D. - Emeritus, Saint Joseph  
 Bickel, Craig L. - Immanuel, Grand Rapids  
 Bodley, Christopher R. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Brandt, Mark D. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Buckhahn, Charles F. - Emeritus, Saginaw  
 Cordts, Frederick T. - Emeritus, Au Gres  
 Davis, David A. - Michigan District President  
 DeMeritt, Carl F., Jr. - Emeritus, Ypsilanti  
 Deneen, Christopher M. - Our Savior, Lansing  
 Dowding, Robert G. - Emeritus, Eaton Rapids  
 Duchene, Michael G. - St. Paul, Sterling Heights  
 Duerr, John M. - Emeritus, New Baltimore  
 Duncan, Randall S. - ULC, Ann Arbor  
 Eden, Joel S. - St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth  
 Edenfield, Harry N. - Emeritus, Brownstown  
 Filter, Edward W. - Emeritus, Portland  
 Fleming, David C. - Our Savior, Grand Rapids  
 Flynn, Daniel J. - Emeritus, Whitmore Lake  
 Frechette, Jeffrey D., Sr. - St. Mark, Flint  
 Gapski, Nicholas C. - Family of God & St. Stephen, Detroit  
 Gesler, Robert G. - Trinity, Davison  
 Grafe, Stephen D. - St. John, Rochester  
 Granado, Jesus R. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Grimm, Dale A. - Emeritus, Chelsea  
 Gruenwald, Daniel J. - Emeritus, Grand Rapids  
 Hagenow, Martin J. - Emeritus, Hemlock  
 Haupt, Dieter E. - Emeritus, Holland  
 Heimsoth, Jeffrey E. - Faith, Grand Blanc  
 Heise, Matthew W. - Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Macomb  
 Hemme, Seth R. - Zion, Auburn  
 Hetzner, Mark W. - Emeritus, Chesterfield  
 Hillenbrand, Richard P. - Emeritus, Sterling Heights  
 Hoesman, C. William - Emeritus, Frankenmuth  
 Hopkins, Theodore J. - St. Paul, Ann Arbor  
 Iqbal, Vincent - St. Michael, Portage  
 Johnson, Randy L. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Jones, Todd A. - Candidate, Milan  
 Jung, David A. - Emeritus, Pinconning  
 Kaiser, Joel C. - St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth  
 Kasper, R. Gabriel - ULC, Ann Arbor  
 Kasper, Robert E. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Kersten, Alfred A. - Emeritus, Lincoln  
 Khan, Farrukh M. - All Nations, Clinton Township  
 Kleimola, Dale M. - Emeritus, Jackson  
 Kopper, Glenn P. - Emeritus, Holt  
 Koy, Norman A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Lahrman, William C. - Emeritus, Muskegon  
 Lassanske, Dennis L. - Emeritus, Muskegon

LeClair, Timothy J. - Family of God, Detroit  
 Lucas, Bruce K. - Trinity, Traverse City  
 Maier, David P. E. - Emeritus, Frankfort  
 Majeski, Eric W. - Grace, Romeo  
 Mann, Dennis C. - Emeritus, Monroe  
 McDonald, Gilbert K. - Emeritus, Clarkston  
 Mehdi-Khan, Amer - All Nations, Clinton Township  
 Melinat, Theodore C. - Emeritus, Pinconning  
 Micheel, Benjamin P. - Trinity, Saint Joseph  
 Neigh, Dennis J. - Emeritus, Greenbush  
 Neuendorf, Donald O. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Nickel, Peter S. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Peck, Adam J. - Holy Cross, Jenison  
 Philp, Paul A. - Concordia University System  
 Pollatz, Paul A. - Mount Hope, Allen Park  
 Pronsati, Dante B. - St. Peter, Macomb  
 Rahn, Robert L. - Lutheran Heritage Foundation  
 Reed, David H. - Orphan Grain Train - Michigan  
 Roberts, Robert R. - Emeritus, Bay City  
 Schmitt, Frederick A. - Emeritus, Sterling Heights  
 Schroeder, Thomas L. - Emeritus, Milan  
 Schuler, Matthew G. - Faith, Troy  
 Schultz, Robert J. - Emeritus, Freeland  
 Sidwell, David H. - Emeritus, Kalamazoo  
 Sproul, John M. - Emeritus, Ypsilanti  
 Stier, Lewis W. - Emeritus, Saint Clair Shores  
 Sutton, A. Trevor - St. Luke, Haslett  
 Troxel, Christopher D. - Emmaus, Ann Arbor  
 Twietmeyer, Andrew R. - St. Paul's, Hillsdale  
 Varblow, Bryan S. - St. Mark's, Brooklyn  
 Watters, Samuel P. - St. Matthew, Westland  
 Weldon, John H. - Emeritus, Saginaw  
 Werner, Joel A. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia  
 Winningham, David C. - Emeritus, Bay City  
 Wojtowicz, Daniel A. - Immanuel, Saginaw  
 Wolff, Paul A. - Emmanuel, Dearborn  
 Wolfram, Richard J. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Woodfin, Stephen W. - Our Shepherd, Birmingham  
 Yakimow, Scott E. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Yohannes, Z. Zerit - St. Luke, Haslett  
 Yops, Bradley J. - Emeritus, Ann Arbor

## **Lay Delegates, Voting**

Adrian, Hope - Gentz, Ronald A.  
 Adrian, St. John's - Hansen, Tom R.  
 Albion, St. Paul - Shedd, Brad  
 Alpena, Immanuel - Stevens, Matthew  
 Ann Arbor, Peace - Saalfeld, James R.  
 Ann Arbor, St. Luke - Fink, Elizabeth  
 Ann Arbor, St. Paul - Shasko, Ellen  
 Ann Arbor, St. Thomas / Milan, St. Paul - Weidmayer, Jeff  
 Armada, Our Saviour - Forbes, Bruce  
 Au Gres, St. John - Klein, Dennis R.  
 Auburn, Grace - Haven, Daniel  
 Auburn, Zion - Wesson, Mark  
 Baldwin, Grace - Otto, Kathy  
 Bay City, Faith - Streeter, Kevin J.  
 Bay City, Immanuel - Trelewski, Christopher  
 Bay City, St. John - Marshall, Daegan  
 Bay City, St. Paul - Warren, Jeremy  
 Bay City, Trinity - Friebe, David M.  
 Bay City, Zion - Schilke, Sharon K.  
 Belding, Holy Cross - Spenle, Lori A.  
 Belleville, Open Arms - Ferber, David  
 Berrien Springs, Trinity - Goodman, Edward  
 Beverly Hills, Our Savior Dear / Dearborn, Emmanuel - Schott, William M.  
 Birch Run, St. Martin - Bender, Timothy  
 Birmingham, Our Shepherd - Hynes, Terrence, Jr.  
 Bloomfield Hills, Cross Of Christ - Grunewald, Jeff  
 Boyne City, Christ - Hessler, Glenn  
 Brant, St. John - Miller, Scott  
 Bridgman, Immanuel - Smith, Larry  
 Brighton, Shepherd Of The Lakes - Gessert, Greg  
 Brooklyn, St. Mark's / Ypsilanti, Cross & Resurrection - Krauss, Philip M. I

Buchanan, Trinity - King, Steven A.  
 Burr Oak, St. John's - Hagen, Brian A.  
 Cadillac, Emmanuel - Heyniger, Brian  
 Caledonia, St. Paul - Miller, Coralie  
 Canton, Grace / Westland, Salem National - Hardy, Cathy  
 Caro, St. Paul - LeBlanc, Jamison  
 Caseville, Good Shepherd / Pigeon, St. Paul - Tabar, Ron  
 Cass City, Good Shepherd - Balzer, Daniel H.  
 Cassopolis, St. Paul - Fitz, Victor A.  
 Charlotte, First - Arends, Herman J.  
 Cheboygan, St. John - Schaedig, Janis  
 Chelsea, Our Savior - Matusik, Mark  
 Chesterfield, Good Shepherd - Bell, Murney  
 Clarkston, St. Trinity - Cardinal, Dan  
 Clinton Township, All Nations - Masih, Arshad  
 Clinton Township, Trinity - Vaughn, Victor  
 Clio, Messiah - Nutzmann, John W.  
 Coldwater, St. Paul - Beier, Beverly J.  
 Coloma, Salem - Dolph, Patrick L.  
 Conklin, Trinity - Barkow, Russell  
 Coopersville, Grace - Hoyer, Jonathan  
 Davison, Trinity - Meinburg, George  
 Dearborn Heights, Immanuel - Hass, Laura  
 Dearborn, Guardian - Glennie, Bruce  
 Detroit, Family of God & St. Stephen - Solano, John  
 Detroit, Historic Trinity - Karle, Christopher  
 Detroit, Mount Calvary - Witte, Daryl  
 Detroit, Outer Drive Faith - Brooks, Robert V., Jr.  
 Detroit, St. John - Henry, Willie Marie  
 DeWitt, Hope - Sikora, Becky Jo  
 Dryden, Holy Redeemer - Bowerman, Terry  
 East Lansing, Ascension - McNamara, Stacey  
 Eastpointe, St. Peter's - Adams, Robyn L.  
 Engadine, Bethlehem / Germfask, Grace / Newberry, Trinity - Dittenber, Robert E.  
 Essexville, Pilgrim - Anthony, Mark  
 Fair Haven, St. Peter - Templin, Sherrie  
 Fairgrove, Grace - Reinbold, Aaron  
 Farmington Hills, Prince Of Peace - Echols, Elaine  
 Fenton, Trinity - Schroeder, Edward G.  
 Flat Rock, Community - Swiecki, Michael  
 Flint, Lamb of God - Prosch, Gerald H.  
 Flint, St. Mark - Schacher, Rick  
 Flint, Christ The King & St. Paul - Paehlke, Glenn A.  
 Flushing, Holy Cross - Meinburg, Wendy  
 Frankenmuth, St. Lorenz - Saleska, James  
 Fraser, St. John - Gorman, James  
 Gaylord, Trinity / Grayling, Mount Hope - Arego, Douglas A.  
 Gladwin, Our Savior - Hetherington, Jeff  
 Glennie, Our Savior / Mio, Living Water - Jones, Todd  
 Goodrich, Christ - Todd, Linda  
 Grand Blanc, Faith - Koke, Carol A.  
 Grand Haven, St. John's - Spitters, Daniel  
 Grand Rapids, Immanuel - Haberling, Timothy H.  
 Grand Rapids, Messiah - Hula, Daniel  
 Grand Rapids, Our Savior - Braun, Matthew  
 Grand Rapids, St. James - Bifulco, Mike  
 Grand Rapids, St. Matthew - Brown, Jason  
 Greenville, Mount Calvary - Gager, Judith  
 Hamburg, St. Paul - Richardson, Clifford  
 Harbor Beach, Zion - Layer, Richard  
 Harrison, St. Luke - Hathaway, Michael II  
 Haslett, St. Luke - Behnke, Donald  
 Hemlock, St. Peter - Thompson, Ethan S.  
 Hemlock, Zion - Bluemer, Richard  
 Highland, Faith - Rhodes, Dean  
 Hillman, St. John - Cordes, Gordon III  
 Hillsdale, St. Paul's - Kilgore, Aaron  
 Holland, Christ Our Savior - Konopka, Ronald  
 Holland, Zion - Pohanka, David W.  
 Holt, Messiah - Hammes, Bill  
 Holt, St. Matthew - Viges, Philip  
 Houghton Lake, St. John - Schalk, John  
 Howard City, Bethel - Newell, Abram  
 Howell, Heart of the Shepherd - Moore, Eric S.  
 Hubbard Lake, St. Paul - Sutton, Robert

Huntington Woods, Huntington Woods - Ducharme, Willard C.  
 Interlochen, Redeemer - Brant, Steven  
 Jackson, Redeemer - Walsh, Christopher B.  
 Jackson, Trinity - Wagner, Lloyd, Sr.  
 Jenison, Holy Cross - Hawks, Scott  
 Kalkaska, St. Paul / Mancelona, St. Matthew - Burns, Gerald  
 Kentwood, St. Mark - Sinner, Bryan  
 Kincheloe, St. Paul / Sault Sainte Marie, Saint Barnabas - Burhop, Ruth A.  
 Lake Orion, Good Shepherd - Meyer, Ken  
 Lansing, Good Shepherd & Trinity - Knudson, William A.  
 Lansing, Living Word - Legabu, Daniel  
 Lansing, Our Savior - Sundstrom, James  
 Lapeer, St. Paul - Zarate, Patrick  
 Lexington, St. Matthew - Henderson, Alexander  
 Linden, Hope - Siegwald, Ronald C.  
 Livonia, Christ Our Savior - O'Hara, Caleb  
 Macomb, Immanuel - Williams, James  
 Macomb, St. Peter - Zael, Kevin  
 Manistee, Trinity - Zehnder, Tim  
 Marlette, Our Savior - Durham, Christopher  
 Marysville, Light of Christ - Liadis, Bill  
 Midland, Messiah - Thomas, Joe  
 Midland, Our Savior - Lyvere, Kathy A.  
 Midland, St. John's - White, Sam  
 Milford, Christ - Peters, Robert  
 Millington, St. Paul - Kern, Steven H.  
 Minden City, Trinity / Palms, St. John - Hales, Catherine  
 Monroe, Grace - Kruger, Jane A.  
 Monroe, Holy Ghost - Declercq, Joshua  
 Monroe, Immanuel - Ries, Karla  
 Monroe, Trinity - Weinau, Kevin  
 Montague, St. James - Meacham, Robert  
 Mount Pleasant, Zion - Camp, Joshua  
 Muskegon, St. Mark - Faith, Elijah  
 Muskegon, Trinity - Francis, Thomas  
 New Baltimore, Christ - Blankenship, Charles  
 New Boston, St. John's - Tapley, Chris  
 New Boston, St. Paul's - Juchartz, Dave  
 Nunica, St. Luke - Schultz, Paul  
 Onaway, Holy Cross - Wollberg, Lydia  
 Onokama, Trinity - Johnson, David W.  
 Oscoda, Trinity - Wright, George  
 Otisville, St. Timothy - Peterson, Dale  
 Oxford, Journey - Smith, Mark  
 Paw Paw, Trinity - Anglin, John  
 Petersburg, St. Peter - Stahl, Thomas C.  
 Petoskey, Zion - Zowada, Tim D.  
 Pinckney, Trinity - Swanson, Ray  
 Pinconning, St. John - Trudell, Andrew  
 Port Hope, St. John - Muter, Teresa  
 Port Huron, Faith - Burke, Sean  
 Port Huron, Trinity - Pegg, John A.  
 Port Sanilac, St. John - Frusti, Daniel  
 Portage, St. Michael - Semrau, William E.  
 Portland, St. Andrew - Roof, Christopher  
 Prescott, Faith - Elowsky, Paul  
 Ray, St. John - Kacanowski, Paul  
 Reed City, Trinity - Johnson, Geri  
 Reese, Trinity - Pike, Brianna  
 Richville, St. Michael's - Bolzman, Jeffrey K.  
 Rochester Hills, GoodLife - Merlitti, Gladys  
 Rochester, St. John - Hughes, Arlan R.  
 Rockford, St. Peter's - Bredow, Joe  
 Rogers City, Immanuel & St. John - Grainger, Donald  
 Rogers City, Peace - Rothe, Daniel E.  
 Romeo, Grace - Todd, Neal  
 Royal Oak, St. Paul - Schultz, Chris  
 Saginaw, Bethlehem - Kerouac, Kenneth A.  
 Saginaw, Good Shepherd - Rauschert, Jeffery  
 Saginaw, Holy Cross - Wright, Beverly  
 Saginaw, Immanuel - Loest, Alexander  
 Saginaw, Messiah - Breternitz, Dale D.  
 Saginaw, Peace - Richardson, Andy  
 Saginaw, St. Mark - Brown, Stephen W.  
 Saint Clair, Immanuel - Jackson, Sean

Saint Helen, Hope / West Branch, St. John - Kaseman, Robert  
 Saint Johns, St. John's - Roberts, Gerald E.  
 Saint Johns, St. Peter - Gallo, Christopher  
 Saline, Christ Our King - Strobl, Julie A.  
 Sandusky, Peace - Hopfensperger, Kristen  
 Sanford, St. Paul - Barnard, Donald M.  
 Sawyer, Trinity - Marske, William  
 Scottville, Our Savior - Calder, Pat  
 Sebewaing, Immanuel - Brown, Nancy  
 Sebewaing, St. John & St. Peter - Garrison, Sara  
 Shelby Township, Peace - Brown, Laurie A.  
 Shelby Township, Shepherd's Gate - MacCourtney, Christian  
 Shelby, St. Stephen's - Puls, Dwight  
 South Lyon, Cross of Christ - Beyer, Robert  
 Southgate, Christ The King - Childers, Chance  
 Spring Lake, Lakeshore Lutheran Fellowship - Huff, George  
 Spring Lake, St. Matthew - Boice, Michael  
 Standish, Bethlehem - Schmidt, Lynn  
 Stevensville, Christ - Jackemeyer, Michael  
 Swartz Creek, NewLife Community - Thalhammer, Doug  
 Tawas City, Zion - Johnson, John  
 Taylor, St. John's - Bauer, Joseph  
 Three Rivers, St. Peter's - Smallcombe, Edward H.  
 Traverse City, St. Michael's & All Angels - Peavey, Susan  
 Traverse City, Trinity - Gauthier, Gerald  
 Trenton, St. Paul - Thompson, David  
 Troy, Faith - Casiglia, Autumn  
 Troy, St. Augustine - Monson, Joshua  
 Unionville, St. Paul - Rish, Leila  
 Utica, Trinity - Banasik, John  
 Walker, The Vine - Kleimola, Kevin  
 Walled Lake, St. Matthew - Farina, Allan  
 Warren, Holy Cross - Atkinson, Kevin  
 Warren, Hope - Wulff, Deborah  
 Washington, Our Redeemer - Riske, James M., Sr.  
 Waterford, Peace - Poe, Robert L. III  
 Waterford, St. Stephen - Heyniger, Wayne  
 Wayne, St. Michael - Lupescu, Linda  
 West Bloomfield, St. Mark's - Reardon, John  
 Westland, St. Matthew - Lockhart, Robert  
 Whitmore Lake, Living Water - Grimm, Phil

### **Lay Delegates, Advisory**

Brooklyn, St. Mark's / Ypsilanti, Cross & Resurrection - McCain, G. Mike  
 Rogers City, Immanuel & St. John - Quaine, Matthew

### **Ministers – Commissioned, Advisory**

Abraham, Caleb J. G. - Valley Lutheran High, Saginaw  
 Allen, Ronald M. - Emeritus, Ann Arbor  
 Altevogt, Lester L. - Emeritus, Brooklyn  
 Aughe, Kent J. - Emeritus, Royal Oak  
 Baughman, Kristina L. - Lutheran High Northwest, Rochester Hills  
 Blickendorf, Jennifer L. - Immanuel, Macomb  
 Bode, Timothy A. - Christ The King, Southgate  
 Bolwerk-Heien, Anne C. - St. Matthew, Walled Lake  
 Brand, Lisa A. - Immanuel, Bay City  
 Brand, Susan L. - Emeritus, Mayfield  
 Brandt, John M. - Emeritus, Saginaw  
 Brandt, Susan R. - Emeritus, Saginaw  
 Bringold, Levi R. - St. John, Fraser  
 Brown, David C. - Lutheran High Westland, Westland  
 Burgess, Robert M. - St. Paul, Ann Arbor  
 Burk, Daniel R. - St. Matthew, Westland  
 Charogoff, Carolyn E. - Trinity, Monroe  
 Cuhuran, Kyle B. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Coomer, Hannah E. - St. John's, Grand Haven  
 Davenport, Chandler A. - Trinity, Monroe  
 Dexter, Johanna L. - Holy Cross, Jenison  
 Duncan, Amy J. - ULC, Ann Arbor  
 Edenfield, Marilyn J. - Emeritus, Brownstown  
 Eising, Christina E. - St. Paul, Royal Oak  
 Esselman, Luke M. - Grace, Coopersville / Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Fanta, Amy L. - Camp Restore Detroit, Detroit  
 Fehn, Kelley J. - St. Peter, Hemlock / Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor

Fehn, Lynn A. - Good Shepherd, Saginaw  
 Flanick, Meghan L. - Candidate, Gladwin  
 Foiles, Lisa M. - Faith, Bay City  
 Francik, Christopher D. - St. Paul, Royal Oak  
 Freudenburg, Benjamin F. - Emeritus, Ypsilanti  
 Frusti, Kathleen H. - Emeritus, Jackson  
 Frusti, Timothy M. - Emeritus, Jackson  
 Gallagher, John J. III - Emeritus, Norton Shores  
 Geikas, Sarah M. - Immanuel, Bay City  
 Gontjes, Abigail G. - St. Matthew, Westland  
 Gross, Nancy D. - Trinity, Monroe  
 Grulke, Travis G. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Hackbarth, Samuel O. - Lutheran High North, Macomb  
 Hackbarth, Tracey J. - Trinity, Monroe  
 Hansard, Christie L. - Faith, Grand Blanc / Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Hansell, Christopher G. - Trinity, Jackson  
 Hansen, Ankara T. - Good Shepherd, Saginaw  
 Hansen, Maxwell A. - Good Shepherd, Saginaw  
 Haupt, Natalie A. - Lutheran High North, Macomb  
 Heinlein, Brian J. - St. Peter, Hemlock  
 Heins, Dawn R. - St. Paul, Royal Oak  
 Hessler, Dorothy E. - Emeritus, Boyne City  
 Hollman, Linda M. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia  
 Hooper, Susan L. - Emeritus, Grand Blanc  
 Horak, John B. - Our Savior, Lansing  
 Horning, Brian C. - Zion, Petoskey  
 Jones, Amanda R. - St. Paul, Flint  
 Kayser, Doris A. - Emeritus, Grand Rapids  
 Kempin, Karen L. - St. John's, Midland  
 Kittleman, Joshua B. - Christ Our Savior, Livonia  
 Knoll, Leah M. - St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth  
 Kopper, Jill M. - Trinity, Clinton Township  
 Krause, Jennifer L. - St. Michael's, Richville  
 Krieger, Ruth A. - Trinity, Berrien Springs  
 Krueger, Richard C. - Messiah, Grand Rapids  
 Kruger, Anna C. - St. John's, Midland  
 Kusch, David S. - Lutheran High Northwest, Rochester Hills  
 Kutch, Michael R. - Hope, DeWitt  
 Laughlin-Adler, Barbara J. - Michigan District Archives  
 Livo, Gilbert R. - Emeritus, Riverview  
 Looker, Paul J. - Lutheran H. S. Association, Rochester Hills  
 Lucas, Krista M. - Emeritus, Traverse City  
 Mahler, William A. - Emeritus, Ypsilanti  
 Martinal, Rebekah E. - Hope, Adrian  
 Matyas, Valerie E. - St. Paul, Bay City  
 McGhee, Stacy J. - LSEM, Ann Arbor  
 McLoughlin, Janet M. - Our Shepherd, Birmingham  
 Meyer, David J. - Lutheran High North, Macomb  
 Morden, Karen T. - Holy Cross, Saginaw  
 Moro, Martin L. III - MOST Ministries  
 Musa, Rahel - St. Luke, Haslett  
 Nimtz, Mark A. - Our Shepherd, Birmingham  
 Nimtz, Wendy E. - Our Shepherd, Birmingham  
 Pearson, Kathryn L. - Peace, Saginaw  
 Pett, Ellen C. - Immanuel, Bay City  
 Pfeiffer, Ann M. - Emeritus, Westland  
 Philp, Sharon D. - Candidate, Traverse City  
 Polk, Norma P. - ULC, Ann Arbor  
 Prusak, Kathleen A. - Emeritus, Dearborn  
 Reincke, John M. - Immanuel, Macomb  
 Ressler, Amanda F. - St. Trinity, Clarkston  
 Revard, Stephanie R. - St. Martin, Birch Run  
 Riley, Barbara A. - St. Paul, Millington  
 Russell, Charles P. - St. Peter, Macomb  
 Schmidt, Paul M. - Emeritus, Melvindale  
 Schmucker, Calvin F. - Emeritus, South Lyon  
 Schnuell-Ruth, Karen D. - Emeritus, Highland  
 Schultz, Josiah D. - Our Savior, Gladwin  
 Schultz, Mark A. - Emeritus, Allen Park  
 Schultz, Patricia A. - Emeritus, Livonia  
 Schumacher, Richard W., Jr. - LSEM, Ann Arbor  
 Seehafer, Tyler N. - St. Paul, Ann Arbor  
 Sellers, Tammy L. - Our Shepherd, Birmingham  
 Seta, Savannah J. - Lutheran High Westland, Westland  
 Siebarth, Jolene R. - Holy Cross, Jenison

Simon, Zane A. - St. Paul, Caro  
 Singleton, Lisa A. - Trinity, Jackson  
 Skov, Neil M. - Emeritus, Ann Arbor  
 Sohn, Kristine K. - Emeritus, Grand Ledge  
 Sorgatz, James F. - Emeritus, Saline  
 Sorgatz, Marian A. - Emeritus, Saline  
 Spiehs, Shawna L. - Trinity, Utica  
 Stathakis, Carol B. - Emeritus, Shelby Township  
 Tedesco, Kimberly J. - St. Paul, Lapeer  
 Thomas, Julie R. - St. Paul, Royal Oak  
 Twork, Clara J. - Emeritus, Belleville  
 Verseman, Dennis H. - Emeritus, Northville  
 Volkert, Bruce R. - Trinity, Utica  
 Volkert, Marianne E. - Lutheran High Northwest, Rochester Hills  
 Walsh, Hannah R. - Our Shepherd, Birmingham  
 Walsh, Kimber L. - Redeemer, Jackson  
 Wargo, Nicole N. - St. Peter, Macomb  
 Weisenbach, Janice L. - Emeritus, Saginaw  
 Wentzel, Anne C. - Candidate, Grand Rapids  
 Weston, Amy J. - St. Matthew, Walled Lake  
 Wieneke, Lori S. - St. Matthew, Grand Rapids  
 Winterstein, Jill N. - St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth  
 Winterstein, Thomas J. - St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth  
 Witto, Gregory P. - Christ Our King, Saline  
 Yakimow, Miriam R. - St. Paul, Hamburg  
 Zucker, Denys M. - Holy Cross, Flushing

## Other Registrants

Allen, Janet M. - Guest  
 Arego, Mary - Guest  
 Auernhamer, Nola - Guest  
 Azzam, Kathy L. - Guest  
 Baerwolf, Ramona - Guest  
 Balzer, Ruth E. - Guest  
 Beam, Scott - Michigan District Board of Directors  
 Bernthal Reindel, Bethany - Guest  
 Biermann, Joel D. - Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis  
 Boergert, Stephen R. - Michigan District Board of Directors  
 Cameron, Debra R. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Candreva, Peter D. - St. Peter, Petersburg  
 Cloeter, Amber - Guest  
 Conrad, Donna - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Davis, Sallie - Guest  
 DeMeritt, Elizabeth - Guest  
 Draper, Ingrid - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Dueker, Kaitlyn - Guest  
 Egger, Thomas J. - Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis  
 Egmon, Sean - Convention Volunteer  
 Ekong, Linda M. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Engelhard, Dennis - Guest  
 Fall, Deborah S. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Frese, Michael N. - LCMS, Saint Louis  
 Fritsch, Linda J. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
 Galloway, Kendall - Padgett Communications  
 Galloway, Kolin - Padgett Communications  
 Gehm, David M. - Wellspring Lutheran Services, Saginaw  
 Grimm, Linda - Guest  
 Gruenwald, Cheryl - Guest  
 Harrison, Matthew C. - LCMS, Saint Louis  
 Hatcher, Barbara - Guest  
 Haupt, Ruth A. - Guest  
 Heckert, Ilona - Guest  
 Hoesman, Barbara - Guest  
 Hopkins, Elizabeth - Guest  
 Hoyer, Joni - Guest  
 Johnson, Susan L. - Guest  
 Jones, Cindy - Guest  
 Kaul, Albert D. - Valley Lutheran High, Saginaw  
 Klingbeil, Shawn - Guest  
 Kopper, Karen L. - Guest  
 Krengel, Amy A. - Guest  
 Krieger, Timothy - Guest  
 Kunze, Wayne - Guest  
 Lahrman, Mary B. - Guest  
 Livo, Katherine K. - Guest

MacAfee, Hannah M. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Maier, Patricia A. - Guest  
Mann, Bonnie L. - Michigan District Board of Directors  
Meckes, Janelle - Convention Volunteer  
Moyer, Chad E. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Neigh, Barbara - Guest  
Nesbitt, Natalie - Convention Volunteer  
Neuenfeldt, Jerry - Guest  
Nielsen-Schmidt, Julie A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Nuechterlein, Christopher - Parliamentarian  
Nutzmann, Joyce - Convention Volunteer  
Ogden, Alexander R. - Guest  
Peters, Meghan E. - Guest  
Prochnow, Peter E. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Prusak, Richard - Guest  
Quitmeyer, Frederick - Christ Our Savior, Livonia  
Redford, Michael - Wellspring Lutheran Services, Saginaw  
Roberts, Eileen B. - Guest  
Ronan, Leslie - Convention Volunteer  
Rumberger, Jennifer A. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Schrack, Jeffery T. - Guest  
Schulz, Elisa L. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Shasko, Wesley - Convention Volunteer  
Smallcombe, Karen - Guest  
Sohn, O. Dennis - Michigan District Board of Directors  
Soltwisch, Thomas L. - Guest  
Sproul, Linda - Guest  
Stathakis, Richard H. - Guest  
Warsinski, Pamela J. - Guest  
Werner, Adele S. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Winget, Alicia - Michigan District Board of Directors  
Witte, Lucie E. - Emeritus, Fairborn  
Wohlfeil, Martha F. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Wohlrabe, John C., Jr. - LCMS, Saint Louis  
Wolff, Kaye K. - Guest  
Woltemath, Chad R. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Wright, Patricia - Guest  
York, Guy R. - Guest

Logan, Keith - Trinity HOPE  
Malone, Mike - Purposeful Journeys  
Manson, Brendan - Fellowship Development  
Martin, Michael - Christian Outreach for Africa (COFA)  
McFarland, Gena - Alliance Defending Freedom  
Montalvo, Micaela - Concordia Plans  
Moro, Audrey - MOST Ministries  
Mueller, Jacob - Lutheran Benefits Group & Lutheran Trust  
Mueller, Keith W. - Lutheran Benefits Group & Lutheran Trust  
Pollatz, Paul - A City On A Hill - ACOAH  
Renard, Alfred H. - Michigan School of Missional Formation  
Richert, John - Concordia University Wisconsin & Ann Arbor  
Salminen, Casey - A City On A Hill - ACOAH  
Sanft, James F. - Concordia Plans  
Schulz, Charles R. - Concordia University Chicago, River Forest  
Scott, Jeannette - Prison Fellowship  
Siefleisch, Courtney - Joint Seminaries - Fort Wayne & Saint Louis  
Sohn, Andrew O. - Church Extension Fund  
Sommerfeld, Cynthia N. - Concordia Center for the Family  
Storm, Walter W. - Ephphatha Lutheran Mission Society  
Thomas, Laura L. - Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor  
Warneke, Kevin - Fellowship Development  
Werner, Zachary J. - CEF / Mighty Fortress Foundation  
Woltemath, Heidi L. - The Center  
Yakimow, Abigail - Camp Concordia  
Yeh, Linda - Educational Opportunities Tours  
Yeh, Mark - Educational Opportunities Tours

## **Other Guests, Ministry Tent Exhibitors**

Alie, Julie - Concordia Center for the Family  
Altenburg, Keith M. - Constitution Review Committee  
Baird, Peter - Connection by Design  
Barodte, Rodney - Church Extension Fund  
Bates, John H. - Church Extension Fund  
Baughman, Brian - Franklin Avenue Mission  
Baylis, Aaron J. - Constitution Review Committee  
Bishop, Pamela - Lutheran Braille Workers  
Burfiend, Daniel - Joint Seminaries - Fort Wayne & Saint Louis  
Burgess, Julia A. - LCMS Foundation  
Burmeister, Todd - Concordia Publishing House  
Cook, Dawn - West Michigan Lutheran High, Wyoming  
Crook, Jeff - Chime Master  
Dussia, Timothy - Martin Luther's Evening Prayer  
Eastland, Melissa L. - West Michigan Lutheran High, Wyoming  
Fenske, Cynthia - A City On A Hill - ACOAH  
George, Akima - POBLO International  
Ghazal, Adel C. - Crafts from Jerusalem  
Ghazal, Mah - Crafts from Jerusalem  
Graham, Kathleen A. - Michigan District Archives  
Green, Joe - UTEC  
Haberling, Jennifer - Christian Outreach for Africa (COFA)  
Hansen, Claudia - Franklin Avenue Mission  
Hocker, Thomas - Tree of Life Imports  
Iseler, Earl A. - Lutherans For Life of Michigan  
Jacques, Patricia S. - Gifts For All God's Children  
Kaiser, Jim - Lutheran Bible Translators  
Kaiser, Pamela - Best Practices Heartland  
Kaiser, Susan - Lutheran Bible Translators  
Khair, Johnny M. - Holy Land Christian Solidarity  
Khan, Cynthia - POBLO International  
Krupski, Philip J. - LCMS Foundation  
Leach, Kathy - Love Ypsilanti Mission  
Liddell, Darrell - Franklin Avenue Mission  
Liddell, Shannon - Franklin Avenue Mission

# Congregations by Circuit and Region

as of 9/23/25

## North & East Region

<b>Circuit # 1 Mackinac Straits</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #6 Bay City</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
De Tour Village, Redeemer	14	Bay City, Faith	539
Drummond Island, Drummond Island	67	Bay City, Immanuel	1,047
Engadine, Bethlehem	76	Bay City, St. John	499
Germfask, Grace	71	Bay City, St. Paul	759
Kincheloe, St. Paul	6	Bay City, Trinity	608
Newberry, Trinity	95	Bay City, Zion	697
Sault Sainte Marie, Saint Barnabas	<u>64</u>	Essexville, Pilgrim	<u>132</u>
7 Member Congregations	393	7 Member Congregations	4,281
<b>Circuit # 2 Alpena</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #7 Thumb East</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Alpena, Immanuel	1,051	Bad Axe, Our Savior	415
Cheboygan, St. John	157	Harbor Beach, Zion	375
Hawks, Faith	85	Kinde, St. Peter	69
Hillman, St. John	335	Marlette, Our Savior	157
Hubbard Lake, St. Paul	271	Minden City, Trinity	46
Onaway, Holy Cross	76	Palms, St. John	69
Ossineke, Good Shepherd	30	Port Hope, St. John	447
Rogers City, Immanuel	158	Port Sanilac, St. John	61
Rogers City, Peace	323	Sandusky, Peace	<u>288</u>
Rogers City, St. John	256	9 Member Congregations	1,927
Rogers City, St. Michael	<u>248</u>		
11 Member Congregations	2,990		
<b>Circuit #3 Timberline</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #8 Thumb West</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Au Gres, St. John	246	Caseville, Good Shepherd	91
Glennie, Our Savior	24	Cass City, Good Shepherd	281
Hale, St. Paul	291	Fairgrove, Grace	64
Mio, Living Water	43	Pigeon, St. Paul	365
Oscoda, Trinity	131	Sebewaing, Immanuel	757
Prescott, Faith	162	Sebewaing, St. John	157
Tawas City, Zion	239	Sebewaing, St. Peter	63
Whittemore, Good News Ministries	<u>31</u>	Unionville, St. Paul	<u>217</u>
8 Member Congregations	1,167	8 Member Congregations	1,995
<b>Circuit #4 Gladwin</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #9 Frankenmuth</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Clare, Prince Of Peace	48	Caro, St. Paul	499
Gladwin, Our Savior	216	Frankenmuth, St. Lorenz	4,181
Harrison, St. Luke	136	Millington, St. Paul	1,164
Houghton Lake, St. John	260	Munger, Trinity-St. James	350
Pinconning, St. John	200	Reese, Trinity	780
Saint Helen, Hope	102	Richville, St. Michael's	1,062
Standish, Bethlehem	174	Saginaw, Immanuel	<u>456</u>
West Branch, St. John	<u>110</u>	7 Member Congregations	8,492
8 Member Congregations	1,246		
<b>Circuit #5 Midland</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #10 Saginaw</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Alma, Peace	97	Hemlock, St. Peter	1,044
Auburn, Grace	362	Hemlock, Zion	311
Auburn, Zion	802	Saginaw, Bethlehem	650
Brant, St. John	97	Saginaw, Good Shepherd	669
Midland, Lord Of New Life	96	Saginaw, Holy Cross	303
Midland, Messiah	1,291	Saginaw, Peace	1,841
Midland, Our Savior	78	Saginaw, St. Mark	234
Midland, St. John's	1,020	Saginaw, Messiah	90
Mount Pleasant, Zion	433	Saint Charles, Nativity	<u>98</u>
Sanford, St. Paul	274	9 Member Congregations	5,240
Wheeler, Immanuel	<u>118</u>		
11 Member Congregations	4,668		
		<b>Circuit #11 Flint North</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
		Birch Run, St. Martin	314
		Bridgeport, Faith	213
		Clio, Messiah	1,485
		Flint, Christ The King	34
		Flint, Our Savior	112
		Flint, St. Paul	366
		Flint, United in Christ	105
		Flushing, Holy Cross	270
		Owosso, St. Philip	<u>85</u>
		9 Member Congregations	2,984

<b>Circuit #12 Flint South</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #13 Lapeer</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Burton, Pilgrim	121	Davison, Trinity	401
Fenton, Trinity	345	Dryden, Holy Redeemer	157
Flint, Lamb of God	167	Flint, St. Mark	506
Goodrich, Christ	32	Imlay City, Family of Christ	54
Grand Blanc, Faith	1,176	Lapeer, St. Paul	730
Linden, Hope	164	Memphis, St. Andrew	40
Swartz Creek, NewLife Community	<u>195</u>	North Branch, New Life In Christ	108
7 Member Congregations	<u>2,200</u>	Otisville, St. Timothy	<u>169</u>
		8 Member Congregations	2,165
		<b>109 Member Congregations</b>	<b>39,748</b>

### Metro East Region

<b>Circuit #14 Port Huron</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #18 Birmingham</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Algonac, First	46	Beverly Hills, Our Savior Deaf	36
Armada, Our Saviour	183	Birmingham, Redeemer	1,488
Fair Haven, St. Peter	105	Birmingham, Our Shepherd	1,006
Goodells, Hope	13	Bloomfield Hills, Cross Of Christ	352
Lexington, St. Matthew	306	Huntington Woods, Huntington Woods	246
Marine City, Living Faith	46	Royal Oak, St. Paul	653
Marysville, Light of Christ	74	Troy, St. Augustine	<u>164</u>
Port Huron, Faith	359	7 Member Congregations	3,945
Port Huron, Trinity	759		
Richmond, St. Peter's	1,113	<b>Circuit #19 Macomb South</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Saint Clair, Immanuel	<u>508</u>	Clinton Township, All Nations	89
11 Member Congregations	<u>3,512</u>	Eastpointe, St. Peter's	725
		Eastpointe, St. Thomas	331
<b>Circuit #15 Macomb North</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	Fraser, St. John	1,037
Chesterfield, Good Shepherd	61	Roseville, Bethlehem	89
Clinton Township, Cross Point	20	Warren, Holy Cross	211
Clinton Township, St. Luke	391	Warren, Hope	<u>356</u>
Clinton Township, Trinity	1,542	7 Member Congregations	2,838
Macomb, Immanuel	2,289		
Macomb, St. Peter	3,414	<b>Circuit #20 Detroit East</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
New Baltimore, Christ	77	Detroit, Bethany	82
Ray, St. John	<u>140</u>	Detroit, East Bethlehem	47
8 Member Congregations	<u>7,934</u>	Detroit, Historic Trinity	1,024
		Detroit, Mount Calvary	116
<b>Circuit #16 Macomb Northwest</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	Detroit, Nazareth	38
Romeo, Grace	562	Detroit, Peace	100
Shelby Township, Peace	525	Detroit, St. Philips	<u>140</u>
Shelby Township, Shepherd's Gate	786	7 Member Congregations	1,547
Sterling Heights, St. Paul	162		
Troy, Faith	2,398	<b>56 Member Congregations</b>	<b>30,144</b>
Troy, Faith Tamil	78		
Utica, Trinity	2,826		
Washington, Our Redeemer	<u>315</u>		
8 Member Congregations	<u>7,652</u>		
		<b>Circuit #17 Oakland North</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
<b>Circuit #17 Oakland North</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	Clarkston, St. Trinity	296
Clarkston, St. Trinity	296	Lake Orion, Good Shepherd	151
Lake Orion, Good Shepherd	151	Ortonville, Prince Of Peace	48
Ortonville, Prince Of Peace	48	Oxford, Journey	277
Oxford, Journey	277	Pontiac, St. Paul Community	10
Pontiac, St. Paul Community	10	Rochester, St. John	1,837
Rochester, St. John	1,837	Rochester Hills, Crown Of Life	65
Rochester Hills, Crown Of Life	65	Rochester Hills, GoodLife	<u>32</u>
Rochester Hills, GoodLife	<u>32</u>	8 Member Congregations	2,716
8 Member Congregations	<u>2,716</u>		

## Metro West Region

<b>Circuit #21 Dearborn/Detroit</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #29 Ann Arbor</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Dearborn, Emmanuel	246	Ann Arbor, St. Luke	283
Dearborn, Guardian	744	Ann Arbor, St. Paul	738
Detroit, Evergreen	52	Ann Arbor, ULC	301
Detroit, Family of God	54	Hamburg, St. Paul	571
Detroit, Pan De Vida	54	Pinckney, Trinity	120
Detroit, Outer Drive Faith	105	Whitmore Lake, Living Water	55
Detroit, St. John	65	Ypsilanti, Cross & Resurrection	47
Detroit, St. Stephen	76	7 Member Congregations	<u>2,115</u>
Wayne, St. Michael	426		
Westland, St. Matthew	<u>376</u>	<b>Circuit #30 Jackson</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
10 Member Congregations	2,198	Addison, Lutheran Church Of The Lakes	161
		Adrian, Hope	170
<b>Circuit #23 Down River</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	Adrian, St. John's	469
Allen Park, Mount Hope	90	Blissfield, Blessed Savior	10
Flat Rock, Community	115	Brooklyn, St. Mark's	104
Lincoln Park, Calvary	120	Hudson, Our Saviour	66
Southgate, Christ The King	1,339	Jackson, Redeemer	287
Taylor, St. John's	148	Jackson, Trinity	<u>285</u>
Trenton, St. Paul	800	8 Member Congregations	1,552
Wyandotte, Trinity	<u>269</u>		
7 Member Congregations	2,881	<b>62 Member Congregations</b>	<b>18,701</b>
<b>Circuit #24 Monroe</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>		
Lambertville, Christ The King	137		
Monroe, Grace	242		
Monroe, Holy Ghost	491		
Monroe, Immanuel	336		
Monroe, Trinity	1,016		
New Boston, St. John's	542		
Petersburg, St. Peter	<u>128</u>		
7 Member Congregations	2,892		
<b>Circuit #26 Kensington</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>		
Brighton, Shepherd Of The Lakes	871		
Highland, Faith	374		
Milford, Christ	265		
South Lyon, Cross of Christ	292		
Walled Lake, St. Matthew	1,196		
Waterford, Peace	163		
Waterford, St. Stephen	<u>220</u>		
7 Member Congregations	3,381		
<b>Circuit #27 Livonia</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>		
Canton, Grace	30		
Dearborn Heights, Immanuel	27		
Farmington Hills, Prince Of Peace	87		
Farmington Hills, Shadow of the Cross	242		
Livonia, Christ Our Savior	1,242		
Northville, St. Paul	382		
Westland, Salem National	<u>85</u>		
7 Member Congregations	2,095		
<b>Circuit #28 Milan</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>		
Ann Arbor, Peace	394		
Ann Arbor, St. Thomas	35		
Belleville, Open Arms	82		
Britton, Emmanuel	135		
Chelsea, Our Savior	168		
Milan, St. Paul	102		
New Boston, St. Paul's	125		
Saline, Christ Our King	487		
Ypsilanti, Faith	<u>59</u>		
9 Member Congregations	1,587		

## West Region

<b>Circuit #31 Petoskey</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #38 Muskegon</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Boyne City, Christ	238	Conklin, Trinity	431
Charlevoix, Bethany	33	Montague, St. James	493
Gaylord, Trinity	152	Muskegon, St. Mark	305
Grayling, Mount Hope	102	Muskegon, Trinity	359
Kalkaska, St. Paul	299	Nunica, St. Luke	179
Lewiston, Bethlehem	134	Shelby, St. Stephen's	30
Mancelona, St. Matthew	97	Whitehall, Faith	129
Petoskey, Zion	<u>251</u>	7 Member Congregations	<u>1,926</u>
8 Member Congregations	1,306		
<b>Circuit #32 Traverse City</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #39 Holland</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Benzonia, Our Savior	53	Coopersville, Grace	249
Cedar, St. Pauls	49	Grand Haven, St. John's	525
Elk Rapids, Grace	78	Holland, Christ Our Savior	73
Glen Arbor, Bethlehem	79	Holland, Zion	313
Interlochen, Redeemer	205	Spring Lake, Lakeshore Lutheran Fellowship	251
Leland, Immanuel	135	Spring Lake, St. Matthew	91
Traverse City, St. Michael's & All Angels	86	West Olive, United	<u>31</u>
Traverse City, Trinity	<u>997</u>	7 Member Congregations	<u>1,533</u>
8 Member Congregations	1,682		
<b>Circuit #33 Manistee</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #40 Grand Rapids Northeast</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Arcadia, Trinity	325	Belding, Holy Cross	71
Cadillac, Emmanuel	260	Grand Rapids, Immanuel	498
Ludington, St. John's	237	Grand Rapids, Messiah	248
Manistee, Trinity	533	Grand Rapids, Our Savior	281
Mesick, Faith	19	Grand Rapids, St. James	133
Onekama, Norwalk	60	Grand Rapids, St. Matthew	611
Onekama, Trinity	141	Greenville, Mount Calvary	149
Pentwater, Lighthouse	58	Ionia, St. John	69
Scottville, Our Savior	305	Lowell, Good Shepherd	57
Wellston, Beautiful Savior	<u>11</u>	Rockford, St. Peter's	<u>224</u>
10 Member Congregations	1,949	10 Member Congregations	2,341
<b>Circuit #34 Big Rapids</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #41 Grand Rapids Southwest</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Baldwin, Grace	60	Caledonia, St. Paul	408
Big Rapids, St. Peter's	207	Grandville, Bethel	53
Fremont, Redeemer	72	Hudsonville, New Hope	117
Howard City, Bethel	120	Jenison, Holy Cross	1,319
Mecosta, Chapel Of The Lakes	95	Jenison, St. John	14
Reed City, Trinity	444	Kentwood, St. Mark	234
Sand Lake, Resurrection	135	Middleville, Good Shepherd	38
Stanton, Hope	29	Walker, The Vine	<u>34</u>
White Cloud, Christ	<u>100</u>	8 Member Congregations	<u>2,217</u>
9 Member Congregations	1,262		
<b>Circuit #35 Capitol</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #42 Battle Creek</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Charlotte, First	252	Battle Creek, Redemption	234
Holt, Messiah	265	Battle Creek, St. Mark	482
Holt, St. Matthew	122	Battle Creek, St. Paul	105
Howell, Heart of the Shepherd	173	Kalamazoo, Immanuel	126
Lansing, Good Shepherd	75	Kalamazoo, Zion	415
Lansing, Living Word	10	Marshall, Christ	100
Lansing, Our Savior	933	Paw Paw, Trinity	492
Lansing, Trinity	89	Portage, St. Michael	<u>555</u>
Leslie, Grace	<u>43</u>	8 Member Congregations	2,509
9 Member Congregations	1,962		
<b>Circuit #36 Saint Johns</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>	<b>Circuit #43 Saint Joseph</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Carson City, Calvary	41	Berrien Springs, Trinity	284
DeWitt, Hope	205	Bridgman, Immanuel	536
East Lansing, Ascension	119	Buchanan, St. Paul	63
Fowler, St. Paul	91	Buchanan, Trinity	393
Haslett, St. Luke	733	Cassopolis, St. Paul	100
Portland, St. Andrew	57	Coloma, Salem	224
Saint Johns, St. John's	266	Niles, St. Paul's	200
Saint Johns, St. Peter	<u>180</u>	Saint Joseph, Trinity	926
8 Member Congregations	1,692	Sawyer, Trinity	197
		Stevensville, Christ	<u>661</u>
		10 Member Congregations	3,584

<b>Circuit #44 South Central</b>	<b>Confirmed Members</b>
Albion, St. Paul	196
Burr Oak, St. John's	120
Centreville, St. Paul's	62
Coldwater, St. Paul	183
Colon, St. Paul's	37
Hillsdale, St. Paul's	359
Sturgis, Salem	30
Sturgis, Trinity	397
Three Rivers, St. Peter's	125
Union City, Our Savior	<u>125</u>
10 Member Congregations	1,634
<b>112 Member Congregations</b>	<b>25,597</b>
<b>339 Member Congregations</b>	<b>114,190</b>

# Advisory Delegates to the 2026 Synodical Convention

## Ministers of Religion – Ordained

### Delegates

### Alternate

Rev. Dr. Timothy Brand  
Rev. Donald Neuendorf  
Rev. Dr. Paul Philp

## Ministers of Religion – Commissioned

### Delegates

### Alternates

Shawna Spiehs  
Kathryn Pearson  
Ron Allen  
Sharon Philp  
Hannah Coomer  
David Kusch  
Amanda Jones  
Tracey Hackbarth  
Amy Weston  
Pat Schultz  
Gilbert Livo  
David Meyer  
Thomas Winterstein  
Jill Winterstein  
Greg Witto  
Sue Hooper



## 2025 Michigan District President's Address

### People of Hope: What Sort of Christians Are We?

Rev. David A. Davis

Recording and transcription can be viewed at  
[michigandistrict.org/convention2025videoplaylist](http://michigandistrict.org/convention2025videoplaylist)

People of Hope: We celebrate Jesus: incarnate, crucified, risen, reigning, returning. We share Jesus: incarnate, crucified, risen, reigning, returning. We fix our eyes on Jesus: incarnate, crucified, risen, reigning, returning.

Can I say, this has been a cool opportunity to serve you as District President? That is not to say it has always been fun and certainly not easy. I appreciate the opportunity to serve Jesus and his people, you, in this way ... of course it is up to you to determine how long I might do that.

Thank you for your kindness, support, patience, prayers, suggestions, and where necessary (staff- VPs) your good-sported-ness.

In this time together, I want to address what I believe to be a pressing issue in our circles generally and, since this is us, in our District specifically. I will assume that you have read my report to the District printed in Workbook II, even if you did not also mark, learn, and inwardly digest it. So, in these few moments together here I will not turn our attention to the topics contained there.

**The heart of this address is not specifically about Concordia** and issues surrounding it. Although there is tangential connection. I will say we certainly grieve and are disappointed about what happened and how. We grieve not only about what has happened, but about the future that now cannot happen. Many people's concerns about and discouragement with our life together as Synod have adhered to this issue. Over the next couple of days, delegates will have opportunity to speak into the situation forthrightly and in love through a number of resolutions that address the situation. At the same time, in our final Michigan District Convention here at Concordia, we intend to celebrate the good things that have taken place on this campus, we will do so with great thankfulness. Through it all, we are Christians. We believe our God is almighty and works all things together for good for those who love him. In spite of what is loss, we are already moving ahead to expand campus ministry in other sites across the state and have taken initial steps to develop a vocational ministry that you will hear about later in the convention. But Concordia

is not the main issue I want to address.

**The issue is not theology** either, at least not directly. In my attendance at lots of Winkel meetings, dozens of worship services, and countless conversations with pastors, I am encouraged about the theological unity that we enjoy across the board. I continue to find solid Biblical, Confessional teaching throughout my travels.

**The issue is not worship**, although there are issues there we could talk about. We continue to struggle with the right way to worship, with which rites, and how many rites. New. Old. Traditional. Today. This preference. That preference.

**The issue is not bureaucracy**, although that is an issue that needs addressing. Every organization needs a structure. A body without a skeleton is a blob. But as is said, if your skeleton is showing, you're not well. Through the accretion of time and accumulation of convention actions our Synodical structure and its intricacies can only be fully grasped by a few and is barely grasped by most. That's an issue.

All that being said, **the issue I do want to address is our character, our ethic**. This is not about who we are. We are Christians washed by the blood of the Lamb, saved by grace through faith. This is not about whose we are. We are children of the most high God. Our identity is in Christ. The issue I want to consider is "how" we are, what sorts of Christians are we, our character, the ancients termed this ethos, ethic. What sort are we—or need to be—or need to be more so? We will consider three points, which if all is going well should sound somewhat familiar, along this theme: what sort of Christians are we going to be?

#### **We are the sort of Christians who read our Bible.**

We read it daily. We read it thoroughly. We read all of it, from beginning to end, even if not in that order. We believe, teach, and confess that the Bible is the sole source and norm for our teaching and believing, and living. It is the norma normans, the norm that norms everything else we think, say and do.

We read our Bible because in it we meet Jesus. John 14: *“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”* John 8: *“If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, you will know the truth and the truth will set us free.”* John 5 *“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life and it is they that testify about me.”* Colossians 3: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.”* Words are the building blocks of every relationship. Reading the Bible, being in the Word, in a sense is more about relationship with Jesus than it is doctrinal formulations.

We read our Bible because through it we have power, the power of God. When God speaks, things happen. He, His Word, spoke the universe into existence. That same power is unleashed when we are reading His word. Isaiah records, *“My word will not return to me void.”* The book of Hebrews explains, *“The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword.”*

We read our Bible and are humbled. We see the greatness of God and His grace and His Kingdom. We learn to own the mystery, revealed but never fully comprehended, that is the Triune God. We are humbled by the Creator’s love for his creatures. From Romans, *“Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?”* Or like Paul says in I Corinthians, *“Now we see through a glass darkly.”*

We read our Bible and are motivated to tell. We learn the ways of the King and His kingdom. The magnificence. The grace. The wisdom. The hope. The promises. And in so doing, become like Peter and John, *“We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard.”*

We read our Bible and are “reminded.” One of the key themes of our Convention is “remember.” When we remember, we are literally re-mind-ed. We get a new or refreshed mind. This is actually at the heart of repentance—in Greek—metanoia—it is changed mind. We think like Jesus.

We grow in Christ through the Word preached from the pulpit and studied in groups. And yet at the center of Lutheran heritage is personal Bible reading. As they say, *“I can’t read your Bible for you.”* Thanks, Dr. Luther. Thanks, Mr. Gutenberg. What sort of Christians are we? We are the sort who read our Bibles and there meet Jesus.

### **Second, we are also the sort of Christians who love one another.**

A big part of this Convention is to be renewed in that. To

be here together, spending time with each other, learning from and about one another. We are here together to love one another.

Of course, this is central to a Christian ethos. I John *“God is love. We love because he first loved us. If God so loved us, we ought to love one another.”* John 13 Jesus said, *“All men will know you are my disciples if your love one another.”*

What do you think about this definition of love, the agape kind? Love is to be fiercely committed to the well-being of another no matter what the cost. Isn’t that how God loved us, so much so that He poured out the precious blood of His Son Jesus to purchase us back from the power of the Devil? We are His pearl of great price—He spared no expense or effort.

This is the sort of love we are to have toward one another: to be fiercely committed to the well-being of one another, no matter what the cost. In the family. In the congregation. At work. With actual neighbors. With strangers. In the District. In the Synod.

Now, of course, just because such love is definable and a good thing, it doesn’t mean it comes easily. While all the people we see are people for whom Christ died, are loved by God, and are to be loved by us, they are still people. Like us. Sinners. Messy. People with faults and foibles. People with different perspectives and opinions. People who do not always think just like we think, or like the same things we like. It can be hard to love one another. But let’s be the sort of people who do.

From a District-wide and Synod-wide standpoint, there are three things that can help us.

For love to flourish we should respect our creaturely nature, that is, that we are all unique. Let’s expect and celebrate some variation. Let’s expect that not everything will be the same and not everyone will be doing all of the same things across our congregations. *We need to find unity in less, not more.* We are united in Scripture—norma normans. We are united in the Confessions—norma normata. More than that becomes increasingly problematic and finally untenable. We have to come to terms with the reality that not everyone has the same tastes, preferences. People have different tastes in food. People have different tastes in art. People have different tastes in music. Some prefer more traditional things. Good. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Some have more appreciation for the new. That’s good too. God is making all things new. Expecting variation in others helps the cause of love.

As signaled at the beginning of this address, for love to flourish in our circles we need to address the complexity

of our “official” relationships with one another through the Synod’s constitution and bylaws. The structure is too complex and inadvertently makes for a focus on rule-keeping and rule-breaking. Did you know that the Constitution and Bylaws are almost 250 pages? There are over 900 pages in the Council of Presidents Manual. A shorter, but still lengthy Circuit Visitors Manual exists. Certainly, we want things done decently and in order, but our relationship as Synod is to buttress ministry in our congregations and their settings, not to stifle the work of the Spirit or bind consciences of people. By having a system that only a few fully understand and from which all can find some transgression, the system breeds cynicism, suspicion, apathy, and sadly, lovelessness. For the sake of loving one another within our fellowship we need a simpler system that enfolds the key operating system: love.

And for love to flourish we need to be together. Or like is said, to be together you have to get together. That actually is a strength our Synod has. Our congregations provide a chance to get together every Sunday and other times during the week: face to face. Our pastors gather every month for their Winkel Conferences: face to face. This past year, nearly all of our Circuits met for area-wide Convocations, gatherings of brothers and sisters from nearby congregations: face to face. Because of your financial support of the District, we held more than 40 conferences last year. People face-to-face. And of course, that is just what we are doing here. We aren’t texting each other. We aren’t Facebooking each other. We aren’t Zooming. Here we are: face to face. Like John wrote, *“Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.”* We are going to worship together. We are going to eat together. We are going to think together. We are going to ... be together. Love flourishes through proximity.

What sort of Christians are we? We are the sort who love one another.

**And finally, we are the sort of Christians who work hard for the King and His Kingdom.**

Or as the Detroit Lions might say, we work with grit.

We are saved by grace, freely given to us through faith, but God worked hard to provide it for us. Think about the whole story, plan, tenaciousness of God’s salvation for us in Christ. Talk about grit. The fall. The flood. The patriarchs. The Exodus. The Judges. The Kings. The Captivity. But God remained steadfast and, at just the right time, sent His Son. Who, like Father like Son, remained steadfast in His work, service, ministry even to the point of death, death on the cross.

Now, He sends us out as His ambassadors with His Spirit, which is a tenacious Spirit. Like our Father, don’t we too want all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth? Well, like He worked hard to save us, we need to work hard to extend that same grace to others.

Trust me, I know full well how difficult it is to “be the Church,” to live as a congregation, to engage a community. It’s hard work. But that’s the sort of people we are. Filled with the Spirit, buoyed by our hope in Christ, and together as we love one another, we work to be used of God to extend His reign in the hearts of others.

Think about the hard work of others that has brought us here. Someone started the 340+ congregations we represent. Someone worked hard, probably a few, to guide you in the way you should go, the way of Jesus. Someone worked hard to recruit and train our pastors, teachers, and other commissioned workers. Someone worked hard to gain the foothold for the Gospel from which we work. Someone worked hard to establish and maintain Concordia.

While each generation faces different challenges, we follow in their train. Our being together in Convention is to build up such a resolve. We want to find courage not only in the presence of God but also in the strength of numbers. That’s what God did for Elijah. *“Last one left? Hardly.”* Look around. Right now. Look around. See brothers and sisters who are engaged in it all. Being together is to prepare us to return with vigor. Spurred on by one another to love and good works, by the end of the day tomorrow it will be time to return and re-engage in the work of our congregation and the Lord’s Church.

Yes, it is hard. Yes, statisticians of the church breed discouragement. Yes, we have buildings we love and want to maintain but have grown tired. Yes, there are congregations that have declined, and people are tired. Yes, the people in the neighborhood might not think just the same as us. Yes, busyness and the secular nature of life work against us.

But this is us. We are people of the most high God, strengthened by His Word, fed by His meal, filled by His Spirit, united in love and purpose. We are the sort of Christians who work with grit to serve the Savior. We work while it is day until the night comes and we lay the work aside.

There are indeed many issues that face the Church, that face your congregation. We can talk about them. We can pray about them. I suppose we can, and do, complain about them. But we might not be able to directly change them or address them.

**This issue, the issue of character, what sort of Christians are we, can be both addressed and acted upon here and now.**

This issue, of course with God's help, is under our control. And this is why we have come together: to become an increasingly different sort of people. It is Christian character that shines through in witness during times of stress: closing of a school we love, facing an apparent decline in the church, troubles in a country, troubles at home, squabbles within a congregation or church body, and as Jesus teaches, wars, rumors of wars, famines, and earthquakes. The work is hard. Our God is greater. The challenge is pressing. Our Savior is present. The difficulties cause stress. The Spirit refreshes.

Exactly what challenges and opportunities we will face in the coming triennium, we cannot predict. But we can prepare for them by God's grace and power as we commend ourselves to God to shape our character, our ethos, individually and corporately ...

- As we read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the word of God—constantly getting new minds—re-minded
- As we are renewed by the Spirit and in fellowship with one another, fiercely committed to the well-being of each other no matter what the cost
- And as we soon return home to our own field of service where we serve diligently, working hard, even with grit, to live out Kingdom life in a needy world.

This is the character of People of Hope.



## 2025 Michigan District Convention Essayist

Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann

Recording and transcription can be viewed at  
[michigandistrict.org/convention2025videoplaylist](http://michigandistrict.org/convention2025videoplaylist)

Thank you for the kind introduction. It's a joy to be with all of you today. It was the summer of 1975 when I first set foot on this campus. And I'll save you all doing the math that makes me 64, which according to a much younger Paul McCartney is the quintessential age of an old man. So that means that I'm old enough to know some stuff, but I'm not quite yet old enough to be that cute, irrelevant old guy, but it's getting closer. Some people were with my father not long ago and talked about, oh, he's so cute. And I thought, the day will come, but not yet. So while I still have some relevance left, I just want to, I want to try to make the most of it. So I came to campus in the summer of 75. It was for a Lutheran Youth Explo or whatever it was officially called.

It was an extraordinary event. Friday night we had a keynote speaker. Moving. I'd never been to anything like this in my life. And on that night, I stood up and said that I was going to serve God with my life. I made that promise. He did a little altar call kind of thing. And the next day we went out and we made evangelism visits on the streets of Ann Arbor right down the neighborhood. Blew my mind. I did it as an eighth grader. It was pretty crazy. So that was a huge event. Every summer I kept coming back. Eventually it was a non-issue. I simply enrolled. I left here in 83 with a BA and headed off to the seminary. Came back pretty consistently for about two years until my future bride graduated. Then I was pretty much done. I wandered on campus once in a while for something like one convention. I remember sitting back on those bleachers for about two hours and then I left. I didn't get a vote, it didn't really matter. Then that was it. I didn't come back.

So Ann Arbor was my alma mater. Loved it. Very proud of it. Telling stories about my Ann Arbor days. Then the spring of 2024, we had a theological professors conference. And these things are mandatory. So I had to come. Well, this one's going to be on the campus of Concordia Ann Arbor. I thought, wow, three nights in a dorm, first time on campus in almost 35 years. This is going to be great. I was genuinely excited about it. So I got to campus and it was wonderful. I was in Timmy dorm, which was so dumb. I was a Barnabas Ruth guy. And so Timothy, what is that?

But I managed, and when I saw the buzzer pad in the CA it was just like, bam, the nostalgia hit. It's just overwhelming. And what I wasn't prepared for was, in the midst of the meetings and all the stuff you do at those conferences, was the overwhelming angst I experienced. And I did not expect that. And anybody who knows me a little bit knows I'm not really prone to much emotional angst. But, man, I got clobbered and I was walking around campus and everything you see just boom, memories like crazy and so much regret and so much remorse and mostly thinking about all the people I treated really lousy. Seriously. You know, I just, man, I was such an idiot back then. What a jerk. And I can't believe I did that. And how I did that. And oh, I did that there. Oh man, it was hard.

But the other side of it was, and I realized this as I reflected more later on it, part of the angst I was experiencing. And it got to the point where I just didn't want to even be alone. I remember walking one evening just finding some table with some guys and just said, "Talk to me, please. I'm needing some help here. I'm just kind of going through this little, little price crisis of angst." And they kind of laughed at me and it was fine and I laughed along. But, um, part of it was I was realizing that I was grieving just becoming an old guy. And I was grieving the fact that that stuff was a long time ago. And a lot of those people I would never see again. And even if I saw them, it would never be the same.

Those days were gone and that Church was gone. And that grieved me because the Church then frankly was a blast. It was a blast. When I came to this campus back in the 70s, in the summers, this was right in the thick of this thing called the charismatic movement. And most of you are far too young to know anything about it. But you know, there's still that dumb question on the set that you can't figure out why it is, but trust me, in the day that mattered. All right? But I came in right in the thick of that and for all the things you could discuss about that and the ups and downs, and I've done all that and worked through it all, it was a profoundly positive thing for me. I did not speak in tongues, just to be clear. All right? Not that that would be a problem.

I'm just letting you know where I came down. Okay? So it was a profoundly positive experience for me. And I witnessed during my four years here, kind of the change that time just sort of went away. And I've reflected often about that. And I really have become quite convinced that there's something to this idea of the Spirit kind of moves where He will and things just happen and then things just kind of don't. And that was very much the case then. And it was with grief then that I was reflecting on this and that last spring in 2024, grief over the loss of that Church. Now nostalgia and reminiscing, man, that's easy. And it's easy to get nostalgic about the past and paint things in unrealistic silly colors that were never true. And so I don't want to indulge in much more of this. I've already taxed your patience, I'm sure way beyond what any of you probably care.

But far more significant I think is the reality that you see. My formation happened during those summers here and during my four years here, I was shaped into the kind of Christian I am today, very much. There are other factors, of course, family, things I learned at the Sem, all that stuff. But man, those were formative, profoundly important years. And my vision of the Church has been shaped by it ever since. And every single one of you sitting here, close to a thousand of you, I suppose, if by counting the votes and figuring out how many are sitting around for the fun of it, maybe a little less, 800 of you, you all have your stories. And every single one of you has your idea of the Church. This is what it's supposed to be.

This is what she looks like. This is how she's supposed to operate. This is the ideal. This is the best. And you're ready to fight for it. Because you give a rip—and you should. Because Church matters. I've got my ideas, you've got yours. And we could have some great discussions about what we think the Church is supposed to be. But what I want to do with my time, and I guess I'm told I get an hour or something like that.

Pres. Davis:

An hour, not “something like that.”

Biermann:

Okay? An hour. I won't go long. Trust me, David, I never go long. I might cut it short, get your voting done sooner, but I won't go long. So with the time I have, I want to think with you a little bit about what exactly the Church is and what the Church is supposed to be doing.

Less on what it is. We know the Church is the body of Christ, the gathered people of God around God's gifts being delivered. AC 7 and 8, crystal clear. You all know that down pat, but what's the Church supposed to be doing? I think we can have some more discussion about that and a little bit maybe things to reflect on. So to help with this, and those of you who have had me in class, and that's not a small number of you, as I

look around—one of the liabilities of teaching for a couple of decades, you've got a lot of former students around, and my apologies to you already if I don't immediately connect a face and a name. But as soon as I do make the connection, I'll remember exactly what kind of student you were. Those things stay with you. I'm kind of not kidding. They kind of do. I don't remember your names, but I remember what kind of guy you were in class and what kind of papers you wrote. Whoosh. Some of you made a bigger impression than others. But anyway, I digress.

So I want to spend some time learning, not just from me and my opinions. My opinions really don't count very much. But the opinions of others maybe give us something to chew on and think about. So I want to spend some time learning and I'm going to give us today three individuals, three teachers I want to present to you to consider for some learning. Two of them are pretty, well, one of them is very safe. One of them might be considered marginal. And one of them, I think you will all be shocked that I'm using him.

So a surprise for all of you former students who think you know exactly where I'm going. You don't. All right? So now you have to pay attention just a little bit. But some of this, you've been down this road before. Alright, so let's go here. The first one I want to talk about, the safe one is Herman Sasse. And yeah, pretty safe in our circles. And I've got a little Sasse quote here for you. I've got two of his essays and if you've got my screen ready to go... no? It's not showing. It's not been showing and I was ignoring it. Maybe I didn't get plugged in enough. Oh, let's try again there. There you go. I just had to plug it in more. It was totally user error, which is always the case.

You probably can't read it, but I'll read it for you anyway. This comes from an essay that Sasse wrote in 1936 and he wrote this on apostolic, what does it mean to be apostolic? What does it mean for the Church to have apostolicity? And so this is from his 36 essays on the Church's apostolicity. And it gives us, I think, a really beautiful kind of overview of what the Church should be. So he writes this, I'll try to make it a little bit larger for you just by holding it open here. That the Church today is no other than the Church of yesterday and of the day of Pentecost. That it today has no other doctrine than in the days of Luther and of the formula of Concord. And then no other doctrine than in the days of Bernard of Clairvaux and Thomas Aquinas (there's a couple names for you), that the Church's proclamation in the time of Gregory the Great and the time of Cyprian dare be no other than in the days of the apostles, that there is only one Gospel for all the centuries of history until the last day, just as there is only one Gospel for the people of all nations and all races that the Gospel has given us in the witness of the apostles and nowhere else. And that this witness cannot be supplanted by any other source of revelation. Yes, that the anathema

of the true Church would have to strike even an angel from heaven who would proclaim to us another Gospel than that proclaimed by the apostles. Such are the thoughts that are contained in the statement of the Church's apostolicity.

If you're paying attention, that was one sentence. You got to love the Germans. These are the trues of the faith to which we commit ourselves when we confess, with Christians of all confessions, the words of the ancient ecumenical Creed: I believe in the apostolic Church. Wow, that's Sasse at his best. Pretty cool. The Church is the Church of the Apostles. It is one Church, one Gospel message for all people, for all time. That's the end of the story. Pretty compelling. Great stuff. And that's what it means to be apostolic. And this reminds us that we then live today. You hear about we're standing on the shoulders of giants. Well yeah, but it's like giants all the way down. It's not turtles all the way down, it's giants all the way down. And it's all the way back to the Church Fathers, all the way into the Old Testament. We're part of that. And it's a healthy reminder for us sometimes in our little sort of sidebar Lutheran Church body that nobody really pays much attention to. The media forgot to come and cover the election of our new DP. Where are they? We got a press room, but I don't see any cameras anywhere. <laugh> the Pope. Big deal. Come on, the world stops to watch the smoke and this is just dumb. But anyway, nobody cares.

So we are this little, this little sidebar and we all get it. But guys, we are not in isolation. And we are standing on that Church, that Church, that Church of Bernard of Clairvaux, that Church of Aquinas, it's ours. That's who we are. We're not a weird denomination that left the Church 500 years ago to be our own thing. No, don't think that way. We are the faithful Church that has been proclaiming God's truth right down the line. We are the Gospel proclaimers. It's who we are. It's who we are. And that one Gospel has to still be proclaimed because it is the only hope for the world. There's else John 14:6 hasn't changed: "I am the way, the truth and life. No one comes to the father, but by me." Period. Utterly exclusive. That's our message. Hasn't changed, can't back off it. We got to keep doing it.

So that's the Gospel, heart and center of it all. So I haven't really preached Gospel at still law. So if someone said, give us some Gospel right before I came up and I said, that won't happen <laugh> if it happens it is by accident, my mistake. So we have a responsibility to proclaim that truth because that's what God has given us to do. Alright, so that's Sasse from 1936. A reminder for us to be faithfully apostolic. This is an awesome message from Herman Sasse. Fifteen years later he wrote another essay and this one is called Confessionalism in Missouri. And those of you who have had Church and World in the last few years, you've read this one. Anybody remember this one? Alright, a couple few hands went up, Confessionalism in Missouri, this is an outstanding essay he

wrote, Sasse wrote it, you're reading now.

Sasse wrote it after he had spent some time visiting in the US, hung out in Missouri, hung out with some Missouri Synod people, and he wrote this essay—a hugely complimentary, glowing picture of the LCMS as this mission group doing the work of the Church. And Sasse paints this picture. Like most of my students think, whoa, where's that Church? My response is kind of, yeah, things change, don't they? And so it's a remarkable picture he paints, but then he has some critique and some criticism, which I'm not going to get into today. That would be like a three-hour discussion all on his own, because he starts asking questions about the role of Scripture and confession and why we're spending more time on paying attention to Scripture and where's our confessional and all kinds of interesting stuff. But we won't do that today.

Today I want you to think about one of the comments he makes in passing and it's such an important comment, but he just kind of makes it along the way, almost a throwaway, but it's so significant. So he writes this (this is on page 207 if you want to check it out yourself sometime). He talks about the great rediscovery of the confession of the Church. And I'm just reading here now, which was the most joyous experience of the German Lutherans in the years between the two world wars was not shared by our American brethren in the faith. So he's saying that in the Missouri Synod, we didn't experience the same court of confessional revival that was going on in the continent between the world wars. For this reason, even whereas in the case in Missouri, the unshakeable authority of the confession—he knows that we're confessional people; we toe the line—he said the unshakable authority of the confession is held in complete earnest, there is nevertheless lacking, lacking in the affirmation of the... (and now you're all bated breath. What's lacking? What are we missing? We've got a confession, right? What are we missing? Let's turn the page and find out)... of the great joy which should accompany genuine confessional loyalty. To confess, [Greek word], *confiteri*, always includes praise to God. Therefore Luther rightly counted "*Te Deum laudamus, Te Dominum confitemur...*" among the Confessions. Joy, my friends, joy. This is such an awesome insight of Sasse. When you are confessional, you are joyful. You are joyful. There is a joy that runs through a right confession. And that's kind of what I think I was living through in my idealistic, heady, naive 70's days. But there was a joy that just ran through stuff. And I'm going to bet that the time is when you can identify when the Church was being the Church, the best and the most real for you and the most significant for you, there was an unbridled joy that accompanied it. There was just a thrill to be part of God's people. A thrill to know God's truth, A joy to confess rightly.

When there's joy lacking, there's a problem. It's a problem. Now this is a hard thing because you see in the Missouri

Synod we like things to be empirical. We like to be able to pin things down and point to hard facts, and joy, that's a feeling and that's scary. Because feelings, wow, you know, feelings. And that's that charismatic. Well, there you go, <laugh>. So we get suspicious. But you see, joy is the hallmark of confessional fidelity. And when joy is lacking, there is a problem. I don't care if you can identify it any more than "something's missing here." These people are crabby. Crabby people are not faithful. I'm serious about this. I know some of you have a disposition that tends towards crabbiness. I will own that one myself. My wife accuses me of being even just a bit of a pessimist, but she's an optimist. And so what are you going to do?

So joy is a hallmark of confessional fidelity every single time. And if you're lacking joy in your life, check your confession, my friend. Check your confession: Is Jesus Lord? And I'm willing to bet He's probably not. Because you probably put something else there. When Jesus is Lord, joy comes. When a confession is right, the confession is always "Jesus is Lord" and everything else that grows out of that. And when that's the central confession, what's there to be sour about? When Jesus is Lord, what's there to complain about? When Jesus is Lord, what's there to be afraid of, people? Come on. Jesus is Lord, where's your joy? So a hallmark. This is Sasse, not Biermann. Sasse. Go fight with Herman.

All right, so he continues though: "Are we mistaken if we miss this joy with our brethren in the Missouri Synod when they speak of the Confession? Are we mistaken in believing that their understanding of the doctrine is wholly orthodox but only in the sense of correct doctrine, while real orthodoxy includes a joyous praise to God? In the case of the old Missouri of Walter is still plainly noticeable that here even as in the classical time of Orthodoxy dogma and liturgy belong together—how greatly St. Louis formerly influenced liturgy in America! If it were still so today would not then Orthodox Lutheranism in particular have something of importance to say to the liturgical movement in America? Christian America, more than many Lutherans sense, waits today for a word from Lutheranism. Members of the Protestant churches in the United States sense the fact that the surrender of the confession of the fathers which has taken place in all these churches during the past century, constitutes an irreparable loss of something that is essential for Church and for Christianity. The so-called new orthodoxy (*neo orthodoxy*) of Reinhold Niebuhr and of the American adherents of Barth is only a weak substitute for what has been lost. But Lutheranism keeps silence. It appears about to follow the Reformed churches on the way to unconfessionalism and with this step to lose its mission to all of Christendom, even as European Lutheranism missed every opportunity, every great opportunity during its history."

So then he wafts off into some concerns about what are we

doing for the sake of the wider Church? And see what I, the reason I read that longer outtake is because Sasse never lost sight of the fact that Lutheranism is some sort of sacred splinter off by itself. There is never ever in Sasse of this idea that somehow we take our liturgical, doctrinal, confessional ball and go home. We engage. We engage the wider Church because we're part of that Church. So remember that. So in our zeal to be faithful and careful, we have to be careful not to become cut off. All right, one last thing from Sasse and then we'll leave Sasse behind here. And this is a little further on in the same essay. And he makes a rather interesting observation on page 219 here where he writes:

"One thing the Church also today has, which preserves her—only one thing, only one person—him who has reserved for himself the task of being the Savior of his body. One of the most comforting truths which the New Testament teaches us with respect to the Church is this, that the prayer for the preservation of the Church is not our prayer alone. The greatest of all prayers which are preserved for us in the holy scripture, perhaps the greatest prayer which ever was spoken on earth, is the prayer of the eternal High Priest for his church on earth in John 17. We know from Scripture that it is not on earth only that prayers are spoken. There's praying also in heaven. The mystery of prayer reaches into the Holy Trinity itself as the prayer of Jesus shows.

This is our comfort, dear brethren, wherever we may be performing our office in the church in this difficult and sorrowful time" [He's writing this in 51, okay? A sorrowful time after the war is over], "as it was the comfort of our fathers during the 'evening of the world,' as they regarded their time. This comfort gives us the strength to work while it is day. The most necessary task we have to perform in the English-speaking world is this, that we learn again to read Luther and the Confessions as men began to learn to do in Europe after the First World War. Here lies your greatest theological task, brethren, in the Missouri Synod."

We've done better with that. I'm not sure we've done better with the joy part. And I'm not sure if we've always done well with the Jesus as our hope and our comfort. And that's kind of the point he's making here. Back to the beginning of that quote where he writes this one thing the Church has, which preserves her only one thing. And that is Christ himself.

The Church's preservation is Jesus' business. And I say this with a little care because I know we have a responsibility to be faithful in our generation. But I think there is way too much tendency in our circles to think that everything in the future depends on us. We've got to preserve, we've got to protect, we've got to hang on, we've got to look out for the wolves. We got to look out for any laxity and we are on continual vigilance as if the entire future of the Church hangs on us. That's wrong. It's just wrong. Christ is our preserver. Christ is

the one who will care for us. He has made the promise, guys, nothing will defeat the Church. Let's bank on that. All right, I'm done with Sasse. Now I want to go for a little sidebar here because what Sasse is telling us is that we need to be, he would argue, we need to be confessional and we need to be faithful.

So what does it mean for us to be confessional? That's what I want to think about a little bit here. This word gets a lot of press. People have a lot of ideas. Some people don't like the word because they think it's been taken over. I still like the word because it simply means that I say back to God what He has said to me learned that from Nagel a long time ago. I don't think I'll let go of that one. So when we confess, we're just saying back what has been said to us. God gives us His truth. I say it back to Him. But I would submit that there are four ways that we are working to be confessional in the contemporary world. Or we might say here with confessional also goes with this is to be doctrinally faithful. And as I made the argument, that also means joyful. But more on that in a second.

But I think I see kind of different techniques or ways of operating that I see present among people who are trying to figure out how to be confessional. So the first one I want to suggest to you, the first way of being confessional or being doctrinal is what I will call the route of polite dinner manners. Dinner manners. So this is the Thanksgiving gathering. The whole family is there, and everybody dreads it because Aunt Sally's going to be there and she's some kind of left-wing nut. And you've got Bobby and his girlfriend and they're vegan and they're weird. And so they're all going to be gathered around the Thanksgiving table, and everybody is holding their breath, holding their breath. You know, when's the ethical discussion coming up? When's the political discussion coming up? Don't say the word Trump. Don't do it. And so everybody is on pins and needles holding their breath. And so what do you do? Well, you just back off and you get this stern warning from the moderator in the family, whether it's the wife or the husband, usually it's the wife who says, keep your mouth shut about this. And so you get the rule laid down. And so the polite dinner manners kick in.

So what does this mean for the Church? This means we've got our doctrine. We're sure about it. Best doctrine in the world. Best confession in the world. I hear this all the time when I'm out in the Church. "Uh, professor man, we love our doctrine here. Now our practice, we do some things a little on the side, but don't worry about that. It's okay. We love our doctrine." That's garbage, guys. Because your practice is your doctrine. And so you can't do sloppy stuff and still have good doctrine, it doesn't work. But the polite dinner manners has this idea that somehow we can just kind of pack that away, tuck it away out of sight, because we don't want to cause any embarrassment. We don't want to cause a harangue. So we'll

just kind of shut up about it and back off. That's polite dinner manners. That's not being confessionally faithful, that's sloppy. It's not giving a witness. So that's the first one. I see a fair amount of that in the Church. Some people are more predisposed than others, but I see it.

The second one, and this one is exceedingly common in our circles, is what I will call in the contemporary parlance "shelter in place." In the old days I called it "circle the wagons," but nobody watches cowboys and Indian movies anymore. Yeah, some of you still know what I'm talking about. So circle the wagons, shelter in place. Look out, there are enemies. Look out, there are dangers. Look out, someone's going to get you. So what we've got to do is hunker down, bar the circle the wagons. Stay safe. Don't let anybody in. Be careful, be careful, be careful. And so we don't engage, and we're terrified and we operate into fear. And so shelter in place, very common. See it all over the place. And you see this attitude of "we don't want to lose what we've got. We don't want to risk something." And so we'll just shelter in place. We'll circle the wagons, and you know what I'm talking about.

Third approach is not widely practiced, but when it is, boy, you cannot miss it because it makes a lot of noise. And that's when we take confession and we take doctrine and we weaponize it and we turn it into a beautiful weapon to attack other people who aren't doing it right, who aren't doing it enough, who aren't doing it faithfully. Don't do it the way I would do it. And so we can turn our doctrinal prowess and our confessional commitments into a club to clobber others who don't quite measure up. And this is not the way of confessional integrity, guys. Yeah, sometimes people deserve a good whacking, I won't argue with you, but it's whose job is it to do this? And it's rarely yours. So we need to be much more careful. I think about how we operate with this idea of the club mentality or weaponizing doctrine. Doctrine is not meant to be a tool to kill and clobber and bring down to size. It's meant to be God's truth that is celebrated with joy.

So there's a fourth way and yeah, I saved the fourth one for this is the last one. So probably it is the right one. And indeed it is. And this is the one I would like to call simply to listen and speak and then learn and teach. And so you have here an attitude of receptivity, an attitude of openness, an attitude of willingness to learn, to gain, to take the time to listen and pay attention. Can you still be confessionally strong and have great integrity confessionally? Absolutely. You have to be a jerk. Ah, no, absolutely not. And to be a jerk is always a problem here. Alright, so this really kind of translates into that we need to function with a good huge, healthy dose of humility again and again and again and again. You don't have it all figured out. Your vision of the Church doesn't necessarily have to be the only one. And maybe it's not even the right one. Humility, listen and learn and then speak and then teach.

And you teach God's truth, and you do it in a winsome way and with confidence and without fear.

All right, this has all been the easy stuff, the stuff you're all used to and familiar with. And that was Sasse and he's pretty safe. So let's go to another Lutheran who's just a little less safe. And we'll take a look at Bonhoeffer. Um, students know that I have become an enormous fan of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's theology. Not just his example, not just his stance against Hitler. Yay. He's a great martyr. No, I like his theology for his theology's sake. And I encourage you to take a look at Bonhoeffer and read him carefully and learn from him. He has insights for us today, which are remarkable. One of my favorite essays of Bonhoeffer's is in the middle of his book called *Ethics*. *Ethics* was written by Bonhoeffer one chapter or essay at a time and then smuggled out of the prison in Tegel where he was being held by the Gestapo. And so he never had the chance to organize it into a complete text or to edit it in any way. So we just have these essays which we're not quite sure where they, how, what order, or even what actually even belongs in his *Ethics*. But this one unquestionably does. It's one of his best. It's an outstanding essay and it's called *Christ, Reality, and Good*. So *Christ, Reality, and Good* [is the] name of the essay. If you can find it, it's worth reading. So in the middle of that essay, he makes this argument. He's talking about thinking in terms of two spheres. And he's very concerned because he's been watching the Deutsch Christian, that's the German Christians. And if you don't remember your 20th century German history, the Deutsche Christian, where the faithful Christians who are following Luther, who decided they could also follow Adolf Hitler and follow Luther and let's go. He's our guy, duly elected, democratically elected. He's the leader God has given us. Off we go. That's the Dets Christian. Bonhoeffer didn't agree and he wasn't the only one. Sasse didn't agree, Martin Niemuller didn't agree, and the list can go on. So Bonhoeffer wrote this essay from prison about the danger of two spheres and making this neat bifurcation. Got my God stuff, got my world stuff cool. Just go obey Hitler and keep on loving Jesus. It's all good. Don't worry about it. That's two kingdoms, about as messed up as you can get it. And I care a lot about getting the two kingdoms, the two realms, right, but that's not today's topic either. But that matters a great deal. Now Bonhoeffer is talking about that danger and he starts talking about it in the sphere or the realm, the arena of the Church. And he writes this:

"It is essential to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ that it occupies space within the world. [So there needs to be a place for the Church and the world. And we know that.] But, of course, it would be entirely wrong to interpret this space in a purely empirical sense. [It's not just a building or a literal gathering of people necessarily.] If God in Jesus Christ claims space in the world, even though it'd be only a stable 'because there was no room in the inn' (Luke 2:7), then in this narrow

space He comprises together the whole reality of the world at once and reveals the ultimate basis of this reality."

So how much space does Jesus need in the world? The space of an infant in a manger. That's how much space he needs. Bonhoeffer is going to exploit this image.

"And so, too, the Church of Jesus Christ is the place, in other words, the space in the world, at which the reign of Jesus Christ over the whole world is evidenced and proclaimed. [So now he's making the connection as Jesus goes, so goes His Church because the Church is His body. How much space does the Church need in the world? How much space do we need in the world? How much space did Jesus need? How much do we need? All right, let's go on further here. Bonhoeffer' got some things to tell us.]

"This space of the Church, then, is not something which exists on its own account. It is from the outset something which reaches out far beyond itself, for indeed it is not the space of some kind of cultural association such as it would have to fight for its own survival in the world, but it is the place where testimony is given to the foundation of all reality in Jesus Christ."

The place where testimony is given to the foundation of all reality in Jesus Christ, even the world! We can never have a dismissive attitude toward the world around us. Be careful. I know John and Paul will both warn us about the world as a fallen place where Satan runs wild. But who made that world out there and who came to redeem that world out there? And who's going to remake that world out there? It is Christ's world, guys. We can never be at odds with the world. We exist for the world. Christ came for the world. So Bonhoeffer stresses this all through the essay.

He goes on, "The Church is the place where testimony and serious thought are given to God's reconciliation of the world with Himself in Christ, to His having so loved the world that he gave His son for its sake. The space of the Church is not there in order to try to deprive the world of a piece of its territory, but precisely in order to prove to the world that is still the world [in other words, God's creation, the object of God's activity] the world which is loved by God and reconciled with Him."

Alright, here's the kicker of this whole thing. Now it gets good: "The Church has neither the wish nor the obligation to extend her space to cover the space of the world. She asks for no more space than she needs for the purpose of serving the world by bearing witness to Jesus Christ and to the reconciliation of the world with God through Him. The only way in which the Church can defend its own territory is by fighting not for it, but for the salvation of the world.

Otherwise, the Church becomes a ‘religious society’ which fights in its own interest and thereby ceases at once to be the Church of God and of the world.”

Now he goes on and the rest of it is outstanding as well. But that’s enough right there. Think about what he just said. The Church is not fighting with the world for space. And when the Church goes out and demands her rights, we have stopped being the Church because we just look like the rest of the world now. We’re not looking like Christ’s people anymore. We’re no longer pointing to the reality of Christ. We’re no longer witnessing his truth. We just look like every other pathetic lobbying group, running wild, demanding their fair share of the pie, demanding their rights. This is Bonhoeffer’s insight. It’s astounding. And the implications of it are dramatic. If we would actually take this seriously, it’s crazy stuff. And I love it.

About 28 hours ago, a little less, just down the road in Wayne, Michigan, crazy guy armed to the teeth, decided he was going to go kill a bunch of people in a church. And before he could even get in, while he was unloading his trunk, people saw him and some guy ran him down with a truck and got shot at, survived. And then the security guards, the security staff of the Church at Cross Point Church in Wayne came out and took him out, killed him, shot him dead. They defended their space. Everybody’s safe.

At almost exactly the same time, almost exactly the same time, halfway around the world, gathered in a Church in Damascus, Syria, a church fittingly named the Church of the Prophet Elias, which of course is Elijah the patron saint of this convention. <laugh> On that Sunday night in Damascus and the Church of the prophet Elias, worshipers had gathered at this Greek Orthodox Church to sing the mass, to go through the liturgy, the divine liturgy. And a crazy came in and shot them and blew himself up and killed 22 people and injured 60 some others. How much space does the Church need? Just enough space to make 22 more martyrs.

So I ask you, which Church at that exact same moment provided a profound witness to the Church of the people of Christ who gathered to receive what God gives and who look different than the world? We need to be careful who’s setting our agenda. We need to be careful how we prioritize. Well, if we make life the most important thing, we have already missed the boat, guys. I tell my students and they’re always shocked, but I’ll tell you today, life is not the most important thing. Faithfulness to Christ absolutely is. There are things far worse than death. And unfaithfulness tops the list.

So just remember what it means to follow Christ. What did it mean for Bonhoeffer to follow Christ? How much space did he need? How much space did he demand? How much space do we need? How much space do we demand? What are we

here to do? All right, while you chew on that, I have one more guy for you today. He’s different and I’ve never used him before and so that’s why he’s really different. The guy I want to talk about today is, um, one I just started reading a little bit and it, he’s a little scary, frankly. That’s David Bentley Hart. And if you’re not familiar with him, he’s kind of a, well, his orthodoxy is questionable. Well, no, it’s not. He’s pretty much over the top. He’s one of these guys who denies the vicarious atonement and he is pretty much a full-blown universalist. No, he’s not pretty much. He is a full-blown universalist. So Hart has got some problems, but Hart wrote a book that was published in 2022 called *Tradition and Apocalypse*.

So *Tradition and Apocalypse*, which was a profound book because he’s arguing in this book that to be faithful to our tradition is not just a matter of hanging on to what we’ve got. It’s not just a matter of preserving something or keeping it or holding onto it, but it’s really receiving what we’ve been given as part of a living tradition. And so Hart has got me thinking a lot about these things and I’m not even close to endorsing everything. Hart does not even close. He’s got all kinds of problems. But on this score, he has got me thinking: What is it actually that we have received? And if we think about what we have received from the people who have gone before us as some sort of a sacred heritage that we have to preserve at all cost and not let anything happen to it, we’re already kind of missing the boat, guys. Because our living tradition keeps on moving somewhere. It’s going forward. See, we are inherently an eschatological people. That’s what Isaiah’s getting at here in Chapter 65: “Behold I create new heavens and a new earth. And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.” New heavens, new earth. This is, we’re going forward, people, into a future. We cannot be always hanging on to an old past. Repristinationism is always wrong. It is a sin because you’re looking back and trying to recreate something that is gone. We’re not living back there. We’re living now. And even today is gone, gone, gone, gone. There’s always another. Here we go. And where are we going? To the promise that Christ has given; a reality that will be fulfilled. Jaroslav Pelikan said it famously that traditionalism is the dead faith of the living. So tradition is an awesome gift, and I love it. And I love my Confessions. I love my heritage, I love all that I have received through God’s Church. And I love preserving all of those gifts. Love the liturgy. Love worshiping God. When we had our Explos here, the highlight of the whole thing was our Sunday morning worship and it was straight out of the hymnal, full blast liturgy. I’d never experienced anything like it. It was so cool. People hugging each other after they took Communion. Well, that sounds kind of touchy-feely. Yeah, it was kind of this weird blend of everything going on. And it was awesome. What a gift. So I love all this, but we have to be so careful, guys, that we don’t venerate it and we don’t create it into a new God, a new Lord.

We are pressing forward. We’re pressing forward to where

God calls us to be. So what does this mean? Well, it means just a couple things here. The Church will always be weird and out of step with the culture. We don't look like anyone else, and we shouldn't. We are not one more special interest group. We're not the Lions Club, we're not the YMCA, we're not like anything else. And when we start lobbying the world, like we're just like everybody else, we denigrate the Church and we treat her like she's just like everything else. Let's not do that anymore. Let's treat the Church like the Church so that we're out of step of the culture.

It is not part of our witness to the world to make it easy for people to connect to the Church. And there's the mistake on the other side. Don't start lopping off parts to make it a little more accessible. We do not lower the bar so that the threshold is not so high. You die to yourself when you come to Christ. That's always asked a lot. And you know this, those of you who have done evangelism, you have the person who shows up in your Church think, oh, this is going to be a big ask. Yes, it is. It's always the same. Die. Die to yourself. We see what Christ gives. Don't ever cut it back. Guys. Don't ever cut slack. Don't ever rewrite the rules. Don't ever cut back on the Confession. Die to Christ receive what Christ gives. We do not cater to people's tastes. When we start shaping worship and we start shaping the Church according to majority vote or what people like, we're already in bad shape because we don't cater to their taste. Instead, we shape people into God's people. And at the same time, we do not obsess over the wrong things. And we don't equate the Church with a style of worship, with preferred garb, or with some ethnic heritage we think superior. That's wrong. So we've got to watch two errors on either side. One is the sloppy agape as it's been said, where we just love everybody and try to make it easy and cut back on the confession. The other is to circle the wagons, hunker down, weaponize doctrine, and fight off any possible threat so we can preserve what we've got. And we forget that we don't have to preserve what we've got. That's the job of Christ.

So what are we supposed to be doing as the Church? I want to wrap some things up here now because I'm getting close to time and most of you're looking like you heard way too much already. So let's pull this together. What then should be the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's identity? What should be our brand? And brand and identity are basically the same thing. Identity we stick on individuals and brand we put on corporate entities. So what is brand LCMS? Well, the whole notion of identity or brand is really kind of silly. Kind of a little goofy because the very idea of somehow preserving my identity is thoroughly modern. It's a modernist way of operating as if it's your job to create who you are, as if it's your job to decide who you want to be and then to cultivate that and keep it going.

That's not how it works. We just receive. We just receive

what comes. And what comes is a hand that baptizes you and no one asked you. It just happened. For most of you, I know most of you infant baptized, I doubt that anybody checked first: "You sure you want to get baptized? It's going to be a pain. You know what you're getting into." And I sometimes think about this when we're baptizing babies, and I think about it even more when we confirm eighth graders. What are we doing to these kids? We're making them promise to suffer all even death rather than forsake their Lord. Wow. Yikes. Really? You want to do that to your kids? Wow, man. You see, I'm throwing them to the martyrs. That's what I'm doing. You will be a martyr rather than forsake your faith. Go for it, dude. Wow. You receive that. See, you don't decide. That's the thing. I think I want that. It happens to you. God just comes and He claims you. He says you're mine, you're His. And he says here, gifts. Take them, receive them. Delight in what I deliver to you and you receive and you know who you are: God's child, forgiven, redeemed, heading for eternity in a new heavens and new earth. That's who I am, man. It's all good. It's in the bag. I know who I am. I don't have to worry about it.

And then the Church, we don't have to worry about it either. We don't have to try to preserve brand identity or preserve our flying cross logo and make sure nobody else co-ops it. I always chuckle when I drive through Bethalto, Ill. because there's a huge church that used, well, not huge, but it's got a enormous, huge blue flying cross. I'm talking about the three, you know, the LCMS flying cross, you know what I mean? Right? You all know Logo Missouri? Of course. Yeah. The curve thing.

So it's this huge flying cross plastered on the end of an A-frame building, which has been sold to some non-denom Church <laugh> and it's still there. And they love that logo. It's awesome. I think it's great. Somebody is stealing our branding. Don't tell corporate LCMS. They'll slap 'em up with a lawsuit because that's how we deal with stuff. <laugh>. That wouldn't be the world though, would it? Alright, read that however you want. <laugh> Modernity is obsessed with identity. Modernity is obsessed with brand. We do not need to obsess over such things. We don't need to obsess over preserving and protecting and hanging on. We're heading for a future of a restoration of all creation. And it will happen.

Institutions come and go and I shed some tears, literally, walking around this campus a year or so ago, not so much because Ann Arbor was going to disappear. It's a drag, I get it. But institutions come and go. Synods come and go. Will the LCMS last until Christ returns? I have no idea. Do I care? A little. Really? Just a little. Because will the Church endure, endure? Absolutely. Will confessionalism endure—a confession that confesses Christ rightly? I know it will. Where it happens. I'm not too concerned about it. It'll happen and I'm going to make sure it happens because I'll keep doing

it. And my kids will and my grandkids and anybody I can convince to believe God's truth with me in my classrooms, in my congregation. And that's your call, guys. We need to worry less about trying to be in control of everything. Christians need to learn to relinquish control.

We need to quit trying to run God's world. We need to quit trying to run God's Church. Let Christ run His Church. So our agenda should not be trying to advance an identity or advance a brand. Our agenda that should consume us, that should obsess us is to be witnesses for the reality of Christ. Like those Syrians gathered in Damascus we're witnesses, whether they knew it or not, hadn't planned to be martyrs that night, but now they are. We are witnesses for Christ. When I started thinking about this essay, I realized I have no idea how to do an essay at a convention. I've only been, this is my fourth convention in my life. I'm talking Synod, District, fourth convention. Seriously. I never go. because I never vote. I was an assistant pastor then I was a congregation serving a congregation that wasn't a rostered congregation. It's another whole story. Some of you know it. And then I was at the seminary. Well, I spent some time on CRM working for a degree. And then I'm at the seminary. And seminary profs don't matter. We all know that they never get to vote on anything. So that's been my life. And so I've got better things to do than come to a convention and so do you. But here you are. <laugh>

They see conventions matter because elections matter. Because elections put people in power and people in power write call lists and take names off of call lists and put congregations in and out of the Synod. And people in power take names on and off of pre-approval lists. And those things matter a lot. And they shape individual lives, they shape congregations, they shape whole synods, and they shape our witness. These things matter. So we take this stuff kind of seriously and we do our work. But what matters far more is when you head out of here. So back when I was getting ready to start with this, I'd wrap things up when I was thinking about this essay, convention essay. I thought, what do I want to send you guys home with? Because when I used to come to events, I always thought, I hope I go home with something. And when I went home with nothing, I felt like what a drag that was. And so I want to give you something.

So here's what I want to give you. When you go home, back to your place, go with joy. Know who you are, who God says you are. Know where you're going. Don't live with an eye always looking at the past. Get both eyes squarely forward. Stand on what you've been given, but think about where you're going and think about who you're going to bring with you. Witness Christ, my friends, witness Christ. That's what you are to do. Not your job to preserve and protect. That's God's job. Your job is to witness the reality of Christ to the world around you. Don't ever get tired of it. Don't ever let the

joy come out of that.

And you witnessed by the way you love your wife, the way you play with your kids, the way you interact with your grandkids, the way that you love your parishioners, the way you pray for them, the way you visit them, the way you talk to the guy at the hardware store about life. And then kick in a little spiritual reality to remind them some things matter more than your lag bolts you're buying. You witness the reality of Christ and you do it with confidence, not fearful. Fear destroys the Church. Repristinasionism, dead traditionalism is driven by fear, but it's also driven by pride and piety. Like it all matters what I do. When the future hangs on you, you've got it messed up. The future hangs on Christ. So you go and you witness. The Church's task, your task, is to witness God's reality to God's world. Period. That's what we're here to do. That's it. Witness God's reality to God's world. We're not here to preserve the Church. We're not here to protect her or her people or her heritage. God takes care of us. We need to take care of our witness. And so we are witnesses. Go home and stand up for Christ. Go home and speak for Christ. I learned those things at an Explo about 45 years ago. No, more like 55. Go home and be Christ's witness. Go home and be what God has called you to be: His voice, His presence in His world. Thank you for your attention.

# Minutes

## Minutes of the 104th Michigan District Convention

June 22–24, 2025

“Nourished for the Journey: Remember - Renew - Return (1 Kings 19)”

**Sunday, June 22, 7 p.m.**

**Opening Worship Service: Chapel of the Holy Trinity**

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, LCMS President

Host Congregation: St. Luke, Ann Arbor

Convention delegates and guests gathered in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity for the Opening Service of the Convention on a very warm evening. Attendance exceeded capacity, nonetheless, and the congregation’s singing was noticeably joyful.

President Harrison briefly referenced the Convention Theme, “Remember, Renew, Return,” and touched on the Old Testament reading for the evening from 1 Kings 18. He reminded us that the Bible is true. Even more importantly, however, it is the powerful, active, effective Word of God. It does what it says.

President Harrison reminded us that Jesus lived, died, and rose for each of us! Atonement has been made for every person’s sin. Our sins are covered: past, present, and future. Jesus’ blood cleanses us from all sin. What is our response to the Gospel? We pray, praise God, do good works for our neighbor, and speak the name of Jesus to others. The name of Jesus is powerful.

President Harrison also reminded us, on the basis of Peter’s words, that we are a chosen race and a royal priesthood. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ, as Paul says. So why don’t we speak His Word? As Peter declares, our purpose is to “proclaim His excellencies.”

Finally, President Harrison reminded us that the Bible was written so that we could be 100% certain of going to heaven, because it depends on Jesus, and not on us. When we trust in Jesus, we get everything credited to us.

**Monday, June 23, 8:15 a.m.**

**Service of Invocation: Chapel of the Holy Trinity**

Preacher: Rev. Christopher R. Bodley

A standing-room-only congregation of delegates and guests gathered once again in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity to begin the first full day of the Convention. A powerful message was delivered by Rev. Bodley, who focused the congregation’s attention upon the theme of recovering when God leads us or allows us to be led into pressure-filled places. Like Elijah, who experienced a crisis of faith and ran, even though God had just given him victory, we sometimes feel like we’re alone. As a result, we will sometimes make broken statements because of our broken hearts. Why do we experience crises? We’re seeking to serve the Lord, but sometimes we’re guilty of taking our eyes off of Him. However, if God is in our story, we can recover.

In the midst of crises, we can put two powerful spiritual disciplines to work, Rev. Bodley encouraged us. First, the power to remember: we can remember what God told us before we entered the crisis so we can still believe He’s God and possess courage in our crisis. Secondly, we can engage in the power of rejoicing. God is present with us in our pain. That doesn’t mean we don’t experience pain, but we choose to rejoice. Don’t quit, we were encouraged. The battle is the Lord’s, not yours. We can recover because of the resurrection power of Christ.

**Monday, June 23, 9:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.**

**Convention Hall/Gym**

Rev. Dr. Robert Kasper, Convention emcee and timekeeper, called the assembly to attention and turned the floor over to President David Davis, Convention Chairman.

At 9:13 a.m., President David Davis called the 104th Convention of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to order in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

President Davis acknowledged Rev. Dr. Kasper and introduced and welcomed synodical guests, LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison and Regional Vice-President Rev. Dr. John Wohlrabe. The assembly acknowledged them.

#### Registration Report - Rev. J. Derek Riddle, District Secretary

The following registration totals were reported:

Voting Pastoral delegates:	219
Voting Lay delegates:	212
Advisory Pastoral delegates:	37
Commissioned delegates:	80
Emeriti:	72
Emeriti Spouses:	15
Vicars:	2
Guests:	62
Advisory Lay Delegates:	2
Ministry Tent Exhibitors:	53
Congregations represented:	244

#### Introduction of Parliamentarian

President Davis introduced and welcomed the Honorable Christopher Neuchterlein, a retired federal magistrate judge for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, a position he held from January 2000 until August 2016. Judge Neuchterlein, who now resides in Frankenmuth, was welcomed by the assembly.

#### Acknowledgement of the Michigan District–LCMS Board of Directors and Vice Presidents

President Davis asked members of the District’s Board of Directors, seated together at the front left of the Convention Hall, to stand and acknowledged them. Board members were acknowledged by the assembly. President Davis also acknowledged and introduced the four Regional Vice Presidents of the District, who were acknowledged by the assembly.

#### Adoption of Agenda and Standing Rules

Motion to approve the Convention agenda. Motion supported. Motion adopted, with none opposed.

Moving to adopt the Standing Rules, with one change noted in Workbook, Part III: Item #4 in boldface type (page 279). Motion supported. Motion adopted, with none opposed.

#### Greetings from Mr. O. Dennis Sohn, Convention Committee Chairman

President Davis introduced Dennis Sohn, Convention Committee Chairman. Chairman Sohn invited the members of the Convention Committee forward and welcomed delegates on behalf of the committee. He briefly described the committee’s role and hopes for the Convention, referenced the Convention theme, “Nourished for the Journey,” and finally introduced the committee members by name and their individual roles. The assembly acknowledged the committee. Chairman Sohn also extended thanks to Rev. Dr. Jeffery Schrank of Christ Lutheran Church, Phoenix, Arizona, and Jennifer Rumberger of the District staff, along with anyone else who helped to make the Convention possible.

#### Welcome from Concordia University Wisconsin: Rev. David Fleming, Board of Regents

President Davis welcomed Rev. Fleming, member of the CUWAA Board of Regents. Rev. Fleming welcomed delegates on behalf of the Board of Regents and thanked them for their service to the Kingdom. He also acknowledged the hurt that so many are experiencing as a result of changes at CUAA, stating that there is no joy for anyone in the decisions being carried out. At the same time, the members of the administration and the Board are fellow Christians who are carrying out their fiduciary responsibilities as wisely as possible. Decisions have not been made lightly or hastily. Leadership has tried to be as transparent as possible, they agonized and tried to consider every possible alternative, and they grieve with us. Finally, he

invited delegates to join the Concordia leadership in praying for wisdom and guidance, trusting that despite our limitations and imperfections, the Lord will use all this in His work, as He is the God who does all things well. Rev. Fleming closed his welcome with a benediction.

President Davis re-introduced Rev. Dr. Kasper. Rev. Dr. Kasper introduced a video featuring St. Paul/Christ the King/Ephphatha, Flint, who sponsored the Monday morning breakfast. The assembly acknowledged the congregations.

#### Committee on New and Revised Constitutions

President Davis introduced Rev. Brad Hubbard, Chairman of the District's Committee on New and Revised Constitutions. Rev. Hubbard briefly described the committee's work and identified committee members. He expressed special thanks to outgoing Constitution Committee member and former Chair, Pastor Ted Voll. Rev. Hubbard commended the work of examining congregations' governing documents and asked that the Convention Constitution Committee report be accepted (Workbook Part II, page 222). President Davis indicated that the congregations' constitutions listed in the report have all been approved, and the Convention assembly is simply receiving this report. In closing, Rev. Hubbard also invited delegates to visit the Constitution Committee table in the Ministry Tent.

#### Reception of Congregations, Ministers of Religion Ordained and Commissioned who have joined the Synod during the past triennium (names printed in Workbook, Part II, page 228)

President Davis asked all new congregations represented and all new church workers (over the last triennium) to stand. The assembly acknowledged them and stood to sing the Doxology.

President Davis also acknowledged the scarves given to delegates at registration for the campus scavenger hunt and expressed thanks to Janelle Meckes, who organized the activity. The purpose of the scavenger hunt is to celebrate the partnership between the Michigan District and Concordia University Ann Arbor through the years.

#### District President's Address: Rev. David A. Davis, Michigan District President

Rev. Dr. Kasper introduced President Davis to the assembly, who began his address by reminding delegates that in the Michigan District, we celebrate Jesus, we share Jesus, and we fix our eyes on Jesus.

President Davis shared with the assembly that he has enjoyed the opportunity to serve the District as President over the last triennium. He thanked delegates for giving him the opportunity, expressed thanks for the encouragement and suggestions shared with him along the way, and expressed thanks for the Vice Presidents and many others.

President Davis referenced his printed report in the Workbook, Part II (pages 203–207). He briefly acknowledged what has happened at CUAA, acknowledged grief about what has happened and the future that now cannot happen, and reminded delegates that they will have opportunities to speak into that situation during the Convention. He also stated that the intent of this Convention is to celebrate the good that has happened at CUAA and to do so with thankfulness. We believe our God is almighty and works all things for our good, and within the District we are already moving ahead and taking other steps with respect to educational opportunities.

President Davis then indicated that the main issue he wants to address in his remarks is our character within the Michigan District, our ethic, not who we are, but how we are. Under three points, he addressed the question, "What sort of Christians are we going to be?"

Point #1: We are the sort of Christians who read our Bible, because in it we meet Jesus.

Point #2: We are the sort of Christians who love one another.

Point #3: We are the sort of Christians who work hard for the King and His Kingdom.

President Davis acknowledged that there are many issues that face our churches. We can talk about them, though we may not be able to impact all of them. However, what sort of Christians we are is something within our control, striving to become an increasingly different sort of people. This becomes especially apparent in times of stress. We can't predict the coming challenges, but we can prepare.

In summary, we are reminded by the Word and renewed by the Spirit and in fellowship, so that we are able to return to our ministries and communities. President Davis closed by thanking the delegates, and the assembly acknowledged President Davis in return.

Rev. Dr. Kasper then introduced a video featuring both seminaries. The assembly applauded to thank the seminaries for their work. President Davis introduced President Rev. Dr. Tom Egger from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and the assembly acknowledged President Egger.

### Nominations Committee

President Davis introduced Rev. Eric Majeski, Nominations Committee Chairman. Committee members were introduced and thanked by Chairman Majeski, who also explained the makeup of the Committee: an ordained member, a commissioned member, and a lay member from each of the four regions of the District. Chairman Majeski encouraged congregations to nominate for future Conventions, especially when it comes to laypeople, and expressed thanks to all who nominated for this Convention.

Nominations, listed in Workbook, Part II, were presented to the Convention assembly. Several changes were noted by President Davis, detailed in Workbook Part III, pages 281–284.

President Davis then asked for any nominations from the floor. None were offered. Motion to accept the slate of nominees as presented. Motion supported. Motion adopted, with none opposed. In closing, Chairman Majeski thanked all those willing to serve.

### Elections Committee - Rev. Joseph W. Polzin, Chairman

President Davis introduced Chairman Polzin and then relinquished the chair to First Vice President Dean Davenport. Chairman Polzin proceeded to introduce the remaining members of the Elections Committee. Chairman Polzin also acknowledged Padgett Communications, providing the voting machines, and the Padgett techs in attendance to provide assistance. He went on to remind the assembly that Advisory Delegates are not polled for elections, reminded delegates of the relevant Bylaws, and offered a word of prayer.

### Election of District President

Chairman Polzin called attention to the Nominations for District President in Workbook, Part II (page 179), and introduced the nominees.

Rev. David A. Davis was re-elected on the first ballot with 69.27% of the vote (293 of 423 votes cast), followed by Rev. Sean Willman (69 votes), Rev. Erik Cloeter (31 votes), and Rev. Darryl Andrzejewski (30 votes). The assembly acknowledged President-elect Davis.

Convention Committee Chairman Dennis Sohn invited President Davis forward and presented him with a small gift. He then invited Sallie Davis forward and presented her with flowers. The assembly acknowledged both with a standing ovation. President Davis acknowledged former President Rev. Dr. William Hoesman, and his wife Barbara, along with former President Rev. Dr. David Maier, and his wife Pat, who were in attendance. Former President Rev. Dr. John Heins and his wife Wilma were not able to be in attendance.

### Election of Regional Vice Presidents

Vice President - Metro East: Nominees are listed in Workbook, Part II (page 181). Chairman Polzin introduced the nominees. Rev. Darryl Andrzejewski was re-elected on the first ballot with 74.64% of the vote (312 of 418 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Vice President-elect Andrzejewski.

Vice President - Metro West: Nominees are listed in Workbook, Part II (page 182). Chairman Polzin introduced the nominees. Rev. Andrew Gruenhagen was elected on the first ballot with 56.86% of the vote (228 of 401 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Vice President-elect Gruenhagen.

Vice President - North & East: Nominees are listed in Workbook, Part II (page 183). Chairman Polzin introduced the nominees. Rev. Erik Cloeter was re-elected on the first ballot with 61.52% of the vote (259 of 421 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Vice President-elect Cloeter.

Vice President - West: Nominees are listed in Workbook, Part II (page 184). Chairman Polzin introduced the nominees. Rev. Craig Bickel was re-elected on the first ballot with 50.96% of the vote (213 of 418 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Vice President-elect Bickel.

#### Ranking of Vice Presidents

Chairman Polzin explained the procedure for the ranking of the Vice Presidents. President Davis then acknowledged the prior Vice Presidents in attendance and expressed thanks to them, followed by the assembly's acknowledgement. President Davis also introduced Mr. Rick Stathakis, member of the LCMS Board of Directors and former member of the District Board of Directors.

First Vice President: No majority was achieved on either the first or second ballots. Vice President Andrzejewski was elected on the third ballot with 52.64% of the vote (219 of 416 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged First Vice President-elect Andrzejewski.

Second Vice President: Vice President Erik Cloeter was elected on the first ballot with 51.31% of the vote (216 of 421 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Second Vice President-elect Cloeter.

Third Vice President: Vice President Bickel was elected with 62.20% of the vote (260 of 418 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Third Vice President-elect Bickel.

Fourth Vice President: Rev. Andrew Gruenhagen.

#### Election of District Secretary

Chairman Polzin reminded delegates of the relevant Bylaws pertaining to the remaining elections.

District Secretary: Chairman Polzin introduced the nominees. Rev. J. Derek Riddle was elected with 61.30% of the vote (255 of 416 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Secretary-elect Riddle.

#### Election of District Board of Directors (Metro East & West Regions only)

Metro East Ordained Member: Rev. Steven Grafe was elected with 54.83% of the vote (227 of 414 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Rev. Grafe.

Metro East Commissioned Member: Mrs. Jennifer Blickensdorf was elected with 57.21% of the vote (234 of 409 votes cast). The assembly acknowledged Mrs. Blickensdorf.

President Davis invoked the orders of the day, and the assembly acknowledged Chairman Polzin for his work. President Davis welcomed Rev. Dr. Kasper and thanked CEF for sponsoring the break. Rev. Dr. Kasper dismissed the assembly.

President Davis welcomed delegates back into the Convention Hall following the break and then acknowledged Rev. Paul Clark of Lutherans For Life of Michigan. Rev. Clark was not in attendance but was acknowledged by the assembly for his work. President Davis also acknowledged Mrs. Ruth Steele, President of the Michigan District chapter of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League. Though not in attendance, Mrs. Steele was also acknowledged by the assembly.

#### Synodical President Presentation: Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison

President Davis introduced LCMS President Harrison. He expressed appreciation for working with him on the Council of Presidents and acknowledged that President Harrison has been in Michigan a number of times during the last triennium.

President Harrison began his presentation with a video, which introduced “Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!” as the theme for the 2026 LCMS Convention, based on 1 Corinthians 15:4–8. The video also briefly introduced various LCMS ministries and ministry areas.

The assembly welcomed President Harrison, who expressed his joy to be in attendance. He began his remarks by stating that we are all Book of Concord Lutherans. President Harrison referenced the Preface to the Book of Concord, in particular, which consists of a mission statement towards the conclusion, he suggested. The expansion of the Word of God is mission, and holding the right faith is going to mean better unity. Visitation is the foundation for this, at every level of our church body.

President Harrison went on to note that the whole Book of Concord is about consolation for troubled consciences. At the time of the Reformation, people could not be certain of eternal life. Luther changed the entire trajectory of the faith by insisting that God doesn’t need your works, but your neighbor does. The Gospel changes everything.

President Harrison acknowledged the approaching 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030 and noted that it is our responsibility before the world to confess the Gospel before everyone. He proceeded to share highlights from Articles I-IX of the Augsburg Confession.

President Harrison then shared a variety of synodical highlights, touching on international mission, our universities and seminaries, the *Set Apart to Serve* initiative, alternate routes to ordination, Synod finances, and congregational giving,

With respect to CUAA, President Harrison recounted the details of the merger with CUW, which gave CUAA “another 10 years of existence,” and the more recent developments under the new administration. He emphasized that the Board of Regents is in charge of the situation and, with respect to the Michigan District’s suggestions regarding the main campus, that he had hoped the Board of Regents would have responded by now. He acknowledged that, with all the positive things that had been taking place at CUAA, he would feel exactly as we all do and that CUWAA President Ankerberg has admitted that the recent developments were rolled out poorly. President Harrison stated that he wishes he could change what has happened but doesn’t have the ability to do that. Nevertheless, he is still hoping for the best. Nothing has been presented to the LCMS Board of Directors regarding the sale of the main campus, and there are still no plans on the table.

In closing, President Davis expressed appreciation for President Harrison’s words and for how approachable he is. President Harrison expressed his appreciation for President Davis, as well. He concluded his remarks with the following encouragement: “God bless you all. Don’t give up. It’s not in vain. Don’t worry. The Lord is in His heavens. We’re blessed in so many ways.” The assembly acknowledged President Harrison.

President Davis introduced a video from St. John, Rochester, who hosted the Sunday evening picnic dinner and entertainment at the Ministry Tent. Rev. Dr. Kasper then offered a pre-lunch prayer and dismissed the assembly for lunch. During lunch, caucuses were held for Advisory Ordained and Commissioned Delegates to the 2026 LCMS Convention, and the District Board of Directors participated in a “Meet and Greet” at the Manor.

### **Monday, June 23, 1:30–6 p.m. Convention Hall/Gym**

Rev. Dr. Kasper welcomed the assembly back to the Convention Hall and announced a video from Christ Our Savior, Livonia, which hosted the Monday lunch. The assembly acknowledged the congregation.

President Davis then invited Elections Committee Chairman Polzin back to the stage, and he offered a brief prayer for the remaining elections.

#### Election of District Board of Directors, continued

Metro East Lay Members: Chairman Polzin drew delegates’ attention to Workbook, Part III (page 281), indicating that Ms. Julie Nemeth had withdrawn her name. He suggested that, with two nominees remaining for two positions, a voice vote be conducted. President Davis entertained a motion to conduct such a vote. Motion made and supported. Motion adopted. Elected: Mr. Nicholas DeMiro; Mr. Dan Nickodemus.

West Region Ordained Member: Rev. A. Trevor Sutton was elected with 51.7% of the vote (198 of 383 votes cast).

West Region Commissioned Member: Mr. Kyle Smith was elected with 63.87% of the vote (244 of 382 votes cast).

West Region Lay Members: Mr. Dennis Sohn (65.13%; 254 of 390 votes cast) and Mr. Scott Liggett (51.28%; 200 of 390 votes cast) were elected.

Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees:

Chairman Polzin highlighted changes to the ballot noted in Workbook, Part III (pages 282–284).

Rostered Member: Rev. Eric Majeski was elected with 57.73% of the vote (224 of 388 votes cast).

Lay Members: Chairman Polzin highlighted the nominees for these positions in Workbook, Part III (pages 283–284). Dr. Amy Engelhardt (71.95%; 277 of 385 votes cast) and Mr. Al Kaul (58.70%; 226 of 385 votes cast) were elected on the first ballot. A majority was not achieved on either the second or third ballots. Mr. Julian Petzold was elected on the fourth ballot with 59.40% of the vote (237 of 399 votes cast).

2028 District Convention Nominating Committee:

Metro East Ordained Member: Rev. Eric Majeski was elected with 70.47% of the vote (284 of 403 votes cast).

Metro East Commissioned Member: With an uncontested ballot, Chairman Polzin suggested that a voice vote be conducted. President Davis entertained a motion to conduct such a vote. Motion supported and seconded. Motion adopted, with none opposed. Elected: Mr. David Kusch.

Metro East Lay Members: With an uncontested ballot, a motion was made and supported to conduct a voice vote. Motion adopted, with none opposed. Elected: Mr. Stephen Boergert.

Metro West Ordained Member: A majority was not achieved on the first ballot. Rev. Aaron Roggow was elected on the second ballot with 51.90% of the vote (205 of 395 votes cast).

Metro West Commissioned Member: With an uncontested ballot, a motion was made and supported to conduct a voice vote. Motion adopted, with none opposed. Elected: Mr. David Nelson.

Metro West Lay Member: With an uncontested ballot, a motion was made and supported to conduct a voice vote. Motion adopted, with none opposed. Elected: Mr. Robert Bourassa.

North and East Ordained Member: Rev. Paul Biber was elected with 52.83% of the vote (215 of 407 votes cast).

President Davis invoked the orders of the day and thanked Chairman Polzin for his work. The assembly acknowledged Chairman Polzin.

Convention Essayist: Rev. Dr. Joel D. Biermann, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis  
Waldemar A. and June Schuette Professor of Systematic Theology

President Davis introduced and welcomed Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann, and the assembly welcomed him. Dr. Biermann's essay addressed the topic of what exactly the Church is and what it's supposed to be doing. He shared highlights from the writings of three different theologians: Herman Sasse, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and, more recently, American philosopher and theologian David Bentley Hart.

In closing, Dr. Biermann returned to the question of what we are supposed to be doing as the Church, and what our identity should be. We just receive. We know who we are. We don't need to obsess over preserving and hanging on. Institutions come and go, but the Church will endure, and confessionalism will endure. We need to worry less about controlling everything.

Our agenda is to be witnesses of the reality of Christ, and this should consume us.

When we return home, Dr. Bierman encouraged us, we should go with joy. We know who we are and who God says we are. We can know where we're going, and it isn't toward the past. Our job is to witness to Christ and the reality of Christ to the world around us, not to preserve and protect. We needn't ever get tired of that. That should be evident in the way we treat those around us everyday. We can do that with confidence and not fear. When the future hangs on us, we've got it messed up; the future hangs on Christ. To witness to God's reality in His world is what we're here to do; that's it. With that in mind, Dr. Biermann encouraged us to return home, stand up for Christ, and speak for Christ.

Following a break, Rev. Dr. Kasper invited delegates back to their seats.

#### Floor Committee #4 - Missions

President Davis invited Committee Chairman Bickel and the members of Floor Committee 4 to the stage. The assembly acknowledged Chairman Bickel, who then introduced the committee members. Chairman Bickel shared the words of Psalm 103:8 and offered a brief prayer.

#### **Resolution 4-01A To Exhort Members of the LCMS to Earnestly and Regularly Pray for and Pursue Synodical Unity (Workbook, Part III, page 298)**

The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Jason Bauer. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted

#### **Resolution 4-02 To Encourage District Congregations to Conduct Personal Witness Training**

The resolution was read by committee member Deaconess Norma Polk. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted

#### **Resolution 4-03A To Commend the Deacon and Ministry Assistant Training Through the Michigan School of Missional Formation and to Encourage Greater Enrollment (Workbook, Part III, page 300)**

Chairman Bickel clarified that this resolution has to do with credentialed deacons. The resolution was read by committee member Mr. Robert Brooks. Motion to adopt by the committee.

Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate made reference to page 301, Line 17, with a motion to change the word "license" to "ordain." Motion supported.
- President Davis asked Rev. Dr. Kasper to address the choice of language in the resolution. Rev. Dr. Kasper clarified the reason for licensing deacons and not ordaining them.
- President Davis then ruled the motion out of order, as the District does not have the authority to choose whom to ordain or not. The language of the resolution represents the current practice in the LCMS. Resolution 13-02, referenced in this resolution, comes from the 2016 LCMS Convention.
- Delegate raised a question about the appropriateness of the word "license."
- Vice President Davenport, representing Christ our Savior, Livonia, clarified that "license" is the Synod's term, and this is a Council of Presidents issue. The resolution is simply repeating wording that reflects the Synod's practice.
- Delegate stated that this path is necessary in order to provide a bridge for emergency situations. Many churches, especially in northern Michigan, have difficulty finding pastors.
- Delegate stated that the final resolve conflicts with Resolution 1-07, the third resolve, Lines 12-14 (Workbook, Part II, page 241).

- The practice was clarified. Licensing happens currently not in ongoing but emergency situations.
- Delegate asked President Davis if he would be able to point to a Council of Presidents document or discussion in which this language is utilized. Chairman Bickel read LCMS Convention Resolution 13-02 (2016), which references the following stipulations: only in times of emergency or extraordinary need, on a temporary basis, and under supervision.
- Delegate asked if the above could be added to the resolution at hand.
- Delegate stated that all of us are trying to make sure that we are serving Jesus to Jesus' people and encouraged delegates to leave the resolution as it is.
- The question was called. Motion seconded. Vote: In favor, 80%.

Advisory Vote: In favor, 87%.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 74.31% (295-102).

Result: Adopted.

President Davis thanked Chairman Bickel and Floor Committee 4 for their work and invited Chairman Cloeter and Floor Committee 3 to the stage. He also invited all involved in the Deacon training program to stand, and the assembly acknowledged them. President Davis stated that we are dedicated to following the nomenclature and procedures of the Synod.

President Davis then introduced a video about Black Ministry, which highlighted the 150th anniversary of Black Ministry in the LCMS.

#### Floor Committee #3 - Education

Chairman Cloeter introduced the committee members, and the assembly acknowledged the committee.

#### **Resolution 3-01 Giving Thanks for Leaders Who Developed CUW/CUAA Partnership**

The resolution was read by committee member Mr. Paul Looker. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor.

Result: Adopted. Following adoption, the assembly stood to sing the Doxology.

#### **Resolution 3-02A To Express Lament and Sympathy Regarding Concordia University Ann Arbor (Workbook, Part III, page 294)**

The resolution was read by committee member Dr. Ronald Allen. Motion to adopt by the committee.

Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate stated that it is not a good idea to put names in resolutions and offered a motion to strike President Ankerberg's name from the resolution, but not his title. Motion supported. No further discussion.
- Vote on the amendment: After a voice vote, President Davis called for an electronic vote. In favor of the amendment: 62.69% (252-150). President Ankerberg's name will be stricken from the resolution.
- No further discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, as amended.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor. President Davis ruled that the motion passed.

Result: Adopted

#### **Resolution 3-03 Commissioned Minister - Teacher Debt Relief Resource**

The resolution was read by committee member Mr. Travis Grulke. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion. Chairman Cloeter clarified that this resolution is addressing a Synodical Convention resolution.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.  
Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 3-04A A Call for Concordia University Wisconsin in Ann Arbor's Leadership to Accountability and Repentance (Workbook, Part III, page 295)**

The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Paul Appold. Motion to adopt by the committee.

#### Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate made reference to Lines 28–32 and 34–37 and stated that we should be doubly sure of the accuracy of what the resolution states; there is not enough convincing evidence.
- Delegate expressed concern with calling for repentance and identifying sin, when both parties stand by what they've said.
- Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that it is our job to scrutinize.
- Delegate asked for clarification: Does this resolution suggest being barred from Holy Communion? This was clarified by Chairman Cloeter, that the resolution is not calling for that.
- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that the committee is to be commended, but a public call for repentance is more than is needed under the circumstances. We need to be absolutely certain a sin has taken place and that this is our business to address this matter; it seems to be more of a judgment call.
- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that it is not appropriate for a Convention to be calling people to repentance for their sin. There are other means and better ways for addressing this issue and working through this conflict.
- Advisory Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that this is an institutional issue; the problem is with leadership and communication and accountability. If the Convention isn't addressing this issue, what other entity will? The university belonged to us.

President Davis invoked the orders of the day, thanked Chairman Cloeter and Floor Committee 3 for their work, and dismissed them from the stage.

President Davis then acknowledged President Rev. Dr. John Bruss from Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne.

#### Discussion I: Remember

“Re-mind-ed” by the Word: John 8:31–32

President Davis explained how the group discussion time would work. The purpose is to give delegates the opportunity to get to know each other and to provide for some mutual conversation and encouragement. Discussion questions were as follows:

- Describe your personal Bible reading habit, including challenges and successes.
- How does Sunday worship and group Bible study buttress it? Does it replace it?
- What tools or resources do you find helpful?
- How does your congregation encourage this habit?

Following the discussion, Rev. Dr. Kasper introduced a video about the *Set Apart to Serve* initiative.

#### Floor Committee #1 - Administration

President Davis invited Chairman Davenport and Floor Committee 1 to the stage. Chairman Davenport introduced the committee members, and the assembly acknowledged the committee.

### **Resolution 1-01 To Encourage Partnerships with English District Congregations**

Chairman Davenport clarified that the purpose of this resolution is not to single out the English District, but there are no SELC District congregations in Michigan. The resolution was read by Chairman Davenport. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted unanimously.

### **Resolution 1-02A Realignment of Circuits (Workbook, Part III, page 285)**

The resolution was read by committee member Ms. Susan Hooper. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion. President Davis clarified that all congregations and Circuit Visitors involved with this resolution have been involved in the conversation. This kind of shifting will continue to take place in the future.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 1-03 Sharing Information for Voters**

The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Phil Baerwolf in its entirety. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion. President Davis informed the delegates that, because this resolution involves a change to District Bylaws, a two-thirds majority vote is needed in order to adopt the resolution. If adopted, it would then be sent on to the Synod, in order for the Commission on Constitutional Matters to make sure the Bylaw is in line with Synod practice.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted unanimously, achieving the required two-thirds majority.

Chairman Davenport noted that LCMS Secretary Sias has already given his blessing to the change required by this resolution.

### **Resolution 1-04 To Revise RSO Requirement of 100% LCMS Board Membership**

Chairman Davenport noted that the committee is striking Lines 34–35 (Workbook, Part II, page 238). The resolution was read by committee member Mr. James Williams. Motion to adopt by the committee.

Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate spoke in favor of the resolution from the standpoint of his involvement with Franklin Avenue Mission.
- Delegate raised a question about the resolution's reference to a "WSO." Chairman Davenport explained that "WSO" is clarified in Line 27.
- Delegate speaking against the resolution asked what problem this resolution addresses.
- Delegate spoke against the resolution from the standpoint of his experience with situations in which the same kind of change has taken place, and leadership has deteriorated as a result.
- Pastoral Delegate, representing the Circuit which submitted the original overture, provided clarification regarding the prior questions. The requirement of 100% LCMS membership in a mission context is challenging. It makes sense to include others in the community we are trying to reach.
- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that he believes it is advantageous to require 100% LCMS membership.
- Delegate asked why others can't be worked with without inviting them to serve on the Board.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition. President Davis ruled that the resolution passed as amended. The assembly asked for an electronic vote: In favor, 57.61% (231-170).

Result: Adopted.

President Davis invoked the orders of the day, thanked Chairman Davenport and Floor Committee 1 for their work and dismissed them from the stage, and invited Chairman Andrzejewski and Floor Committee 2 to the stage.

President Davis then introduced Mrs. Beth Bernthal-Reindel, who has been assisting with the District staff. The assembly acknowledged her.

## Floor Committee #2 - Doctrine

President Davis introduced Chairman Andrzejewski and Floor Committee 2. Chairman Andrzejewski introduced the committee members, and the assembly acknowledged the committee.

### **Resolution 2-01A To Define and Affirm Lutheran Identity (Workbook, Part III, page 289)**

The resolution was read by committee member Rev. William Wangelin. Motion to adopt by the committee.

#### Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate speaking in support of the resolution stated that the conversation about Lutheran identity seems to expand beyond the Lutheran Confessions at times.
- Advisory Pastoral Delegate stated that there are traditions that are not in keeping with our confession.
- Delegate asked the committee, especially with respect to Lines 12–14, if there is a mechanism the committee has in mind for all the policies and bylaws being examined. Is there a body that will do what is being proposed?
- Delegate expressed concern with the mindset seminary graduates are bringing with them.
- Pastoral Delegate stated that his congregation has identified that what makes us Lutheran is the central fact that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone. He spoke in favor of the resolution, so that we can focus on keeping the main thing the main thing.
- Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that he agrees with Lines 1–8 but offered a motion that “onto” be changed to “on to” in Line 16 (page 290). Motion accepted by the committee.
- Delegate proposed changing “overture” to “resolution” in Line 16 (page 290). Motion accepted by the committee.
- Advisory Pastoral Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution expressed concern with whether or not confessional subscription at his ordination makes him “Lutheran enough.”
- The question was called. Vote to call the question: In favor, 84.65% (331-60).

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 78.09% (310-87).

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 2-02 To Pause and Correct the Deficiencies in the Lutheran Identity and Mission Outcome Standards (LIMOS)**

The resolution was read by committee member Ms. Stacy McGhee. Motion to adopt by the committee.

#### Discussion:

- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that the issue is more complex than meets the eye, along with the previous resolution. The effort to define Lutheran identity is necessarily going to involve some matters of conundrum. The resolution was not thought through enough.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 73.60% (290-104).

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 2-03A To Encourage Young People to Enter Church Worker Vocations (Workbook, Part III, page 291)**

The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Dr. Theodore Hopkins. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion. President Davis reminded the assembly that a lack of discussion doesn't mean that an issue isn't important.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted.

President Davis invoked the orders of the day, and the assembly acknowledged Floor Committee 2 for their work.

## Elections, continued

Rev. Dr. Kasper invited Chairman Polzin back to the stage. Chairman Polzin called attention to the remaining uncontested ballots and proposed that delegates act on these positions next: Nominating Committee for the North & East Region, Commissioned & Lay Members, and Nominating Committee for the West Region, Commissioned Member. President Davis entertained a motion to do so. Motion made and supported. All in favor, none opposed. Elected: Mr. Brian Heinlein (North & East Commissioned); Mr. Steven Kern (North & East Lay); Mrs. Lori Wieneke (West Commissioned).

West Region Ordained Member: No majority was achieved on the first ballot. Rev. Paul Appold was elected on the second ballot with 59.10% of the vote (224 of 379 votes cast).

West Region Lay Member: Mr. Timothy Haberling was elected, with 61.42% of the vote (234 of 381 votes cast).

## LCMS Committee for Convention Nominations, in preparation for the 2026 Synod Convention

Lay Member: No majority was achieved on the first ballot. Mr. Stephen Boergert was elected on the second ballot with 60.93% of the vote (237 of 389 votes cast).

Alternate Lay Member: Mr. Michael Stack was elected with 52.74% of the vote (202 of 383 votes cast).

The assembly acknowledged those elected. President Davis thanked Chairman Polzin for his work on the Elections Committee, and the assembly acknowledged him.

Rev. Dr. Kasper introduced a video about St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth, which sponsored the Monday evening dinner and entertainment. The assembly acknowledged the congregation.

Rev. Dr. Kasper also introduced a video from LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces. President Davis then recognized the military chaplains, asking those in attendance to stand. The assembly acknowledged the following: Rev. Coleman Geraci (Army Reserve), Rev. Justin Krupsky (Army Reserve), Rev. Daniel Maske (Navy Reserve), Rev. Trenton Wollberg (Air National Guard), and Rev. Lang Yang (Army Reserve/Civil Air Patrol).

Rev. Dr. Kasper then invited delegates to stand for a group photo. President Davis announced that he and the Vice Presidents had determined that an evening session would not be necessary. Rev. Dr. Kasper closed the Monday afternoon session with announcements and offered a closing prayer.

**Tuesday, June 24, 8:15 a.m.**

### **Memorial Service: Chapel of the Holy Trinity**

Preacher: Rev. Robert B. Appold

On another warm morning, delegates and guests gathered in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity to begin the second full day of the Convention by remembering the 62 departed ordained and commissioned ministers who joined the Church Triumphant since the prior Convention. Rev. Appold reminded the congregation that the memorial service gives us all a chance to reflect on the trajectory of our ministries. He acknowledged the various feelings undoubtedly present, including those that came with gathering in the Chapel for the final Convention at CUA.A.

Thanks be to God for those who've gone before us, Rev. Appold reminded us, for it is our privilege to follow them. For all of us, like Elijah, God says that there is so much more. Even after the powerful events on Mt. Carmel, Elijah wanted to give up. We all have times like that; they are one of the devil's best tools. Elijah was ready to die, but God ministered to him in those moments. The angel simply touched him, rather than yelling at him. What we can't do anymore, God does. He gives us the nourishment to continue on the journey of this life.

We've all had others who have tapped us on the shoulder and encouraged us. Today we thank God for these servants, in particular. Even more, thanks be to God for our Lord Jesus Christ, who strengthens us for our journey.

**Tuesday, June 24, 9:35–12:30 p.m.**  
**Convention Hall/Gym**

President Davis welcomed the assembly back to the Convention hall and introduced a video about Redeemer, Jackson, which hosted the Tuesday morning breakfast. The assembly acknowledged the congregation.

President Davis then invited the District staff to the stage and introduced the staff to the assembly. The assembly acknowledged the staff. President Davis highlighted that the entire staff wants to be responsive to our needs and encouraged us not to hesitate to contact them for assistance.

President Davis then introduced the Omnibus resolutions and reminded the assembly how these resolutions are handled and why.

#### Omnibus Resolutions

#### **Omnibus Resolution A (Overture 3-11)**

Motion to adopt. Motion seconded. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted.

#### **Omnibus Resolution B (Overtures 2-09, 2-10)**

President Davis reminded the assembly that handling certain overtures this way doesn't mean they haven't been talked about or are not important. Motion to adopt. Motion seconded. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Result: Adopted.

There were no Omnibus C resolutions.

President Davis invited Chairman Cloeter and Floor Committee 3 back to the stage. He also invited all lay congregational representatives to stand, and the assembly acknowledged them.

#### **Resolution 3-04A, continued from Monday afternoon**

As discussion of this resolution resumed, Chairman Cloeter spoke on behalf of the committee, explaining that the committee is very empathetic to the weight of this matter and has done their homework. He indicated that a precedent has been set with respect to this particular type of issue, referring the assembly to the 2023 LCMS Convention, at which time one of the resolutions issued a similar call to repentance.

Summary of Discussion, continued:

- Delegate asked if efforts have been made to contact the parties involved in person. If not, he is against the resolution. President Davis indicated that regular communication has taken place with President Ankerberg and the CUWAA Board of Regents, and responses did not address this issue.
- Delegate offered some additional background to this resolution: There was a claim made that the entities referenced in the resolution had been contacted in a report published by CUW. When that report came out, CEF issued an online press release, indicating that CEF was never contacted as alleged in the report. CEF diligently checked their phone logs and email to be doubly sure that communication wasn't missed. A phone call did take place with President Ankerberg shortly after the report was published, and his response was that he should not be blamed, as he didn't write the report.
- Delegate questioned the language used as far as who exactly the resolution is calling to repentance. Would it be helpful to include names in order to be specific?

- Delegate referenced meetings that took place in April 2024 at CUAU and explained that this resolution has to do with the building of trust and accountability.
- Delegate called the question. Motion supported.
- Delegate Vote: In favor, but only 56.54% (216-166), which was not the required  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority (255), so discussion continued.
- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that he is unsure those involved have committed a sin and that calling them to repentance is required. What is the goal of this resolution? Repentance for the sake of forgiveness or vindication? There are other ways to accomplish the desired objective.
- President Davis stated that the motivation has been love, and not vindication. He also asked the assembly to refrain from applause during discussion.
- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that he is certain a sin has been committed, but he is less certain that this is the forum for calling the parties referenced in the resolution to repentance; there are probably better ways to do so.
- President Davis ruled that the thirty minutes allotted to this particular resolution was up, after 15 minutes of discussion yesterday (Monday) and another 15 today (Tuesday).
- Delegate Vote regarding calling the question: In favor, 82.03% (315-69).

Advisory Voice Vote regarding the main motion: In favor; with some opposition.

Delegate Vote regarding the main motion: Not in favor, 54.13% (172-203).

Result: Defeated.

### **Resolution 3-05 To Clarify the Prior Approval Process and Provide Appropriate Transparency**

The resolution was read by committee member Ms. Elizabeth Fink. Motion to adopt by the committee. President Davis reminded the assembly that if this resolution were adopted, it would be sent on to the 2026 Synod Convention.

#### Summary of Discussion:

- Advisory Pastoral Delegate thanked President Davis for his outstanding leadership and stated that it stands in stark contrast to the shockingly poor leadership we have witnessed from the CUW administration. The prior approval process is directly responsible for that. There were so many well qualified candidates for the presidency at that time, but none of their names made it through the prior approval process. As a result, the individual elected brought about the demise of CUAU. Something needs to change so that the same kind of thing doesn't happen again.
- President Davis again asked the assembly to refrain from applause during discussion.
- Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution, and speaking from the perspective of someone who was nominated for a Concordia position and eliminated without any reason given as to why on two separate occasions, stated that his experience resulted in no opportunity to correct his errors or to grow.
- Advisory Pastoral Delegate, speaking neither for or against the resolution but in order to provide delegates with information, referenced the CUW website's list of hiring policies and indicated that some of the information this resolution seeks is available there.
- Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that we don't talk to each other enough. This is what we want to get away from as a District and as a church body.
- Delegate stated that he is not sure what to do with this resolution. Adopting it would be inconsistent with how we do certain other things within the Synod. There is precedent with the prior approval process in other areas, with respect to call lists, etc. Precedent should be considered.
- Advisory Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that non-disclosure statements and communication that's either nonexistent or inadequate, etc., suggests a lack of understanding regarding the meaning of Synod. A lot of political procedures are being utilized rather than ecclesiastical procedures.
- Delegate stated that this is a resolution he would support, but for this question: What are the standards being used?
- Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that this resolution is meant to address the fact that we don't trust each other and would help bring clarity to the process.
- Advisory Pastoral Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that he went through the prior approval process personally and believes the resolution is asking the Synod to trust the faculties of our universities.
- Delegate called the question. Motion seconded.
- Delegate Vote to call the question: In favor, 91.19% (352-34).

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with limited opposition.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 82.19% (323-70).

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 3-06 To Request Transparency from CUA**

The resolution was read by committee member Mrs. Linda Sproul. Motion to adopt by the committee.

Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that he has no personal involvement with CUA and knows people on both sides of the aisle. He has noticed two contradictory positions, indicating a lack of trust and that the two sides have been looking at each other as enemies.
- Delegate stated that this issue is his first experience with Synod politics, and it has been disorienting. Synod means walking together, and if we're going to walk together with leadership, we need to be able to trust them. We have called for transparency and have shown facts, and the facts have been denied. Transparency and accountability will help trust.

President Davis invoked the orders of the day. He thanked the assembly for working through these difficult issues, tender in some cases, and for working together and being respectful.

#### Discussion II: Renew

“Re-new-ed” Commitment to Love: John 13:34–35

President Davis introduced the second discussion time, explaining to the assembly that he wants us to be encouraged that there are more with us than we thought.

Discussion questions:

- How do you define love?
- How would a newcomer to your congregation experience love?
- How does your congregation's organization help or hinder the experience of love?
- What does your congregation do to promote love within and beyond itself?

Following the discussion, Rev. Dr. Kasper released the assembly for a break.

Upon returning from the break, Rev. Dr. Kasper introduced a video from the Lutheran Laymen's League, which highlighted the Congregational Ministry Summit at St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth, January 31–February 1, 2026. President Davis also reported that 11,840 and counting water bottles had been used during the Convention so far and expressed thanks for all who've been involved in making those available.

#### Ratify Circuit Visitor Slate (Workbook, Part II, page 221)

President Davis asked the current Circuit Visitors to stand. The assembly acknowledged them for their work. President Davis identified Circuit Visitors as one of the most crucial voluntary positions we have in place.

President Davis asked delegates to add Rev. Steve Newton to the list of Circuit Visitors for Circuit 27 Livonia. Motion to ratify the Circuit Visitor slate, with this addition. Motion seconded. President Davis invited the assembly to acknowledge the Circuit Visitors. Delegate Voice Vote: In favor.

President Davis then asked the new Circuit Visitors to stand, and the assembly acknowledged them. President Davis also issued a special thank you to Pastor Mike Roth, Chairman of the Circuit Visitors, whom he asked to stand. The assembly acknowledged Pastor Roth.

President Davis introduced Mr. Jim Saalfeld, Church Extension Fund CEO, and invited him to the stage. Mr. Saalfeld introduced CEF's management team and made a few brief remarks about CEF's services, especially highlighting CEF's 125th anniversary in 2026, which will be celebrated in a variety of ways. Mr. John Bates then provided a brief financial report, and Mr. Andy Sohn a brief marketing report, highlighting especially the Fall Leadership Conference September

26–28, as well as the Investment Rebate Program. The CEF presentation concluded with a video, and the assembly acknowledged CEF.

Rev. Dr. Kasper introduced Mr. Dave Gehm, President and CEO of Wellspring Lutheran Services, and the assembly acknowledged him. Mr. Gehm made a few brief remarks, identifying Wellspring as arguably the largest social service agency in Michigan and as having been in service for more than 130 years, established in 1893. Wellspring offers over 40 different programs across the state, across the spectrum of needs.

President Davis acknowledged that both CEF and Wellspring are great assets to our District.

President Davis invited Chairman Davenport and Floor Committee 1 back to the stage. He then introduced a video about St. Paul, Ann Arbor, which hosted the Memorial Brunch for the families of the dearly departed rostered workers. The assembly acknowledged the congregation.

### **Resolution 1-05 To Ensure the Sustainability of Concordia Plan Services**

The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Tyge Zucker. Motion to adopt by the committee.

#### Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate expressed a point of concern, considering what happened when Thrivent did something similar. His concern is with encountering things counter to our faith.
- Delegate stated that we need to make sure we're not yoking ourselves to someone who may turn around later and operate unethically.
- Delegate speaking in support of previous remarks expressed concern with CPS advertising on Pluto TV.
- Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that the concerns that have been raised are not related to this resolution. The concern of this resolution is the need for increasing the pool of workers. This has nothing to do with changing the administration of CPS.
- Delegate stated his agreement with the earlier statements regarding Thrivent's history. He pointed to Line 19 of the resolution, indicating that, if followed, the proposed change could work.
- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that he agrees with the idea of enlarging the pool of workers, but there are other ways this could be done. Opening CPS up to other church bodies not in fellowship with us could be dangerous.
- Chairman Davenport clarified that action on the part of delegates today would only send this resolution on to the Synod. The resolution is only intended to highlight concerns with a decreasing pool of workers, and this issue should be considered.
- Advisory Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that he has some concerns as a young church worker.
- Advisory Pastoral Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that it is wise to send this on to the Synod for further consideration. We need to think about how these programs can continue to serve our churches and church workers well.
- Delegate suggested that we consider encouraging churches to encourage their families to help each other rather than proceeding this way.
- Delegate called the question. Motion seconded. In favor, 92.86% (351-27).

Advisory Vote: In favor, 86%.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 77.21% (288-85).

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 1-06 To Call for the Publication of the Council of Presidents Manual**

The resolution was read by committee member Brian Heyniger. Motion to adopt by the committee.

#### Discussion:

- Delegate asked why someone would be opposed to this.
- President Davis stated that he is not sure why the manual is not public. Some believe there is sensitive information contained in the manual.

- Pastoral Delegate, explaining the reason for the original overture, stated that it seems fair, if we're going to operate a certain way, that we should know why.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with limited opposition.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 1-07 To Make Clarifications Regarding Credentialed Lay Deacons**

Chairman Davenport indicated that Line 13 should include the word "utilizing" following the words "practice of" and before the words "Licensed Lay Deacons." The resolution was read by committee member Deaconess Miriam Yakimow. Motion to adopt by the committee.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with limited opposition.

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 1-08A Encouraging Accuracy of Call Documents (Workbook, Part III, page 286)**

The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Cameron Steele. Motion to adopt by the committee.

Discussion:

- Delegate offered as a substitute motion Overture 1-10, Workbook, Part I, pages 116–118. Rationale: His call documents promised Concordia Plans, but once the call had been accepted, the congregation indicated they would not be able to offer Concordia Plans, after all. The St. Joseph Circuit supported this overture unanimously, and the overture spells out certain necessary details.
- Chairman Davenport replied that the committee had conversation about this matter and acknowledged that the circumstances are unfortunate. However, they wondered who is responsible for addressing the situation, the District or the congregation? The committee stumbled over the question of whether or not call documents are legal documents.
- Vote to continue to consider the substitute motion: Not in favor, 53.43% (187-163).

President Davis invoked the orders of the day, thanked Floor Committee 1 for their work, and dismissed them from the stage.

Rev. Dr. Kasper invited LCMS Regional Vice President Wohlrabe to the stage for a brief presentation. President Davis briefly introduced Vice President Wohlrabe, and the assembly acknowledged him. Rev. Dr. Kasper then offered a prayer for lunch and dismissed the assembly.

### **Service of Installation: Chapel of the Holy Trinity 1:45 p.m.**

Preacher: Rev. David A. Davis

On a very warm afternoon, delegates and guests gathered once again in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity to begin the afternoon session of the Convention. President Davis focused the attention of the congregation on the theme of returning, with Matthew 10:38 serving as the text for the message. We are the living dead, but in Christ we are not like zombies. Contrary to the opinion of our culture, living our best life ever can be a death trap. Jesus calls us to give up our lives as we follow Him. The world urges us to live self-centered lives, but Jesus invites us to die to ourselves. We're better off dead in Christ.

President Davis encouraged us to return to our communities as the living dead. Jesus' words were not only spoken to the apostles, to church workers. According to Luke's account of the same episode in Luke 9, Jesus spoke His words to all who were present. Our congregations need to be willing to die to ourselves and to reach into our communities in order to receive new people.

At the conclusion of the service, Synod Regional Vice President Rev. Dr. John Wohlrabe installed President Davis as District President for his second term, and President Davis then installed the four Regional Vice Presidents, followed by all other office-holders duly elected during the Convention.

**Tuesday, June 24, 3–6 p.m.**  
**Convention Hall/Gym**

Following the Service of Installation and a break, the assembly returned to the Convention Hall. President Davis explained to the assembly the plan for the remaining Floor Committee time. He expressed thanks to St. Paul's, Hillsdale, for providing the take-home bags, and the assembly acknowledged the congregation. President Davis then recognized several individuals for their contributions.

Announcing a change to the order indicated on the agenda, President Davis invited Chairman Andrzejewski and Floor Committee 2 back to the stage. Chairman Andrzejewski thanked the assembly for the beautiful, joyful singing during the final hymn of the Service of Installation, likely the last service to be held in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity.

### **Resolution 2-04 To Put Confessional Subscription into Practice During the Upcoming Triennium**

The resolution was read by committee member Mr. Bruce Glennie. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 2-05 Encourage Regular Use of Confession and Absolution**

The resolution was read by Mr. Josh Kittleman. Motion to adopt by the committee.

Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate speaking without opposition to the resolution asked what the motivation was for including this resolution. The Committee is simply responding to overtures received from congregations.
- Delegate spoke from the Circuit which submitted the overture behind this resolution and from the perspective of the experience of a worker within the Circuit, who had been tasked with writing “creative” absolutions.
- Delegate offered a motion to amend the resolution: In Line 37, strike “and resources.” Motion seconded. Rationale: to focus on our common language together.
- The committee responded by explaining that those words were added to the original overture because *Creative Worship* is a product of the Synod which has undergone doctrinal review, and many congregations use it. As a result, the committee wanted to include such resources in the resolution.
- Delegate speaking against the amendment and from the Circuit which submitted the overture stated that he commends the committee for adding those two words.
- Delegate speaking against the amendment asked why we would use anything other than LCMS approved hymnals and resources.
- Delegate asked the question: Don't we trust the people in these positions to make God-pleasing decisions?
- Delegate speaking in favor of the amendment stated that his desire is to ensure that everyone is using the same, common language.
- Delegate asked the question: Without the amendment, does the rest of this resolution lose its meaning?
- Delegate called the question. Motion seconded. Delegate Vote: In favor, with none opposed.
- Delegate Vote regarding the amendment: Opposed, 82.82% (56-270 votes). Amendment defeated.

Summary of Discussion regarding the original resolution, continued:

- Delegate stated that when the Lutheran Confessions talk about Absolution, they are talking about private Confession and Absolution. The intent of the resolution is good, but it undermines the understanding of Absolution in the Confessions.
- Delegate asked for clarification regarding the use of the word “regular” in the resolution. The committee responded briefly.
- Delegate called the question. Motion supported. Delegate Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.  
Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 2-06B To Condemn the False Teachings of the “Stone Choir” (Tuesday morning supplement, page 305)**

Chairman Andrzejewski acknowledged that the majority of the committee wasn't familiar with the issues addressed in this resolution. Research led the committee to become convinced that this resolution needed to be addressed. The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Matthew Durance. Motion to adopt by the committee.

#### Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate recommended voting against the resolution and stated that very few have listened to the podcast in order to be in a position to join the committee in its condemnation. There are errors in the resolution.
- Delegate offered a friendly amendment: In Line 45 (page 305), change “and its hosts” to “and to call its hosts to repentance.” Motion seconded. The delegate explained his rationale.
- The committee clarified that the purpose of the resolution is not to call the hosts to repentance. That's already been done, and they've been excommunicated.
- Delegate Voice Vote regarding the amendment: Amendment defeated.

#### Summary of Discussion regarding the original resolution, continued:

- Advisory Delegate stated that he wasn't familiar with the podcast but decided to listen to several episodes as a result of the resolution. In doing so, he heard many horrifying things, and he stated that he is horrified that we even need to be having this conversation.
- Delegate stated that the perpetrators of this podcast do not need the publicity this resolution would give them and encouraged the committee to withdraw the resolution.
- Delegate strongly encouraged everyone to vote in favor of the resolution and stated that the sentiments expressed in the podcast are common in some pockets of the LCMS.
- President Davis asked to call the question in the interest of time. Delegate Vote: In favor, 92% (303-25).

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, 94%.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 90.94% (291-29).

Result: Adopted.

President Davis announced that this brought Floor Committee 2's work to an end. He thanked Chairman Andrzejewski and the committee for their work and dismissed them. The assembly acknowledged the committee.

President Davis introduced a video from the LWML, and the assembly acknowledged the LWML.

President Davis invited Chairman Cloeter and Floor Committee 3 back to the stage.

#### Summary of Discussion of Resolution 3-06, continued:

- The committee announced minor corrections to the resolution: The following words from Line 14 (page 259), “the District in Convention formally requests,” should be repeated in Lines 18 and 22 (page 259).
- President Davis indicated that this would be treated as an amendment. No further discussion. Delegate Vote regarding the amendment: In favor, with none opposed. Amendment adopted.
- President Davis indicated that about 20 minutes remained from Monday's discussion of this resolution.
- Advisory Delegate encouraged voting in favor of the resolution for the purpose of regaining trust within the Synod and stated that many potential students have been deeply hurt by what went on at CUAA.
- Delegate speaking in favor of the resolution stated that transparency may be annoying, but it's helpful. What is good for our congregations is good for our Synod and colleges.
- Delegate stated that he resonates with the concerns that have been voiced but would urge caution and maybe even voting against the resolution. He spoke from the perspective of having served as a District President in The Lutheran Church of Canada. Sometimes corporate responsibility and ecclesiastical responsibility conflict.
- Advisory Delegate spoke regarding the multiple Concordia closures that have taken place over the last number of years.
- Delegate called the question. Motion seconded. Delegate Vote: In favor, 75.87% (239-76).

Advisory Vote: In favor, 88%.

Delegate Vote regarding the resolution as amended: In favor, 82.19% (263-57).

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 3-07A Project Postmortem Examination of CUA (Workbook, Part III, page 297)**

Chairman Cloeter highlighted a slight change from the original resolution in the subject line and in the body of the resolution (Line 18). The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Bryce Roche. Motion to adopt by the committee.

Summary of Discussion:

- Advisory Delegate offered a definition of “project postmortem.” If that’s the definition of that phrase, he stated that he was speaking in support of the resolution.
- Lay Delegate offered an amendment. Motion seconded. Delegate explained his rationale. The amendment was withdrawn after further discussion.
- Advisory Pastoral Delegate spoke in favor of the resolution. Having served for a number of years as an Advisory Regent under the prior administration, he indicated that not once did the Board ever enter into Executive Session, whereas doing so became much more common under the current administration. Some type of examination would be the most positive thing that could happen after what has taken place. It is important to have an understanding of how this could take place.
- Delegate asked for clarification, and the committee clarified that the findings of the examination called for would be made available to the entire Synod.
- Delegate called the question. Motion seconded. Delegate Vote: In favor, 96.85% (307-10).

Advisory Vote: In favor, 98%.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 91.90% (295-26).

Result: Adopted.

President Davis addressed the assembly regarding the District’s pursuits in response to the CUA developments and shared a series of slides that detailed the exploration of a Lutheran Vocational School as a ministry of the District.

### **Resolution 3-08 To Support New Educational Endeavors**

The resolution was read by committee member Ms. Natalie Haupt. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted.

### Discussion III: Return

Our Turn to Serve: Joshua 1:5–6

Discussion Questions:

- Share a way your congregation serves your community.
- What challenges do you face to connect with your community?
- What partnerships do you have to connect with your community? Within the church? Outside of the church?
- How can you be emboldened in love to do more?

Following the discussion, President Davis referenced the District’s Annual Ministry Report, which was provided to delegates at their seats.

President Davis invited Floor Committee 1 back to the stage.

### Discussion of Resolution 1-08A, continued:

- Delegate proposed the following amendment: “and be it finally resolved, that the Board of Directors of the Michigan

District, or the District office, clarify the legal status of the template used for the call documents in the Michigan District as legal contracts, or not legal contracts, and that the results will be communicated to the members of the LCMS in the Michigan District by January 1, 2026.” Motion seconded. Rationale: It is important to clarify language regarding call papers. The committee had no objections to the amendment.

Summary of Discussion regarding the proposed amendment:

- Delegate speaking from the perspective of a member of the Board of Directors stated that the amendment would require something of the Board of Directors that is not the responsibility of the Board.
- President Davis suggested adding the following words to the amendment (already added above): “or the District office.”
- Delegate, having formerly served at Hosanna-Tabor and speaking from the perspective of their experience, stated that technically call documents are legal contracts according to the Supreme Court.
- Lay Delegate speaking in favor of the amendment stated that such documents deal with our livelihood, and that makes this an important issue.
- Delegate Vote regarding the amendment: In favor, 69.52% (187-82). Amendment adopted.

President Davis called the question regarding the original resolution as amended. Delegate Vote: In favor, 96.72% (265-9).

Advisory Voice Vote regarding the amended resolution: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposed.

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 1-09 To Respectfully Decline Overtures (1-01, 1-07, 1-09)**

The committee moved to remove Overtures 1-07 and 1-09 from the resolution. Motion to adopt the resolution as amended by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted.

### **Resolution 1-10 To Encourage Presidential Visitation (Workbook, Part III, page 287)**

The resolution was read by committee member Rev. Phil Baerwolf. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Result: Adopted.

President Davis dismissed Floor Committee 1 and invited Floor Committee 3 back to the stage.

### **Resolution 3-09 To Strengthen Our Process for Supporting our Concordias**

Chairman Cloeter briefly explained the rationale for this resolution. It was brought forward by the committee again, after being submitted originally to the 2022 District Convention, because looking back on the 2022 resolution, it seemed prescient, and there is now an even greater desire to protect the remaining Concordias. Chairman Cloeter read Lines 21–23 and 31–33 (Workbook, Part II, page 263). The resolution was read by committee member Mr. Chance Childers. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Vote: In favor, 94%.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 87.28% (247-36).

Result: Adopted.

President Davis dismissed Floor Committee 3 and invited Floor Committee 1 back to the stage.

## **Resolution 1-11 To Declare the Commission on Constitutional Matters Unconstitutional (Workbook, Part III, page 288)**

Chairman Davenport explained the rationale for this resolution from the open Floor Committee meetings, with the resulting decision on the part of the committee to bring Overture 1-09 into this resolution, after its original inclusion in Resolution 1-09. The resolution was read by committee member Mr. Jim Saalfeld. Motion to adopt by the committee.

### Summary of Discussion:

- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that this is not our place. If there would be a way to come to a Synod-wide consensus, he would be in favor of the resolution.
- Delegate speaking against the resolution stated that we understand the Constitution of the Synod can't speak for itself but must be interpreted. Someone has to do this and have that oversight. He questioned the scope of the resolution and stated that specifics should be given. The work the CCM does is necessary. If in the future we have a specific point of their work, methodology, etc., in mind, the resolution may be worth returning to.
- Chairman Davenport clarified that the resolution is asking the District President to form a task force to explore this issue further and bring the matter back to the 2028 District Convention, which would look further into some of the aforementioned specifics.
- Delegate speaking from the Circuit which brought the original overture forward explained the Circuit's rationale and stated that the study would help to define what isn't currently defined in the Synod's Constitution.
- Advisory Pastoral Delegate referenced Lines 40–43 and read from the LCMS Handbook. That particular "Whereas" is in conflict with the Articles of Incorporation of the Synod.
- Delegate called the question. Delegate Vote: In favor, with some opposition.

Advisory Vote: In favor, 66%.

Delegate Vote: In favor, 54.68% (152-126).

Result: Adopted.

President Davis thanked Floor Committee 1 for their work and Vice President Davenport, in particular, as he is finishing up his responsibilities as Vice President. The assembly acknowledged Vice President Davenport with a standing ovation.

President Davis invited Floor Committee 3 back to the stage.

## **Resolution 3-10 To Respectfully Decline Two Overtures (3-06 & 3-10)**

Chairman Cloeter explained the rationale of this resolution briefly and on behalf of the committee moved adoption. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Delegate Vote: In favor, with none opposed.

Result: Adopted.

President Davis thanked Chairman Cloeter and Floor Committee 3 for their work and dismissed them from the stage. The assembly acknowledged the committee.

President Davis invited Chairman Bickel and Floor Committee 4 back to the stage and noted that we were ending where we started on Monday, thinking about mission.

## **Resolution 4-04B A Triennial Mission and Ministry Emphasis on the Clear Proclamation of the Gospel, Unity in Christ, and Multicultural Ministry (Tuesday Morning supplement, page 307)**

Chairman Bickel identified proposed changes from the committee: Line 23 should read "Love one another" instead of "Love on another." Line 32 should include a semi-colon following the words "and life experiences." All of Line 33 should be scratched, except for the word "and".

The resolution was read by committee member Mrs. Amy Fanta. Motion to adopt the resolution as amended by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.  
Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.  
Result: Adopted.

**Resolution 4-05A To Encourage Prayer, Partnership, and Participation in International Mission (Workbook, Part III, page 304)**

Committee member Rev. Adam Peck provided a brief explanation of “foros” and read the resolution on behalf of the committee. He explained that “foros” offer a greater partnership and support system. This is something the Synod Convention has commended to us, and we would like to see this take place within the Michigan District. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.  
Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.  
Result: Adopted.

**Resolution 4-06 To Direct Concordia Publishing House to Prioritize Mission and Distribution**

President Davis suggested dispensing with reading of the resolution in the interest of time. Motion to adopt by the committee. No discussion.

Advisory Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.  
Delegate Voice Vote: In favor, with none opposed.  
Result: Adopted.

President Davis thanked Chairman Bickel and Floor Committee 4 for their work and dismissed the committee. The assembly acknowledged the committee.

President Davis introduced the Convention wrap-up video. The assembly acknowledged the video. President Davis invited Mr. Jerry Novak forward, expressing gratitude for his work and the work of his team. Rev. Dr. Jeff Schrank was already on the way home, but gratitude was expressed for his work, as well. The assembly acknowledged Jerry, in particular.

President Davis also expressed gratitude to the following:

- all volunteers
- the Convention Committee
- all the congregations which provided food, music, etc.
- the District staff
- Judge Neuchterlein for serving as the Parliamentarian
- the District Secretary

The assembly acknowledged each.

Final Registration Report - Rev. J. Derek Riddle, District Secretary

Voting Pastoral delegates:	228
Voting Lay delegates:	222
Advisory Pastoral delegates:	48
Commissioned delegates:	96
Emeriti:	79
Emeriti Spouses:	16
Vicars:	2
Guests:	66

Advisory Lay Delegates: 2  
Ministry Tent Exhibitors: 62  
Congregations represented: 252

President Davis expressed thanks to all the delegates and invited Convention Committee Chairman Dennis Sohn forward, who delivered the Convention Ingathering Report: 24 packages of diapers, 60 quilts, 12 packages Huggies baby wipes, and an assortment of shampoo, baby wash, ointment, and dental items were collected for the Love Ypsilanti Diaper Pantry. President Davis expressed thanks to Dennis for chairing the Convention Committee and to Rev. Dr. Robert Kasper for keeping us on schedule and for his work during the Convention. The assembly acknowledged both.

#### Closing Devotion

Rev. Dr. Kasper read Colossians 1:15–20, the assembly sang, “We Praise You and Acknowledge You to Be the Lord,” and the Vice Presidents led a closing prayer especially focused upon the blessings of CUAA over the years.

At 5:44 p.m., President Davis declared the 104th Convention of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod adjourned in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and delivered the Benediction, followed by the remainder of the hymn.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rev. J. Derek Riddle  
Michigan District Secretary

# Resolutions

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-01  
SUBJECT: To Encourage Partnerships With English District Congregations  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-11

**WHEREAS**, The English District was established in 1911 to receive the congregations of the English Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States into the German LCMS, and continues as a non-geographic district with 158 congregations in the US and Canada, including 23 congregations currently in Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, The number of congregations and the size of congregations across the Synod are generally decreasing, and new strategic partnerships are necessary for coordinated ministry and mission outreach; and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan District is encouraging a greater cooperation between congregations, fraternal bonds among pastors, and more strategic partnerships and collaboration to make a greater Kingdom impact in its geographic area; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District encourage all LCMS congregations within the geographical parameters of the Michigan District to work together and foster greater cooperation and mutual support in carrying out the mission of the Church, regardless of district affiliation; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the English District congregations be invited and welcome to participate and collaborate with the geographical district congregations nearest them, including circuit events, conferences, mission projects, and community outreach efforts; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the pastors of the Michigan District and English District be encouraged to foster a spirit of collegiality and partnership with each other, for the strengthening of all congregations and a greater impact for the Kingdom of God.

## **ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-02A  
SUBJECT: Realignment of Circuits  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-04

**WHEREAS**, St. Stephen, Waterford has grown close to the ministries of the Kensington circuit; and

**WHEREAS**, The Kensington Circuit is at risk of losing its electoral status due to congregations shrinking and closing; and

**WHEREAS**, Trinity, Warren recently dissolved and the Macomb South Circuit is at risk of losing its electoral status due to this closure; and

**WHEREAS**, Holy Cross, Warren is in Warren, MI and a part of Macomb County; and

**WHEREAS**, Holy Cross, Warren is currently a part of the Birmingham Circuit which is located in Oakland County; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention transfer St. Stephen, Waterford from the North Oakland Circuit to the Kensington Circuit; and be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention transfer Holy Cross, Warren from the Birmingham Circuit to the Macomb South Circuit.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-03  
SUBJECT: Sharing Information for Voters  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-02, 1-03, 1-12, 1-13

**WHEREAS**, Delegates at the regional assemblies should be informed regarding the candidates for election; and

**WHEREAS**, There is an established method for providing comparable information about lay, ordained, and commissioned minister candidates who are presented for election to positions or offices of the Michigan District in Workbook II; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District prepare the biographical information normally included in Workbook II and share it at least one week in advance of the regional assemblies; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention amend Bylaw 5.6c to read “...The regional nominating committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate, as well as biographical data, and supply the regional assembly with this information one week prior to the regional assembly...”

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-04  
SUBJECT: To Revise RSO Requirement of 100% LCMS Board Membership  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-05

**WHEREAS**, The 2016 Synodical convention created a task force to review the current structure and recommend the best model for the Synod’s relationship to RSOs (Recognized Service Organizations); and

**WHEREAS**, The Task Force was charged, among other things, “to ensure that all recommendations maintain the important relationships with the organizations that are recognized by the Synod;” and

**WHEREAS**, The 2019 Synodical Convention adopted the recommendation of the Task Force in Resolution 4-06a; and

**WHEREAS**, This resolution thoroughly revised and redefined the structure and expectations of synodical RSOs; and

**WHEREAS**, An unintended consequence of adopting such a large and sweeping change in a single resolution was that some long-standing synodical RSOs found themselves post facto to be no longer qualified; and

**WHEREAS**, The language of bylaw 6.2.2a, adopted in 2019 resolution 4-06a, states that any WSO (Witness Service Organization - new subcategory) must now have 100% of its Board of Directors hold membership in an LCMS congregation; and

**WHEREAS**, An organization involved in mission or service in areas without LCMS representation, or that desires to expand into regions without LCMS churches, would find it invaluable to recruit board members who better

understand the mission context; and

**WHEREAS**, This requirement has forced RSOs to choose between proudly partnering and affiliating with the Synod, and pursuing the mission goals for which they exist; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention memorialize the Synod to revise the 2019 change in Bylaw 6.2.2a so that a WSO have board membership of at least two-thirds LCMS congregation members or members of the Synod's partner churches; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention commend the work of the many and various service organizations and their support of the Gospel proclamation; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention express the earnest desire that longtime and faithful RSOs not be needlessly severed from affiliation with the LCMS.

**ACTION: Adopted as presented**

COMMITTEE NAME:	Administration
RESOLUTION NUMBER:	1-05
SUBJECT:	To Ensure the Sustainability of Concordia Plan Services
REFERENCE:	Overture 1-14

**WHEREAS**, Concordia Plan Services (CPS) provides significant blessings to workers enrolled in their health, retirement, and disability plans; and

**WHEREAS**, The cost of the Concordia Health Plan, Retirement Plan, and Disability Plan offered by CPS is a substantial expense borne by congregations, schools, and other ministries of the LCMS; and

**WHEREAS**, The pool of workers available to enroll in the CPS benefit plans is relatively small; and

**WHEREAS**, A larger pool of workers contributing to the health plan, retirement plan, and disability plan would provide the opportunity to spread expenses over a larger membership base and would increase the ability of Concordia Plan Services to negotiate with vendors; and

**WHEREAS**, There are other church bodies with whom we agree in biblical morality and medical ethics; and

**WHEREAS**, Our doctrine permits us to cooperate in externals with other church bodies in non-doctrinal matters; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Synod in convention would amend the Synod's Bylaws so that Concordia Plan Services can serve a wider population, by working with other church bodies to increase collective worker enrollment, in order to stabilize the overall cost of the benefits offered by CPS.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-06  
SUBJECT: To Call for the Publication of the Council of Presidents Manual  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-06

**WHEREAS**, The Council of Presidents of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is expected to have policies that guide both the corporate work of the Council and the individual work of its members (synodical bylaw 3.10.1.2); and

**WHEREAS**, Those policies have been codified in a manual distributed to the Council's members, but not available for public viewing; and

**WHEREAS**, That private manual is often cited to defend the actions and positions taken by district presidents; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in Convention urge the Council of Presidents to make public their manual; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in Convention memorialize Synod to require the Council of Presidents to make public its manual; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Council of Presidents Manual be available on the website of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in the "Document Library;" and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the manual available online be the most recent iteration, as updated periodically by the Council.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-07  
SUBJECT: To Make Clarifications Regarding Credentialed Lay Deacons  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-08

**WHEREAS**, There is always a need for more workers in the Church; and

**WHEREAS**, It is incumbent on the Church to provide training and preparation for effective service; and

**WHEREAS**, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Michigan District have discontinued the practice of utilizing Licensed Lay Deacons, in conformity with Synod resolution 13-02A (2016), but the need for trained assistants to the ordained ministers of the Church still remains; and

**WHEREAS** The Michigan District has conducted a thorough program of instruction for deacons which consists of training by rostered workers of the LCMS in Scripture, Christian doctrine, and practical ministry, preparing them to assist ordained clergy in the care of congregations, and that program recognizes this training by credentialing deacons; and

**WHEREAS**, These Credentialed Lay Deacons are not authorized to serve in Word and Sacrament ministry, but in case of need may be transitioned through the Specific Ministry Pastor program to become ordained clergy; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the District in convention commend the faithful laborers who have trained workers to assist our congregations; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the convention give thanks for the willing and humble service of deacons in our District and pray for

their continued service to the people of God.

**ACTION: Adopted as presented**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-08A  
SUBJECT: Encouraging Accuracy of Call Documents  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-10

**WHEREAS**, The Constitution of the LCMS states that one of the objectives of the LCMS is 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” (LCMS Handbook 2023, Article III, Objectives, Objective 10, page 12); and

**WHEREAS**, In some cases the Call Documents presented to professional church workers have incorrectly identified benefits provided by the congregation and have resulted in the professional church workers not receiving the pay and/or benefits noted in the Call Documents presented to them by the calling entities; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That congregations and other calling entities be encouraged to verify and double check that the Call Documents have been prepared correctly, comparing the benefits offered in the Call Documents to the employer benefit election sheet provided by Concordia Plans prior to the start of each benefit year as well as other benefit plans the congregation may have; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District urge the Council of Presidents to revise the Call Document Template for clarity and simplicity; and be it finally

**Resolved**, that the Board of Directors of the Michigan District, or the District office, clarify the legal status of the template used for the call documents in the Michigan District as legal contracts, or not legal contracts, and that the results will be communicated to the members of the LCMS in the Michigan District by January 1, 2026.

**ACTION: Adopted as amended**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION: 1-09  
SUBJECT: To Respectfully Decline Overtures  
REFERENCE: Overtures 1-01, 1-07, 1-09

**WHEREAS**, The floor committee has considered all overtures assigned to it and has concluded, for various reasons, that certain overtures should be declined; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the following overture be respectfully declined for the reasons given:

Overture 1-01 To Affirm and Appreciate the Efforts of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Emphasize That Their Researched Opinions are Solely Recommendations to the Leadership That Appointed the Commission

Reason: The overture is flawed in indicating that matters are only advisory as this contradicts bylaw 3.9.2.2(c) which indicates, “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.”

**ACTION: Adopted as presented**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-10  
SUBJECT: To Encourage Presidential Visitation  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-07

**WHEREAS**, The president of each district of Synod is called upon, "In his ministry of ecclesiastical supervision [to] visit the congregations of the district," (synodical bylaw 4.4.4) at least once every triennium for specific duties outlined in same bylaw; and

**WHEREAS**, The same bylaw allows the use of circuit visitors and vice-presidents to assist the president in this visitation responsibility; and

**WHEREAS**, The president also "shall supervise the doctrine, the life, and official administration on the part of the ordained and commissioned ministers who are members through his district or are subject to his ecclesiastical supervision," (synodical bylaw 4.4.5); and

**WHEREAS**, The same bylaw allows the use of circuit visitors to assist the president in this supervisory responsibility; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the President of the Michigan District be encouraged and supported by the Michigan District Convention in his assigned task of visitation and supervision of both congregations and ministers in his district.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Administration  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1-11  
SUBJECT: To Declare the Commission on Constitutional Matters Unconstitutional  
REFERENCE: Overture 1-09

**WHEREAS**, The Constitution of the Synod controls and supersedes bylaws and all other rules and regulations of the Synod (Art XIV); and

**WHEREAS**, The Constitution of the Synod grants specific powers to the Synod in convention to form corporate entities which shall have legal powers (Art IV); and

**WHEREAS**, The Synod Constitution has limited synodical governance to executive (Art X and XI) and legislative powers (Art IV and XIV), specifically excluding any judicial power; and

**WHEREAS**, The congregations of the Synod have reserved all grants of judicial power; and

**WHEREAS**, The Commission on Constitutional Matters has no Constitutional grant of power; and

**WHEREAS**, The Commission on Constitutional Matters has been created by the Synod in Convention through Bylaws; and

**WHEREAS**, The Synod in convention exceeded its legislative powers when it created the Commission on Constitutional Matters by granting it judicial powers, through its acts in a judicial manner through its interpretations and reviews and the publication of its "opinions;" and

**WHEREAS**, The congregations of the Synod have limited the Synod in convention's legislative powers, specifically "The Synod in convention may adopt bylaws that are consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod" (Art XIV); and

**WHEREAS**, The Commission on Constitutional Matters exists to exercise judicial functions, being the interpretation of the Synod’s governing documents (3.9.2 and 3.9.2.2) and through the publication of “opinions;” and

**WHEREAS**, The Synod in convention has exceeded its limited powers under Art XIV, as the Commission on Constitutional Matters role is not consistent with the Constitution of the Synod by exercising judicial powers; and

**WHEREAS**, The Synod in convention has exceeded its limited powers under Art XIV, as the Commission on Constitutional Matters role contradicts with the Constitution of the Synod by exercising judicial functions, and furthermore, the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers . . . (Art VII); therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention direct the District President to form a task force to consider if the Commission on Constitutional Matters has been properly formed, whether by the use of bylaws the Synod has effectively amended the Constitution without the required ratification by congregations, and that this task force report back to the 2028 Convention.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Doctrine  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-01A  
SUBJECT: To Define and Affirm Lutheran Identity  
REFERENCE: Overtures 2-03, 2-04, 2-05, 2-07

**WHEREAS**, The term “Lutheran Identity” is used without having a clear definition, nor having Scriptural or Confessional references; and

**WHEREAS**, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod states in Article II of its 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; and

**WHEREAS**, The Augsburg Confession Article VII. [THE CHURCH] declares, “...It is enough to agree concerning the teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. It is not necessary that human traditions or rites and ceremonies, instituted by men, should be alike everywhere. It is as Paul says, ‘One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,’ etc.” (Eph. 4:5, 6) ACVII; and

**WHEREAS**, According to article XXVIII of the Augsburg Confession: “It is necessary that the doctrine of Christian freedom be preserved in the churches. In other words, the bondage of the Law is not necessary in order to be justified, as it is written in the Epistle to the Galatians, ‘Do not submit again to a yoke of slavery’ (5:1). It is necessary for the chief article of the Gospel to be preserved, namely that we obtain grace freely by faith in Christ, and not by certain observances or acts of worship devised by people ... It is proper to keep such ordinances just so long as consciences are not burdened to think that they are necessary to salvation, or to regard it as sin if they are changed without offending others” (51, 52, 56); and

**WHEREAS**, According to article X of the Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration: “As soon as Christian freedom is

weakened and human traditions are forced on the Church with coercion, as though it were wrong and a sin to omit them, the way is already prepared for idolatry. In this way, human traditions are multiplied and regarded as divine worship, not only equal to God’s ordinances, but even placed above them” (15); and

**WHEREAS**, There is great benefit in common traditions, rites, and ceremonies, as stated in the Augsburg Confession XXIV, “Falsely are our churches accused of abolishing the Mass; for the Mass is retained among us, and celebrated with the highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved, save that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns, which have been added to teach the people. nearly all the usual ceremonies are preserved ... to teach the people,” and stated in 4-04A Resolution of the 2016 Convention, “To Appeal to the LCMS Congregations, Workers, and Institutions within Christian Freedom and for Love’s Sake to Maintain a Common Order of Service for the Lord’s Supper” although they do not form the basis of our unity or identity, but are useful for teaching the faith; therefore, be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District reaffirm the definition of “Lutheran Identity” as already listed in the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions and Synodical Constitution namely that:

- (1) Lutheran Identity is found in the right teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments, not in the uniformity of human rites, ceremonies, or traditions instituted by men
- (2) Lutheran Identity is found in the acceptance of the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written, inerrant Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice
- (3) Lutheran identity is found in the acceptance of all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God; and be it further

**Resolved**, That all policies and bylaws of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod regarding “Lutheran Identity,” be examined and brought into conformity with the Scriptures and the Confessions mentioned above; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That if adopted, this Resolution is memorialized and sent on to Synod for the 2026 Synodical Convention.

**ACTION: Adopted as amended**

COMMITTEE NAME: Doctrine  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-02  
SUBJECT: To Pause and Correct the Deficiencies in the *Lutheran Identity and Mission Outcomes Standards*  
REFERENCE: Overtures 2-05, 2-06

**WHEREAS**, The purpose of *Lutheran Identity and Mission Outcomes Standards* (LIMOS) was to find Lutheran identity for accreditation in mission and outreach; and

**WHEREAS**, Those involved diligently and in great effort of their time developed LIMOS to improve the mission and outreach of our universities; and

**WHEREAS**, We do not want those efforts to go to waste and have LIMOS fall short in reaching its purpose; and

**WHEREAS**, There are deficiencies with various questions, which result in the following problems:

- “Lutheran Identity” is presented as a doctrinal category but not defined, allowing the interviewer and interviewee to define it subjectively and how they believe it should be applied.
- The absence of a definition of “Lutheran Identity” could lead our congregations, our schools, and our associations to be confused about what it means to be Lutheran.
- An unclear definition of “Lutheran Identity” could be used inappropriately, unethically, unjustly, and unlovingly.
- The use of technical language without definition (e.g. “High Christology” “Lutheran Values”).
- The use of “yes or no” questions and the overuse of the word “explain” as a “catch all”; and

**WHEREAS**, These problems and deficiencies have caused a lack of trust in how LIMOS have been used; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That, because of the problems in LIMOS, it should be paused in its use until these issues are addressed; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the LCMS in Convention 2026 be memorialized to adopt this resolution and form a new task force which includes but is not limited to CUS representatives and all Concordia University Presidents to improve and remedy the issues in the LIMOS stated above; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the review and corrections be made fully transparent to the members of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Doctrine  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-03A  
SUBJECT: To Encourage Young People to Enter Church Worker Vocations  
REFERENCE: Overture 2-08

**WHEREAS**, Our Lord states that, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few,” and commands his church to “pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” (Matt. 9:37–38); and

**WHEREAS**, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has a long, rich history of educating men and women towards church work vocations that continues to this day; and

**WHEREAS**, There is an apparent dearth of young people seeking to enter church work vocations, especially Lutheran school teachers and pastors; and

**WHEREAS**, Most church workers attribute their vocational decisions to mentors and other church work leaders throughout their lives; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That each and every church worker in the Michigan District be encouraged to set a goal of encouraging at least one individual per year towards professional church worker training; and be it further

**Resolved**, That every congregation in the Michigan District seek to support both in encouragement and finances the sending of young people to such institutions as train these workers;

**Resolved**, That every congregation facilitate the use of “Set Apart to Serve” and celebrate church worker Sundays throughout the year by highlighting various vocations; and be it further

**Resolved**, That every educational institution of the Michigan District urge and encourage its teachers to complete the Synod’s colloquy program; and offer financial support, and be it further

**Resolved**, That every church worker be encouraged to conduct oneself in word and deed in such a way that actively (and passively) encourages young people to seek church work vocations; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt a similar resolution.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Doctrine  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-04  
SUBJECT: To Put Confessional Subscription Into Practice During the Upcoming Triennium  
REFERENCE: Overture 2-11

**WHEREAS**, The Lutheran Confessions are in accord with the Word of God; and

**WHEREAS**, The ordained clergy of our congregations have made these confessions their own; and

**WHEREAS**, The ordained clergy of our congregations have made a solemn promise before God and man to “perform the duties of [their] office in accordance with these Confessions, and that all [their] preaching and teaching and [their] administration of the Sacraments will be in conformity with Holy Scripture and these Confessions;” and

**WHEREAS**, In these last days of this transitory world, many false and misleading doctrines have been introduced and have crept into our land; and

**WHEREAS**, The answers to the questions of our day concerning “Lutheran Identity” are certainly to be found in the Lutheran Confessions; and

**WHEREAS**, It is good and pleasant when brothers dwell in unity (Psalm 133:1) and true unity is found in agreement with the will of the Father and the teaching of His Son (Matthew 12:50, John 6:40); and

**WHEREAS**, It is fitting to remember the 450th anniversary of the publication of the Formula of Concord during the upcoming triennium; and

**WHEREAS**, Synod in convention adopted Resolution 6-07A, “To Recommend and Implement Rigorous Program of Study in Circuit Winkels;” therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Lutheran Confessions be encouraged and promoted as devotional aids and study materials for the people of our district by our district officials; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District be encouraged to devote the spring regional pastors conferences of 2027 A.D. to the study of the Formula of Concord for the edification of our ministry and to the honor of those who wrote and subscribed to this blessed confession 450 years ago; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That each circuit in our district, in preparation for these conferences and in accordance with Synodical Resolution 6-07A, devote significant time and effort during their Winkels in the first half of 2027 A.D. to the study of the Formula of Concord.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Doctrine  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-05  
SUBJECT: Encourage Regular Use of Confession and Absolution  
REFERENCED: Overture 2-02

**WHEREAS**, The practice of Confession and Absolution is firmly established in our Lutheran Confessions, cf. the Augsburg Confession, Article 25: “Confession in the churches is not abolished among us; for it is not usual to give the body of the Lord, except to them that have been previously examined and absolved. And the people are most carefully taught concerning faith in the absolution, about which formerly there was profound silence. Our people are taught that they should highly prize the absolution, as being the voice of God, and pronounced by God’s command.

The power of the Keys is set forth in its beauty and they are reminded what great consolation it brings to anxious consciences, also, that God requires faith to believe such absolution as a voice sounding from heaven, and that such faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins,” and, “Our people are taught that they should highly prize the Absolution as being God’s voice and pronounced by God’s command—when the pastor absolves us—that is, says, “I forgive you all your sins”—he speaks with Christ’s authority and on His behalf” [Explanation of the Small Catechism 2017, pages 309–310]; and

**WHEREAS**, Our Lutheran Confessions include Confession and Absolution as one of our Sacraments, considering it “the third Sacrament” [Apology to the Augsburg Confession Article XIII, paragraph 4], “Now Baptism, the Eucharist, and Absolution are true Sacraments; for they are commanded of God, and have the promise of grace, which in reality belongs to, and is the New Testament;” therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the congregations and pastors of the Michigan District esteem and regularly practice Confession and Absolution in their services; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the officiants of said services treat reverently the general confession of the congregation, allowing opportunities for examination and sincerity among the congregants, as well as speak reverently the comforting words of Absolution, just as they speak during the administration of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, allowing the congregants to receive the words of Absolution gladly and gratefully; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the congregations of the Michigan District be encouraged to regularly use the words of the Confession of sins and Absolution from our LCMS-approved hymnals and resources to the end that such regular repetition implants the words firmly into the memory of each congregant, available for times of crisis when meaningful and comforting words are needed.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Doctrine  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2-06B  
SUBJECT: To Condemn the False Teachings of the “Stone Choir”  
REFERENCE: Overture 2-01

**WHEREAS**, Twitter/X personalities Corey J. Mahler (@CoreyJMahler) and Ryan “Woe” Dumperth (@treblewoe) began releasing episodes of the Stone Choir podcast on Oct. 19, 2022, to tackle issues relevant to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) that, in their judgment, the pastors and leadership of the LCMS were not addressing, leaving Mahler and Dumperth to function as “the very stones” who must “cry out” because the clergy are silent (Luke 19:40); and

**WHEREAS**, These issues on which the pastors and leadership of the LCMS are accused by the Stone Choir hosts of remaining silent include the ostensible necessity of the reintroduction of racial segregation; the ostensible sinfulness of interracial marriage; the ostensibly pernicious nature of the Jewish race today; and the ostensibly fictitious nature of the Jewish Holocaust perpetrated by the National Socialists during World War II; and

**WHEREAS**, None of Stone Choir’s positions on these aforementioned issues is taught in Holy Scripture, and indeed their positions on these issues cause great offense to many Christians of good will; and

**WHEREAS**, Stone Choir hosts Mahler and Dumperth are active on Twitter/X, and Stone Choir listeners are likely to be influenced not only by what Mahler and Dumperth teach on the Stone Choir podcast, but also by what they post on Twitter/X; and

**WHEREAS**, On Twitter/X, Corey Mahler and Dumperth, among other offensive behaviors, openly praise Adolf Hitler, call for the genocide or deportation of Jews, Muslims, and Blacks from the United States, and condemn as sin the practice of interracial marriage and adoption, causing great offense to Christian consciences; and

**WHEREAS**, Through their activity on the Stone Choir podcast and on Twitter/X, Mahler and Dumnperth have sought to associate confessional Lutheranism with devotion to Adolf Hitler, opposition to the Jewish race, and a desire for segregation of Blacks from white society; and

**WHEREAS**, Mahler and Dumperth have publicly denounced pastors of the LCMS as “either apostate or derelict” and on their podcast and on Twitter/X have attempted to turn their listeners against their pastors; and

**WHEREAS**, Mahler is excommunicated and therefore under discipline and Dumperth is no longer a member of an LCMS congregation and is therefore beyond the reach of church discipline, yet both continue to challenge the doctrine and teaching of the LCMS; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in Convention publicly condemn the teachings of the Stone Choir podcast and its hosts, for the offense they cause by their public devotion to Adolf Hitler, their stirring up of antipathy toward our Jewish and Black neighbors, their denunciation as sin of that which God has not called sin, and their open hostility toward the pastors and leadership of the LCMS; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the laity of the Michigan District be warned against the Stone Choir podcast and its hosts, and that the pastors of the Michigan District be encouraged to admonish members of their congregations whose approval of such racist and anti-Semitic beliefs has become known; and be it further

**Resolved**, That pastors and teachers of the Michigan District be encouraged to examine the teachings of Stone Choir according to the norm of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, demonstrating from these clear and firm testimonies how Stone Choir is in error; and pastors and teachers of the Michigan District acknowledge that these teachings violate the Fifth Commandment; and be it further

**Resolved**, That pastors and teachers of the Michigan District be encouraged to teach the truth of God’s Word that all human creatures of all nations, tribes, languages, and peoples are made in God’s image and redeemed by the death and resurrection of Jesus, and that pastors and teachers would use Synod and District resources that promote the same; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the LCMS in convention be memorialized to condemn the teachings of the Stone Choir podcast and its current hosts, and to admonish pastors and teachers who promote the same.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME:	Education
RESOLUTION NUMBER:	3-01
SUBJECT:	Giving Thanks for Leaders who Developed CUW/CUAA Partnership
REFERENCE:	Overtures 3-07; 3-08

**WHEREAS**, The congregations and people of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod have treasured a close relationship with Concordia University Ann Arbor since its founding in 1963; and

**WHEREAS**, In July 2013, a strategic partnership between Concordia University Ann Arbor and Concordia University Wisconsin became official; and

**WHEREAS**, For over a decade this merger resulted in the flourishing of CUAA, with an expansion of programs and facilities, record growth in enrollment, a greater community impact, and most importantly the spiritual development of students in the Christian faith, resulting in numerous students being converted and baptized through the work of the Holy Spirit, choosing church work careers, and having a greater desire to embrace the Christian faith and our Lutheran Confession; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in Convention give thanks to God for the mission and ministry of Concordia

University Ann Arbor since its founding in 1963, and especially for the years of flourishing as a result of the merger with CUW; and be it further

**Resolved,** That the Michigan District in convention commend all leaders, past and present, of CUWAA and the Michigan District for their support of the mission and ministry of CUAA since its founding in 1963 and their remarkable efforts to see it flourish for the last decade, for their communication of the vision and their encouragement and support of the many faculty and staff who helped the merger take place, to the glory of God; and be it further

**Resolved,** That the Michigan District in convention memorialize the Synod convention to, with united hearts and voices, give thanks and praise to God for the blessings He has bestowed upon the Kingdom at large through the work of His Holy Spirit and the ministry fulfilled at Concordia University Ann Arbor, specifically, and as a whole, through all our Concordia universities; and be it finally

**Resolved,** That the assembly rise and join in singing the Doxology as an expression of thanksgiving.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
OVERTURE NUMBER: 3-02A  
SUBJECT: To Express Lament and Sympathy Regarding Concordia University Ann Arbor  
REFERENCE: Overtures 3-01, 3-02, & 3-05

**WHEREAS,** The congregations and people of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod have treasured a close relationship with Concordia University Ann Arbor since its founding in 1963; and

**WHEREAS,** Concordia University Wisconsin and Concordia University Ann Arbor formally joined together in ministry in 2013, with Concordia University Wisconsin taking on the primary financial responsibility; and the Districts surrounding Concordia University Ann Arbor, including our Michigan District, the Ohio District, the English District, as well as a number of donors from the same, including the Michigan District Church Extension Fund, all contributed financial support; and

**WHEREAS,** Concordia University Ann Arbor was listed as one of the fastest-growing private colleges in the state of Michigan, with the 2024–25 school year on track to have the highest enrollment in its history; and

**WHEREAS,** The majority of the Board of Regents of Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor approved in 2024 the President’s plans that have substantially and materially reduced operations of the Ann Arbor campus; and that despite the heroic efforts of faithful supporters, including President David Davis, the Michigan District Board of Directors, and many generous donors, to simply delay drastic changes so that better plans might be explored and implemented; and

**WHEREAS,** These changes have resulted in the loss of employment for a number of staff, negatively impacted students and their families, caused anger and distrust of Synod and the university’s leadership among alumni and many faithful members of Synod, and damaged the once close and treasured relationship between Concordia University Ann Arbor with the congregations and people of the Michigan District; therefore be it

**Resolved,** That the congregations of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod here in convention express lament over the poorly executed actions of the President and the majority of the Board of Regents of Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor; and be it further

**Resolved,** That the congregations of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod here in convention express sympathy with the many that have been adversely affected by these actions; and be it finally

**Resolved,** That, as People of Hope, the congregations of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod lift up our brothers and sisters in prayer as they are nourished for the journey, keeping in mind the words of Paul in Romans 8:28 that God works for the good of those who love Him and have been called according to His purpose.

**ACTION: Adopted as amended**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 3-03  
SUBJECT: Commissioned Minister – Teacher Debt Relief Resource  
REFERENCE: Overture 3-13

**WHEREAS,** Resolution 12-03A, “To Address Commissioned Minister – Teacher Student Debt” was adopted at the 2023 Synodical Convention; and

**WHEREAS,** Our Lutheran schools continue to struggle to find rostered teachers to serve in the classrooms; and

**WHEREAS,** In 2023 there were requests for 455 teachers to be placed and only 84 placements occurred; and

**WHEREAS,** The reality of student loan debt and educational costs play an important role in the decision whether to attend a CUS school and seek employment within the Lutheran school system or not; and

**WHEREAS,** Many of the scholarship and debt assistance programs are not communicated to the potential students and their parents for use in their decision-making process; and

**WHEREAS,** A key part of *Set Apart to Serve*, the church worker formation initiative, affirmed and strengthened in Resolution 6-01 at the 2023 Synodical convention, was that *Set Apart to Serve* and their key partners are to address church worker wellness, which includes student debt, compensation, and benefits; therefore be it

**Resolved,** That the Michigan District produce a consolidated resource, in print and online, for use by congregations, circuit visitors, pastors, teachers, youth leaders, parents, and potential future church workers, containing information on District scholarships, Concordia Plan Services grants and loan repayment assistance, any LCEF and CEF student loan consolidation and low interest loans availability, and any other assistance available; and be it further

**Resolved,** That the Michigan District encourage congregations to establish scholarship funds and student loan debt assistance programs within their congregations, and that District will be available to assist them in this endeavor; and be it further

**Resolved,** That congregations be reminded and encouraged to financially support our universities, seminaries, and District scholarship programs; and be it finally

**Resolved,** That we give thanks to God for our Lutheran schools and the loving, dedicated teachers who serve there, and for His continued blessing on their work.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
OVERTURE NUMBER: 3-04A  
SUBJECT: A Call for Concordia University Wisconsin Ann Arbor's Leadership to Accountability and Repentance  
REFERENCE: Overture 3-04

**WHEREAS**, Concordia University Ann Arbor (CUAA), was founded in 1963 by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), and since 2013 has been governed by the CUWAA Board of Regents; and

**WHEREAS**, On Feb 8, 2024 a majority of the CUWAA Board of Regents (BOR) voted unilaterally to take action and President Ankerberg announced in a Feb 13 email to significantly reduce operations, enact staff reductions and dispose of property, facilities and equipment; and

**WHEREAS**, The Eighth Commandment requires truthfulness in all our dealings with others, and the Ninth and Tenth Commandments protect us from all evil desires which lead to the breaking of all the other commandments; and

**WHEREAS**, The May 31, 2024 CUWAA Task Force Report states, "In the first week of April, the Subcommittee contacted the Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana District Presidents, the English District Bishop, the LCMS Board of Directors, the Concordia University System Board, and the Michigan District Extension Fund, to determine (a) whether, and to what extent, each entity would be willing to make an initial "launch" contribution toward an independent CUAA by December 31, 2024, and (b) whether, and to what extent, each entity would be willing to commit to ongoing annual support for an independent CUAA. Per the Resolution, other CUS schools were not approached to serve as financial partners for the Ann Arbor campus (p. 24);" and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. James Saalfeld, CEO of the Church Extension Fund (CEF) - Michigan District, wrote on June 14, 2024 in his CEO Update, "The report then states CEF failed to respond to this inquiry. This is not true. First, CEF was never contacted as alleged in the report. Second, CEF's rich history of supporting CUAA makes the implication that CEF was indifferent without merit." ([churchextensionfund.com/news/ceo-update](http://churchextensionfund.com/news/ceo-update)); and

**WHEREAS**, the Ohio District Board of Directors of the LCMS wrote to the CUWAA Board (June 14, 2024), "No dialogue with the Ohio District President or Board of Directors ever occurred. While Michigan may have responded affirmatively, Ohio did not have the opportunity to consider it." ([oh.lcms.org/images/documents/BOD/2024-06-14-OH-BOD-RESPONSE-LTR-CUWAA.pdf](http://oh.lcms.org/images/documents/BOD/2024-06-14-OH-BOD-RESPONSE-LTR-CUWAA.pdf)); and

**WHEREAS**, Follow-up correspondence in July 2024 with all parties indicate that all hold to their previous statements or have no further comment; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the CUWAA Board of Regents and responsible administrators be held to account for the above false statement and libel, by repenting in writing to all Michigan District Church Extension Fund (CEF) and Ohio District constituents confessing the sin and admitting the defamation of reputation of the harmed; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Presidents of Ohio and Michigan Districts and the CEO of the MI-CEF Michigan District Church Extension Fund (CEF) stand prepared to grant holy absolution at the appropriate Conventions to the CUWAA Board Officers and President who state their repentance and desire to relate in forthright honesty with one another; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District initiate a good faith effort with the CUWAA Board of Regents by September 2025 to rebuild trust and confidence among the aforementioned disenfranchised supporters and that the effort be widely disseminated in the official publications of the Michigan District and forwarded for publication in the LCMS Reporter, as well as the Concordia Wisconsin's social media and printed communication venues.

**ACTION: Defeated**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 3-05  
SUBJECT: To Clarify the Prior Approval Process and Provide Appropriate Transparency  
REFERENCE: Overture 3-03 & 3-16

### **Rationale**

Since the 2013 Synod Convention, appointments to theological faculties at all CUS universities and seminaries, as well as all college, university, and seminary presidential appointments, have been subject to the prior approval process. While the convention in 2013 amended the bylaws to delegate the responsibility for prior approval to specific groups (see bylaws referenced below) the bylaws did not, and still do not, stipulate how the process of prior approval should be carried out. Over time, this has led to questions as to the standards used to evaluate candidates as well as the process utilized by the prior approval panels. In the hopes of building trust and relieving any undue criticism of the panels and the process, the following overture aims to increase transparency for the process and standards used by the panels as well as ensuring clear communication between the panels, the candidates, and the Synod.

**WHEREAS**, One of the expressed purposes of Synod is to “recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” (Art. III.3); and

**WHEREAS**, Synod has the responsibility to oversee that training; and has designated that responsibility to the prior approval panels outlined in various bylaws (3.6.6.1, 3.10.5.7.3, 3.10.6.8.2, 3.10.6.9.2); and

**WHEREAS**, Those panels have responsibility not only to work on behalf of the Synod but also are responsible to the Synod; and

**WHEREAS**, Those under consideration for theological professorships and other such positions as require prior approval have ordinarily been ordained into the Office of Holy Ministry or have been commissioned and/or consecrated into an auxiliary office of the Church; and

**WHEREAS**, Those under consideration for aforementioned positions have also been examined and approved for service on the roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and

**WHEREAS**, Those individual members of Synod have, by virtue of their membership in the Synod, agreed to the confessional basis as outlined in Art. II, as well as recognize and affirm the validity of Bylaws 1.6–1.8; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention give thanks to the Lord of the Church for using the Synod and its agencies to preserve and enlarge the workers of the harvest; and for those involved in the various prior approval processes for being engaged in difficult and important work; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to do the same; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to require that process used by the various panels to carry out the responsibility entrusted to it by the Synod be made transparent and publicly available; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to stipulate that, unless those under consideration by the prior approval panels are found to be in violation of their ordination, commissioning, consecration, or installation vows, their approval be assumed; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to stipulate that, if those under consideration are thought to be in violation, that the candidate be given every opportunity to clarify their position to the panel; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to stipulate that, if such a violation be found, the panel would, with the appropriate District President as that individual's ecclesiastical supervisor, engage in the appropriate processes to restore the erring brother or sister so that one deemed unworthy to teach at one of the Synod's institutions not be permitted to remain on the roster or serve a congregation and thus lead that congregation to err or become out of step with Synod.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
RESOLUTION: 3-06  
SUBJECT: To Request Transparency From CUWAA  
REFERENCE: Overture 3-12

**WHEREAS**, The common goal of the Concordia University System is to develop Christian leaders for the church, community, and the world; and

**WHEREAS**, Concordia University in Ann Arbor, Mich. has been developing Christian leaders for the church, community, and the world since 1963; and

**WHEREAS**, In a report dated February 1, 2024, CFO Colleague, a financial consultancy for higher education institutions, analyzed recent financial performance for the university and concluded:

*The structural deficit for the combined entity of CUW and CUAA requires immediate and substantial attention. ... It is difficult to see a way forward for CUAA, given its enormous deferred maintenance needs, inadequate NTR per student and the use of net tuition to fund athletic costs. ... The time is now to craft a multi-year plan that addresses these clear challenges (CUAA TASK FORCE REPORT ISSUED: MAY 31, 2024, pgs. 6-7); and*

**WHEREAS**, Synod Bylaw 1.5.3.4 states, "All mission boards, commissions, and governing boards may appoint standing committees of specialists to provide professional or technical assistance to the board or commission and may delegate certain responsibilities to such committees while retaining supervision. Standing committees may be made up of or include non-board or commission members. The creation of standing committees shall be reported to the President and the Board of Directors of the Synod;" and

**WHEREAS**, *In response to the CFO Colleague Report, the Board of Regents, on February 29, 2024, adopted a resolution for "a special subcommittee to explore the possibility of the Ann Arbor campus applying for self-governance within the Concordia University System" (CUAA TASK FORCE REPORT ISSUED: MAY 31, 2024, pg.7); and*

**WHEREAS**, Members of the special subcommittee reported that their work veered outside of the scope of the Board of Regents' resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, Members of the subcommittee were either required to sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) or were removed from the special subcommittee; and

**WHEREAS**, Synod Bylaw 1.5.3.5 states, "All agencies of the Synod shall develop policies and procedures for making available official minutes of their meetings. All mission boards and commissions shall develop policies and procedures to make available upon request and at a reasonable price a verbatim copy of the official minutes of their meetings except for executive sessions. Any member of the Synod may request a copy of any official minutes of mission boards or commissions by submitting a written or electronic (via email) request to the Secretary of the Synod, who shall provide such minutes according to the policy of the Board of Directors;" and

**WHEREAS**, Synod Bylaw 3.10.6.1(o) states, "In fulfilling its commonly understood fiduciary duties owed to the institution, and its governance responsibilities, the board of regents shall: maintain effective internal controls and

operate with financial transparency, annually reviewing and approving the institutional budget and providing, within 30 days of board acceptance and final issuance of the institutional audit, audited financial statements and other information as specified in the policies of the Synod Board of Directors and to congregations of the Synod upon request;” and

**WHEREAS**, Congregations of the Michigan District have requested these financial statements and have not received them from the CUWAA Board of Regents; and

**WHEREAS**, The congregations of the Michigan District desire to bear with CUWAA in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-5); and

**WHEREAS**, The congregations of the Michigan District desire to walk as children of light and expose things done in secret to the light so that Christ would shine on all things (Ephesians 8b-14); therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention formally requests CUWAA Board of Regents to rescind the NDAs signed by the special subcommittee members as a sign of good faith and to restore the shared trust and confidence in the process; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention formally requests CUWAA Board of Regents make available the verbatim copies of the official minutes and the video recordings of the meetings of the special subcommittee to the LCMS District Presidents for the benefit of building national consensus on this issue; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention formally requests CUWAA Board of Regents respond to the previous and all subsequent congregational requests for audited financial statements; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the district memorialize the Synod to encourage transparency in the financial states of the Concordia Universities and the Synod at large.

**ACTION: Adopted as amended**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
OVERTURE NUMBER: 3-07A  
SUBJECT: Project Postmortem Examination of CUAA  
REFERENCE:

**WHEREAS**, It is desirable to enhance the level of trust and support in the Concordia University System (CUS) and the respective Concordia institutions contained therein, regarding processes and decisions that lead to any substantial and material downsizing or elimination of any university; and

**WHEREAS**, There has not been an independent analysis of the actions taken by the Board of Regents of Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor regarding the contractual framework and resultant decisions leading to the substantial and material reduction of operations of the Ann Arbor campus; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod memorialize the Synod in convention to direct that an independent committee be established, under the oversight of the Board of Directors of Synod, to do a project post-mortem analysis of the contractual agreements involved in the acquisition of Concordia Ann Arbor by Concordia Wisconsin, audited financial statements, and processes involved regarding decisions pertaining to the acquisition and subsequent downsizing of the Concordia Ann Arbor campus and its programs; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the independent committee’s membership include at a minimum those District Presidents representing all former and current Concordia Universities excluding those Districts that are associated with a Concordia University involved in any current litigation with Synod; and be it finally

**Resolved,** That the findings of this committee be made available to the Synod and all District Presidents.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
OVERTURE NUMBER: 3-08  
SUBJECT: To Support New Educational Endeavors  
REFERENCE: Overture 3-14

**WHEREAS,** The Michigan District has a long history of excellence in education at every age and stage of life, so that we are proud and grateful to support 126 preschools, 66 elementary schools, and 5 high schools throughout our state; and

**WHEREAS,** The Michigan District has been richly blessed by the ministry of Concordia University Ann Arbor, where we have witnessed what the Holy Spirit can do in leading young men and women to faith while they are preparing for many different careers; and

**WHEREAS,** Many are seeing an increased need for non-college education that prepares men and women for fruitful service in their communities, and we recognize that this is in harmony with the Table of Duties and the many “callings” or vocations to which God leads His people; and

**WHEREAS,** People in all fields of endeavor are called to use their labor to the glory of God and the blessing of their neighbor; and

**WHEREAS,** Vocational education which imparts technical skills to serve others may also provide the opportunity to teach the spiritual value of service, the true meaning of labor as the hands of Christ, and the knowledge of the One who blessed Bezalel and Oholiab (Exodus 31:1-11) to glorify God through the labor of their hands; therefore be it

**Resolved,** That the Michigan District explore opportunities to establish a Vocational or Technical School, or to partner with an existing such school, which would bless those in need of honorable employment, engage with and serve its community, and combine an excellent technical education with the opportunity to grow in faith toward Jesus Christ and love and service to the neighbor.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 3-09  
SUBJECT: To Strengthen our Process for Supporting our Concordias  
REFERENCE: Overture 3-09

**WHEREAS,** at the 2022 Michigan District Convention, Resolution 2-05a was considered. It read (as amended before it was voted on):

***WHEREAS,** Our Concordia Universities have long been beloved and treasured by the members and member congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and a vital part of the communities in which they are located; and*

***WHEREAS,** Our Concordia Universities have historically been at the very heart of our Synod’s stated identity and purpose (Synodical Constitution, Article III Objectives (3) Recruit and train pastors, teachers and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continued 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,** *Our Concordia Universities not only exist to train professional church workers but also to train Christian laymen and laywomen who will be godly and influential leaders in their workplaces, communities, churches, and families; and*

**WHEREAS,** *Our Lord Jesus Christ calls His followers to be salt and light in the world at large and not only in safe, homogeneous communities {Matthew 5:13–16}; and*

**WHEREAS,** *Our six remaining Concordia Universities (on seven residential campuses) give our Synod a valuable foothold in increasingly diverse, multicultural, and urban settings where the Church's presence is in many cases not especially prominent in the 21st century; and*

**WHEREAS,** *Our Concordia Universities, by their very existence, have the potential to bring the mission field to our Synod's doorstep and to provide safe places for difficult theological and cultural issues to be openly and honestly engaged; and*

**WHEREAS,** *three of our Concordia Colleges and Universities have unfortunately closed their doors in recent years (Selma in 2018, Portland in 2020, and Bronxville in 2021); and*

**WHEREAS,** *Our Synod is filled with many generous givers and donors with the means and/or the desire to lend needed financial support to our Concordia Universities if called upon to do so; and*

**WHEREAS,** *Our God Himself is “able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20), even though we may not always be immediately able to identify a viable solution; therefore be it*

**Resolved,** *That the Michigan District investigate opportunities for how it can provide support (prayer, church worker and other student recruitment, financial, etc.) to help ensure the continuation of the residential campus of Concordia University Ann Arbor (CUAA) located within its own District; and be it finally*

**Resolved,** *That the Michigan District memorialize to the 2023 Synodical Convention the previous Whereases and the following resolves:*

**Resolved,** *To affirm our commitment, as far as humanly possible, not to allow any more of our remaining Concordia Universities to close their doors before first exploring all possible avenues to assist them to remain open and to continue to fulfill their missions; and be it further*

**Resolved,** *To instruct synodical leadership to refuse to take any future action(s) with respect to our six remaining Concordia Universities without being fully transparent with the professional church workers and the lay membership of the entire Synod's congregations, namely, regarding any course of action being considered, prior to any such course of action being carried out, and without first giving the members and member congregations of the Synod every opportunity to respond to such a potential course of action in generosity and/or with creativity; and be it finally*

**Resolved,** *To be encouraged to further unite behind a renewed commitment to keep the doors of our six remaining Concordia Universities open as long as our gracious God sees fit, to His glory, honor, and praise.*

and

**WHEREAS,** *This Resolution was addressed by the Synodical President as “canned, it has been going around to a number of districts ... is false, contains material error” (minutes surrounding 2–05, from the 2022 Michigan District convention proceedings, page 43); and*

**WHEREAS**, This Resolution was subsequently defeated by the Convention. Then, sadly, eighteen months later, the majority of the CUWAA Board of Regents undertook the “reimagining” of Concordia Ann Arbor; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in convention recognizes that the actions of the majority of the Board of Regents showed the need for the 2022 Resolution 2–05a; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District memorialize to the 2026 Synodical Convention the WHEREAS statements listed in 2022 Resolution 2–05a with the following resolves:

**Resolved**, To instruct Synod in convention to direct synodical leadership, the Concordia University System, and each university’s Board of Regents to be fully transparent with the professional church workers and the lay membership of the entire Synod’s congregations regarding any course of action being considered prior to any such course of action being carried out; and be it further

**Resolved**, To affirm our commitment, as far as humanly possible, not to allow any more of our remaining Concordia Universities to close their doors or significantly reduce operations on a campus before first exploring all possible avenues with members and member congregations of the Synod to assist them to remain open and to continue to fulfill their missions; and be it finally

**Resolved**, To instruct the administrations of Concordia University System schools to not ask newly elected Board of Regents members to undertake significant actions (such as we saw the CUWAA Administration undertake in regards to Concordia Ann Arbor), until the Regents have been trained as required under Synod Bylaw 3.10.6.2.l(d).

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Education  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 3–10  
SUBJECT: To Respectfully Decline Two Overtures  
REFERENCE: 3–06 & 3–10

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan District Floor Committee #3 – Education, has considered all overtures assigned to it and has concluded, for various reasons, that certain overtures should be declined; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the following overtures be respectfully declined for the reason(s) given:

Overture 3–06 To Seek Historic Site Designation for the Chapel of the Holy Trinity of CUAA

Reason: The Education Floor Committee is unable to act on this overture since the resolved outcome cannot be achieved or influenced through the Michigan District Convention. To attain protected site status for a historical site in Michigan, the property must first be assessed for eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This involves submitting a nomination package to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the State Historic Preservation Review Board for review. If approved, the property is then formally listed in the NRHP. Local historic districts can be established by local governments through ordinances; however, this requires a study committee to assess the area and potentially establish a district.

Historical designation does not necessarily prevent a site from demolition. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places is a recognition of a property’s historical significance, but it does not impose restrictions on what a non-federal owner can do with their property. Protection from demolition typically requires local ordinances or preservation easements.

The City of Ann Arbor further states that National and State register designations are purely honorary. They do not protect historic properties from alteration or demolition. Local historic district designation is the only way to protect historic properties.

This effort and process requires significant resources of time and legal counsel beyond that of the Michigan District.

\*Data supporting this statement can be found online at [National Park Service](http://www.nps.gov/index.htm) (www.nps.gov/index.htm) and [City of Ann Arbor](http://www.a2gov.org) (www.a2gov.org)

Overture 3-10                      Dissolving “Partnerships” with Non-Lutheran Universities

Reason:                              The overture is flawed in that it states that Lutheran students are “given ‘Lutheran’ mentors, with the intent that those who complete the Kairos Program will then enter the LCMS Specific Ministry Pastor program.” Whereas, in fact, The Michigan School of Missional Formation (MSM) utilizes ONLY our Michigan District, LCMS terminal-degreed faculty who are faithful to the inspired Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions drawn from them; and the MSM program of study was found to qualify as a master’s degree program on the Kairos University platform so that deacon students are able to receive a Master of Arts in Missional Formation in recognition of their achievement. Some graduates (Credentialed Deacons), because of their congregation’s needs, may enter the seminary training toward ordination via Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) or Alternate Route (AR). The affiliation with KAIROS University serves only as an asynchronous platform for our Michigan School of Missional Formation and an accrediting agency.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME:                      Mission  
RESOLUTION NUMBER:                      4-01A  
SUBJECT:                                      To Exhort Members of the LCMS to Earnestly and Regularly Pray for and Pursue  
    Synodical Unity  
REFERENCE:                                      Overture 4-02

**WHEREAS**, Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed for the unity of His Church so that the world might believe He has been sent by the Father (John 17:11, 20-23); and

**WHEREAS**, Jesus stated, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35); and “In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16); and

**WHEREAS**, The Apostle Paul enjoins God’s people 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” (Ephesians 4:1-3); and

**WHEREAS**, Holy Scripture is filled with many other similar prayers for and exhortations to pursue unity and reconciliation in the Church (Psalm 133:1; Matthew 5:23-25; 7:1-5; 18:15-35; Romans 12; 15:5; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 12:12; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 4:4-6; Philippians 1:27; 2:1-11; Colossians 3:14; 1 Peter 3:8; 1 John 4:20, etc.); and

**WHEREAS**, The first objective listed in Article III of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s Constitution 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;" and

**WHEREAS**, Unity in the Church is a gift from God (Romans 15:5–6) we should humbly seek from Him in prayer; and

**WHEREAS**, Division and acrimony between Christians severely compromises the witness of the Church to the world and may directly impede the proclamation of the Gospel and may thereby threaten the eternal salvation of numerous souls; and

**WHEREAS**, Such disunity, where it is not necessary to maintain fidelity to the Scriptures and the Confessions, but is rather the result of human sin, such disunity tarnishes God's name and thus violates the Second Commandment; and

**WHEREAS**, The LCMS is frequently known even outside of the Synod for its internal conflicts and for the refusal of pastors, congregations, and circuits to commune together; and

**WHEREAS**, Strife and division in the Church for sinful reasons are indications that the Church is reflecting the ways of the world rather than providing a godly alternative to it; and

**WHEREAS**, Satan, who is the father of all lies and a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44), fervently desires to catechize Christians in the ways of Hell and in demonic discord that so frequently marks interactions in the world; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention strongly urge its members to pray fervently, both in corporate worship and as individuals, for the unity and health of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, believing that all things are possible with God (Phil. 4:13); and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention exhort its members to review and renew their commitment to the Eighth Commandment and to self-restraint in speech and anger (James 1:19); and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention implore its members be quick to listen (James 1:19) and to seek out opportunities to listen to and dialogue with those they disagree with, in order that mutual understanding, fidelity to doctrine, harmony, forgiveness, and reconciliation might be facilitated and abound among us; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention encourage its members to employ extraordinary efforts toward caution, patience, clear communication, and love when navigating issues which have historically been or have the potential to be a source of division, and that all such issues be approached with a posture of humility and repentance for any ways in which we have contributed to disunity in the past; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention exhort its members to resist the temptation to imitate secular partisanship by lording it over each other and employing slander, coercion, secrecy, and power as the default means of addressing disagreements, but rather to seek to be servants of all (Matthew 20:25–28), to engage in substantive and long-suffering efforts toward reconciliation with those who have something against us (Matthew 5:23–25) and to display the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:1–11); and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention memorialize Synod in Convention to all the same ends; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the District in Convention memorialize Synod in Convention to organize a task force representative of Synod's makeup as a whole to study and develop recommendations: 1) to clarify the distinction between doctrine and adiaphora (matters of indifference neither commanded nor forbidden by God) in matters which are currently the source of conflict; 2) to avoid imitating patterns of secular politics and partisan ways of relating to each other within the Church; and 3) to address and resolve divisions of altar fellowship within the Synod where and if any such divisions are not a matter of conscience borne out of doctrinal necessity, but instead stem from differences of opinion or preference.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Mission  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 4-02  
SUBJECT: To Encourage District Congregations to Conduct Personal Witness Training  
REFERENCE: Overture 4-05

**WHEREAS**, Christians as God’s people are to “proclaim the excellencies of him who called [us] out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9) and maintain constant preparation “to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15); and

**WHEREAS**, As Martin Luther observed, it might seem “best for God to take away our breath and let us die as soon as we are baptized and have begun to believe. But He lets us live here in order that we may lead other people to believe, doing for them what He has done for us” (*What Luther Says*, [CPH, 1959] number 3021; WA 12:267); and

**WHEREAS**, Christians know and interact with many non-Christians and unchurched people through their vocations and daily lives (e.g., family, coworkers, classmates), people who will not hear the Gospel or learn of Jesus Christ unless someone tells them; and

**WHEREAS**, In this sinful world, Christians often fear to speak of Christ with others; and

**WHEREAS**, Such fear can be addressed through teaching and learning not only the biblical message of the Gospel but also particular ways to converse about matters of faith; and

**WHEREAS**, Without intentional effort, our congregations can become places where we can talk about Jesus Christ, but our homes and places of work may become places where our faith is concealed; and

**WHEREAS**, The Synod in its Resolution 1-01A (2023) urged Districts “to encourage and assist congregations as they train their members to tell the Good News about Jesus;” therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the District encourage its pastors, other church workers, and lay leaders to teach people to engage in witness, providing frequent instruction and encouragement; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District encourage congregations to make use of the many teaching resources for personal witness, including the *Spiritual Conversations* (and other) series from Lutheran Hour Ministries, *Every One His Witness* from the Synod, *Joining Jesus on His Mission*, and many others, and instruct the Regional District Facilitators to assist congregations in finding appropriate training materials and instructors.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Mission  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 4-03A  
SUBJECT: To Commend the Deacon and Ministry Assistant Training Through the Michigan School of Missional Formation and to Encourage Greater Enrollment  
REFERENCE: Overture 3-15

**WHEREAS**, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, already in 1989, recognized the need for intentional lay training programs in the synodical Districts to equip men as deacons (Resolution 3-05B), and again in its 2016 national convention the Synod encouraged districts to continue such lay training programs even as this resolution was framed to regularize the service of Licensed Lay Deacons (Resolution 13-02A); and

**WHEREAS**, The practice of appointing deacons has served to expand the effectiveness of the ordained pastoral ministry since the earliest days of the Church, as recognized by Dr. Samuel Nafzger in his address to the 1989

delegates, “The adoption of Resolution 3–05(B) does not initiate a single new practice in the doctrine of the ministry of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It will, however, initiate proper supervision of those practices we have long recognized as being consistent with our understanding of the doctrine of the ministry” (1989 Convention Proceedings, pg. 114); and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan District has been a leader in such training programs, and has been training deacons for assistance to the pastoral ministry since 1989 and has continued to expand and improve the quality and effectiveness of the training through the ongoing work of the Commission on Deacon Qualifications; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan District deacons serve only under a supervising LCMS pastor as assistants to his ministry, and in the case of a congregation where a credentialed deacon may need to be temporarily “licensed” for Word and Sacrament ministry because the District is unable to provide a pastor. When “emergency knows no rule” (see Res. 13–02A, 2016, p. 237) then that deacon is enrolled in the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) or the Alternate Route (AR) to ordination. In the last triennium, three credentialed deacons or deacon candidates have enrolled in studies at one of our LCMS seminaries toward ordination through SMP and two through AR; and

**WHEREAS**, The servant leadership of well-trained and credentialed deacons has blessed many Michigan District congregations and their pastors; and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan District Commission on Deacon Qualification (CDQ) has worked diligently to honor the requirements of both Resolution 3–05(B) 1989 and Resolution 13–02(A) 2016, and has successfully developed a way (both the non-degreed “Classic-Plus” and the MA degree on the KAIROS University asynchronous platform) to effectively train lay students in the Scriptures, Lutheran doctrine, Church history, and ministry disciplines of Christian caregiving, Christian outreach, teaching the faith, Lutheran worship, basic biblical interpretation, and leadership; and

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan School of Missional Formation utilizes ONLY our Michigan District, LCMS terminal-degreed faculty who are faithful to the inspired Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions drawn from them; and the MSM program of study was found to qualify as a master’s degree program on the Kairos University platform so that deacon students are able to receive a Master of Arts in Missional Formation in recognition of their achievement; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in Convention thank God for the ongoing work of the Commission on Deacon Qualification and the faculty of the Michigan School of Missional Formation; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the training provided through the Michigan School of Missional Formation be commended to the congregations of the District and each congregation be encouraged to prayerfully identify one or more men from among their membership to be raised up and trained as credentialed deacons and one or more women from among their membership be raised up and trained as ministry assistants through said school; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the ongoing services of well-trained credentialed deacons and ministry assistants, under the supervision of ordained pastors, continue to be encouraged and celebrated in the Michigan District; and be it further

**Resolved**, That with respect to Synod Resolution 13–02A (2016), the Council of Presidents continue to support the district training of credentialed deacons and, in times of emergency where needed, license them for Word and Sacrament ministry.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Mission  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 4-04B  
SUBJECT: A Triennial Mission and Ministry Emphasis on the Clear Proclamation of the Gospel,  
Unity in Christ, and Multicultural Ministry  
REFERENCE:

**WHEREAS**, “the District convention shall, through the delegate vote, forward to the national convention a list of two or three triennial mission and ministry emphases for consideration by the national convention” (Bylaw 4.2.1(d)); and

**WHEREAS**, Romans 1:16 calls us to proclaim the Gospel, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile”; and

**WHEREAS**, The *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* Article IV, on Justification, confesses the central teaching of the Gospel, namely, that we are justified by grace through faith in Christ alone; and

**WHEREAS**, Part II, Article I of the *Smalcald Articles* states, “The first and chief article is this: That Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:25); and

**WHEREAS**, Jesus commands His people, “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:34,35); and

**WHEREAS**, We should celebrate the unity we have in Christ; and

**WHEREAS**, The LCMS has historically emphasized proclaiming the clear and compelling Gospel to all people, without distinction; and

**WHEREAS**, The local Church is beautifully diverse in language, ethnicity, and life experiences; and

**WHEREAS**, There is a great need for a strengthened LCMS multicultural ministry in the local context; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the LCMS boldly and faithfully proclaims the Gospel clearly, confidently, and joyfully in all its purity, and be it further

**Resolved**, That we in the LCMS actively work to celebrate our unity in Christ within our fellowship—which expresses itself in sacrificial love, in bearing with one another, and in seeking the good of the whole body of Christ; such love being evident in circuit forums, circuit meetings, Harvest Network gatherings, and other places where we walk together; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the LCMS emphasize, multi-cultural ministry within the local context; that we celebrate and support local congregations and Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) engaged in “all nations” ministry among us; and that we increase support for the training of local multiethnic ministry through organizations such as St. Louis Seminary’s Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology, the Spanish Institute, District lay deacon training programs for ethnic ministries, and for the equipping of evangelists (all of us) for the clear proclamation of the Gospel in our local communities; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That this triennial mission and ministry emphasis be submitted to the national convention of the LCMS, urging the Synod to focus its work on 1) the proclamation of the Gospel, 2) walking together in love and trust, and 3) supporting ethnic and multicultural ministry within our own local context.

**ACTION: Adopted as presented**

COMMITTEE NAME: Mission  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 4-05A  
SUBJECT: To Encourage Prayer, Partnership, and Participation in International Mission  
REFERENCE: Overtures 4-01 and 4-04

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan District is committed to the four outcomes—Great Commission, Great Compassion, Healthy Congregations, and Healthy Church Workers—which begin with Christ’s call to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19); and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan District congregations have demonstrated faithful generosity through efforts like the Here We Stand campaign, which provided over \$1.25 million to missionary endeavors, showing the value of reliable and ongoing support for flourishing mission efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, Scripture exhorts believers to “pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Matt. 9:38) and to be “eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3); and

**WHEREAS**, Congregations of the Michigan District partner with Lutheran church ministries around the world, such as with Lutheran Church of Uganda through Women of the Pearl, MOST Ministries, LAMP, and the LCMS mission in Puerto Rico through the *Foro* model (<https://international.lcms.org/events-foros/>); therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District in Convention commend our Gospel partnership with the Lutheran churches in the world to all congregations as a worthy focus for prayer and thanksgiving in corporate worship; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District encourage congregations to commit to praying regularly for the Lord to raise up pastors and to prosper the ministry of the Lutheran churches in the world, and to consider supporting their works through their time, talents, and treasures as the Spirit moves them; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District adopt the synodically commended practice of participation in forums, such as the Latin American *Foro*, committing to regular support, including a financial commitment and the appointment of a District representative (the President or his designee) to attend their gatherings; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District consider how the *Foro* model could be employed to create partnerships between congregations in Michigan and the mission field, and inspire Michigan District members to mission at home and abroad; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District Board of Directors evaluate the need for the next capital campaign to fund international ministries that the District sees as important; and be it further

**Resolved**, That the District encourage congregations to prayerfully explore the *Foro* model as a framework for deepening their connection to the global mission of the Church through financial support and personal involvement; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District memorialize the LCMS in convention to likewise support the Lutheran churches in the world and commend *Foro*-based mission partnerships across the Synod.

**ACTION: Adopted**

COMMITTEE NAME: Mission  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 4-06  
SUBJECT: To Direct Concordia Publishing House to Prioritize Mission and Distribution  
REFERENCE: Overture 4-03

**WHEREAS**, Concordia Publishing House was established in 1869 to serve the congregations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by publishing materials that are useful to the church and faithful to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions; and

**WHEREAS**, The Mission Statement of Concordia Publishing House further states that it “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;” and

**WHEREAS**, The Vision Statement of Concordia Publishing House states that they will “strive to be the premier publisher and provider of choice for products and services that are faithful to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions,” but does not envision a role in the Great Commission purpose of the Church (Matthew 28:16–20); and

**WHEREAS**, Concordia Publishing House is well known for producing high quality and durable materials that serve well in North American congregations that can afford them, and may also be too expensive for our mission partners in other nations; and

**WHEREAS**, Concordia Publishing House generously offers discounts to our Synod missionaries for their personal books, but does not offer such assistance for bulk distribution of helpful teaching materials that can be used to extend the Kingdom of God in the world; and

**WHEREAS**, Northwestern Publishing House provides us with a praiseworthy example of support for the mission of the Church by providing publications to Wisconsin Synod missionaries for free or for a steep discount (see [nph.net/multi-language-productions](http://nph.net/multi-language-productions) for an example); and

**WHEREAS**, The protection of copyrights has discouraged our missionaries from translating useful materials into the languages of their mission field by making them prohibitively expensive, and has hampered our missionaries in their task of reaching the lost with the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ; and

**WHEREAS**, Even our confessional documents and catechisms are protected by copyright from wide distribution in the mission field (ex: CPH sells the Book of Concord in Spanish for \$28.99); therefore be it

**Resolved**, That the Michigan District memorialize to the 2026 Synodical Convention the previous Whereases and the following resolves:

**Resolved**, That we give thanks to God for Concordia Publishing House and its faithfulness to the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions in providing material to churches and church workers for 156 years; and be it further

**Resolved**, That Concordia Publishing House, in addition to its mission to provide products that are faithful to the Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, be directed to prioritize the Great Commission and seek every way to provide free or low-cost materials for use by Synod missionaries in their congregations and communities; and be it further

**Resolved**, That Concordia Publishing House be directed to work in cooperation with Synod missionaries in the field to identify and remove obstacles to providing affordable resources to the work of missions, including possible alternatives to the current copyright agreements; and be it finally

**Resolved**, That the laborers and congregations of the Synod give thanks to God for the faithful authors, hymnwriters, and others who often work in obscurity to provide useful teaching material to the Church, and

pray God to bless the wide distribution of their labors to the glory of God and the coming of His Kingdom.

**ACTION: Adopted**

# Omnibus Resolutions

## Omnibus Resolution A

**WHEREAS**, Many overtures request action that is the responsibility of various boards, commissions, or individuals to study and to implement; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That that the following overtures be referred to the designated board, commission, task force, or individual:

<i>Overture</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Board, Commission, Task Force, Individual</i>
3-11	Seminary Preparation	The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s Pastoral Formation Committee

**ACTION: Adopted**

## Omnibus Resolution B

**WHEREAS**, A number of issues have been presented through overtures to which the Michigan District and/or Synod, in convention, has previously spoken; and

**WHEREAS**, After careful consideration of these matters, there appears to be insufficient rationale to change or alter the stated position of the Michigan District; therefore be it

**Resolved**, That petitioners offering the following overtures be referred to previous convention action as indicated.

<i>Overture</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Board, Office, Individual, Commission</i>
2-09	To Condemn Abortion In the State of Michigan	1971 Synod Convention Resolution 2-39 1979 Synod Convention Res.3-02A 2016 Synod Convention Res. 3-04 2019 Synod Convention Res. 11-01A 2022 Michigan District Convention Resolution 1-17
2-10	Closed Communion	1998 Synod Convention Res. 3-28 2016 Synod Convention Res. 5-15 2018 Michigan District Convention Resolution 1-06

**ACTION: Adopted**

**BYLAWS**  
**THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT**  
**OF**  
**THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD**  
(As Amended by the 2025 Michigan District Convention, June 22–24, 2025.)

**ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION**

- 1.1** The Michigan District shall consist of congregations and ministers of religion (ordained and commissioned) holding membership in the Synod received by the District or the Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaw 4.1.2).
- 1.2** The District shall establish an organizational structure for the effective operation of its program and conduct of its affairs, which structure shall embrace the convention, regional assemblies, the Board of Directors, circuits, and such other entities, boards, commissions, and committees as may from time to time be established.
- 1.3** The District shall be administered through four (4) levels of organization:
- a. The convention is the meeting of the voting member congregations represented by their delegates.
  - b. The regional assemblies shall meet prior to the District convention, at which time delegates shall consist of the regularly elected and certified delegates of said regions (Cf. Bylaw 2.3).
  - c. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for the overall policy and affairs of the District subject to the Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of Synod, and to these Bylaws and the resolutions of the District in convention.
  - d. The circuits shall carry out resolutions of the Synod and the District and engage in the objectives of the Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaw 1.3.6).

**ARTICLE II - CONVENTIONS**

- 2.1** District conventions shall be held and conducted as prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaw 4.2).
- 2.2** The convention shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws or the Bylaws of Synod.
- 2.3** Representation
- a. Every member congregation or multi-congregation parish is entitled to two votes, one of which is to be cast by its pastor and the other by the lay delegate elected and deputed by the congregation or parish (Constitution, Art. XII, Section 10 a.).
  - b. Advisory delegates are all commissioned ministers, and those ordained ministers not presently serving as voting representatives of congregations, who are members of the Synod within the district. In addition, a congregation that is part of a multi-congregation parish, other than the congregation supplying the voting lay delegate, may elect and depute an advisory lay delegate (Constitution Art. XII, Section 10 b.).
  - c. Advisory representatives of the Board of Directors, other boards, commissions, and educational institutions and such as by virtue of their office are required to attend District conventions.
- 2.4** Quorum - To conduct business, a convention must have present at least one-third of the voting member congregations represented by at least one of their respective voting representatives (pastor or lay delegate) (Cf. Constitution XII.14).

**ARTICLE III - REGIONS AND REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES**

- 3.1** There shall be four (4) regions within the Michigan District.
- 3.2** Regions shall consist of a group of circuits created, aligned, and/or realigned by convention resolution.

- 3.3** Regional assemblies shall meet no later than 45 days prior to the convention of the Michigan District. The date shall be communicated to congregations no later than 30 days prior to the regional assembly. The regional vice-president shall call and chair the assembly of his region at a place of his choosing.
- 3.4** The regional assembly shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.
- 3.5** Each member congregation or multi-congregation parish is entitled to be represented at this assembly by two of their respective voting delegates (one pastor and one layperson) and by their advisory delegates (Cf. Bylaw 2.3).
- 3.6** The chair shall appoint a secretary to record the proceedings.
- 3.7** At least one-third of the voting member congregations represented by at least one of their respective voting representatives (pastor or lay delegate) shall be present to conduct a meeting of the regional assembly (Cf. Constitution XII, Section 14).
- 3.8** The purpose of the regional assembly shall be:
- a. To be informed about major issues to come before the District convention;
  - b. To nominate from its region two (2) ministers of religion – ordained for the office of vice-president in accordance with the provisions of Bylaw 5.10 and candidates for the Board of Directors in accordance with the provisions of Bylaw 5.13.
  - c. To nominate from its region, using a slate prepared by the regional nominating committee, the District Nominating Committee (Cf. Bylaw 5.13 d).

#### **ARTICLE IV - QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS**

- 4.1** Officers and board members shall meet all qualifications established from time to time by the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and such other qualifications as may be established from time to time by these Bylaws. Regional members of the board must be members of congregations within the region represented throughout their term of service.
- 4.2** Officers and members of the Board of Directors must be members in good standing of congregations which are members of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, except as noted in Michigan District Bylaw 5.9 a. No congregation of the District shall have more than one (1) member from its congregation as a voting member of the Board of Directors to the District.

#### **ARTICLE V - ELECTIONS**

- 5.1** Officers.
- a. Elective Officers. The elective officers of the District shall be the President, one vice-president from each region, a Secretary, and the circuit visitors.
  - b. Appointive Officer. The Board of Directors, in consultation with the President, shall appoint the Treasurer.
- 5.2** The elective board of the District shall be the Board of Directors.
- 5.3** Term of Officers and Board of Directors' Members.
- a. The term of office of each elected or appointed officer shall be three (3) years. All officers other than circuit visitors may be elected or appointed to the same office for four (4) consecutive terms after which a period of three (3) years shall elapse before they are again eligible for election or appointment to the same office, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws. An officer, elected or appointed to fill an unexpired term, who serves two (2) or more years, shall be considered to have completed one (1) term. Circuit visitors may serve an unlimited number of terms.
  - b. The President may be elected to succeed himself in office no more than three (3) times.
  - c. The term of office of each Board of Directors member shall be six (6) years. All Board of Directors members may be

elected or appointed to the same office for two (2) consecutive terms after which a period of six (6) years shall elapse before they are again eligible for election to that board. A Board of Directors member appointed to fill an unexpired term who serves four (4) or more years, shall be considered to have completed one (1) term.

- d. The Board of Directors shall be composed of four (4) ordained ministers, four (4) commissioned ministers, and eight (8) laypersons with equal representation from each region of the District. The size of the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees shall be determined by its Bylaws.

#### **5.4 Salaried Executives without Vote.**

Executive level staff of the District and the Chief Executive Officer for the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees are not eligible for voting membership on any board of the District. They shall not at the same time hold an executive position to which they have been called and the Office of President, vice-president, Secretary, or Treasurer of the District. If such staff is elected or appointed to one of these positions, he must resign his executive office to accept such an election. (See also Syn. Bylaw 1.5.1.1 for additional restrictions.)

#### **5.5 Time of Elections.**

- a. The election of the President, the vice-presidents, the Secretary, approximately one-half of the Board of Directors, and the ratification of the circuit visitors shall take place at each District convention. At alternate conventions a District member shall be elected to serve on the LCMS Committee for Convention Nominations.
- b. Regional assemblies shall nominate for all positions with the exception of President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees.
- c. At their regional assemblies prior to the even numbered conventions, the Metro-East Region and the West Region shall narrow the slate of candidates for the Board of Directors.
- d. At their regional assemblies prior to the odd numbered conventions, the Metro-West Region and the North and East Region shall narrow the slate of candidates for the Board of Directors.

#### **5.6 Nominating Committee**

- a. The District convention shall elect a 12-member Nominating Committee consisting of one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister, and one (1) layperson from each region of the District and the President shall designate the Chairman thereof. The three committee members from each region shall serve as the regional nominating committee.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall meet at the call of the Secretary.
- c. The regional nominating committee shall draw up from its region a list of candidates and alternates for the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee in accordance with the provisions of Michigan District Bylaws 5.6 and 5.13 and the Schedule of Elections. The regional nominating committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate, as well as biographical data, and supply the regional assembly with this information one week prior to the regional assembly. Following the regional nominations, the biographical data of persons nominated shall be transferred to the District Nominating Committee so that the District ballot may be drawn up.
- d. The District Nominating Committee shall draw up a list of candidates and alternates for the Secretary and the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate, and transmit its final report to the Secretary no later than three (3) months before the convention. This report shall contain the occupation or profession, residency, and specific experience and qualifications for the proposed office.
- e. The Chairman or his designate shall submit the committee's report to the District convention.
- f. If between the regional assembly and the District convention a nominee becomes ineligible for election, the Elections Committee will fill the vacancy on the ballot with the person who received the next-highest number of votes.
- g. The convention shall have the right to alter the ballot by amendment. The amendment procedure shall include a motion, a second, and a majority vote on the amendment. Any delegate making a nomination for the floor shall have secured prior written consent and biographical data from the candidate whom he wishes to nominate as detailed in Michigan District Bylaw 5.6 c. & d. This material shall then be submitted to the District Secretary.

- h.** The Chairman shall have on hand at the convention a reserve list of nominees, approved by his committee, for use if required if a new board is to be elected. Whenever possible, however, the committee on nominations should be informed in advance if any new board is likely to be elected at a District convention, so that it may have a slate of candidates in readiness.

#### **5.7 Floor Committee on Elections.**

- a.** Elections shall be conducted by a Floor Committee on Elections, appointed by the President before the convention. The Secretary of the District shall furnish the committee a copy of suggested election procedures.
- b.** The committee shall consist of one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister and two (2) laypersons.
- c.** The committee may appoint tellers, who need not be voting delegates, to assist in conducting the elections. The Chairman shall give the list of tellers to the Secretary of the District, who shall announce them to the convention.
- d.** A regional floor committee on elections shall be appointed by the vice-president of that region to conduct the nominating elections at the regional assemblies and whose duties shall be consistent with the District Floor Committee on Elections.

#### **5.8 Majority and Plurality of Votes.**

A majority of all votes cast shall be required to elect.

#### **5.9 Nominations and Election of the President.**

- a.** The Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall elect a President from among the clergy of the Synod.
- b.** Every voting member congregation of the Michigan District may nominate one pastor as a candidate for the Office of President.
- c.** The nomination of each member congregation shall be submitted to the Secretary no later than four (4) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- d.** Candidates for the Office of President shall be the five (5) persons receiving the largest number of nominations in this congregational action.
- e.** The Secretary shall notify each candidate and shall secure his approval in writing for inclusion of his name on the convention ballot.
- f.** The Secretary shall prepare biographical information on the five candidates which shall be submitted for publication no later than two (2) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- g.** The Secretary shall submit the names of the five candidates for election of President to the District convention.
- h.** The convention shall have the right to alter the slate by majority amendment.
- i.** If no candidate receives a majority vote on the first ballot, the name of the candidate who receives the smallest number of votes shall be dropped from the list and a new ballot taken. The procedure shall be continued until one (1) candidate has received a majority of the votes cast.

#### **5.10 Nominations and Elections of Vice Presidents.**

- a.** The Michigan District shall elect one vice-president for each region from the clergy roster of the District with membership in a congregation in the designated region.
- b.** Every voting congregation of a region may nominate one pastor from its region as a candidate for the office of vice-president for its region.
- c.** The nomination shall be submitted to the Secretary no later than four (4) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- d.** The Secretary shall notify each nominee, secure his approval in writing, and secure biographical information for the inclusion of the five (5) names receiving the most nominations on the regional nominating ballot.

- e. At the regional assemblies each region shall choose by ballot two (2) pastors as nominees for election by the District convention to the office of regional vice-president.
- f. Each voting delegate in the region may vote for two (2) nominees for vice-president, indicating his first and second choice. The tellers, appointed by the chairman, shall score two (2) points for each first choice and one (1) point for each second choice. The two (2) nominees receiving the largest number of points shall be candidates. The tellers shall report the results of the meeting to the chairman.
- g. The chairman of the regional assemblies shall report to the Secretary the names of the persons nominated for the office of vice-president along with the biographical data. The Secretary shall transmit such names to the Floor Committee on Elections.
- h. The Committee on Elections shall recap the information provided on qualifications and experience for each candidate and shall submit such information together with the ballot on which such election is to take place.
- i. The convention shall have the right to alter the slate at the proper time by majority amendment as outlined in Michigan District Bylaw 5.6 g.

#### **5.11 Ranking of Vice-Presidents.**

After the vice-presidents have been elected, balloting will continue to determine their rank. The names of all four (4) vice-presidents will constitute the ballot for the First Vice-President, and voting continues until one is elected by majority vote. (If one is not elected on the first ballot, the name of the candidate who receives the smallest number of votes shall be dropped, and the balloting continues in this fashion until one is elected by majority vote.) The remaining three names constitute the ballot for Second Vice-President and the balloting continues as above. The two remaining names constitute the ballot for Third Vice-President, and the one not elected becomes Fourth Vice-President.

#### **5.12 Election of Circuit Visitors.**

The convention shall elect the circuit visitors as provided by the Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaws 5.2.2).

#### **5.13 Nominations of Board of Directors.**

- a. Every voting congregation of a region nominating for the Board of Directors may nominate one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister and two (2) laypersons holding membership in member congregations of the region for consideration as potential candidates by the regional nominating committee, which may consider additional candidates as it sees fit. (Cf. Bylaw 5.5 c. & d. for the nominating schedule.)
- b. The nominations shall be submitted to the Nominating Committee no later than four (4) months prior to the opening of the District convention.
- c. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of up to four (4) ordained ministers, four (4) commissioned ministers, and eight (8) laypersons for the regional nominating ballot in accordance with Bylaw 5.6 c.
- d. At the regional assemblies each region shall choose by ballot two (2) ordained ministers, two (2) commissioned ministers, and four (4) laypersons from the slate prepared by the regional nominating committee as nominees for election by the District convention.
- e. Each voting delegate in the region may vote for two (2) ordained minister nominees, two (2) commissioned minister nominees, and four (4) layperson nominees. The two (2) ordained ministers, two (2) commissioned ministers, and four (4) laypersons receiving the largest number of votes shall be candidates. The tellers shall report the results of the meeting to the chairman.
- f. The chairman of the regional assemblies shall report to the Secretary the names of the persons nominated for the Board of Directors, along with the biographical data. The Secretary shall transmit such names to the Floor Committee on Elections.
- g. The Committee on Elections shall recap the information provided on qualifications and experience for each candidate and shall submit such information together with the ballot on which such election is to take place.
- h. The convention shall have the right to alter the slate at the proper time by majority amendment as outlined in Michigan District Bylaw 5.6 g.

#### **5.14 Election of Other Officers.**

- a. Election of all officers other than the President and vice-presidents will be held at a special period of the convention session determined and announced by the President in advance.
- b. The Committee on Elections shall submit one (1) ballot containing the nominees furnished by the committee on nominations for all elective offices.
- c. The list of nominees for each respective office, together with their experience and qualifications, shall be distributed.

#### **5.15 Order of Names on the Ballot.**

The names of all candidates in all elections shall be placed on the ballot regionally and in alphabetical order but without any distinctive mark, unless otherwise stipulated by these Bylaws.

#### **5.16 Notifications of Election to Office.**

At the close of the convention, the Secretary of the District shall notify every officer and board member in writing of his or her election.

#### **5.17 Exception of Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees.**

Members of the Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees shall be elected as provided by the Fund's own Bylaws.

#### **5.18 Induction and Beginning of Term of Office.**

- a. All officers and directors elected at the convention shall be inducted into their respective offices in an installation ceremony (service) at the convention. Failure to hold the ceremony or the unavailability of inductees to attend the ceremony in person does not affect the time at which the inductees assume office.
- b. All officers shall begin their terms of office on October 1.

### **ARTICLE VI – VACANCIES AND SUCCESSION**

#### **6.1 Presidential Vacancy**

- a. A vacancy in the Office of President shall be filled by the First Vice-President, who shall serve until the District convention.
- b. The First Vice-President may decline the Office of President; in which event:
  - 1. The next ranking vice-president shall become President of the District.
  - 2. All other vice-presidents shall move up one rank.
  - 3. The declining vice-president shall fill the last ranking vacant vice-presidency.
- c. The successor need not terminate his position as pastor of a congregation while completing the former President's unexpired term.
- d. If the Board of Directors determines that the President is temporarily unable to serve in that capacity because of prolonged illness or disability, the duties and responsibilities of the Office of President shall be assumed by the First Vice-President, who shall remain as the acting President until the Board of Directors determines that the illness or disability has been removed.

**6.2** A vacancy in the office of vice-president shall be filled by advancing the lower ranking vice-presidents. An acting vice-president for the resulting vacancy may be appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors, until the District convention.

**6.3** A vacancy in the Board of Directors shall be filled by the board. The appointee shall serve the unexpired term.

**6.4** A vacancy in the office of circuit visitor between conventions shall be filled by appointment by the President (Cf. Synod Bylaw 5.2.2.1).

**6.5** A vacancy in any other elective office shall be filled by the Board of Directors. The appointee shall serve the unexpired term.

**6.6** The Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees will fill vacancies in accordance with its own Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE VII - BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**7.1** The Board of Directors, with full authority, shall carry into execution the resolutions adopted by the District in convention. The Board of Directors shall create policies and monitor compliance to policies which govern the District's business and legal affairs and the Board of Directors shall monitor the performance of the District President in matters it has delegated to him and for which he has accepted delegation. Such delegation shall not conflict with the District President's ability to perform duties assigned by the Constitution or Bylaws of the Synod, including but not limited to ecclesiastical supervision of the district. The Board of Directors shall carry out its functions as described by Synod Bylaw 4.5.1.

**7.2** The Board of Directors is authorized to elect from its membership a chairman, vice chairman and secretary.

- a. The Board of Directors is authorized to appoint such committees and task forces as it deems reasonable to assist it to carry out its work. Members of committees and task forces shall be members in good standing of congregations which are members of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (MCL 450.2527(3)).
- b. All committees, commissions and task forces of the District shall report regularly to the Board of Directors. Such report may be made in writing or by a representative in person, provided, however, that the Board of Directors may require the report to be made by a representative in person.
- c. The Board of Directors is authorized to extend calls on behalf of the District.

**7.3** The membership of the Board of Directors shall be divided into two classes, the voting members and advisory members:

- a. The voting members of the Board of Directors shall consist of one (1) ordained minister, one (1) commissioned minister and two (2) laypersons elected from each of the regions within the District.
- b. The Advisory members shall consist of the President, regional vice-presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and the chairman of the circuit visitors.

**7.4** The Board of Directors shall meet at least five (5) times per year.

- a. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members and the majority of those present and voting shall be sufficient to carry a motion or resolution.
- b. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, the chairman of the Board or any three (3) voting members of the board. Advance notice of special meetings shall be given to all members.
- c. A member of the Board of Directors or of a committee designated by the board may participate in a meeting by means of telephone conference or other means of remote communication by which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this subsection constitutes presence in person at the meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII - OFFICERS AND ADMINISTRATION**

**8.1** President. The President shall be the chief executive of the District, responsible that the resolutions of the district are implemented and reporting to the district convention. He may, as delegated by the board of directors, carry out executive functions with regard to the district's business and legal affairs, subject to these Bylaws, but as to these the board retains general management and supervision. He shall preside at all District conventions. The President shall carry out the duties and responsibilities assigned to his office by the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod (Cf. Constitution, Art. XII; Synod Bylaws 4.4.1ff.). He shall be an ex-officio member of all commissions or committees in the District with the right to speak but not to vote. He shall have the right to designate any one of the vice-presidents to sit in his place at meetings of the Board of

Directors or any of the District's commissions or committees. As the chief executive, he shall manage and supervise the District staff. The Office of District President shall be full-time. He shall not be in charge of a congregation, nor hold a chair at any educational institution or fill any other full-time executive office of the District. This prohibition does not apply when a vice president assumes the Office of District President to complete an unexpired term.

**8.2 Vice Presidents.** In the event that the Office of President shall become vacant or in the event of the absence of the President or his disability to discharge the duties of his office, such duties shall for the time being devolve upon the vice-presidents in order according to their ranking as further provided in these Bylaws. The vice-presidents shall also do and perform such other acts as the President may from time to time authorize them to do.

**8.3 Secretary.** The Secretary of the District shall keep the minutes of the conventions of the District in books provided for that purpose; he shall attend to the giving and receiving of all notices of the District; he shall sign, with the President or a vice-president, in the name of the District, all contracts authorized by the Board of Directors, and when necessary shall fix the corporate seal of the District thereto; and his minutes and records shall be opened to examination to any member of the District at all reasonable times; and he shall have such additional duties as may be delegated to him by the convention or the Board of Directors.

**8.4 Assistant Secretaries.** The Board of Directors may appoint assistant secretaries who shall have the authority of the Secretary when delegated by the Secretary or the Board of Directors, or when the Secretary is unavailable due to disability or absence from the District.

**8.5 Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall have oversight of all funds and securities of the District and shall report to the Board of Directors and the District convention the financial status of the District. The Treasurer, the President of the District and/or the President's designated staff persons shall have authority to sign on behalf of the District all checks, notes, or other official documents. The Treasurer shall also require on behalf of the Board of Directors the annual audit of all District funds. The Treasurer shall be bonded for the discharge of all duties as Treasurer, the bond being of such character, form and in such amount as the Board of Directors may require.

**8.6 Circuit Visitors.** Circuit visitors shall serve in accordance with the duties assigned to this position as provided by the By-laws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. During the year when there is no Synod or District convention, circuit convocations will be held under the leadership of the circuit visitors and members of the circuit forum.

## **ARTICLE IX - FISCAL AND AUDITING**

**9.1 District Budget.** The District budget shall be determined by the Board of Directors through its policies, but no budget shall be approved which allows for expenditures greater than receipts and other funds projected to be available in any given year. The board shall adopt the annual budget.

**9.2 Auditing.** All the District's financial accounts shall be audited at least once every year by a firm of certified public accountants designated by the Board of Directors.

**9.3** No commission or committee of the District except the Church Extension Fund which is a subsidiary corporation of the District shall maintain a separate bank account without the consent of the Board of Directors. In the event such consent is given by the Board of Directors, such account or accounts shall be audited at the same time and in the same manner as heretofore provided.

**9.4** The Board of Directors shall develop its own board policy manual for proper governance of the District.

## **ARTICLE X - THE CHURCH EXTENSION FUND**

**10.1** The Church Extension Fund shall adopt rules to govern its proceedings not inconsistent with these Bylaws. (See Bylaws of the Church Extension Fund attached to Bylaws of the Michigan District.)

## **ARTICLE XI - RECONCILIATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

**11.1** The District shall follow the principles, structures, procedures, and membership described in Synod Bylaws 1.10 and 2.14 to 2.17 with regard to reconciliation and dispute resolution.

## **ARTICLE XII – COMMISSIONS AND TASK FORCES**

- 12.1** The District convention may create commissions and task forces for special purposes.
- 12.2** Task forces and commissions established by a convention and existing at the time of the adoption of these Bylaws shall continue their powers, duties and jurisdiction until further resolution of the convention. No future commission or task force shall have duration for longer than the time between conventions.
- 12.3** A convention resolution creating a commission or task force shall define its powers, duties, duration and jurisdiction and establish its budget.
- 12.4** A commission or task force created by a convention shall make period reports of its activities to the convention and to the Board of Directors between conventions (Cf. Bylaw 7.2b).
- 12.5** Members of commissions and task forces shall be members in good standing of congregations which are members of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

## **ARTICLE XIII - HANDBOOK**

- 13.1** The Board of Directors shall cause to be prepared, within three (3) months after the adjournment of each District convention, a District handbook.
- 13.2** The handbook shall include:
- a. The current Bylaws of the District as they may be amended.
  - b. The names of all officers and board members.
  - c. Such other information as the convention and/or the Board of Directors may direct.
- 13.3** A copy of the handbook shall be furnished to:
- a. Each member congregation of the District.
  - b. Each officer and board member.
  - c. Such other persons as the convention and/or the Board of Directors may direct.

## **ARTICLE XIV - REPEAL AND SAVING CLAUSE**

- 14.1** Any and all bylaws previously adopted by the convention of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are hereby repealed.
- 14.2** If any section, paragraph, clause or provision of these Bylaws or any amendments thereto, shall be held invalid under the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, or under the laws of the State of Michigan, the invalidity of such paragraph, section, clause or provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of these Bylaws or amendments thereto.
- 14.3** All acts, resolutions or orders or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of these Bylaws, and any amendments thereto, to the extent of such conflict, are hereby repealed and all other acts, resolutions or orders or parts thereof not in conflict with the provisions of these Bylaws, or amendments thereto, shall continue in full force and effect.

## **ARTICLE XV - INDEMNIFICATION**

- 15.1** Those directors duly elected or appointed to the Board of Directors who do not receive anything of value from this corporation for serving as a director other than reasonable per diem compensation and/or reimbursement for actual, reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by such director in service of the capacity as a director shall be deemed a “volunteer director” for all purposes hereunder.

**15.2** A volunteer director shall not be personally liable to the corporation or its membership and/or members for monetary damages for any breach of the director's fiduciary duty except for liability arising from or relating to:

- a. A breach of director's duty of loyalty to the corporation or its members;
- b. Actual omissions not in good faith or the involvement of intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;
- c. An act in violation of the provisions of Michigan law, specifically MCLA 450.2551(1);
- d. Any transaction from which a director derives an improper personal benefit;
- e. Any act or omission resulting in liability occurring before January 1, 1988;
- f. Any act or omission that is grossly negligent.

**15.3** The corporation shall assume all liability to any person or entity other than the corporation or its members for all acts or omissions of a volunteer director occurring on or after January 1, 1988.

**15.4** The corporation shall to the fullest extent permitted under Michigan law, indemnify those persons serving in the position of, or at the request of the corporation as director, officer, trustee, committee member, commission member, employee or agent against expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by a person in connection with any actions, suits or proceedings, formal or informal, relating to the service of said individual on behalf of the corporation if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the corporation or its members, or with respect to any criminal action or proceeding if the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct engaged in was unlawful. The corporation, through its Board of Directors, shall have such further or other authority to indemnify directors, officers, employees or agents consistent with the provisions of Michigan law.

## **ARTICLE XVI - AMENDMENTS**

**16.1** Amendments may be made to the Bylaws by the District in convention providing they are not contrary to the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod.

**16.2** Proposed amendments shall be presented in writing to a convention of the District upon review and approval by the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaw 3.9.2.2.3 [a]).

**16.3** Proposed amendments shall be specified as bylaws amendments.

**16.4** Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the District committee on new and revised constitutions and they shall report to a convention floor committee.

**16.5** Proposed amendments to the Bylaws may be adopted by an affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting.

**16.6** Following a convention of the Synod, Bylaw amendments necessary for compliance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod may be made by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors upon review and approval by the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Synod (Cf. Synod Bylaw 3.9.2.2.3 [a]). All such amendments will be reported to the District.

**BYLAWS**  
**CHURCH EXTENSION FUND OF THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT OF**  
**THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD**  
(As amended by the Michigan District Convention, June 25, 2018)

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Church Extension Fund is to administer a fund and acquire assets to assist by loans, grants, or otherwise, primarily to the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, congregations of the Michigan District, individuals serving as professional church workers within the Michigan District, LCMS schools and colleges, entities and associations qualifying as Michigan District recognized service organizations, entities and associations qualifying as Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod recognized service organizations, and entities owned and/or operated by member congregations. The Church Extension Fund may also assist other LCMS Districts, through their respective Church Extension Funds, by purchasing or participating, in whole or in part, in loans or investments, of other LCMS Districts or the Lutheran Church Extension Fund of the LCMS. The purpose for which funds and assistance may be provided shall include, but not limited to, acquiring property, erecting buildings, purchasing equipment, acquiring housing and supporting projects and the operations of the above. The primary purpose, however, of the Church Extension Fund shall be to contribute to the ministry and purposes of the Michigan District and its member congregations.

**II. MEMBERSHIP**

The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall consist of nine (9) elected trustees.

1. The elected trustees shall consist of three (3) persons duly rostered in the LCMS and called or assigned within the Michigan District, and, six (6) laypersons. Trustees shall be elected by the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at its regular Convention in the following manner:
  - a. The District Nominating Committee shall draw up a list of candidates and alternates for the Church Extension Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate and prepare biographical data, including occupation or profession, residency, and specific experience and qualifications for the proposed office, for each candidate. Board of Trustee candidates shall have an understanding of the Church Extension program and/or demonstrate expertise in fields or areas closely related to Church Extension activities, such as knowledge of banking, investments, accounting, law, real estate, business management and financial planning.
  - b. Trustees must be members in good standing of congregations in the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. No congregation of the District shall have more than one (1) member [including ordained, commissioned or layperson] from its congregation as a voting member of the Board of Trustees.
  - c. Election of Church Extension Board of Trustees shall take place at the same time and in the same manner as the election of all District Officers and Board Members, other than the District President and Vice Presidents, in accordance with procedures outlined in Articles 5.18, 5.19, and 5.20 of the Bylaws of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
2. Elections of trustees to fill the places of those whose terms of office expire shall take place at the last regular convention of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, occurring prior to the expiration of the terms of their predecessors. Approximately one—half of the trustees will be elected at each convention of the Michigan District.
3. The trustees shall be elected for a term of six (6) years. They may be elected for two (2) consecutive terms, after which a period of three (3) years shall elapse before they are again eligible for election as trustees.
4. Vacancies caused by death, resignation, removal, declination to serve or otherwise, may be filled by the remaining trustees, subject to ratification by the Board of Directors of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
5. All trustees elected at the Convention shall begin their terms of office on the first of October following election.

### **III. ORGANIZATION**

1. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall elect a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers and subcommittees as it considers necessary for the efficient conduct of its business.
2. The Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer elected by the Church Extension Board of Trustees at the October meeting following the Convention of the Michigan District shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Church Extension Fund.
3. Legal documents executed in the name of the Church Extension Fund shall bear the signatures of any two members of the Executive Committee or such officer or officers as the trustees shall authorize by resolution duly adopted in accordance with these Bylaws.
4. The trustees may appoint task-oriented committees to assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities.

### **IV. MEETINGS**

1. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall schedule regular meetings as the business of the Board shall require, but not less than four times per year.
2. Special meetings may be called by the chairman of the Board or by any four (4) trustees.
3. A majority of the trustees of the Church Extension Board of Trustees shall constitute a legal quorum at all regular and special meetings of the Board.
4. The Executive Committee of the Church Extension Board of Trustees shall meet at the call of the Chairman to conduct and act on matters of business requiring attention between regular meetings of the Church Extension Board of Trustees. A majority vote of the members of the Executive Committee shall be required to take any action. All such actions of the Executive Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Church Extension Board of Trustees.
5. A member of the Church Extension Board of Trustees or of a committee designated by said board may participate in a meeting by means of conference telephone or other means of remote communication if all individuals who are participating in the meeting can communicate with the other participants.

### **V. ADMINISTRATION**

1. The Church Extension Fund may, in its corporate name, take, hold and manage all property, real and personal, notes, bonds, mortgages, land contracts, leases, evidences of indebtedness, loans and property and all property real and personal, tangible and intangible, and assets devised, bequeathed, transferred, leased, or conveyed to the Church Extension Fund absolutely or in trust for the purposes outlined in Section I of these Bylaws.
2. The Church Extension Fund may, in its corporate name, invest and reinvest the personal property and assets in its hands and under its control as trustees; and sell, convey by deed, land contract or lease, mortgage or hold in trust and manage any real estate held by them as such trustees; all in accordance with the manner and as specified in the Statutes of the State of Michigan in such case made and provided.
3. The Church Extension Fund may accept gifts or bequests in trust or otherwise, and employ, manage or retain such property, real or personal, devised or bequeathed, on such terms, conditions, or policies approved by the Board of Trustees.
4. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall adopt rules and regulations in the interest of the orderly administration of its objectives.
5. The Church Extension Board of Trustees shall employ and appoint a Chief Executive Officer, employ and appoint any other such officers or employees deemed necessary to conduct its business affairs in an orderly manner, at a rate of compensation as deemed proper and fair by the Church Extension Board of Trustees.
6. Those trustees duly-elected or appointed to the Board of Trustees who do not receive anything of value from this corporation for serving as a trustee other than reasonable per diem compensation and/or reimbursement for actual reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by such trustee in service of the capacity as a trustee shall be deemed a "volunteer trustee" for all purposes hereunder (being deemed and defined as a "volunteer director" for all purposes under Michigan law and statutes).

7. A volunteer trustee shall not be personally liable to the corporation or its membership and/or members for monetary damages for any breach of the trustee's fiduciary duty except for liability arising from or relating to:
  - a. A breach of trustee's duty of loyalty to the corporation or its members;
  - b. Actual omissions not in good faith or the involvement of intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;
  - c. An act in violation of the provisions of Michigan law, specifically MCLA 450.2551(1);
  - d. Any transaction from which a trustee derives an improper personal benefit;
  - e. Any act or omission resulting in liability occurring before January 1, 1988;
  - f. Any act or omission that is grossly negligent.
8. The corporation shall assume all liability to any person or entity other than the corporation or its members for all acts or omissions of a volunteer trustee occurring on or after January 1, 1988.
9. The corporation shall, to the fullest extent permitted under Michigan law, indemnify those persons serving in the position of, or at the request of the corporation, as director, officer, trustee, committee member, employee, or agent against expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by a person in connection with any actions, suits, or proceedings, formal or informal, relating to the service of said individual on behalf of the corporation if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the corporation or its members, or with respect to any criminal action or proceeding if the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct engaged in was unlawful. The corporation, through its Board of Trustees, shall have such further or other authority to indemnify trustees, committee members, officers, employees, or agents consistent with the provisions of Michigan law.

#### **VI. RELATIONSHIP TO THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT**

1. The Church Extension Fund shall be subject to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod insofar as said Constitution and Bylaws do not conflict with the laws of the State of Michigan.
2. In the event of the dissolution of the Church Extension Fund as a Michigan Church Trustee Corporation, all property and assets to which it holds title, or over which it has control, shall be transferred forthwith to the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or to its nominee.
3. In the event that the Michigan District no longer exists, then references to the "Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" or the "Michigan District" in these Bylaws, and references to actions thereof, shall be deemed to mean, respectively, the congregations that comprised the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and their actions in convention or at a meeting of such congregations.

#### **VII. AMENDMENTS**

The Bylaws of the Church Extension Fund may be amended by a majority vote of those entitled to vote at the Convention of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.



