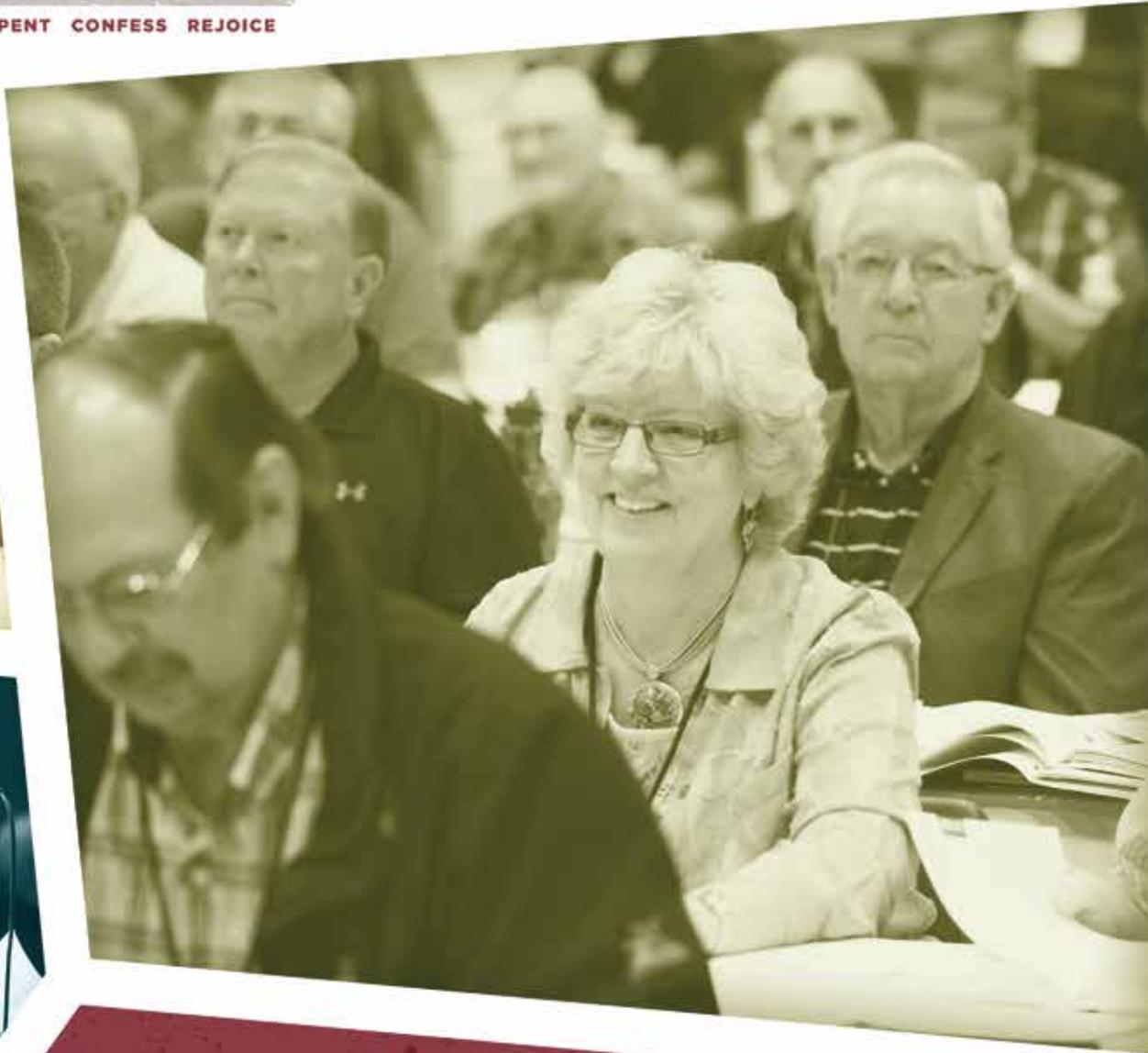
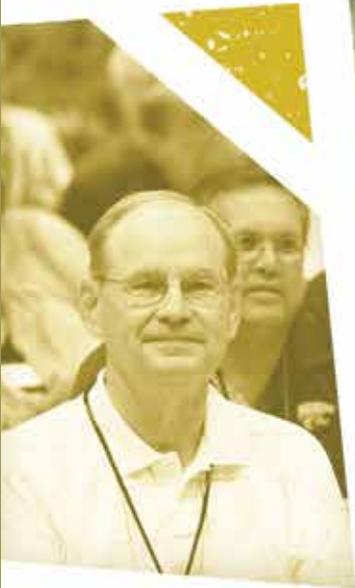


TODAY'S BUSINESS *Proposed Resolutions • 2016*



66th REGULAR CONVENTION
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Milwaukee, Wis.
July 9-14, 2016

**A Prayer for
Our Synod in Convention**

Almighty and everlasting God,
You have given the Comforter to Your Church
and have promised to abide with it forever.

Pour forth the blessing of Your Spirit on our pastors and lay delegates
who will assemble this summer in Your name.

Grant them abundant steadfastness of faith,
purity of love,
and a sincere desire for peace
that they, by the help of Your abiding Spirit,
may conduct the affairs of Your Church in all humility and godliness,
and to the glory of Your name;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ABOUT *TODAY'S BUSINESS*

This is the first of six issues of the publication *Today's Business* that will facilitate the business of the 2016 convention. It is mailed in advance to registered attendees and contains essential information including the convention schedule, late overtures, Part II of the President's Report, proposed special standing rules, and official announcements.

This first issue also contains the proposed resolutions to be considered by the 2016 convention as prepared by the convention floor committees during their May 27–30 meeting in St. Louis. These resolutions are the committees' proposed convention actions in response to the reports and overtures printed in the 2016 *Convention Workbook*, including the late overtures published in this issue of *Today's Business*.

This first issue of *Today's Business* is mailed well in advance of the convention to allow ample opportunity for study and discussion. It is also available on the Synod's Web site at www.lcms.org/convention. Additional copies may be purchased from the Concordia Publishing House for \$7.50 per copy.

After receiving this mailing, delegates and representatives are encouraged to participate in meetings of the circuits or groups that they will be representing to receive reactions and suggestions regarding the business contained in this book. Such suggestions or concerns may also be submitted in writing to the chairmen of the appropriate floor committees (names and addresses are included in this issue of *Today's Business*) at least one week prior to the convention.

The five remaining issues of *Today's Business* will be published and distributed to all delegates and representatives each morning of the convention, the first to be distributed prior to the Sunday morning session. Each day's issue will contain the schedule for the day, substitute or revised resolutions, wording for proposed amendments, and other official announcements and information. A limited number of additional copies of daily editions will be available for visitors attending the convention.

Because this pre-convention issue of *Today's Business* contains the resolutions to be considered by the convention, it will be essential to have it available for ready reference during all convention sessions. This will be true also for the following other convention publications:

- The 2016 *Convention Workbook* received in early May (necessary when reference will be made to an overture or report)
- The 2016 *Biographical Synopses & Statements of Nominees* booklet received with the *Convention Workbook* (necessary to refer to when voting)
- The 2013 *Handbook* of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (copies will be provided during the registration process at the convention)
- All daily issues of *Today's Business* (it will often be necessary to refer to previous days' issues)

Conventions are the principal legislative assemblies of the Synod for electing officers and board and commission members, taking actions, providing direction, and addressing issues and concerns. They are also unique occasions for witness to one another, worship with one another, and spending time together doing the business of the Synod—all as redeemed children of God who “Upon This Rock” of Christ Jesus boldly repent, confess, and rejoice.

Raymond L. Hartwig, *Editor*
Pam Weeke, *Managing Editor*
Rebekah Pratt, *Managing Editor*
Rachel Asburry, *Managing Editor*

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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE
The 66th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
July 9–14, 2016 • Wisconsin Center • Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Floor committee meetings will be held July 8–9, 2016. The schedule is considered tentative as Bylaw 3.1.9(i)(2) states that the President “shall, at the first session and during the course of succeeding sessions of the convention, announce the order of business for the day and following days.” Unless otherwise indicated, all activities take place in the Wisconsin Center.

Friday—July 8, 2016

1:30–6:30 Floor Committees—closed meetings

Saturday—July 9, 2016*Exhibits open 10:00am–3:00pm (Hall D, 3rd floor)*8:30–10:00 Floor Committees #1, 4, 9, 15, 16, and 18
open hearings (*Hyatt Regency*)8:30–noon Floor Committees #2, 5–7, 11–13
open hearings (*Hyatt Regency*)

10:00 Break

10:30–noon Floor Committees #3, 8, 10, 14, and 17
open hearings (*Hyatt Regency*)

12:00 Lunch on your own

1:00 Floor Committees closed meetings,
if necessary1:30–3:00 All Delegate and Representative Orientation
(*Halls A & B, 3rd floor*)5:30 Delegate Dinner (*Ballroom, 1st floor*)

7:00 Pre-service music

7:30 Opening Divine Service with
Holy Communion
(*Halls A & B, 3rd floor*)**Sunday—July 10, 2016***Exhibits open 10:00am–3:00pm (Hall D, 3rd floor)*

8:00 Matins—Rev. Christopher Esget

8:45 Preparation for Opening Business Session

8:55 Convention Opening and
Presentation of Gavel

9:00 Electronic Voting System

9:20 Registration, Credentials, and Elections (#19)

9:25 Standing Rules

9:40 Convention Schedule

9:50 President’s Report (Part 3)

10:20 Welcome and greetings from local representatives

10:25 Welcome and greetings from
South Wisconsin District10:30 Convention Essay—Rev. Dr. Lawrence Rast Jr.
Upon This Rock: Repent, Confess, Rejoice

11:00 International Mission (#2)

11:30 National Mission (#1)

12:00 Recess

1:30 Midday Prayer—Rev. Nabil Nour

1:55 Registration, Credentials, and Elections (#19)
(*Announce presidential election result*)

2:00 Response from Newly Elected President

2:05 Registration, Credentials, and Elections (#19)
(*Voting delegate registration report*)2:10 Presentation of slate and balloting for
First Vice-President2:20 Presentation of slate and balloting for Central
Region Vice-President2:30 Presentation of slate and balloting for East-
Southeast Region Vice-President2:40 Presentation of slate and balloting for Great Lakes
Region Vice-President2:50 Presentation of slate and balloting for Great Plains
Region Vice-President3:00 Presentation of slate and balloting for West-
Southwest Region Vice-President

3:10 Election to determine ranking of vice-presidents

3:20 Committee for Convention Nominations
(*Nominations from the floor for Secretary*)

3:40 Omnibus Resolution A

3:50 Routes to Ministry (#13) Introduction

4:20 Reformation (#15)

4:45 Mercy (#3)

5:30 Evening Prayer

6:00 Recess

7:30 LCEF Ice Cream Social (*Ballroom, 1st floor*)**Monday—July 11, 2016***Exhibits open 10:00am–3:00pm (Hall D, 3rd floor)*8:00 Service of Confession and Absolution—
Rev. Herbert C. Mueller Jr.8:30 Greetings—Concordia Publishing House,
Dr. Bruce Kintz

8:35 Structure and Administration (#11)

9:15 Church and Culture (#14)

9:45 Registration, Credentials, and Elections (#19)
(*Balloting for Secretary of Synod and regional
members of Synod Board of Directors*)10:15 Convention Essay—Rev. Roosevelt Gray Jr.
Upon This Rock: Repent

10:45 Theology and Church Relations (#5)
 11:30 University Education (#7)
 12:00 Recess
 1:30 Responsive Prayer 2—Rev. Gregory Seltz
 1:55 Minutes
 2:05 Seminaries (#6)
 2:40 Special Presentation—Ryan Anderson
 3:20 Committee for Convention Nominations
(Nominations for Synod Board of Directors, other boards, CTCR, Board of Regents and synodwide entities)
 4:00 Special Presentation—military chaplains, Rev. Craig Muehler
 4:10 Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution (#12)
 5:00 Special Presentation—honoring missionaries
 5:10 Routes to Ministry (#13)
 5:45 Closing Worship
 6:00 Load buses for Concordia Wisconsin dinner and concert

Tuesday—July 12, 2016

Exhibits open 10:00am—3:00pm (Hall D, 3rd floor)

8:00 Matins—Rev. Kou Seying
 8:25 Special Recognition—newly elected and outgoing Praesidium
 8:30 Routes to Ministry (#13)
 9:35 Church and Culture (#14)
 10:05 Convention Essay—Rev. Daniel Preus
Upon This Rock: Confess
 10:35 Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution (#12)
 11:20 International Mission (#2)
 12:00 Recess
 1:30 Responsive Prayer 1—Rev. Dr. John Wohlrabe Jr.
 1:55 Minutes
 2:05 Registration, Credentials, and Elections (#19)
(Balloting for Synod Board of Directors, other boards, CTCR, Board of Regents, synodwide entities)
 2:50 Special Recognition—former officers of Synod and special church body guests in attendance
 3:00 Registration, Credentials, and Elections (#19)
(Balloting for Synod Board of Directors, other boards, CTCR, Board of Regents, synodwide entities)
 3:40 Special Recognition—newly elected and outgoing Synod Board of Directors
 3:45 Theology and Church Relations (#5)
 5:10 Youth and Family (#16)
 5:45 Closing Worship
 6:00 Recess
Alumni Receptions (Hyatt Regency)

Wednesday—July 13, 2016

Exhibits Closed

8:00 Matins—Rev. Allan Buss
 8:20 Greetings—Lutheran Hour Ministries, Kurt Buchholz
 8:25 Greetings—Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Patti Ross
 8:30 Life Together (#4)
 9:25 Finance (#9)
 10:05 Convention Essay—Rev. Dr. Berhanu Ofgaa
Upon This Rock: Rejoice
 10:35 Special Recognition—LCMS President Emeriti
 10:45 Parochial Schools (#8)
 11:10 Stewardship (#10)
 11:35 Seminaries (#6)
 12:00 Recess
 1:30 Commemoration of the Faithful Departed—Rev. Dr. John Wille
 1:55 Minutes
 2:05 Registration, Credentials, and Elections (#19)
(Balloting for Synod Board of Directors, other boards, CTCR, Board of Regents, synodwide entities)
 2:50 Omnibus Resolution B
 3:00 Omnibus Resolution C
 3:10 Registration, Credentials, and Elections (#19)
(Balloting for Synod Board of Directors, other boards, CTCR, Board of Regents, synodwide entities)
 3:55 Routes to Ministry (#13)
 4:30 Structure and Administration (#11)
 5:20 Preaching and Continuing Education (#17)
 5:45 Closing Worship
 6:00 Recess
 7:30 President-Elect's Reception (*Ballroom, 1st floor*)

Thursday—July 14, 2016

Exhibits Closed

8:00 Matins—Rev. Dr. Scott Murray
 8:20 Minutes
 8:30 National Mission (#1)
 9:10 University Education (#7)
 9:50 Worker Wellness (#18)
 10:15 Life Together (#4)
 10:40 Ecclesiastical Supervision (#12)
 11:10 Unfinished Business
 11:50 Itinerarium
 12:00 Adjournment

OFFICIAL NOTICES

GENERAL INFORMATION: Voting and advisory delegates and representatives are reminded that the 66th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) will be held at the Wisconsin Center in downtown Milwaukee, July 9–14, 2016. The Opening Divine Service with Holy Communion will begin at 7:30 p.m. (with pre-service music at 7:00 p.m.) on Saturday, July 9, in Halls A and B, located on the 3rd floor of the Wisconsin Center. Following Matins on Sunday morning at 8:00 a.m., the first official business session of the convention will begin at 8:45 a.m. in Halls A and B.

HOUSING: All registered delegates and representatives should have received housing and travel information by this time. *If this is not the case, the district office or the entity represented should be notified.* If a delegate is unable to serve, the district secretary should be informed immediately so that he can properly register the alternate delegate with the Synod Secretary.

ON-SITE REGISTRATION: Delegates and representatives should register on-site for the convention as soon as possible after checking into their hotels. Registration will take place in the Foyer—4th Street, located on the 2nd floor of the Wisconsin Center and will be open at the following times:

Friday, July 8	1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Saturday, July 9	8:00 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, July 10	7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Monday—Wednesday, July 11–13	8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Thursday, July 14	8:00 a.m. – Noon

Visitors to the convention are welcome and not required to register. Members of the working press are asked to register with the Communications Office, Room 203C.

DELEGATE ORIENTATION: An orientation session is scheduled for 1:30–3:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 9, in Halls A and B, located on the 3rd floor of the Wisconsin Center.

FLOOR COMMITTEE OPEN HEARINGS: Floor Committees #1–18 have open hearings the morning of Saturday, July 9 that will be held at the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee located at 333 West Kilbourn Avenue near the Wisconsin Center. The Hyatt Regency Milwaukee is connected to the Wisconsin Center by a skywalk. The schedule of floor committee open hearings is as follows:

Floor Committee 1 – National Witness	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Floor Committee 2 – International Witness	8:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 3 – Mercy	10:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 4 – Life Together	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Floor Committee 5 – Theology and Church Relations	8:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 6 – Seminaries	8:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 7 – University Education	8:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 8 – Parochial Schools	10:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 9 – Finance	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Floor Committee 10 – Stewardship: Funding the Mission	10:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 11 – Structure and Administration	8:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 12 – Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution	8:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 13 – Routes to Ministry	8:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 14 – Church and Culture	10:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 15 – Reformation	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Floor Committee 16 – Family, Youth and Young Adults	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Floor Committee 17 – Preaching and Church Worker Cont. Education	10:30 a.m. – Noon
Floor Committee 18 – Worker Wellness	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

TODAY'S BUSINESS OFFICE AND ON-SITE SUBMISSIONS FOR PUBLICATION: Any materials for publication in a daily edition of *Today's Business* (Room 202 C) should be submitted by 3:30 p.m. on the day before

the item could appear in print. All submitters must return by 6:30 p.m. to approve what they have submitted before it can be printed for the next edition. The *Today's Business* office will be open Saturday, July 9, 9:00 a.m.–6:45 p.m.; Sunday, July 10 through Wednesday, July 13, 7:30 a.m.–6:45 p.m.; and Thursday, July 14, 7:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. (NOTE: Personal notices are not published in *Today's Business*.)

PRAYER AT THE CONVENTION: A prayer chapel, located in Room 101A on the 1st floor of the Wisconsin Center, will be open beginning the afternoon of Saturday, July 9. A box will be located in the chapel to receive any prayer requests. Additionally, prayer requests can be sent to Chaplain Weedon via email at chaplain@lcms.org. Please indicate on your prayer request whether it is a private or public concern. We will lift the private concerns to the throne of grace privately in the prayer chapel. Due to the volume of prayer requests received we cannot promise that each public prayer will be offered during public worship, but the chaplains will lift each concern in private prayer. Chaplain William Weedon and Assistant Chaplain Peter Bender will be present throughout the convention and will personally offer prayer with anyone who desires it. Note that the prayer chapel is closed during the lunch break each day when it will be used for private confession and absolution.

PRIVATE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION: Anyone desiring to receive private absolution may do so during the convention. The prayer chapel, located in Room 101A on the 1st floor of the Wisconsin Center, will be closed to public use during the lunch break each day (from Sunday through Wednesday) and used for private confession and absolution. When the door is open, you may simply enter and the pastor will guide you through the service; when the door is closed, please wait outside the chapel until it is opened again. A closed door during the lunch hour indicates that the room is occupied and being used for private absolution.

CONVENTION NATIONAL OFFERING: The National Offering will be received during the opening service, Saturday, July 9. Delegates who are carrying congregational or individual National Offering gifts with them to the convention are encouraged to submit them during this service. National Offering gifts can also be delivered to the Synod's display in the exhibit hall; however, the opening service is the preferred option.

INTERNET ACCESS: The Wisconsin Center has FREE Wi-Fi everywhere throughout the building. The complimentary service is best suited for light use with a speed of about 256 Kbps (upload & download). This service is upgradable at prevailing rates and can be configured throughout the Wisconsin Center campus.

For more information, visit the convention website at www.lcms.org/convention.



CONSENT FORM FOR FLOOR NOMINATIONS

LCMS 66TH REGULAR CONVENTION

STATEMENT OF WILLINGNESS TO SERVE

In addition to the commitment of the necessary time and energy required for service, officers and members of boards and commissions agree to serve in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, doctrinal statements and resolutions of the Synod.

When pastors, teachers and laypersons are requested to serve as board members or in similar part-time capacities, the Synod will assume the expense of travel, lodging, meals and other incidentals connected with such service. The Synod will not pay for the casual service rendered in a non-salaried position, nor pay for any substitutes engaged while away on duty. If financial outlay is required to perform the duties of the position involved, it is expected that congregations will assume this responsibility as needed.

Position to which you have been nominated:

Signature indicating willingness to serve:

Status: ordained commissioned lay

BRIEF PERSONAL STATEMENT

The report on final nominees for Synod offices is to contain pertinent information concerning each candidate, such as occupation or profession; district affiliation; residence; specific experience; number of years as a member of an LCMS congregation; present position; offices previously held in a congregation, district or the Synod; qualifications for the office in question; and, "if the candidate so desires, also a brief personal statement" (Bylaw 3.12.3.6 [c]).

As a nominee you may make such a statement in the space provided below. You may wish to say something about your vision for the future of the Synod or about your interest in service in the position to which you have been nominated. **Your statement should not exceed 100 words.**

With your consent, this statement will be published in a convention issue of *Today's Business* and made available to the voting delegates of the convention.

Release Approval: I agree to the release of this information for publication. Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This form is provided to facilitate the floor nominations process and is available on the LCMS Web site at lcms.org/convention.





SUPPLEMENTAL NOMINEE INFORMATION FORM

FOR CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM BOARD POSITIONS

LCMS 66TH REGULAR CONVENTION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Email: _____

Status : ordained commissioned lay

The 2013 LCMS Convention approved changes to the Bylaws of the Synod intended to **identify additional potential nominees and ascertain their qualifications** to serve in Concordia University System (CUS) board positions, either as a member of the CUS Board of Directors or as a member of a board of regents of one of the nine CUS colleges and universities. Bylaw expectations in both cases are nearly identical:

- 3.6.6.3 Persons elected or appointed to the Concordia University System Board of Directors should have demonstrated familiarity and support of the institutions, and shall support the doctrinal positions of the Synod, and shall possess two or more of the following qualifications: theological acumen, an advanced degree, experience in higher education administration, administration of complex organizations, finance, law, investments, technology, human resources, facilities management, or fund development.
- 3.10.5.2 7. Persons elected or appointed to a board of regents should be knowledgeable regarding the region in which the institution is located and shall demonstrate familiarity and support for the doctrinal positions of the Synod and possess two or more of the following qualifications: theological acumen, an advanced academic degree, experience in higher education administration, administration of complex organizations, finance, law, investments, technology, human resources, facilities management, or fund development. Demonstrated familiarity and support of the institution is a desired quality in the candidate.

To facilitate the review and verification process also required by the Synod's bylaws, please respond to the following:

- A.** How and to what extent have you demonstrated familiarity and support of the colleges and universities of the Concordia University System? With which institution(s) and region(s) are you most familiar?
- B.** How have you demonstrated familiarity and support for the doctrinal positions of the Synod?



SUPPLEMENTAL NOMINEE INFORMATION FORM
FOR CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM BOARD POSITIONS

Nominee's Name: _____

C. Which "two or more" of the following qualifications do you believe you possess that would qualify you to serve on the CUS Board of Directors or a college or university board of regents (check as many as apply):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> theological acumen | <input type="checkbox"/> experience in higher education administration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an advanced academic degree | <input type="checkbox"/> administration of complex organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> finance | <input type="checkbox"/> law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> investments | <input type="checkbox"/> technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> human resources | <input type="checkbox"/> facilities management fund development |

D. List separately two or three of the qualifications you have marked and offer supportive information and comments to demonstrate that you possess that qualification:

Qualification #1

Qualification #2

Qualification #3

Name (please print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for your cooperation. Please return the signed and dated form to:

Committee for Convention Nominations
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
1333 South Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295



FLOOR COMMITTEE OPEN HEARINGS AND OTHER KEY LOCATIONS

Open Hearings—Saturday, July 9

Hyatt Regency Milwaukee
333 West Kilbourn Avenue

1. National Witness8:30–10:00 a.m.; Lakeshore Ballroom C (1st Floor)
2. International Witness 8:30 a.m.–Noon; Milwaukee Room AB (2nd floor)
3. Mercy 10:30 a.m.–Noon; Lakeshore Ballroom C (1st Floor)
4. Life Together8:30–10:00 a.m.; Lakeshore Ballroom B (1st Floor)
5. Theology and Church Relations 8:30 a.m.–Noon; Regency Ballroom B (2nd floor)
6. Seminaries8:30 a.m.–Noon; Executive Ballroom B (2nd floor)
7. University Education 8:30 a.m.–Noon; Executive Ballroom A (2nd floor)
8. Parochial Schools 10:30 a.m.–Noon; Lakeshore Ballroom B (1st Floor)
9. Finance8:30–10:00 a.m.; Lakeshore Ballroom A (1st Floor)
10. Stewardship: Funding the Mission 10:30 a.m.–Noon; Lakeshore Ballroom A (1st Floor)
11. Structure and Administration8:30 a.m.–Noon; Regency Ballroom A (2nd Floor)
12. Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution8:30 a.m.–Noon; Regency Ballroom D (2nd Floor)
13. Routes to Ministry 8:30 a.m.–Noon; Regency Ballroom C (2nd Floor)
14. Church and Culture10:30 a.m.–Noon; Executive Ballroom D (2nd Floor)
15. Reformation 8:30–10:00 a.m.; Executive Ballroom D (2nd Floor)
16. Family, Youth and Young Adults8:30–10:00 a.m.; Executive Ballroom C (2nd Floor)
17. Preaching and Church Worker Continuing Education 10:30 a.m.–Noon; Executive Ballroom C (2nd Floor)
18. Worker Wellness8:30–10:00 a.m.; Crystal Room (2nd Floor)

Other Key Locations
Wisconsin Center

Chapel..... 101A (1st floor)

Clergy Vestry 101B (1st floor)

Communications 203C (2nd floor)

Convention Office 201C (2nd floor)

Delegate Dinner..... Wisconsin Center Ballroom (1st floor)

Delegate Orientation..... Halls A and B (3rd floor)

District Photos 101B (1st floor)

Event Shuttle Pickup/Drop off..... 4th Street and Wells Street (curbside, north side of building)

Exhibit Hall Hall D (3rd floor)

Floor Committee Workrooms 202D and 202E (2nd floor)

General Session/Worship..... Halls A and B (3rd floor)

Registration..... Foyer-4th Street (2nd floor)

Today's Business 202C (2nd floor)

Video Room..... 103E (1st floor)

VISIT Milwaukee Information Center main entrance, 4th Street and Wisconsin Ave. (1st floor)

FLOOR COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

<u>Number and Name</u>	<u>Chairman</u>
1. National Witness	Rev. Mark Miller, President Central Illinois District 1850 North Grand Avenue West Springfield, IL 62702-1626
2. International Witness	Rev. Donald J. Fondow, President Minnesota North District P.O. Box 604 Brainerd, MN 56401-0604
3. Mercy	Dr. R. Lee Hagan, President Missouri District 660 Mason Ridge Center Drive, Suite 300 St. Louis, MO 63141-8557
4. Life Together	Rev. Dan P. Gilbert, President Northern Illinois District 2301 South Wolf Road Hillside, IL 60162-2211
5. Theology and Church Relations	Dr. Scott R. Murray, Fourth Vice-President West-Southwest Region 2525 Nantucket Drive #10 Houston, TX 77057-4829
6. Seminaries	Dr. James A. Baneck, President North Dakota District 413 East Avenue D Bismarck, ND 58501
7. University Education	Rev. Timothy J. Scharr, President Southern Illinois District 2408 Lebanon Avenue Belleville, IL 62221-2529
8. Parochial Schools	Dr. Dean W. Nadasdy, President Minnesota South District 14301 Grand Avenue South Burnsville, MN 55306-5707
9. Finance	Dr. Daniel P. May, President Indiana District 1145 South Barr Street Fort Wayne, IN 46802-3135
10. Stewardship: Funding the Mission	Rev. Dwayne M. Lueck, President North Wisconsin District 3103 Seymour Lane Wausau, WI 54401-4049

- | | |
|---|--|
| 11. Structure and Administration | Rev. Terry L. Cripe, President
Ohio District
6451 Columbia Road
Olmsted Falls, OH 44138-0277 |
| 12. Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution | Dr. John C. Wille, President
South Wisconsin District
8100 West Capitol Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53222-1920 |
| 13. Routes to Ministry | Dr. Roger C. Paavola, President
Mid-South District
1675 Wynne Road
Cordova, TN 38016-4905 |
| 14. Church and Culture | Rev. Terry C. Forke, President
Montana District
30 Broadwater Avenue
Billings, MT 59101-1826 |
| 15. Reformation | Rev. Peter K. Lange, President
Kansas District
1000 SW Tenth Avenue
Topeka, KS 66604-1104 |
| 16. Family, Youth and Young Adults | Rev. Timothy Yeadon, President
New England District
400 Wilbraham Road
Springfield, MA 01109-2723 |
| 17. Preaching and Church Worker Continuing Education | Dr. Brian S. Saunders, President
Iowa District East
1100 Blairs Ferry Road
Marion, IA 52302-3093 |
| 18. Worker Wellness | Dr. David P. E. Maier, President
Michigan District
3773 Geddes Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-3028 |
| 19. Registration, Credentials, and Elections | Rev. Gregory S. Walton, President
Florida-Georgia District
5850 T. G. Lee Boulevard, Suite 500
Orlando, FL 32822-4410 |
| 20. Nominations | Dr. Ronald M. Garwood
Christ the King Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 355
Cody, WY 82414-0355 |

SPECIAL STANDING RULES

Minutes

1. Minutes shall be distributed every next morning for consideration and adoption and will be included in the issue of *Today's Business* on the day following adoption. The first item of business of the afternoon session shall be the formal approval of these minutes, with the exception of the final day's minutes, which shall be approved by the Board of Directors at its first meeting following the convention. Only corrections to the minutes involving convention actions shall be offered from the floor for consideration. Editorial corrections addressing misspellings of names or faulty references or titles should be provided in writing to the Secretary for incorporation into the minutes.

Resolutions

2. Resolutions shall be prioritized by floor committees and normally shall be presented to the convention in numerical sequence. However, resolutions that impact nominations or elections may be given earlier consideration at the discretion of the chair, in consultation with the floor committee chairman and the chairman of the floor committees on nominations and elections.
3. The preface, preamble, rationale, and whereas sections shall be regarded as integral parts of resolutions and therefore subject to the same consideration and adoption.
4. It shall be the discretion of the chairman or presenting member of the floor committee to read the preface, preamble, rationale, and whereas sections of resolutions from floor committees that are printed in *Today's Business*. In addition, the chair of the convention is not required to read each resolution as he states the questions and then as he calls for the vote.
5. The convention chairman, in consultation with floor committee chairmen, may identify resolutions to which up to 1 ½ hours of continuous consideration should be allotted, as follows:

15 minutes (if needed)	Floor committee presentation
30 minutes (if needed)	Debate on the main motion
45 minutes (if needed)	Presentation of and debate on amendments, substitute motions, main motion, or main motion as amended.
6. Whenever possible, substitute resolutions and amendments to proposed resolutions shall be submitted to *Today's Business* for publication prior to convention consideration of the resolutions to which they pertain. When this is not possible, as in the course of discussion, one written copy of the proposed amendment shall be provided to the Secretary after it is offered from the floor.
7. The delegates will consider omnibus resolutions as part of regular scheduled business. Omnibus A refers to overtures referred to a board, commission, or other group of the Synod to consider and take action. Omnibus B refers to overtures that affirm an action previously taken in past conventions. Omnibus C refers to overtures of thanks or recognition. Omnibus D refers to overtures declined by the floor committee. A majority vote is required to remove an overture from an omnibus resolution and have it referred to the appropriate floor committee for action.
8. If any resolution is not acted upon by the convention before adjournment, it dies and the subject matter may be reintroduced for possible consideration by an overture to the next convention.

Process

9. Unless covered by these Special Standing Rules, parliamentary procedure shall be governed by the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*
10. The chair shall see that the agenda is followed as closely as possible. The chair may deviate from the printed program when necessary or expedient.
11. All non-voting advisory delegates and representatives may participate in debate, but may not nominate candidates, make motions, or vote.
12. Registered delegates and advisory representatives wishing to address the convention, once recognized by the chair, shall state their name, the name of the district (or other entity of the Synod that they represent), and whether they are a voting delegate, advisory delegate, or advisory representative. Delegates and representatives shall normally address the convention from their assigned microphones.
13. A microphone queue list will be enacted for every debatable motion considered by the assembly. Each time a debatable motion is considered by the assembly, a new microphone queue list will be created and the queue list from any previous motion will be cleared.

14. The pro-con method of debate may be used at the discretion of the chair or by adoption of the assembly. When a member of the floor committee speaks in favor of a resolution, it shall be recognized as a “pro” speech and will be followed by a “con” speech.
15. Delegates and representatives wishing to enter the microphone queue for any reason (debate, make an amendment, call the question, request information, or any other action) must always identify themselves as pro or con speakers, by pressing either 1(pro) or 2 (con) on their queue keypad even if the assembly is not in a pro-con mode. This queue identification is necessary so delegates and representatives are appropriately reflected in the queue should the chair choose to move to a pro-con method of debate. All queue entrees will be addressed as they appear in the queue order. When called upon by the chair delegates and representatives must identify themselves and state the desired action.
16. Ordinarily, questions of privilege (or point of personal privilege) shall be addressed in writing to the chair or his appointee.
17. No delegate or representative may speak in debate any longer than two (2) minutes per speech. No delegate or representative may speak more than twice on the same motion on the same day and may not speak a second time until all delegates and representatives desiring to speak the first time have had the opportunity. The chair shall have discretion to make exceptions to this rule. When a floor committee is called on to answer a question or to give information, this rule shall not apply.
18. A delegate who speaks on an issue may not move to call the question at the close of his or her speech.
19. If a substitute motion is offered and seconded, the presenter shall be offered two (2) minutes to provide the rationale for offering it and a member of the floor committee shall be offered two (2) minutes to present rationale for why the committee believes the original motion is to be preferred. The convention shall decide by majority vote without further debate whether or not to consider the substitute. If the decision is in the affirmative and if the substitute motion is subsequently adopted, the original motion dies. If the substitute motion does not receive favorable action either to consider or adopt, the original motion is again considered.
20. A motion to close debate (“call the question”) shall apply only to the immediately pending question.
21. While any voting delegate may move to close debate (call the question) at any time that it is his or her turn to speak, a vote on closing debate (two-thirds vote required) on the pending motion shall be put by the chair after every twenty (20) minutes of debate (except those to which Standing Rule 5 pertain). The chair may also call for a vote on closing debate (two-thirds vote required) when in his judgment the assembly has heard sufficient speaking from both sides of the issue.
22. Amendments of non-contiguous words may be made to a pending question so long as the consequence of such non-contiguous words does not constitute in effect a substitute motion.
23. During the last two days of the convention, the President shall have the privilege of calling up for action those resolutions that in his judgment must be acted upon before adjournment.
24. No motion to reconsider or rescind shall be made or called up during the last day of the convention.

Floor Nominations

25. No floor nominations will be accepted for the First Vice-President, regional vice-presidents, or regional board elections (Bylaws 3.12.2.1; 3.12.2.5[d]). In the case of election of the Secretary and board and commission members that do not require regional representation, floor nominations are allowed, to take place at the time of the report of the chairman of the Committee for Convention Nominations (Bylaw 3.12.3.7). Such floor nominations may only be made from the list of names which have previously been offered to the Committee for Convention Nominations prior to the final deadline for the submission of nominations, unless the convention shall otherwise order by a simple majority vote (Bylaw 3.12.3.7[c]). Allowable floor nominations for all positions of boards and commissions shall be opened for a period of forty (40) minutes, unless ceased earlier by a two-thirds vote of the assembly. At the end of forty (40) minutes, a vote to cease nominations shall be called by the convention chairman. If a two-thirds vote to cease nominations is not received, the period for floor nominations shall be extended an additional twenty (20) minutes. This cycle shall continue in twenty (20) minute intervals until a two-thirds vote for nominations to cease is received from the assembly. Floor nominations are not debatable and will be voted on individually for approval to be added to the slate (Bylaw 3.12.37[a-b]).

Voting

26. An electronic response system shall ordinarily be used to register votes. If the system is not available, the chair shall take votes by voice, by show of hands, or by a rising vote. The chair may order a count if any

voice, show of hands, or rising vote seems inconclusive. When possible, vote tallies shall be recorded in the minutes.

27. An invalid vote is defined as a vote entered on the keypad with a number not offered as a selection, or entered before voting is opened or after voting is closed. Invalid votes are not counted in the total number of votes cast.
28. The privilege of granting delegates the right to record their votes in the minutes with respect to a particular resolution shall be granted by the assembly by a majority vote without debate. If such privilege is granted, the votes of record shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Synod within 15 minutes after the close of the day's business on which such privilege was granted.

Use of Electronic Devices

29. In order to promote an orderly and non-distracting convention atmosphere, the following shall apply to the use, and area of use, of electronic equipment, including wired and wireless communication devices, laptops, iPads, tablets, cell phones, smart phones, pagers, PDAs, or other similar electronic devices. In all cases where use is permitted, the sound-producing capabilities of such devices shall not be used. Except as approved by convention staff, personal extension cords shall not be allowed on the convention floor.

Area of Convention Hall		Type of Usage Permitted in Designated Area		
	Voice	Text Message	Other electronic Communications, e.g., laptops, ipads, tablets, pagers, PEDs, smart phones, wearable technology including Apple Watch and like devices.	Laptop computers, ipads, tablets WITH communications disabled (e.g., Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, Cellular, and Infrared communications turned off)
Voting and Advisory Delegates & Representatives	No	No	No	Yes
COP, BOD, CCM, COH, CTCR, Press, Special Guests	No	Yes	Yes	---
Visitors, Back Seating Area	No	Yes	Yes	---
Convention Staff, All Areas	Yes	Yes	Yes	---

HISTORY OF LCMS CONVENTIONS

Structure of the Synod

When the Synod was organized in 1847, the number of congregations was small and its geographical area limited. There was no need for districts. Seven years later, in 1854, the Synod inaugurated its current basic structure by dividing itself into four districts which initially convened at the same time as the national convention and then, later on, during years when the national delegate convention did not meet.

Since 1854 until the present time, the Synod has made clear that it is not a federation of districts. It adds, divides, or combines its districts according to need. Delegates attending national conventions take into consideration not only the interests of their own districts (which are the Synod in that place), but also the welfare of the entire Synod.

Delegate Representation

The 2016 LCMS convention will be its 66th Regular Convention and its fiftieth delegate convention. From 1847 to 1872 (the first 15 conventions) each congregation was represented by a lay member and its pastor.

Beginning with the 1874 convention, assembly size necessitated delegate representation, as provided in the 1923 Synod Constitution, which required that “a number of congregations shall form a group, which shall be represented by two voting delegates, one a pastor and one a lay delegate.” The 1947 Constitution became a little more specific: “Large congregations shall form small circuits and small congregations shall form large circuits.”

Since 1967, electoral circuits have generally been identified with visitation circuits comprised of 7 to 20 congregations with a combined membership of 1,500 to 10,000 confirmed members. Exceptions to these numbers may be granted by the President of the Synod upon request of district boards of directors.

Frequency of Conventions

The Synod met annually during its first eight years (1847–1854). Since that time it has usually convened every three years.

Exceptions occurred at the time of the Civil War, when the 11th Regular Convention was held in 1863; the 12th in 1864; and the 13th in 1866. In addition, a special convention was also held in 1864 to consider reorganization proposals for the President’s Office and delegate arrangements.

An additional exception to the three-year rule occurred in 1874. The 1872 convention had resolved to hold the next (16th) convention in 1875. Via a vote of the districts, it was resolved to hold the next convention in 1874 due to pressing business. The next following convention was not held until 1878.

A constitutional change by the 1965 convention brought about yet another exception to the three-year cycle. From 1967 to 1981, conventions met every two years. The three-year rule has been in effect since that time. The recent 2010 and 2013 conventions declined resolutions that would have changed the convention cycle to every four years.

Convention Locations

Host cities and the frequency of their hosting national conventions of the Synod have been as follows (2016 convention included):

St. Louis (21)	San Francisco (1)
Fort Wayne (13)	New York (1)
Milwaukee (8)	Denver (1)
Chicago (4)	New Orleans (1)
Cleveland (3)	Anaheim (1)
Detroit (3)	Dallas (1)
Houston (3)	Indianapolis (1)
Saginaw (1)	Wichita (1)
St. Paul (1)	Pittsburgh (1)

PRESIDENT’S REPORT, PART 2

66th Regular Convention of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Presented to the Convention Floor Committees
May 27, 2016

Grace and peace in Jesus!

Let’s be *bold!* Peter confessed, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!” And Jesus responded, “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:16, 18).

Let’s confess boldly.

- Let’s confess boldly that we believe in a Savior who came for sinners! Whatever we state publicly as a church must clearly come from a people who recognize their own inherent sinfulness and need of a Savior. When we say “no” to culture, we do so fully knowing ourselves to be sinners under the Law. It is our sacred task to invite the world to be sinners with us, and to invite them to share with us the forgiveness of Jesus. And let’s be sinners over against one another—that is, sinners who know what it is to confess our sins to one another and to be forgiven for the sake of Jesus. None of us has the moral high ground at this convention. Our hearts are all alike, susceptible to division, party spirit, violations of the Eighth Commandment and much more. We will sin against each other. It’s impossible for sinners not to do so when dealing with significant and emotional issues. We’ve all been given two ears and one mouth, and that divine math exists for a reason. “God be merciful to *me* a sinner!” (Luke 18:13). And then let us all the more boldly tell one another, “God has put away your sin, in the cross and the resurrection of Jesus!”
- That’s why we boldly confess the Gospel and all its articles of faith! No compromise! The apostles went straight to the temple after Pentecost, preached the Gospel and did acts of mercy right under the nose of the antagonistic authorities (Acts 2:42 ff.). They were not smug. They were not “holier than thou.” They did not preach themselves. They confessed Christ! Let’s tighten the straps of the armor of God (Eph. 6:10 ff.), and with the truth of Christ stand tall and stand together as confessors. “You are the Christ!” “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom. 10:9). “Hold fast the confession!” (Heb. 4:14).
- “I appeal to Ceasar!” (Acts 25:21). As I write this report, the Supreme Court has handed what is essentially a victory to the Little Sisters of the Poor regarding the Health and Human Services dictates regarding the provision of birth control (including abortifacients) for employees as required by the Affordable Care Act. We have been watching this case closely and joined in an amicus brief supporting the Little Sisters. From time to time, criticisms come to us for “political activity,” or the allegation is made that we put out statements on these kinds of issues as though we were trying to turn back the clock in the culture. Rubbish! As my friend, Tim Goeglein, likes to remind us, every morning there are thousands of individuals who get up with the goal of removing every vestige of Christian influence from the public square. They are bent on trumping our constitutionally guaranteed free exercise of religion with mythical rights to gender identity, transgenderism, etc. They are intensely committed to removing the rights of religious entities and individuals to take part in the benefits afforded in this country to educational and other institutions. The current attack is to define any and all opposition to homosexuality, same-sex marriage, transgenderism and gender self-identification as bigotry somehow equal to racial discrimination. In all such matters, we as The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod must stand tall, educate our own members, and defend our collective rights as citizens to be religious and to serve as citizens of this country without penalty for our long-standing, biblically-based views. The Lutheran Reformation was many things, but it was also a moment that declared that the religious conscience is created by God to be free from coercion by the state. Luther made that abundantly clear. Had the Little Sisters not “appealed to Ceasar” or sued, they would have been forced to pay millions in fines and bring to an end the charitable care for the elderly for which they are famous. We face the same with our universities. The Obama administration recently sent all educational institutions an instruction to accommodate transgender individuals on campuses. It was sent to *our* institutions as well. When he appealed to the legal process available to him at

1 the time, Paul had not only the Gospel in mind, but also his ability to proclaim the Gospel freely. That's what
2 we have in mind as well.

3
4 This year we have increased the number of floor committees. This was done to spread the work around more, as in
5 2013 some committees had more work than they could comfortably and efficiently handle. We expect very strong,
6 solid and excellent resolutions to be presented to the convention. We are directing each floor committee to focus on
7 a narrower set of concerns, but in so doing, to go deeper and produce resolutions of greater substance. We have
8 assigned staff to provide detailed, up-to-date information to the floor committees in order to provide the "grist" for
9 what we hope will be some of the best resolutions ever passed by a synod in convention. As we have told the chair
10 and vice chair of each floor committee that we are not at all afraid of significant and thorough "whereas" statements
11 in the resolutions, leading to *action* in the resolves. Resolutions are put together by the floor committees from the
12 overtures published in the *Workbook*, from the reports in the same, and from this report to you today as well. In
13 meeting with each floor committee's leadership, First Vice-President Herb Mueller and I have carefully emphasized
14 some significant issues that need to be dealt with by you. Information we have shared with your committee leaders
15 is provided also at the end of this report, floor committee by floor committee. Staff are also present as resources. Use
16 them fully as you see fit to get the information you need. There is nothing to hide in this place. Nothing. We are
17 looking for substantive resolutions that draw as many people as possible to them, so that we are more united around
18 the Word of God and our confession of Christ before the world.

19
20 In Part 1 of my report (*Workbook*, pp. 1ff.) I noted six issues that need synodical concentration.

- 21 1. evangelism and outreach;
- 22 2. reinvigorating congregations and assisting struggling congregations;
- 23 3. healthy workers;
- 24 4. intentional outreach to immigrant populations;
- 25 5. church planting; and
- 26 6. resolution of internal issues which cause conflict.

27
28 All of these issues and more have been reviewed by us together with the chair and vice chair of each floor
29 committee. Although they also merit profound attention, I am not mentioning them in my remarks to follow because
30 they have already been discussed in Part 1.

31
32 In the time we have together now I simply want to highlight a few issues for your consideration.

33
34 **Resolution 5-01A Task Force—Concordia University System (CUS).** I'm very proud of our universities. The
35 Lutheran Identity Statement (*Workbook*, p. 262ff.) is a great piece of work. The university presidents, Dean Wenthe
36 and the CUS Board have all outdone themselves. Responding to the task force recommendations, the presidents
37 have suggested in particular that the issue of adding additional regents should be studied for another triennium,
38 rather than making the changes suggested in the report. I am agreeable to that, but would request that the President
39 of Synod or perhaps the Praesidium (since they are involved in visitation of universities at the Synod President's
40 request), be given one, or perhaps two, appointees to each university board of regents. The Bylaws require the
41 Synod President to visit and provide ecclesiastical supervision for these institutions. Currently there is little ability
42 for my office to have any real, adequate knowledge of the institution's life.

43
44 The Synod Board of Directors, with my encouragement, passed a resolution requesting study of the issue of closure,
45 divestment or consolidation of our universities in the event of catastrophic financial failure. I believe we are but a
46 court decision or two away from a scenario where the federal government could eliminate our ability to participate
47 in federal student loan programs, and thereby quickly make it impossible for our schools to survive. We face threats
48 from the Department of Justice, Department of Education, EEOC and others. There will be voices among us calling
49 for compromise on the sexuality issues in order for us to "continue the mission." This will be the death knell of
50 genuine Lutheran university education. In the event of a catastrophic court decision, the Synod will need to be able
51 to act decisively to consolidate resources, properties and schools—perhaps into one or two institutions sufficiently
52 endowed to survive without federal money or interference. I pray this does not happen. The alternative will be to
53 simply watch the universities drift away into religious and moral ambiguity. The universities don't want this. I will
54 do everything in my power to prevent it.

1 **Resolution 5-14A Task Force—Alternate Routes to Pastoral Ministry.** This task force has done extraordinary
 2 work. The proposals are excellent. They’ve hit the right balance between maintaining required flexibility and
 3 opportunity in the various routes toward ordination, yet have made specific recommendations for strengthening the
 4 various programs. As with other task force reports before this convention, I, for one, am not determined to put to the
 5 convention every detail or provision suggested. We are after progress, not perfection. I’m told by our military
 6 chaplains that the Armed Forces are ceasing to recruit men for military chaplaincy who have online degrees. It’s a
 7 matter of performance! Let’s up our game across the board in pastoral education, not conform to broadly
 8 diminishing standards all around us, including the loss of even New Testament Greek as a requirement for many
 9 protestant seminary programs across the U.S. God help us!

10
 11 **Task Force on Dispute Resolution.** I am not in favor of wholesale revision of our dispute resolution and
 12 ecclesiastical supervision processes. Our current system has many valuable attributes. I did, however, appoint a task
 13 force to evaluate the system and make some suggestions, which they have done (*Workbook*, pp. 297ff.). Concerns
 14 about the system arose from years of dealing with a case (now resolved) where the system had repeatedly failed. The
 15 system does need some clarification and improvement. The current process is too long. The current process affords
 16 no appeal, should a district president refuse to act. The process needs panel members with stronger theological
 17 credentials. The current bylaw on dissent is unclear. The task force has made some good suggestions. In the task
 18 force’s recommendations, I would personally prefer any appeal to the Synod President, or reference to the Synod
 19 President in general in the reconciliation process, be made an appeal or reference to the Praesidium. We must have a
 20 system that actually works. However, we must avoid centralization as much as possible. If district presidents are to
 21 be subject to the same ecclesiastical oversight as parish pastors (and that’s a real “if”), then it may be wise to
 22 consider placing the action in such cases in the hands of the Praesidium rather than the Synod President. We count
 23 on the wisdom of the task force, the floor committee and finally, the convention.

24
 25 **CCM Opinions.** Because there are issues arising from time to time on these matters, I put several questions to the
 26 CCM regarding the confessional article of the Synod’s Constitution (Article II), and also regarding unionism in
 27 Article VI. More than forty years ago, the Synod asserted its right and responsibility to make doctrinal resolutions in
 28 conformity with its confession, as well as its right, evangelically and pastorally, to hold members to the same. At the
 29 time, many argued vociferously that Article VII, which notes that Synod is advisory with respect to the
 30 congregation’s right of self-government, meant that no congregation was obligated to the doctrinal resolutions of the
 31 Synod. Even today there are those among us still arguing that the definitive response of the Synod to higher
 32 criticism, as adopted in 1973 in “A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles”—a document written by
 33 Dr. Ralph Bohlmann at the request of Dr. J.A.O. Preus—is not binding on the members of synod. The outstanding
 34 CCM Opinion 13-2694 is worth very careful study.

35
 36 Delegates will note that there are CCM opinions, and especially overtures, dealing with the Synod President’s role in
 37 the selecting of new presidents for LCMS colleges and universities. This issue arises because I have consistently
 38 pushed for the best theologically and administratively qualified candidates possible. And this has been done in the
 39 wake of experience, visitation of campuses, and knowledge of the many strengths and some weaknesses of the
 40 institutions. I will continue to do the same. We need *great* theology *and* great administration.

41
 42 CCM Opinion 14-2724 on Bylaw 3.8.3 has certainly garnered a lot of attention. Let me be frank. This bylaw, simply
 43 put, says that the Synod’s Board for International Mission is “the only sending agency” for missionaries and funds to
 44 official foreign mission fields of Synod. The bylaw was put in place in its present form in 1983. Just a few years
 45 back, when the Iowa District East resolved to send a missionary to a foreign field, the then-President of the Synod in
 46 no uncertain terms informed the president of that district that such action was not permissible. In my own former
 47 work with LCMS World Relief and Human Care, *all* funds we sent overseas went via LCMS World Mission, and
 48 the one international employee we placed after the great Asian Tsunami was placed with and through the mission
 49 board.

50 The CCM opinion has clarified the bylaw, and the bulk of the opinion actually limits its applicability. The
 51 auxiliaries are free to act as they see fit. RSOs are free to act as they see fit. The opinion does not apply to these
 52 entities. The CCM simply stated that the districts and congregations are not to act independently of the Board for
 53 International Mission. The opinion does not limit short-term mission trips, nor does it restrict the sending of funds.
 54 We *want* congregations and districts involved internationally! However, in response to the actions or contemplated
 55 actions of a couple of districts, Dr. Collver asked for the opinion. We had not had districts (or congregations)
 56 sending missionaries on their own until last year. Our international footprint is large and growing exponentially. The

1 bylaw and the opinion simply say that we as Synod need to do this work together. See the FAQ in the *Workbook*, pp.
2 145ff. Much is clarified. The BIM has also provided policies, which are found in the *Workbook*, pp. 147ff. These
3 policies allow flexibility and *joint* calling of missionaries by congregations/districts *and* the BIM. There is nothing
4 in the Bible that would preclude a congregation or district from carrying out international mission on its own. But in
5 such matters we should act in good order. “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Cor. 14:40). And we
6 should act in love, which voluntarily limits its freedom for the greater good (Romans 14). For example, there is
7 nothing in the Bible that would prevent one geographic district from starting a mission church in another district.
8 But we limit that activity for the sake of love and unity and cooperation—all for the sake of the mission of the
9 Gospel.

10
11 We have made significant philosophical and practical changes in the work we do internationally. See “A
12 Theological Statement for Mission in the 21st Century” in the *Workbook*, pp. 6ff. We have emphasized a back-to-
13 basics approach to mission. We have emphasized church planting and seminary training. We have emphasized
14 Lutheran identity. We have emphasized the proper freedom and responsibility of the spiritual priesthood to take part
15 in the mission, while upholding our sound LCMS doctrine of the Office of the Ministry. We have vastly increased
16 the number of missionaries. A couple of years ago, one or two missionaries chose to discontinue their service in
17 OIM, and then sought out congregations and districts to send them independently. The mission will endure, God
18 willing! Yet, we must put up a united front. I can list numerous horror stories that have resulted from work not done
19 cooperatively. Nine times out of ten, the BIM and the OIM staff bend over backward to assist congregations and
20 districts in what they desire to do, and not to impede. If we are truly to be a Synod, and not a mere confederation of
21 separate entities, we need to work together. And we can and we do.

22
23 **Synod Convention Cycle.** There are overtures to expand the Synod’s three-year convention cycle to four years. I
24 have been skeptical of this in the past, primarily because it puts another year of separation between the fundamental
25 decision making body of Synod (the convention) and the operation of the church. I am more open to considering a
26 four year cycle, however, for two reasons: 1. it would result in an overall reduction of cost for congregations; and 2.
27 the amount of preparation for conventions is enormous and costly, and it might be better to expend more time and
28 energy on the mission of the church and somewhat less on convention preparation. I think it would be healthy to
29 have a discussion of this matter on the floor. Any change would require a two-thirds vote, and a two-thirds
30 ratification by the congregations of Synod.

31
32 **CTCR Documents.** Do take a careful look at the CTCR documents presented in the *Workbook*, pp. 149ff. They are
33 a marvelous body of work. The CTCR has great leadership in Dr. Lehenbauer and Rev. Vogel. Dr. Rast’s
34 chairmanship has likewise been stellar. Note the “Guidelines for Congregational, District, and Synodical
35 Communion Statements” (*Workbook*, p. 178). Last convention, the Synod (by 77%) directed the Synod President to
36 urge district presidents to address this matter in their districts. I have done so, but the matter continues to need
37 attention. I have stated repeatedly and publicly that if congregations would only cease inviting non-LCMS people to
38 commune after merely reading and assenting to a statement about the Lord’s Supper in the bulletin, and instead also
39 direct all non-members to the pastor or an elder before communing so that actual pastoral discretion can be
40 exercised, this would go a long way toward resolving the issue among us.

41
42 In light of the CTCR reports on “Gender Identity Disorder” and “A Christian Response to Hostility and
43 Persecution,” I urge the floor committee on Church and Culture to provide the convention with a strong resolution
44 on these issues. We must stand with people like our own Judge Neely in Wyoming, who is being persecuted and
45 threatened with removal from the bench for simply having a traditional view of marriage.

46
47 **Resolution 3-10A Task Force on CRM Candidates.** This task force addressing the issue of rostered workers
48 without calls has provided a helpful report (*Workbook*, pp. 231 ff.). It was produced from the perspective of district
49 presidents and is helpful. In order to more carefully evaluate the situation and provide the floor committee with the
50 most information possible, we also assembled a group of 18 men who have experienced “candidate” and “non-
51 candidate” status—that is, men who have been without calls. The issue is complex. However, these men did provide a
52 wealth of information and some significant suggestions that may be helpful in moving us all in the best direction
53 regarding this matter. We will share that full report with the floor committee.

54
55 My dear friends, thank you so very much for your thoughtful service. Some of you are on floor committees that will
56 make relatively short work of the tasks on your plate. No matter what your tasks, each is in its own way vital. You

1 will deal with preaching, continuing education, parochial schools, evangelism, mission, structure, governance,
2 finance, etc. For us all to be on about the mission of “seeking and saving the lost,” it is imperative that all of these
3 vital areas are well ordered and that we as a Synod are faithful to the core to the Scriptures and the Confessions,
4 which direct our great mission in the name of Jesus. Your work will be blessed. We will, I’m confident, have
5 overwhelming unity expressed at this convention.

6
7 God bless your work. Let’s be kind. Let’s hear each other. Let’s be resolved. Let’s act with decisiveness. Let’s be
8 the best of who we are as The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod—that is, sinners indeed, but sinners with a
9 marvelous confession of the faith; and a Savior who has seen fit to sustain us, despite ourselves, to this very day.

10
11 “Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by
12 the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us, that
13 which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Hebrews 13:20ff.).

14
15 Be bold! “Let’s go!” (Mark 1:38).

16
17 *Additional information from various staff and content experts has been provided to the leadership of each floor*
18 *committee for the specific recommendations below. An asterisk (*) indicates where no accompanying documents*
19 *have been provided. These lists are not necessarily exhaustive, but provide the basic framework and direction for*
20 *each committee’s work.*

21 22 **Floor Committee 1—National Witness (“Reaching the Lost”)**

23 The first four floor committees have been organized around the 2013 mission and ministry emphasis of “Witness,
24 Mercy, Life Together,” with the theme of “witness” divided into two subthemes of “national” and “international.”
25 As John the Baptizer bore witness to Christ (John 1:19), so also the church exists to bear witness to the “Lamb of
26 God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The general issues before this floor committee include: work
27 associated with the Office of National Mission (ONM), including rural/small town ministry, urban and inner city
28 mission work; ethnic outreach, congregational revitalization, church planting, and evangelism/personal witnessing.

29 30 **Specific Recommendations**

- 31 • Encouraging Ethnic Ministry Outreach.
- 32 • Encouraging use of ONM’s forthcoming “Everyone His Witness” program. This should include goals and
33 metrics, as well as urging district participation and promotion of this worthwhile effort.
- 34 • Give thanks for 40th Anniversary of LCMS HMong Ministry.
- 35 • To encourage congregational Christian education for children, youth and adults.
- 36 • To expand the work of congregational revitalization through OIM’s “re:Vitality.”
- 37 • To commend and support the development of the proposed Rosa J. Young Academies.
- 38 • Today, the U.S. is one of the largest mission fields in the world. Prepare a resolution focusing on ONM’s
39 MissionField USA. It should include metrics for monitoring church plants in districts. This would include
40 ONM’s focus on rural/small town ministry, urban and inner city mission work, Urban/Inner city mission
41 work.*

42 43 **Floor Committee 2—International Witness (“To All Nations”)**

44 This second floor committee focuses on Synod’s international outreach efforts, particularly through the work of the
45 Office of International Mission (OIM). After His resurrection, Jesus opened the minds of His disciples to understand
46 the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the
47 dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from
48 Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:45–47).

49 50 **Specific Recommendations**

- 51 • To Address District Membership/Ecclesiastical Supervision Issues (International Circuit).
- 52 • To Affirm and Encourage the Continuing Expansion of International Partnerships.
- 53 • To Commend and Support the Synod’s International Schools and Their Role in the Church’s Mission.
- 54 • To Re-Affirm LCMS Military Chaplains’ Right for Free Exercise of Religion in the Face of LGBT
55 Inclusion in the Armed Forces.

- 1 • To Thank God for an Increase in the Number of LCMS Career Missionaries, and to Invite Further Increase
- 2 and Support for the Synod’s Mission Work.
- 3 • “To Cooperate in Reaching the Nations”—affirming Bylaw 3.8.3 and Opinion 14-2724.

4 5 **Floor Committee 3—Mercy**

6 This floor committee focuses on the church’s work of mercy. As the body of Jesus Christ in the world, we seek to
7 bring Christ’s love and mercy to hurting and broken people. “Go and learn what this means,” our Lord said, “I desire
8 mercy, and not sacrifice” (Matt. 9:13). And the night before He died, Jesus told His followers, “A new commandment
9 I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another” (John 13:34). The
10 resolutions prepared by this committee highlight our efforts to bring Christ’s mercy when people most need it.

11 12 **Specific Recommendations**

- 13 • To Commend and Encourage the Work of LCMS Disaster Response.
- 14 • To Give Thanks to God and Encourage Support for the Ministries of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee
- 15 Services, Lutheran Services in America, and Lutheran World Relief.
- 16 • To Support and Expand the Work of LCMS World Relief and Human Care through the Offices of
- 17 International and National Mission. Encourage each congregation to be involved at least one specific mercy
- 18 and one specific outreach effort/project.
- 19 • To Commend Work of LCMS National Housing Support Corporation.
- 20 • Ov. 3-06 to create a task force to study Life Issues.

21 22 **Floor Committee 4—Life Together**

23 “God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor. 1:9).
24 Having fellowship, that is *koinonia*, with the Lord Jesus, we are called to express that relationship in how we act
25 toward one another. In the very next verse Paul says, “I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus
26 Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and
27 the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10). Floor Committee 4 works on resolutions designed to draw us together in our
28 common mission. Christ Himself gives the *koinonia* in which we live and work together.

29 30 **Specific Recommendations**

- 31 • To Develop Comprehensive Catechetical Materials for Adults.
- 32 • “To Expand and Promote the Koinonia Project. See “Specific Suggestions for a Resolution Regarding the
- 33 Koinonia Project.
- 34 • Triennial Mission and Ministry Emphases—see “Information for Proposed Resolution re: Triennial
- 35 Mission and Ministry Emphasis.”
- 36 • To Celebrate 175 Years of Combined Ministry and Service of LWML and ILLC.
- 37 • To Beseech the Congregations, Pastors, and Educational Institutions of the LCMS by the Mercies of God to
- 38 Retain the Ordo.

39 40 **Floor Committee 5—CTCR**

41 Jesus said, “So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in
42 heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 10:32–33).
43 The job of Floor Committee 5 is to lead us in confessing Christ clearly before the world. God has given us many
44 partners here and around the world, partners who share the same confession. We also seek new partners and work to
45 restore relationships with old partners. In so doing, we desire to speak clearly what God’s Word says—no more, no
46 less—for the life of Christ is given in His Word.

47 48 **Specific Recommendations**

- 49 • Clarify Synod’s position on the service of women, that congregations should not engage women as elders
- 50 and congregational chairmen.
- 51 • To Encourage The Use of CTCR’s “Guidelines for Congregational, District, And Synodical Communion
- 52 Statements.”
- 53 • To Affirm and Commend the work of the International Lutheran Council (ILC).
- 54 • To Affirm and Encourage the Continuing Expansion of International Partnerships.

- 1 • To Commend “A Theological Statement for Mission in the 21st Century” for Synodwide Study.
- 2 • On catechesis, encouraging completion of Small Catechism Explanation revision project, etc.
- 3 • On Justification, commending the Theses on Justification from CTCR in 1980s.
- 4 • Reaffirming a right understanding of the Royal Priesthood and the Office of the Holy Ministry, via
- 5 Walther’s *Church and Ministry* as the position of Synod.
- 6 • To Affirm the Importance of Renouncing Joint Prayer and Joint Worship with Non-Christians.
- 7 • Resolutions on various interchurch discussions, including: WELS/ELS; ACNA, NALC.
- 8 • Various resolutions on altar and pulpit fellowship with international churches.

9 **Floor Committee 6—Seminaries**

10 Our Lord’s apostle writes, “an overseer [*bishop, pastor*], as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be
 11 arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-
 12 controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be
 13 able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it” (Titus 1:7–9). The various
 14 programs of our seminaries prepare men for this task. We have the best two seminaries in the world. How do we
 15 keep them and make them even better? How do we support them and recruit more students? These are the questions
 16 this floor committee is tasked to help us answer.

17 **Specific Recommendations**

- 18 • To Encourage and Support the Global Seminary Initiative (GSI).
- 19 • Establish a Pastoral Formation Committee.
- 20 • To Urge Synod to Increase Seminary Financial Assistance.
- 21 • Affirm biblical and confessional qualifications for the Office of the Ministry, in relation to LLDs.*
- 22 • To encourage men to study for the ministry at the seminaries.*

23 **Floor Committee 7—University Education**

24 The ten campuses of our Concordia University System are amazing gifts of God passed down to us from our
 25 forebears. How shall we steward these gifts for the future? How shall we support them financially? Bring more
 26 students? How shall they stand faithful to Christ as the culture collapses around us? St. Paul urges us, “Whatever
 27 is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if
 28 there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Phil. 4:8). These are the
 29 issues taken up by this floor committee. Our goal? To be clear about our Lutheran identity, that “in all things Christ
 30 might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to
 31 himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:18–20).

32 **Specific Recommendations**

- 33 • To Encourage CUS Institutions to Request Religious Exemptions.
- 34 • To Continue Study of Concordia University System Governance and Strengthen CUS Connections to the
 35 Synod.
- 36 • To Divest Concordia College Alabama from the CUS. Cf. Ov. 7-18.
- 37 • Ov. 7-19. “To Enable Concordia University System to Maintain Doctrinal Integrity in Face of Existential
 38 Threats.” Draft resolution provides specific bylaw language.
- 39 • To Study and Recommend Improvements to the Process to Consolidate, Relocate, Separate, or Divest a
 40 College or University.
- 41 • Ov. 7-01 “To Adopt Lutheran Identity Statement for CUS Institutions as Prepared by CUS Presidents.”
- 42 • To develop a Classical Education track at some Concordias (Ov. 7-20, 7-21, 7-24).
- 43 • Ov. 7-25 “To Celebrate 125th Anniversary of Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota.”

44 **Floor Committee 8—Parochial Schools**

45 “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”
 46 (Eph. 6:4). As church, we help parents in this also by means of our schools. Our system of Christian education is one
 47 of the crown jewels of our Synod, one of our greatest strengths. From early childhood, to elementary, to junior high
 48 and high schools, our parochial schools bring Christ into the daily lives of thousands of students and families. How
 49 shall we support and strengthen them so that they not only survive but thrive? Few questions are more important
 50 than this, which is why we have a floor committee to focus specifically on this issue.

1 **Specific Recommendations**

- 2 • To Increase Training of Lutheran Leaders and Administrators for Early Childhood and School Programs.
 3 • To encourage the thorough use of Holy Scripture and the Small Catechism in Lutheran day schools.*
 4 • To continue the work of the Task Force on Lutheran Day Schools, setting some specific goals and
 5 expectations, metrics.*
 6

7 **Floor Committee 9—Finance**

8 How shall we make the best use of the resources God provides through His people? The Word of God says, “God is
 9 able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in
 10 every good work . . . He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for
 11 sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness” (2 Cor 9:8, 10). Floor Committee 9 will help us be wise with
 12 our money given for God’s purposes.
 13

14 **Specific Recommendations**

- 15 • To Recognize the Work of LCEF.
 16 • To Commend the Startup of the Lutheran Federal Credit Union and Promote Its Ongoing Work.
 17 • To Give Thanks and Encourage Participation in the Funding of Synod Mission Work.
 18 • Uniform Financial Reporting.
 19 • To Commend Work of LCMS Foundation. Cf. Ov. 9-02.
 20

21 **Floor Committee 10—Funding the Mission/Stewardship**

22 God’s Word also says, “The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows
 23 bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under
 24 compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:6–7). Floor Committee 10 will help us be faithful stewards of
 25 God’s good gifts. May God give us what we need to serve so that one day we also hear the Lord say, “Well done,
 26 good and faithful servant, you have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your
 27 master” (Matt. 25:21).
 28

29 **Specific Recommendations**

- 30 • To Encourage Collaborative Stewardship Work across the Synod.
 31 • To Encourage the Faithful Teaching of Stewardship to People in Their Daily Vocations.
 32 • To Encourage Members, Congregations, and Districts in Cheerful and Voluntary Giving.
 33 • To Encourage the Greater Stewardship of Information on the Life and Work of the Synod.
 34

35 **Floor Committee 11—Structure and Administration**

36 Every human organization (such as a Synod of congregations, together with their pastors and commissioned
 37 ministers) needs to agree, in love, how it will operate and how the members will live and relate to one another in
 38 love. Our “God is not a God of confusion but of peace” (1 Cor 14:33). Floor Committee 11 will help us clarify those
 39 agreements, namely our Bylaws, so that our work together is structured more effectively.
 40

41 **Specific Recommendations**

- 42 • Visitation—a strong resolution should be prepared, based on the President’s Report, commending the
 43 district visitation process, giving direction for the next steps, urging visitation at all levels.*
 44 • Lay Voting Delegates at District Conventions—giving a lay vote to all congregations at district convention,
 45 even if part of multi-point parish, will simplify district convention registration and will give every
 46 congregation at least one vote for president. It may also affect the lay/clergy balance at district conventions.
 47 • Ov. 11-25 “To Establish Board for International Mission Representation at Synod Convention.”
 48 • Various and bylaw adjustments from COH (cf. Ov. 50-55).
 49 • Encourage completion of studies on Articles VI and VII from 2010. Cf. CCM opinion 13-2694 on Article
 50 II. Consult with Committee 5 (CTCR) on this one.*
 51

52 **Floor Committee 12—Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution**

53 What happens when things go wrong? The Word of God says, “Brothers, if anyone is caught in a transgression, you
 54 who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted” (Gal.

6:1). Floor Committee 12 will bring ideas for the improvement of our processes for bearing with one another and for holding one another accountable to our confession.

Specific Recommendations

- Improvement in Dispute Resolution and Expulsion Bylaws. See the TF report. [Cf. R65]
- Pastoral care for returning missionaries and men on CRM status, based on 3-10A TF Report and report on two focus groups. [Cf. Ov. 12-03 to 12-06]. Propose specific structural solutions.

Floor Committee 13—Routes to Ministry

The Scriptures explain, “How are they to call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?” (Rom. 10:14–15). How does the church raise up, train, approve, call and send men to be pastors today? We currently have at least nine routes to ministry. What should be the role of licensed deacons? How do the office of the ministry and the priesthood of the baptized complement each other in the mission of God? The charge to Floor Committee 13 is to help us sort out these questions according to the Word of God and our confession.

Specific Recommendations

- 2013 Res. 5-14A Task Force recommendations, and additional suggested recommendations.
- Affirm and enhance the role of the “priesthood of the baptized.”
- Affirm the basic principle that to do pastoral acts, one should be a pastor.
- Provide agreed upon means by which all congregations and missions of the Synod are able to be served Word and Sacrament by regularly called pastors.
- Adopt efforts to enhance all our means (“routes to ministry”) for preparing, examining, calling, and ordaining men to the pastoral office.
- Clarify eligibility requirements for colloquy in the bylaws of the Synod.

Floor Committee 14—Church and Culture

Our culture today presents both challenges and opportunities. We are becoming more and more familiar with the challenges. Our public discourse is replete with issues few people talked about much ten to twenty years ago: same-sex marriage, transgenderism, homosexual behavior, etc. The church may be tempted to retreat, or even to give in. Floor Committee 14 needs to prepare resolutions by which we seize opportunities to confess the truth boldly and with love. We go forward with full confidence in our Lord’s promise: “And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say” (Luke 12:11–12).

Specific Recommendations

- To Thank Alliance Defending Freedom for their Enduring Work of Defending Religious Liberty and Supporting the Efforts of the LCMS.
- To Reaffirm Biblical Teaching on Sexuality and Marriage While Addressing Changing Opinions.
- To Address the Question of Clergy as Agents of the State.
- Christian Witness in the Public Square. Include support for LCMS members and other Christians threatened by unjust laws.
- Resolution highlighting the CTCR’s gender dysphoria document (*Workbook*, pp. 172 ff.).*
- Outreach to Muslim neighbors (Ov. 1-06).

Floor Committee 15—Reformation

2017 brings a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity with the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Floor Committee 15 will bring proposals that will focus our activity on the theme, “Reformation 2017: It’s *Still* All About Jesus!” This is the heart of our theology: “Human beings cannot be justified before God by their own powers, merits or works. But they are justified as a gift on account of Christ’s sake through faith when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us” (AC IV, Kolb/Wengert, pp. 39f.).

1 **Specific Recommendations**

- 2 • To Encourage the Use of the Two-Hour Luther Documentary.
- 3 • To Commend the Use of the Resources Provided for the Reformation 2017 500th Anniversary.
- 4 • To Honor the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation by the Studying of God's Word and the Lutheran
- 5 Confessions and the Adopting of a Missionary.
- 6 • To Give Thanks for the Stand With Your Community Grant Program.
- 7 • To Give Thanks for the Gospel Focus of The Wittenberg Project; and/or To Give Thanks for the Completed
- 8 Renovation of the Old Latin School and Encourage Its Use by the Synod and by International Lutheran
- 9 Council Churches (ILC).
- 10 • To affirm the God-given responsibility of the LCMS to bear witness to the truth of Christ for the benefit of
- 11 all Christians, ecumenical responsibility of orthodox Lutheranism to world Christianity (Cf., Pieper, *House*
- 12 *of My Fathers*, "Contending for the Truth for All Christianity . . .", p. 639 ff.).*
- 13

14 **Floor Committee 16—Family, Youth and Young Adults**

15 The apostle John wrote to his beloved Christians, "I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven
16 for his name's sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to
17 you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father. I
18 write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are
19 strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one" (1 John 2:12-14). How will we
20 equip our congregations to help families be so grounded in the Word of God? We have a tremendous history of
21 youth work—National Youth Gathering, Higher Things, extensive catechesis, a developing youth corps, growing
22 family ministries, and more. This committee will work on proposals to help the Office of National Mission and
23 districts serve congregations to strengthen families and keep our young people in Christ.

24 **Specific Recommendations**

- 25 • To Increase Our Efforts to Retain College Age Youth.
- 26 • To Increase the Engagement of Lutheran Young Adults in the Ministry and Service Work of the LCMS.
- 27 • To Encourage the Training of Young People as Church Leaders.
- 28 • To strengthen families as a mission priority (Cf. Ov. 16-01).
- 29 • Thanksgiving for NYG and for ministry of Terry Dittmer (Ov. 16-04).
- 30
- 31

32 **Floor Committee 17—Preaching and Church Worker Continuing Education**

33 At every ordination/installation we hear St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy: "I charge you in the presence of God and
34 of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be
35 ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching" (2 Tim. 4:1-
36 2). How might we "up our game" as far as preaching is concerned? No matter what gifts we have as preachers, we
37 can always grow. And we need to grow, for "faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ"
38 (Rom. 10:17). Floor Committee 17 will lead us in this endeavor.

39 **Specific Recommendations**

- 40 • To Enhance Clergy Continuing Education. Reference 2013 Convention action, and push to next level.
- 41 • To encourage regular sermon evaluation by District Presidents and Circuit Visitors.
- 42 • To Endorse Preach the Word Project as Celebration of 500th Anniversary of Reformation (Cf. Ov. 15-02).
- 43
- 44

45 **Floor Committee 18—Worker Wellness**

46 It becomes clearer with each passing year that having healthy workers lead to healthy congregations (and *vice*
47 *versa!*). We have a wonderful gift and resource in the Concordia Plans. How may this blessing be maximized? What
48 steps might the Synod take to promote and encourage wellness—physically, spiritually, emotionally, and
49 vocationally—so that we serve the Lord with greater joy? We have put this committee to work in the spirit of this
50 Word: "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established
51 in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (Col. 2:6-7).

52 **Specific Recommendations**

- 53 • To Commend Work of Concordia Plan Services.
- 54

- 1 • To Address Indebtedness Arising from Education and Training of Seminarians and Other Students
2 Preparing for Service as Rostered Church Workers.
- 3 • To Establish and Promote the Ministries of District Care-Givers, Father Confessors, and Spiritual
4 Companions.
- 5 • To encourage Districts of LCMS to offer the opportunity for church workers to share their strengths and
6 their needs through the Church Workers Family Needs Assessment.
- 7 • To Establish an Office of National Mission (ONM) Worker Wellness Task Force.
- 8 • To Encourage District Presidents, Circuit Visitors, and Congregations to Utilize Resources already
9 Established for Ministerial Wellness.
- 10 • To Promote Worker Wellness within Circuits and Districts.
- 11
- 12 President Matthew C. Harrison

LATE OVERTURES

The following overtures were received after the deadline for receipt of reports and overtures but have been accepted for convention consideration.

L7-26

To Study and Recommend Improvements to the Process to Consolidate, Relocate, Separate, or Divest a College or University

WHEREAS, A process addressing the matter of consolidating, relocating, separating, or divesting a college or university first appeared in the 1969 edition of the LCMS *Handbook*: “The board [for Higher Education], in carrying out its functions, shall...have authority, after receiving the consent of the Boards of Control of the colleges involved and with the approval of the synodical Board of Directors and the Council of Presidents, to consolidate colleges to the extent required by the church’s professional needs and by its financial condition” (1969 Bylaw 6.05 [p]); and

WHEREAS, Since 1969, the relevant bylaw has been revised six different times, most recently in 2010 when the wording was changed to “the Board of Directors of Concordia University System shall... have authority, after receiving the consent of the Board of Directors of Synod by its two-thirds vote and also the consent of either the Council of Presidents by its two-thirds vote or the appropriate board of regents by its two-thirds vote, to consolidate, relocate, separate, or divest a college or university” (Bylaw 3.6.6.5 [k]); and

WHEREAS, The wording of the current bylaw includes confusing terminology (e.g., “have authority, after receiving the consent,” “separate,” “divest”); and

WHEREAS, Over the past 35 years, a number of the Synod’s educational institutions have experienced catastrophic financial difficulties, and yet in only one instance was the then-current bylaw successfully used; and

WHEREAS, The time necessary to bring the current process to completion can be a years-long undertaking at a time when, in the event of catastrophic financial difficulties, millions of dollars could be at stake each semester a school is allowed to continue operating under such circumstances; and

WHEREAS, The cost for closing a school according to United States Department of Education guidelines for closure is estimated to be a multi-million dollar activity; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors is responsible for the general management of the business and legal affairs of the Synod (Bylaw 3.4.4.3) and also serves as the custodian of all the property of the Synod as defined in Bylaw 1.2.1 (q), and has the authority and responsibility with respect to the property of the Synod as is generally vested in and imposed upon a board of directors of a corporation. It may and has delegated to the Concordia University System powers and duties with respect to property of the Synod for which such agency of the Synod (CUS) has direct supervisory responsibility. Such delegation shall be in [is in] writing and shall be subject to change at any time (from Bylaw 3.3.4.7); and

WHEREAS, In each instance where Synod institutions have experienced catastrophic financial difficulties, corporate Synod was looked upon to reallocate millions of dollars away from other budgeted ministry activity either through direct emergency funding or by increasing the historic CUS debt; and

WHEREAS, Under the current process, two of the three decision-making groups have little or no financial impact influencing their decision; therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS Board of Directors, with the concurrence of the President of the Synod, appoint a task force, to review and, if appropriate, propose changes to the process “to consolidate, relocate, separate, or divest a college or university,” as is currently outlined in Bylaw 3.6.6.5 (k); and be it further

Resolved, That the task force also contemplate the possibility of a new bylaw to delineate an expedited process

1 in the event of a “catastrophic financial crisis” at a college, university, or seminary; and be it further

2
3 *Resolved*, That the task force of nine (8) members be comprised of the following voting members: a CUS
4 national office staff member, an LCMS Board of Directors member, the LCMS Chief Financial Officer, the LCMS
5 Chief Administrative Officer, a CUS school president, a CUS school chief financial officer, a representative of one
6 of Synod’s seminaries, the chairman of the Council of Presidents, and the President of the Synod or his designee.
7 The task force shall also be assisted by the Synod’s general counsel. The President of the Synod shall designate the
8 chair of the task force from the members identified herein; and be it finally

9
10 *Resolved*, That the final report of the task force, including any recommendations, be delivered to the LCMS
11 Board of Directors and the Synod President no later than 9 months prior to the 2019 convention and that the report
12 be printed in its entirety in the 2019 *Convention Workbook*.

13 LCMS Board of Directors

14
15
16

17 **L11-58**

18 **To Authorize Review of Synod Nominations/Elections Processes**

19 **Rationale**

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21
22
23 The nominations/elections processes leading up to Synod conventions have undergone significant changes during
24 the past decade with the introduction of presidential elections prior to the conventions, regional board positions with
25 a ballot nominations process, increased interest in the qualifications of Concordia University System board members
26 leading to required background and skill set assessments, and more—all incorporated into what had largely been a
27 nominating committee process, at times creating confusion and difficult time frame expectations for national
28 convention preparations.

29
30 The Commission on Handbook therefore proposes, a number of issues having been brought to its attention, that it is
31 time for the Synod in convention to authorize a thorough review of the procedures and expectations of Bylaw
32 section 3.12 “Nominations and Elections” and related bylaws throughout the *Handbook*. The creation of a task force
33 composed of individuals most familiar with the current nominations and elections processes will provide
34 opportunity for an informed review of current bylaw requirements and submission of well-conceived
35 recommendations to the 2019 LCMS convention.

36
37 **Proposed Action**

38
39 Therefore be it

40
41 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention authorize the creation of a task force to review existing nominations
42 bylaw procedures in the interest of combining them into a comprehensive process with appropriate time frames to
43 facilitate convention preparations; and be it further

44
45 *Resolved*, That the members of this task force be the Secretary of the Synod, the Chief Administrative Officer of
46 the Synod, single representatives of the Commission on Handbook and Commission on Constitutional Matters
47 (chosen by the commissions), the chairman of the 2016 Committee for Convention Nominations, the chairman of
48 the 2016 Committee on Elections, one district secretary and one district president appointed by the Council of
49 Presidents, and up to three additional persons appointed by the LCMS Board of Directors; and be it further

50

1 WHEREAS, At its National Annual Meeting in May 2013 the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) announced a policy
2 change admitting homosexual youth to Scout programs effective January 1, 2014, but also reaffirmed its
3 longstanding policy of not allowing openly homosexual adults to serve as scoutmasters or leaders in any capacity;
4 and

5
6 WHEREAS, The BSA National Executive Board on July 10, 2015, lifted the BSA’s ban on openly gay Scout
7 leaders, resulting in a dissolution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Lutheran Church—
8 Missouri Synod (LCMS) and the BSA and the cessation of an official LCMS relationship with the BSA; and

9
10 WHEREAS, The national organization of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) has long permitted adults of any
11 sexual orientation to serve as leaders and allows both its local councils and local units to affiliate with and utilize the
12 materials of Planned Parenthood, an organization which is responsible for the majority of abortions in the USA and
13 which promotes un-Christian sexual activities among girls; and

14
15 WHEREAS, American Heritage Girls and Trail Life U.S.A. were organized, respectively, in 1995 and 2013 as
16 distinctively Christian scouting organization for girls and boys; and

17
18 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in May 2014 signed an MoU with American Heritage Girls
19 which stipulates that “there is no American Heritage Girls authority which supersedes the authority of the local
20 pastor and the congregation in any phase of the program affecting the spiritual welfare of those who participate”;
21 and

22
23 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has been negotiating a similar MoU with Trail Life U.S.A.;
24 and

25
26 WHEREAS, Members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod do not wish to voluntarily expose our youth to
27 the societal dangers and immoral behaviors of the homosexual lifestyle and the abortion industry; and

28
29 WHEREAS, Many congregations of the LCMS desire to continue providing scout-like organizations for both
30 boys and girls; therefore be it

31
32 *Resolved*, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod discourage families and strongly discourage
33 congregation from being involved in BSA and GSUSA; and be it finally

34
35 *Resolved*, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod encourage its member congregations and families to
36 pursue affiliations with alternative, distinctively Christian, scout-like organizations whose beliefs and practices
37 conform to that of the LCMS and only if there is no authority which supersedes the authority of the local pastor and
38 the congregation in any phase of the program affecting the spiritual welfare of those who participate.

39 Pastors Conference
40 South Wisconsin District

OMNIBUS RESOLUTIONS

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 the following overtures be referred to the designated board, commission, or individual:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Board, Commission, Individual</u>
Ov. 1-02	To Support Sharing the Gospel Through Professionally Produced Musical Stage Play	Office of National Mission
Ov. 2-13	To Require cause for Withdrawal or Release of Career Missionaries	Office of International Missions Legal
Ov. 2-15	To Change Funding Model of Our Missionaries	Board for International Missions Office of International Missions
Ov. 3-01	To Help Our Mercy Agencies Be Free to Be Faithful	Concordia University System and Board of Directors in consultation with President of the Synod
Ov. 3-08	To Request Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to Open Up Choice Dollars for Lutherans for Life	Board for National Mission
Ov. 3-09	To Add a Synod Prison and Jail Ministry Coordinator	Office of National Mission
Ov. 4-17	To Again Publish in Luther's Small Catechism the Fourth Commandment's Divine Promise	Commission on Theology and Church Relations
Ov. 4-20	To Translate and Publish Book of Concord of 1580 Into French Language	Office of International Mission
Ov. 4-21	To Develop Social Media Agreement for Professional Church Workers	Council of Presidents
Ov. 4-25	To Investigate Organization Named FiveTwo in Light of Constitution Article II	Commission on Theology and Church Relations
Ov. 4-26	To Require Super-Majority Votes to Adopt Convention Resolutions	Commission on Handbook
Ov. 4-28	To Establish Task Force for Social Media Policy Development	Council of Presidents
Ov. 5-06	Seminaries to Evaluate Fellowship with AALC	Office of the President Commission on Theology and Church Relations
Ov. 5-07	To Warn Against Occult Pseudoscience Practices	Commission on Theology and Church Relations

1	Ov. 5-08	Provide Suggested Guidelines/Policies for Implementing Social Media	Commission on Theology and Church Relations
2			
3			
4	Ov. 5-21	To Encourage Synod to Complete Work on Transforming Churches Network, Joint Prayer With Those Who Deny Christ and Role of Women in Church	Office of National Mission in consultation with Commission on Theology and Church Relations
5			
6			
7			
8			
9	Ov. 5-22	To Direct CTCR and Seminaries to Evaluate Transforming Churches Network	Office of National Mission in consultation with Commission on Theology and Church Relations
10			
11			
12			
13	Ov. 5-23	To Suspend Application of “Reduction in Force” to Pastoral Office Pending CTCR Decision	Office of the President Commission on Theology and Church Relations Council of Presidents
14			
15			
16			
17			
18	Ov. 5-24	To Change Intentional Interim Ministry Program to Reflect Historic LCMS Theology and Practice of the Call	Office of National Mission in consultation with Commission on Theology and Church Relations
19			
20			
21			
22	Ov. 5-25	To Review Role of Women in Congregation and Synod Offices	Commission on Theology and Church Relations Office of the President
23			
24			
25			
26	Ov. 6-01	To Reaffirm in Practice Biblical Qualifications for Office of the Holy Ministry	Council of Presidents Faculties of Both Seminaries
27			
28			
29	Ov. 6-02	To No Longer Allow or Compel Vicars to Appear to Rightly Administer the Sacrament	Council of Presidents Faculties of Both Seminaries
30			
31			
32	Ov. 6-03	To Require Use of Synod Hymnals at Synod Seminaries and Universities	Faculties of Both Seminaries Religion Department of all Universities
33			
34			
35	Ov. 6-04	To Fraternaly Admonish Seminaries to Give Due Weight to Lodge Membership Issue	Faculties of Both Seminaries
36			
37			
38	Ov. 7-18	To Divest Concordia College Alabama from Concordia University System	LCMS Board of Directors
39			
40			
41	Ov. 7-22	To Instruct CUS Institutions to Teach Synod’s Position on Church Ministry	CUS Board of Directors
42			
43			
44	Ov. 9-03	To Urge Synod to Increase Seminary Financial Assistance	LCMS Board of Directors
45			
46			
47	Ov. 11-01	To Review LCMS President’s Authority	Praesidium
48			
49	Ov. 11-02	To Review Powers of Synod President, Secretary, CCM, and District Presidents	Praesidium
50			
51			
52	Ov. 11-06	To Appoint Committee to Study District Restructure	Praesidium
53			
54			
55	Ov. 11-25	To Establish Board for International Mission Representation at Synod Conventions	LCMS Board of Directors
56			

1			
2	Ov. 11-28	To Establish Board for National Mission Representation at Synod Conventions	LCMS Board of Directors
3			
4			
5	Ov. 11-30	To Declare CCM Opinion 13-2696 re: Doctrinal Resolutions Null and Void	LCMS President
6			
7			
8	Ov. 11-31	To Complete Study of Constitution Article VII	LCMS President
9			
10	Ov. 11-32	To Overrule CCM Opinion 13-2694	LCMS President
11			
12	Ov. 11-33	To Affirm Article II as Only Required Confession	LCMS President
13			
14	Ov. 11-34	To Honor and Reaffirm Advisory Nature of Synod	LCMS President
15			
16	Ov. 11-35	To Affirm Advisory Nature of Synod	LCMS President
17			
18	Ov. 11-36	To Have Equal Lay and Ordained Representation on Convention Floor Committees	Praesidium
19			
20			
21	Ov. 11-36	To Have Equal Lay and Ordained Representation on Convention Floor Committees	LCMS Board of Directors
22			
23			
24	Ov. 11-37	To Discuss Advisory Enabling Advisory Delegates to Become Voting Delegates at Future Conventions	LCMS President Commission on Constitutional Matters
25			
26			
27			
28	Ov. 11-41	To Affirm Past Policy re: Display of Literature at Synod Conventions	Convention Manager
29			
30			
31	Ov. 11-49	To Amend Bylaws to Affirm That Conscience is Bound by the Word of God	Commission on Theology and Church Relations
32			
33			
34	Ov. 12-02	To Return to Pastoral-Based Model of Governance	Council of Presidents
35			
36	Ov. 12-05	To Specify Inactive Members in Official Publications	Rosters & Statistics
37			
38			
39	Ov. 12-22	To Clarify Proper Use of Social Media and Internet Postings by Church Leadership During Expulsion Process	Council of Presidents
40			
41			
42			
43	Ov. 12-31	To Clarify Ecclesiastical Supervision of Roster Workers Serving Outside Home District	Council of Presidents
44			
45			
46	Ov. 12-32	To Address Unbiblical Removal of Pastors from Office	Council of Presidents
47			
48			
49	Ov. 12-38	To Call to Faithful Confession	Council of Presidents
50			
51	Ov. 12-41	To Establish Procedure for Removal of Officers of the Synod or District from Office	Legal Counsel
52			
53			
54	Ov. 14-01	Legal Defense Fund	LCMS Board of Directors
55			
56	Ov. 14-09	Change LSB Rite	Office of National Mission

1			
2	Ov. 16-03;	To Recommend That These Overtures Be Referred	Office of the President
3	L16-05	to the Scouting Task Force Already Working to	
4		Address These Issues	
5			
6	Ov. 18-01	To Encourage Development of Retirement	Districts
7		Assistance Program for Parish Pastors	
8			
9	Staff R1.2 (pp.	To Encourage Congregational Education	Office of National Mission
10	22–23, 30,		
11	42–44)		
12			
13			
14			

OMNIBUS RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION B

18
19 WHEREAS, A number of issues have been presented through overtures to which the Synod, in convention,
20 has previously spoken; and

21
22 WHEREAS, After careful consideration of these matters, there appears to be insufficient rationale to change
23 or alter the stated position of the Synod; therefore be it

24
25 *Resolved*, That petitioners offering the following overtures be referred to previous convention action as
26 indicated.

27	<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Board, Commission, Individual</u>
28	Ov. 4-18	To Direct Concordia Publishing House to	Concordia Publishing House already
29		Place 1986 Catechism into Public Domain	grants congregations and individuals
30			permission for non-commercial use.
31			2013 Convention Overture 3-27
32			
33	Ov. 11-14	To Determine How Mid-Term Vacancies of	Current Bylaw 3.3.2.4 created in 2010
34		Regional Vice-President Positions are Filled	
35			
36	Ov. 11-42	To Permit Electronic Means for Official	Current Bylaw 3.1.8 (b) adopted in 2010
37		Dissemination of Convention Workbooks	
38			
39	Ov. 11-54	To Amend Bylaw Process for Filling Regional	Current Bylaw 3.3.2.4 created in 2010
40		Vice-President Vacancies	
41			
42	Ov. 14-03	Joint Prayer	2004 Res. 3-06A
43			
44	Ov. 14-04	Change Name of Synod to	1998 LCMS Convention, et. al.
45		Concordia Lutheran Synod	
46			
47			

OMNIBUS RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION C

WHEREAS, Many requests for recognition of noteworthy labors of love are brought to the Synod's attention at every convention; therefore be it

Resolved, That the following overtures be received as expressions of encouragement or gratitude:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Board, Commission, Individual</u>
Ov. 1-14	To Recognize, Affirm, and Give Thanks for Mission Training Center, Concordia University – Portland	Give Thanks for Equipping and Training Lay People
Ov. 3-05	To Commend Participation in 2017 LCMS Life Conference	Encourage Participation
Ov. 3-07	To Commend Concordia Portland for its 3 to PhD Initiative	To Commend
Ov. 7-25	To Celebrate 125 th Anniversary of Concordia University, St. Paul, MN	To Celebrate
Ov. 18-04	To Thank Rev. Dr. Carl Krueger and Dianne Krueger for Distinguished Service	Thanks

1. NATIONAL WITNESS

To Expand Evangelism and Encourage Use of *Every One His Witness*

RESOLUTION 1-01

Reports R1, R1.1, R1.2 (CW, pp. 2–3, 14, 25–26); Overtures 1-01, 1-07, 1-12, 1-13, 1-15–16 (CW, pp. 309, 311–314)

WHEREAS, In the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20), Christ sets forth the work of the church on earth as “making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you”; and

WHEREAS, In 1 Peter 2:9, all believers in Christ are called to “proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light”; and

WHEREAS, North America now constitutes the world’s third largest mission field (after China and India based on the number of people who do not confess Jesus Christ) with over 200 million non-churched people; and

WHEREAS, One of the stated objectives of the Synod in the Synod’s Constitution is to “strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world (Art. III 2); and

WHEREAS, The Synod’s Office of National Mission has initiated *Every One His Witness*, a theologically sound evangelism program designed to equip Lutherans for being more active and effective witnesses of Jesus Christ in their everyday lives; and

WHEREAS, The *Every One His Witness* evangelism program includes elements to develop and provide resources for witnessing to people in diverse contexts, cultures, and languages in North America, including other world religions and cults as well as de-churched and un-churched people; and

WHEREAS, Evangelism is essential to the planting, sustaining, and revitalization of Lutheran congregations; therefore be it

Resolved, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) reaffirm its commitment to the Great Commission as stated in Matt. 28:19–20; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS reaffirm North America as a mission field with the rest of the world; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention commend the current evangelism efforts of our districts, local congregations, recognized service organizations (RSOs), and auxiliaries; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention adopt *Every One His Witness* as a Synod-wide evangelism program; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention commend the use of the *Every One His Witness* evangelism program to all LCMS districts, congregations, RSOs, and auxiliaries; and be it finally

Resolved, That the convention authorize Synod-wide offerings for the purpose of creating and distributing print, digital, and other resources in multiple languages for the *Every One His Witness* evangelism program.

[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]

**To Encourage Church Planting throughout the Synod and
Supporting the “Mission Field: USA” Initiative**

RESOLUTION 1-02

Report R1.2 (CW, p. 21); Overtures 1-10–11, 1-13 (CW, pp. 311–313)

WHEREAS, A mission priority of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is planting Lutheran congregations; and

WHEREAS, The Office of National Mission (ONM) was charged by the 2013 Synod convention (Res. 1-04A) to encourage congregations and members to pray for and engage in the critical work of church planting; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has historically been a planting church body (at one time planting a new church each week) and this has rapidly been reduced along with the tools that are needed; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS needs to locate churches where the greatest populations of people are located; and

WHEREAS, LCMS congregations many times do not reflect the diversity of the neighboring communities around them; and

WHEREAS, The average age of LCMS members is older than the average age of the American population; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS is called to be faithful in reaching the lost through our word and sacrament ministry and by showing love to our neighbors and bearing witness to them; and

WHEREAS, “Mission Field: USA,” an initiative of the LCMS, will offer services to support church-planting efforts throughout the Synod (CW, R1.2, p. 21); therefore be it

Resolved, That concerted effort be made to equip and support the Mission Field: USA church planting initiative beyond raising awareness of the need, and that the use of these resources be commended as a flexible framework for technical support, training, equipping, and organizing church planting in multiple settings and contexts nationwide; and be it further

Resolved, That as the Synod supports districts in their mission efforts, greater emphasis be given to reaching new people groups within the USA through church planting and new ministries; and be it further

Resolved, That investment be made in domestic mission work, especially in rebuilding struggling inner city and rural communities, helping to lift people out of poverty, and preparing and sending national missionaries into the margins of the USA; and be it further

Resolved, That the ONM work through districts to track the number of churches that are planted; and be it finally

Resolved, That this convention encourage and support the districts of the Synod to plant 150 congregations through the Mission Field: USA initiative, and that the ONM partner with districts to send out 18 new domestic missionaries in the next triennium.

[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]

To Expand the Work of Revitalization and Encourage the Use of *re: Vitality* Program

RESOLUTION 1-03

1
2
3 Report R1.2 (CW, pp. 18–21); Overtures 1-03–1-05, 1-08–09, 1-11, 1-13, 1-15 (CW, pp. 310–314)

4
5 WHEREAS, A mission priority of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is the revitalization of
6 Lutheran congregations; and

7
8 WHEREAS, Approximately 78 percent of LCMS congregations have peaked or are declining in membership and
9 worship attendance; and

10
11 WHEREAS, Congregation revitalization is centered in the new life that is found in God’s Word being proclaimed
12 in purity and His Sacraments being rightly administered; and

13
14 WHEREAS, The Office of National Mission (ONM) was charged by the 2013 LCMS convention (Res. 3-08A) to
15 increase its ongoing focus on revitalization while offering continued evaluation of available resources; and

16
17 WHEREAS, ONM has met with the staffs of ten LCMS districts to determine how ONM can best support
18 revitalization efforts in the Synod, and the consensus from these meetings was that the districts need ONM to
19 produce effective, low cost, and doctrinally sound resources to aid congregations and to provide training for district
20 personnel to deliver those resources to congregations; and

21
22 WHEREAS, In order to attend to the needs highlighted by these ten districts, ONM has undertaken the
23 development of the *re:Vitality* program to provide resources for congregations through their districts that address
24 revitalization needs from a distinctively Lutheran perspective; and

25
26 WHEREAS, *re:Vitality* is designed to meet a large-scale need for revitalization at little to no cost to
27 congregations; and

28
29 WHEREAS, *re:Vitality* resources are designed so that they can be used in conjunction with other revitalization
30 efforts currently in use in the LCMS (e.g., LCEF’s “Vision Path,” TCN’s “1910 Project,” district-developed
31 visitation-based assessment programs); therefore be it

32
33 *Resolved*, That the current revitalization efforts in our districts and the local congregations be commended; and
34 be it further

35
36 *Resolved*, That the ONM continue to develop the *re:Vitality* program and accompanying resources; and be it
37 further

38
39 *Resolved*, That congregations be encouraged to make use of the *re:Vitality* program and its resources as these
40 are made available; and be it further

41
42 *Resolved*, That districts identify personnel to ONM who may be equipped to serve as coordinators, facilitators,
43 coaches, and trainers in support of the *re:Vitality* program within their districts; and be it further

44
45 *Resolved*, That ONM assess and report on the *re:Vitality* over the triennium to the 2019 LCMS convention; and
46 be it finally

47
48 *Resolved*, That this convention authorize Synod-wide offerings for the purpose of creating and distributing
49 print, digital, and other resources for the *re:Vitality* revitalization program and making those resources available to
50 congregations through their districts at little to no cost to the congregations.

51
52 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
53 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

54
55
56

To Encourage Immigrant and Refugee Outreach

RESOLUTION 1-04

Overtures 1-01, 1-07 (CW, pp. 309, 311)

WHEREAS, Holy Scripture tells us, “God desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4); and

WHEREAS, Refugees, immigrants, and people from many cultures are in our schools and in our neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Many congregations need special assistance to reach out to people in the changing communities around their churches; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod continue to encourage and support districts and congregations with immigrant and refugee outreach by developing language-specific resources and programs; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations be encouraged to witness to immigrants and refugees; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations be encouraged to make such outreach a high priority in all activities; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations serving diverse or changing communities be encouraged to integrate new members into leadership positions to foster ownership in the congregation; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations be encouraged to seek partnerships with other congregations; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod work through districts to locate at least twelve locations over the next triennium to send national missionaries where there is a significant immigrant and refugee population.

[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]

To Give Thanks and Praise to God for 40th Anniversary of HMong Ministry and Encourage Synod Support

RESOLUTION 1-05

Reports R15, R20, R39, R43, R48–49 (CW, p. 86, 93, 112, 116, 120)

Whereas, “For the Lord will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel, and will set them in their own land, and sojourners will join them and will attach themselves to the house of Jacob” (Is. 14:1); and

WHEREAS, Even as our Lord has taught His Church to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 19:19), the mission of welcoming the stranger (Matt. 25:36) caught fire in the hearts of Lutherans 40 years ago for the Southeast Asian people who had lost their homeland through war; and

WHEREAS, Beginning in 1976 through the ministry of the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), many Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) congregations across the country sponsored many HMong and other Southeast Asian families to resettle them in America as the result of the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, Gospel seeds have been planted through these refugee resettlement efforts of our LCMS congregations; and

1
2 WHEREAS, The HMong ministry in the LCMS has grown into at least 20 Word and Sacrament ministries across
3 the Synod with 1,500 baptized members; and
4

5 WHEREAS, The LCMS has ordained 20 HMong pastors, with an additional seven men ready to be ordained; and
6

7 WHEREAS, The history of the HMong mission in the LCMS has been well documented, commended, and
8 archived by Concordia Historical Institute; and
9

10 WHEREAS, Only 13 percent of the HMong worldwide population claim to profess Christ; therefore be it
11

12 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention gave thanks and praise to God for 40 years of HMong ministry in
13 the LCMS; and be it further
14

15 *Resolved*, That the Synod continue to encourage and support districts and congregations with HMong ministry
16 outreach; and be it finally
17

18 *Resolved*, That the Synod address the need for trained servants of the Word to the HMong people worldwide by
19 encouraging and supporting the preparation of HMong pastors, deaconesses, and other commissioned workers.
20
21
22

23 **To Celebrate Legacy of Rosa J. Young and Encourage Launch**
24 **of Rosa J. Young International Academies**
25

26 **RESOLUTION 1-06**
27

28 Report R1.2 (CW, pp. 24, 31); Overture 7-18 (CW, pp. 372–373)
29

30 **Preamble**
31

32 The Rosa J. Young International Academies' mission will be to educate, equip, and empower spiritual, servant,
33 social, and mercy leaders to leave a positive imprint on the world.
34

35 The Rosa J. Young International Academies will strive to build a network of creative, innovative, and holistic life-
36 long learning communities for future leaders in all aspects of society. They will seek to be a growing network of
37 schools located in various regions of the U.S. to provide urban, inner city, rural, and ethnic communities with
38 educational options and opportunities.
39

40 The Rosa J. Young International Academies will focus on developing and managing multi-purpose educational
41 facilities and developing complementary programs for K-12 education, such as before- and after-school care, pre-
42 schools and religious education, mentoring and tutoring, music and drama, sports and summer camps, and health
43 and fitness activities.
44

45 WHEREAS, The Great Commission tells us: "Then Jesus came to them and said: 'All authority in heaven and on
46 earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father
47 and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I
48 am with you always, to the very end of the earth'" (Matt. 28: 18–20); and
49

50 WHEREAS, Dr. Rosa. J. Young laid claim to what the Lord said and would not be deterred by life's
51 circumstances, financial and otherwise; and
52

53 WHEREAS, Dr. Rosa J. Young followed the trends of African American women of faith who sought to be
54 educators, entrepreneurs, and mission workers; and
55

56 WHEREAS, When she joined the Lutheran church, her dedicated teaching abilities and mission work opened

1 doors so that African American children could receive religious education; and

2
3 WHEREAS, Dr. Booker T. Washington pointed her to the Lutheran church for financial and religious support,
4 resulting in Christ Lutheran School and Church in 1916; and

5
6 WHEREAS, The opening of Christ Lutheran School and Church served as a model for the development of 29
7 more schools in other communities in “The Black Belt”; and

8
9 WHEREAS, Dr. Rosa J. Young impacted the lives of more than 2,000 students, many of whom went on to
10 become teachers and pastors in the Lutheran church; and

11
12 WHEREAS, Dr. Rosa J. Young was influential in the founding of Alabama Lutheran Academy and College of
13 Selma, Alabama, which is now Concordia College Alabama, providing affordable college education for young
14 women and men; therefore be it

15
16 *Resolved*, That The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) thank God for what He has accomplished
17 through this faith-filled woman through the Lutheran school; and be it further

18
19 *Resolved*, That the Synod commend and support the development of the proposed Rosa J. Young International
20 Academies as a model for reaching a new generation in a new century; and be it further

21
22 *Resolved*, That we pray to the Lord of the Church to raise up new Rosas filled with faith in Christ, with renewed
23 zeal and passion to reach a new generation in a new century, so that we may reach to the ends of the earth with the
24 Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and be it finally

25
26 *Resolved*, That we obey the command of the Lord: “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the
27 Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field” (Matt. 9:37).

2. INTERNATIONAL WITNESS

To Thank God for Faithful Service of LCMS Missionaries

RESOLUTION 2-01

Report R1.2 (CW, p. 12)

WHEREAS, By the grace of God, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has sent missionaries into the world since 1894 in response to our Lord’s command to make disciples of all nations; and

WHEREAS, The Lord of the harvest has blessed LCMS mission efforts through the faithful service of thousands of rostered church workers and lay men and women throughout the years, that has resulted in the formation of Lutheran schools, congregations, medical centers, and independent church bodies that remain faithful to the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, The service of these faithful missionaries often resulted in hardship, personal loss, and death—yet they served with joy; and

WHEREAS, Former LCMS missionaries have expressed interest in reuniting with colleagues engaged in mission service; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2016 LCMS convention give thanks to God for His blessings upon the LCMS’ mission work and for the faithful mission service of our forbearers by the singing of the Common Doxology; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention express thanks and appreciation to all who have served in the LCMS international mission ministry; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Office of International Mission coordinate a reunion for LCMS missionaries in the coming triennium.

[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]

To Thank God for Increase in Number of LCMS Career Missionaries and Invite Further Increase and Support for Synod’s Mission Work

RESOLUTION 2-02

Reports R1, R1.2 (CW, pp. 4, 15)

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), under the grace of God, in 2013 Res. 1–11 resolved “to double the number of career missionaries engaged in church planting, mercy work, and theological education” and has over the past triennium increased from 68 career missionaries in 2013 to a current total of 112; and

WHEREAS, This blessing from God has resulted in the planting of over 40 new Lutheran congregations globally, and has helped to revitalize many more; and

WHEREAS, This blessing from God has enabled the LCMS to re-engage fields in foreign mission areas where the LCMS formerly had fruitful activity but were on the verge of collapse due to natural attrition and the conclusion of service by former missionaries who were not replaced; and

WHEREAS, This blessing from God has enabled the LCMS to provide theological educators requested by

1 Lutheran partner church and other church bodies desirous of learning about the Lutheran confession of the faith,
2 thus training hundreds of pastors, evangelists, and deaconesses globally; and
3

4 WHEREAS, This blessing from God has enabled an increase in mercy work and projects, alleviating human
5 suffering and pain in proximity to Word and Sacrament ministry; and
6

7 WHEREAS, This blessing from God has enabled the LCMS to accompany and assist partner churches to work
8 among refugees from closed countries, which has been nothing short of miraculous; and
9

10 WHEREAS, This blessing from God has resulted in the strengthening of spiritual and emotional care of
11 missionaries by alleviating isolation and loneliness; and
12

13 WHEREAS, This blessing from God has resulted in a decline of the number of Globally Engaged Opportunity
14 (GEO) missionaries who have opportunity to provide witness to the salvation that God has given to us through Jesus
15 Christ during shorter terms of service, typically 24 months; and
16

17 WHEREAS, This blessing from God clearly has been made evident through the joyful, enthusiastic, and
18 outstanding support of the individuals, congregations, and other entities which support LCMS missionaries through
19 the *Together in Mission (TIM)* program; and
20

21 WHEREAS, Through *TIM* and other channels, the *Network Supported Missionary (NSM)* model has continued to
22 increase mission awareness and facilitate the establishment of collaborative missionary support networks throughout
23 the LCMS; and
24

25 WHEREAS, Through the *TIM* program, the *NSM* model, and other means, prayer and financial support for LCMS
26 career and GEO missionaries have increased over the past triennium; therefore be it
27

28 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention give thanks to God for this wondrous blessing by joining in singing the
29 Common Doxology; and be it further
30

31 *Resolved*, That all individuals, congregations, and other entities of the LCMS continue to pray to the Lord of the
32 harvest that He will continue to send laborers for His harvest; and be it further
33

34 *Resolved*, That all individuals, congregations, and other entities of the LCMS pray regularly for those who do
35 not yet know that Jesus is the only Savior from death through the forgiveness of their sin; and be it further
36

37 *Resolved*, That all individuals, congregations, and other entities of the LCMS pray regularly for LCMS
38 missionaries and their families; and be it further
39

40 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention give thanks for all individuals, congregations, and other entities
41 supporting LCMS missionaries through the *TIM* program, *NSM* model, and/or other means of prayer and financial
42 support; and be it further
43

44 *Resolved*, That all individuals, congregations, and other entities of the LCMS give prayerful consideration to
45 supporting LCMS missionaries through the *TIM* program, *NSM* model, and/or other means of prayer and financial
46 support; and be it further
47

48 *Resolved*, That as an increase in missionaries necessarily results in a proportionate increase in mission
49 operational costs, that all individuals, congregations, and other entities of the LCMS, in addition to their regular
50 worship service plate offerings, give prayerful consideration to supporting (1) LCMS global mission projects and (2)
51 crucial LCMS services that ensure the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of our LCMS missionaries
52 throughout the world; and be it finally
53

54 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention pray that the Lord of the harvest bless our work of witness to the
55 Gospel and our work of mercy, that His will may be done among us, and that all may be saved and come to the
56 knowledge of the truth.

**To Commend and Support Synod’s International Schools
and Their Role in the Church’s Mission**

Resolution 2-03

Reports R.1.2, R7 (CW, pp. 12–14, 63–64)

WHEREAS, For over 175 years, the Lord has provided The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) with countless blessings in Christian witness, mercy, and life together through Lutheran education; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS through the coordinating efforts of its dedicated educators and mission leaders has established three thriving international schools (Hong Kong International School, Concordia International School Shanghai, and Concordia International School Hanoi); and

WHEREAS, Each school is respected locally, regionally, and internationally for offering a “tier one” quality education; and

WHEREAS, Collectively, over 4,100 students from over 50 different countries worldwide are served each day by these international schools; and

WHEREAS, Each of these international schools holds the potential to provide an effective platform for furthering the mission of the LCMS in their respective countries and regions; and

WHEREAS, These international schools were established to advance the Synod’s mission as they proclaim the pure Gospel while embodying a vigorous, lively, and winsome Lutheran Christian identity; and

WHEREAS, The international schools currently have no individual or entity providing centralized, consistent advocacy or resource coordination similar to that provided by the LCMS Office of School Ministry (under the supervision of the Office of National Mission) to domestic Lutheran day schools and high schools, or the Concordia University System (CUS) to its member institutions; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention thank God for the mission and ministry of its three international schools, and that the individuals and congregations of the Synod be encouraged to lift up these schools, their communities, and the countries they serve in prayer on a regular basis; and be it further

Resolved, That the three international schools be encouraged to find ways to sustain and broaden their impact in their respective countries and regions, faithfully bearing the Synod’s confession (LCMS Constitution Article II) and supporting its objectives (LCMS Constitution Article III); and be it further

Resolved, That LCMS educators be encouraged to apply to work in the three international schools; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod’s Board for International Mission establish policies guiding the Chief Mission Officer and the Office of International Mission to

- (1) foster intentional, collaborative partnerships between the three international schools, the Concordia University System, Lutheran day schools, and Lutheran high schools;
- (2) provide means of centralized advocacy and coordination for the international schools in the recruitment of educators, increased visibility and awareness, and promotion of opportunities for service; and
- (3) consider and support appropriate opportunities to plant new international schools, leveraging the deep experience of LCMS international schools and educators in other global contexts, countries, and regions.

**To Reaffirm LCMS Military Chaplains’ Right for Free Exercise of Religion
in Face of LGBT Inclusion in Armed Forces**

RESOLUTION 2-04

President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, p. 21–31)

WHEREAS, The LCMS has a longstanding history of providing pastoral care and counsel through the calling of pastors into the Armed Forces, beginning with Rev. Chaplain Friedrich W. Richmann who was called on April 3, 1862, to serve as chaplain in the Ohio Regiment during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, For the past 154 years, the LCMS has continued to provide the Armed Forces with qualified, called clergymen to serve all servicemen, servicewomen, spouses, and children during wartime and peace; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS has defined military chaplains as missionaries to this unique community who have a distinctive culture and customs; and

WHEREAS, Christ prays to His heavenly Father, “I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world” (John 17:15–16); and

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense and the Armed Forces recognizes that all military chaplains, as service members, are guaranteed the right to express their sincerely held religious and moral beliefs in accordance with section 533 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112-239) as amended by section 532 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113-66); and

WHEREAS, LCMS military chaplains are never forced to preach, teach, or act contrary to their conscience and confession of faith; and

WHEREAS, Recent Department of Defense and Armed Forces policies and procedures promoting LGBT rights, recognition, and celebration have the potential for placing LCMS chaplains into situations in which they could be asked to compromise their own preaching and teaching or even act contrary to their confession of faith; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention give thanks to God for the calling of LCMS clergy into the Armed Forces; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod in convention reaffirm her willingness to continue to call able bodied clergy within the Chaplain Corps to act as faithful missionaries to the men, women, and children of the Armed Forces; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod in convention support section 533 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112-239) as amended by section 532 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113-66) that no member of the Armed Forces may

1. require a chaplain to perform any rite, ritual, or ceremony that is contrary to the conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs of the chaplain; or
2. discriminate or take any adverse personnel action against a chaplain, including denial of promotion, schooling, training, or assignment, on the basis of the refusal by the chaplain to comply with a prohibited requirement;

and be it finally

Resolved, That this 2016 LCMS convention re-affirm the Synod’s stance against the espousing or promoting of LGBT matters so that chaplains might be free either to “perform or provide” pastoral care to all servicemen, servicewomen, and children in accordance with their own religious and moral beliefs and in accordance with the

1 publicly stated doctrinal positions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
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4

5 **To Assist LCMS Rostered Workers with Their Confessional Integrity as Contract Workers**

6 **RESOLUTION 2-05**

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9 Report R1.2 (CW, pp. 40–41)

10
11 WHEREAS, On July 21, 2014, President Barack Obama signed Executive Order (EO) 13672, adding “sexual
12 orientation” and “gender identity” (SOGI) to the list of protected classes in the federal workplace; and

13
14 WHEREAS, On January 28, 2015, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance
15 Programs (OFCCP) implemented EO 13672 into federal employment regulations and created an enforcement
16 mechanism through OFCCP; and

17
18 WHEREAS, EO 13672 prohibits discrimination on the basis of “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” in
19 employment by federal *contractors* and *subcontractors* and it prohibits discrimination against federal *employees*
20 based on “gender identity”; and

21
22 WHEREAS, The United States federal government increasingly is requiring contract workers and other
23 employees to compromise their conscience and deeply held religious beliefs on their view of gender identity and
24 sexual orientation; and

25
26 WHEREAS, EO 13672 applies not only to federal contractors, but also to their employees and subcontractors. It
27 requires federal contractors to affirmatively state that job applicants will be considered without regard to sexual
28 orientation or gender identity. It also requires federal contractors to impose this same requirement to all
29 subcontractors and vendors; and

30
31 WHEREAS, Frequently the military chaplaincy lacks the immediate manpower to provide for the religious needs
32 of the military community. In such situations—as is often the case within the Department of Defense (DOD)—
33 chaplains are authorized to supplement their religious ministry through federal contractors and vendors; and

34
35 WHEREAS, Many federal contractors who provide religious ministry and support to DOD are faith-based
36 organizations with their own sincerely held religious beliefs and standards of faith and conduct. EO 13672 presents a
37 significant threat to the religious freedom of LCMS rostered workers who desire to conduct their ministry in a
38 manner consistent with the doctrine and practice of the LCMS; and

39
40 WHEREAS, LCMS military chaplains and other rostered workers often receive exemplary training in pastoral
41 care, behavioral health, marriage enrichment retreats, and couples communication; and

42
43 WHEREAS, LCMS military chaplains and other rostered workers have the opportunity to utilize their knowledge,
44 skills, and abilities as contract workers or in other employee relationships; and

45
46 WHEREAS, Such support may include marriage retreats and couples counseling for those who have an unbiblical
47 view of gender identity and/or sexual orientation; and

48
49 WHEREAS, LCMS rostered workers may place themselves into contractual and employment obligations which
50 may force them to compromise their conscience and their confessional integrity as well as the doctrine and practice
51 of the LCMS under that particular contractual or employment obligation; and

52
53 WHEREAS, LCMS rostered workers, retired or otherwise, are still to confess the doctrines and beliefs of the
54 LCMS; and

55
56 WHEREAS, Those doctrines and beliefs teach that marriage and sexual unions are to be between one man and

1 one woman, that gender is assigned to us from birth by God and is declared to be “good,” and that gender is not to
2 be altered by the will of any person; and

3
4 WHEREAS, The LCMS confesses with the Holy Scriptures that homosexual behavior is intrinsically sinful and
5 that gender assigned from birth is a gift from God; therefore be it

6
7 *Resolved*, That the LCMS be aware of the situation in which retired military chaplains and rostered workers
8 may place themselves; and be it further

9
10 *Resolved*, That rostered workers be aware that entering into certain contractual or employment obligation may
11 force them to support or condone beliefs, practices, and lifestyles which violate the Scriptures and their ordination
12 and/or installation vows; and be it further

13
14 *Resolved*, That district presidents, as the ecclesiastical supervisors of all rostered workers registered within their
15 districts, endeavor to become aware of those chaplains or rostered workers, retired or otherwise, who may place
16 themselves under such contractual or employment obligations which require the unbiblical view of gender identity
17 and sexual orientation; and be it finally

18
19 *Resolved*, That district presidents provide the appropriate pastoral care and, when necessary, disciplinary action
20 to those rostered workers who willingly or willfully violate the doctrine and practices of the LCMS by way of
21 contractual or employment obligation within any agency.

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23
24
25 **To Maintain Proper Balance in Foreign Missions between Congregations’ Right of Self-
26 Governance, the Role of Districts, and Our Commitment to Walk Together**

27
28 **RESOLUTION 2-06**

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30 Reports R56–57 (CW, pp. 133–137, 147–148); Overtures 2-01–12, 2-14 (CW, pp. 315–324); President’s Report,
31 Part 2 (TB, p. 21–31)

32
33 WHEREAS, God’s Word speaks to the responsibility of all Christians to make disciples of all nations (Matt.
34 28:18–20) and is replete with examples of individuals and congregations directly caring for the needs of
35 missionaries and foreign mission fields (Rom. 15:25–29; 1 Cor. 16:1–14; 2 Cor. 8:1–9:15; Phil. 2:19–30; 4:10–20;
36 etc.); and the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) rendered opinions in 14-2724 and 15-2771 that
37 affirmed and recognized the right of congregations to participate in mission work around the world; and

38
39 WHEREAS, As a condition of membership in the Synod, congregations and rostered church workers have
40 voluntarily agreed not to participate in “heterodox tract and missionary activities” (Constitution Article VI 2 c), and

41
42 WHEREAS, Article VII of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Constitution states, “In its relation to
43 its members, the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and with
44 respect to the individual congregation’s right of self-government it is but an advisory body”; and

45
46 WHEREAS, Article XIV of the Constitution states that the Synod in convention may adopt bylaws that are
47 consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod, which controls and supersedes such bylaws and
48 all other rules and regulations of the Synod; and

49
50 WHEREAS, A purpose for forming the Synod is for congregations to join together in ministry (Bylaw 1.1.1):

51
52 1.1.1 Committed to a common confession and mission, congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
53 join with one another in the Synod to support one another and to work together in carrying out their
54 commonly adopted objectives. The Synod is organized to work in support of and on behalf of congregations
55 to assist them in carrying out their ministries as they seek to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, the members of His
56 body, and the world which stands in need of the Word and the impact of His redeeming love.

1 (a) The Synod functions in support of its member congregations by providing assistance as
2 congregations conduct their ministries locally, as well as their ministries at large.

3 (b) The Synod on behalf of its member congregations administers those ministries that can be
4 accomplished more effectively in association with other member congregations through the Synod. In
5 this way member congregations utilize the Synod to assist them in carrying out their functions of
6 worship, witness, teaching and nurture, service, and support.

7
8 and

9
10 WHEREAS, The Board of International Mission (BIM) and the President of Synod have encouraged congre-
11 gations and districts to be engaged both locally and internationally; and

12
13 WHEREAS, Congregations, occasionally districts, and other entities have with the best intentions engaged in
14 unilateral work overseas which has caused offense, confusion, and consternation among partner churches (e.g.,
15 supporting Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) partners, charismatic, or other non-Lutheran churches
16 and groups), exacerbated or created division on the field, necessitated hours of remediation by LCMS mission
17 personnel, left projects costing hundreds of thousands of dollars incomplete—all with little or no communication
18 with LCMS missionaries responsible for various regions and partner church relationships; and

19
20 WHEREAS, Districts are the extension of Synod, and the Synod may limit its own activity for the sake of good
21 order; and

22
23 WHEREAS, 2010 Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of
24 “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the
25 Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) related to this topic; and

26
27 WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 09-2573 states in part that “there is a common understanding that a congregation
28 exercises its self-government...in carrying out...its own ministry programs and financial affairs...”; and

29
30 WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.8.3 states in part, “Upon the recommendation of the Office of International Mission, the
31 board shall serve as the only sending agency through which workers and funds are sent to the foreign mission areas
32 of the Synod, including the calling, appointing, assigning, withdrawing, and releasing of missionaries (ministers of
33 religion—ordained and ministers of religion—commissioned) and other workers for the ministries in foreign areas”;
34 and

35
36 WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 states in part, “Congregations may not send funds to mission societies and
37 non-Synod entities for work in foreign areas without taking into consideration policies developed and determined for
38 this purpose by the Board of International Mission as the only sending agency”; and

39
40 WHEREAS, The world is now a place that has become much smaller due to things like airplane travel, the
41 internet, cell phone communication, and social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter, etc.; and

42
43 WHEREAS, It is possible to find bylaw language which is more applicable to the circumstances today, while
44 ensuring harmony and Synod unity in international work; and

45
46 WHEREAS, It is desirable to maintain the right of local congregations to engage in mission activity while at the
47 same time working to ensure that the international mission work of the Synod goes on in good order and without
48 conflict; therefore be it

49
50 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention request that the President of the Synod form a “Bylaw 3.8.3 Task
51 Force” to study and review the proper balance in foreign missions between congregations’ right of self-governance
52 and commitment to walk together with the Board for International Mission (BIM) and Office of International
53 Mission (OIM) to ensure that the international mission work of the Synod goes on in good order and without
54 conflict, and that a report be presented at the next regular Synod convention; and be it further

55
56 *Resolved*, That this “Bylaw 3.8.3 Task Force” may include, but is not limited to, representation from pastors and

1 laity from congregations, district presidents, BIM members, OIM staff, and the Commission on Handbook; and be it
2 further

3
4 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention recognize and accept the current practice and understanding of Bylaw
5 3.8.3 as clarified by CCM Opinions 14-2724 and 15-2771 as correct interpretations of Bylaw 3.8.3 during the time
6 that the task force reviews Bylaws 1.1.1 and 3.8.3; and be it further

7
8 *Resolved*, That for the sake of “walking together,” congregations be encouraged to communicate and coordinate
9 with the OIM, and districts of the Synod with the President of the Synod as the chief ecumenical officer (Bylaw
10 3.3.1.1.2) as they contemplate engaging in mission activities in any part of the world, including but not limited to
11 those areas officially identified and listed as the Synod’s “foreign mission area[s]” according to Bylaw 3.1.4.3; and
12 be it further

13
14 *Resolved*, That thanks be given for the great mission zeal of congregations and districts, both in their support of
15 the Synod’s official mission agencies but also where entrepreneurial activities have been blessed by the Lord and
16 have brought great blessing to the Synod; and be it finally

17
18 *Resolved*, That the BIM, the OIM, congregations, and districts seek to mutually communicate, coordinate, and
19 support each other’s mission efforts as we walk together as a Synod.

3. MERCY

To Commend and Encourage Work of LCMS Disaster Response

RESOLUTION 3-01

Reports R1.2, R54 (CW, pp. 29, 123); President's Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, Our gracious, heavenly Father richly and daily provides us with all that we need to support this body and life (*Small Catechism* [SC], Apostle's Creed: First Article) and continues to provide for us, even in the midst of disaster, through various God-pleasing vocations; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Disaster Response is designed to carry out a comprehensive program in these gray and latter days, serving as a Christian faith-based emergency relief and long-term assistance effort following natural and manmade disasters, engaging LCMS congregations, districts, recognized service organizations and partner churches in a shared ministry of mercy, with an objective of opening doors to the proclamation of the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS awarded 135 national and international disaster relief grants totaling nearly \$3 million in the last triennium (e.g., the typhoon in the Philippines; the tornadoes in Moore, OK, and across the Midwest and the South; the flooding in Colorado, Missouri, Texas and Louisiana; the fires in Chile; the Ebola Virus in West Africa; and numerous other disasters); and

WHEREAS, More than 5,000 LCMS volunteers have been trained through the 100-plus Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) training events held in the last three years; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Disaster Response has established a goal of 20,000 LERT trained LCMS volunteers by the end of the upcoming triennium; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Disaster Response has developed Spanish resources for domestic and international work, with additional resources needed; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) provided a grant of \$80,000 to LCMS Disaster Response for congregations, districts, and recognized service organizations, resulting in 26 disaster response trailers being provided across 21 districts; and

WHEREAS, The opportunity to point those who are suffering to the comfort of the Gospel and to make use of financial resources to bring physical healing to disaster victims has never been greater; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention commend and give thanks for the mercy work of LCMS Disaster Response, congregations, districts, recognized service organizations, LWML, and all those who have assisted with the work nationally and internationally; and be it further

Resolved, That LCMS Disaster Response continue to produce training and resources to serve the Synod and our communities, with special emphasis on Spanish language resources; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod encourage its members to continue to support the mercy work of LCMS Disaster Response with prayer for all those who suffer from all manner of disasters, to participate in LERT training, to offer volunteer assistance when there is the opportunity, and to provide financial resources to assist those in need, as we show Christ's love through our acts of mercy.

[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday's issue of Today's Business.]

To Commend Work of LCMS National Housing Support Corporation

RESOLUTION 3-02

Report R18 (CW, pp. 91–92); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, Our Lord commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31); and

WHEREAS, Christ Jesus in His ministry on earth provided us the most perfect example of living this command through His attention to both the spiritual and bodily needs of people; and

WHEREAS, Housing and community development services, which address the basic human need for shelter, can play a vital role in revitalizing LCMS congregations in areas that have been economically ravaged and blighted; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS National Housing Support Corporation (Lutheran Housing Support), the Synod’s housing intermediary since 2007, has been a Christ-centered, collaborative agency committed to mercy; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS National Housing Support Corporation has in the past triennium distributed 25 grants, trained 185 church leaders in community development, consulted and assisted 80 entities domestically and internationally, conducted the first “Helping Hand Initiative” of health and safety repairs in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and led a broad-based community revitalization initiative in the College Hill neighborhood of St. Louis, Missouri, including the development of new owner-occupied housing; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod thank God for His blessings and gifts—most specifically, the resources and abilities that He has provided to serve our neighbors’ needs of body and soul; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod give thanks for the work of the LCMS National Housing Support Corporation on behalf of LCMS congregations, districts, and recognized service organizations; and be it finally

Resolved, That LCMS congregations, districts, and recognized service organizations be encouraged to support the LCMS National Housing Support Corporation, as well as to engage its expertise as they take leadership roles in strengthening neighborhoods near LCMS congregations, thereby providing opportunities for Gospel witness.

To Encourage Synod to Educate and Advocate for Persecuted Christians

RESOLUTION 3-03

Overture 3-02 (CW, p. 325); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, Paul reminds us in 1 Cor. 12:26, “If one part [of the Body of Christ] suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it”; and

WHEREAS, Christian populations throughout the world are suffering persecution of the most severe kind; and

WHEREAS, Many of these populations face extinction because of their faith; and

WHEREAS, Many men, women, and children have been brutally murdered or driven from their homes, becoming refugees in their own homeland or interned in other countries, looking to a future place to live; and

WHEREAS, Many have been kidnapped from their families and sold into slavery; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod encourage pastors and congregations to be better informed about the issue of the world-wide persecution of Christians; and be it further

1 issues surrounding fertility and procreation; and be it further

2
3 *Resolved*, That this task force gather and arrange points for consideration, coordinate discussion, and identify
4 actions leading to the production of appropriate LCMS responses to these issues (reports, study documents, essays,
5 other media, and the like) with the CTCR and/or other appropriate LCMS entities; and be it finally

6
7 *Resolved*, That this task force continue this aforementioned work of leadership, facilitation, and coordination,
8 and summarize its activities in a report to be completed by December 31, 2018, along with accompanying
9 recommendations in the form of appropriate overtures to the Synod's 2019 national convention.

10
11 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
12 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday's issue of Today's Business.]*

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16 **To Give Thanks to God and Encourage Support for the Ministries of Lutheran Immigration and**
17 **Refugee Services, Lutheran Services in America, and Lutheran World Relief**

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19 **RESOLUTION 3-05**

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21 Report R1.2 (CW, p. 30); President's Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

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23 WHEREAS, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS), an inter-Lutheran organization based in
24 Baltimore, MD, partners with Lutheran congregations across the country working to protect, embrace, and empower
25 migrants and refugees through ministries of resettlement and justice; and

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27 WHEREAS, Lutheran Services in America (LSA), an inter-Lutheran organization based in Washington, D.C.,
28 creates opportunities to bring hope and healing to people in thousands of communities throughout the United States
29 and the Caribbean through a network of 300 ministries of health care, senior services, disability support, community
30 development, housing, and child and family strengthening; and is celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2017 of bringing
31 together social ministries to answer actively God's call to love and serve our neighbor and provide works of mercy
32 that transform the lives of people and communities; and

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34 WHEREAS, Lutheran World Relief (LWR), an inter-Lutheran organization based in Baltimore, MD, provides
35 focused response to emergencies, relieves suffering and poverty by working among the poorest in rural and remote
36 regions of over 35 countries, promotes justice around the world, and is working with our Synod to strengthen the
37 capacity of LCMS international mission operations and LCMS partner churches in their mercy work; and

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39 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has a long history with these entities in mercy
40 work, in what has historically been described as “cooperation in externals”; and

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42 WHEREAS, Through the work of LIRS, LSA, and LWR, the Lord extends His mercy to those in need; and

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44 WHEREAS, LIRS, LSA, and LWR extend their work through material and financial support of individuals and
45 congregations; and

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47 WHEREAS, The faithful prayers of the saints greatly strengthen and encourage their work; therefore be it

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49 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention offer thanks and praise to God for His works of mercy extended
50 through these organizations; and be it further

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52 *Resolved*, That the Synod commend LIRS, LSA, and LWR in their stewardship of the resources entrusted to
53 them in responding to the various service needs and opportunities in the world; and be it finally

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55 *Resolved*, That the Synod encourage congregations and individuals to remain supportive of and involved in the
56 mercy work of LIRS, LSA, and LWR.

**To Support and Expand Work of LCMS World Relief and Human Care
through Offices of International and National Mission**

RESOLUTION 3-06

President's Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, To redeem the sinful world, God the Father gave a tangible expression of His mercy through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus; and

WHEREAS, Jesus, as God's mercy incarnate, preached the Gospel, healed the sick, cast out demons, and performed various other miracles; and

WHEREAS, The Holy Spirit, through the washing of Holy Baptism, forgives our sins and frees us to be Jesus' hands and feet of mercy in the world; and,

WHEREAS, The Church's mission is born of God's mercy; our life is an expression of the One who gave His life for all; and,

WHEREAS, Throughout the history of the church from the days of Paul's collection for the poor, through Luther's common chest, to Rev. Dr. C.F.W. Walther's pastoral leadership, the church has followed her merciful Master; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in its modern history was blessed by God in the creation of the LCMS World Relief and Human Care—a ministry of mercy and care for those in need throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, God's command to care for the orphan, widow, alien, the dispossessed, those who hunger and thirst, and those who suffer from disasters—manmade and natural—has been fulfilled through this ministry in its care for body and soul; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention give thanks to God for His blessings of the Gospel and works of mercy through His church; and be it further

Resolved, That all members of the Synod be encouraged to support LCMS World Relief and Human Care through prayers and gifts; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Offices of National Mission and International Mission continue to see mercy as an integral part of the church's mission and strengthen collaboration with the Synod's districts, congregations, recognized service organizations, and partner churches, here and abroad, to identify and respond to needs for mercy.

4. LIFE TOGETHER

To Celebrate 175 Years of Combined Ministry and Service of LWML and ILLL

RESOLUTION 4-01

Reports R54–55 (CW, pp. 123–126); Overture 4-02 (CW, p. 329)

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML) is celebrating 75 years of ministry and service to the Church (1942–2017); and

WHEREAS, The International Lutheran Laymen’s League (ILLL) is celebrating 100 years of ministry and service to the Church (1917–2017); and

WHEREAS, These auxiliaries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the LWML and the ILLL, exist as arms of the Synod, with the primary function of aiding the Synod specifically in programs that extend the ministry and mission of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The mission of the LWML is to assist each woman of the LCMS in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world; and

WHEREAS, The mission of the ILLL is “Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church”; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS Office of National Mission and the Office of International Mission have been working collaboratively and cooperatively with LWML and ILLL in mission endeavors; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2016 LCMS convention give thanks for the lay members of the LWML and ILLL; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention joyfully acknowledge the faithful leadership and cooperative work of these auxiliaries which support the Synod’s national and international mission efforts; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention congratulate and commend the LWML and ILLL for their 175 years of combined ministry to the church; and be it finally

Resolved, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in convention stand and sing the Common Doxology with all glory to God in praise and anticipation of LWML and ILLL future ministry initiatives.

**To Reaffirm Witness, Mercy, Life Together as the Mission and Ministry
Emphasis for the 2016–2019 Triennium**

RESOLUTION 4-02

Overtures 4-04–11, 4-27, 16-01 (CW, pp. 330–332, 338, 476)

WHEREAS, Our commitment together as LCMS congregations and workers is to walk together with the Word of God as our only norm and guide for doctrine and practice; and

WHEREAS, The current triennial emphasis of “Witness, Mercy, Life Together” established at our 2013 Synod convention has served the Synod well and has blessed congregations with a richer understanding of the nature and mission of the Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, Nine (9) of 35 districts submitted overtures to the 2016 convention suggesting mission and ministry

1 emphases for the 2016–2019 triennium; and

2
3 WHEREAS, These submissions continue to focus on our life together, service to our community and to those in
4 need, and reaching out with the Gospel; and

5
6 WHEREAS, These submissions have given special focus to ministering to families, people of different nations,
7 and people of different races; therefore be it

8
9 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention reaffirm the threefold emphasis of “Witness, Mercy, Life Together,”
10 including the following six priorities:

- 11 ∞ Plant, sustain, and revitalize Lutheran churches
- 12 ∞ Support and expand theological education
- 13 ∞ Perform human care in close proximity to Word and Sacrament ministries
- 14 ∞ Collaborate with the Synod’s members and partners to enhance mission effectiveness
- 15 ∞ Promote and nurture the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of pastors and professional
16 church workers
- 17 ∞ Enhance early childhood, elementary and secondary education, and youth ministry

18
19 and be it further

20
21 *Resolved*, That a seventh priority be established:

- 22 ∞ Strengthen and support the Lutheran family in living out God’s design

23
24 and be it finally

25
26 *Resolved*, That special focus be given toward:

- 27 ∞ Ministry to and with people of different nations and people of different races
- 28 ∞ Preaching and Bible study
- 29 ∞ Visitation

30
31
32
33 **To Convene Task Force to Review Recognized Service Organization Program and Bylaws**

34
35 **RESOLUTION 4-03**

36
37 Overture 4-03 (CW, pp. 329–330)

38
39 WHEREAS, The Synod has a lengthy history of recognizing the contributions made by service organizations as
40 they fulfill the call to love our neighbors (Mark 12:31); and

41
42 WHEREAS, There are currently more than three hundred recognized service organizations (RSOs) in the
43 program, including social service agencies, mission societies, camps, and schools; and

44
45 WHEREAS, The granting of RSO status by the Synod signifies that a service organization, “while independent of
46 the Synod, fosters the mission and ministry of the church, engages in program activity that is in harmony with the
47 programs of the boards of the Synod, and respects and does not act contrary to the doctrine and practice of the
48 Synod” (Bylaw 6.2.1); and

49
50 WHEREAS, The needs of the Synod, the work of social service agencies, and the regulation and oversight by
51 governmental agencies have all changed significantly over the 30-plus years of the program; and

52
53 WHEREAS, Concerns have been raised over the years by various constituencies within The Lutheran Church—
54 Missouri Synod (LCMS), including program leadership and the Board of Directors, as to the objectives of the
55 program and the current policies and procedures associated with the administration of the program; and

1
2 WHEREAS, Current state and federal laws may negatively impact an RSO’s ability to “not act contrary to the
3 doctrine and practice of the Synod,” recent same-sex marriage rulings having serious implications for programs and
4 services of RSOs especially in the areas of foster care, adoption, aging, and housing; and

5
6 WHEREAS, The LCMS desires and encourages its RSOs to live out their Lutheran identity in the services and
7 programs they provide; and

8
9 WHEREAS, The RSO program is intended to benefit the church by contributing to its effectiveness in witness,
10 mercy, and life together; and

11
12 WHEREAS, A thorough review of the RSO program was conducted in 2006–07 by Synod staff which brought
13 revision and improvement to the Synod’s RSO recognition process; and

14
15 WHEREAS, A review of the needs of the Synod, including the work of social service agencies; mission societies,
16 and other entities granted recognition status; the impact of government regulations and oversight; and a review of
17 mutual benefits to the Synod and RSOs should be undertaken; therefore be it

18
19 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention authorize the formation of an RSO Task Force charged with the
20 following responsibilities:

- 21
22 • Review and report on the original purpose and intent of the RSO program and its predecessors
23 • Determine the needs of and benefits to the Synod with respect to the RSO program and identify the best
24 model for the Synod to engage with organizations which foster the mission and ministry of the church and
25 who engage in programs that are in harmony with the programs of the Synod
26 • Recommend changes to the RSO program, and/or the elimination of the program, and/or replacement of the
27 current RSO program with a new relationship model that provides benefit to the Synod and the social
28 service agency, and/or develop and recommend other solutions
29 • Recommend appropriate changes to the LCMS Bylaws, as needed
30 • Ensure that all recommendations maintain the importance of agencies that are recognized by the LCMS,
31 foster the mission and ministry of the church, engage in program activity that is in harmony with programs
32 of the Synod, and respect and do not act contrary to the doctrine and practice of the Synod

33
34 and be it further

35
36 *Resolved*, That the task force begin work immediately following this convention, and that the members of this
37 task force be the Secretary of the Synod, the Chief Mission Officer, the Chief Administrative Officer, the executive
38 director of the Office of National Mission, the director of the RSO program, a representative from the Office of the
39 President, a representative of the Council of Presidents, and the chief executive officer of one or more RSOs
40 selected by the task force; and be it finally

41
42 *Resolved*, That the task force make its first report and recommendations to the Synod Board of Directors and the
43 President of the Synod by August 1, 2018, with a final report and recommendations to be presented to the 2019
44 LCMS convention.

45
46 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
47 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

48
49
50
51 **To Appeal to LCMS Congregations, Workers, and Institutions by the Mercies of God**
52 **to Retain a Common Order of Service for the Lord’s Supper**

53
54 **RESOLUTION 4-04**

55
56 Overtures 4-14–15, 6-09 (CW, pp. 333–334, 359)

1
2 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church has long heeded the Apostle’s injunction that all things be done decently and
3 in order (1 Cor. 14) by joyfully and freely receiving the Church’s historic order of Divine Service (service of Holy
4 Communion) as a precious gift from previous generations of Christians by which the Word of God is not bound but
5 given free course that it may be proclaimed to the joy and edifying of Christ’s holy people; and
6

7 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church confesses that it suffices for the true unity of the Christian Church that the
8 Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it and the sacraments administered in accordance
9 with the divine Word (Augsburg Confession, Article VII:2); and
10

11 WHEREAS, It is simply not necessary for the true unity of the Christian Church that ceremonies instituted by
12 human custom should be observed uniformly in all places (AC VII:3); and
13

14 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Reformers nevertheless protested ardently that they had by no means allowed the
15 Mass, that is, the Divine Service (service of Holy Communion), to be abolished, but rather observed it with the
16 customary ceremonies with even greater reverence than their opponents (AC XXIV:1 and Apology of the Augsburg
17 Confession XXIV:1); and
18

19 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Reformers could insist that those church usages that have been established by human
20 authority ought to be observed, provided they could be observed without sin and without the erroneous opinion that
21 they justified (AC XV) for the sake of training the unlearned in the faith (AC XXIV:3); and
22

23 WHEREAS, The Reformers rejected the notion that humanly instituted ceremonies are in and of themselves
24 divine worship or a part of it (Formula of Concord, Epitome X:3); and
25

26 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Reformers confess that the churches of God in every locality and age have authority to
27 order such ceremonies in ways that are fitting and profitable for the building up of the community in the faith (FC
28 Ep X:4); and
29

30 WHEREAS, All frivolity and offense are to be carefully avoided in this regard so that weak in faith are not
31 scandalized (FC Ep X:5); and
32

33 WHEREAS, The Reformers also authored church orders, such as the *Church Order for Braunschweig-*
34 *Wolfenbüttel* , recently (2015) published in English by Concordia Publishing House (CPH), which show how
35 evangelical freedom may fruitfully be joined with a grateful reception and creative appropriation of the church’s
36 living liturgical and hymnological heritage; and
37

38 WHEREAS, The church orders evidenced variation in the details of the humanly established ceremonies from
39 place to place, yet all within the order received from previous generations; and
40

41 WHEREAS, This received order provides in a remarkable way for the whole counsel of God to be set before the
42 congregation in a weekly and yearly pattern that delivers the riches of Christ to His Bride, balancing both what
43 changes weekly or seasonally (the “Propers”) with the stability of a framework that remains largely constant (the
44 “Ordinary”); and
45

46 WHEREAS, The Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Article III 7 states: “The
47 Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions shall – 7. Encourage congregations to strive for uniformity in
48 church practice, but also to develop an appreciation of a variety of responsible practices and customs which are in
49 harmony with our common profession of faith”; therefore be it
50

51 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention appeal to the congregations of the Synod by the mercies of God (Rom.
52 12:1), when celebrating the Lord’s Supper, regularly to use these basic components of the Order of Service (*Ordo*):
53 to gather in the Triune name, confess our sins and receive absolution, sing the praises of the blessed Trinity, attend
54 to the reading and the proclamation of God’s Holy Word, confess our faith using the historic creeds, offer prayers
55 for all people according to their needs, present our offerings, lift our hearts to God, give Him thanks and join with
56 angels and archangels in their song, celebrate the Lord’s Supper with Christ’s own Words, rejoice in the Lamb of

1 God who takes away the sin of the world, and then depart in God's peace and with His blessing to send us forth as
2 His forgiven children and witnesses to His grace; and be it further

3
4 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention appeal to the congregations of the Synod to rejoice in the freedom of
5 instrumentation and style within a consistent framework of the order of service as listed above; and be it further

6
7 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention appeal to the congregations of the Synod to reaffirm Synod Constitu-
8 tion Article VI 4 in which we willingly agree to the “4. Exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymnbooks and
9 catechisms in church and school” in all worship services; and be it further

10
11 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention appeal to the pastors and other worship leaders of the Synod to make a
12 rich and full use of the liturgy and hymns of the church; and be it further

13
14 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention appeal to the educational institutions of the Synod to educate and form
15 students in the riches of our liturgy and hymns; and be it further

16
17 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention appeal to our congregations and workers to welcome and encourage
18 the development and use of new hymns and liturgical settings, which continually is called forth by the Holy Spirit,
19 not as a supplanting of what has come before, but as a supplement to it, its living growth; and be it further

20
21 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention appeal to the circuits and districts of the Synod and the Council of
22 Presidents to engage in full and open discussion in the next triennium of how this spirit of unity and freedom is put
23 into practice in our walk together, and that the district presidents would encourage the implementation of this
24 resolution and report back to the 2019 convention; and be it finally

25
26 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention appeal to our congregations and workers to remember that the freedom
27 to which we are called in Christ “shall be and remain a servant of love and of our fellow-man” (Martin Luther, AE
28 53:61).

31 **To Continue and Expand Koinonia Project**

32 **RESOLUTION 4-05**

33
34
35
36 Overtures 4-01, 4-30 (CW, pp. 329, 339–340)

37
38 WHEREAS, The Constitution of the Synod (Article XI B 3) enjoins the President of the Synod to “conscien-
39 tiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the
40 Synod”; and

41
42 WHEREAS, The goals of the Koinonia Project are laudable and are goals for which we fervently pray; and

43
44 WHEREAS, A framework has been established in the Koinonia Project concept paper, posted on the Synod’s
45 website (<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=884>); and

46
47 WHEREAS, The Koinonia Project has been developing since 2010 and is ongoing; and

48
49 WHEREAS, True koinonia is God’s gift, whole and complete in the Lord Jesus; our work is to study the Word of
50 God together, that being where God gives His gift of koinonia in Christ as the Holy Spirit works through the Gospel
51 purely preached and the Sacraments rightly administered (Apology VII and VIII); and

52
53 WHEREAS, The 2013 Synod convention directed the expansion of the Koinonia Project by directing the Council
54 of Presidents to engage in the Koinonia Project (2013 Res. 3-01A); and

55
56 WHEREAS, The Council of Presidents for the 2013-2016 triennium has engaged in and benefited from the

1 Koinonia Project; and

2
3 WHEREAS, Some districts and circuits have employed the Koinonia Project with positive results; and

4
5 WHEREAS, It would be desirable if the Koinonia Project were developed to be broader and deeper across the
6 Synod, with the prayer that there be a cultural shift toward more open and honest discussion under the Word of God,
7 and that more resources be developed; therefore be it

8
9 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention assign oversight of the Koinonia Project to the Synod Praesidium
10 (Synod President and vice-presidents); and be it further

11
12 *Resolved*, That the Council of Presidents continue with study groups and report its progress to the 2019 Synod
13 convention; and be it further

14
15 *Resolved*, That each district president promote the Koinonia Project within his district and include an update on
16 the Koinonia Project in his report to his district in 2018 and in his report to the 2019 Synod convention; and be it
17 finally

18
19 *Resolved*, That each member of the Synod and each member of a Synod congregation follow the principles of
20 the Koinonia Project, namely, that when there is disagreement regarding doctrine and practice, the baptized will
21 come together through their unity in Christ to live out that unity as they study the Word of God and pray.

22
23
24
25 **To Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of *The Lutheran Hymnal***

26
27 **RESOLUTION 4-06**

28
29 Overtures 4-12, 4-16 (CW, pp. 332, 334)

30
31 WHEREAS, This year 2016 marks the 75th anniversary of the publication of *The Lutheran Hymnal*, which was
32 issued in 1941 by the Intersynodical Committee on Hymnology and Liturgics for the Evangelical Lutheran
33 Synodical Conference of North America; and

34
35 WHEREAS, *The Lutheran Hymnal* stands as a reminder and is one of the finest products of the cooperative
36 relationship that united the principal confessional Lutheran church bodies in the United States in the old Synodical
37 Conference; and

38
39 WHEREAS, During the four decades in which *The Lutheran Hymnal* served the Synod as its primary hymnal, the
40 Synod experienced unprecedented numerical growth, doubling its size while witnessing the tremendous expansion
41 of its schools and institutions of higher education; and

42
43 WHEREAS, The enduring character of *The Lutheran Hymnal* is evidenced by its continued use to the present day
44 and by the incorporation of its beloved texts in *Lutheran Service Book*; and

45
46 WHEREAS, *The Lutheran Hymnal* and several of its attendant resources are still in print and available through
47 Concordia Publishing House; therefore be it

48
49 *Resolved*, That the 2016 Synod convention commemorate the 75th anniversary of *The Lutheran Hymnal* by
50 giving thanks to God for the liturgical and hymnological treasures of the church contained therein; and be it further

51
52 *Resolved*, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in convention, by adopting this overture/resolution,
53 formally recognize and commemorate the 75th anniversary of *The Lutheran Hymnal*; and be it finally

54
55 *Resolved*, Upon adoption of this resolution, that the convention stand and sing “God’s Word Is Our Great
56 Heritage” (TLH 283):

1 God's Word is our great heritage
 2 And shall be ours forever;
 3 To spread its light from age to age
 4 Shall be our chief endeavor.
 5 Through life it guides our way,
 6 In death it is our stay.
 7 Lord, grant, while worlds endure,
 8 We keep its teachings pure.
 9 Throughout all generations. Amen.
 10
 11
 12

To Respectfully Decline Overtures

RESOLUTION 4-07

17 WHEREAS, The floor committee has considered all overtures assigned to it and has concluded, for various
 18 reasons, that certain overtures should be declined; therefore be it
 19

20 *Resolved*, That the following overtures be respectfully declined for the reasons given:
 21

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reason</u>
4-13	To Provide for Doctrinal Review of Non-Synod Approved Worship and Catechetical Materials	Doctrinal review intended only for synodwide publications. Volume of work too great.
4-19	To Translate and Publish Book of Concord of 1580 (Concordia) into Russian Language	Already translated by Lutheran Heritage Foundation
4-22	To Publicly Call Rev. Dr. Matthew Becker to Repentance	Already addressed by Northwest District President. No longer member of Synod
4-23	To Settle Professor Jeffery Kloha Controversy	Already resolved by President of Synod and President of Concordia Seminary
4-24	To Request Public Clarification of Kloha Paper	Already resolved by President of Synod and President of Concordia Seminary
4-29	To Call for Members with Confessions Contrary to That of the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions To Leave Synodical Union Voluntarily	Already addressed by Synod Constitution

5. THEOLOGY AND CHURCH RELATIONS

To Endorse Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with Lutheran Church in Norway

RESOLUTION 5-01

Overture 5-01 (CW, pp. 341–342)

Preamble

Christianity came to Norway around AD 1000 and became the dominant religion by the 12th century. The 16th-century Reformation had a profound effect on the church in Norway, leading it to sever its ties with Rome. The Lutheran church became the state church of Norway. (To this day the “state” or “peoples’ church” continues to receive state support.) In subsequent centuries, Norwegian Lutherans were noted for deep piety and energetic work in missions. The second half of the 20th century, however, marked significant change for the Norwegian state church, most notably an undermining of biblical authority, growing tolerance of theological innovation and false doctrine, growing rejection of Christian moral teachings (e.g., on abortion, sexual behavior), a marked decline of church attendance among the laity, and the decline of mission. In the 21st century, the decay of Norwegian Christianity has become only more evident. Regular church attendance is now below 3% of population, leading to baptism of infants dropping significantly. The Church of Norway itself tolerated departures from biblical teaching and practice, such as abortion, same-sex marriage, universalism, and so forth.

Despite such decline, there are faithful Christians in Norway. One example is The Lutheran Church in Norway (LCN). The LCN is a small, emerging, strongly confessional Lutheran church (presently with three congregations) that is independent of state support. It upholds the complete authority and inerrancy of Holy Scripture and clearly articulates and practices the truth that Christ alone is the world’s Savior from sin, death, and hell. As has been the practice among Scandinavian Lutherans, it subscribes to the three ecumenical creeds, the Small Catechism, and the Augsburg Confession, with the *Book of Concord* as authoritative for interpreting these documents. The LCN’s purpose is to plant and guide congregations in the true faith.

Its commitment to the Gospel and the Holy Scriptures, and the Confessions, led the LCN, under the leadership of Rev. Torkild Masvie, to request fellowship with the LCMS on March 3, 2011. Doctrinal discussions began in July of that same year, according to the provisions of Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (c). Following these visits and discussions (which included LCMS representatives Dr. Albert Collver, Rev. Dan Gilbert, Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, and Rev. Daniel Preus), on May 16, 2014, the CTCR recommended a recognition of fellowship with the LCN to President Harrison and he declared the same on November 7, 2014. A protocol agreement between the two churches was signed on March 7, 2015. On January 17, 2016, Rev. Torkild Masvie was formally installed as Provisional Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Norway at the first official convention of the LCN.

WHEREAS, There is a severe decline of biblical and confessional teaching and life among Norwegian Christianity; and

WHEREAS, By God’s grace, the LCN traces its history to the Lutheran Reformation’s acceptance in Norway and continues to believe, teach, and confess the saving Gospel of justification by grace through faith in Christ alone and is fully committed to the sole authority of Holy Scripture in the church’s teaching and life; and

WHEREAS, By God’s grace, the LCN boldly proclaims God’s holy Law and His saving Gospel, seeking to uphold the scriptural truth about abortion, abortifacients, and same-sex marriage, while promoting the glorious truth of Christ’s saving work for all the world; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), in obedience to God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions, enjoys church fellowship with many other Lutheran churches throughout the world and endeavors to seek out other Lutheran churches that believe, teach, and confess the same true faith; and

WHEREAS, The LCN has for several years enjoyed altar and pulpit fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran

1 Church of Latvia, a partner church of the LCMS; and

2
3 WHEREAS, While living in the United States, the Rev. Torkild Masvie (now bishop of LCN) was a member of
4 an LCMS congregation for three years, and LCN leaders and pastors have enjoyed a working relationship in
5 theological education with numerous LCMS leaders, teachers, and lecturers; and

6
7 WHEREAS, The LCN was established as an independent Lutheran church in 2006 and subsequently requested
8 formal church fellowship discussions with the LCMS; and

9
10 WHEREAS, Representatives of the LCMS conducted several formal visits to the LCN, and LCN representatives
11 have, in turn, visited the LCMS; and

12
13 WHEREAS, After visits, correspondence, and thorough consideration, the LCMS representatives concluded that
14 there is complete agreement between our two churches in doctrine and practice and therefore no obstacle to altar and
15 pulpit fellowship; and

16
17 WHEREAS, At its 2010 Convention the Synod adopted Res. 3-04A “To Amend Bylaw 3.9.6.2.2 re Altar and
18 Pulpit Fellowship with Small, Formative, or Emerging Confessional Churches,” which recognizes that in certain
19 cases a streamlined approach to altar and pulpit fellowship with such emerging churches would be beneficial; and

20
21 WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (c) now provides:

22
23 When a small, formative, emerging confessional Lutheran church body (identified as such by the President
24 of the Synod as chief ecumenical officer) requests recognition of altar and pulpit fellowship with the
25 Synod, after consultation with the Praesidium and approval by the commission, such recognition may be
26 declared by the President of the Synod subject to the endorsement of the subsequent Synod convention.”

27
28 and

29
30 WHEREAS, At its May 2014 meeting the CTCR formally recommended church fellowship with the LCN to the
31 President of Synod; and

32
33 WHEREAS, President Harrison declared fellowship on November 7, 2014, after consultation with the
34 Praesidium; and

35
36 WHEREAS, Necessary protocol documents guiding interactions between the LCMS and the LCN have been
37 adopted; therefore be it

38
39 *Resolved*, That we acknowledge with gratitude the unity of confession that has been given to the LCMS and the
40 LCN under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and be it further

41
42 *Resolved*, That we give thanks that, despite significant cultural and ecclesial challenges, God, by His grace, has
43 equipped and prepared the LCN to give a faithful, confessional Lutheran witness in Norway; and be it further

44
45 *Resolved*, That we give thanks to God that doctrinal discussions between official representatives of the LCMS
46 and the LCN have revealed that complete agreement exists between our two churches in doctrine and practice; and
47 be it further

48
49 *Resolved*, That this convention endorse the Synod President’s declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship between
50 the LCMS and the LCN; and be it further

51
52 *Resolved*, That we pray for God’s blessings in the coming years on our agreement in the confession of the
53 Gospel that we enjoy as partner churches, and for the blessing of the Lord upon the members and leaders of the
54 Lutheran Church of Norway; and be it finally

55
56 *Resolved*, That in celebration and thanksgiving of this partnership in the Gospel, the convention assembly

1 signify its approval by rising and singing the Common Doxology.
 2
 3
 4

5 **To Endorse Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with Lutheran Church of Uruguay**

7 **RESOLUTION 5-02**

8
 9 Overture 5-02, (CW, pp. 342–343)
 10

11 **Preamble**

12
 13 Christianity came to Latin (or South) America through the work of Spanish missionaries, beginning in the late 15th
 14 century. The evangelization of the region where Uruguay is now located followed the entry of the first Spaniards
 15 there in 1624. In 1830, Roman Catholicism became the official religion of Uruguay. About a century later, Uruguay
 16 became one of the first Latin American countries to formally separate church and state in 1917. Today, Uruguay is
 17 one of the most secular countries in all of Latin America. Less than 60 percent of the population identifies itself as
 18 Christian (under 50 percent identify as Roman Catholic and slightly more than 10 percent as Protestant - with over
 19 40 percent of the population religiously unaffiliated, atheist/agnostic, or another religion).
 20

21 A small Lutheran presence in Uruguay was established in 1936 through the efforts of Lutherans in Argentina. Since
 22 that time, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina (IELA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil
 23 (IELB) - both The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) partner churches and members of the International
 24 Lutheran Council - provided pastors to work with the small Lutheran community in Montevideo, establishing St.
 25 Paul [San Pablo] Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran School. The LCMS provided financial support for these
 26 efforts as early as 1945. The ministry of the school has consistently borne fruit, with about 90 percent of the
 27 members of the Lutheran Church in Uruguay (LCU) having attended. In 1998 the congregation became a member of
 28 the IELB and in 2004 formed an independent synod, The Lutheran Church of Uruguay (LCU). While there is only
 29 one congregation, this small, emerging, confessional Lutheran church has called not only a pastor for its single
 30 congregation, Rev. André Luiz Müller (the principal pastor for the LCU), but also a pastor for evangelism and
 31 mission, another for school chaplaincy, and a fourth for school administration. The LCU's educational ministry is
 32 widely respected in Uruguay and the LCU's vision is to continue that tradition of educational excellence and the
 33 evangelistic priorities of its school. Its long-term intention is to establish the first-ever Lutheran university in
 34 Spanish-speaking Latin America.
 35

36 The LCU formally requested fellowship with the LCMS in December 2015. The LCU is in fellowship with the
 37 IELA and IELB - both of which strongly urge the LCMS to recognize that fellowship exists with these brothers and
 38 sisters in Christ in Uruguay. LCMS leaders have visited the LCU and examined its doctrine and practice, its
 39 doctrinal statements, and its constitution, finding full agreement with our own teaching and practice. Doctrinal
 40 discussions were conducted according to the provisions of Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (c). Following these visits and
 41 discussions, on December 11, 2015, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) recommended
 42 recognition of fellowship with the LCU to President Harrison. He formally declared fellowship on January 6, 2016.
 43

44 WHEREAS, There is great need for the pure proclamation of the Gospel in Uruguay, as there is throughout the
 45 world; and
 46

47 WHEREAS, By God's grace, the LCU believes, teaches, and confesses the saving Gospel of justification by grace
 48 through faith in Christ alone and is fully committed to the sole authority of Holy Scripture in the Church's teaching
 49 and life; and
 50

51 WHEREAS, By God's grace, the LCU, though small, has established a strong, faithful ministry of outreach
 52 through its Lutheran school and envisions a vigorous expansion of that educational outreach through the
 53 establishment of a Lutheran university in Uruguay; and
 54

55 WHEREAS, The LCMS, in obedience to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions, enjoys Church fellowship
 56 with many other Lutheran churches throughout the world and endeavors to seek out other Lutheran churches that

1 believe, teach, and confess the same true faith; and

2
3 WHEREAS, The LCU has for some time enjoyed altar and pulpit fellowship with the IELA and the IELB, partner
4 churches of the LCMS; and

5
6 WHEREAS, The LCU was established as an independent Lutheran church in 2004 and requested formal church
7 fellowship discussions with the LCMS; and

8
9 WHEREAS, Representatives of the LCMS visited the LCU and witnessed its work and examined its teaching;
10 and

11
12 WHEREAS, After this visit, correspondence, and further consideration, LCMS representatives concluded that
13 there is complete agreement between our two churches in doctrine and practice and therefore no obstacle to altar and
14 pulpit fellowship; and

15
16 WHEREAS, At its 2010 Convention the Synod adopted Res. 3-04A “To Amend Bylaw 3.9.6.2.2 re Altar and
17 Pulpit Fellowship with Small, Formative, or Emerging Confessional Churches,” which recognizes that in certain
18 cases a streamlined approach to altar and pulpit fellowship with such emerging churches would be beneficial; and

19
20 WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (c) now provides:

21
22 When a small, formative, emerging confessional Lutheran church body (identified as such by the President
23 of the Synod as chief ecumenical officer) requests recognition of altar and pulpit fellowship with the
24 Synod, after consultation with the Praesidium and approval by the commission, such recognition may be
25 declared by the President of the Synod subject to the endorsement of the subsequent Synod convention.

26
27 and

28
29 WHEREAS, At its December 2015 meeting the CTCR formally recommended church fellowship with the LCU to
30 the Synod President; and

31
32 WHEREAS, President Harrison declared fellowship on January 6, 2016, after consultation with the Praesidium;
33 and

34
35 WHEREAS, Necessary protocol documents guiding interactions between the LCMS and the LCU have been
36 adopted; therefore be it

37
38 *Resolved*, That we acknowledge with gratitude the unity of confession that has been given to the LCMS and the
39 LCU under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and be it further

40
41 *Resolved*, That we give thanks that God has equipped and prepared the LCU to give a faithful, confessional
42 Lutheran witness in Uruguay; and be it further

43
44 *Resolved*, That we give thanks to God that discussions between official representatives of the LCMS and the
45 LCU have revealed that complete agreement exists between our two churches in doctrine and practice; and be it
46 further

47
48 *Resolved*, That this convention endorse the President of Synod’s declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship
49 between the LCMS and the LCU; and be it further

50
51 *Resolved*, That we pray for God’s blessings in the coming years on our agreement in the confession of the
52 Gospel that we enjoy as partner churches, and for the blessing of the Lord upon the members and leaders of the
53 LCU; and be it finally

54
55 *Resolved*, That in celebration and thanksgiving of this partnership in the Gospel, the convention assembly
56 signify its approval by rising and singing the Common Doxology.

1
2
3
4 **To Recognize Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala as a Self-Governing Partner Church**

5
6 **RESOLUTION 5-03**

7
8 Overture 5-03(CW, p. 343)
9

10 WHEREAS, In 1986, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Board for Mission Services (BFMS) for
11 all intents and purposes turned over the Synod’s property and mission in Guatemala to its indigenous Lutheran
12 church, the Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala (“The Lutheran Church in Guatemala”); and
13

14 WHEREAS, The aforementioned action by the BFMS for all practical purposes established Iglesia Luterana en
15 Guatemala as a self-governing partner church; and
16

17 WHEREAS, For the entire time period since the aforementioned action by the BFMS, the Synod has in practice
18 effectively interacted with and recognized Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala as a self-governing partner church, despite
19 the fact that the Synod did not formally confer this status upon Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala by a convention
20 resolution; and
21

22 Whereas, Rev. Abdiel Orozco, President of the Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala, in conversations with the Synod
23 leadership and in a Nov. 4, 2015, letter addressed to the director of church relations, has confirmed the church’s
24 desire to have this oversight rectified and to receive formal recognition of its status as a self-governing partner
25 church under LCMS Bylaws; and
26

27 WHEREAS, The Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala has committed itself to be faithful to the inerrant Scriptures and
28 has subscribed without reservation to the writings of the Book of Concord; and
29

30 WHEREAS, The Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala seeks in every way to be and remain a scripturally faithful,
31 confessional Lutheran church body; and
32

33 WHEREAS, 2013 Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (d) states:
34

35 When a mission of the Synod applies for formal recognition as a self-governing partner church, such
36 recognition shall be proposed at convention of the Synod by the Board for International Mission with the
37 approval of the commission [Commission on Theology and Church Relations].
38

39 and

40 WHEREAS, In compliance with 2013 Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (d), the Board for International Mission has requested and
41 received the approval of the CTCR to propose to the 2016 LCMS convention that the Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala
42 be recognized as a self-governing partner church; and
43

44 WHEREAS, Appropriate protocol documents guiding interactions between the LCMS and the Iglesia Luterana en
45 Guatemala have been developed; therefore be it
46

47 *Resolved*, That the LCMS formally recognize the Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala as a self-governing partner
48 church; and be it further
49

50 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks to God for the efforts of its missionaries and Guatemalan national pastors
51 of the Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala; and be it further
52

53 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks that God, by His grace, has equipped and prepared the members of the
54 Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala to give a faithful, confessional Lutheran witness in Guatemala; and be it further
55

56 *Resolved*, That we give thanks for the growth of this former “daughter church” of the LCMS and its ongoing

1 vitality as a self-governing Lutheran church body; and be it further

2
3 *Resolved*, That we acknowledge with gratitude the unity of confession that has been given to our churches under
4 the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and be it further

5
6 *Resolved*, That we pray for God’s blessings in the coming years on our agreement in the confession of the
7 Gospel that we enjoy as partner churches, and for the blessing of the Lord upon the members and leaders of the
8 Iglesia Luterana en Guatemala; and be it finally

9
10 *Resolved*, That in celebration and thanksgiving of this partnership in the Gospel, the 2016 LCMS convention
11 assembly signify its approval by rising and singing the Common Doxology.

12
13
14

15 **To Recognize Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela as a Self-Governing Partner Church**

16
17
18

17 **RESOLUTION 5-04**

19 Overture 5-04, (CW, pp. 343–344)

20

21 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Board for Mission Services (BFMS) for all intents
22 and purposes turned over the Synod’s property and mission in Venezuela to its indigenous Lutheran church, the
23 Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela (“The Lutheran Church of Venezuela”); and

24

25 WHEREAS, The aforementioned action by the BFMS for all practical purposes established Iglesia Luterana de
26 Venezuela as a self-governing partner church; and

27

28 WHEREAS, For the entire time period since the aforementioned action by the BFMS, the Synod has in practice
29 effectively interacted with and recognized Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela as a self-governing partner church, despite
30 the fact that the Synod did not formally confer this status upon Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela by convention
31 resolution; and

32

33 WHEREAS, Rev. J. Elías Lozano, president of the Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela, in conversations with the
34 Synod leadership has confirmed the church’s desire to have this oversight rectified and to receive formal recognition
35 of its status as a self-governing partner church under LCMS bylaws; and

36

37 WHEREAS, The Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela has committed itself to be faithful to the inerrant Scriptures and
38 has subscribed without reservation to the writings of the Book of Concord; and

39

40 WHEREAS, The Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela seeks in every way to be and remain a scripturally faithful,
41 confessional Lutheran church body; and

42

43 WHEREAS, 2013 Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (d) states:

44

45 When a mission of the Synod applies for formal recognition as a self-governing partner church, such
46 recognition shall be proposed at convention of the Synod by the Board for International Mission with the
47 approval of the commission [Commission on Theology and Church Relations].

48

49 and

50

51 WHEREAS, In compliance with 2013 Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (d), the Board for International Mission has requested and
52 received the approval of the CTCR to propose to the 2016 LCMS convention that the Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela
53 be recognized as a self-governing partner church; and

54

55 WHEREAS, Appropriate protocol documents guiding interactions between the LCMS and the Iglesia Luterana de
56 Venezuela have been developed; therefore be it

1
2 *Resolved*, That the LCMS formally recognize the Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela as a self-governing partner
3 church; and be it further
4

5 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks to God for the efforts of its missionaries and Venezuelan national pastors
6 of the Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela; and be it further
7

8 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks that God, by His grace, has equipped and prepared the members of the
9 Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela to give a faithful, confessional Lutheran witness in Venezuela; and be it further
10

11 *Resolved*, That we give thanks for the growth of this former “daughter church” of the LCMS and its ongoing
12 vitality as a self-governing Lutheran church body; and be it further
13

14 *Resolved*, That we acknowledge with gratitude the unity of confession that has been given to our churches under
15 the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and be it further
16

17 *Resolved*, That we pray for God’s blessings in the coming years on our agreement in the confession of the
18 Gospel that we enjoy as partner churches, and for the blessing of the Lord upon the members and leaders of the
19 Iglesia Luterana de Venezuela; and be it finally
20

21 *Resolved*, That in celebration and thanksgiving of this partnership in the Gospel, the 2016 LCMS convention
22 assembly signify its approval by rising and singing the Common Doxology.
23
24
25

26 **To Recognize Evangelical Lutheran Church in Almaty and the District of Almaty –**
27 **Republic of Kazakhstan as a Self-Governing Partner Church**

28
29 **RESOLUTION 5-05**

30
31 Overture 5-05 (CW, p. 344)
32

33 **Preamble**
34

35 The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Almaty and the District of Almaty - Republic of Kazakhstan (ELC-RK)
36 traces its origin to the efforts of LCMS missionaries. Rev. Alexander Burtsev, ELC President and pastor of Sts.
37 Peter and Paul Lutheran Church in Almaty, in a Nov. 11, 2015, letter stated:
38

39 The Missouri Synod sent her first missionary to Kazakhstan in 1994. For the past 21 years, the Missouri Synod
40 has operated the mission work in Kazakhstan. We are very grateful for the work of the Missouri Synod and
41 appreciate her as our mother. Due to the changing laws in Kazakhstan, it is difficult if not impossible for an
42 American missionary to do work in Kazakhstan. The best we can hope is for people from the Missouri Synod to
43 drop in now and then. Yet this sort of arrangement is not the best for the day-to-day operations of a church.
44

45 Currently, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kazakhstan is not a legal entity within Kazakhstan, and likely
46 cannot be so for some time. Our church has five congregations legally registered with the government. ... The
47 five congregations, while not legally recognized as a church body in Kazakhstan, have banded together under an
48 agreement to function as a church body. In total, we have approximately 500 members.
49

50 We should request that the Missouri Synod recognize the ELC-RK to be recognized as a self-governing church.
51 ...
52

53 If possible, we would like you to bring the recognition of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC) as a “self-
54 governing church” before your Synod convention in July 2016.
55

56 WHEREAS, The ELC-RK has committed itself to be faithful to the inerrant Scriptures and has subscribed

1 without reservation to the writings of the Book of Concord; and

2
3 WHEREAS, The ELC-RK seeks in every way to be and remain a scripturally faithful, confessional Lutheran
4 church body; and

5
6 WHEREAS, The ELC-RK is established as an independent Lutheran church and has shared its Agreement on
7 Spiritual Unity, Partnership, and Collaboration of Churches and a representative example of an ELC-RK
8 congregation’s Articles of Association with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) leadership; and

9
10 WHEREAS, Rev. Alexander Burtsev, ELC-RK president, in conversation with Synod leadership and in his
11 November 2015 letter, has confirmed the church’s desire to receive formal recognition of its status as a self-
12 governing partner church under LCMS bylaws; and

13
14 WHEREAS, 2013 Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (d) states:

15
16 (d) When a mission of the Synod applies for formal recognition as a self-governing partner church, such
17 recognition shall be proposed at convention of the Synod by the Board for International Mission with
18 the approval of the commission.

19
20 and

21
22 WHEREAS, In compliance with 2013 Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2 (d), the Board for International Mission has requested and
23 received the approval of the CTCR to propose to the 2016 LCMS convention that the Evangelical Lutheran Church
24 in Kazakhstan be recognized as a self-governing partner church; and

25
26 WHEREAS, Appropriate protocol documents guiding interactions between the LCMS and the ELC have been
27 developed; therefore be it

28
29 *Resolved*, That the LCMS formally recognize the ELC-RK as a self-governing partner church; and be it further

30
31 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks to God for the efforts of its missionaries and Kazakhstan national pastors
32 of the ELC-RK; and be it further

33
34 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks that God, by His grace, has equipped and prepared the members of the
35 ELC-RK to give a faithful, confessional Lutheran witness in Kazakhstan; and be it further

36
37 *Resolved*, That we give thanks for the growth of this “daughter church” of the LCMS and its establishment as a
38 self-governing Lutheran church body; and be it further

39
40 *Resolved*, That we acknowledge with gratitude the unity of confession that has been given to our churches under
41 the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and be it further

42
43 *Resolved*, That we pray for God’s blessings in the coming years on our agreement in the confession of the
44 Gospel that we enjoy as partner churches, and for the blessing of the Lord upon the members and leaders of the
45 ELC-RK; and be it finally

46
47 *Resolved*, That in celebration and thanksgiving of this partnership in the Gospel, the 2016 LCMS convention
48 assembly signify its approval by rising and singing the Common Doxology.

49
50
51

52 **To Recognize Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Republic of Chile – IELCHI**
53 **as a Partner Church**

54
55 **RESOLUTION 5-06**
56

1 Report R11 (CW, pp. 66–73); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

2
3 WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina, a partner of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
4 (LCMS) since 1896, began mission work in Chile in 1954; and

5
6 WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Republic of Chile (IELCHI) became an independent church
7 in 1992; and

8
9 WHEREAS, The IELCHI is a daughter church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina, and shares the
10 same doctrine and commitment to the Holy Scriptures and the Book of Concord as the LCMS; and

11
12 WHEREAS, The LCMS has been working with the IELCHI in Chile since her inception; and

13
14 WHEREAS, The IELCHI requested that the LCMS recognize her as a partner church, and such recognition has
15 been approved by the CTCR according to Bylaw 3.9.5.2.2:

16
17 “(b) ...[S]uch recognition shall be proposed at a convention of the Synod only after the approval of the
18 commission...”

19
20 therefore be it

21
22 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention recognize the IELCHI as a partner church; and be it further

23
24 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks to God for the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina,
25 our partner church, for the mission work done in Chile that resulted in the creation of the IELCHI; and be it further

26
27 *Resolved*, That we acknowledge with gratitude the unity of confession that has been given to the Evangelical
28 Lutheran Church of Argentina , the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Republic of Chile, and the LCMS under the
29 guidance of the Holy Spirit; and be it further

30
31 *Resolved*, That we pray for God’s blessings in the coming years of agreement in the confession of the Gospel,
32 and for the blessing of the Lord upon the members and leaders of the IELCHI; and be it finally

33
34 *Resolved*, That in celebration and thanksgiving of this partnership in the Gospel, the 2016 LCMS Convention
35 assembly signify its approval by rising and singing the Common Doxology.

36
37
38
39 **To Affirm and Encourage Work of the International Lutheran Council (ILC)**

40
41 **RESOLUTION 5-07**

42
43 Report R1.3 (CW, p. 52)

44
45 **Preamble**

46
47 The International Lutheran Council (ILC) is a worldwide association of established confessional Lutheran church
48 bodies that proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of an unconditional commitment to the Holy Scriptures
49 as the inspired and infallible Word of God and to the Lutheran Confessions contained in the Book of Concord as the
50 true and faithful exposition of the Word of God.

51
52 The origins of the ILC can be traced to a meeting of leaders of confessional Lutheran churches in Uelzen, Germany
53 in July 1952. A second meeting was held in 1959 in Oakland, California to discuss the topic “The Fellowship
54 Between our Churches.” This was followed in 1963 by a third meeting in Cambridge, England, where the name
55 “International Lutheran Theological Conference” was chosen for these informal international gatherings. During the
56 next three decades eleven more informal gatherings of the heads of confessional Lutheran churches took place. The

1 ILC as a council of church bodies officially came into existence in 1993 in Antigua, Guatemala with the adoption of
2 a constitution by representatives from Lutheran church bodies from all six continents.

3
4 Serving as officers of the ILC are a chairman, a vice chairman, and a secretary. An executive committee made up of
5 the officers and one representative from each of its five world areas (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and North
6 America) is responsible for implementing the objectives of the ILC. An executive secretary, working under the
7 general supervision of the executive committee, is responsible for implementing the objectives of the ILC (see
8 <http://ilc-online.org/about-us/>). Member church bodies contribute, on an annual basis, financial support (based on
9 their baptized membership and the GNP of the country in which it exists) for the costs of operating the ILC.
10 The council has 35 participating church bodies. Meetings of the ILC take place on the basis of a three year cycle—in
11 year one, regional meetings takes place, in year two the entire council meets in conference, and in year three, a
12 conference of representatives from each of the ILC seminaries is held.

13
14 The ILC is proving to be a popular refuge for confessional Lutheran churches worldwide that seek to maintain their
15 biblical and confessional identity, teaching, and practice within the context of a global Lutheran community that has
16 few such forums. In addition to its existing 35 members, more than twenty additional church bodies have emerged in
17 the last few years to express an interest in ILC membership.

18
19 WHEREAS, The majority of growing Lutheran churches are found in the ‘Global South,’ e.g. Ethiopia and
20 Madagascar; and the era of ethnocentric and paternalistic missions having passed, the ILC provides great opportunity
21 for mutual encouragement for the sake of the gospel; and

22
23 WHEREAS, The ILC is the primary forum for inter-church relations among The Lutheran Church—Missouri
24 Synod (LCMS) and her partners; and

25
26 WHEREAS, The LCMS, in obedience to God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions, desires to engage other
27 confessional Lutheran church bodies around the world as an equal partner; and

28
29 WHEREAS, The ILC is a growing forum for the equal participation of Lutheran partners around the world; and

30
31 WHEREAS, God’s Word would have us “be united in the same mind and the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10); and

32
33 WHEREAS, “Unity should be nourished by mutual offices” (Apology of the Augsburg Confession V III);
34 therefore be it

35
36 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks for the many blessings that the ILC is bringing to the confessional
37 Lutheran world for the sake of the gospel and urge the members of the LCMS to support the ILC with their prayers;
38 and be it further

39
40 *Resolved*, That we urge all organs of the Synod, especially the Office of the President and the Commission on
41 Theology and Church Relations, to continue and increase their support of the ILC; and be it finally

42
43 *Resolved*, That we give thanks to God for the anticipated additional growth in the membership of the ILC and
44 urge the Synod and its entities to extend all possible aid and support in order to facilitate the ongoing development
45 of the ILC to meet the opportunities presented by its growing membership for the sake of the gospel throughout the
46 world.

47 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
48 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

49
50
51
52 **To Commend and Encourage Informal Conversations with Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod**
53 **(WELS) and Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)**

54
55 **RESOLUTION 5-08**
56

1 Report R11 (CW, pp. 66–73)

2
3 WHEREAS, The first objective of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), under Scripture and the
4 Lutheran Confessions, is to “Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3-6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work
5 through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense
6 against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy”; and

7
8 WHEREAS, Beginning in 2012, LCMS leaders have met yearly with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
9 (WELS) and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) to discuss such topics as the doctrine of church and ministry;
10 the doctrine of church fellowship, and hermeneutics (biblical interpretation); and

11
12 WHEREAS, As reported jointly (<https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=3864>), the WELS-ELS-
13 LCMS discussions have enabled participants to identify many points of common understanding and practice; to
14 honestly recognize points of difference; and to realize that many assumptions about the teaching and practice of the
15 other church(es) were false or exaggerated; and

16
17 WHEREAS, All the participants in these discussions with the WELS and ELS, agree that (1) though such
18 conversations will likely not in the near future enable altar and pulpit fellowship between our churches because of
19 continuing differences in teaching and practice, they are (2) highly beneficial, have increased the degree of common
20 understanding, and enabled our churches to encourage each other in faithful confession of the Christian faith and
21 holy living in grateful obedience to the Triune God; therefore be it

22
23 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention give thanks to God for the WELS and the ELS and our joint desire to
24 be faithful confessors of the truth of God’s Word; and be it further

25
26 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention give thanks for the increasingly cordial relationship with these fellow
27 Lutherans and, in particular, for their willingness to send representatives to this convention; and be it finally

28
29 *Resolved*, That the LCMS commend the Office of the President and the Commission on Theology and Church
30 Relations for pursuing these opportunities to conserve and promote unity without compromise of God’s Word and
31 strongly encourage such discussions to continue.

32
33
34
35 **To Commend and Encourage Interchurch Conversations with**
36 **Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) and North American Lutheran Church (NALC)**

37
38 **RESOLUTION 5-09**

39
40 Report R11 (CW, pp. 66–73)

41
42 WHEREAS, Beginning in 2009, shortly after the establishment of the Anglican Church in North America
43 (ACNA, formed as a result of The Episcopal Church’s unscriptural views of biblical authority, creedal dogma, and
44 morality), representatives of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and our Canadian partner, the
45 Lutheran Church—Canada (LCC), have met twice each year with ACNA leaders for a series of cordial and
46 productive discussions; and

47
48 WHEREAS, The ACNA-LCC-LCMS discussions have revealed areas of strong agreement (e.g., the ACNA
49 firmly believes and teaches that the Bible is God’s Word, that the Creeds rightly confess the Christian faith, and that
50 the moral teachings of the Bible on matters such as sexuality and marriage are to be upheld) and also areas where
51 our churches have differing traditions and teachings (e.g., the Lord’s Supper, the doctrine of ministry), as reported in
52 2012 (<https://blogs.lcms.org/2012/acna-lcms-release-joint-statement>)
53 and 2016 (<https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=3994>)
54 and in a joint statement on marriage (<http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=726&DocID=2384>); and

55
56 WHEREAS, Beginning in 2009, after the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) was established (formed

1 largely because of the ELCA's departure from scriptural and confessional teaching in a variety of areas),
 2 representatives of the LCMS and our Canadian partner, the LCC, have met twice each year with NALC leaders for a
 3 series of cordial and productive discussions; and
 4

5 WHEREAS, The LCC-LCMS-NALC discussions have revealed areas of strong agreement (e.g., the under-
 6 standing of the Gospel and the necessity of faith in Christ for salvation, the doctrine and practice of marriage) and
 7 also areas where our churches have differing practices (e.g., women in ministry), and have resulted in a joint
 8 statement on marriage (together with the ACNA; see (<http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=726&DocID=2384>) and
 9 a joint report on the authority of Scripture (which is under consideration by the leaders of the three church bodies);
 10 and
 11

12 WHEREAS, All the participants in these discussions with the ACNA and the NALC agree that (1) though such
 13 conversations will likely not in the near future enable altar and pulpit fellowship between our churches because of
 14 continuing differences in teaching and practice, they are (2) highly beneficial, have increased the degree of common
 15 understanding, and enabled our churches to encourage each other in faithful confession of the Christian faith and
 16 holy living in grateful obedience to the Triune God; therefore be it
 17

18 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention give thanks to God for these church bodies and our joint desire to be
 19 faithful confessors of the truth of God's Word; and be it further
 20

21 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention give thanks for the increasingly cordial relationship with these fellow
 22 Christians and, in particular, for the willingness of the ACNA and the NALC to send representatives to this
 23 convention; and be it finally
 24

25 *Resolved*, That the LCMS commend the Office of the President and the Commission on Theology and Church
 26 Relations for pursuing these opportunities to conserve and promote unity without compromise of God's Word and
 27 strongly encourage such discussions to continue.
 28
 29
 30

31 **To Commend and Encourage Faithful Teaching of** 32 **Article on Which Church Stands or Falls**

33 **RESOLUTION 5-10**

34 President's Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)
 35
 36
 37

38 WHEREAS, "By works of the law no human being will be justified," but God has given His Son into human
 39 flesh, to bear our sin, so that all who believe in Him may be "justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption
 40 that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3:20–25a; John 3:16–17, 6:40; Acts 10:43; Rom. 5:1; Gal. 2:16, 3:8–11; Titus 3:7);
 41 and
 42

43 WHEREAS, The clear teaching of the Gospel, that we are justified by grace through faith in Christ, was restored
 44 with brilliance by the almighty God through the Reformation and is beautifully articulated in the Lutheran
 45 Confessions: Augsburg Confession (AC) Article IV; Apology of the AC, Article IV; Smalcald Articles (SA), Article
 46 II:13; SC II; Large Catechism (LC) Part II; Formula of Concord (FC) Epitome (Ep)/Solid Declaration (SD) III); and
 47

48 WHEREAS, This concentration on sinful man and the God who justifies is Lutheranism's greatest contribution
 49 for all of Christianity since the doctrine of justification reminds us that sinful man has always defied God and abused
 50 and misused His goodness and His gifts—and that the justifying God alone can and does re-create His fallen world
 51 by His word of forgiveness; and
 52

53 WHEREAS, The gospel of justification is always directly connected to the *external* Word—to the Law in which
 54 God speaks *against* me and the Gospel in which He speaks *for* me; and
 55

56 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) emphatically holds such teachings on justification

1 by its unreserved acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith
2 and of practice and its confession that the entire *Book of Concord* contains true and unadulterated teachings of
3 Scripture; and
4

5 WHEREAS, The LCMS has reiterated with certainty its commitment to this understanding of justification by
6 adopting the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod* in 1932 (“Of Faith in Christ,” Chapters
7 9, 17–19); and
8

9 WHEREAS, Justification, as an article of faith, is often described as “the article on which the church stands or
10 falls” because a failure to teach it rightly results in human beings trusting themselves, rather than God, for their
11 salvation; and
12

13 WHEREAS, False teaching about justification is a recurring problem (e.g., in popular preachers who favor a
14 “how to” theology of successful living, in those who deny the justification of all the world [objective justification],
15 or in those who confuse justification and sanctification) that may lead people to trust in themselves instead of in
16 God, who alone justifies (Rom. 8:33); and
17

18 WHEREAS, The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) 1983 report *Theses on Justification*
19 (<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=422>) provides helpful clarity about this central teaching of the
20 Christian faith; therefore be it
21

22 *Resolved*, That the LCMS reaffirm the centrality of the doctrine of justification for the life of the church and the
23 salvation of individuals; and be it further
24

25 *Resolved*, That the LCMS reaffirm that the right teaching of justification requires the proper distinction between
26 Law and Gospel; and be it further
27

28 *Resolved*, That the LCMS affirm that the CTCR’s *Theses on Justification* is in agreement with Scripture and the
29 Confessions and encourage the Synod to use them as a resource in the study of the doctrine of justification; and be it
30 further
31

32 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention encourage the study of the doctrine of justification by circuits and
33 congregations as part of the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation; and be it finally
34

35 *Resolved*, That the LCMS ask the CTCR, in consultation with the seminary faculties, to prepare a biblical and
36 confessional study of the doctrine of justification for use by the congregations and called workers of the LCMS for
37 the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.
38

39 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
40 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*
41
42
43

44 **To Protect Christian Consciences and Address Conscription of Women**

45 **RESOLUTION 5-11**

46 Overtures 5-29–32 (CW, pp. 354–356)
47

48 WHEREAS, On December 3, 2015, United States Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter opened all military
49 occupations and positions to women, including those involving direct combat engagement; and
50

51 WHEREAS, On January 1, 2016, implementation of this policy began; and
52

53 WHEREAS, This policy was implemented despite significant division over the matter amongst the general
54 American population, lawmakers, and the military itself; and
55
56

1
2 WHEREAS, The Marine Corps' request for a partial exemption from the order was denied; and

3
4 WHEREAS, The implementation of this policy would seem to require that women will eventually be required to
5 register for selective service and a possible draft, as the primary rationale provided by the US Supreme Court in
6 allowing women to be excluded from the draft was their ineligibility to serve in a combat capacity (*Rostker v.*
7 *Goldberg*); and

8
9 WHEREAS, Christians are to be subject to governing authorities (Rom. 13; 1 Peter 2) while remaining obedient
10 to God whenever human authority seeks to require us to act contrary to our conscience-bound convictions regarding
11 God's Word and will; and

12
13 WHEREAS, Christians differ on whether having women serve in combat is morally permissible, with some
14 holding the opinion that having women serve in a combat capacity is a matter for the "left-hand kingdom" to address
15 and therefore a matter in which they willingly obey and honor such a decision by the governing authorities; and

16
17 WHEREAS, Biblical objections to women being required to serve in the military in general or to serve in combat
18 positions in particular have been voiced by many Christians, including members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri
19 Synod (LCMS), based on scriptural concerns about the complementary yet ordered relationship between man and
20 woman (Gen. 1–2); the requirement given to husbands, not wives, to love in a manner that emulates the sacrifice of
21 Christ for His Bride, the Church (Eph. 5); and the Scripture's teaching on marriage, family, and vocation (Prov.
22 31:10–31; Titus 2:3–5; etc.); and

23
24 WHEREAS, Lutheran Christians have a high regard for God's gifts of human reason and natural law, and take
25 very seriously the many reason-based arguments that have been made (by both Christians and non-Christians)
26 against women serving in combat positions (e.g., physical strength comparisons between men and women in
27 general; other physical and biological differences between men and women; data-based concerns about mixed-
28 gender troop performance under combat conditions, etc.); and

29
30 WHEREAS, Women of the LCMS, as well as other Christian women who serve in the military, may be required
31 to serve in combat units even when they may conscientiously oppose such service; and

32
33 WHEREAS, LCMS and other Christian women who seek to serve their country in the military may similarly feel
34 required to forego such service because of conscientious objections to serving in a combat capacity; and

35
36 WHEREAS, In the 2013 convention, the Synod asked the Commission on Theology and Church Relations
37 (CTCR) to study the issue of employing women in combat and to issue a statement on this matter for consideration
38 at the 2016 convention (Res. 2-12A); and

39
40 WHEREAS, The CTCR has devoted considerable time, effort, and discussion to this assignment in the past
41 triennium and anticipates the completion of a document before the end of the year; therefore be it

42
43 *Resolved*, That as the CTCR continues its work on this assignment and seeks to bring it to completion, the
44 LCMS strongly support the responsibility and necessity for men and women to act according to conscience in this
45 matter while respecting the conscience of others (Rom. 14:2–3, 13–23; 1 Cor. 10:29; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 13:18); and
46 be it further

47
48 *Resolved*, That there is biblical and theological support for individuals in the LCMS conscientiously to object
49 (1) to a woman's service in the military in general or (2) to a woman in the military being required to serve in a
50 combat capacity or (3) to a woman being required to register for military service and being subject to a possible
51 draft; and be it further

52
53 *Resolved*, That due to deep and widespread concern among many members of the LCMS—rooted in biblical
54 convictions, historic understandings of natural law, and reason-based common sense—about the negative impact of
55 the conscription of women on individual consciences, marriages, families, and society as a whole, the LCMS in
56 convention strongly oppose the conscription of women; and be it finally

1 for working together to prepare and make available a draft revision of the *Explanation* and urge widespread
2 participation in field-testing the draft; and be it further

3
4 *Resolved*, That the LCMS encourage publication of the revised *Explanation* during 2017, the 500th anniversary
5 of the Lutheran Reformation, after appropriate attention to feedback from the field-test; and be it finally

6
7 *Resolved*, That the CTCR, in concurrence with the President of Synod and the seminary faculties, explore the
8 creation of an annotated and expanded edition of the *Large Catechism* for widespread use and study in the church.
9

10 11 12 **To Reaffirm Scriptural Teaching re Royal Priesthood and Office of Public Ministry**

13 14 **RESOLUTION 5-13**

15
16 Overtures 5-25–28 (CW, pp. 352–354)

17
18 WHEREAS, The Christian Church confesses that God created humanity, male and female, in His image and with
19 His blessing as His stewards (Gen. 1:27–28; 2:21–24; 5:2) and, by grace through faith, to be His “chosen priests”
20 living in service to Him (1 Peter 2:9–10; and see Matt. 4:10; Acts 2:18; Gal. 3:27–28); and

21
22 WHEREAS, All of God’s chosen priests (the congregation of saints, the church) are “to offer themselves as living
23 sacrifices” and “to proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light” (Rom.
24 12:1; 1 Peter 2:4–9; see also Matt. 28:19–20; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; as examples of this see John 4:39; Acts 8:4; 11:19–21)
25 and therefore to them Christ gives the Office of the Keys (Matt. 18:18; Tr 67; 1932 *Brief Statement*, § 30); and

26
27 WHEREAS, The Word of God teaches that although all believers are royal priests and possess the keys of the
28 kingdom of heaven, God has also established a particular *office* to proclaim the Word and administer the Office of
29 the Keys publicly (i.e., on behalf of the church), and this Office of Public Ministry is to be held only by certain men
30 who are “above reproach,” “able to teach,” and then rightly called to this office (John 21:15–17; 1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Cor.
31 12:29; Rom. 10:15; Eph. 4:11; Jam. 3:1; 1 Tim 3:1–6; 2 Tim. 2:1–2; Titus 1:5–9; see also Augsburg Confession
32 (AC) Article V and AC Article XIV); and

33
34 WHEREAS, The priestly work of the people of God and the special calling to the office of preaching and the
35 administration of the sacraments on behalf of the church are complementary, not competing, existing side-by-side in
36 Scripture and in the life of the church; and

37
38 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has affirmed this complementary understanding of
39 the royal priesthood and the office of the ministry throughout its history by (1) adopting C. F. W. Walther’s *Theses*
40 *on Church and Ministry* (1851); (2) adopting the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*
41 (1932; see §§ 30–34); and (3) recently reaffirming Walther’s *Church and Ministry* (2001 Res. 7-17A; see also 1992
42 Res. 3-06A); and

43
44 WHEREAS, Misunderstandings have arisen in recent years such as denials of the right or responsibility of the
45 laity to proclaim the Gospel and of the efficacy of the Word when lay people proclaim it, and also denials and
46 confusion about the divinely-instituted nature and/or responsibilities of the office of public ministry; and

47
48 WHEREAS, The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) recently (May 2016) adopted an
49 opinion titled “Response to Two Questions: Is the Gospel Effective when Spoken by a Lay Person? and Is Pastoral
50 Oversight the Sole Criterion for Laymen Carrying Out Pastoral Functions?”; therefore be it

51
52 *Resolved*, That the LCMS confess that all Christians, as chosen priests, are the possessors of the keys of the
53 Kingdom of God and are called in their Baptism to proclaim the Gospel in their daily lives (see references above as
54 noted); and be it further

55
56 *Resolved*, That the Word of God is efficacious, without regard to where, when, how or by whom it is spoken (Is.

1 55:11; John 4:39); and be it further

2
3 *Resolved*, That the LCMS encourage the CTCR to complete its requested study of the royal priesthood (see
4 2007 Res. 1-03) prior to the next Synod convention; and be it further

5
6 *Resolved*, That the LCMS confess that the office of the ministry is established and commanded by Christ as
7 essential to the church’s life (see references above as noted); and be it further

8
9 *Resolved*, That we commend for study and discussion the CTCR opinion, “Response to Two Questions,” and be
10 it finally

11
12 *Resolved*, That the LCMS again endorse Walther’s teaching on church and ministry, as stated in *Church and*
13 *Office*, as fully faithful to Holy Scripture and the Confessions and as the teaching and understanding of this Synod.

14 15 16 17 **To Reaffirm Biblical Teaching on Man and Woman in the Church**

18 19 **RESOLUTION 5-14**

20
21 Reports R11, R59 (*CW*, pp. 69, 181–187); Overtures 5-17, 5-25–28 (*CW*, pp. 349, 352–354)

22
23 WHEREAS, The Christian church throughout history has believed and confessed that God created humanity male
24 and female in His image and with His blessing so that we might live in grateful obedience toward Him (Gen. 1:27–
25 28; 2:21–24; 5:2) and, by baptismal faith in Him, be His “chosen priests” serving Him (1 Peter 2:9–10; and see Matt.
26 4:10; Acts 2:18; Gal. 3:27–28); and

27
28 WHEREAS, God’s Word also makes clear that He created humanity as male and female so that we might, in
29 distinctive and complementary ways as men and as women, serve and glorify Him (for example, in procreation and
30 in certain daily responsibilities; see Gen. 2:18–23; Eph. 5:22–27; Col. 3:18–19; 1 Peter 3:1–7; Titus 2:1–8); and

31
32 WHEREAS, God’s Word teaches that although all believers are royal priests, God has also established the Office
33 of Public Ministry (or “pastoral office” or “preaching office”) which is to be held only by certain men who are
34 “above reproach” and “able to teach” (1 Tim 3:1–6; see also 1 Cor. 12:29; Titus 1:5–9); and

35
36 WHEREAS, “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has consistently stated and reaffirmed on the basis of
37 Scripture (1 Cor. 11:1–4; 14:33–35; 1 Tim. 2:11–14) that only qualified men are to hold the pastoral office or carry
38 out the distinctive functions of this office (see 1969 Res. 2-17, 1971 Res. 2-04, 1977 Res. 3-15, 1986 Res. 3-10,
39 1989 Res. 3-14)” (1998 Res. 3-25A); and

40
41 WHEREAS, There continue to be disagreements in the Synod regarding certain aspects of the service of women
42 in the church, including their service in lay positions of leadership in the church that are not directly or necessarily
43 involved in carrying out the distinctive functions of the pastoral office (e.g., congregational chairman or vice-
44 chairman); and

45
46 WHEREAS, In 2014 the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) adopted *CTCR Review of 2005*
47 *Task Force Guidelines for the Service of Women in Congregational Offices* (2016 *CW*, pp. 181–187), affirming
48 helpful aspects of the *Guidelines* (see, e.g., fourth resolved below) while also addressing certain deficiencies in this
49 document (e.g., a lack of explicit discussion of the order of creation and a lack of attention to ongoing disagreements
50 in the Synod regarding certain aspects of the service of women in the church); therefore be it

51
52 *Resolved*, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) reaffirm the scriptural teaching that all
53 Christians, male and female, are members of the royal priesthood with the responsibility to “proclaim the
54 excellencies of him who called [us] out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9); and be it further

55
56 *Resolved*, That the LCMS reaffirm the scriptural teaching that only qualified men are to hold the pastoral office

1 or carry out the distinctive functions of this office (1 Cor. 11:1–4; 14:33–35; 1 Tim. 2:11–14; Augsburg Confession
2 XIV); and be it further

3
4 *Resolved*, That the LCMS commend the CTCR’s *Review of Guidelines* for study and discussion; and be it
5 further

6
7 *Resolved*, That the three specific recommendations from the 2005 *Task Force Guidelines for the Service of*
8 *Women in Congregational Offices* (pp. 21–22) be endorsed:

9
10 (1) “That the term ‘elder,’ in view of the use of this term in the Scriptures, in the history of the church, and in
11 the Synod’s history, be reserved for that humanly instituted office in the congregation which has as its assigned
12 duty the assisting of the pastor in the public exercise of the distinctive functions of this office”

13 (2) “That lay assistance in the distribution of the elements in the celebration of Holy Communion, in order ‘to
14 avoid confusion regarding the office of the public ministry and to avoid giving offense to the church,’ [1989
15 Res 3-10] be limited to lay men”

16 (3) That, while situations exist in which the service of women in leadership positions in the congregation is
17 desirable or even necessary, men be encouraged to continue to exercise leadership in their congregations even
18 as they are encouraged to exercise their God-given leadership in a God-pleasing manner in their homes”

19
20 and be it finally

21
22 *Resolved*, That the LCMS, in convention, ask the CTCR, in consultation with the seminary faculties, to continue
23 and complete (by the end of the triennium) a biblical, confessional, and historical study of the concept of the order
24 of creation, examining its relevance to various questions about the service of men and women in the church and
25 society today and also taking into account continued disagreements and discussion in the Synod about the service of
26 women in certain lay positions and offices of leadership (e.g., congregational chairman or vice-chairman).

30 **To Address Questions re the Sacrament of the Altar**

31 **RESOLUTION 5-15**

32
33
34 Overtures 5-10–16, 5-18–20 (*CW*, pp. 346–351)

35
36 WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach that the Lord Jesus gave His disciples His body to eat and His blood to drink
37 under the bread and wine (Matt. 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:15–20; 1 Cor. 11:23–26); and

38
39 WHEREAS, In the Sacrament of the Altar there is both a “vertical” and “horizontal” dimension, since we receive
40 in the bread and wine Christ’s bodily presence and the forgiveness of sins He has won (vertical dimension) all the
41 while partaking of one bread and cup together corporately in a way that affirms our unity with our fellow
42 communicants (horizontal dimension; see Paul’s concerns about the *church*’s communion practices in 1 Cor. 10 and
43 11); and

44
45 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Confessions emphasize (1) that the true body and blood of Christ are truly
46 (substantially) present, distributed, and received in the Church’s communion (AC X; Ap X; SA III:6 1–4; SC
47 Sacrament of the Altar 1; LC 5 1–19; FC SD VII 44); (2) that as we all receive one bread, we are therefore one body
48 (Ap X 3); (3) that the Lord’s Supper conveys the forgiveness of sins (SC Sacrament of the Altar 6; LC 5 20–32; AC
49 XXIV 7); (4) that all who commune receive the body and blood of Christ; (5) that only those who receive it in faith
50 receive its forgiveness while those who do not receive it in faith do so to their spiritual harm (FC Ep and SD VII);
51 and (6) that the Lord’s Supper strengthens faith (Ap IV 210); and

52
53 WHEREAS, The right practice of the Lord’s Supper flows from such scriptural and confessional teaching; and

54
55 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) firmly holds these biblical and confessional
56 teachings and has endorsed them numerous times not only through biblical and confessional subscription, but also in

1 other formal ways, such as by adopting the *Brief Statement* (§ 21) and numerous convention resolutions regarding
 2 communion practice (1983 Res. 3-12; 1986 Res. 3-08; 1989 Res. 3-10; 1995 Res. 3-08; 1998 Res. 3-05; 1998 Res.
 3 3-16 B; 2001 Res. 3-16); and

4
 5 WHEREAS, Questions and concerns continue to be raised about the Synod’s practice of close(d) communion;
 6 and

7
 8 WHEREAS, Questions and concerns have been raised about the propriety and practice of communing infants and
 9 very young children; and

10
 11 WHEREAS, Questions and concerns have been raised about the propriety and practice of intinction; and

12
 13 WHEREAS, The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) has also addressed the doctrine and
 14 practice of the Lord’s Supper, both in general terms and by addressing specific questions, in numerous reports and
 15 opinions (such as, *Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Supper* (1983); *A Model Communion Card Statement* (1993);
 16 *Response to “Concerns of the South Wisconsin District Circuits 18 and 19 Regarding Infant Communion”* (1997);
 17 *Admission to the Lord’s Supper: Basics of Biblical and Confessional Teaching* (1999); *Knowing What We Seek and*
 18 *Why We Come: Questions and Answers Concerning the Communing of Infants and Young Children* (2014);
 19 *Guidelines for Congregational, District, and Synodical Communion Statements* (2014)); therefore be it

20
 21 *Resolved*, That the LCMS reaffirm that its statements and resolutions with regard to close(d) communion, as
 22 noted above, are faithful to Scripture and the Confessions; and be it further

23
 24 *Resolved*, That the LCMS continue “[t]o Encourage Proper Oversight in Administration of [the] Lord’s Supper
 25 by Visitation from Ecclesiastical Supervisors” (2013 Res. 4-10); and be it further

26
 27 *Resolved*, That the LCMS affirm that participation in the Lord’s Supper by infants and very young children (as
 28 well as adults!) should be postponed until they are baptized and instructed, so that they may properly examine
 29 themselves and “know what they seek and why they come” (Large Catechism V 2); and be it further

30
 31 *Resolved*, That in the matter of infant and toddler communion, the LCMS commend for study and guidance the
 32 CTCR report *Knowing What We Seek and Why We Come: Questions and Answers Concerning the Communing of*
 33 *Infants and Young Children* (2014); and be it further

34
 35 *Resolved*, That in the matter of guidance for communion cards and statements and continued faithful and loving
 36 pastoral practice, the LCMS commend for study and discussion the CTCR report *Guidelines for Congregational,*
 37 *District, and Synodical Communion Statements* (2014); and be it finally

38
 39 *Resolved*, That the LCMS encourage the CTCR to complete its work on a study document on intinction for use
 40 by the Council of Presidents as it discusses this issue.

41 42 43 44 **To Reaffirm Six-Day Creation**

45 46 **RESOLUTION 5-16**

47
 48 Overture 5-33 (CW, p. 356)

49
 50 WHEREAS, The Synod has previously and consistently taught and affirmed a six-day creation; therefore be it

51
 52 *Resolved*, That we reaffirm what the Synod has said in the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the*
 53 *Missouri Synod* (§ 5) adopted by the Synod in convention in 1932:

54
 55 We teach that God has created heaven and earth, and that in the manner and in the space of time recorded
 56 in the Holy Scriptures, especially Gen. 1 and 2, namely, by His almighty creative word, and in six days. We

1 reject every doctrine which denies or limits the work of creation as taught in Scripture. In our days it is
2 denied or limited by those who assert, ostensibly in deference to science, that the world came into existence
3 through a process of evolution; that is, that it has, in immense periods of time, developed more or less of
4 itself. Since no man was present when it pleased God to create the world, we must look for a reliable
5 account of creation to God's own record, found in God's own book, the Bible. We accept God's own record
6 with full confidence and confess with Luther's Catechism: "I believe that God has made me and all
7 creatures."
8
9

10
11 **To Commend the Lutheran Church—Canada CTCR Report,**
12 ***“Cremation and the Christian”***

13
14 **RESOLUTION 5-17**

15
16 Overture 5-09 (CW, pp. 345–346);

17 <http://www.lutheranchurch.ca/ctcr/Study%20and%20Response/Cremation%20and%20the%20Christian.pdf>
18

19 WHEREAS, The practice of cremation is gaining acceptance in the United States; and
20

21 WHEREAS, Questions about the propriety of cremation from a theological perspective have arisen over the years;
22 and
23

24 WHEREAS, Such questions have been referred to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR)
25 by several previous conventions; and
26

27 WHEREAS, The CTCR has, in consultation with the seminaries, examined and commended the report prepared
28 by the Lutheran Church—Canada CTCR, *“Cremation and the Christian”*; therefore be it
29

30 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention commend *“Cremation and the Christian”* to pastors and congregations
31 for study and discussion.

6. SEMINARIES

To Create a Pastoral Formation Committee

RESOLUTION 6-01

Report R64 (CW, pp. 268–296); Overtures 6-03, 6-07–08, 6-11, 6-13, 6-15 (CW, pp. 357–362)

WHEREAS, One of the objectives of the Synod is to “recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” (Constitution Article III 3); and

WHEREAS, The 2013 Resolution 5-14A Task Force (*Convention Workbook*, R64 “The Task Force”) undertook a study of the various means by which the Synod prepares, examines, and certifies men for the pastoral office as ministers of religion—ordained of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The task force reported that it “has concluded that all of these several means [Master of Divinity (both seminaries), Alternate Route (both seminaries), Center for Hispanic Studies (St. Louis), Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (St. Louis), Deaf Institute of Theology (St. Louis), Cross-Cultural Ministry Center (St. Louis), and Specific Ministry Pastor Program (both seminaries)] by which the church recruits, trains, and certifies men to be placed into the pastoral office are both appropriate and needed for the life and mission of our Synod, and ought to be recognized as such by the Synod” (R64, p. 276); and

WHEREAS, The task force has recognized “the need to provide for greater coordination and collaboration between our two seminaries” (R64, p. 279); and

WHEREAS, The task force recommended “that there be an entity ensuring that the seminaries *do* coordinate and collaborate with respect to these various programs” (R64, p. 279); therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaw 3.10 be amended as follows:

PROPOSED WORDING

D. Pastoral Formation Committee

3.10.4 The Pastoral Formation Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that the Synod’s objective of training pastors is fulfilled consistently (Constitution Art. III 3).

3.10.4.1 The committee shall recommend any new routes leading to ordination for approval by resolution of the Synod. Such a recommendation shall follow consultation with the two seminary boards of regents in their annual joint meeting.

3.10.4.2 Seminaries will implement new routes to ordination only upon approval by resolution of the Synod.

3.10.4.3 The committee shall review, assess, coordinate, support and make suggestions for improvement of all existing non-colloquy routes leading to ordination in the Synod, including seminary and pre-seminary education programs.

3.10.4.4 The committee shall monitor and receive reports from all directors and committees charged with oversight of all routes to ordination (e.g. Specific Ministry Pastor Committee) and shall foster coordination and collaboration among them.

3.10.4.5 The committee shall consider the long term strategic direction of pastoral formation within the Synod and facilitate discussion of the same with the two seminary boards of regents in their annual joint meeting.

3.10.4.6 The Pastoral Formation Committee shall be comprised of the following members:

Voting Members:

1. The Chief Mission Officer of the Synod, chairman

2. The presidents of the seminaries

Nonvoting Advisory Member:

The Executive Director of the Office of Pastoral Education

3.10.4.7 The Pastoral Formation Committee shall meet at least once per year, and shall report on its work at the

1 annual joint meeting of the two seminary boards of regents. Additional meetings shall be determined by
 2 the chairman in consultation with the committee members;

3
 4 and be it further

5
 6 *Resolved*, That current sections D, E, and F of Bylaw section 3.10 (“Other Councils, Committees, and Boards”) be relabeled and renumbered accordingly; and be it finally

7
 8
 9 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 3.4.3.8 be amended as follows:

10
 11 3.4.3.8 The Chief Mission Officer shall, on behalf of the President, provide leadership, coordination, and oversight for pre-seminary education programs, seminary education, and post-seminary continuing education, and by providing advocacy for pastoral education and health within the Synod. He shall serve as the chairman of the Pastoral Formation Committee.

12
 13
 14
 15
 16 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

21 **To Uphold the Scriptural and Confessional Qualification for the Office of the Holy Ministry**

22 **RESOLUTION 6-02**

23
 24
 25
 26 Reports R62, R64 (CW, pp. 235–261, 268–289)

27
 28 WHEREAS, The Office of the Holy Ministry is located within God’s plan and work of salvation in Jesus Christ Matt. 28:18–20, Mark 16:15–16, Luke 24:44–49, John 20:21–23). For this reason we confess Augsburg Confession, Article V, because (*quia*) it is “a true exposition of Holy Scriptures” (*LSB Agenda*, p. 166), “To obtain such faith [i.e. justifying faith, AC IV] God instituted the office of preaching [*Predigtamt*], giving the gospel and sacraments” (AC V.1, German, Kolb-Wengert (KW) edition). See the paper “The Office of the Holy Ministry,” which “represents a consensus” of the “systematics departments of both LCMS seminaries” (CTQ 70 (2006): 97–111); and

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 35 WHEREAS, The Office of the Holy Ministry was instituted and mandated by Jesus Christ to save sinners by “giving the gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when he wills, in those who hear the gospel” (AC V 1–2, German, KW). God instituted the Office of the Holy Ministry, or preaching office, for this very purpose, that sinners obtain saving faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:14–17). We confess that this office has “the command of God and magnificent promises” (Rom 1:16, Ap XIII.11); and

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 42 WHEREAS, Jesus Christ has given the keys of the kingdom of heaven to His church immediately. Thus the teaching of our church, “It is to the true church of believers and saints that Christ gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven. . .” [C. F. W. Walther, *The Church and the Office of the Holy Ministry*, Thesis 4 concerning the Church, (Thesis 6 concerning the Office), p. 36 of 2012 edition, adopted in 1852 and reaffirmed with 2001 Res. 7–17A]. Jesus says in Matt. 18:18–20, “Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them;” so also, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9); and

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 53 WHEREAS, God has also instituted and mandated the Office of the Holy Ministry as his gift to the church through which the saving Word of God and the holy Sacraments are to be publicly distributed and the keys are to be used publicly on behalf of the church (Eph 4:8, 11; AC XIV; Walther on the Office, Theses 3 and 5). Thus Christ says to His apostles, “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you. . . . Receive the Holy Spirit; if you

1 forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld” (John 20:21–
2 23; Matt. 16:18–19); and

3
4 WHEREAS, In keeping with God’s own mandate for filling the Office of the Holy Ministry, we confess in
5 Augsburg Confession Article XIV, “Concerning church government it is taught that no one should publicly teach,
6 preach, or administer the sacraments without a proper [public] call” (KW, German), as the Scripture says, “And how
7 are they to preach unless they are sent?” (Rom. 10:15); and

8
9 WHEREAS, In Augsburg Confession Article XIV, the “proper call” [*ordentliche Beruf, rite vocatus*] entails three
10 Biblical and Confessional mandates (R62, pp. 238–240; R64, pp. 268–270),

- 11
12 1. Examination: The Scriptures mandate that the candidate for the holy ministry be personally and
13 theologically qualified for the office (1 Tim 3:1–7; 2 Tim 2:24–26; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Pet 5:1–4). The personal
14 qualifications include that the candidate be a biological male (Gen. 1:26; Matt. 19:4), above reproach, and
15 the husband of only one wife. The theological qualifications especially include the requirement that he be
16 “able to teach” (2 Tim. 2:24), that is, that “he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to
17 rebuke those who contradict it” (Titus 1:9), along with competence to perform all the tasks mandated to the
18 office. See the Small Catechism, Table of Duties, 2. To this end the faculties of our seminaries have been
19 called to teach the Scriptures and the Confessions to the pastoral candidates and to form their minds and
20 hearts and skills to the pastoral task. The faculties of the seminaries are also called to examine the
21 confession and life of each of the candidates for the office, along with the Colloquy Committee in the cases
22 reserved for it (Bylaw 3.10.2). By this examination the Synod assures itself of the confessional
23 commitment and the personal and theological fitness of its candidates for call and ordination.
- 24 2. Call: God himself calls a man into the office of the holy ministry through the church, whose right to call
25 and ordain ministers stems from her possession of the keys, on account of Christ’s institution. By the
26 ministerial call (or sending, John 20:21, Rom. 10:15), Christ, through the church, bestows His own
27 authority and power upon the one who is called, as we confess in the Apology, “They represent the person
28 of Christ on account of the call of the church and do not represent their own persons, as Christ himself
29 testifies (Luke 10:16), ‘Whoever listens to you listens to me.’ When they offer the Word of Christ or the
30 sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ” (Ap VII/VIII.28, KW). The call of the church
31 is not only the call of Christ into the office, but also indicates the consent of the church in receiving the
32 ministry of the one called (Acts 6:1–6; Walther, Thesis 6 concerning the Office). The divine call is always
33 to a designated location and field of service. We especially defend the right of the local congregation to call
34 her own pastor.
- 35 3. Ordination: The rite of ordination, the laying on of hands, is an ancient and laudable practice in the church,
36 but not commanded by God. But when ordination is understood as the whole church’s confirmation of the
37 call, it is an inherent component of trans-congregational (transparochial) church fellowship and a part of the
38 “proper call” confessed in AC XIV. So we confess, “Finally [the church’s right to call and ordain ministers]
39 is also confirmed by Peter’s declaration (1 Peter 2:9): ‘You are a . . . royal priesthood.’ These words apply
40 to the true church, which, since it alone possesses the priesthood, certainly has the right of choosing and
41 ordaining ministers. . . . Ordination was nothing other than such confirmation of the candidate by the laying
42 on of hands” (Tr 69–70, KW). The church has the right to put her ministers in place, and ordination
43 guarantees that right. We also confess in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, “But if ordination is
44 understood with reference to the ministry of the Word, we have no objection to calling ordination a
45 sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has the command of God and has magnificent promises like Rom.
46 1[:16]: the gospel ‘is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.’ . . . For the church has the
47 mandate to appoint ministers, which ought to please us greatly because we know that God approves this
48 ministry and is present in it” (Ap XIII.11, 12, KW). Again, from the Treatise, “For wherever the church
49 exists, there also is the right to administer the gospel. Therefore, it is necessary for the church to retain the
50 right to call, choose, and ordain ministers” (Tr 67, KW). C. F. W. Walther writes in his *Pastoral Theology*
51 (p. 44), “Neither the examination which one who has been called to the preaching office passes before an
52 appointed commission outside of the calling congregation, nor the ordination which he receives from the
53 appointed persons outside of the congregation, are what make the call valid. But both procedures are
54 among the most beneficial ordinances of the church and have – especially the latter – among other things
55 the important purpose of publicly confirming that the call is recognized by the whole church as legitimate
56 and divine. Anyone who unnecessarily omits one or the other is acting schismatically and making it known

1 that he is one of those whom congregations with itching ears heap up for themselves (2 Tim. 4:3).”

2
3 and

4
5 WHEREAS, Society is challenging the church to conform to the shifting definitions of marriage (no-fault divorce,
6 same sex marriage, etc.) and sex (transgenderism, surgical modifications, etc.), putting pressure on applications of
7 the qualifications for the holy ministry; and

8
9 WHEREAS, Within the Synod many are debating issues surrounding the Office of the Holy Ministry, including
10 preparation, fitness, examination and certification, and the necessity of call and ordination to “publicly teach, preach
11 or administer the sacraments” (AC XIV; see e.g. 2013 Res. 4-06A on licensed lay deacons); and

12
13 WHEREAS, The office assigned to the seminary faculties is complementary to that assigned to the visitors of the
14 church (i.e. district presidents).The seminary faculties present the candidates to the church for call and ordination,
15 while the district presidents ordain and install them into office on behalf of the church. The district presidents (as
16 ecclesial visitors) provide for the care and maintenance of the work done by the seminaries by encouraging and
17 strengthening the pastors under their charge with the Word of God (Acts 15:1–35), continuing to examine their
18 doctrine, practice and life, and by testifying to the church of the faithfulness of each pastor’s confession and life; and

19
20 WHEREAS God calls pastors to love and care for his people, to minister to them with compassion and
21 understanding, and as the church asks her pastors to promise in the Rite of Ordination, “Will you faithfully instruct
22 both young and old in the articles of Christian doctrine, will you forgive the sins of all those who repent, and will
23 you promise never to divulge the sins confessed to you? Will you minister faithfully to the sick and dying, and will
24 you demonstrate to the Church a constant and ready ministry centered in the Gospel? Will you admonish and
25 encourage the people to a lively confidence in Christ and in holy living?” (*LSB Agenda*, p. 166); therefore be it

26
27 *Resolved*, That the seminaries in consultation with the Council of Presidents review their admissions and
28 certification standards to ensure that all those admitted to or certified through any of the routes to the Office of the
29 Holy Ministry conform to the personal qualifications outlined in Holy Scriptures (1 Tim. 3:1–7, 2 Tim. 2:24–26,
30 Titus 1:5–9), including that they be a biological male (Gen. 1:26; Matt. 19:4; Acts 1:21, 1 Tim. 3:2), the husband of
31 only one wife if married (1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:6; see also Ap XXIII); and be it further

32
33 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention uphold these scriptural and confessional qualifications of the holy
34 ministry by directing the seminaries and district presidents to ensure that, 1) the candidate for office be examined by
35 a seminary faculty or the colloquy committee to certify his fitness in life, doctrine, and confessional commitment; 2)
36 he be called by the church to a particular field of service in the public teaching of God’s Word and administration of
37 the holy sacraments; and 3) he be ordained into this office by the appropriate district president or his representative
38 according to the order of the church; and be it further

39
40 *Resolved*, That where a man does the work of the holy ministry (AC V), he have a “proper public call” by
41 examination and certification, call, and ordination; and be it finally

42
43 *Resolved*, That the Synod receive this resolution in the spirit of Friedrich Wyneken (2nd LCMS President): “This
44 office is not about concealing from the so-called laity its sovereignty, patronizing it, and defining ever more
45 narrowly the boundaries within which it may move. It does not clip its rights, limit its heart, close its lips, [or]
46 reduce it to timidity that it remain nice-looking and subject and not dare in any way to impinge upon the sovereignty
47 of the educated and well-reasoned pastor. In short, the office does not consist in suppression of the laity in order to
48 elevate the clergy at the laity’s expense. . . The dignity, the desire, and the joy of the true co-worker of God is to
49 draw ever more his community of believers into their freedom and its worthy use, to encourage them and lead them
50 ever more in the exercise of their rights, to show them how to exercise their duties that they be more and more
51 convinced of their high calling and that they demonstrate that they are ever more worthy of that calling” (Friedrich
52 Wyneken, *At Home in the House of My Fathers*, p. 366).

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56 **To Affirm the Master of Divinity Route at the Synod’s Seminaries**

RESOLUTION 6-03

Report R64 (CW, pp. 268–296); Overture 6-10 (CW, pp. 359–360)

WHEREAS, Our Lord said, “The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2), and the Apostle Paul wrote, “If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task” (1 Tim. 3:1); and

WHEREAS, The 2013 Res. 5-14A Task Force Report states, “The New Testament passages listing qualifications for the pastoral office focus mainly on the character of the man proposed for the office (“above reproach, husband of one wife, sober minded, self-controlled, respectable,” etc. [1 Tim. 3:2ff]). The one theological requirement in that section is that the man be “able to teach.” He must “keep a close watch on himself and on the teaching” (1 Tim. 4:16). He must be “able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it” (Titus 1:9). Character and the ability to teach and to hand the doctrine on to others are the qualifications Scripture looks for. These high standards apply to each of the various means by which the church recruits and trains pastors from her midst. Here is scriptural rationale supporting the work of our seminaries to train future pastors, as well as the careful work of our Colloquy Committee. We want men who love Jesus, whose hearts have been transformed by the Holy Spirit so that they also love people. We want men who are fiercely loyal to their Savior and to His Body, the Church. But we want these men to be thoroughly trained in biblical truth as well as other necessary disciplines for the task” (R64, p. 268); and

WHEREAS, The Synod has been blessed by the graduates of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne Master of Divinity programs; and

WHEREAS, The 2013 Res. 5-14A Task Force report states, “The most complete means of preparing a man for the general responsibilities of the pastoral office and a lifetime of service is the master of divinity route at our two seminaries. This full residential experience has always been our ‘gold standard’ for pastor formation” (R64, p. 271); therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention affirm that the most complete means of preparing a man for the general responsibilities of the pastoral office and a lifetime of service is the residential Master of Divinity route at the Synod’s seminaries; and be it further

Resolved, That men aspiring to the noble task of pastor be encouraged by the Synod in convention to apply for admission to the Master of Divinity program at the Synod’s seminaries; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod in convention urge all members of Synod and members of Synod congregations to encourage men to study in the Master of Divinity programs of the Synod’s seminaries.

To Encourage and Support the Global Seminary Initiative (GSI)**RESOLUTION 6-04**

Report R1 (CW, p. 3)

Preamble

The Global Seminary Initiative (GSI) was conceived in 2011 to assist world Lutheranism with theological education by bringing future Lutheran leaders and seminary instructors to the Synod’s two excellent seminaries for advanced study, by sending professors from the Synod’s seminaries and other qualified instructors to teach short term at seminaries of International Lutheran Council (ILC) member churches and other requesting church bodies, and by holding conferences and seminars to assist in continuing education in these church bodies. The GSI helps support approximately 25 international students at both The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) seminaries each

1 year, helps support students from the Global South to attend seminaries at ILC partners, supports about 60 graduate
2 level students in Ethiopia per year, provides for training in Tanzania, Madagascar and elsewhere, provides
3 theological training to over 1,000 students and conference attendees worldwide, and impacts many more thousands
4 through their study.

5
6 Based on requests received by the Synod, our partners' greatest need is assistance with theological education.
7 Lutheran leaders worldwide see faithful, confessional, theological education as a key to maintaining Lutheran
8 doctrinal integrity in their church bodies and providing good and faithful leaders for the future of their churches.

9
10 A significant reason for the requests for theological education is the anti-scriptural stance Western churches have
11 taken on same-sex marriage and the ordination of practicing homosexuals into the ministry. The churches of the
12 Global South have begun seeking a Lutheran church that teaches the truth of the Holy Scriptures in accordance with
13 the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. As a result, these churches in the Global South greatly desire
14 the teaching found in the ILC and the Synod. Churches around the world greatly desire the treasures of faithful and
15 sound teaching. As holders of this precious treasure, rather than bury it in the field, the Synod is called and
16 compelled to share it with the world.

17
18 For example, three years ago, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) asked for the Synod's
19 assistance to train students at the graduate level at their Mekane Yesus Seminary (MYS) to be instructors in their 10
20 regional seminaries and 40 Bible schools. The objective is to train 10,000 pastors to meet EECMY's rapid growth.
21 (EECMY's current membership is approaching 8 million people.) Some dioceses in Tanzania also have requested
22 in-country training of pastors and evangelists. To date, twenty have graduated from this program. We anticipate that
23 the five-million member Lutheran Church in Madagascar will begin requesting additional training from the Synod
24 over the next three years. This past year, the one-million member Anglican Church of South Sudan approached the
25 LCMS seeking to become Lutheran. These requests are stretching the capacity of the GSI to meet expectations.

26
27 WHEREAS, The LCMS has a global reputation for theological education based on the Holy Scriptures as the
28 Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions as a true exposition of God's Word; and

29
30 WHEREAS, In recent years, dedication to true doctrine and biblical Christianity has weakened in many places,
31 but growing churches around the globe are seeking the treasure the LCMS possesses as a gift from God; and

32
33 WHEREAS, There are now over 60 Lutheran seminaries and Bible institutes globally that are looking to the
34 LCMS for leadership precisely because of the Synod's dedication to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions; and

35
36 WHEREAS, The LCMS has the ability and the experience to assist these churches by providing sound theological
37 education; and

38
39 WHEREAS, Because the support and expansion of theological education is a mission priority of the Synod (2013
40 Res. 3-06A), the LCMS is called to act boldly to share resources and teachers to spread God's Word and teach the
41 Lutheran Confessions among all who thirst for truth; therefore be it

42
43 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention affirm that the GSI is imparting great blessings to world Lutheranism at
44 this crucial moment; and be it further

45
46 *Resolved*, That the Synod send qualified instructors to teach at and support seminaries requesting assistance;
47 and be it further

48
49 *Resolved*, That the Synod support the formation of the next generation of international teachers and church
50 leaders by enabling them to study at LCMS and regional seminaries; and be it further

51
52 *Resolved*, That the Synod sponsor conferences and continuing education seminars particularly in East Africa;
53 and be it further

54
55 *Resolved*, That these aforementioned initiatives be undertaken when sufficient resources are designated and
56 secured for that purpose; and be it finally

1
2 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention encourage individuals and congregations to support the continuation of
3 this good work with their prayers and financial support: www.lcms.org/makeagift/gsi.

4
5 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
6 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

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10 **To Encourage Movement Toward an Alternative to Federal Student Loans for Seminarians**

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12 **RESOLUTION 6-05**

13
14 Report R1.2 (CW, p. 42); Overture 7-19 (CW, pp. 373–74); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

15
16 WHEREAS, The seminaries in St. Louis and Ft. Wayne currently participate in the Title IV Federal Student
17 Financial Aid Program, which consists primarily of loan programs, with grant programs limited to the Federal Work
18 Study Program; and

19
20 WHEREAS, It is preferable that the seminaries not receive funding from the federal government for student
21 loans; and

22
23 WHEREAS, At least two synodwide corporate entities, the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) and the
24 Lutheran Federal Credit Union (LFCU) provide loans to church workers; and

25
26 WHEREAS, LCEF and LFCU understand and appreciate the unique financial situations of church workers and
27 can provide appropriate loan counseling; and

28
29 WHEREAS, Another synodwide entity, Concordia Plan Services (CPS), provides excellent leadership by
30 recognizing students at the seminaries as pre-church workers, covering them under the Concordia Health Plan; and

31
32 WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the synodwide entities and the Synod’s church workers to establish
33 beneficial relationships at an early stage; therefore be it

34
35 *Resolved*, That the administrations of the seminaries, LCEF, and LFCU gather sufficient information and meet
36 to determine the feasibility of privatizing student lending at the seminaries; and be it further

37
38 *Resolved*, That the preferred lender for student loans at the seminaries be a synodwide corporate entity; and be it
39 finally

40
41 *Resolved*, That if this group identifies a reasonable alternative and lenders are willing to participate, the
42 seminaries be encouraged to withdraw from the Title IV Student Financial Aid Program.

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46 **To Encourage Use of Existing Training Programs for Pastoral Ministry**
47 **in Immigrant and Challenging Ministry Settings**

48
49 **RESOLUTION 6-06**

50
51 Report R62 (CW, pp. 235–261); Overture 6-14 (CW, pp. 360–361)

52
53 WHEREAS, Throughout its history, The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod has established various training and
54 degree programs to prepare pastors for service in new ministry settings. Often this has been in response to outreach
55 opportunities as well as to provide pastors in small economically distressed congregations, small isolated

1 congregations, and congregations that present unique demographic challenges. Among these routes have been
2 numerous district training programs for lay deacons, Distance Education Leading to Ordination (DELTO, no longer
3 in operation), the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology, the Center for Hispanic Studies (formerly the Hispanic
4 Institute of Theology), the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center, Bilingual Pastoral Formation for Latinos, and various
5 other programs; and
6

7 WHEREAS, As congregations of the LCMS continue to navigate the rapidly changing shifts in our society, it will
8 be necessary for the Synod to utilize these and other models of preparing pastors that supplement its residential
9 pastoral formation programs at both seminaries; therefore be it
10

11 *Resolved*, That the congregations and districts of the LCMS be commended for their desire to provide Word and
12 Sacrament ministry for all the people of God and for Gospel outreach; and be it further
13

14 *Resolved*, That the LCMS continue its long-standing commitment to a well-trained clergy, formed through its
15 seminaries; and be it further
16

17 *Resolved*, That districts and congregations in cross-cultural settings and in challenging demographic
18 circumstances be encouraged to utilize, when appropriate, the various programs for forming pastors in the Synod,
19 such as the Specific Ministry Pastor program, the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology, the Center for Hispanic
20 Studies, the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center, Bilingual Pastoral Formation for Latinos, and various other programs of
21 the seminaries which focus on training pastors for these situations; and be it finally
22

23 *Resolved*, That the Synod continue its multifaceted efforts to ensure that financial constraints do not prevent any
24 eligible candidate from participating in these programs.

7. UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

To Adopt Lutheran Identity Statement for CUS Institutions as Prepared by CUS Presidents

RESOLUTION 7-01

Reports R1, R15, R63 (CW, pp. 1–7, 77–79, 262); Overtures 7-01–02 (CW, pp. 363–364)

WHEREAS, The Synod is blessed with university leadership that seeks to reflect the confession and practice of the church and to share the treasure of the Gospel with a world in need; and

WHEREAS, The presidents of the Concordia University System (CUS) have endorsed an identity statement and its protocols as a means to demonstrate their support for the Christian teaching and Lutheran confession and practice of the church (R15 pp. 77–78):

Lutheran Identity Standards for CUS Institutions

As educational institutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), the colleges and universities of the CUS confess the faith of the Church. The Concordias uphold the teachings of sacred Scripture and its articulation in the Lutheran Confessions. This includes the biblical teaching that Jesus Christ—true God and true man—is the sole way to God’s mercy and grace; that at the beginning of time the triune God created all things; that life is sacred from conception to natural death; and that marriage between a man and a woman is a sacred gift of God’s creative hand—over against the reductionistic assumptions of many in our culture who view men and women as only transitory and material beings.

As educational institutions of the LCMS, the Concordias are committed to providing an excellent, robust curriculum in the liberal arts and professional studies, which together equip students for various vocations of service to church and society. As C.F.W. Walther wrote;

“As long as and wherever the Christian church flourished, it always and everywhere proved itself to be a friend and cultivator of all good arts and sciences, gave its future servants a scholarly preparatory training, and did not disdain to permit its gifted youth at its schools of higher learning to be trained by the standard products of even pagan art and science.”

Accordingly, the colleges and universities of the CUS affirm and promise to uphold these identity standards:

1. *Identity statements*—The institution’s mission statement (and/or vision statement) clearly identifies it as a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) institution, as do the institution’s primary print and electronic publications.
2. *Governing Board*—All of the institution’s regents are active members in good standing of LCMS congregations (Bylaw 3.10.5.2–4).
3. *Senior Leadership*—The president and the senior leaders over academic student life, admissions, and athletics are active members in good standing of LCMS congregations and faithfully participate in worship and religious activities on campus and in their local congregations.
4. *Faculty*—Each tenure track or continuing-level faculty search is given optimal exposure among members of congregations of the LCMS to identify faculty who are qualified in their respective academic disciplines and are members of LCMS congregations. Ideally, all faculty members are active members of LCMS congregations. When academically qualified LCMS members are not available, faculty members will be Christians who affirm, at minimum, the content of the Ecumenical Creeds and are members of Christian congregations. All faculty members promise to perform their duties in harmony with the truths of Holy Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the doctrinal statements of the LCMS (cf. Bylaw 3.10.5.6.2).
5. *Theology Faculty*— All theology faculty (full-time and part-time) are active members in good standing of LCMS congregations and fully affirm the theological confession of the LCMS. As the LCMS Bylaws

1 indicate, all full-time theology faculty receive prior approval from the CUS Board of Directors before being
2 appointed or called (Bylaw 3.6.6.1).

- 3 6. *Academic Freedom and Responsibility*—All full-time faculty acknowledge their acceptance of the CUS
4 statement of Academic Freedom and Responsibilities. All faculty, both full- and part-time, pledge to
5 perform their duties in harmony with Scripture, the Confessions, and the Synod’s doctrinal statements
6 (Bylaw 3.10.5.6.2).
- 7 7. *Faith and Learning*—In accordance with the doctrine of the two kingdoms, all faculty strive to faithfully
8 bring Lutheran theology into interaction with their various academic disciplines while respecting the
9 integrity of those disciplines. Likewise, in other campus arenas, faculty, staff, and administrators will seek to
10 apply Lutheran theology within their campus vocations.
- 11 8. *Required Theology Courses*—The institution requires two to three theology courses for an undergraduate
12 degree, typically in Old Testament, New Testament, and Christian doctrine. Because these courses are
13 directly related to the theological identity of CUS institutions and to the identity formation of graduates,
14 these theology courses will normally be taken at a CUS institution. Exceptions to this will be approved by
15 the institution’s called theological faculty.
- 16 9. *Preparation of Church Workers*—The institution provides resources to recruit, form, nurture, and place
17 students preparing for professional church work in the LCMS (e.g., pre-seminary, pre-deaconess, deaconess,
18 Lutheran teacher, DCE, DCO, DPM). Specific programs may vary by campus.
- 19 10. *Campus Ministry*—The institution offers regular opportunities for worship that reflect the confession of the
20 church. Faculty, staff, and students are strongly encouraged to participate in these services. The institution
21 calls a campus pastor or chaplain, who is a minister of religion—ordained of the LCMS, to oversee the
22 worship life of the community, organize opportunities for Christian service and witness, and provide
23 pastoral care for students.

24
25 and

26
27 WHEREAS, Such commitment by the presidents is distinctive and, by God’s grace, will recommend their
28 institutions not only to members of the church but also to those that are seeking such a full and transparent
29 commitment to the integration of the finest in university education with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and

30
31 WHEREAS, While some have noted the drift of colleges and universities away from the churches that gave birth
32 to them, the Synod can give thanks for such a clear and forthright expression of solidarity with the church; and

33
34 WHEREAS, Pastors, congregations, and parents are urged to support these faithful presidents and send students
35 as well as financial assistance so that their mission as institutions of the Synod might flourish and display the truth
36 that all true knowledge and learning is rightly ordered in relation to God’s revelation in Jesus Christ; and

37
38 WHEREAS, It is appropriate that the Synod in convention support the faithful witness of the CUS institutions by
39 adopting the Lutheran Identity Standards prepared by the institution presidents; and

40
41 WHEREAS, It is appropriate that the achievements of the institutions relating to the Lutheran Identity Standards
42 be shared regularly with the CUS and the President of the Synod to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities
43 as assigned by the Bylaws, and with the institution’s own community and the Synod at large for mutual edification
44 and encouragement; therefore be it

45
46 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention commend the institution presidents for their faithful leadership in the
47 preparation and endorsement of the Lutheran Identity Standards set forth above; and be it further

48
49 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention adopt the Lutheran Identity Standards set forth above; and be it finally

50
51 *Resolved*, That as contemplated by the standards, each institution will submit an annual self-evaluation of its
52 institutional commitment to Lutheran identity by submitting a written report to the CUS Board of Directors and the
53 President of Synod describing, with evidence, how the institution meets the ten Lutheran identity standards, on or
54 prior to December 1 of each year, which report shall be submitted by each respective board of regents and shared
55 with the respective campus community. Additionally, the CUS board shall use this information to report to the
56 Synod in convention the achievements of the institutions relating to the Lutheran Identity Standards, and the

1 President of the Synod and the CUS Board shall use this information to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities
2 under existing Bylaws 3.3.1.1.1 (c), 3.3.1.2 (a), and 3.6.6.5 (i).
3
4
5

6 **To Preserve Concordia Colleges and Universities as Institutions of the Church**
7 **and Strengthen Their Structural Bonds with Synod**
8

9 **RESOLUTION 7-02**

10
11 Reports R15, R63 (CW, pp. 77–88, 262–267); Overtures 7-03–09, 7-11–13, 7-15–17 (CW, pp. 364–369, 371–372);
12 CCM Opinion 13-2695 (CW, pp. 129–130)
13

14 WHEREAS, The Concordia colleges and universities are treasures of the church, built by God’s grace with the
15 people’s offerings, bequests, and tuition, that serve to educate students for service both in church work and in
16 society at large; and
17

18 WHEREAS, The Synod witnessed with great sadness the decision of Concordia University Edmonton (CUE),
19 originally founded by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in 1921 for the purpose of training teachers
20 and seminary candidates, to renounce its Christian mission, sever all ties with the Lutheran Church Canada (LCC),
21 and become an entirely secular, non-Lutheran and non-Christian institution. As a result the LCC has been deprived
22 not only of the use of the institution for training its church workers but also of the value of the CUE property; and
23

24 WHEREAS, The loss of CUE to the church did not happen overnight, but occurred following several steps (an
25 oft-repeated occurrence described in the book *The Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and*
26 *Universities from their Christian Churches*, by James Burtchaell):
27

- 28 • In 2012, the Board of Governors of CUE acted to revise its bylaws so that the LCC would no longer
- 29 elect members of the Board of Governors, with the result that the Board of Governors became self-
- 30 perpetuating. At the time, the President of CUE assured LCC leaders that any decisions CUE made
- 31 would “not only maintain, but strengthen the shared ecclesiastical bond” with the LCC.
- 32 • In 2015, CUE suspended the LCC District President’s ex-officio position on the Board of Governors.
- 33 • Finally, in November 2015, CUE’s Board of Governors voted to remove all references to Christianity
- 34 from its mission statement and secularize.

35 and
36

37 WHEREAS, To preserve the Concordia colleges and universities as institutions of the church, it is necessary to
38 strengthen their structural bonds with the Synod, lest the institutions be lost to the church through inattention or the
39 temptation to compromise with secularism; and
40

41 WHEREAS, With prudence, the 2013 LCMS convention adopted Res. 5-01A *To Encourage Continued Faithful*
42 *Witness by Concordia University System*; and
43

44 WHEREAS, The Resolution 5-01A Task Force was appointed for the purpose of
45

- 46 • studying and reporting on the issues of confessional Lutheran identity in all Concordia University
- 47 System (CUS) institutions
- 48 • strengthening all CUS institutions’ connection to the Synod
- 49 • reviewing the composition, size, and selection of boards of regents
- 50 • review of Bylaw 3.6.6.5 (k) regarding the consolidation, relocation, separation or divesting of CUS
- 51 institutions
- 52 • review of governance structures

53 and
54

55 WHEREAS, The task force developed a series of Lutheran identity standards for CUS institutions, which have

1 been endorsed unanimously by the CUS presidents and are being presented to the 2016 convention for affirmation in
2 Resolution 7-01; and

3
4 WHEREAS, A significant number of the overtures relating to governance issues within the Concordia University
5 System submitted for consideration by the 2016 convention of the Synod relate to the comprehensive work of the
6 task force; and

7
8 WHEREAS, Certain of the recommendations of the task force require further study by the presidents and boards
9 of regents of the CUS institutions, and at their request, the CUS Board of Directors has agreed to recommend further
10 study of such recommendations; and

11
12 WHEREAS, 2013 Res. 5-05B improved the governance process for CUS boards of regents by imposing specific
13 requirements for qualifications of regents, and by requiring boards of regents to document to the CUS Board of
14 Directors various key factors including financial stewardship, faithfulness to the church, and educational background
15 suiting them for service on the governing boards of complex and sizeable institutions; and

16
17 WHEREAS, Each institution and the Synod at large benefits from the presence on boards of regents of rostered
18 workers of the Synod who faithfully serve the church and who are often alumni of the institution; and

19
20 WHEREAS, The President of the Synod has many responsibilities with respect to CUS institutions under long-
21 standing bylaws of the Synod, including, *inter alia*, Bylaw 3.3.1.1.1(c), which provides that he “shall at regular
22 intervals officially visit or cause to be visited all the educational institutions of the Synod to exercise supervision
23 over the doctrine taught and practiced in those institutions”; Bylaw 3.3.1.2 (a), which provides that he “shall at
24 regular intervals officially visit or cause to be visited all the educational institutions of the Synod and thereby
25 exercise oversight over their administration as it relates to adherence to the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of
26 the Synod”; and Bylaw 3.3.1.3 (b), which provides that he “shall make provisions for new district presidents and
27 members of boards and commissions of the Synod to be acquainted with their duties and responsibilities”; and

28
29 WHEREAS, The regional vice-presidents of the Synod assist the President of the Synod pursuant to Bylaw 3.3.2
30 in the visitation of the CUS institutions; and

31
32 WHEREAS, Each CUS institution and the Synod would benefit from increased communication and coordination
33 with the Synod at large, to ensure that each institution remains closely affiliated with the Synod; and

34
35 WHEREAS, Close affiliation of the CUS institutions and the Synod is crucially important in the rapidly changing
36 culture in which numerous matters of religious liberty are being eroded; and

37
38 WHEREAS, The structure of most boards and commissions of the Synod include either the President of the
39 Synod or his representative as a member or members who are appointed by the President of the Synod; and

40
41 WHEREAS, To ensure communication and mutual accountability while ensuring that governance of CUS
42 institutions remains with their respective boards of regents, whose vocation, fiduciary duty, and authority within the
43 Bylaws are to be respected, it is appropriate that the Praesidium of the Synod have the authority to appoint two
44 voting members to each respective CUS board of regents; and

45
46 WHEREAS, Certain other bylaw revisions are appropriate for the improved governance of the CUS institutions
47 pertaining to the boards of regents and the office of president of each institution for clarification and in keeping with
48 best practices for governance; therefore be it

49
50 *Resolved*, That the 2013 Res. 5-01A Task Force be commended for its work thus far; and be it further

51
52 *Resolved*, That the President of the Synod renew the appointment of the task force members and direct them to
53 continue their work during the next triennium for the purpose of continuing to

- 54
55
- strengthen all CUS institutions’ connection to the Synod
 - review the composition, size, and selection of boards of regents
- 56

- review of governance structures
- review the process for selecting presidents of institutions

and be it further

Resolved, That this task force make its first reports and recommendations to the President by the end of 2017, which shall be provided to the CUS institutions for review and comment for a period of at least six months, and its final report and recommendation, responding to any comments from the CUS institutions on the initial draft, to the 2019 LCMS convention; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Bylaws of the Synod be amended as follows:

Rationale

To add linkage with the Synod through appointees of the Praesidium and to clarify issues relating to board of regents governance.

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

3.10.5.2 The board of regents of each college and university shall consist of no more than ~~19~~ 17-voting members.

- (1) One ordained minister, one commissioned minister, and two laypersons shall be elected by the conventions of the Synod.
- (2) One ordained minister, one commissioned minister, and two laypersons shall be elected by the geographical district in which the institution is located.
- (3) No fewer than four and no more than eight ~~laypersons~~ members shall be appointed as voting members by the board of regents according to a process determined by the individual institution.
- (4) The president of the district in which the college or university is located or a district vice-president as his standing representative shall serve as an ex-officio member.
- (5) College and university board of regents members may be elected or appointed to serve a maximum of three consecutive three-year terms and must hold membership in a member congregation of the Synod.
- ~~(56)~~ Two voting members appointed by the Praesidium of the Synod, one of whom shall be an ordained minister, and one of whom shall be a commissioned minister or layperson.
- ~~(67)~~ Not more than two of the elected members shall be members of the same congregation.
- ~~(78)~~ Persons elected or appointed to a board of regents should be knowledgeable regarding the region in which the institution is located and shall demonstrate familiarity and support for the doctrinal positions of the Synod and possess two or more of the following qualifications: theological acumen, an advanced academic degree, experience in higher education administration, administration of complex organizations, finance, law, investments, technology, human resources, facilities management, or fund development. Demonstrated familiarity and support of the institution is a desired quality in the candidate. When regents are elected at the national convention of the Synod or appointed by the Board of Regents, qualifications shall be reviewed and verified by the Secretary of Synod (or designee) and the President of the CUS (or designee). When regents are elected at district conventions, qualifications of all nominees, including floor nominees, shall be reviewed and verified by the chair and secretary of the district board of directors or their designees.
- (9) Recognizing its fiduciary duty as a board, as well as the requirements of accrediting bodies that an institution's governing board be clearly defined and have ultimate authority and independence in the operation of the institution subject to appropriate pre-established policies and rules (e.g., Synod Bylaws), under no circumstances shall a board delegate its authority to, nor commingle its authority with, any other body that includes non-board members. Boards of regents may meet as a "committee of the whole" with advisory groups (e.g., a foundation board; the CUS board) to seek input, but no votes shall be taken at such meetings.

Rationale

In keeping with current scrutiny of executive compensation at non-profits, it is best to leave severance arrangements

1 to the discretion of each board of regents. Additionally, it is appropriate to clarify the process for appointment of
2 interim presidents following a vacancy.

3
4 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

5
6 3.10.5.5.1 The president of each college or university shall serve a five-year renewable term of office....

7 ...
8 (d) In the event that a president’s term is not renewed, the office of the president shall be considered vacant
9 as of the end of the term of the incumbent. ~~A president whose term is not renewed shall continue to~~
10 ~~receive full salary and benefits for six months excepting those benefits specifically associated with the~~
11 ~~office of the president.~~

12 (e) ~~When a president retires, the board of regents may continue the president's full salary and benefits for~~
13 ~~six months excepting those benefits specifically associated with the office of the president.~~

14
15 3.10.5.5.2 The following process shall govern the selection of a college/university president.

16
17 (a) When a vacancy or an impending vacancy in the office of president is known, the board of regents
18 shall inform the campus constituencies, the Board of Directors of Concordia University System, the
19 President of the Synod, an official periodical of the Synod, and other parties as appropriate. The board
20 of regents shall appoint an interim president, who shall meet the qualifications established for the
21 office of president. He shall bear the title “interim president” and action must be taken to appoint or
22 reappoint an interim president annually if the vacancy continues for longer than one year.

23 ...

24
25
26
27 **To Amend Certain Concordia University System Bylaws**

28 **RESOLUTION 7-03**

29 Report R63 (CW, pp. 262–267); Overtures 7-10, 7-14 (CW, pp, 367, 369–371)

30
31
32
33 **A. To Update CUS Bylaws**

34 **Recommended Bylaw changes**

35
36 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

37
38 3.6.6.3 The Board of Directors of Concordia University System shall be composed of nine voting members and
39 four nonvoting members (no more than ~~one member~~ two members elected by the Synod shall be from the
40 same district, and no executive, faculty member, or staff member from a Lutheran institution of higher
41 education may serve on the Board of Directors of Concordia University System as a voting member):

42
43 ~~3.6.6.4 The presidents and interim presidents of the Synod’s educational institutions shall comprise an advisory~~
44 ~~council which shall meet at the call of the Board of Directors of Concordia University System and report~~
45 ~~the results of its studies to the board for consideration in making its decisions.~~

46
47 3.6.6.5 In keeping with the objectives and the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod, the Board of
48 Directors of Concordia University system shall:

49 (a) ~~develop detailed~~ adopt coordinating policies and procedures for cooperative roles and
50 responsibilities of the colleges and universities after consulting with or receiving recommendations
51 from the colleges or universities of the Synod;

52 (b) ~~together with boards of regents and the Board of Directors of the Synod, coordinate institutional~~
53 ~~planning and approve capital projects in relation to campus property management agreements and~~
54 ~~institutional and~~ changes to institutional master plans of the colleges and universities, upon
55 recommendation of the boards of regents;

56 (c) review and approve new programs ~~and manage peer review of~~ in the interest of the institution(s)

1 and the Synod;

2 ~~(d) establish policy guidelines involving distribution of grants from the Synod (restricted and~~
 3 ~~unrestricted) and efforts for securing additional financial support from other sources.~~

4 ~~(e) obtain data on liberal arts education and current trends and government regulations in higher~~
 5 ~~education that impact upon collaborative efforts and relationships within the Concordia University~~
 6 ~~System;~~

7 ~~(fd) together with the Board of Directors of the Synod, establish and monitor adopt criteria and~~
 8 ~~standards for determining institutional the financial viability, financial and otherwise, of the colleges~~
 9 ~~and universities, subject to approval by the Board of Directors of the Synod, and monitor compliance~~
 10 ~~with these standards and criteria;~~

11 ~~(ge) together with districts, congregations, local boards of regents, and national efforts, assist~~
 12 ~~congregations and districts in student recruitment for both professional church work and lay higher~~
 13 ~~education;~~

14 ~~(hf) serve as a resource for the development of lists of potential teaching and administrative personnel;~~

15 ~~(ig) upon request of assist the President of the Synod, assist in monitoring and promoting the ongoing~~
 16 ~~faithfulness of all Concordia University System institutions colleges and universities to the Synod's~~
 17 ~~doctrine and practice Article II of the Constitution of the Synod; and~~

18 ~~(j) together with schools, districts, congregations, and national efforts, foster continuing education for~~
 19 ~~ministers of religion commissioned.~~

20 ~~(kh) have authority, after receiving the consent of the Board of Directors of the Synod by its two-thirds~~
 21 ~~vote and also the consent of either the Council of Presidents by its two-thirds vote or the appropriate~~
 22 ~~board of regents by its two-thirds vote, to consolidate, relocate, separate, or divest a college or~~
 23 ~~university.~~

25 3.6.6.6 The Board of Directors of Concordia University System shall ~~receive evidence on a regular basis from~~
 26 ~~boards of regents and campus administrators that they are, after consulting with the colleges and~~
 27 ~~universities of the Synod, adopt policies to assist and ensure that the boards of regents and campus~~
 28 ~~administrators are:~~

29 ...

30 ~~(f) maintaining accountability of its institutions to the system-wide board, while expecting stronger~~
 31 ~~governance of the institutions by their boards of regents.~~

32

33 **B. To Provide Clarity to Bylaws Governing Concordia University System**

34 **Faculty Policies and Dispute Resolution**

35 **Rationale**

36
 37
 38 The 2013 Res. 5-06A “To Revise Bylaw 3.10.5.6 re College and University Faculties” removed much of the content
 39 of Bylaws 3.10.5.6ff as being no longer relevant at the Synod level, thereby to allow boards of regents to set their
 40 own policies governing faculty and academic matters.

41
 42 Res. 5-06A replaced the deleted bylaw paragraphs with new paragraphs requiring each educational institution to
 43 state policies and procedures related to faculty matters (3.10.5.6.1), to state terms and conditions of employment and
 44 limitations on academic freedom in appointment documents (3.10.5.6.2), and to provide a formal procedure for
 45 carrying out performance reviews on a regular basis (3.10.5.6.3).

46
 47 Res. 5-06A also detailed proper causes for termination of faculty employment (3.10.5.6.4), retained bylaw language
 48 regarding consequences of the removal of faculty members from the roster of the Synod (3.10.5.6.4.1), and added a
 49 bylaw requiring CUS dispute resolution guidelines for use by faculty members who wish to challenge a termination
 50 decision (3.10.5.6.4.2).

51
 52 This process of removing former Bylaws 3.10.5.6ff resulted in newly adopted bylaws that are less than clear in their
 53 expectations for dispute resolution related to faculty employment and academic matters. In addition, Res. 5-06A also
 54 removed the former Bylaw 3.10.5.6.9 governing the handling of complaints against academic institutions’ faculty or
 55 administration.

1 The following proposed bylaw amendments will clarify the wording of the replacement bylaw paragraphs.

2

3 **Proposed Action**

4

5 Therefore be it

6

7 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 3.6.6.1 be revised and new Bylaw 3.6.6.7 governing Concordia University System policy
8 administration and dispute resolution be adopted as follows:

9

10 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

11

12 **Concordia University System**

13

14 3.6.6.1 The Board of Directors of the Concordia University System has authority with respect to the Synod’s
15 colleges and universities. It shall have the overall responsibility to provide for the education of pre-
16 seminary students, ministers of religion-commissioned, other professional church workers of the Synod,
17 and others desiring a Christian liberal arts education by providing prior approval as set forth in Bylaw
18 3.10.5.6.2 for all initial full-time theology appointments to college/university faculties and by coordinating
19 the activities of the Synod’s colleges and universities as a unified system of the Synod through their
20 respective boards of regents.

21

22 ~~3.10.5.6.1~~ 3.6.6.7 The Concordia University System Board of Directors shall maintain in its policies a list of subject
23 matters that Each educational institution shall state must address in its own policies and procedures,
24 related to include faculty appointments, employment contracts, contract renewal, contract termination,
25 faculty organization, modified service, sabbaticals, and dispute resolution. ~~within the Concordia University~~
26 ~~System’s Standard Operating Procedures Manual for Dispute Resolution.~~ Notwithstanding the provisions
27 of any such policy, any person connected with an institution who is a member of Synod shall also remain
28 under the ecclesiastical supervision of the Synod, and nothing in any such CUS institution policy shall be
29 construed to limit or constrain any action that may be taken, nor the rights or responsibilities of any party,
30 pursuant to the Synod Handbook with respect to a member of Synod.

31

32 and be it further

33

34 *Resolved*, That Bylaws 3.10.5.6ff governing Concordia University System faculties administration be amended
35 as follows:

36

37 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

38

39 **Concordia University System Faculties**

40

41 3.10.5.6 The faculty of each college or university of the Synod shall consist of the president, the full-time faculty,
42 and the part-time faculty.

43

44 3.10.5.6.1 The Concordia University System Board of Directors shall maintain in its policies a list of subject
45 matters that Each educational institution shall state must address in its own policies and procedures,
46 related to include faculty appointments, employment contracts, contract renewal, contract termination,
47 faculty organization, modified service, sabbaticals, and dispute resolution. ~~within the Concordia~~
48 ~~University System’s Standard Operating Procedures Manual for Dispute Resolution.~~

49

50 3.10.5.6.4 Other than honorable retirement, termination of faculty employment may only be the result of the
51 following:

52

- 53 (a) professional incompetency
- 54 (b) incapacity for the performance of duty
- 55 (c) insubordination
- 56 (d) neglect of or refusal to perform duties of office
- (e) conduct unbecoming a Christian

- 1 (f) advocacy of false doctrine (Constitution Art. II) or failure to honor and uphold the doctrinal position
 2 of the Synod as defined further in Bylaw 1.6.2 (b)
 3 (g) discontinuance of an entire program (e.g., social work, business)
 4 (h) discontinuance of an entire division or department (e.g., modern foreign language) of a college or
 5 university
 6 (i) reduction of the size of staff in order to maintain financial viability in compliance with policies
 7 concerning fiscal viability
 8 (j) discontinuance, merger, or consolidation of an entire college or university operation
 9 (k) expiration of the term of a contract of employment
 10 (l) for those whose position requires membership in a Synod congregation, if the person ceases to be a
 11 member of a Synod congregation.
 12

13 3.10.5.6.4.1 A faculty member who is on the roster of the Synod is under the ecclesiastical supervision of the Synod.
 14 In the event a member is removed from membership in the Synod pursuant to procedure established in
 15 these bylaws, then that member is also considered removed from the position held and shall be
 16 terminated forthwith by the board of regents.
 17

18 3.10.5.6.4.2 An appeal process ~~following Concordia University System's *Standard Operating Procedures Manual*~~
 19 ~~for *Dispute Resolution*~~ established by the Board of Regents of the institution shall be in place for use by
 20 faculty members who wish to challenge a termination decision. Notwithstanding the provisions of any
 21 such policy, any person connected with an institution who is a member of Synod shall also remain under
 22 the ecclesiastical supervision of the Synod, and nothing in any such CUS institution policy shall be
 23 construed to limit or constrain any action that may be taken, nor the rights or responsibilities of any
 24 party, pursuant to the Synod *Handbook* with respect to a member of Synod.
 25
 26
 27

28 **To Study and Recommend Improvements to the Process to Consolidate,** 29 **Relocate, Separate, or Divest a College or University**

30 **RESOLUTION 7-04**

31
 32
 33 Overtures 7-19; L7-26 (CW, pp. 373–374; TB, p. 33)
 34

35 WHEREAS, Recent court decisions and policy pronouncements by federal and state governments threaten the
 36 ability of religiously affiliated institutions, such as the Concordia University System (CUS) institutions, to exercise
 37 their God-given rights to practice their faith, by threatening to remove tax exempt status, accreditation, and other
 38 accommodations of religious liberty. Such threats if implemented could have an immediate, adverse, and material
 39 financial impact on the continuing viability of the CUS institutions; and
 40

41 WHEREAS, These threats and other rapid changes occurring in the higher education environment may require a
 42 more timely response than has historically been provided under current Bylaw procedures for the consolidation,
 43 relocation, separation, or divestment of colleges and universities, given the increasing operational complexity of
 44 these institutions since the time when the current process was established; and
 45

46 WHEREAS, The process addressing the matter of consolidating, relocating, separating, or divesting a college or
 47 university first appeared in the 1969 edition of the LCMS *Handbook*, and has since been revised six different times,
 48 most recently in 2010; and
 49

50 WHEREAS, The current wording is that “the Board of Directors of CUS shall... have authority, after receiving
 51 the consent of the Board of Directors of the LCMS by its two thirds vote and also the consent of either the Council
 52 of Presidents by its two-thirds vote or the appropriate board of regents by its two-thirds vote, to consolidate,
 53 relocate, separate, or divest a college or university” (2010 Bylaw 3.6.6.5 [k]); and
 54

55 WHEREAS, The time necessary to bring the current process to completion can be a years-long undertaking at a
 56 time when, in the event of catastrophic financial difficulties that may be caused by government action or other

1 causes, millions of dollars could be at stake each term a school is allowed to continue operating under such
2 circumstances; and

3
4 WHEREAS, Closing a school according to the United States Department of Education’s guidelines for closure is
5 estimated to result in a multi-million dollar cost; and

6
7 WHEREAS, The Board of Directors is responsible for the general management of the business and legal affairs of
8 the Synod (Bylaw 3.4.4.3) and also serves as the custodian of all the property of the Synod as defined in Bylaw 1.2.1
9 (q), and has the authority and responsibility with respect to the property of the Synod as is generally vested in and
10 imposed upon a board of directors of a corporation. It may and has delegated to the CUS powers and duties with
11 respect to property of the Synod for which such agency of the Synod (CUS) has direct supervisory responsibility.
12 Such delegation shall be in (is) in writing and shall be subject to change at any time ... (from Bylaw 3.3.4.7); and

13
14 WHEREAS, In each instance where our institutions have experienced catastrophic financial difficulties, the
15 corporate Synod was looked upon to reallocate millions of dollars away from other budgeted ministry activity,
16 which is neither desirable nor sustainable, either through direct emergency funding or by increasing the historic CUS
17 debt; and

18
19 WHEREAS, Responsible stewardship requires an updated process to deal with the foregoing risks at the lowest
20 possible cost and with due regard to the fiduciary obligations of the Board of Directors, the CUS institution boards
21 of regents, and the obligations of each CUS institution; therefore, be it

22
23 *Resolved*, That the LCMS Board of Directors with the concurrence of the President of the Synod appoint a task
24 force, to review and, where appropriate, propose changes to the process “to consolidate, relocate, separate, or divest
25 a college or university”, as currently outlined in Bylaw 3.6.6.5 (k); and be it further

26
27 *Resolved*, That the task force also contemplate the possibility of a new bylaw delineating an expedited process
28 for resolution in the event of a ‘catastrophic financial crisis’ at a college or university; and be it further

29
30 *Resolved*, That the task force of nine members be comprised of the following voting members: a CUS national
31 office staff member, the LCMS Chief Financial Officer, a CUS school president, a CUS school Chief Financial
32 Officer, a regent of one of the CUS institutions, a member of the Board of Directors, the chairman of the Council of
33 Presidents, and the President of Synod or his designee. The task force shall also be assisted by the Synod’s general
34 counsel and the Synod’s Chief Administrative Officer, who shall also serve as the chairman of the task force; and be
35 it finally

36
37 *Resolved*, That the final report of the task force, including any recommendations, be delivered to the LCMS
38 Board of Directors and the President of Synod no later than nine months prior to the 2019 convention and that the
39 report be printed in its entirety in the 2019 *Convention Workbook*.

40
41 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
42 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

43
44
45
46 **To Endorse Classical Liberal Studies Program at Concordia University Chicago**

47
48 **RESOLUTION 7-05**

49
50 Overtures 7-20–21, 7-23–24 (CW, pp. 374–376)

51
52 WHEREAS, The Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions command and commend education that shapes students
53 morally as well as intellectually, preparing them to love God and serve their neighbors:

54 “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the
55 Lord.” (Eph. 6:4)

56 “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is

1 lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think
 2 about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things,
 3 and the God of peace will be with you.” (Phil. 4:8–9)

4 “For if we want capable and qualified people for both the civil and spiritual realms, we really must spare no
 5 effort, time, and expense in teaching and educating our children to serve God and the world. We must not
 6 think only of amassing money and property for them.” (Lutheran Confessions I, pp. 172–173)

7
 8 and

9
 10 WHEREAS, An increasing number of Lutheran schools are choosing a classical model of education as best suited
 11 to carry out these mandates; and

12
 13 WHEREAS, Classical Lutheran education requires teachers who are richly conversant in Lutheran doctrine and
 14 practice, as well as the languages, literature, and history of Western civilization, as Luther himself notes, “One knife
 15 cuts better than another; so likewise, one that has learned languages and arts can better and more distinctly teach
 16 than another” (Table Talk CXXXVI); and

17
 18 WHEREAS, Current teacher education programs offered through Concordia University System (CUS)
 19 institutions do an excellent job, and have in many instances served as models statewide and nationwide, in preparing
 20 candidates for state certification allowing service in public school settings; and

21
 22 WHEREAS, The Synod should commend the teacher training programs at the CUS institutions that serve the
 23 needs of those preparing to enter the educational profession, whether at public, private, or parochial institutions; and

24
 25 WHEREAS, The Synod should also seek to meet the needs of congregations with classical Lutheran schools
 26 desiring Synod-trained candidates to avoid having such congregations seek teacher candidates from colleges and
 27 universities outside the CUS; and

28
 29 WHEREAS, Many preparing to enter the educational profession may wish to study principles other than or in
 30 addition to the methodology required to meet requirements set forth by governmental or other secular certification
 31 agencies; and

32
 33 WHEREAS, It is the duty of Synod to “aid congregations to develop processes of thorough Christian education
 34 and nurture and to establish agencies of Christian education such as elementary and secondary schools and to
 35 support Synod colleges, universities, and seminaries” (Constitution Article III); and

36
 37 WHEREAS, The Wyoming District in convention, in Res. 3-02-2015, has memorialized the Synod to establish a
 38 program for training classical Lutheran teachers; and

39
 40 WHEREAS, Concordia University Chicago has created a classical liberal studies program that draws on the
 41 strength of a broad variety of Concordia University Chicago programs, including music, theology, and languages, as
 42 well as the quality of worship life on campus; and

43
 44 WHEREAS, The establishment of a program designed to train prospective Lutheran teachers would greatly
 45 strengthen the service of Concordia University Chicago to the Synod and help ensure the flourishing of Christian
 46 education in the Synod; therefore be it

47
 48 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention endorse the accredited classical liberal studies program at Concordia
 49 University Chicago for the training of classical Lutheran educators as ministers of religion—commissioned within
 50 the CUS, including a strong core of courses in the Scriptures, the Confessions, and the traditional liberal arts,
 51 history, literature, and languages of Western civilization, supplemented by practical pedagogical experience, and
 52 commend such program for study by CUS institutions who may wish to create similar programs, and others
 53 interested in classical education, for an alternate route toward The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS)
 54 recognized teacher certification leading to placement on the roster of the LCMS for ministers of religion—
 55 commissioned; and be it further
 56

1 *Resolved*, That by June 1, 2017 the CUS Board shall establish appropriate standards for ensuring that candidates
2 for roster status from this program meet all requirements of Bylaw 2.8.1.

3
4
5
6 **To Improve Prior Approval Process for Theology Faculty at CUS Institutions**

7
8 **RESOLUTION 7-06**

9
10 Overture 7-10 (CW, p. 367)

11
12 WHEREAS, 2013 Res. 5-11B restored the prior approval process for initial appointments to seminary faculties,
13 ensuring that review of such appointments would occur by Synod officials with significant synodwide responsibility,
14 for the well-being of the Synod; and

15
16 WHEREAS, 2013 Res. 5-05B also restored the prior approval process for initial appointments of theology faculty
17 at Concordia University System (CUS) institutions but set forth a process different from that used for seminary
18 faculties; and

19
20 WHEREAS, The prior approval process as amended has been beneficial, and has not caused any issues with
21 institutional accreditation or otherwise; and

22
23 WHEREAS, CUS schools are given responsibility for the training of ministers of religion—commissioned; and

24
25 WHEREAS, An important mission of the CUS is to prepare church workers, some of whom continue their
26 theological education at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; and

27
28 WHEREAS, “We, though many, are one body in Christ” (Rom. 12:5); and

29
30 WHEREAS, Students continuing through multiple institutions of the CUS, as well as to the Synod at large, would
31 benefit from the application of consistent standards of excellence in the selection and approval of theology faculty;
32 and

33
34 WHEREAS, It is also appropriate that the prior approval process evaluate the work and scholarship of those
35 persons being considered for tenure or continuing-level appointments; therefore be it

36
37 *Resolved*, That the Synod give thanks for the diligent and faithful work of all those who have been involved in
38 the prior approval processes as they now exist; and be it further

39
40 *Resolved*, That the bylaws of the Synod be amended as follows:

41
42 PROPOSED WORDING

43
44 3.6.6.1 The Board of Directors of the Concordia University System has authority with respect to the Synod’s
45 colleges and universities. It shall have the overall responsibility to provide for the education of pre-
46 seminary students, ministers of religion—commissioned, other professional church workers of the Synod,
47 and others desiring a Christian liberal arts education by providing prior approval as set forth in Bylaw
48 3.10.5.6.2 for all initial full-time theology appointments to college/university faculties and by coordinating
49 the activities of the Synod’s colleges and universities as a unified system of the Synod through their
50 respective boards of regents.

51
52 3.10.5.6.2 Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the board of regents, on recommendation of the president
53 of the institution, shall appoint all full-time members of the faculty. All initial appointments and all grants
54 of tenure or continuing appointment to persons serving on theology faculties or teaching classes in or cross-
55 listed with the theology department shall require prior approval by a majority vote of the President of the
56 Synod (or his designee), the chairman of the Council of Presidents (or his designee), and a member of the

1 CUS Board selected by the chair, and shall include a thorough theological review. The three voters shall be
 2 ordained. The process shall be facilitated by the president of CUS. Initial appointment refers to the
 3 engagement of any person who will teach one or more theology courses, regardless of assigned academic
 4 department, other than visiting faculty who teach no more than one academic year in any three-year period.
 5 The terms and conditions of every appointment shall be stated in writing and be in the possession of both
 6 the institution and the prospective faculty member before the appointment is consummated. Limitations of
 7 academic freedom because of the religious and confessional nature and aims of the institution shall be
 8 stated in writing at the time of the appointment and conveyed to the person being appointed. Faculty
 9 members, full- and part-time, shall pledge to perform their duties in harmony with the Holy Scriptures as
 10 the inspired Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Synod's doctrinal statements.

14 **To Encourage Concordia University System Institutions to Request Religious Exemptions**

16 **RESOLUTION 7-07**

18 Overture 7-19 (CW, pp. 373–374)

20 WHEREAS, The Concordia colleges and universities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) exist to
 21 supply the higher education services needed to accomplish the mission of the church; and

23 WHEREAS, The Concordia University System (CUS) institutions accept the Scriptures as the inspired and
 24 inerrant Word of God, and are compelled by the Scriptures to be faithful to the religious tenets articulated therein;
 25 and these religious tenets are set forth in the Constitution of the Synod and illuminated by the Lutheran Confessions,
 26 a true and binding exposition of Holy Scripture that serve as authoritative texts for all pastors, congregations, and
 27 other rostered church workers, as evidenced, among other things, by the Lutheran identity statement unanimously
 28 endorsed by the presidents of the CUS as a means to demonstrate their support for the Christian teaching and
 29 Lutheran confession and practice of the church; and

31 WHEREAS, We support our CUS institutions as they continue to make a bold confession of our Christian faith
 32 and extol God's gifts of marriage and sexuality according to His design; and

34 WHEREAS, To the extent that these religious beliefs and tenets permit, the CUS institutions are committed to
 35 complying with the spirit and letter of federal laws affording equal educational opportunity and nondiscrimination in
 36 admission to and participation in the Universities' programs and activities, as set forth in Title IX of the Education
 37 Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.; and

39 WHEREAS, Title IX does not apply to educational institutions controlled by religious organizations, to the extent
 40 application of Title IX would be inconsistent with such institutions' religious tenets; and

42 WHEREAS, In keeping with the limitation of the applicability of Title IX, qualifying institutions are permitted to
 43 apply to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights for an exemption from the provisions of Title IX
 44 that conflict with the religious tenets upheld by the organization; and

46 WHEREAS, God's Word and the religious beliefs of the Synod require the CUS institutions to act in ways that
 47 may conflict with certain of the regulations implementing Title IX, as currently interpreted by the U.S. Department
 48 of Education, Office of Civil Rights ("OCR"), such as the following beliefs: that God, in creating the world, gave
 49 marriage to be the life-long union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:4–6), a gift to be held in honor
 50 and kept pure (Heb. 13:4; 1 Thess. 4:2–5). Premarital and extramarital sexual activity is inappropriate (Gen. 2:24; 1
 51 Thess. 4:2–5; cf. Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:16–20); because marriage between one man and one woman
 52 is the only appropriate context for sexual union or intercourse, homophile behavior is intrinsically sinful, expressly
 53 condemned as immoral by Sacred Scripture (Lev. 18:22, Rom. 1:26–27, and 1 Cor. 6:9); and all engaged therein,
 54 like any other sinners, are in need of God's free gift of grace and forgiveness earned by His Son's death and
 55 resurrection (1 Cor. 6:11). Our embodiment as male and female is understood as an aspect of our creation by God
 56 and, therefore, instructive regarding the moral behavior and lifestyles that are good and pleasing to Him; and, as

1 articulated by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, “a biblical approach to sexual morality,
2 therefore, is not simply grounded in specific Bible passages alone. It is grounded, first, in the truth of our nature as
3 created beings (‘natural law’) as that is understood in Scripture.”

4

5 Therefore be it

6

7 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention encourage the Concordia colleges and universities with all deliberate
8 speed under their respective circumstances to request exemptions from certain aspects of Title IX, and request
9 exemptions and/or challenge other statutes, regulations, or policies, where compliance would conflict with the
10 Synod’s religious beliefs; and be it further

11

12 *Resolved*, That the institutions coordinate with the CUS and the Synod to ensure that all institutions act in a
13 consistent and united manner to defend religious liberty and the right of the CUS institutions to operate as
14 identifiably Christian and distinctively Lutheran institutions of higher learning; and be it finally

15

16 *Resolved*, That all congregations continue to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and wisdom (James 1:5)
17 for our colleges and universities as they face difficult challenges to our Christian faith and Lutheran confession.

8. PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

To Encourage and Strengthen the Lutheran Ethos of Our LCMS Parochial Schools

RESOLUTION 8-01

President's Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, The Holy Scriptures and the Small Catechism are foundational for our faith and life in Christ; and

WHEREAS, Luther was concerned that “[a]ll the people are supposed to be Christians, have been baptized, and receive the Holy Sacrament even though they do not know the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments and live like poor animals of the barnyard and pigpen. What these people have mastered, however, is the fine art of tearing all Christian liberty to shreds” (Small Catechism – Preface); and

WHEREAS, The prefaces to the Small and Large Catechisms enjoin both the teaching and understanding of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer, as foundational for the Lutheran ethos in the Christian congregation, home, and school; and

WHEREAS, The Word of God and the Catechism teach us how to receive God’s gifts in the Divine Service, how to pray, how to confess, how to forgive, and how to live where God has called us, with faith in Christ and love to the neighbor; and

WHEREAS, The congregations and schools of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) are bound to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions for the teaching of the faith and the practice of that faith; and

WHEREAS, The purpose of the liturgy and the hymnody of the church is to teach us what we need to know about Christ (Augsburg Confession XXIV); and

WHEREAS, Our Synod has always placed a high value on doctrinally sound hymnals and agendas for teaching the faith (Constitution Article VI); and

WHEREAS, *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)* is a blessing to our Synod and has been joyfully received in many thriving schools as the basis of their worship and catechesis; and

WHEREAS, The Bible, the catechism, and the hymnal are central to the Lutheran ethos and are God’s gifts to us that we might lovingly and clearly confess the Christian faith to children and families of our schools—believers and unbelievers alike; and

WHEREAS, The increasing presence of non-Lutherans in our schools presents an opportunity to evangelize, calling them to repentance and faith in Christ; and

WHEREAS, For the mission of the Church, it is imperative that we confess the Christian faith before the world in all aspects of our life, especially to those whom God has placed in our charge; therefore be it

Resolved, That all pastors and teachers in the schools of the LCMS daily use the Scriptures and hymnal to create a culture of catechesis and prayer that touches every aspect of the life of the school and the Christian, as Saint Paul exhorts in Col. 3:16–17, acknowledging all the arts and academic disciplines as gifts of God by which children grow up into the full stature of Christ as His redeemed children so that they may use their talents in service to Him and to their neighbors; and be it further

Resolved, That all pastors and teachers in the schools of the LCMS make as their highest priority the use of the Small Catechism in our schools (learning by heart, devotions in the classroom, daily worship and prayer, discussion of contemporary life and culture, the integration of the faith into all academic disciplines, guidance and support to parents and families in teaching the faith at home, etc.); and be it further

1
2 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention direct the Office of National Mission and LCMS School Ministry to
3 provide for the preparation of early childhood and school administrators, whether current, new, or prospective; and
4 be it further

5
6 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention direct the Office of National Mission and LCMS School Ministry to
7 fund programs to recruit and equip such current, new, and prospective administrators; and be it finally

8
9 *Resolved*, That congregations pray for the administrators and educational programs of LCMS early childhood
10 centers and schools.

11
12 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
13 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

14
15
16
17 **To Support the Quality and Sustainability of Lutheran Schools through the Work of the Blue**
18 **Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools**

19
20 **RESOLUTION 8-03**

21
22 Report R1.2 (CW, pp. 12–16); Overtures 8-02–03 (CW, pp. 377–378); Res. 3-04 (2013 *Proceedings*, p. 117)

23
24 WHEREAS, Lutheran schools provide a strong witness to their communities by proclaiming the pure Gospel of
25 our Lord Jesus Christ as taught in the Scriptures in addition to rigorous academics, competitive athletics, and a
26 passion for the arts; and

27
28 WHEREAS, In Lutheran schools, families outside the church are often drawn to life together with The Lutheran
29 Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) families, thus facilitating a Gospel witness; and

30
31 WHEREAS, LCMS schools (early childhood, elementary, and high schools) are the second-largest parochial
32 educational system in the United States, operating 1,173 early childhood centers and preschools, 804 elementary
33 schools, 91 domestic and three international high schools (Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Hanoi) serving students and
34 their families; and

35
36 WHEREAS, LCMS congregations have closed 458 schools since 2005, and enrollment has dropped by 99,113
37 students during the same period (290,453 in 2005 to 191,340 in 2015); and

38
39 WHEREAS, 61 percent of LCMS schools serve 100 or fewer children; and

40
41 WHEREAS, The 2013 LCMS national convention established a blue ribbon committee with the following
42 purpose: “to assist our congregations to embrace Lutheran schools as a critical ministry in congregational life and to
43 support our schools as they serve in the 21st century” (Res. 3-04); and

44
45 WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools will continue its work in the 2016–2019
46 triennium; therefore, be it

47
48 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention direct the Office of National Mission to fund the continued work of the
49 Blue Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools; and be it further

50
51 *Resolved*, That the work of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools include but not be limited to the
52 following:

- 53 1. Identify the reasons for the decline in the number of schools and in total student enrollment;
- 54 2. Assess the current compensation of pastors and teachers in congregations with Lutheran schools and its
55 effect on Lutheran schools and workers;
- 56 3. Suggest pilot projects that may produce creative solutions related to the challenges currently faced by

- 1 our Lutheran schools;
- 2 4. Explore and communicate creative options for enhancing the quality of our schools, such as classical
- 3 education, online education, flexible scheduling, hybrid homeschooling, consolidated efforts among
- 4 congregations with schools, and ministry among international students;
- 5 5. Identify alternative models for funding Lutheran schools with an emphasis on making schools
- 6 affordable for all families;
- 7 6. Address the significant need for a new generation of Lutheran educators;
- 8 7. Identify, celebrate, and share examples of Lutheran schools actively engaged in the mission of Christ
- 9 in their respective communities; and
- 10 8. Explore the role of Lutheran schools in planting new churches and revitalizing existing churches;

11
12 and be it finally

13
14 *Resolved*, That the Blue Ribbon Committee complete its work by mid-2018 so that it can report to the LCMS
15 national convention in 2019.

16
17 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
18 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

19
20
21
22 **To Preserve the Religious Freedom of Our Parochial Schools**

23
24 **RESOLUTION 8-04**

25
26 Overture 7-19 (CW, pp. 373–374); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

27
28 WHEREAS, Lutheran schools are a vital expression of religious freedom in the United States; and

29
30 WHEREAS, Our Lutheran schools encounter rapid societal changes starkly contradicting Biblical truth, such as
31 the redefinition of marriage, family, and human sexuality; and

32
33 WHEREAS, Our Lutheran schools may face federal and state mandates that contradict the Word of God and our
34 confession of faith; and

35
36 WHEREAS, Such societal and governmental changes may result in significant legal and financial consequences;
37 and

38
39 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) school ministry in cooperation with the Alliance
40 for Defending Freedom (ADF) and Synod counsel has produced the “Protecting Your Ministry” document, which
41 includes sample policies that are designed to help protect the religious freedom of our schools; therefore be it

42
43 *Resolved*, That our Lutheran schools maintain their commitment to the Scriptures and the Lutheran
44 Confessions; and be it further

45
46 *Resolved*, That all LCMS schools evaluate the implications of their financial dependence on government
47 programs and aid; and be it further

48
49 *Resolved*, That the Synod thank ADF for assisting with the “Protecting Your Ministry” document and commend
50 this document and other resources available on the LCMS Website to all congregations and schools; and be it finally

51
52 *Resolved*, That districts encourage their member congregations with schools to adopt written policies and
53 practices that boldly and clearly confess the Christian faith and protect the religious freedom of the school.

9. FINANCE

To Give Thanks to God for Increase in Sunday Offerings and Encourage Walking Together as Synod

RESOLUTION 9-01

Overture 9-05 (CW, p. 380)

WHEREAS, We have a long-standing practice of congregations sending a portion of their offerings to their district to support mission and ministry in their districts, with an expectation that their districts will send a portion of those funds to the Synod to support mission and ministry; and

WHEREAS, Congregation support of our work as districts and the Synod has remained essentially flat for the past thirty-plus years, not keeping up with inflation, while total Sunday morning offerings have more than doubled in the same period; and

WHEREAS, One of the objectives of the Synod is to accomplish on behalf of its member congregations those ministries that can be accomplished more effectively in association with other member congregations through the Synod (Bylaw 1.1.1[b]); and

WHEREAS, The 2013 LCMS convention approved over sixty new resolutions requiring spending of resources without identifying the source of those resources; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2016 LCMS convention thank God for this doubling of the Sunday offerings; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations and districts be encouraged to increase their level of unrestricted support to the Synod through their work-at-large budget to account for both inflationary pressures and funding needed for new ministries.

To Assure Uniformity of Relationship and Asset Disposition Language in Governing Documents of Corporate Agencies of the Synod

RESOLUTION 9-02

Overture 9-07 (CW, p. 381)

Rationale

As the various corporations of the Synod were established, different reversionary language was used to make clear that all property of its agencies is the “Property of the Synod” (with the exception of assets held by the Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod and by any agency in a fiduciary capacity such as administered by Concordia Plan Services or certain funds held by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation; see Bylaw 1.2.1 [q]). Such variety led the 1981 LCMS convention to adopt Res. 5-07 to provide “definite procedures and policies for the establishment of additional corporations within the Synod.”

More recently, legal counsel advised that it would be helpful for the unity and interests of the Synod if clear and consistent relationship and property reversionary language be included in the Articles of Incorporation of all corporate agencies, new and old. This interest resulted in the adoption by the 2004 LCMS convention of Res. 4-11, requiring the inclusion of “clear relational and property reversionary provisions in the Articles of Incorporation of all corporate agencies.” Such provisions were developed by the Commission on Structure with the assistance of special legal counsel, to be included *verbatim* in the Articles of Incorporation of all corporate entities of the Synod,

1 “not to be altered or deleted without the approval of the Synod, in convention, or the Board of Directors of the
2 Synod.”

3
4 Ongoing efforts by the CCM (including the creation of a model articles of incorporation document) to see to it that
5 such language is found in all agency Articles of Incorporation has resulted in unforeseen difficulties and concerns,
6 including not-for-profit corporation laws with requirements that vary from state to state. This was a subject of
7 discussion at a joint meeting of the Council of Presidents, CCM, and Commission on Handbook on November 20,
8 2014, resulting in the naming of a “Resolution 4-11 Committee” to represent the three groups. The committee’s
9 assignment was to recommend next steps for the implementation, modification, or rescission of Res. 4-11 while
10 continuing to honor the intentions of the resolution (and those of 1981 Res. 5-07).

11
12 As the committee reviewed its assignment, it requested comments regarding the resolution from the corporate
13 agencies of the Synod while also examining how the provisions of Res. 4-11 impact LCMS organizational
14 documents. After a series of telephone conference meetings, the committee requested the assistance of the Synod’s
15 legal counsel, Thompson Coburn LLP, to consider comments received in response to the letter to the corporate
16 agencies, to review the interaction of Res. 4-11 with provisions of the LCMS organizational documents, and to
17 consider a new approach to the entire matter of uniformity of reversionary language.

18
19 The end result of the Resolution 4-11 Committee’s work is this overture to the 2016 LCMS convention, proposed
20 with the assistance of LCMS legal counsel. It is consistent with existing LCMS organizational documents and
21 advocates rescinding 2004 Res. 4-11, superseding pertinent portions of 1981 Res. 5-07, and adopting a new Bylaw
22 1.5.3.6.

23
24 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

25
26 Therefore be it

27
28 *Resolved*, That 2004 Res. 4-11 be herewith rescinded in lieu of the adoption of new Bylaw 1.5.3.6 by this
29 convention to accomplish the same expectations but in a manner more amenable to legal and other requirements of
30 the Synod’s various corporate agencies; and be it further

31
32 *Resolved*, That those portions of 1981 Res. 5-07 pertaining to matters now addressed by the adoption of new
33 Bylaw 1.5.3.6 be superseded by this convention action and its new Bylaw 1.5.3.6; and be it further

34
35 *Resolved*, That new Bylaw 1.5.3.6 be adopted as follows:

36
37 PROPOSED WORDING

38
39 1.5.3.6 Notwithstanding anything in the Bylaws to the contrary, the Articles of Incorporation or other governing
40 documents of each agency shall provide:

41 (a) That all provisions of its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are subject to the provisions of the
42 Constitution, the Bylaws, and the resolutions of the Synod in convention; and

43 (b) That in the event of dissolution other than by direction from the Synod in convention, the assets of
44 such agency, subject to its liabilities, shall be transferred, consistent with applicable state and federal
45 laws, as follows:

46 (1) In the case of a synodwide corporate entity, district, university, college, or seminary, to The
47 Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as may be more specifically described elsewhere in these
48 Bylaws;

49 (2) In the case of a corporation formed by an agency (as defined in these Bylaws), to the agency that
50 formed the dissolving corporation, or if such forming agency is not then in existence, to The
51 Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod itself.

52 An agency may submit any concerns related to the inclusion of subsections (a) or (b) in its governing
53 documents to the Board of Directors of the Synod, and the Board of Directors may determine to permit
54 the removal or modification of these provisions for an affected agency.

55
56 and be it finally

1
2 *Resolved*, That the agencies of the Synod shall comply with the requirements of this bylaw change in time for
3 the CCM to report the status of compliance to the 2019 convention of the Synod.
4
5

6
7 **To Give Thanks and Encourage Participation in Funding of Synod Mission Work**

8
9 **RESOLUTION 9-03**

10
11 Overtures 9-05–06 (*CW*, pp. 380–381); President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31); Res. 12-09 (1981 *Proceedings*, p.
12 237); Res. 6-02 (2013 *Proceedings*, p. 158); (see also Network Supported Missionary funding model “NSM White
13 Paper,” forthcoming)
14

15 WHEREAS, Charitable contributions to financially support mission and ministry work are always given
16 voluntarily offered up in response to the Gospel and informed by truthful and transparent information about the need
17 for and use of such contributions; and
18

19 WHEREAS, The amount in undesignated regular worship offerings that flowed from congregations to corporate
20 Synod decreased from \$25.7 million in fiscal year 1981 to \$14.8 million in 2015; and
21

22 WHEREAS, In fiscal year 2017, the expected cost to call, send, and sustain LCMS missionaries in the field, not
23 counting logistical and material support, alone amounts to \$17 million, which is larger than the total \$14.8 million in
24 undesignated regular worship offerings that flowed from congregations to corporate Synod in 2015; and
25

26 WHEREAS, Corporate Synod and its Office of International Mission and Office of National Mission including
27 missionaries rely entirely on what is received from individuals, households, congregations and other groups and
28 entities who give voluntarily to support missionaries, their programs and projects, and its mission infrastructure; and
29

30 WHEREAS, Many individuals, households, congregations, and other groups and entities who voluntarily support
31 missionaries designate (restrict) their contributions to that purpose, in part for the reassurance that such contributions
32 can only be used to fund missionaries; and
33

34 WHEREAS, The funding of LCMS missionaries through specially designated gifts was first authorized by the
35 Synod in 1981 Res. 12-09 and most recently affirmed in 2013 Res. 6-02 [see *Addenda* to this resolution]; and
36

37 WHEREAS, Voluntary support received by corporate Synod, in the form of donor-designated (restricted)
38 contributions to financially support LCMS national and international missionaries, increased from \$7.6 million in
39 fiscal year 2013 to just over \$10 million in 2015, owing in large part to the *Network Supported Missionary* funding
40 model; and
41

42 WHEREAS, As of just prior to the 2016 Synod convention, 1,373 LCMS congregations (including 639 who have
43 voluntarily identified themselves as *Together in Mission* partners) are directly sponsoring LCMS missionaries,
44 compared to 916 congregations (including 514 *Together in Mission* partners) just prior to the 2013 Synod
45 convention showing the positive response to the 2013 Res. 6-02; and
46

47 WHEREAS, Over the past triennium the increase in voluntary support for missionaries, particularly in the form of
48 donor-designated (restricted) contributions, has made it possible for the Office of International Mission and Office
49 of National Mission substantially to increase the number of LCMS missionaries serving in the Lord’s harvest fields
50 toward the Synod’s goal of doubling that number; and
51

52 WHEREAS, Corporate Synod, through its Mission Advancement Unit (including Mission Central in Mapleton,
53 Iowa) provides information, instructions, encouragement, and counsel to individuals, households, congregations and
54 other groups and entities who wish to financially support the sending of missionaries, with or without the direct
55 involvement of individual missionaries; and
56

1 WHEREAS, Mission Central in Mapleton, Iowa, alone facilitates \$5 million in annual voluntary donor and
 2 congregation contributions for LCMS missionaries and mission projects, and this from a limited geographic area of
 3 the LCMS; and
 4

5 WHEREAS, In response to the goal of doubling the number of LCMS missionaries serving in the Lord’s harvest
 6 fields and as a sign of corporate Synod’s commitment to sending missionaries, the Mission Advancement Unit
 7 increased by one the number of staff members on its Missionary Network Care and Support Team (from four to
 8 five) and is attempting to increase the number of mission development counselors from one (Gary Thies in
 9 Mapleton, Iowa) to two (location to be determined), in order to proactively engage individuals, households,
 10 congregations and other groups and entities in the noble task of financially sponsoring missionaries; and
 11

12 WHEREAS, Corporate Synod through Mission Advancement/Mission Central offers multiple paths, means, and
 13 opportunities to support financially the sending and retention of missionaries and their projects; and
 14

15 WHEREAS, Over 94 percent of LCMS households and 75 percent of LCMS congregations have not yet chosen
 16 to sponsor one or more specific LCMS missionaries as an intentional aspect of their voluntary support for mission
 17 and ministry outside their local community, this over and above their general support of districts and Synod through
 18 undesignated regular worship offerings; and
 19

20 WHEREAS, The primary factor limiting financial support of LCMS missionaries, their projects, and their support
 21 system infrastructure is a choice as to whether or not to voluntarily contribute resources from God’s bounty at the
 22 individual, household, congregation, or other group or entity level; therefore be it
 23

24 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention rejoice and give thanks to God for congregations that have already
 25 made the decision to provide voluntary contributions to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for the purpose of
 26 funding LCMS missionaries; and be it further
 27

28 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention commend the Offices of International Mission and the Office of
 29 National Mission and their missionaries, LCMS Communications, LCMS Mission Advancement and Mission
 30 Central for being vigorous in connecting God’s people to mission opportunities through the voluntary financial
 31 support of the Synod and its missionaries and for the wise and diligent use of donated funds; and be it finally
 32

33 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention encourage all potential donors to avail themselves of at least one of the
 34 paths, means, or opportunities provided by the Synod’s Mission Advancement Unit through which they can support
 35 the Church’s mission to share the Gospel, by providing voluntary charitable contributions to corporate Synod,
 36 whether designated or undesignated.
 37

38 **Donor Data for LCMS Missionary Support**

	<u>2012–13</u>	<u>2015–16</u>
39 TIM Congregations	514	639
40 Non-TIM Congregations	<u>402</u>	<u>734</u>
41 Total: LCMS Congregations	916	1,373
42 Congregational Groups	<u>322</u>	<u>258</u>
43 Congregations plus Cong. Groups	1,238	1,631
44 Districts	13	18
45 Circuits	5	6
46 LLL Districts/LWML Zones	<u>21</u>	<u>28</u>
47 All LCMS Cong, Groups & Orgs	1,277	1,683
48 Households/Families	<u>4,596</u>	<u>4,620</u>
49 Total Donor Count - Missionaries	5,875	6,303
50 Amount (<i>excluding</i> bequests)	\$6,526,359	\$10,464,400

51 *Addenda*

52
 53
 54 **Adopt Personalized Missionary Support Program**
 55
 56

1981 RESOLUTION 12-09

1
2
3 WHEREAS, Our gracious God has saved us so that we might serve Him and willingly use our talents
4 and abilities to pursue the Great Commission, “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the
5 name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:19); and
6

7 WHEREAS, This is the mandate which members of the LCMS accept as their mission command; and
8

9 WHEREAS, Seventy-one percent (71%) of the world is non-Christian (U.S. Center for World Missions,
10 Pasadena, Calif.); and
11

12 WHEREAS, The LCMS has pledged itself with the mission challenge for the 1980s to open 600 new
13 ministries and to increase mission money by 100% plus inflation (Resolutions 1-20 and 1-27A, 1979
14 *Proceedings*); therefore be it
15

16 *Resolved*, That those congregations of the LCMS or groups of congregations or Circuits which unite to
17 give financial support for missionaries be given the opportunity to pledge themselves to maintain a
18 missionary and his family under the policy of support of the Board of Missions; and be it further
19

20 *Resolved*, That this personalized support for a missionary be understood to be over and above the
21 normal annual support for the District and the Synod; and be it further
22

23 *Resolved*, That the Board for Missions of the LCMS be charged with the planning, direction,
24 implementation, and administration of this mission outreach at home and abroad; and be it finally
25

26 *Resolved*, That the Department of Stewardship and Financial Support in cooperation with the Board for
27 Missions develop the financial structure and mechanics for this program.
28

To (Joy)fully Fund Career and GEO Missionaries**2013 RESOLUTION 6-02**

29
30
31
32
33 Overtures 6-07, 6-10 (2013 CW, pp. 232–233)
34

35 WHEREAS, Article III 2 (Objectives) of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
36 (LCMS) has established extending Gospel witness into all the world; and
37

38 WHEREAS, The LCMS has been engaged in extending the Gospel into the world since 1895; and
39

40 WHEREAS, There is a need among congregations, pastors, and households for a clearer understanding
41 of the mission impact that the LCMS is having today; and
42

43 WHEREAS, The reality is that the number of career and Globally Engaged in Outreach (GEO)
44 missionaries has increased each year since 2008; and
45

46 WHEREAS, The best practices mission model is based on intentional personal missionary
47 communication; and
48

49 WHEREAS, This model is vital to creating the congregational and personal understanding necessary for
50 prayer and personal and financial support of missionaries; therefore be it
51

52 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention give thanks to God for the 69 career and 100 GEO
53 missionaries and their families serving throughout the world who embrace the current model; and be it
54 further
55

56 *Resolved*, That the Synod commend the former Board for Mission Services for developing an effective

1 model of sustainability for calling and deploying and supporting missionaries in the field until the natural
2 conclusion of their service; and be it further

3
4 *Resolved*, That the Synod thank the 500 congregations and nearly 2,000 household partners in the
5 LCMS who are actively and joyfully providing prayer, encouragement, and direct financial support in
6 excess of \$7.6 million per year for the benefit of specific missionaries; and be it further

7
8 *Resolved*, That all congregations and LCMS households be encouraged to utilize counsel and resources
9 available through the Mission Advancement Unit of the LCMS as they plan their support of missionaries;
10 and be it finally

11
12 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention encourage and support the Office of International Mission to
13 continue expanding the number of missionaries and provide the logistical support necessary to sustain them
14 in their mission activities.

15
16
17
18 **To Improve Disclosures Related to Financial Gifts from God’s Stewards for Special Appeals**

19
20 **RESOLUTION 9-04**

21
22 Overture 9-01 (CW, p. 379); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

23
24 WHEREAS, Monies for special appeals requested by corporate Synod (e.g., following natural disasters) are
25 reported only in part in Synod publications (e.g., *Reporter* and *The Lutheran Witness*) and sometimes only annually;
26 and

27
28 WHEREAS, Donors and members of the Synod are interested in the impact of funds raised for special appeals
29 and will appreciate improved disclosure of results; therefore be it

30
31 *Resolved*, The Synod in convention commend the various financial offices of corporate Synod for their efforts
32 to date to improve financial disclosure; and be it further

33
34 *Resolved*, That the financial offices of corporate Synod continue to recognize the desire of donors and members
35 of the Synod to improve processes of reporting and work to provide clear, timely, and transparent accounting for all
36 funding and special appeals, so that the Body of Christ may experience the joy of Gospel-centered mission and
37 ministry beyond the local context or community; and be it finally

38
39 *Resolved*, That Synod in convention encourage The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Board of
40 Directors and national leadership team to pursue all reasonable avenues to enhance such reporting through its varied
41 communication channels, including the dissemination of an official Synod annual report (in addition to the annual
42 “State of the Synod” issue of *The Lutheran Witness*) as well as convening periodic fiscal conferences.

43
44 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
45 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

46
47
48
49 **To Commend Work of LCMS Foundation**

50
51 **RESOLUTION 9-05**

52
53 Overture 9-02 (CW, p. 379); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

54
55 WHEREAS, The Lord of the Church has placed before our Synod many remarkable opportunities for Gospel
56 testimony, both at home and abroad; and

1
2 WHEREAS, The LCMS Foundation was incorporated in 1958 to promote the growth of our church body by
3 receiving special gifts on behalf of the church, including its congregations, districts, schools, RSOs, auxiliaries, and
4 other organizations; and

5
6 WHEREAS, The LCMS Foundation offers investment management services for planned gifts, endowments, and
7 trust funds of the Synod and its agencies, striving to offer competitive returns in a low-cost model; and

8
9 WHEREAS, The LCMS Foundation was created to offer “programs of deferred giving ... for the Synod, its
10 districts, colleges, seminaries, and other agencies” and to provide for immediate and future work in our Lord’s
11 kingdom through proper estate planning, using such devices as unitrusts, annuities, life reserve, and life income
12 agreements to transfer cash, securities, and real estate to the church; and

13
14 WHEREAS, Since its incorporation, the LCMS Foundation has distributed over \$1 billion dollars from gifts
15 provided by generous and spirit-moved donors to ministries of the LCMS; and

16
17 WHEREAS, The LCMS Foundation earnestly endeavors to continue serving our church body and its entire
18 membership by channeling additional support to the missionary, educational, and other activities of the Synod;
19 therefore be it

20
21 *Resolved*, That the Synod commend the LCMS Foundation to our congregations and their membership, urging
22 them to utilize the Foundation’s services in making special gifts available for our work at home and abroad; and be
23 it further

24
25 *Resolved*, That the 2016 Synod convention express deep appreciation to the generous donors who have elected
26 to utilize the channel of the LCMS Foundation in the exercise of their Christian stewardship; and be it further

27
28 *Resolved*, That all members of the LCMS be encouraged to use estate planning also to provide additional
29 resources for the extension of Christ’s church in the future; and be it further

30
31 *Resolved*, That the LCMS Foundation seek to expand its various deferred giving programs within the LCMS for
32 the promotion of the church’s mission and ministry; and be it further

33
34 *Resolved*, That the Synod give thanks to the Lord for His gifts and the ability to use them to His glory and the
35 welfare of His church; and be it further

36
37 *Resolved*, That the official boards of all districts, Synod schools, affiliated agencies, and congregations make
38 themselves aware of and be encouraged to utilize the LCMS Foundation’s various services and, where feasible, use
39 the LCMS Foundation in establishing their own endowment funds; and be it finally

40
41 *Resolved*, That the LCMS, in convention assembled, implore the overflowing blessing of the Lord of the
42 Church on the continued activities of the LCMS Foundation, so that under divine benediction it may continue to be a
43 powerful help in the expansion of our Synod’s work.

44
45
46
47 **To Respectfully Decline Overture**

48
49 **RESOLUTION 9-06**

50
51 Whereas, The floor committee has considered all overtures assigned to it and has concluded, for various
52 reasons, that certain overtures should be declined; therefore be it

53
54 *Resolved*, That the following overture be respectfully declined for the reasons given:

55
56

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reason</u>
---------------	----------------	---------------

1			
2	9-06	To Direct Synod Board of Directors To Address	Inconsistent with Bylaws re BOD
3		Budget Redistribution and Synod Organization	Responsibilities/Capabilities
4		To Better Fund Seminaries, Global Seminary	
5		Initiative, Missionaries	

10. STEWARDSHIP: FUNDING THE MISSION

To Recognize the Lutheran Church Extension Fund

RESOLUTION 10-01

Report R16 (CW, pp. 88–90); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) incorporated in convention on June 15, 1978, as the continuation of the Synod’s Church Extension Fund (CEF) that began in 1902 to provide a structure for efficient delivery of church extension services nationwide, providing opportunity for district CEFs to consolidate into a single entity; and

WHEREAS, LCEF supports the church in fulfilling its mission of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ by being a Christ-centered servant partner of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), ensuring that funds and services are available now and in the future; and

WHEREAS, LCEF provides LCMS members and organizations the opportunity to partner in mission by offering competitive investments through which investors effectively steward their financial resources and provide funds for loans to support LCMS ministries; and

WHEREAS, LCEF offers loans and ministry support services designed to meet the unique and specific needs of LCMS ministries and rostered church workers as they seek to fulfill the great commission within their communities; and

WHEREAS, LCEF has distributed portions of each year’s operating results to its participating districts and the Synod in excess of \$25 million since inception; and

WHEREAS, LCEF has rebated portions of its interest income annually to borrowing congregations based on the level of member investments in LCEF, totaling over \$30 million; and

WHEREAS, LCEF Board approved the sponsorship of and allocated capital to support the establishment of the Lutheran Federal Credit Union to serve solely the members and the ministries of the LCMS; and

WHEREAS, LCEF has and continues prayerfully to work with and encourage ministries facing financial challenges, providing opportunities for the ministries to address the issues confronting them; and

WHEREAS, LCEF meets its fiduciary responsibility to protect its investors funds and to maintain a strong financial position to support the church with strong financial standards and third party audits to insure transparency; and

WHEREAS, LCEF continues to seek ways to advance innovation and creativity in supporting the LCMS; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention thank God for the work of LCEF on behalf of the LCMS; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod continue to pray for and support the efforts of LCEF; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod encourage LCMS ministries always to consider utilizing LCEF as its partner in ministry for investments, loans, and ministry support services.

**To Commend Startup of the Lutheran Federal Credit Union
and Promote Its Ongoing Work**

RESOLUTION 10-02

Report R16 (CW, pp. 88–90); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, One of the objectives of the Synod is to promote biblical stewardship and fiscal responsibility; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Federal Credit Union (LFCU) was granted a nationwide charter by regulators at the National Credit Union Administration to serve exclusively The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) community in all 50 states; and

WHEREAS, This charter was the first faith-based nationwide charter granted in the past 15 years; and

WHEREAS, LFCU was an initiative started and supported by the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) after many years of consideration and execution through the process steps of charter approval by federal regulatory agencies; and

WHEREAS, On May 1, 2015, LFCU began initial operations in a silent phase; and

WHEREAS, At the LCEF Fall Conference on November 22, 2015, LFCU announced that it was opening its operations to the entire LCMS community nationwide; and

WHEREAS, LFCU utilizes the newest technology to deliver an exceptional transactional banking experience for its members; and

WHEREAS, LFCU is a ministry-based replacement for secular providers of daily household financial products and congregation business accounts; and

WHEREAS, LFCU is a way to connect our LCMS together in a common bond of biblical stewardship and daily household financial management, with a special appeal to younger members who enjoy the convenience of our products and the intent of our mission; and

WHEREAS, LFCU is in ministry partnership with the LCEF to provide advantageous home loans to support rostered church workers in all 50 states; and

WHEREAS, LFCU will be a source of sponsorship and grants exclusively for LCMS ministries; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention encourage individual members of LCMS communities, rostered church workers, congregations, agencies, and auxiliaries of the LCMS to use the products and services offered by LFCU; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod in convention give thanks to God for the successful startup of the LFCU and encourage wide support of this new ministry tool, with encouragement and prayers that God would bless the LFCU and those it serves.

**To Encourage Individuals, Congregations, and Districts
in Cheerful and Voluntary Giving**

RESOLUTION 10-03

Report R6 (CW, pp. 32, 62–63); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

1 WHEREAS, Our triune God is the creator and owner of all His creation (Gen. 1; Ps. 26:1; Job 41:11b) who
2 provides us with the resources He knows we will need to accomplish His purpose here on earth; and
3

4 WHEREAS, Our triune God loves a cheerful giver, first fruits giving, and even arguably unrestricted sacrificial
5 giving (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6–8; Matt. 5:45); and
6

7 WHEREAS, The share of the Sunday morning offering that supports the Synod’s budget has decreased from 4.34
8 percent in 1984 to 1.12 percent in 2014; and
9

10 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has faced difficult financial times in the past
11 decade, the details of which were publicly disclosed as early as the 2007 convention in the State of the Synod report
12 presented by the Chief Financial Officer of the LCMS; and
13

14 WHEREAS, In light of the Synod’s continually declining share of the Sunday morning offering the LCMS Board
15 of Directors has been required to make difficult decisions regarding allocating limited funds for unlimited potential
16 ministries of the Synod; and
17

18 WHEREAS, The New Testament encourages Christians to provide financial support for the ministry voluntarily
19 and cheerfully, from our first fruits, and in proportion to our income (that is, a percentage) (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6–
20 8); and
21

22 WHEREAS, A congregation is an assembly of individual Christians; and
23

24 WHEREAS, The Synod is the assembly of individual congregations which has subdivided itself into districts;
25 therefore be it
26

27 *Resolved*, That each individual of our congregations is hereby encouraged to set aside a generous first fruits
28 proportion (percentage) of his income and cheerfully and voluntarily (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6–8) remit it to his local
29 congregation’s general ministry fund; and be it further
30

31 *Resolved*, That each congregation is hereby encouraged to set aside a generous first fruits proportion
32 (percentage) of its income and cheerfully and voluntarily remit it to its district’s general fund; and be it finally
33

34 *Resolved*, That each district is hereby encouraged to set aside a generous first fruits proportion (percentage) of
35 its income and cheerfully and voluntarily remit it to the Synod’s general ministry fund.
36
37
38

39 **To Encourage Faithful Teaching of Stewardship**
40 **to People in Their Daily Vocations**

41 **RESOLUTION 10-04**

42 Report R6 (CW, pp. 32, 62–63); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)
43
44

45
46 WHEREAS, “Christian Stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God’s family, the
47 church, in managing all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes” (1998 LCMS Convention); and
48

49 WHEREAS, Growing in our Christian life, into the freedom and “joyous activity of the child of God” is called
50 sanctification (1 Thess. 4:1–12); and
51

52 WHEREAS, Understanding sanctification through the various vocations (callings, holy orders, positions) God has
53 given to each Christian in the home, church, and community is a prized rediscovery of the Lutheran Reformation;
54 and
55

56 WHEREAS, Martin Luther placed Scriptures that exhort Christians to faithful stewardship of financial resources

1 (1 Cor. 9:14; Gal. 6:6–7; 1 Tim. 5:17–18) within the section of Luther’s *Small Catechism* (Section 3, Table of
2 Duties) that deals with “various holy orders and positions”; and

3
4 WHEREAS, The entire Table of Duties narrates our sanctification and living out of the Christian life through the
5 vocations of clergy, hearers, civil government, citizens, husbands, wives, parents, children, workers, employers and
6 supervisors, youth, widows, and every Christian; and

7
8 WHEREAS, The *Apology to the Augsburg Confession* XV narrates the preaching and teaching that is
9 characteristic of the Lutheran Church in this way: “On the contrary, in our churches all the sermons are occupied
10 with such topics as these: of repentance; of the fear of God; of faith in Christ, of the righteousness of faith, of the
11 consolation of consciences by faith, of the exercises of faith; of prayer, what its nature should be, and that we
12 should be fully confident that it is efficacious, that it is heard; of the cross; of the authority of magistrates and all
13 civil ordinances [likewise, how each one in his station should live in a Christian manner, and, out of obedience to the
14 command of the Lord God, should conduct himself in reference to every worldly ordinance and law]; of the
15 distinction between the kingdom of Christ, or the spiritual kingdom, and political affairs; of marriage; of the
16 education and instruction of children; of chastity; of all the offices of love”; and

17
18 WHEREAS, The Rite of Ordination requires our preachers to promise to “admonish and encourage the people to
19 confidence in Christ and holy living”; therefore be it

20
21 *Resolved*, That the pastors and congregations of the Synod be hereby encouraged faithfully and forthrightly to
22 teach the people their vocations in home, church, and community from the Table of Duties in Luther’s *Small*
23 *Catechism*, which includes proper stewardship; and be it further

24
25 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention hereby encourage each and every member of our congregations to live
26 out the calling God has given to each one, in the sure and certain confidence that it is “God who works in us” (Phil.
27 1:12–13).

28
29
30
31 **To Encourage Greater Use of LCMS Communication Resources**

32
33 **RESOLUTION 10-05**

34
35 Report R1 (*CW*, p. 10); President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)

36
37 WHEREAS, Under God’s blessing, the national and international work of The Lutheran Church—Missouri
38 Synod (LCMS) generates a wealth of inspiring stories and other resources for proclaiming the Gospel, teaching the
39 faith, serving our neighbor in need, nurturing the family, standing up for biblical values, defending our religious
40 liberties, and a host of other positive examples of mission and ministry activity and Christian witness; and

41
42 WHEREAS, Considerable time, talent and treasure go into preparing and publishing *The Lutheran Witness*,
43 *Reporter* and *Lutherans Engage the World* and the online counterparts of these periodicals; producing content for an
44 array of other communication vehicles like the Synod’s Website, social media channels, LCMS ministry blogs,
45 KFUE Radio, e-news and e-blasts; and creating the videos, photography, graphic design and downloadable
46 resources instrumental in telling the stories and sharing the news of the church; therefore be it

47
48 *Resolved*, That we rejoice in our Synod’s information resources and encourage pastors and church leadership to
49 urge the people to make use of LCMS communications so that through the greater sharing of information we come
50 to a fuller knowledge of the work of our national church walking together for the furtherance of the Lord’s
51 Kingdom.

To Promote the Use of Synodical Stewardship Services

RESOLUTION 10-06

Report R6 (CW, pp. 32, 62–63); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 4.6.1 reads,

4.6.1 Each district shall elect or appoint a committee, board, or individual responsible for stewardship.

(a) This committee, board, or individual shall cooperate with the Synod's elected or appointed person/persons responsible for stewardship and shall assist and advise local congregations in the development and promotion of an adequate stewardship program.

(b) Districts are advised to provide for the systematic supervision and qualified guidance and promotion of stewardship education.

and

WHEREAS, The Synod’s Office of National Mission (ONM) has established a Stewardship Ministry and appointed a Coordinator for Stewardship (currently, Rev. Heath Curtis) and an Assistant Coordinator for Stewardship (currently, Rev. Nathan Meador); and

WHEREAS, ONM’s Stewardship Ministry provides *free* stewardship resources at lcms.org/stewardship; and

WHEREAS, The Coordinator for Stewardship and Assistant Coordinator for Stewardship regularly travel around the various districts speaking on stewardship topics at pastoral conferences, conventions, and workshops; and

WHEREAS, ONM’s Stewardship Ministry provides regular training sessions for stewardship leaders; and

WHEREAS, ONM’s Stewardship Ministry rejoices in its partnership with the District Stewardship Leaders Conference; and

WHEREAS, Districts vary in the amount of resources and manpower they are able to direct toward stewardship; therefore be it

Resolved, That each district be encouraged to engage the aid of the Office of National Mission’s Stewardship Ministry to help fulfill the tasks laid out in Bylaw 4.6.1 (a) and (b); and be it further

Resolved, That districts that do not currently send a representative to the District Stewardship Leaders Conference be encouraged to do so annually; and be it finally

Resolved, That each district be encouraged to send trainees to the national stewardship training events when offered as sponsored by the ONM Stewardship Ministry.

11. STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

To Hold National and District Conventions Every Four Years

RESOLUTION 11-01

Overtures 11-43, 11-46–47 (CW, pp. 402, 404)

WHEREAS, We live in a hurried culture and there is a need for deeper study, conversation, and reflection on important matters on a local level that we rarely have time for; and

WHEREAS, Moving to a four-year convention cycle would provide the opportunity for theological and missional grassroots convocations between conventions by congregations, circuits, and/or districts to better engage congregations and church leaders on a local level, providing more time for theological reflection and study; and

WHEREAS, The overall cost to host a district or national convention has continued to increase over the years, largely borne by individual congregations, many of which are struggling financially, and impacting district and national budgets; and

WHEREAS, Moving to a four-year convention cycle would provide more time to implement convention actions; and

WHEREAS, Moving to a four-year convention cycle may provide opportunity for substantial financial relief to congregation, district, and national budgets; therefore be it

Resolved, That a four-year convention cycle be adopted for the national and district level; and be it further

Resolved, That the four-year schedule would be as follows: year one - circuits may hold convocations and/or local forums; year two - districts may hold or encourage regional theological and missional convocations; year three - district conventions; and year four - the national convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the President of the Synod, district presidents, and circuit visitors and their respective staffs utilize the extra year to accomplish visitation in a more reasonable and equitable fashion; and be it further

Resolved, That this become effective upon completion of the 2019 convention and shall effect every Synod and district convention thereafter; and be it further

Resolved, That bylaw provisions shall be determined for adoption at the 2019 convention for immediate implementation of election cycles, terms of office, staggering terms, and any other necessary issues that arise prior to the 2019 convention; and be it finally

Resolved, That Constitution Article VIII A 1 be amended as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Article VIII Synodical Meetings

A. Time and Legality of Meetings

1. The Synod convenes every ~~three~~ four years for its regular meeting.
2. For a legal convention...

[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]

1
2
3 **To Clarify Four-Year Convention Cycle Ramifications**

4
5 **RESOLUTION 11-02**

6
7 Overtures 11-43, 11-46–47 (CW, pp. 402, 404)

8
9 WHEREAS, The Synod in convention has adopted a change to Constitution Article VIII A 1 to move to a four-
10 year convention cycle; therefore be it

11
12 *Resolved*, That the convention authorize the creation of a task force to develop the bylaw changes necessary to
13 enable the newly approved four-year cycle; and be it further

14
15 *Resolved*, That bylaw provisions be determined for adoption at the 2019 convention for immediate
16 implementation of election cycles, terms of office, staggering of terms, and any other necessary issues that arise
17 prior to the 2019 convention; and be it finally

18
19 *Resolved*, That a representative from the Commission on Constitutional Matters chosen by the commission, one
20 member of the Commission on Handbook chosen by the commission, two members of the Council of Presidents
21 chosen by the council, the Secretary of the Synod, and the President of the Synod or his representative be members
22 of said task force.

23
24 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
25 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday's issue of Today's Business.]*

26
27
28
29 **To Change Bylaws re District Convention Attendance**
30 **as Prerequisite for Voting for Synod President**

31
32 **RESOLUTION 11-03**

33
34 Overtures 11-05, 11-17, 11-21, 11-40 (CW, pp. 384, 391–392, 401)

35
36 WHEREAS, The Synod's Constitution establishes the principle that each congregation or multi-congregation
37 parish has two votes at district conventions; and

38
39 WHEREAS, The purpose of the current process of electing the Synod President is to give all the congregations a
40 voice in the election of the President; therefore be it

41
42 *Resolved*, That the following changes to the following bylaws be adopted:

43
44 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

45
46 3.12.2.3 The Secretary of the Synod, ~~using lists of delegates in attendance at the prior year's district conventions~~
47 ~~as submitted by the secretaries of the districts,~~ shall compile and maintain the voters list for the election of
48 the President of the Synod ~~in coordination with the secretaries of the districts.~~ This list and any of its parts
49 shall not be disseminated.

50 (a) This voters list shall include:

51 (1) the pastor of each member congregation or multi-congregation parish

52 (2) a lay person from the congregation or parish ~~two voting delegates from each congregation in~~
53 ~~attendance at the previous district conventions who remains members of the congregations they~~
54 ~~represented.~~

55 (b) In the case of a congregation with more than one pastor eligible to vote, the congregation must
56 designate to the Secretary of the Synod which pastor will cast the vote for the congregation. ~~If one or~~

1 ~~both delegates are unavailable, congregations shall be provided opportunity to select substitute voters.~~
 2 3.12.2.4 Four weeks prior to the national convention, the Secretary of the Synod shall provide, via a secure and
 3 verifiable method, opportunity for two voting delegates from each congregation, as determined according
 4 to Bylaw 3.12.2.3, in attendance at the previous district conventions (or substitute voters selected
 5 according to Bylaw 3.12.2.3 [b]) to vote for one of the candidates for President. The Secretary shall, with
 6 the approval of the Board of Directors of the Synod, obtain the assistance necessary to accomplish this
 7 task. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the two candidates receiving the highest
 8 number of votes shall be retained on the ballot, and another vote shall be taken in the same manner.

9
10
11
12 **To Change Bylaws re Certification and Verification of District Convention Delegates**

13
14 **RESOLUTION 11-04**

15
16 Overture 11-04 (CW, p. 384)

17
18 WHEREAS, The process of registering and accrediting delegates for a district convention is cumbersome and
19 confusing; and

20
21 WHEREAS, A major source of the confusion is that the current process has required a double registration and
22 accreditation for every delegate. A registration several weeks prior to the convention, all properly certified and
23 submitted to the district office, is required so that the district president can select delegates to assign to floor
24 committees, print their names in the convention workbook, prepare registration material, and various other matters.
25 Then, current Bylaw 4.2.2 (a) requires another set of identical credentials to be submitted to the district secretary at
26 the opening of the convention; and

27
28 WHEREAS, Technically, according to the way the bylaw now reads, an individual who does not present the
29 proper form at the time of registration at the convention cannot be accredited, even though forms were previously
30 submitted to the district office; therefore be it

31
32 *Resolved*, That the following amendment to Bylaw 4.2.2 (a) be adopted.

33
34 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

35
36 4.2.2 The delegates of a voting congregation to a district convention shall be accredited.

37 (a) ~~They shall be entitled to vote upon presenting to the secretary at the opening of the convention the~~
38 ~~proper credentials provided by the district secretary and signed by two of the congregation's officers. To~~
39 ~~be entitled to vote, delegates shall return the proper credentials signed by two of the congregation's~~
40 ~~officers, either by mailing them to the district office at a date determined by the district or by presenting~~
41 ~~them to the district secretary at the opening of the convention. These credentials shall be signed by two of~~
42 ~~the congregation's officers. These credential forms will be provided by the district secretary and must~~
43 ~~also include all of the information necessary for voting for the President of the Synod. The district~~
44 ~~secretary shall verify the attendance of voting delegates at the district convention.~~

45
46
47
48 **To Revise and Enhance Nomination and Election Process for Regional Board Members**

49
50 **RESOLUTION 11-05**

51
52 Overtures 11-18, 11-26-27, 11-29, 11-52 (CW, pp. 392, 394-95, 397, 407)

53
54 The 2010 LCMS convention adopted changes to the Bylaws that allow for the regional election to certain vice-
55 president, Board of Directors, and mission board positions. While these regional elections have been well received,
56 recent experience has shown that there are a number of deficiencies and opportunities for improvement to the

1 nomination and election processes.

2
3 Currently, the submission of nominations for regional positions is restricted to congregations within that region. The
4 final slates for these positions are populated by the five nominees who receive the highest number of nominations. In
5 some cases, the slate includes persons who have low, single-digit numbers of nominations. The Board of Directors
6 believes expanding the pool of nominators will likely result in more nominees for consideration. Because the slate is
7 currently compiled based solely on the number of nominations received, there is no opportunity for an assessment to
8 determine whether a candidate possesses sufficient qualifications necessary to perform the functions of the position
9 for which they are being nominated. Additionally, the current process does not allow for floor nominations, which
10 would provide an opportunity to amend the slate should there be a more qualified candidate in the pool of nominees.

11
12 The proposed overture attempts to address each of the issues identified in the preceding paragraph. Additionally, we
13 advocate for the inclusion of the Committee on Convention Nominations in the process of gathering and reviewing
14 the nominees, tasking them to create a slate of the most qualified candidates using previously established processes
15 that are used for the election of other LCMS positions.

16
17 Therefore be it

18
19 *Resolved*, That certain bylaws be amended as follows:

20
21 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

22
23 **3.12 Nominations and Elections**

24
25 *Regional Elections*

26
27 3.12.1 For all elections requiring regional representation, the Board of Directors of the Synod and the Council of
28 Presidents acting jointly shall designate five geographic regions.

29 (a) Regions shall be designated 24 months prior to conventions of the Synod and shall take into
30 consideration geographical and number of congregation's information in the interest of fair
31 representation.

32 (b) For purposes of regional elections, individuals will be considered a part of the geographical region
33 ~~where their congregational membership is held~~ in which they reside. Canadian congregations will be
34 placed as a whole into the region which the Board of Directors and the Council of Presidents deem
35 appropriate.

36 (c) This information shall be shared immediately with all districts of the Synod.

37
38 *Nominations and Elections of Regional Vice-Presidents*

39
40 3.12.2.7 After the results of the first-vice-presidential election have been announced, the convention shall elect five
41 regional vice-presidents according to the following nominations and elections process. ~~(This shall also be~~
42 ~~the process used for all other regional elections.)~~

43
44 (a) Each member congregation of a region (including any non-geographic-district congregations in that
45 region) shall have been given opportunity to nominate two ministers of religion—ordained from the clergy
46 roster of the Synod with residence in its designated region as candidates for regional vice-president.

47 (b) The Secretary of the Synod shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the
48 nominating congregation).

49 (c) The names of the five ministers of religion—ordained residing within the boundaries of each geographic
50 region who receive the most nominating votes shall form the slate from which the Synod convention shall
51 select by majority vote each regional vice-president.

52 (d) No opportunity shall be provided for additional nominations from the floor of the convention.

53 (e) Voting delegates to the national convention shall be entitled to vote for one of the candidates from each
54 region. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the three candidates receiving the highest
55 number of votes shall be retained on the ballot.

56 (f) Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one

1 candidate from each region has received a majority of the votes cast.
2 (g) Upon the election of the regional vice-presidents, a final election will take place ranking the vice-
3 presidents by separate ballots with a simple majority of voting delegates determining the second, third,
4 fourth, fifth, and sixth vice-presidents in line of succession.
5

6 **Nominations and Elections of Regional Positions—Board of Directors and Mission Boards**

7
8 3.12.2.8 The convention shall elect the regional positions for the Synod’s Board of Directors and Mission Boards
9 according to the following nominations and elections process.

10 (a) Approximately 24 months before a regular meeting of the Synod in convention, the Secretary of the
11 Synod shall solicit from those agencies with positions to be filled descriptions of criteria for qualified
12 candidates to serve in those positions.

13 (b) With such criteria in view, the Secretary shall issue the first call for nominations through a
14 publication of the Synod and on the Synod website 18 months before the convention, soliciting names
15 from the agencies and officers of the Synod and the congregational and individual members of the
16 Synod, along with lay persons of the congregations of the Synod. Nominations may be received from
17 persons or parties outside the region.

18 (c) All nominees for a particular regional position must reside within the boundaries of the region for
19 which they are nominated.

20 (d) All incumbents eligible for reelection shall be considered to be nominees

21 (e) The qualifications of each nominee shall be submitted together with the names on forms made
22 available on the Synod’s website.

23 (f) All suggested names and information for consideration by the Committee for Convention
24 Nominations shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Synod no later than nine months prior to the
25 convention of the Synod.

26 (g) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the Committee on Convention Nominations who
27 shall select candidates according to the process outlined in Bylaw 3.12.3.6.

28 (h) Amendments to the slate of candidates developed by the Committee on Convention Nominations
29 shall follow the process outlined in Bylaw 3.12.3.7.

30 (i) Voting delegates to the national convention shall elect the members of all elective regional positions
31 following the process outlined in Bylaw 3.12.4.2.
32

33 ***Committee for Convention Nominations***

34
35 3.12.3.6 The Committee for Convention Nominations shall select candidates for all elective offices, boards, and
36 commissions except President, First Vice-President, and ~~elective vice-president~~ positions requiring regional
37 nominations (Bylaws 3.12.2.7; 3.3.4.1; 3.8.2.2; 3.8.3.2).
38

39 ***Committee on Elections***

40
41 3.12.4.2 The President shall determine and announce a period of time during the convention for the election of the
42 members of all elective boards and commissions.
43

44 ...
45 (e) Except in the elections of the First Vice-President, ~~and regional vice-presidents, and regional board~~
46 ~~members~~, when a second or succeeding ballot is required for a majority, the candidate receiving the
47 fewest votes and all candidates receiving less than 15 percent of the votes cast shall be dropped from
48 the ballot, unless fewer than two candidates receive 15 percent or more of the votes cast, in which case
49 the three highest candidates shall constitute the ballot.

50 3.8.2.2 The Board for National Mission shall be comprised of eleven members:

- 51 1. Five laypersons and five individual members of the Synod (one of each from each region of the
- 52 Synod) elected in the same manner as are regional members of the Board of Directors of the Synod
- 53 (Bylaws 3.12.1 and ~~3.12.2.7~~ 3.12.2.8)

- 54 2. The President of the Synod or his representative

55 In 2016, the laypersons elected from the Great Plains and East/Southeast regions and the individual
56 members of the Synod elected from the West/Southwest, Central, and Great Lakes regions shall be elected

1 for three-year terms.
2

3 3.8.3.2 The Board for International Mission shall be comprised of eleven members:

4 1. Five laypersons and five individual members of the Synod (one of each from each region of the
5 Synod) elected in the same manner as are regional members of the Board of Directors of the Synod (see
6 Bylaws 3.12.1 and ~~3.12.2-73.12.2.8~~)

7 2. The President of the Synod or his representative

8 In 2016, the individual members of the Synod elected from the Great Plains and East/Southeast regions and
9 the laypersons elected from the West/Southwest, Central, and Great Lakes regions shall be elected for three-
10 year terms.
11
12
13

14 **To Clarify and Confirm Distinction between Synod and Corporate Synod** 15 **and Provide Consistency for the Meaning of “Property of the Synod”**

16 **RESOLUTION 11-06**

17
18
19 Overture 11-56 (CW, p. 412)
20

21 **Rationale**

22
23 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was originally founded as a *synodical union* in April, 1847. Its original
24 name was “The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.” Ultimately, in 1947, the
25 synodical union—the Synod—shortened its name to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).
26

27 In 1894, the Synod voted to form a Missouri benevolent *corporation* under Chapter 352 of the Missouri Statutes
28 called “The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.” The corporation’s name
29 eventually was also changed to “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.”
30

31 In 1967, the corporation filed Articles of Acceptance with the State of Missouri to convert to a nonprofit corporation
32 pursuant to the General Not for Profit Corporation Act, Chapter 355 of the Missouri Statutes. The corporation’s
33 Articles of Incorporation have been amended from time to time, and the current Articles are included in the
34 *Handbook of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*.
35

36 Article XIV of the Synod’s Constitution provides that “[t]he Synod in convention may adopt bylaws that are
37 consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod.” The Synod’s Bylaws also serve as the bylaws
38 of the corporate entity.
39

40 The Synod’s Bylaws have been amended fairly regularly over the past 150 years. Some of the amendments were
41 designed to recognize the distinction between the synodical union (Synod) and the Missouri nonprofit corporation of
42 the same name. An example of such is current (2013) Bylaw 1.2, which includes definitions of “Synod” and
43 “Corporate Synod.”
44

45 Bylaw 1.2.1 (f) provides, in pertinent part: “**Corporate Synod:** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Missouri
46 nonprofit corporation, including its offices, boards, commissions, and departments ” Bylaw 1.2.1 (u) states:
47 “**Synod:** Refers collectively to the association of self-governing Lutheran congregations and all its agencies on the
48 national and district levels. The Synod, as defined herein, is not a civil law entity.” [The term “Agency” is defined in
49 Bylaw 1.2.1 (a).]
50

51 Because the name of the Synod and the name of the Missouri nonprofit corporate entity are identical, certain
52 provisions of the Synod’s Constitution and Bylaws could be viewed as ambiguous and, therefore, should be
53 amended for clarity and consistency.
54

55 One such bylaw that should be clarified for at least two different reasons is Bylaw 1.2.1 (q), which defines “Property
56 of the Synod” as “[a]ll assets, real or personal, tangible or intangible, whether situated in the United States or

1 elsewhere, titled or held in the name of the Synod, its nominee, or an agency of the Synod. ‘Property of the Synod’
2 does not include any assets held by the Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod or by an agency of the
3 Synod in a fiduciary capacity (including, for purpose of example, the funds managed for the Concordia Plans by
4 Concordia Plan Services and certain funds held by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation.)”

5
6 First, the current definition, especially when read in light of the definition of “Synod,” could lead to an erroneous
7 understanding that the Synod owns the property of member congregations. Such a misunderstanding would be
8 inconsistent with Article VII 2 of the Constitution, which clearly states, “Membership of a congregation in the
9 Synod gives the Synod no equity in the property of the congregation.” Clarification for consistency could be made
10 by amending Bylaw 1.2.1 (q) to expressly exclude property of congregations from the definition.

11
12 Second, Article XI E of the Constitution should be amended to reflect more clearly that the duties of the Board of
13 Directors include serving as the legal representative of both the Synod and corporate Synod, and to clarify that the
14 Board of Directors’ role as custodian of the property of the Synod includes, in particular, property held by or titled
15 in the name of corporate Synod or its nominee. This is not a change in responsibilities but rather a clarification.

16
17 These amendments would benefit the Synod and its members by providing clarity and consistency between the
18 Constitution and the Bylaws.

19
20 Therefore be it

21
22 *Resolved*, That the LCMS *Handbook* be revised as follows:

23
24 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

25
26 **Article IV Powers**

27
28 The Synod in convention is empowered to and has formed corporate entities which shall have legal powers:

- 29 1. To purchase, hold, administer, and sell property of every description in the interest of the Synod;
30 2. To accept, hold, administer, and, if deemed advisable, dispose of legacies, donations, commercial papers, and
31 legal documents of every description in the interest of its work.

32
33 **Article XI Rights and Duties of Officers**

34
35 **E. Composition and Duties of the Board of Directors**

36 ...
37 2. The Board of Directors is the legal representative ~~of the Synod. It is the~~ and custodian of all ~~the~~ property of
38 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ~~the Synod~~, directly or by its delegation of such authority to an agency
39 of the Synod. It shall exercise supervision over all ~~the~~ property ~~of the Synod~~ and business affairs of ~~the Synod~~
40 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod except in those areas where it has delegated such authority to an agency
41 of the Synod or where the voting members of the Synod through the adoption of bylaws or by other convention
42 action have assigned specific areas of responsibility to separate corporate or trust entities, as to those the Board
43 of Directors shall have general oversight responsibility as set for in the Bylaws. For the purposes of this article,
44 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod includes both the Synod formed by this Constitution and the Missouri
45 corporation formed by the Synod.

46
47 **1.2 Definitions of Terms**

48
49 1.2.1 The following definitions are for use in understanding the terms as used in the Bylaws of The Lutheran
50 Church—Missouri Synod:

51 ...
52 (q) **Property of the Synod:** All assets, real or personal, tangible or intangible, whether situated in the United
53 States or elsewhere, titled or held in the name of ~~the Synod or~~ corporate Synod, its nominee, or an agency
54 of the Synod. “Property of the Synod” does not include any assets held by member congregations, the
55 Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod, or by an agency of the Synod in a fiduciary capacity
56 (including, for purposes of example, the funds managed for the Concordia Plans by Concordia Plan

1 Services and certain funds held by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation).

2
3
4
5 **To Amend Constitution to Grant Lay Vote to Every Congregation**

6
7 **RESOLUTION 11-07**

8
9 Overtures 11-44–45 (CW, pp. 402–403)

10
11 **Preamble**

12
13 When Jesus directs those attempting to admonish an erring brother, He states that the final attempt of such
14 admonition is to take the matter before the church (Matt. 18:17). To that assembly Jesus predicates the authority to
15 exercise the Office of the Keys saying, “And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile
16 and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you
17 loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 18:17b–18).

18
19 This God-given authority is not limited by the size of a congregation; for Jesus goes on to add a clear promise to be
20 with even the smallest assembly or congregation: “Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything
21 they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in My name, there
22 am I among them” (Matt. 18:19-20).

23
24 The Lutheran Church in general and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in particular have always held
25 the autonomy of the congregation in high esteem. The Confessions of the Lutheran church testify to the authority
26 given by Christ to the Church as recorded in the Scriptures. Particularly, the above mentioned verses of Matt.18 are
27 cited in the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* defending the Church’s right of calling ministers (Tr. 24,
28 *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*). Later it is made clear that this authority comes down to each congregation:
29 “Therefore when the regular bishops become unwilling to administer ordination, the churches retain their own right
30 [to ordain ministers]. Where the Church is, there is the authority to administer the Gospel” (Tr. 66–67).

31
32 When the question of church and ministry was raised in the early days of our Synod’s history, Pastor C. F. W.
33 Walther expressed the urgency of clarifying the scriptural position on the matter, in part because of its implications
34 for church polity (cf. Walther’s preface to the first edition of *Church and Ministry*, especially pages xvii–xix in the
35 2012 edition edited by Matthew C. Harrison and published by CPH). Because of the divine institution of the Church
36 and the Office of the Holy Ministry, the LCMS has consistently upheld the temporal right of a congregation to have
37 a say in the business of the Synod, and this is not limited to pastoral representation, but has also included the laity. In
38 recent times, the voice of the congregation has been heard through the voting of two delegates appointed by a
39 congregation to represent her at district conventions as well as circuit forums where delegates to Synod conventions
40 are elected.

41
42 However, even though we acknowledge the God-given authority of each congregation, our Synod has not allowed
43 certain congregations to be represented equally in the affairs of our Synod. As we walk together we have muted the
44 voices of many congregations by calling a “dual or multiple-congregation arrangement served by the same pastor” a
45 “parish” and limiting each parish in such a context to one pastoral and one lay vote (CCM Opinion 03-2327,
46 “Voting Rights of Congregations”). In one extreme case, four congregations served jointly by two pastors have been
47 allowed a total of two votes at district meetings (CCM Opinion 09-2545, “Voting Rights of Congregations”).

48
49 By disenfranchising certain congregations who hold membership in the Synod, we have acted inconsistently on a
50 number of levels.

- 51
- 52 • Though we confess no divinely appointed form of church polity, denying some congregations the right to
 - 53 the same representation that other congregations have in matters of the Synod is at best at a disconnect with
 - 54 our theological understanding of a congregation’s embodiment of the catholicity of the Church.
 - 55 • In some matters of the Synod that are dealt with on a congregational level, every congregation is allowed to
 - 56 speak for herself. However, in other matters, multiple congregations served jointly by one or more pastors

- 1 voice.
- 2 • In regard to voting at district conventions, the term *parish* has come to mean a “dual or multiple-
- 3 congregation arrangement served by the same pastor,” but the majority of the times *parish* is used in the
- 4 *Handbook* it is used synonymously with the term *congregation*, for example, in the following titles:
- 5 “director of parish music” and “parish assistant.” Such servants of the church are certainly not limited to
- 6 settings where two or more congregations have come together to call a pastor.
- 7 • Furthermore, if the term *parish* is used consistently, we must also re-evaluate whom we elected to the
- 8 CTCR, seeing as Bylaw 3.9.5.1 requires “two ordained ministers who are *parish pastors*” (emphasis
- 9 added).

	Independent Voice	Shared Voice
Representation at District Conventions		X
Representation at Circuit Forums	X	
Election of circuit delegates to Synod Convention	X	
Vote on Amendments to Synod Constitution	X	
Nominate Synod Officers including Synod President	X	
Voting for Synod President		X
Establishing necessary number of congregations for electoral circuits	X	

26 The problems created by such a situation are only intensified when the congregations making up a multiple-

27 congregation setting are located in different circuits or even districts.

28

29 Some would claim that allowing each congregation in a multi-point parish a vote at district conventions would throw

30 off the balance between laity and clergy. Historically, the Synod has allowed for an equal number of pastoral and lay

31 voting delegates; however, no great effort has been made to ensure that an equal number of lay and pastoral

32 delegates actually attend the convention of Synod. The constituting convention of Synod in 1847 consisted of 16

33 voting delegates. Of those only four were lay delegates. A year later there were six voting lay delegates and 25

34 voting pastoral delegates. That was a significant imbalance, but there is no evidence that anyone was bothered by it,

35 since the opportunity was given for significant lay participation along with the clergy.

36

37 If there are 509 multipoint parishes including 1,051 congregations as of 2013, granting a voting representation could

38 create an additional 542 lay votes at district conventions. Given that there are approximately 6,100 congregations in

39 the Synod, such a change would permit 6,100 voting lay delegates to 5,558 pastoral delegates (see lcms.org/aboutus).

40

41 Granted, these numbers could change significantly according to changing demographics, but currently, if every

42 congregation sent a lay delegate, on average across the various districts lay delegates would outnumber clergy by a

43 ratio of less than 1.1 to 1. And it is likely that a sizable minority of congregations who are able to send lay delegates

44 do not, so that even if congregations in multipoint parishes were each allowed a voting lay delegate, pastoral

45 delegates may still outnumber the lay delegates in general. In any case, we are a significant way from the imbalance

46 of the early days of our Synod.

47

48 Regarding the objection that granting a voting lay delegate to every congregation would change the historic

49 precedent, it should be noted that other aspects of our structure have changed significantly since 1847. For example,

50 we now have the possibility for (and numerous examples of) dual parishes consisting of congregations in different

51 districts. In those cases, the congregations in a district other than the district in which their pastors are members

52 receive no representation with a voice at their district conventions.

53

54 **Proposed Action**

55

56 WHEREAS, The Synod Constitution Art. V A deals with voting members of the Synod and states: “All organized

1 congregations that have joined the Synod hold voting membership. At the meetings of the districts of the Synod
 2 every congregation or parish is entitled to two votes, one of which is to be cast by the pastor and the other by the lay
 3 delegate”; and
 4

5 WHEREAS, The term *parish* is used for the first time in the Constitution and only in this place has it been
 6 interpreted to mean “multiple congregations served by the same pastor(s)”; and
 7

8 WHEREAS, “Multiple congregations” are only allowed to send a single lay delegate to district conventions,
 9 which does not respect the equal dignity, gifts, and authority of all member congregations. Rather, it creates degrees
 10 of voting membership in the Synod because every congregation is allowed a vote in some places but not in others
 11 (see chart in Preamble); and
 12

13 WHEREAS, The basic meaning of *parish* is more geographical than the basic meaning of *congregation*
 14 (congregation membership is not limited by geography, and a parish would, strictly speaking, include many people
 15 [even members of other denominations, as well as unbelievers] who are not members of an LCMS congregation);
 16 and
 17

18 WHEREAS, The presence of a pastor is not what determines the presence of a congregation. According to C. F.
 19 W. Walther’s *Church and Ministry* (tr. J.T. Mueller) concerning the church, Article VII, “As visible congregations
 20 that still have the Word and the sacraments essentially according to God’s Word bear the name ‘church’ because of
 21 the true invisible church of sincere believers that is found in them, so also they possess the authority that Christ has
 22 given to his whole church, on account of the true visible church hidden in them, *even if there were only two or three*
 23 *[believers]”* (emphasis added); and
 24

25 WHEREAS, The polity of the LCMS is based on congregations and not on parishes; and
 26

27 Whereas, The emphasis of our polity on the representation of congregations is intrinsically connected to the
 28 scriptural and confessional understanding of a congregation’s bearing all the characteristics of the Church; and
 29

30 WHEREAS, The restructuring of the LCMS passed by the delegates at the 2010 convention included the
 31 provision that congregations of the Synod would directly vote for the Synod President (Congregations Walking
 32 Together in Mission as They Elect President and First Vice-President, Res. 8-17 “To Elect the Synod President,”
 33 2010 *Proceedings*, p. 167); and
 34

35 WHEREAS, Requiring that a congregation’s two votes for Synod President be cast by those individuals who
 36 represented the congregation at the previous district convention disenfranchises the congregations in so-called
 37 multiple-congregation settings who are forced to share representation at district conventions; and
 38

39 WHEREAS, The idea of congregations electing the Synod President enhances the representative nature of this
 40 election; and
 41

42 WHEREAS, 2013 convention Res. 3-07A, “To Further Promote Mission Awareness, Support, Collaboration, and
 43 Coordination for Rural and Small Town, Urban and Inner City, and Suburban Ministry” was adopted by an
 44 overwhelming majority (981 to 15), the final resolve of which stated: “That the LCMS in convention continue to
 45 respect the equal dignity, gifts, and authority of all member congregations, regardless of demographics or size,”
 46 (*Proceedings*, p. 119); and
 47

48 WHEREAS, The use of the term *parish* has led to confusion and the denial of voting rights to certain
 49 congregations; therefore be it
 50

51 *Resolved*, That the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at its 2016 convention:

- 52 • give all organized congregations that hold membership in the Synod the opportunity to be represented by a
 53 lay delegate and a pastoral delegate at district conventions (Bylaw 3.1.2.1 [c] allows such representation at
 54 circuit forums and regional caucuses);
- 55 • retain a single vote for a pastor who represents more than one congregation;
- 56 • and amend Article V A of the Synod Constitution as follows:

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PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Article V Membership

A. Voting Members

All organized congregations that have joined the Synod hold voting membership. At the meetings of the districts of the Synod every congregation or parish is entitled to two votes, one of which is to be cast by the pastor and the other by the lay delegate. In the case of a single pastor representing two or more congregations, no individual shall cast more than one vote. At the meetings of the Synod a number of congregations shall form a group which shall be represented by two voting delegates, one a pastor and one a lay delegate.

To Amend Bylaws re District Administration and Electoral Circuit Requirements

RESOLUTION 11-08

Overtures 11-12, 11-24, 11-38–39, 11-51 (CW, pp. 389, 393, 400, 405)

A. To Strengthen Bylaw Requirements for Submission of Statistical Information

Rationale

With the active cooperation of the Council of Presidents, progress has been made by the Office of the Secretary and the Department of Rosters, Statistics, and Research toward obtaining 100 percent response in congregations’ submission of annual statistical information. While this information has always been valuable, increased abilities to use such information for the general good of the Synod and its agencies has increased interest in a unanimous response.

The Commission on Handbook has approved the following bylaw changes proposed by the Secretary of the Synod for submission to the 2016 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) convention.

Proposed Action

Therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaws 1.3.4–1.3.4.1; 3.3.3.2; 4.4.7–4.4.8; and 5.2.3 be amended to strengthen requirements for congregations’ submission of annual statistical information, as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

1.3.4 Congregations together establish the requirements of membership in the Synod (Constitution Art. VI). In joining the Synod, congregations and other members obligate themselves to fulfill such requirements and to diligently and earnestly promote the purposes of the Synod by word and deed. ~~Members of the Synod, compelled by love for each other, accept the responsibility to support financially the work of the Synod and provide annual statistical information to enable the Synod to plan current and future ministry efforts based upon an accurate picture of the results of current ministries within its churches, communities, and world.~~

1.3.4.1 Members agree to uphold the confessional position of the Synod (Constitution Art. II) and to assist in carrying out the objectives of the Synod (Constitution Art. III), which are objectives of the members themselves. ~~Thus, w~~While congregations of the Synod are self-governing (Constitution Art. VII), they, and also individual members, commit themselves as members of the Synod to act in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod under which they have agreed to live and work together and which

1 the congregations alone have the authority to adopt or amend through conventions.

2
3 1.3.4.2 Members of the Synod, compelled by love for one another, accept the responsibility to support financially
4 the work of the Synod.

5
6 1.3.4.3 Congregations of the Synod, to enable the Synod to plan current and future ministry efforts and to lend
7 accuracy and integrity to the Synod's delegate representation and voting processes, agree to provide annual
8 membership and statistical information to the Synod.

9
10 3.3.3.2 The Secretary shall perform such other work as pertains to his office or such other work as the Synod in
11 convention, the President, or the Board of Directors of the Synod may assign to him.

12 (a) He shall serve as a voting member and secretary of the Commission on Constitutional Matters.

13 (b) He shall administer the Synod's dispute resolution process.

14 (c) He shall serve as a voting member of the Board of Governors of Concordia Historical Institute.

15 (d) He shall supervise the maintenance of the official roster of member congregations and ordained and
16 commissioned ministers on the basis of information supplied by the district presidents.

17 (e) He shall supervise the process for obtaining annual statistical information from all member
18 congregations of the Synod.

19 (ef) He shall serve as editor of *The Lutheran Annual*.

20 (fg) He shall keep a file of all governing instruments of all agencies of the Synod.

21
22 4.4.7 The district president shall be responsible for maintaining the official rosters of his district.

23 (a) He shall add the names of those ordained or commissioned ministers initially placed in the district
24 and those accepting a call to or otherwise transferring to the district.

25 (b) He shall remove the names of those who have died or have resigned their membership or have had
26 their membership in the Synod duly terminated.

27 (c) An ordained or commissioned minister accepting a call to a congregation in a sister district or to an
28 institution which relates to such district shall immediately report such decision to his district president
29 and ask for a transfer of membership. The district president shall forward such transfer to the president
30 of the sister district.

31 (d) Upon receipt of the transfer and of a request for installation from the minister of religion, the
32 district president of the sister district shall install or authorize installation of such minister.

33 (e) He shall regularly forward roster reports to the Secretary of the Synod for publication in *The*
34 *Lutheran Annual*.

35
36 4.4.8 The district president shall ~~revise annually the official rosters of ordained ministers and of commissioned~~
37 ~~ministers for publication in *The Lutheran Annual*, with the assistance of his district's circuit visitors,~~
38 promote and pursue unanimous participation by congregations in the submission of annual statistical
39 reports as an expectation of membership in the Synod.
40

41 5.2.3 Each circuit visitor shall assist the district president within the circuit.

42 (a) He shall serve under the direction of and be accountable to the district president and shall serve as
43 his spokesman when so authorized and directed and shall assist him in doctrinal and spiritual
44 supervision.

45 (b) He shall serve in a servant role.

46 (c) He shall seek to remind and encourage members of the circuit of their responsibilities as God's
47 people and the privilege they have in being about His mission.

48 (d) He and any other officers of the circuit shall have the primary responsibility for maintaining liaison
49 between the circuit and the Synod at the national and district levels.

50 (e) He shall be conversant with and supportive of Synod-wide and district resolutions and programs.

51 (f) He shall seek to strengthen the spirit of cooperation among pastors, commissioned ministers, and
52 congregations.

53 (g) He shall assist in the development and attainment of Synod-wide mission and ministry emphases.

54 (h) He shall assist the district president, as requested, in promoting and obtaining unanimous
55 participation by congregations in the submission of annual statistical reports.

56 (hi) He may, when requested to do so by the district president, serve as a mediator to effect

- 1 reconciliation of disputes within the circuit not under dispute resolution of the Synod as outlined in
- 2 section 1.10 of these Bylaws.
- 3 (ij) He shall regularly convene the pastors of his circuit for circuit conferences.
- 4 (jk) He shall regularly report on his activities to the district president.
- 5 (kl) The district president shall meet with the circuit visitors of the district at least once per year to
- 6 discuss their work, to encourage them, and to conduct ongoing training for congregational and pastoral
- 7 visits.
- 8 (lm) The circuit visitor is authorized to draw on the district treasury for his expenses.

11

12 **B. To Restore Requirement for Submission of Circuit Visitor Nominee Names**

13

14 **Preamble**

15

16 A bylaw provision requiring the submission of names of circuit visitor nominees prior to the day of the circuit forum

17 to elect the circuit visitor was inadvertently omitted when the current process was adopted by the 2010 LCMS

18 convention. Such a provision does currently exist in the circuit forum election process for national convention voting

19 delegates.

20

21 The Commission on Handbook proposes restoring this day-prior requirement for submission of names of circuit

22 visitor nominees, thereby mirroring the language of Bylaw 3.1.2.1 (e) by amending Bylaw paragraphs 5.2.2 (b) and

23 (d).

24

25 **Proposed Action**

26

27 Therefore be it

28

29 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 5.2.2 paragraphs (b) and (d) be amended to restore the day-prior requirement for

30 submission of names of circuit visitor nominees, as follows:

31

32 PROPOSED WORDING

33

34 5.2.2 The circuit visitor shall hold his position by virtue of his selection by the circuit forum and ratification by the

35 district convention.

36 (a) Circuit forums shall meet at the call of their circuit visitors to select their circuit visitors no later than

37 the time established by the district. When in-person meetings are burdensome (e.g., geographically large

38 circuits), a circuit may select another manner of meeting (e.g., e-meeting technologies) that is suitable

39 and made available to all participants, taking into consideration the need to provide for an open and fair

40 exchange of ideas and secure, private, and confidential voting.

41 (b) Prior to the day of the circuit forum, Nominations for candidates for the office of circuit visitor may

42 be submitted by a voting congregation of the circuit and suggested by the district president, in

43 consultation with the praesidium of the district.

44 (c) Each circuit may adopt procedures and methods that will insure efficiency and accuracy, including

45 the use of mechanical, electronic, or other methods of casting, recording, or tabulating votes. The

46 privilege of voting shall be exercised by the representatives from each member congregation of the

47 circuit, who shall have been selected in the manner prescribed by the congregation (Bylaw 5.3.2).

48 (d) All nominated pastors serving congregations and emeriti pastors, whose names were nominated prior

49 to the day of the circuit forum, shall be eligible for election in accordance with section 4.3 of these

50 Bylaws.

51

52

53

54 **C. To Clarify Bylaws re Circuit Forums and**

55 **Electoral Circuit Forums**

56 **Rationale**

1
2 Current Bylaw section 5.3, which defines and details the responsibilities of visitation circuit forums, includes
3 information regarding electoral circuit meetings (as anticipated by Bylaw 3.1.2). Removing those references from
4 Bylaw section 5.3 and inserting them into Bylaw 3.1.2 will provide clarity for distinguishing between visitation
5 circuits and electoral circuits. The Commission on Handbook therefore proposes the following bylaw changes.

6
7 **Proposed Action**

8
9 Therefore be it

10
11 *Resolved*, That new wording be introduced into Bylaw 3.1.2 that retains and relocates the content of current
12 Bylaw 5.3.3 regarding electoral circuit meetings, as follows:

13
14 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

15
16 *Electoral Circuits and Voting Delegates*

17
18 3.1.2 ~~Voting delegates shall consist of one pastor and one layman from each electoral circuit.~~ Electoral circuits
19 shall meet as required by the Bylaws of the Synod to elect circuit voting delegates to the Synod's national
20 conventions.

21 (a) An electoral circuit shall consist either of one or two adjacent visitation circuits, as shall be
22 determined by the district board of directors on the basis of the following requirements: each pair of
23 delegates shall represent from 7 to 20 member congregations, ~~involving an aggregate communicate~~
24 ~~membership ranging from 1,500 to 10,000.~~

25 (b) Voting delegates shall consist of one pastor and one layperson from each electoral circuit. These
26 pastoral and lay delegates and their alternates shall be elected according to the regulations of the Synod
27 (Bylaw 3.1.2.1).

28 ~~(c)~~ Exceptions to these requirements may be made only by the President of the Synod upon request of
29 a district board of directors.

30 (d) The lay delegate shall serve throughout the triennium following the convention as an advisory
31 member of the circuit forum.

32
33 and be it further

34
35 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 5.3.3 be amended to read as follows:

36
37 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

38
39 5.3.3 The circuit forum ~~will~~shall meet at least once triennially to elect ~~circuit delegates to the national~~
40 ~~convention. It shall elect the pastoral and lay delegates and their alternates to the national convention of the~~
41 ~~Synod according to the regulations of the Synod. The lay delegate shall, upon election, serve through the~~
42 ~~triennium following the next convention as an advisory member of the circuit forum~~ a circuit visitor (Bylaw
43 5.2.2).

44
45
46
47 **To Allow Voting Privilege for Assistant Pastors**

48
49 **RESOLUTION 11-09**

50
51 Overture 11-37, 11-48 (CW, pp. 400, 404)

52
53 WHEREAS, All ordained ministers equally hold the Office of the Public Ministry (John 20:21; *Treatise on the*
54 *Primacy and Power of the Pope* 9); and

55
56 WHEREAS, Nomenclature regarding the Office of the Public Ministry (titles, responsibilities, etc.) is at the

1 discretion of the local congregation; and

2
3 WHEREAS, Assistant pastors who have been called and ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry are,
4 according to Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Constitution Article V B, ineligible to vote at district
5 meetings but are designated as “advisory members”; therefore be it

6
7 *Resolved*, That the 2016 Synod convention strike “assistant pastors” from the list of Advisory Members of the
8 Synod in Article V B of the Synod’s Constitution; and be it finally

9
10 *Resolved*, That Articles V B 2 and XII B b of the Constitution be changed as shown below:

11
12 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

13
14 **Article V Membership**

15 ...
16 **B. Advisory Members**

17
18 Advisory members only are the following:

- 19 1. Pastors whose congregations do not hold membership in the Synod
- 20 ~~2. Assistant pastors~~
- 21 ~~3. Ministers not in charge of congregations~~
- 22 ~~4. Professors at the Synod’s educational institutions~~
- 23 ~~5. Teachers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church~~
- 24 ...

25
26
27 **Article XII Districts of the Synod and Their Regulations**

28 ...
29 **B. Advisory Members**

30
31 Advisory members are:

- 32 a. Pastors whose congregations do not hold membership in the Synod
- 33 ~~b. Assistant pastors~~
- 34 ~~eb. Ministers not in charge of congregations~~
- 35 ~~ec. Professors at the Synod’s educational institutions~~
- 36 ~~ed. Teachers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church~~
- 37 ...

38
39
40
41 **To Authorize Review of Synod Nominations/Elections Processes**

42
43 **RESOLUTION 11-10**

44
45 Overture L11-58 (TB, pp. 34–35)

46
47 **Rationale**

48
49 The nominations/elections processes leading up to Synod conventions have undergone significant changes during
50 the past decade with the introduction of presidential elections prior to the conventions, regional board positions with
51 a ballot nominations process, increased interest in the qualifications of Concordia University System board members
52 leading to required background and skill set assessments, and more—all incorporated into what had largely been a
53 nominating committee process, at times creating confusion and difficult time frame expectations for national
54 convention preparations.

55
56 The Commission on Handbook therefore proposes, a number of issues having been brought to its attention, that it is

1 time for the Synod in convention to authorize a thorough review of the procedures and expectations of Bylaw
 2 section 3.12 “Nominations and Elections” and related bylaws throughout the *Handbook*. The creation of a task force
 3 composed of individuals most familiar with the current nominations and elections processes will provide
 4 opportunity for an informed review of current bylaw requirements and submission of well-conceived
 5 recommendations to the 2019 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) convention.

6
 7 **Proposed Action**

8
 9 Therefore be it

10
 11 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention authorize the creation of a task force to review existing nominations
 12 bylaw procedures in the interest of combining them into a comprehensive process with appropriate time frames to
 13 facilitate convention preparations; and be it further

14
 15 *Resolved*, That the members of this task force be the Secretary of the Synod, the Chief Administrative Officer of
 16 the Synod, single representatives of the Commission on Handbook and Commission on Constitutional Matters
 17 (chosen by the commissions), the chairman of the 2016 Committee for Convention Nominations, the chairman of
 18 the 2016 Committee on Elections, one district secretary and one district president appointed by the Council of
 19 Presidents, and up to three additional persons appointed by the LCMS Board of Directors; and be it further

20
 21 *Resolved*, That this task force review the procedures and expectations of Bylaw section 3.12 and all related
 22 bylaws; and be it finally

23
 24 *Resolved*, That the task force make public its recommendations at least one year prior to the 2019 Synod
 25 convention, thereafter receiving input and submitting its final report with proposed bylaw changes in time for
 26 inclusion in the 2019 *Convention Workbook* and action by the 2019 convention.

27
 28 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
 29 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

30
 31
 32
 33 **To Clarify Convention Matters**

34
 35 **RESOLUTION 11-11**

36 Overture 11-50 (CW, p. 405)

37
 38 **A. To Designate Chief Administrative Officer**
 39 **as Convention Manager**

40
 41 **Rationale**

42
 43 Current Bylaw 3.1.9 (a) speaks of the “Director of General Services” as “convention manager,” although the
 44 position of Director of General Services no longer exists. The convention position of Director of General Services
 45 and its related responsibilities have already been under the day-to-day supervision of the Chief Administrative
 46 Officer in preparation for the 2016 convention. The Commission on Handbook proposes the following change to
 47 Bylaw 3.1.9 (a) for consideration by the 2016 LCMS convention.

48
 49 **Proposed Action**

50
 51 Therefore be it

52
 53 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 3.1.9 (a) be amended to identify the Synod’s Chief Administrative Officer as the
 54 convention manager, as follows:

55
 56 ~~PRESENT~~ PROPOSED WORDING

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Convention Order

3.1.9 The President shall be responsible for the overall organization and operations of the conventions of the Synod.

(a) ~~As convention manager, the Director of General Services, within the assigned general meeting and conference planning function, The Chief Administrative Officer~~ The Chief Administrative Officer or the Chief Administrative Officer’s designee shall serve as the convention manager. He shall be responsible to the President for making arrangements for and directing the externals of the convention and other major assemblies of the Synod and may assist with planning and arranging for district conventions.

...

**B. To Clarify District Responsibilities
re Convention Publications Distribution**

Rationale

Districts are required by Synod Bylaw 4.2.1 (a) to be “governed by the bylaws adopted by the Synod for its conventions, insofar as these may be applicable.” Synod Bylaws 3.1.8 (b), 3.1.10.1, and 3.1.10.1 (a) require printed copies of convention workbooks and proceedings to be mailed to bylaw-assigned recipients.

Districts have indicated that the requirement to mail convention workbooks and proceedings impose obligations on districts that often are needlessly expensive, wasteful, and unneeded. Electronic means of communication are now widely available and used by the Synod in multiple other contexts.

Proposed Action

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2016 LCMS convention adopt the following additional paragraph to Bylaw 4.2.1:

~~PRESENT~~ PROPOSED WORDING

4.2 District Conventions

4.2.1 Conventions of the districts shall afford opportunities for worship, nurture, inspiration, fellowship, and the communication of vital information. They are the principal legislative assemblies, which amend the district’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, consider and take action on reports and overtures, and handle appropriate appeals.

...

(g) Districts may, at their own discretion, provide their convention workbooks and proceedings to each district congregation, delegate and alternate, officer, and board, commission, and council member by a means of electronic communication, provided that any designated recipient shall be provided a printed copy of the workbook and proceedings upon request.

To Clarify Synod Administration Matters

RESOLUTION 11-12

Overture 11-53 (CW, p. 408–411)

A. To Remove Bylaw Provisions Adopted by the 2013 Convention

for Staggering Terms

Rationale

The final paragraphs of Bylaws 3.8.2.2 and 3.8.3.2 were adopted by the 2013 convention to create staggered terms beginning with the 2016–2019 triennium. Similarly, Bylaw 3.9.4.1 was amended to create staggered terms when the voting members of the Commission on Handbook are appointed for the 2016–2019 triennium.

Since these were temporary changes that will have accomplished their purpose with the 2016 mission board elections and 2013–2016 triennium Commission on Handbook appointments, the following bylaw changes will restore the bylaws to their pre-2013-convention content.

Proposed Action

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the following changes be made to Bylaws 3.8.2.2 and 3.8.3.2 by the 2016 convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

3.8.2.2 The Board for National Mission shall be comprised of eleven members:

1. Five laypersons and five individual members of the Synod (one of each from each region of the Synod) elected in the same manner as are regional members of the Board of Directors of the Synod (Bylaws 3.12.1 and 3.12.2.7)
2. The President of the Synod or his representative
~~In 2016, the laypersons elected from the Great Plains and East/Southeast regions and the individual members of the Synod elected from the West/Southwest, Central, and Great Lakes regions shall be elected for three year terms.~~

3.8.3.2 The Board for International Mission shall be comprised of eleven members:

1. Five laypersons and five individual members of the Synod (one of each from each region of the Synod) elected in the same manner as are regional members of the Board of Directors of the Synod (see Bylaws 3.12.1 and 3.12.2.7)
2. The President of the Synod or his representative
~~In 2016, the individual members of the Synod elected from the Great Plains and East/Southeast regions and the laypersons elected from the West/Southwest, Central, and Great Lakes regions shall be elected for three year terms.~~

and be it further

Resolved, That the wording of Bylaw 3.9.4.1 be amended as follows, effective with the appointment of Commission on Handbook members for the 2016–2019 triennium:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

3.9.4.1 The Commission on Handbook shall consist of eight members, five voting and three nonvoting:

1. Of the five ~~appointed~~ voting members, three shall be individual members of the Synod and two shall be attorneys, whose terms shall be for six years, renewable once. ~~In 2016, one of the individual members and one of the attorneys shall be appointed for three year terms. The remaining individual members and attorney shall be appointed for six year terms.~~
- ~~12.~~ The Chief Administrative Officer of the Synod, the Secretary of the Synod, and an additional member of the Commission on Constitutional Matters shall serve as advisory members.

3.9.4.1.1 ~~2.~~ The five voting members of the Commission on Handbook shall be appointed in the following manner:

- (a) Candidates shall be nominated only by district boards of directors and presented to the Council of

1 Presidents through the office of the Secretary of the Synod.
2 (b) ...
3
4

5
6 **B. To Clarify the Role of the Synod President**
7 **in Executive Appointment Processes**
8

9 **Rationale**

10
11 The President of the Synod has a role in the appointment of certain staff positions of corporate Synod and certain
12 agencies of the Synod, including the executive directors of the offices of national and international mission and the
13 chief executives of the synodwide corporate entities, a role that differs in these appointment processes (Bylaw
14 3.3.1.3 [e]).
15

16 The current wording of the bylaw does not adequately differentiate between the two processes, thereby creating
17 confusion. To clarify, the following bylaw changes are proposed to the 2016 LCMS convention.
18

19 **Proposed Action**

20
21 *Resolved*, That current Bylaw 3.3.1.3 (e) be amended as follows:
22

23 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING
24

25 *Powers and Duties—Ecclesiastical and Administrative*

26
27 3.3.1.3 The President shall have responsibilities and duties that are both ecclesiastical and administrative.
28

29 ...
30 (e) Prior to ~~appointing his appointment of an executive director of a mission office~~, he shall engage in
31 consultation with the appropriate mission board to reach concurrence on a slate of candidates for the
32 position ~~of executive director of a mission office~~.

33 (f) He shall engage in consultation with ~~each mission board, commission, and~~ the governing board of
34 each synodwide corporate entity to reach mutual concurrence on a slate of candidates for appointment
35 to the position of chief executive or executive director.

36 (g) As ecclesiastical supervisor, he shall provide leadership to all officers, agencies, and national
37 office staff of the Synod. Through the Chief Mission Officer, he shall supervise the duties listed in
38 Bylaws 3.4.3–3.4.3.8.
39 ...

40
41
42 **C. To Stipulate Commissions Meeting Requirement**
43

44 **Rationale**

45
46 Synod Bylaw 1.5.3 requires every Synod agency to meet at least quarterly unless otherwise stipulated in the bylaws,
47 exceptions requiring approval at least annually by the President of the Synod. In the case of the Commission on
48 Constitutional Matters, and possibly other commissions, responsibilities vary considerably from year to year
49 depending upon business to be addressed.
50

51 It is in the fiduciary interest of the Synod that groups such as commissions do not incur unnecessary meeting
52 expenses. The following proposed overture would introduce a stipulation into the bylaws (new Bylaw 3.9.1.1) that
53 would reduce the quarterly meeting requirement for commissions of the Synod to at least two times per year.
54

55 **Proposed Action**
56

1 Therefore be it

2
3 *Resolved*, That a new Bylaw 3.9.1.1 be inserted in Bylaw section 3.9 as follows:

4
5 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

6
7 3.9.1 The commissions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are the following:

- 8 1. Commission on Constitutional Matters
9 2. Commission on Doctrinal Review
10 3. Commission on Handbook
11 4. Commission on Theology and Church Relations

12
13 3.9.1.1 Commissions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall meet as they deem necessary but at least two
14 times per year to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

15
16
17
18 **D. To Clarify Responsibility of the Commission on Handbook**

19
20 **Rationale**

21
22 Bylaw 3.9.4.2 (e) assigns responsibility to the Commission on Handbook to respond to requests from agencies of the
23 Synod that propose new provisions to address specific handbook-related issues that surface between conventions.
24 The role of the commission is to assist such agencies when developing bylaw proposals to determine their language
25 (terminology) and suitability for incorporation into the *Handbook*, thereby to maintain its integrity and good order.

26
27 A number of agencies have requested that the Commission on Handbook create and propose new bylaws addressing
28 topics referenced by the requesting agency without indication as to what the bylaw solution should be. Such requests
29 place the commission in an advocacy rather than assisting role. Recognizing that existing Bylaw 3.9.4.2 (e)
30 governing that role of the commission may not be sufficiently clear, the commission proposes the following
31 additional wording.

32
33 **Proposed Action**

34
35 Therefore be it

36
37 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 3.9.4.2 (e) be amended as follows:

38
39 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

40
41 3.9.4.2 The Commission on Handbook shall maintain the *Handbook* of the Synod.

42 ...

43 (e) It shall respond to requests from agencies of the Synod to propose new provisions to address
44 specific *Handbook*-related issues that surface between conventions. In responding to such requests, the
45 role of the commission will be to assist requesting agencies in formulating bylaw changes, not to
46 develop and/or advocate specific substantive solutions or modifications to existing *Handbook*
47 provisions.

48
49
50
51 **E. To Clarify the Process for Calling, Ordaining**
52 **or Commissioning, and Installing Missionaries**

53
54 **Rationale**

55
56 The general rule that governs calls, ordinations, commissionings, and installations is that the president of the district

1 from which a call originates provides counsel, signs documents, and authorizes ordinations or commissionings and
2 installations of called ordained or commissioned ministers. This general rule holds true for first calls of candidates
3 as well as second and subsequent calls and installations of rostered church workers.
4

5 The Bylaws of the Synod in general support this rule, also in the case of candidates and rostered workers called to
6 serve as missionaries in foreign mission fields. Because such calls by the Board for International Mission (and non-
7 foreign specialized ministry calls by the Board for National Mission) originate in the Missouri District, the president
8 of the Missouri District provides counsel and signs documents. Several current bylaws, however, take exception to
9 the general rule when addressing authorization of ordinations or commissionings and installations of missionaries.
10

11 The introduction of this exception, while certainly well intended for such special occasions as the ordination,
12 commissioning, and/or installation of missionaries, departs from the ecclesiastical supervisory norm that is
13 otherwise consistent throughout the pertinent bylaws of the Synod. What appear to be conflicting requirements in
14 these bylaws have caused some disagreement and confusion.
15

16 **Proposed Action**

17 Therefore be it

18
19
20 *Resolved*, That the proposed changes to the following bylaws be adopted by the 2016 LCMS convention to
21 provide uniformity throughout the ordination or commissioning and installation procedures of the Synod.
22

23 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

24
25 **2.9 Assignment of First Calls**

26
27 2.9.1 The Council of Presidents, acting as the Board of Assignments, shall regularly assign to qualified graduates
28 of educational institutions of the Synod and workers available from colloquy programs as “first calls” those
29 calls that have been duly extended to fill active member positions as identified in Bylaw 2.11.1 for ordained
30 and commissioned ministers if positions for which candidates are qualified are available.

31 (a) The placement officers of the respective institutions shall be consulted before assignments are
32 made.

33 (b) The president of the district in which a candidate is to be placed shall be consulted, and his
34 concurrence suggestions and recommendations shall be an essential part of the final recommendation
35 to the Board of Assignments.
36

37 **2.10 Ordination, Commissioning, and Initial Installations**

38 ...
39 2.10.3 The president of the district of which the calling congregation is a member or in which the eligible calling
40 ~~body~~ agency or other calling body is located or with which it is otherwise identified shall be responsible for
41 the rites of ordination and commissioning of candidates for the ministry called to that congregation, ~~or~~
42 agency, or other calling body.

43 (a) The rite of ordination or commissioning should normally take place in the presence of the
44 congregation, agency, or other calling body ~~to~~ by which the candidate has been called.

45 (b) In the case of missionaries called by the Synod, members of a faculty of an institution of the Synod,
46 or ~~institutional chaplains~~ non-foreign specialized ministers called by the Synod, the rite shall take place
47 in a setting approved by the district president of the calling entity.

48 (c) If an unusual circumstance warrants it, as in the case of missionaries and non-foreign specialized
49 ministers, the ~~appropriate~~ district president may authorize that the rite take place in the home
50 congregation of the candidate, or another appropriate congregation, with the permission of the calling
51 congregation or other agency or calling body.

52 (d) A service of celebration on the part of the candidate’s home congregation is encouraged.

53 (e) The district president shall issue a diploma of ordination or commissioning.
54

55 **4.4 District President**

56 ...

1 4.4.3 The district president of the calling congregation, agency, or other calling body (e.g., in the case of
 2 corporate-Synod-issued calls, the president of the Missouri District) shall represent the Synod in connection
 3 with all ordinations, commissionings, and installations.

4 (a) **First calls:** Ordinations, commissionings, and initial installations shall be conducted by or at the
 5 direction of the district president when the requirements of Bylaw 2.10.2 (a) have been satisfied.

6 (b) **Missionaries and non-foreign specialized ministers:** The authorization for the ordination or
 7 commissioning and ~~the~~ installation of a missionary called into the foreign fields, whether as a first or
 8 subsequent call, shall be ~~provide~~ issued upon the request of the Board for International Mission by the
 9 president of the ~~district in which the missionary resides~~ Missouri District. The authorization ~~with~~
 10 ~~respect to~~ for the ordination or commissioning and ~~the~~ installation ~~for service of Synod-called non-~~
 11 ~~foreign specialized ministers within a district of the Synod,~~ whether as a first or subsequent call, shall
 12 be ~~issued~~ provided upon the request of the Board for National Mission by the president of ~~that district~~
 13 the Missouri District.

14 (c) **Synod staff members:** Ordained and commissioned ministers who are members of the Synod called
 15 ~~or appointed~~ by the Synod to serve the national Synod shall be installed, in accordance with forms and
 16 practices developed by the Synod for that purpose, by the president of the Missouri District, or by his
 17 representative.

18 (d) **Professors and instructional staff members:** Ordained and commissioned ministers who are
 19 members of the Synod called or appointed to serve at the Synod's educational institutions as professors
 20 and instructional staff members shall be installed, in accordance with forms and practices developed by
 21 the Synod for that purpose, by the president of the district in which the institution is located, or by his
 22 representative.

23 (e) **Second and subsequent installations of ministers:** ~~Except as provided in the foregoing paragraphs,~~
 24 Rostered ordained ~~ministers~~ and commissioned ministers who have been duly called to a position of
 25 full- ~~or part-time~~ service shall be installed upon authorization provided by the ~~appropriate district~~
 26 president of the district from which the call originates. Each installation shall be conducted, in
 27 accordance with forms and practices developed by the Synod for that purpose, by the district president
 28 or by an ordained minister designated by the district president.

29
 30 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
 31 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday's issue of Today's Business.]*
 32
 33
 34

35 To Update Bylaw 2.12.1.4 to Include Mention of Office of National Mission

36 RESOLUTION 11-13

37
 38
 39 Overture L11-59 (TB, p. 35)

40 Rationale

41
 42
 43 The 2013 LCMS convention (Res. 2-05B) amended Bylaw 3.8.2 by adding a final paragraph to allow the extension
 44 of calls to specialized pastoral ministers by the Board for National Mission upon recommendation of the Office of
 45 National Mission:

46
 47 3.8.2 Upon recommendation of the Office of National Mission, the Board for National Mission shall serve as a
 48 calling agency for institutional and agency chaplains and other non-foreign specialized ministers (e.g.,
 49 Veterans Administration chaplains, Bureau of Prison chaplains, hospital chaplains, pastoral counselors, and
 50 teachers of chaplaincy and pastoral counseling) after consultation with the appropriate district president(s)
 51 (cf. Bylaw 2.12.1.4).
 52

53 While the parenthetical reference to Bylaw 2.12.1.4 in the above new Bylaw 3.8.2 paragraph infers its application to
 54 Bylaw 2.12.1.4 and its consultation requirement, specific mention of the Office of National Mission is not made.
 55 The Commission on Handbook therefore proposes the following bylaw changes to affirm the connection between
 56 Bylaws 3.8.2 and 2.12.1.4.

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Proposed Action

Resolved, That Bylaw 2.12.1.4 be amended as follows:

~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

2.12.1.4 A missionary or chaplain serving under a call by the Synod shall hold membership in the Synod through the district designated by the missionary or chaplain if approved by the president of that district after consultation with the office of International Mission and the president of the district through which membership is currently held and the Office of National Mission or the Office of International Mission as appropriate.

**To Clarify Function of Committee for Convention Nominations
in Interim between Issuing Final Report and Convention**

RESOLUTION 11-14

Overture 11-19 (CW, p. 392)

WHEREAS, The Committee for Convention Nominations (CCN) issues its “final report at least five months prior to the convention” (Bylaw 3.12.3.6 [b]); and

WHEREAS, “Final report” seems to imply that the CCN’s work is finished and no further action is expected; and

WHEREAS, Subsequent events and situations occur which require modifications in the slate of candidates provided by the CCN; and

WHEREAS, Reconvening of the CCN in the interim is time-consuming, cumbersome, and expensive; and

WHEREAS, The nominations files are kept in the Office of the Secretary of Synod and are not accessible from a distance; and

WHEREAS, The Bylaws do not seem to speak to handling of such changes when required, or possibly do not permit action except by the plenary CCN; and

WHEREAS, Previous CCNs have had to improvise solutions to this situation, so it needs clarification; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Bylaw 3.2.5 committee selected by the CCN be empowered to act on behalf of and in the name of the CCN for actions needed subsequent to the issuing of the CCN’s final report prior to the convention.

To Amend Bylaw re Responsibilities of Commission on Constitutional Matters

RESOLUTION 11-15

Overture 11-03 (CW, pp. 383–384)

WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.9.2.2.3 states:

“The Commission on Constitutional Matters shall examine the articles of incorporation, bylaws, and policy manuals of every agency of the Synod to ascertain whether they are in harmony with the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.

1 (a) Agencies intending to make amendments to articles of incorporation or bylaws shall make such
2 intentions known and receive approval from the commission in advance.

3 (b) The commission shall maintain a file of the articles of incorporation, bylaws, and policy manuals of
4 all agencies of the Synod”;

5 and

6
7 WHEREAS, Bylaw 1.2.1 (a) (1) states: “Agencies include each board, commission, council, seminary, university,
8 college, district, Concordia Plan Services, and each synodwide corporate entity”;

9
10 and

11
12 WHEREAS, Districts amend their articles of incorporation and bylaws in conventions, at which the Synod’s
13 Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) is not present, and therefore the CCM cannot give “approval ... in
14 advance” for any changes in wording of articles of incorporation or bylaws that might be made through amendments
15 from the floor at such conventions; and

16
17 WHEREAS, The parliamentarian at the 2007 convention of the Synod ruled that, according to the Synod’s
18 bylaws, amendments from the floor could not be debated unless they had first been examined by the CCM, in effect
19 allowing the CCM to kill any amendments simply by failing to examine them; and

20
21 WHEREAS, By such a reading, Bylaw 3.9.2.2.3 would rule out all amendments from the floor of any district
22 convention, thus robbing the districts of the insights of the delegates who are not on floor committees, even
23 prohibiting districts from voting on their own bylaws if their floor committees failed to provide the CCM with
24 advance copies of their proposed changes or if the CCM for any reason fails to approve them before the convention;
25 therefore be it

26
27 *Resolved*, That Synod Bylaw 3.9.2.2.3 be amended to read as follows:

28
29 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

30
31 3.9.2.2.3 The Commission on Constitutional Matters shall examine the articles of incorporation, bylaws, and policy
32 manuals of every agency of the Synod to ascertain whether they are in harmony with the Constitution,
33 Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.

34 (a) Agencies intending to make amendments to articles of incorporation or bylaws shall ~~make such~~
35 ~~intentions known and receive approval from~~ submit their proposed amendments to the commission in
36 advance for review.

37 (b) The commission shall examine the proposed wording of all amendments received from these
38 agencies and report their findings to the submitting agency, including suggestions for any corrections
39 that the commission deems to be necessary.

40 (c) After agencies amend their articles of incorporation or bylaws, they shall submit them to the
41 commission for similar review.

42 (d) The commission shall maintain a file of the articles of incorporation, bylaws, and policy manuals
43 of all agencies of the Synod.

44
45
46
47 **To Respectfully Decline Overtures**

48
49 **RESOLUTION 11-16**

50
51 WHEREAS, The floor committee has considered all overtures assigned to it and has concluded, for various
52 reasons, that certain overtures should be declined; therefore be it

53
54 *Resolved*, That the following overtures be respectfully declined for the reasons given:

55
56

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reason</u>
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1			
2	11-07	To Standardize and Clarify Procedures for Elections at Synod and District Conventions	Confusing, time consuming, not practical
3			
4			
5	11-08	To Standardize and Clarify Procedures for Elections at Circuit Forums	Confusing, time consuming, not practical
6			
7			
8	11-09	To Increase Number of Candidates for President and Streamline Election Process	Confusing, time consuming, not practical
9			
10			
11	11-10	To Strengthen Committee on Elections and Form District Committees on Elections	Confusing, time consuming, not practical
12			
13			
14	11-11	To Allow Each Region to Elect Its Vice-President	To safeguard the integrity of the current process; regional VPs represent the entire Synod
15			
16			
17			
18	11-13	To Create Term Limits for Synod Elected-Officers	Term limits restrict the choice(s) for delegates 3.2.4.1
19			
20			
21	11-15	To Alter Method of Electing Synod Regional Vice-Presidents	To safeguard the integrity of the current process; regional VPs represent the entire Synod
22			
23			
24			
25	11-16	To Allow Each LCMS Region to Elect Its own Vice-Presidents	To safeguard the integrity of the current process; regional VPs represent the entire Synod
26			
27			
28			
29	11-20	To Seat Entire Committee for Convention Nominations at Convention	Not expedient or necessary; there is current representation of the CCN at the convention 3.12.3.7
30			
31			
32			
33	11-22	To Change Election of Regional Vice-Presents	To safeguard the integrity of the current process; regional VPs represent the entire Synod
34			
35			
36			
37	11-23	To Change Nominations Process for Elected-District Officers	Districts are to follow Synod Bylaws 4.2.1 (a); creates additional unhelpful exceptions
38			
39			
40			
41	11-55	To Amend Bylaw Process for Election of Synod-Regional Vice-Presidents	To safeguard the integrity of the current process; regional VPs represent the entire Synod
42			
43			
44			
45	11-57	To Require LCMS Foundation to Use Biblical-Dispute Resolution to Settle Disputes with Donors	Outside the parameters of Bylaw 1.10.2; has significant legal implications
46			
47			

12. ECCLESIASTICAL SUPERVISION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

To Restore Right of Accuser to Appeal When a District President Declines or Fails to Act

RESOLUTION 12-01

Report R65D (CW, p. 301); Overtures 12-01, 12-11–13, 12-15–21, 12-23–27, 12-39–40 (CW, pp. 415, 419–424, 430–431)

Rationale

Membership in the Synod is and always has been a privilege that is either granted or terminated by the Synod. In the earliest period of its history, the Synod retained the authority to make decisions regarding membership to itself, to be made by its conventions. Over time, the Synod adopted bylaw processes for making such decisions. In the matter of expulsions from the Synod, such processes were to be fair and impartial.

Initially, the President of the Synod as ecclesiastical supervisor assumed the authority to suspend members prior to their expulsion. Not long after, district presidents as the President's agents were given the authority to suspend, with final decisions regarding expulsion to be made by a convention of the Synod or district. In time, Synod bylaw changes provided opportunity for appeals of suspensions to commissions and boards of the Synod or districts prior to expulsion.

The 1992 convention of the Synod, which created the Synod's dispute resolution process, retained district presidents' authority to suspend but delegated the authority for final decisions regarding expulsion from membership to dispute resolution panels. When the 2004 convention created new processes solely for suspension and expulsion, panels of three district presidents were given responsibility for expulsion decisions. The 2010 convention replaced one of the three presidents on such panels with a lay reconciler.

Of particular note, as the removal from membership process evolved over nearly 170 years, was the decision by the 1965 convention to empower the President of the Synod to act when a district president failed to act on an accusation brought against a member of the Synod. This presidential authorization to act was then given to the Praesidium of the Synod in 1989 and retained as part of the overhaul of the suspension/expulsion processes in 1992.

The 2004 convention's major overhaul of the process removed the right of an accuser to appeal to the Praesidium of the Synod when the district president declined to act. In its place, the accuser could now request that the matter be presented to a Referral Panel of three circuit visitors if the district president fails or refuses to act, this panel then making the decision regarding the suspension, thereby reducing the opportunity for a full and objective hearing and placing an ecclesiastical supervisory decision in the hands of circuit visitors which constitutionally only belongs to district presidents.

The history of the suspension/expulsion process supports a return to past practice which existed from 1965 to 2004, leaving the responsibility for suspension in the hands of those charged with ecclesiastical supervision. When a district president fails or declines to act, this will allow an appeal by the accuser to the Praesidium of the Synod, who will decide when an accusation warrants suspension and, if requested by the accused, a hearing before a panel.

Prior to the 2004 LCMS convention, there also existed a right of appeal to the LCMS Praesidium in matters of ecclesial supervision involving such serious disciplinary action under former Bylaw 2.27.2 (b), which stated:

b. If the district president declines to suspend the member or fails to act within 90 days after receipt of the written complaint, the complainant may present the written complaint to the Praesidium of the Synod, which consists of the President and the vice-presidents of the Synod. If after investigation the Praesidium concludes that the facts form a basis for expulsion of the member under Article XIII of the Constitution, the Praesidium shall proceed in the same fashion as hereafter required of the district president. If the Praesidium determines not to proceed, it shall in writing so inform the complainant and the involved member, which shall terminate the

1 matter.

2

3 therefore be it

4

5 *Resolved*, That the following changes be made to sections 2.14 and 2.15 & 2.17 of the bylaws.

6

7 PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

8

9 **2.14 Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod**

10

11 **Preamble**

12

13 2.14.1 Termination of membership in the Synod is a serious matter involving both the doctrine and life of those to
14 whom it has been granted.

15

16 ...

17 (b) The action to commence expulsion of a congregation or individual from membership in the Synod
18 is the sole responsibility of the district president who has the responsibility for the ecclesiastical
19 supervision of such member, or by the Praesidium of the Synod under Bylaw 2.14.5.2.

20 **Definition of Terms**

21

22 2.14.2 The definitions of terms used in this bylaw are as follows:

23

24 ...

25 ~~(s) **Referral Panel:** A panel that may be formed of three circuit visitors or district presidents, who shall
26 be selected according to these bylaws to determine, according to the facts learned from the
27 investigation, whether or not to proceed.~~

28 **Referral Panel**

29

30 ~~2.14.5 In the determination whether or not to initiate formal proceedings, the district president may form a
31 Referral Panel consisting of three circuit visitors of the district.~~

32

33 ~~(a) If three circuit visitors from the district are not available to serve by reason of conflict of interest or
34 otherwise, the district president may select a sufficient number from other districts to form the panel.~~

35

36 ~~(b) This panel shall be formed by blind draw and shall not include the circuit visitor of the accused or
37 the accuser. The blind draw shall be administered by the district president and audited by witnesses.~~

38

39 ~~2.14.5.1 After reviewing the accusation and the results of the investigation, the Referral Panel shall make the
40 determination whether or not to initiate formal proceedings.~~

41

42 ~~2.14.5.2 Whether made by the district president or the Referral Panel, if If the determination of the district
43 president is not to initiate formal proceedings, the district president he shall in writing so inform the
44 accuser, any other district president involved, and the involved member, which shall terminate the matter,
45 unless the accuser presents the written complaint or accusation to the Praesidium of the Synod as
46 provided below (Bylaw 2.14.4.3).~~

47

48 ~~2.14.5.3 If the district president fails to act within 60 days after receipt of the formal written complaint or
49 accusation, the accuser may present a formal written request to the district president for the forming of a
50 Referral Panel, which request the district president must grant. If the provisions of Bylaw 2.14.4 have not
51 been carried out, the Referral Panel shall carry out these provisions in the process of making its
52 determination whether or not to initiate formal proceedings. If the district president fails or declines to
53 suspend the member within 90 days after receipt of the written complaint or accusation, the accuser may
54 present the written complaint or accusation to the Praesidium of the Synod. If after investigation the
55 Praesidium of the Synod determines that the facts are such that it could lead to expulsion of the member
56 under Article XIII of the Constitution, the Praesidium of the Synod shall designate one of the vice-
presidents of the Synod to proceed in the same fashion as is hereafter required of the district president. If
the Praesidium of the Synod determines not to proceed, they shall in writing so inform the complainant~~

1 and the involved member, which shall terminate the matter.

2
3 **Commencing Formal Proceedings**

4
5 2.14.65 If the district president ~~or the Referral Panel~~ concludes that the facts form a basis for expulsion of the
6 member under Article XIII of the Constitution, the district president in commencing formal proceedings
7 shall...

8
9 *(Additionally: the following are related changes unique to Bylaw section "2.15 Expulsion of a District President or*
10 *Officer from Membership in the Synod.")*

11
12 **Referral Panel**

13
14 ~~2.15.5 In the determination of whether or not to initiate formal proceedings, the President of the Synod may form~~
15 ~~a Referral Panel consisting of three district presidents.~~

16 (a) ~~This panel shall be formed by blind draw, shall not include the district president that is a party to~~
17 ~~the matter or the district president or an accused officer or the district president of the accuser.~~

18 (b) ~~The blind draw shall be administered by the chairman of the Council of Presidents audited by~~
19 ~~witnesses.~~

20
21 ~~2.15.5.1 After reviewing the accusation and the results of the investigation, the Referral Panel shall make the~~
22 ~~determination whether or not to initiate formal proceedings.~~

23
24 ~~2.15.45.2 Whether made by the President of the Synod or the Referral Panel, if~~ If the determination of the President
25 of the Synod is not to initiate formal proceedings, he the President of the Synod shall in writing so inform
26 the accuser, any other district president involved, and the accused officer of the Synod or district president
27 involved member, which shall terminate the matter, unless the accuser presents the written complaint or
28 accusation to the President of the Synod or Chairman of the Council of Presidents as provided below
29 (Bylaw 2.15.4.3).

30
31 ~~2.15.45.3 If the President of the Synod declines to suspend the officer of the Synod or district president or fails to act~~
32 ~~within 90 days after receipt of the written complaint or accusation, to act within 60 days after receipt of~~
33 ~~the formal written complaint or accusation, the accuser may present a formal written request to the~~
34 ~~President of the Synod for the forming of a Referral Panel, which request the President of the Synod must~~
35 ~~grant. If the provisions set forth in Bylaw 2.15.4 have not been carried out, the Referral Panel shall carry~~
36 ~~out these provisions in the process of making the determination whether or not to initiate formal~~
37 ~~proceedings. the accuser may present the written complaint or accusation to the chairman of the Council~~
38 ~~of Presidents or next qualified officer of the Council of Presidents. If, after investigation and consultation~~
39 ~~with other district presidents as he sees fit, the chairman of the Council of Presidents determines that the~~
40 ~~facts are such as could lead to the expulsion of the member under Article XIII of the Constitution, the~~
41 ~~chairman of the Council of Presidents shall proceed in the same fashion as is hereafter required of the~~
42 ~~President of the Synod. If the chairman of the Council of Presidents determines not to proceed, he shall in~~
43 ~~writing so inform the complainant and the involved member, which shall terminate the matter.~~

44
45 **Commencing Formal Proceedings**

46
47 2.15.56 If the President of the Synod ~~or the Referral Panel~~ concludes that the facts form a basis for expulsion of the
48 member under Article XIII of the Constitution, the President of the Synod in commencing formal
49 proceedings shall...

50
51 *(Additionally: the following are related changes unique to Bylaw section "2.17 Expulsion of Individuals from*
52 *Membership in the Synod as a Result of Sexual Misconduct or Criminal Behavior.")*

53
54 **Referral Panel**

55
56 ~~2.17.5 In the determination whether or not to initiate formal proceedings, the district president may form a~~

1 Referral Panel consisting of three circuit visitors of the district.

2 (a) ~~If three circuit visitors from the district are not available to serve by reasons of conflict of interest~~
3 ~~or otherwise, the district president may select a sufficient number from other districts in order to form~~
4 ~~the panel.~~

5 (b) ~~This panel shall be formed by blind draw and shall not include the circuit visitor of the accused or~~
6 ~~the accuser. The blind draw shall be administered by the district president audited by witnesses.~~

7
8 ~~2.17.5.1 In the event that the accused is a district president, an officer of the Synod, or the President of the Synod,~~
9 ~~the Referral Panel shall consist of three district presidents selected by a blind draw administered by the~~
10 ~~chairman of the Council of Presidents and audited by witnesses. Such panel, which shall exclude any~~
11 ~~involved district president, shall function as set forth hereafter.~~

12
13 ~~2.17.5.2 After reviewing the accusation and the results of the investigation, the Referral Panel shall make the~~
14 ~~determination whether or not to initiate formal proceedings.~~

15
16 ~~2.17.45.23 Whether made by the district president or the Referral Panel, if~~ If the determination of the district
17 president or the President of the Synod is not to initiate formal proceedings, he shall in writing so inform
18 the accuser, any other district president involved, and the involved member, which shall terminate the
19 matter, unless the accuser presents the written complaint or accusation to the President of the Synod or
20 Chairman of the Council of Presidents as provided below (Bylaw 2.17.4.3).

21
22 ~~2.17.45.34 If the district president (or the President of the Synod in the case of a district president or officer of the~~
23 ~~Synod) declines to suspend the member or fails to act within 9060 days after receipt of the formal written~~
24 ~~complaint or accusation, the accuser may present the a formal written request complaint or accusation to~~
25 ~~the President of the Synod (or in the case of a district president or officer of the Synod to chairman of the~~
26 ~~Council of Presidents) to the district president for the forming of the Referral Panel, which request the~~
27 ~~district president must grant. If the provisions of Bylaw 2.17.4 have not been carried out, the Referral Panel~~
28 ~~shall carry out these provisions in the process of making its determination whether or not to initiate formal~~
29 ~~proceedings.~~

30 (a) In the case of an individual member, if, after investigation and consultation with the Praesidium of
31 the Synod, the President of the Synod determines that the facts are such that it could lead to expulsion
32 of the member under Article XIII of the Constitution, the President of the Synod shall designate one of
33 the vice-presidents of the Synod to proceed in the same fashion as is hereafter required of the district
34 president. If the President of the Synod determines not to proceed, he shall in writing so inform the
35 complainant and the involved member, which shall terminate the matter.

36 (b) In the case of a district president or officer of the Synod, if, after investigation and consultation
37 with other members of the Council of Presidents, if deemed necessary, Praesidium of the Synod, the
38 Chairman of the Council of Presidents determines that the facts are such that it could lead to expulsion
39 of the member under Article XIII of the Constitution, he shall proceed in the same fashion as is
40 hereafter required of the district president. If the Chairman of the Council of Presidents determines not
41 to proceed, he shall in writing so inform the complainant and the involved member, which shall
42 terminate the matter.

43
44 ***Commencing Formal Proceedings***

45
46 ~~2.17.56 If the appropriate district president or the President of the Synod or the chairman of the Council of~~
47 ~~Presidents or the Referral Panel, whichever the case may be, concludes that the facts form a basis for~~
48 ~~expulsion of the member under Article XIII of the Constitution, the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor in~~
49 ~~commencing formal proceedings shall...~~

50
51
52
53 **To Encourage Calling Church Workers on Candidate Status**

54
55 **RESOLUTION 12-02**

1 Overtures 12-03–04, 12-06, 12-09 (CW, pp. 416–418)

2
3 WHEREAS, There are ordained and commissioned church workers on candidate status, that is, rostered church
4 workers without calls, but who are available for calls and service to the church; and

5
6 WHEREAS, The Synod wishes to be diligent in its care for these workers and their families; and

7
8 WHEREAS, The Synod desires to be a good steward of these gifts from God; and

9
10 WHEREAS, District presidents are charged with ecclesiastical supervision, which “includes visitation,
11 evangelical encouragement and support, care, protection, [and] counsel” (Bylaw 1.2.1[i]) of the rostered church
12 workers in their districts; and

13
14 WHEREAS, The congregation has the sole authority to call workers; therefore be it

15
16 *Resolved*, That district presidents continue to provide pastoral care for these workers and their families; and be
17 it further

18
19 *Resolved*, That district presidents regularly share with their vice presidents and circuit visitors their efforts to
20 provide such pastoral care; and be it further

21
22 *Resolved*, That district presidents publish annually in a district publication the names of these candidates; and be
23 it further

24
25 *Resolved*, That district presidents report annually to the Council of Presidents the names of candidates who are
26 available for a call; and be it further

27
28 *Resolved*, That district presidents or their representatives visit annually with each ordained worker on candidate
29 status to review his situation; and be it further

30
31 *Resolved*, That congregations that have requested, but not received, candidates from the seminaries, be
32 encouraged to request from their district president names of individuals on candidate status; and be it finally

33
34 *Resolved*, That congregations and schools that have requested, but not received, commissioned workers through
35 placement, be encouraged to request from their district president names of individuals on candidate status.

36
37
38
39 **To Amend the Bylaws on Candidate Status**

40
41 **RESOLUTION 12-03**

42
43 Report R60 (CW, pp. 231–233); Overtures 12-07–08, 12-10, 12-43 (CW, pp. 418, 436)

44
45 WHEREAS, Church vocations exist for active service to the Lord’s Church; and

46
47 WHEREAS, Candidate status and non-candidate status have been granted to rostered workers of the Synod with
48 the hope and expectation that they eventually return to active status (Bylaw 2.11.1); and

49
50 WHEREAS, Members of the Synod have asked for clarity regarding candidate and non-candidate status; and

51
52 WHEREAS, Candidates and non-candidates in good standing are eligible to receive a call (CCM 09-2546);
53 therefore be it

54
55 *Resolved*, That all references to non-candidate status be removed from the Bylaws (Bylaw 2.11.2.3, *et al*); and
56 be it further

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56

Resolved, That with the adoption of this resolution all current candidates and non-candidates be granted candidate status, effective immediately; and be it further

Resolved, That candidate status will be for a period of ten years, and may be renewed for a five year period upon the recommendation of the applicant’s District President and approval of three fourths (75%) of the Council of Presidents; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Commission on Handbook make all necessary Bylaw changes consistent with this resolution.

To Expedite the Dispute Resolution and Suspension/Expulsion Processes

RESOLUTION 12-04

Report R65 (CW, pp. 297–298); Overture 12-42 (CW, pp. 432–435)

Rationale

Bylaw 1.10.1 speaks of disputes, disagreements, or offenses as “a grave concern for the whole church” that “should be resolved promptly.” An oft-voiced concern regarding the current dispute resolution and suspension/ expulsion processes is that they take overly long to complete.

In addition, current time frames vary between the bylaws governing dispute resolution and those governing suspension/ expulsion processes, often for identical steps in the processes. The following changes to Bylaw sections 1.10 and 2.14 will conserve time and provide uniformity. The changes to Bylaw section 2.14 are also, upon adoption by the 2016 convention, to be applied to the 2.15, 2.16, and 2.17 processes as shown in the addendum to this report.

Also proposed is an addition to Bylaws 1.10.4 and 2.14.2 to accommodate unforeseen circumstances that at times make strict adherence to time frames impossible, also providing authority to the administrator of the process to grant exceptions and to report intentional non-compliance to the President of the Synod.

Finally, an additional source of potentially lengthy delay has been the difficulty experienced by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations in responding within the time frames established by bylaws to requests for opinions regarding theological issues surfaced by the dispute resolution and expulsion processes. Included in the proposed actions below is a bylaw solution that would authorize the executive committee of the commission to render these opinions within the established time frames.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the following changes be made to Bylaw sections 1.10 and 2.14 to expedite and provide uniformity throughout the Synod dispute resolution and suspension/expulsion processes, it being understood that changes to the Bylaw section 2.14 process will be applied to the Bylaw sections 2.15, 2.16, and 2.17 processes during preparation of the 2016 *Handbook*.

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

1.10 Dispute Resolution of the Synod

2.14 Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod

1.10.5...(c) Within 45 days of the conclusion of the consultation and receipt of any advice or opinions as described above, the district president shall....

2.14.3...(f) ~~Only~~ Within 45 days after all the requirements of the consultation provided in this bylaw (Bylaw 2.14.3) have been followed may the accuser....

- 1 1.10.6.1 The administrator shall ~~promptly~~ within 15
2 days select the reconciler in the manner hereinafter
3 set forth and then notify the parties....
4
5
- 6 1.10.7 If the parties to a dispute with the assistance
7 of the reconciler have been unable to achieve
8 reconciliation, the complainant shall notify the
9 Secretary of the Synod with ~~30~~15 days after
10 receiving....
11
- 12 1.10.7.2... Within ~~30~~15 days after the appointment of
13 the panel, the hearing facilitator shall confer parties
14 to the dispute and the Dispute Resolution Panel for
15 the purpose of choosing a location....
16
17
- 18 1.10.7.3 The formal hearing before the Dispute
19 Resolution Panel, conducted by a hearing facilitator,
20 shall take place within ~~60~~45 days after the ~~date of the~~
21 ~~final~~ selection of the ~~hearing facilitator location and~~
22 ~~date of the formal hearing~~, unless there is unanimous
23 consent by the panel members for a short delay
24 beyond such ~~60~~45 days for reasons the panel deems
25 appropriate.
26
- 27 1.10.7.4...(b) Within ~~60~~30 days after the hearing, the
28 panel shall issue a written decision that shall state the
29 facts determined by the panel...
30
- 31 1.10.8 Within ~~30~~15 days after receiving the decision
32 of the Dispute Resolution Panel, any party to the
33 dispute or the President of the Synod...may
34 appeal....
35
- 36 1.10.8.2 Within ~~30~~21 days after receipt, an Appeal
37 Panel shall be selected in the prescribed manner, and
38 the Secretary of the Synod shall send the appeal....
39
- 40 1.10.8.3 Within 30 days after its formation, the
41 Appeal Panel shall issue its written decision in
42 response to the request for reconsideration.
43
44
- 45 1.10.8.4 If an appeal is granted, the Secretary of the
46 Synod, or his representative, shall, within 21 days,
47 select a Review Panel....
48
49 and be it further
50
- 51 *Resolved*, That, because unforeseen circumstances can make adherence to time allowances in the above
52 processes impossible at times, the following paragraphs in the definitions bylaws governing the dispute resolution
53 and suspension/expulsion processes be added to allow exceptions when necessary:
54
- 55 1.10.4...(p) *Shall*: Retains its compulsory meaning
56 in this bylaw section. Its use, however, in connection
57 with time frame expectations may require exceptions
- 2.14.5.3 ...the Referral Panel shall carry out these
provisions in the process of making its determination
within 60 days whether or not to initiate formal
proceedings.
- 2.14.6 ...the district president in commencing
formal proceedings shall...(c) provide to the
member a written notification that the member has
15 days from the date of receipt of the statement
of the matter....
- 2.14.7.6 Within 15 days after the Hearing Panel
is constituted, the hearing facilitator shall, after
conferring with the panel, the accused, and the
district president who imposed the suspended
status, select a date....
- 2.14.7.6 ...and location within 45 days after the
Hearing Panel was constituted for the panel to
hear and consider the matter, unless there is
unanimous consent by the panel members for a
short delay beyond such 45 days for reasons the
panel deems appropriate.
- 2.14.7.9 Upon completion of the hearing, the
Hearing Panel shall deliberate and then issue its
written decision within 30 days.
- 2.14.8 The decision of the Hearing Panel may be
appealed by the accused...with 15 days after
receiving the decision....
- 2.14.8...(a) Within ~~30~~21 days after receipt of an
appeal from the accused or the President of the
Synod, an Appeal Panel shall be selected....
- 2.14.8...(e) Within 30 days after its formation, the
Appeal Panel shall issue its written decision in
response to the request for reconsideration. If the
Appeal Panel....
- 2.14.9 Within ~~30~~21 days after the receipt of the
decision of the Appeal Panel..., a Final Hearing
Panel shall be selected.
- 2.14.2...(s) *Shall*: Retains its compulsory meaning
in this bylaw section. Its use, however, in connection
with time frame expectations may require exceptions

1 at times due to insurmountable circumstances, to be
2 allowed by the administrator of the process. (pq)
3 (pq) ...

at times due to insurmountable circumstances, to be
allowed by the administrator of the process.
(st) ...

4
5 and be it further

6
7 *Resolved*, That, to provide incentive for adhering to the time frames embedded in these bylaws, the following
8 new definition paragraphs be added to Bylaws 1.10.4 and 2.14.2:

9
10 1.10.4...(r) ***Time Frame***: Period of time allowed
11 for carrying out a bylaw requirement, to be monitored
12 by the administrator of the process, incidents of
13 purposeful non-compliance to be reported to the
14 President of the-Synod.

2.14.2...(w) ***Time Frame***: Period of time allowed
for carrying out a bylaw requirement, to be monitored
by the administrator of the process, incidents of
purposeful non-compliance to be reported to the
President of the Synod.

15
16 and be it finally

17
18 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 1.5.3.2 be amended and a new Bylaw 3.9.5.2.3 be added to authorize the executive
19 committee of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) to function on behalf of the commission
20 and respond to dispute resolution and suspension/expulsion process requests for opinions:

21
22 1.5.3.2 All mission boards, commissions, and governing boards may make use of executive committees to act in
23 times of emergency between plenary meetings, ~~and~~ to act on delegated assignments, and to act as specified
24 elsewhere in these Bylaws.

25
26 3.9.5.2.3 The executive committee of the commission shall, within 30 days, provide opinions on theological matters
27 in response to questions presented by ecclesiastical supervisors or panels as described in the dispute
28 resolution and suspension/expulsion processes of the Synod (Bylaw sections 1.10 and 2.14–2.17). Because
29 these opinions are in response to a specific situation, they shall carry no precedential authority beyond that
30 particular matter.

31
32
33
34 **To Expand the Composition of the Hearing Panels (2.14, 2.15, 2.17)**

35
36 **RESOLUTION 12-05**

37
38 Report R-65 (CW, pp. 303–305)

39
40 WHEREAS, Given the extremely important matters that are decided by these panels (removals from membership
41 in the Synod), the task force advocates that their composition be reconsidered to broaden representation on such
42 panels; and

43
44 WHEREAS, These panels must make objective decisions after hearing testimony and evaluating evidence, efforts
45 should be made to obtain the service of those with aptitude, training, and/or experience in such areas (i.e. trained
46 reconcilers); and

47
48 WHEREAS, A decision regarding expulsion from membership is of great significance to the church and her
49 rostered workers; therefore be it

50
51 *Resolved*, That the composition of the Hearing Panels be expanded as follows for Bylaw 2.14.2 (k), to be
52 reflected in changes to Bylaws 2.14.7.2, 2.15.7.2, 2.17.7.2:

53
54 (k) ***Hearing Panel***: Two district presidents, ~~and a lay reconciler~~, two lay reconcilers, and one ordained
55 reconciler, assisted by a hearing facilitator, selected according to these bylaws to hear the matter and render
56 a final decision unless appealed.

1
2 and be it finally

3
4 *Resolved*, That the Commission on Handbook make all necessary Bylaw changes consistent with this resolution.

5
6 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
7 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

8
9
10
11 **To Care for Returning Missionaries and Military Chaplains**

12
13 **RESOLUTION 12-06**

14
15 Report R60 (CW, pp. 231–233); Overtures 12-03, 12-06, 12-09 (CW, pp. 416–418)

16
17 , Ordained missionaries and military chaplains have diverse experience and skills in preaching the Gospel to
18 various peoples; and

19
20 WHEREAS, Missionaries and military chaplains serve in positions which eventually come to a conclusion and as
21 a result are available for and desire calls; and

22
23 WHEREAS, The Synod wishes to be diligent in its care for these workers and their families; and

24
25 WHEREAS, The Synod desires to be a good steward of these gifts from God; therefore be it

26
27 *Resolved*, That the Offices of National and International Mission make available to all district presidents the
28 names and status of all returning missionaries and military chaplains whose current field of mission is coming to a
29 close; and be it further

30
31 *Resolved*, That the district presidents use the means at their disposal to disseminate these names and encourage
32 congregations to consider calling them; and be it finally

33
34 *Resolved*, That the Offices of National and International Mission report annually to the Council of Presidents
35 the names of those workers who have not received a call since returning from their field of service.

36
37
38
39 **To Clarify Definition of Dissent**

40
41 **RESOLUTION 12-07**

42
43 Report R65 (CW, pp. 306–307)

44
45 **Rationale**

46
47 “The Lutheran church has always affirmed the right and responsibility of expressing dissent from teachings and
48 practices believed to be at odds with God’s Word” (Commission on Theology and Church Relations(CTCR) on p. 6
49 of its 2006 report, “CTCR Response to Expressions of Dissent [2004–2006]”). Accordingly, the Synod has
50 established an agreed-upon procedure for dissent which respects both the dissenter and the Synod.

51
52 When, then, a member of the Synod in such forums as “blogs, Facebook pages, and email pages publicly teaches
53 and advocates that a doctrinal position of the Synod as stated in a resolution of the Synod is in error and does not use
54 the Synod’s dissent procedures, he/she/it may no longer be honoring and upholding the constitution, bylaws, and
55 resolutions of the Synod and could thereby be subject to a charge of false doctrine” (CCM Opinion 13-2665).

1 Given the development and expanded use of such electronic media by members of the Synod, often to call into
 2 question matters of doctrine and practice, at times attempting to excuse such conduct as conversation “within the
 3 fellowship of peers” (Bylaw 1.8.2), the Synod will do well to expand its bylaw section on dissent with the following
 4 changes developed upon consideration of the opinion by the CCM in its August 2013 meeting (Opinion 13-2665).

5
 6 Therefore be it

7
 8 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 1.8 “Dissent” be expanded to address current concerns by adding additional wording:

9
 10 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

11
 12 **1.8 Dissent**

13
 14 1.8.1 While retaining the right of brotherly dissent, members of the Synod are expected as part of the life
 15 together within the fellowship of the Synod to honor and uphold the resolutions of the Synod.

16
 17 1.8.2 Dissent from the doctrinal position of the Synod as expressed in its resolutions and doctrinal statements is
 18 to be expressed first within the fellowship of peers (that is, with those who are competent to evaluate the
 19 issue critically) and then brought to the attention of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations
 20 before finding expression as an overture to the Synod in convention calling for revision or rescision. The
 21 discussion among the fellowship of peers is to be conducted privately and confidentially among those who
 22 are competent, rather than a public forum. While the conscience of the dissenter shall be respected, the
 23 consciences of others, as well as the collective will of the Synod, shall also be respected.

24
 25 1.8.3 This right of brotherly dissent does not allow a member of the Synod publicly to teach contrary to the
 26 established position of the Synod. Any such public teaching shall place in jeopardy membership in the
 27 Synod.

28
 29
 30
 31 **To Provide Assistance to Lay Reconcilers Serving on**
 32 **Dispute Resolution, Hearing, and Final Hearing Panels**

33
 34 **RESOLUTION 12-08**

35
 36 Overtures 12-29–30 (CW, pp. 426–427)

37
 38 **Rationale**

39
 40 2013 Res. 7-18 “To Study Doctrinal Training for Reconcilers” responded to a request in Part 2 of the Synod
 41 President’s Report “to consider doctrinal training for reconcilers” to assist them when they are asked to serve on
 42 panels that are called upon to decide matters of doctrine or doctrinal application. The resolution’s single resolve
 43 paragraph referred this request to the Council of Presidents (COP), the Commission on Constitutional Matters
 44 (CCM), and the Secretary of the Synod “for appropriate study and recommendations giving particular attention to
 45 Bylaw 2.14.7, especially 2.14.7.8 (k).”

46
 47 After discussions during the current triennium that included the COP and CCM as well as the Commission on
 48 Handbook (COH) and the reconcilers themselves during late-2014 regional training meetings, it was generally
 49 agreed that providing such comprehensive doctrinal training for lay reconcilers as would be necessary to cover all
 50 potential doctrinal issues would not be a reasonable solution.

51
 52 The bylaws governing dispute resolution and suspension/expulsion processes already contain resource assistance to
 53 the parties to a dispute to help them understand and apply our Synod’s confessional Lutheran doctrines and practices
 54 (Bylaws 1.10.18.1 [h]; 2.14.7.8 [l]). The same resource opportunity is available to a Dispute Resolution, Hearing, or
 55 Final Hearing Panel as a whole (Bylaws 1.10.18.1 [h]; 2.14.7.8 [l]). In the interest of providing lay reconciler panel
 56 members with a resource for personal assistance (i.e., to talk through a doctrinal matter with a knowledgeable

1 person), the addition of a subparagraph (3) to Bylaw 1.10.18.1 [h] and a subparagraph (5) to paragraph (l) of Bylaw
2 2.14.7.8, as follows, will provide such opportunity.

3
4 Therefore be it

5
6 *Resolved*, That the following bylaw changes be adopted by the 2016 convention of the Synod to offer ready
7 access to resources that may assist lay panel members in understanding confessional Lutheran doctrines and
8 doctrinal applications.

9
10 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

11
12 1.10.18.1 (h) If any part of the dispute involves a specific question of doctrine or doctrinal application,...

13 ...

14 (3) An individual member of the panel may also request resource materials and personal assistance from
15 the executive director of the CTCR or from a theologian recommended by the executive director, this to
16 provide opportunity to read about, discuss with a knowledgeable person, and better comprehend doctrinal
17 matters associated with the dispute. The dispute resolution case itself shall not be discussed.

18
19 2.14.7.8 (l) If any part of the dispute involves a specific question of doctrine or doctrinal application,...

20 ...

21 (5) The lay reconciler member of the panel may also request resource materials and personal assistance
22 from the executive director of the CTCR or from a theologian recommended by the executive director,
23 this to provide opportunity to read about, discuss with a knowledgeable person, and better comprehend
24 doctrinal matters associated with the suspension. The suspension case itself shall not be discussed.

25
26
27
28 **To Update and Amend Dispute Resolution Process**

29
30 **RESOLUTION 12-09**

31
32 Overture 12-42 (CW, pp. 432–35)

33
34 **A. To Add “Appeal Panel” to Bylaw Section 2.14 Definitions**

35
36 **Rationale**

37
38 When Res. 7-12A was adopted by the 2013 convention incorporating an appeal panel process into the Synod’s
39 expulsion processes, the inclusion of a definition of “Appeal Panel” Bylaw 2.14.2 was overlooked. The Commission
40 on Handbook proposes the following addition to this bylaw, identical to the definition of “Appeal Panel” in Bylaw
41 1.10.4 for the dispute resolution process, which addition to Bylaw 2.14.2 will also pertain to the expulsion processes
42 provided in Bylaw sections 2.15 and 2.17.

43
44 **Proposed Action**

45
46 Therefore be it

47
48 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 2.14.2 be amended as follows:

49
50 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

51
52 2.14.2 The definitions of terms used in this bylaw are as follows:

53
54 (a) **Accused**: The party named by the accuser as being in violation of Constitution Art. XIII and under the
55 procedural ecclesiastical supervision of Bylaw sections 2.14–2.17.

56 (b) **Accuser**: The party who accuses a member under the provisions of Constitution Art. XIII through the

1 process of Bylaw sections 2.14–2.17.

2 (c) Appeal Panel: Three district presidents selected according to these bylaws to determine whether the

3 decision of a Hearing Panel should be reconsidered or reviewed.

4 (ed) ...

5
6
7 **B. To Clarify Bylaw 1.10.2 re Availability of Dispute Resolution Process**

8
9 **Rationale**

10
11 The Synod strongly values its process for dispute resolution and requires that disputes between eligible parties be

12 adjudicated using the process outlined in Bylaw section 1.10. Over the course of time, certain wording of current

13 Bylaw 1.10.2 has been identified as potentially causing confusion regarding who is eligible to use the process.

14
15 The bylaw includes “persons involved in excommunication” among parties for whom the Synod’s conflict

16 resolution procedures are designed. However, the only other mention of cases involving excommunication in Bylaw

17 section 1.10, Bylaw 1.10.10.2, which identifies four situations in which district reconcilers may be used, speaks of

18 “procedural questions involved in excommunication cases.” The current wording of Bylaw 1.10.2 often leads parties

19 involved in excommunication to have unrealistic expectations, including the expectation that the process will deal

20 with the issues which led to the excommunication rather than only addressing procedural questions.

21
22 In addition, because the persons involved may be lay persons who are not under “ecclesiastical supervision” as

23 defined in Bylaw 1.2.1 (i), they have no ecclesiastical supervisor to consult with as directed by Bylaws 1.10.5 and

24 1.10.6. The following simple changes will help to provide clarity on both counts.

25
26 **Proposed Action**

27 Therefore be it

28
29
30 *Resolved*, That Bylaws 1.10.2, 1.10.5, and 1.10.6 be amended as follows:

31
32 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

33
34 1.10.2 This procedure is established to resolve, in a God-pleasing manner, disputes that involve as parties, (1)

35 members of the Synod.; ~~(2) the Synod itself, (3) a district or an organization owned and controlled by (2)~~

36 corporate Synod or an agency of the Synod.; ~~(4) persons involved in~~ (3) members of congregations

37 challenging the procedure used in their excommunications.; or ~~(54) lay~~ members of congregations of the

38 Synod holding elected or appointed to positions with the Synod itself or with districts and other

39 organizations owned and controlled by the Synod LCMS Board of Directors or an agency of the Synod. It

40 shall be....

41
42 1.10.5 Before any matter is submitted to the formal reconciliation process, the parties involved in a dispute must

43 meet together, face-to-face, in a good-faith attempt to settle their dispute in the manner described in Matt.

44 18:15 and may involve the informal use of a reconciler. An further, before any matter is submitted to the

45 formal reconciliation process, the complainant must meet and consult with his/her the appropriate

46 ecclesiastical supervisor to seek advice and also so that it can be determined whether this is the appropriate

47 bylaw procedure (Bylaw section 1.10) or whether the matter falls under Bylaw sections 1.8, 2.14, 2.15,

48 2.16, or 2.17, or Bylaws 3.10.4.7.9 and 3.10.5.6.4.2. In regard to this consultation: ...

49
50 1.10.6 If any party to the dispute is of the opinion that informal reconciliation efforts have failed, such party, in

51 consultation with his/her/its the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor, shall submit a request to the

52 administrator of the dispute resolution process, the secretary of the Synod or district, or an appointee, as

53 appropriate, that a reconciler be appointed to assist in seeking reconciliation. Such request shall be

54 accompanied by: ...

C. To Update Bylaws re Appointment and Replacement of District Reconcilers

Rationale

Current Bylaws 1.10.10 and 1.10.10.1 contain requirements for the appointment and replacement of district reconcilers that are no longer reasonable or practicable. These bylaws will better and more accurately read as proposed.

Proposed Action

Therefore be it

Resolved, That Bylaws 1.10.10 and 1.10.10.1 be amended as follows:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

1.10.10 ~~Within three months after conventions of the Synod, e~~Each district board of directors shall appoint and maintain a district roster of four reconcilers (ministers of religion—ordained, ministers of religion—commissioned, and laypersons), no more than two of whom shall be ~~ordained~~ ordained ministers of religion—ordained, from a list supplied by the circuit visitors of the district. The Synod shall provide appropriate training within six months following each national Synod convention.

1.10.10.1 The term of service of a reconciler shall be six years, renewable immediately following every even-numbered Synod convention (2010, 2016, etc.) without term limitations. ~~They~~Reconcilers shall be people “of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3). Vacancies ~~for an unexpired term~~ shall be filled by the district board of directors in the same manner as regular appointments by the district board of directors within 30 days following their occurrence. The district board of directors may add to the district roster of reconcilers a reconciler who has moved into the district from another district where appointed.

D. To Update Bylaws re Appointment and Replacement of Hearing Facilitators

Rationale

Current Bylaws 1.10.12–1.10.12.3 provide for the appointment and replacement of dispute resolution and expulsion process hearing facilitators. These bylaws require updating and will better and more accurately read as follows.

The Commission on Handbook therefore proposes the following changes:

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Hearing Facilitators

1.10.12 After the training of the reconcilers and in consultation with the appropriate district presidents, the Secretary of the Synod shall maintain a roster of identify 25 hearing facilitators selected from the roster of the trained reconcilers. They may be ordained ministers, commissioned ministers, or laypersons who and shall exhibit skills in the proper conduct of a fair and impartial hearing. to comprise the Synod’s roster of hearing facilitators, whoThey shall be trainedreceive training for such purpose.

(a) Their term of service, monitored by the Secretary of the Synod, shall be six years, renewable without limit. Within three months after even-numbered conventions of the Synod (2010, 2016, etc.), the Secretary of the Synod shall contact ~~those~~all hearing facilitators ~~whose terms have been completed~~ to learn of their availability and willingness to continue for an additional term. Resulting vacancies on the roster of hearing facilitators shall be filled by the Secretary of the Synod from the Synod roster of reconcilers after consultation with the appropriate district presidents, in time for

1 resulting vacancies on district rosters of reconcilers to be filled by appointment by district boards of
2 directors.

3 (b) Any vacancy in an unexpired term ~~or which results from a decision not to continue at the end of a~~
4 ~~term of service~~ shall be filled in the same manner as described above ~~as needed and as requested by~~
5 ~~the Secretary of the Synod.~~

6
7 1.10.12.1 Limitations on holding multiple offices do not apply to hearing facilitators.

8
9 1.10.12.2 If a hearing facilitator moves from the district where nominated, such hearing facilitator, ~~if on the roster~~
10 ~~of hearing facilitators, shall~~ may remain as a member of ~~on~~ the Synod’s roster of hearing facilitators ~~until~~
11 ~~the term of service of the hearing facilitator expires.~~

12
13 1.10.12.3 A hearing facilitator shall not serve as a reconciler or as a voting member of a panel.

14
15
16 **E. To Strengthen Bylaw 1.10.2 Requiring Members**
17 **to Honor Dispute Resolution Procedure**

18
19 **Rationale**

20
21 Members of the Synod (ministers of religion—ordained or ministers of religion—commissioned and congregations)
22 by their membership agree to honor dispute resolution decisions (Bylaw 1.10.2). On occasion, member
23 congregations that have received an unfavorable result from the dispute resolution procedure have disregarded
24 binding decisions, relinquished membership, and received support for such actions from a civil court, the court
25 failing to comprehend the nature of membership in the Synod.

26
27 Short of proposing a constitutional amendment to make clear the binding nature of the dispute resolution procedure
28 on members of the Synod, the Commission on Handbook proposes that Bylaw 1.10.2 be amended to make even
29 more clear this requirement of membership in the Synod.

30
31 **Proposed Action**

32
33 Therefore be it

34
35 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 1.10.2 be amended as follows:

36
37 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

38
39 ***Purpose***

40
41 1.10.2 This procedure is established to resolve, in a God-pleasing manner, disputes...that involve theological,
42 doctrinal, or ecclesiastical issues except those covered under Bylaw sections 2.14–2.17 and except as
43 provided in Bylaw 1.10.3, and shall be binding on all parties. It is applicable whether the dispute involves
44 only a difference of opinion without personal animosity or is one that involves ill will and sin that requires
45 repentance and forgiveness. No person, congregation, or agency to whom or to which the provisions of this
46 dispute resolution process are applicable because of their membership in ~~because such person or agency is a~~
47 ~~member~~ ~~of the Synod may render these provisions~~ this procedure inapplicable by terminating that
48 membership during the course of the dispute resolution process.

49
50
51 **F. To Provide Opportunity for District Presidents**
52 **to Appeal Hearing Panel Decisions**

53
54 **Rationale**

55
56 Current Bylaws 2.14.7.9, 2.14.8, 2.17.7.9, and 2.17.8 do not grant to the involved district president the same right to

1 request examination of a decision of a Hearing Panel to an Appeal Panel as they grant to the member who has been
 2 suspended by the district president and the President of the Synod (if a question of doctrine or practice is involved).
 3 One of the participants most involved in these important processes is thereby not granted the same important
 4 opportunity as the other.

5
 6 The Commission on Handbook, believing that this was an oversight when the appeal process was incorporated into
 7 the Bylaw 2.14 and 2.17 dispute resolution processes by a convention, proposes that the involved district president
 8 also be provided opportunity to appeal a Hearing Panel decision by amending these bylaws as follows.

9
 10 **Proposed Action**

11
 12 Therefore be it

13
 14 *Resolved*, that Bylaws 2.14.7.9, 2.14.8, 2.17.7.9, and 2.17.8 be amended as follows:

15
 16 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

17
 18 2.14.7.9 Upon completion of the hearing, the Hearing Panel shall deliberate and then issue its written decision
 19 within 30 days.

20 (a) Copies of the decision shall be mailed to the accused, the district president who imposed the
 21 suspension, the accuser and his/her district president, the Secretary of the Synod, and the President of
 22 the Synod.

23 (b) The decision of the Hearing Panel shall be subject to appeal by the accused, the district president
 24 who imposed the suspension, or the President of the Synod.

25 ...

26
 27 2.14.8 The decision of the Hearing Panel may be appealed by the accused (if an active participant in the hearing
 28 before the Hearing Panel), by the district president who imposed the suspension, or by the President of the
 29 Synod if a question of doctrine or practice is involved (Constitution Art. XI B 1–3)....

30
 31 2.17.7.9 Upon completion of the hearing, the Hearing Panel shall deliberate and then issue its written decision
 32 within 30 days.

33 (a) Copies of the decision shall be mailed to the accused, the district president who imposed the
 34 suspension, the accuser and his/her district president, the Secretary of the Synod, and the President of
 35 the Synod.

36 (b) The decision of the Hearing Panel shall be subject to appeal by the accused, the district president
 37 who imposed the suspension, or the President of the Synod.

38 ...

39
 40 2.17.8 The decision of the Hearing Panel may be appealed by the accused (if an active participant in the hearing
 41 before the Hearing Panel), by the ecclesiastical supervisor who imposed the suspension, or by the President
 42 of the Synod if a question of doctrine or practice is involved (Constitution Art. XI B 1–3)...

43
 44
 45 **G. To Remove Detail Regarding Expense Responsibilities**
 46 **from Bylaw 2.14.7.8 (e)**

47
 48 **Rationale**

49
 50 Recognizing its responsibility to provide for “the ongoing maintenance and management of the *Handbook*” (Bylaw
 51 3.9.4), the Commission on Handbook proposes that such detail in the Synod’s expulsion process that assigns
 52 responsibility for expenses would be better addressed in the general rules section of the *Standard Operating*
 53 *Procedures Manual* provided by the Commission on Constitutional Matters for each procedure.

54
 55 **Proposed Action**

56

1 Therefore be it

2

3 *Resolved*, That Bylaw 2.14.7.8 (e) be removed from the Bylaws of the Synod as follows:

4

5 ~~PRESENT/PROPOSED~~ WORDING

6

7 2.14.7.8 The following guidelines are applicable to the Hearing Panel and all involved persons:

8 ...

9 (d) Any member of the Synod, officer of a congregation, or officer of any organization owned or
10 controlled by the Synod shall, when called upon by the panel to do so, testify or produce records
11 related to the matter.

12 ~~(e) Each party to the matter shall assume its own expenses. The expenses of the panel shall be borne
13 by the district or the Synod.~~

14 ~~(~~e~~)~~ No party to the matter, nor anyone on the party’s behalf, shall communicate either directly or
15 indirectly with the panel or any member of the panel without the full knowledge of the other party to
16 the matter.

17 ...

18

19

20 **H. To Add Definition of *Standard Operating Procedures Manual* to Pertinent Bylaws**

21

22 **Rationale**

23

24 Current bylaws governing dispute resolution assume the existence of regular updating of a *Standard Operating*
25 *Procedures Manual* for each of the dispute resolution processes in the Bylaws of the Synod but fail to define what
26 such manuals are and the purpose they serve.

27

28 The Commission on Handbook proposes that the following definition inserted into the definitions sections of the
29 two primary dispute resolution processes in the *Handbook* of the Synod be adopted by the 2016 convention of the
30 Synod.

31

32 **Proposed Action**

33

34 Therefore be it

35

36 *Resolved*, That the following new paragraphs be inserted into Bylaws 1.10.4 and 2.14.2, as follows:

37

38 ~~PRESENT/PROPOSED~~ WORDING

39

40 1.10.4 In order to communicate effectively and avoid misunderstanding, it is critical that terms be carefully
41 defined:

42 ...

43 (p) *Standard Operating Procedures Manual*: A comprehensive procedures manual developed by the
44 Commission on Constitutional Matters in consultation with the Secretary of the Synod and the Council
45 of Presidents to ensure uniformity and consistency in the implementation of this bylaw section.

46 ...

47

48 2.14.2 The definitions of terms used in this bylaw are as follows:

49 ...

50 (p) *Standard Operating Procedures Manual*: A comprehensive procedures manual developed by the
51 Commission on Constitutional Matters in consultation with the Secretary of the Synod and with the
52 concurrence of the Council of Presidents to ensure uniformity and consistency in the implementation
53 of this bylaw section.

54 ...

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To Respectfully Decline Overtures

RESOLUTION 12-10

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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 overtures be respectfully declined for the reasons given:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reason</u>
12-14	To Assist and Encourage Resolution of Disputes Where Facts are Unclear and Evidence is Possessed by Synod	Request unclear
12-28	To Create a Commission on Doctrinal Fidelity	Already have Commission on Theology and Church Relations
12-33	To Require District Presidents to Provide Church Worker Information When Requested	Redundant with current processes
12-34	To Improve Transparency of Council of Presidents Procedures and Meetings	Material Error
12-35	To Permit Access by Rostered Workers to Own Personnel Records	Redundant with current processes
12-36	To Prioritize District Presidents Work to Within Within Their Districts	Violates Bylaws
12-37	To Require District President Visitation of Congregations	Material Error

13. Routes to Ministry

To Extol and Equip the Blessed Partnership Between the Royal Priesthood and the Office of the Public Ministry

RESOLUTION 13-01

Overtures 13-22, 13-28 (CW, pp. 452, 455)

WHEREAS, The apostle Peter affirms the royal priesthood, that all are called to “proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness” (1 Peter 2:9); and

WHEREAS, There exists a blessed partnership in the ministry of the Gospel between the royal priesthood and those called to the Office of the Public Ministry; and

WHEREAS, The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope quotes from the words of Jesus in Matt. 18:19–20, where He says, “If two of you agree on earth,” to affirm that Jesus “grants the power of the keys principally and without mediation to the church”; and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther wrote:

We have been born of this bridegroom and bride through holy baptism and thus have become true clerics in Christendom in a hereditary manner, sanctified by his blood and consecrated by his Holy Spirit, as St. Peter calls us in 1 Peter 2:9: “But you are...a royal priesthood” for offering spiritual sacrifices. St. Paul also extols us as priests in the Epistle to the Romans, chapter 12:1, for he calls upon us “to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God....” Now to make sacrifices to God is solely the office of the priests, as the pope himself and all the world must admit. Moreover, we are not only his children, but also his brothers, as he says in [Ps. 22:22], “I will tell of thy name to my brethren,” and in the Gospel of Matthew: “Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and my sister, and my mother” Matt. 12:50. So we are not only true clerics and priests according to our right as children but also according to our right as brothers. This, our hereditary priesthood with which we are born, we do not want to have taken away, impeded and obscured; rather, we want to have it brought out into the open, proclaimed and extolled with all its honors in order that it should beam and shine like the precious sun and blind the eyes of the devil and his hypocrisies and abominations,.... (AE 38:187–188).

and also

If they were forced to grant that all of us that have been baptized are equally priests, as indeed we are, and that only the ministry was committed to them, yet with our common consent, they would then know that they have no right to rule over us except insofar as we freely concede it. For thus it is written in 1 Peter 2:9, “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a priestly royalty.” Therefore we are all priests, as many of us as are Christians. But the priests, as we call them, are ministers chosen from among us. All that they do is done in our name; the priesthood is nothing but a ministry.” (AE 44:127)

and

WHEREAS, The holy ministry, or the pastoral office, is an office distinct from the priestly office, which belongs to all believers; and

WHEREAS, God has blessed the Church with a talented laity, whom He has blessed with spiritual gifts; therefore be it

Resolved, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod give thanks for district, university, and college based lay training programs and the many willing lay servants who have sought to further their theological education and desire to serve in the work and mission of the Lord’s Church; and be it further

1
2 *Resolved*, That such lay training programs continue their work and include a major emphasis on evangelism
3 and the task of outreach in our increasingly diverse and challenging cultural context; and be it further
4

5 *Resolved*, That congregations and districts be encouraged to identify individuals for special training in and
6 attention to evangelism and outreach; and be it further
7

8 *Resolved*, That congregations and districts be encouraged to facilitate lay training on both local and district
9 levels and to establish new opportunities for lay people to make use of their gifts in evangelism and service to the
10 church; and be it further
11

12 *Resolved*, That districts be encouraged to provide assistance and support for lay training; and be it finally
13

14 *Resolved*, That the President of the Synod convene a task force including lay leaders, representatives from
15 districts both with and without licensed lay deacons, and representatives from the Council of Presidents, both
16 seminaries, and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations to consider how best to facilitate an ongoing
17 conversation and communication among laity, districts, and the Synod in order to foster the blessed complementary
18 relationship between the royal priesthood and the Office of the Public Ministry, and also to consider

- 19 (1) the royal priesthood and the office of the public ministry in the New Testament (in light of the many offices
20 that are mentioned, e.g., deacon, elder, overseer);
21 (2) the challenges of an increasingly multicultural America and a country that has become the third largest
22 mission field in the world; and
23 (3) the growing number of congregations and ministries that cannot provide financial support for a pastor.
24

25 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
26 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*
27
28
29

30 **To Regularize Status of Licensed Lay Deacons**
31 **Involved in Word and Sacrament Ministry**
32

33 **RESOLUTION 13-02**

34 Overtures 13-01–50 (CW, pp. 437–464)
35

36 WHEREAS, The Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions teach that our Lord gave the keys of the kingdom to
37 His whole church, the royal priesthood of believers (Matt. 16:15–19; Matt. 18:18–20; 1 Peter 2:9; Augsburg
38 Confession [AC] Article XXVIII, paragraph 10; Smalcald Articles [SA], Section III, paragraph 7; Treatise [Tr]
39 paragraph 11; see also Walther’s *Church and Ministry/Office*); and
40

41 WHEREAS, The Scriptures and Confessions also teach that Christ established an office that is distinct from the
42 priesthood of believers (the office of the public ministry) for teaching and nurturing His royal priests by means of
43 preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments (1 Cor. 12:29; Rom. 10:15; James 3:1; AC XIV; see also
44 Walther’s *Church and Ministry/Office*); and
45

46 WHEREAS, The royal priesthood and the office of the public ministry are to have a complementary and not a
47 competitive or conflicted relationship; and
48

49 WHEREAS, In its history the Lutheran church has always maintained the divine requirement (*de jure divino*) of
50 the office of public ministry, while it has in many and various ways prepared men for the Office of the Public
51 Ministry, since the manner of preparation for the office is by human arrangement (*de jure humano*); and
52

53 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church has always ensured, on the basis of Scripture: (1) that men who are to serve in
54 the office of public ministry be examined as to their doctrine and life; (2) that the congregations they serve willingly
55 call them into service; and (3) that the wider church (other churches in fellowship with the congregation) also
56 affirms them as fellow ministers of the Word and Sacraments (see Acts 1:15–26; Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus

1 1:5; see also Tr 24, 26, 67–70); and

2
3 WHEREAS, The rite of ordination, although not a divine institution (*Church and Ministry*, Ministry Thesis VI), is
4 the apostolic custom by which Lutherans have designated and publicly acknowledged a man as a minister of Word
5 and Sacrament, that is, as one who is in the Office of the Public Ministry and recognized by the wider fellowship as
6 a fellow minister (Ap XIII 11–13); and

7
8 WHEREAS, In faithfulness to the Word of God and to its confession requiring a regular call for those who preach
9 and administer the sacraments publicly in the church (AC XIV; Ap XIV), The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
10 has followed the practice of identifying those who are eligible to be called into the Office of the Public Ministry by
11 the certification of one of the seminary faculties or the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry; and

12
13 WHEREAS, In a human institution such as the LCMS, such human arrangements are necessary in order to foster
14 harmony and prevent needless confusion and division; and

15
16 WHEREAS, The LCMS has long-recognized that challenging circumstances may make it difficult or impossible
17 to provide a pastor for congregations and ministries, for example: (1) financial challenges (numerous congregations
18 and missions are unable to support a pastor financially); (2) geographical challenges (small, isolated congregations
19 in remote areas often face financial challenges and may have no pastors in geographic proximity to them); (3)
20 demographic challenges (urban, minority, non-English-speaking, and ethnically diverse congregations and missions
21 may find no rostered candidates available to fill their pastoral needs); and

22
23 WHEREAS, The practice of licensing lay deacons for temporary service in certain difficult circumstances, like
24 the afore-mentioned examples, was approved by the LCMS in 1989 Res. 3-05B as a means to address the need for
25 regular preaching of the Word and administration of the Sacraments by utilizing trained and supervised laymen to
26 serve “temporarily” in Word and Sacrament ministry when “no pastor [is] available,” “in exceptional circumstances
27 or in emergencies” (1989 Res. 3-05B, Nomenclature, Guidelines 1 b); and

28
29 WHEREAS, There has been significant dissension in the LCMS over the Synod-approved practice of licensing
30 laymen to preach and administer the Sacraments while under the supervision of an ordained pastor, but the Synod
31 needs to move forward together with deep concern for fidelity to the word of Christ as we confess it together and for
32 faithfulness in the mission that Christ has given to His Church; and

33
34 WHEREAS, 1989 Res. 3-05B repeatedly references temporary service for deacons when no pastor is available in
35 emergencies and exceptional circumstances, but in some cases deacons have served for years regularly preaching
36 and administering the Sacraments; and

37
38 WHEREAS, The presence of continuing dissension about licensed lay deacons is an aspect of further
39 disagreement about elements of doctrine and practice, e.g., the understanding of the pastoral office, the relationship
40 between the Office of the Public Ministry and the royal priesthood, the understanding of call and ordination, and
41 faithful and effective ways to share the Gospel and plant churches in our post-Christian world; and

42
43 WHEREAS, The Specific Ministry Pastors (SMP) Program was established by the LCMS convention (2007 Res.
44 5-01B) in response to the need for effective theological education and practical training to prepare pastors to serve in
45 particularly challenging settings and situations that prevent them from enrolling in residential theological education;
46 and

47
48 WHEREAS, The Synod recognizes a need for flexibility in its approach to preparing men to serve in the Office of
49 the Public Ministry while upholding the biblical requirement that they be men who are “above reproach” and “able
50 to teach,” and so offers approved training programs to prepare pastors for urban and cross-cultural service, namely,
51 the Center for Hispanic Studies, the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center, the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology
52 (EIIIT), all at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and the Spanish-speaking SMP track at Concordia Theological
53 Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFV); and

54
55 WHEREAS, There is a need within the LCMS to regularize the status of licensed lay deacons who are engaged in
56 Word and Sacrament ministry; and

1
2 WHEREAS, The Synod directed the President to appoint a task force to address questions about the practice of
3 licensing lay deacons, and the task force, as required, reported a recommended plan to address questions (see
4 *Convention Workbook*, pp.234–255) and the theological framework of the report has been affirmed by both
5 seminary faculties and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR); and
6

7 WHEREAS, The Synod has budgeted \$40,000 for the remainder of the current fiscal year and is committed to
8 budgeting at least \$150,000 per year for the next two years to assist deacons entering the SMP and EIIT programs;
9 therefore be it
10

11 *Resolved*, That the LCMS recognize that “emergency knows no rule” and that no Synod action can or should
12 prevent a congregation from taking the steps necessary to provide for the Word to be proclaimed in time of
13 emergency, while at the same time, every congregation of the Synod is required to address matters involving the
14 Office of the Public Ministry in a way that is consistent with its subscription to Scripture and the Confessions, as
15 well as its agreement to abide by the Synod’s Constitution; and be it further
16

17 *Resolved*, That the LCMS affirm and give thanks for the men who have recognized the needs of the church and
18 its mission, serving as licensed lay deacons, preaching and administering the Sacraments in keeping with 1989 Res.
19 3-05B, often without remuneration and at personal cost, lest congregations be deprived of the means of grace; and
20 be it further
21

22 *Resolved*, That the LCMS, while mindful of the need for continued conversation within the church, affirm the
23 theological framework of the “2013 Resolution 4-06A Task Force Report,” namely, that a right calling to the office
24 of public ministry requires that a man be properly prepared and examined regarding doctrine and life, be called by
25 the congregation (or ministry) where he is to serve, and publicly appointed in a way so that the entire church
26 fellowship recognizes the validity of his service (Acts 13:1–3; 14:21–23; 2 Tim. 2:24–26; Titus 1:5); and be it
27 further
28

29 *Resolved*, That the LCMS, under the auspices of the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry, establish
30 and implement an expanded regional colloquy program (with appropriate regional colloquy committees) to
31 regularize the status of current licensed lay deacons (LLDs) who are 50 years of age or older and who have been
32 preaching the Gospel and/or administering the Sacraments publicly on behalf of the church for the past 2 years (*de*
33 *facto* pastors), so that these servants of Christ can be called and ordained according to the order of the LCMS and be
34 rostered as pastors with SMP status; and be it further
35

36 *Resolved*, That exceptions to the SMP colloquy requirements with respect to age and years of service for LLDs
37 may be granted by the appropriate regional colloquy committee with the approval of the respective district president
38 and the plenary of the Council of Presidents; and be it further
39

40 *Resolved*, That until January 1, 2018, district presidents may license new deacons to preach publicly and to
41 administer the Sacraments. In exceptional cases, the appropriate district president may grant a license beyond that
42 date with the consent of the plenary of the Council of Presidents and the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral
43 Ministry; and be it further
44

45 *Resolved*, That those deacons currently licensed for and serving in Word and Sacrament Ministry shall have
46 until July 1, 2018, to:
47

- 48 (1) apply to one of our seminaries for admission into an alternate route program,
- 49 (2) apply for entrance into an SMP program, or
- 50 (3) apply to the regional colloquy committee for admission to the SMP roster,

51
52 unless granted a waiver by his district president, the plenary of the Council of Presidents, and the appropriate
53 regional colloquy committee, and be it further
54

55 *Resolved*, That the district president, the plenary of the Council of Presidents and the regional colloquy
56 committees, in making decisions related to the three resolves above, shall do so in a fashion that no congregation or

1 current ministry will be forced to close or discontinue; and be it further

2
3 *Resolved*, That lay deacons licensed for Word and Sacrament Ministry who have applied for colloquy to the
4 SMP roster prior to July 1, 2018, shall continue to serve under their current district licensure until the colloquy
5 process is complete and certification is given by the Colloquy Committee; and be it further
6

7 *Resolved*, That upon the certification of the Colloquy Committee, the licensed lay deacons will be eligible to be
8 called by the congregations where they have been serving, ordained into the Office of the Public Ministry, and
9 placed on the roster of SMP pastors; and be it further
10

11 *Resolved*, That as recommended by the Res. 4-06A Task Force, the LCMS, in partnership with districts,
12 congregations, and individuals, provide funding to ensure that financial constraints will not prevent any eligible
13 licensed lay deacon from participating in an LCMS seminary ordination-track program; and be it further
14

15 *Resolved*, That the First Vice-President of the Synod and three members of the Council of Presidents appointed
16 by the Council be directed to develop by June 1, 2017, necessary policies and procedures for the implementation of
17 this resolution, such policies and procedures to be approved by the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry;
18 and be it finally
19

20 *Resolved*, That the LCMS thank and commend the Res. 4-06A Task Force for its work on the question of
21 licensed lay deacons.
22

23 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
24 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*
25
26
27

28 **To Address Future Church Leadership Needs**
29 **in Light of Current and Future Challenges**

30
31 **RESOLUTION 13-03**
32

33 Reports R62, R64 (CW, pp. 235, 268) ; Overtures 6-14–15, 13-01–07, 13-09, 13-11–12, 13-14–19, 13-21–24, 13-
34 27–29, 13-31, 13-38–42, 13-50 (CW, pp. 360–362, 437–442, 444–457, 460–461, 464)
35

36 WHEREAS, In its history, the Lutheran Church has in various ways prepared men for the Office of the Public
37 Ministry; and
38

39 WHEREAS, The church in every era requires pastors who are “able to teach” (in a manner appropriate to the
40 situation), of good character (“above reproach”), properly called, faithful to the Scriptures and the Confessions, and
41 recognized by the wider church; and
42

43 WHEREAS, Congregations and missions will continue to experience financial, geographic, and demographic
44 challenges, and the Synod must address the need to provide the ministry of Word and Sacrament in such
45 circumstances; and
46

47 WHEREAS, Long-term concerns of mission and ministry have raised questions about how the divinely instituted
48 pastoral office may be preserved, while remaining faithful to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions even in unique
49 and exceptional circumstances; and
50

51 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) faces a declining pool of candidates for pastoral
52 ministry, while there is a simultaneous increase in the ethnic diversity of the American population that is not
53 reflected in the current membership of the Synod; therefore be it
54

55 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention establish a task force to be convened by the Council of Presidents
56 (COP) to include five members of the COP who are representative of the geographic diversity of the Synod, two

1 persons appointed by each seminary, two non-ordained individuals appointed by the Concordia University System
 2 (CUS) board, and four lay persons appointed by the Synod Board of Directors

- 3 •To help the Synod address the needs of small, rural, urban, ethnic, immigrant, financially challenged, and
- 4 geographically isolated congregations
- 5 •To recommend ways to identify candidates to address future needs in the LCMS
- 6 •To provide strategies for reaching the increasingly diverse population of the U.S.
- 7 •To establish minimal standards for pastors (while keeping the optimum in view)
- 8 •To explore alternative methods for ministerial preparation in light of changing needs
- 9 •To recommend avenues to finance preparation of pastors
- 10 •To consider relevant recommendations in the 4-06A and 5-14A task force reports
- 11 •To consider other matters relevant to their task as may be identified

12
 13 and be it further

14
 15 *Resolved*, That the task force provide a report to the next regular convention of the Synod; and be it further

16
 17 *Resolved*, That in its work the task force encourage the ongoing work of the district lay training programs
 18 and the CUS programs for evangelism and outreach, in order to identify, equip, encourage, and empower men and
 19 women for mission, witness, and service to Christ and His Church; and be it finally

20
 21 *Resolved*, That the LCMS thank and commend the Res. 4-06A and Res. 5-14ATask Forces for their work
 22 and reports.

23
 24 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
 25 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*

26 27 28 29 **To Clarify Colloquy Requirements**

30 31 **RESOLUTION 13-04**

32
 33 Report R64 (CW, pp. 268–289)

34
 35 WHEREAS, The 2013 Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) adopted Resolution 5-
 36 14A, which reads, simply:

37
 38 WHEREAS, The Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Task Force Report notes that there are eight routes to
 39 ordained ministry; and

40
 41 WHEREAS, The SMP Task Force Report recommends for the sake of clarity and simplicity that a study of
 42 the non-Master of Divinity routes to the Pastoral Office take place; therefore be it

43
 44 *Resolved*, That the Synod President appoint a task force (chaired by the Executive Director for Pastoral
 45 Education) to conduct a study of the non-Master of Divinity routes to the Pastoral Office, and that it report
 46 its findings and the recommendations regarding the appropriateness of each route, the optimal number of
 47 such routes, etc., to the Synod President by the end of 2015 for action at the 2016 Synod convention. and be
 48 it further

49
 50 WHEREAS, The task force has concluded that all the several means by which the church recruits, trains, and
 51 certifies men to be placed into the pastoral office are both appropriate and needed for the life and mission of our
 52 Synod and ought be recognized as such by the Synod. The task force recommends that the Synod by resolution
 53 recognize that each of the means we have for the church to recruit and train men for pastoral office is appropriate
 54 and needed; and

55

1 WHEREAS, The task force recommends that eligibility for regular colloquy be clarified in the Synod’s Bylaws;
2 therefore be it

3
4 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention receive with thanks the Report of the Task Force; and be it further

5
6 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention amend the Bylaws of the Synod by adding after Bylaw 3.10.2.2 the
7 following new paragraphs to be numbered 3.10.2.3, 3.10.2.4, and 3.10.2.5, respectively:
8

9 3.10.2.3 Applicants for the ordained ministry who are eligible for colloquy under the Colloquy Committee’s
10 published policies may make application directly to the committee. Other applicants for the ordained
11 ministry, such as Ministers of Religion—Commissioned, laymen of a special ethnic or linguistic group,
12 and laymen who have fulfilled at least ten years of significant service in a congregation, may make
13 application directly to a seminary for the Residential Alternate Route program.
14

15 3.10.2.4 The LCMS laymen and commissioned ministers who receive a Master of Divinity or equivalent degree
16 from a non-LCMS seminary may seek certification for call and placement in the Synod by participating
17 in the Residential Alternate Route program of one of the seminaries of the Synod, if otherwise eligible
18 for admission to the seminary.
19

20 3.10.2.5 All men desiring the ordained ministry who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the foregoing
21 bylaws shall be directed to the seminaries for consideration in other programs.
22

23 and be it finally

24
25 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention thank the members of the task force for their, time, communication,
26 care, listening, and recommendations to continue to prepare men for the pastoral office in the different routes.
27
28
29

30 **To Respectfully Decline Overture**

31
32 **RESOLUTION 13-05**
33

34 WHEREAS, The floor committee has considered all overtures assigned to it and has concluded, for various
35 reasons, that one overture should be declined; therefore be it

36
37 *Resolved*, That the following overture be respectfully declined for the reason given:
38

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reason</u>
13-48	To Bring End to District Licensed Lay Deacon Programs	Did not discontinue lay ministry role and function

14. CHURCH AND CULTURE

To Encourage Intentional Leadership in Matters of Religious Freedom

RESOLUTION 14-01

Overtures 14-02, 14-06, 14-19–20 (CW, pp. 465–66, 472–73)

Preamble

As Lutheran Christians, we have always followed Scripture’s lead in recognizing government as a good and God-ordained part of God’s created order (Rom. 13:1–7). We have followed Paul’s apostolic mandate in offering prayers and other support for “our leaders and all in authority” so that, living in a peaceful and well-ordered society, we might share the Gospel freely. We have understood this ordering to be “pleasing to God, who wants all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:2). Historically we have been deferential to the authority of our elected and appointed governmental officials acting in their proper sphere of influence (kingdom of the left), even as they have been deferential to the church in its proper sphere (kingdom of the right). In the context of the American public square, we have exercised restraint. Even in those rare instances where we have felt such efforts to be necessary, we have preferred to do so almost exclusively through the independent political activity of our individual members as they exercise their vocation as citizens.

In recent years, two significant changes have occurred. The first is that the culture has become more secularized. As a result many policy makers and leaders resist hearing the voice of the church at large. Secondly we are witnessing a structural change in the means of how our government develops public policy. Vague laws have given more opportunity to the executive branches of all levels of government to interpret legislative intent and create law by means of executive authority. Consequently, we are seeing more decisions that encroach on the sphere of the church and other mediating institutions of society, especially the family. In response to these changes, we offer the following resolution.

Proposed Action

WHEREAS, The religious freedom our forbearers sought and enjoyed is under assault and being eroded; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) sees an opportunity for a uniquely Lutheran response to increasing intrusions, limitations and challenges by the government in the life of the Church; and

WHEREAS, These conflicts are making it increasingly difficult for the church to give a clear and unfettered witness to the words of law and gospel that she is called to proclaim; and

WHEREAS, The church is finding it increasingly difficult to carry out the acts of love and mercy which are also her calling; and

WHEREAS, the “Free to Be Faithful” campaign educates and motivates rostered workers and laity to take informed action in defense of **one-man/one-woman marriage, the sanctity of life, and religious liberty**; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty (LCRL) will create a direct presence for the LCMS in the nation’s capital that will enable the church to:

- **engage** federal and state officials through advocacy and defensive legal strategies
- **educate** future generations about serving God through vocations in government, law, and public policy
- **connect** with Lutherans involved in government affairs. Where the government, the culture and faith conflict, Lutherans can and must speak up and out in support of religious liberty

therefore be it

1
2 *Resolved*, That the pastors of the Synod continue to deal compassionately with the family, friends, and all others
3 impacted by those who struggle with same-sex attraction or those involved in same-sex relationships, through the
4 proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and corporate and individual
5 confession and absolution; and be it further
6

7 *Resolved*, That congregations be encouraged to utilize current LCMS resources such as these Commission on
8 Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) documents: *Human Sexuality: A Theological Perspective*, *Response to*
9 *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* and *The Creators Tapestry: Scriptural Perspectives on Man-Woman Relationships*
10 *in Marriage and the Church*; and be it further
11

12 *Resolved*, That the CTCR be directed to update the document *Human Sexuality* (1981) in order to address
13 current challenges to the estate of marriage; and be it finally
14

15 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention direct the Board for National Mission, Concordia Publishing House,
16 and the two seminaries of our Synod to provide resources that enable the church to confess the truth boldly and deal
17 compassionately with those who struggle with same-sex attraction and those who care for them.
18

19
20
21 **To Affirm the Right of Clergy to Continue Conducting Weddings**
22 **in Accordance with Confession**

23
24 **RESOLUTION 14-04**

25
26 Overtures 14-02, 14-06, 14-10–12, 14-14 (CW, pp. 465–466, 470–471)
27

28 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has repeatedly affirmed its belief that God
29 established marriage to be for one man and one woman, (Gen. 1:27; 2:21–24) even as our Lord Jesus declares (Matt.
30 19:4–6) and the inspired apostle Paul teaches (Eph. 5:21–33); and
31

32 WHEREAS, The Supreme Court of the United States has now affirmed same-sex marriage (*Obergefell v.*
33 *Hodges*), and every state now must license the marriage of same-sex couples; and
34

35 WHEREAS, There is a need for the LCMS to give prayerful and thoughtful guidance to pastors about preserving
36 the religious freedom afforded by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and about being mindful of
37 potential threats to such freedom as they conduct weddings in today’s legal and societal context; therefore be it
38

39 *Resolved*, That no LCMS congregation shall make its facilities available for a ceremony sanctioning a same-sex
40 union and no LCMS pastor shall consent to officiate or participate in any ceremony sanctioning the union of a
41 same-sex couple; and be it further
42

43 *Resolved*, That for the purpose of public disclosure (e.g. marriage handbooks and congregational Websites),
44 each congregation be encouraged to utilize the Synod’s publication *Information on Marriage Policies for Member*
45 *Congregations* to develop policies for marriage in accord with the witness of Scripture and the Lutheran
46 Confessions; and be it further
47

48 *Resolved*, That the LCMS give thanks for and seek to preserve the right of pastors to decline to officiate for
49 weddings that are contrary to their conscience and the teachings of our Synod, as well as protections that preserve
50 the right of congregations to determine on the basis of conscience and the Word of God whom they will allow to use
51 their facilities; and be it finally
52

53 *Resolved*, That the CTCR, in consultation with the seminary faculties, and other scholars, prepare materials to
54 facilitate a biblical and confessional, theological and practical study affirming the right of our clergy to continue
55 conducting weddings in accordance with our confession, and that these materials be prepared in time for the 2019
56 convention.

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2
3
4
5 **To Commend *In Christ All Things Hold Together:***
6 ***The Intersection of Science and Christian Theology***

7
8 **RESOLUTION 14-05**
9

10 Report R59 (CW, p. 196)

11
12 WHEREAS, The apparent contradictions between science and faith create an opportunity for doubt as students
13 pursue their education in a variety of settings; and

14
15 WHEREAS, The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) document *In Christ All Things Hold*
16 *Together* is an excellent resource for Christian reflection on questions arising from the intersection of science, faith,
17 and Christian theology; and

18
19 WHEREAS, Reason is never lord over the Christian faith but always the servant of the Christian faith; and

20
21 WHEREAS, The idea that nature is an autonomous machine leaving no need for God is a predominate cultural
22 presupposition; and

23
24 WHEREAS, Throughout history, many faithful Christian scientists intentionally applied theology to their work
25 and found God's creative and providential actions in the world; and

26
27 WHEREAS, We should always seek to discern the proper use of science and the proper use of Scripture, in order
28 to recognize that Christ and the Gospel are at the center of all things; and

29
30 WHEREAS, We have many opportunities to apply these principles in our daily vocations; therefore be it

31
32 *Resolved*, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in convention commend the CTCR document
33 *In Christ All Things Hold Together: The Intersection of Science and Theology* as a helpful resource to prevent the
34 idolatry that results from confusing the Creator and his creation; and be it further

35
36 *Resolved*, That the Concordia University System (departments of theology, natural sciences, and education), the
37 Association of Lutheran Secondary Schools, LCMS campus ministries, and individual congregations utilize this
38 report for the purpose of strengthening the ability of our young people to maintain their faith while also seeing the
39 value of studying the sciences; and be it finally

40
41 *Resolved*, That Concordia Publishing House be encouraged to pursue the development of curricular materials
42 based on this resource for the purpose of catechesis.
43
44
45

46 **To Encourage Outreach to Muslim Neighbors**

47
48 **RESOLUTION 14-06**
49

50 Overtures 14-05-06, 14-15 (CW, pp. 466-467, 471)

51
52 WHEREAS, The religion of Islam continues to grow in numbers and impact throughout the United States and
53 world; and

54
55 WHEREAS, Christians' fear of Muslims is unscriptural (Matt. 10:28); and
56

1 WHEREAS, Violence as a result of fear or as an expression of religious conviction is contrary to Scripture (Matt.
2 5:38–39, Luke 22:50–51, John, 18:10–11); and

3
4 WHEREAS, Christ commands us to love our neighbors of all faiths (Matt. 22:39) and to proclaim the gospel to
5 all nations (Matt. 28:19); therefore be it

6
7 *Resolved*, That the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in convention condemn all acts of violence as a
8 result of fear or of religious conviction; and be it further

9
10 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention direct the Chief Mission Officer, working in coordination with the
11 Office of National Mission and the Office of International Mission, to adopt as a priority the development and
12 identification of resources (e.g., written and visual materials, conferences, and experts) that will assist districts and
13 congregations boldly and faithfully to reach out to Muslims with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and be it further

14
15 *Resolved*, That districts be directed and congregations be encouraged to develop specific outreach plans to share
16 the Gospel with their Muslim neighbors; and be it finally

17
18 *Resolved*, That the LCMS in convention commend the work of Gottfried Martens in Berlin, Germany for
19 successfully creating an ongoing outreach to European Muslim refugees and also commend those in the United
20 States conducting similar outreach activities.

24 **To Encourage Vocation and Confession in Public Square**

25 **RESOLUTION 14-07**

26
27 Report R1 (CW, p. 3); Overture 14-02 (CW, p. 465)

28
29
30 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church confesses that we, as people redeemed by Christ, live as citizens of both
31 realms (two kingdoms), who acknowledge the reign of God through His Word and through civil authorities (Phil.
32 3:20; 1 Peter 2:13); and

33
34 WHEREAS, Christians are called to live out their vocations faithfully to God and in service to the neighbor (1
35 Peter 4:12–19; Rom. 12:1; Small Catechism Table of Duties); and

36
37 WHEREAS, When civil authorities command that we disobey what our Lord commands, “we must obey God
38 rather than men” (Acts 5:29); and

39
40 WHEREAS, The church’s power and authority flows from the Word of God alone and is not a coercive authority
41 (Tr 31–37); and

42
43 WHEREAS, Spiritual and civil authority therefore ought not be “mixed” or confused (AC XXVIII 12), and the
44 church itself, as God’s “right hand kingdom,” ought not to seek civil rule and authority (see AC XXVIII, Tr 2, 49–
45 52; *Brief Statement* § 34); therefore be it

46
47 *Resolved*, That the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in convention urge all congregations, pastors, church
48 workers and members to support, teach and live out the biblical doctrines of vocation and of the two kingdoms
49 regarding the relationship between church and state; and be it further

50
51 *Resolved*, That members of the LCMS be encouraged as individual citizens of the left hand kingdom to exercise
52 their rights and responsibilities and within their vocations to hold positions of civil power and authority in
53 government and business (AC XVI; Ap XVI); and be it further

54
55 *Resolved*, That members of the LCMS pray for and seek the good of all, giving special regard to governmental
56 policies that allow the church to practice its faith freely and without hindrance (1 Tim. 2:1–2); and be it further

1
2 *Resolved*, That members of the LCMS pray for Judge Ruth Neely, a member of the LCMS congregation in
3 Pinedale, Wyoming, whose job is threatened as a result of her public confession of the truth concerning marriage
4 (See *Caspar Star Tribune*, May 6, 2016); and be it finally
5

6 *Resolved*, That in the face of hostility and resistance to the Gospel and to the historic teachings of the church,
7 the LCMS in convention encourage the members of LCMS congregations to bear witness to Christ and the truth of
8 the Gospel in word and deed (Acts 4:19).
9

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11
12 **To Affirm Compassionate Care to End of Natural Life**

13
14 **RESOLUTION 14-08**

15
16 Overture 14-02, 14-07 (*CW*, pp. 329, 331)
17

18 WHEREAS, Because the Triune God alone gives life and recalls life unto Himself (Ps. 90), Christians guard and
19 defend human life from conception to natural death; and
20

21 WHEREAS, Because Christians are called to help and protect their neighbor in every bodily need (*Small*
22 *Catechism*), we have the duty and responsibility to care for human life from conception to natural death; and
23

24 WHEREAS, Our culture increasingly sees the lives of the chronically ill, the disabled, and the aged as a burden
25 that individuals, their families, and society should not bear; and
26

27 WHEREAS, Elements of our society are enlisting the medical profession to administer death (physician-assisted
28 suicide) rather than sustaining and protecting life; and
29

30 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has repeatedly affirmed that the medical
31 community has the duty always to care, but never to kill; therefore be it
32

33 *Resolved*, That the LCMS continue as a strong voice for the sanctity of life, especially supporting the truth that
34 life begins at conception and continues until natural death and therefore deserves our protection and care; and be it
35 further
36

37 *Resolved*, That pastors and congregations be encouraged to utilize resources concerning care at the end of life
38 which have been developed by the LCMS [The *Pastoral Care Companion* (pp. 221–227); by the Commission on
39 Theology and Church Relations (*Christian Care At Life’s End*); and by LCMS Life Ministry (*Mercy at Life’s End*)],
40 all of which offer guidance and counsel concerning end-of-life decisions; and be it further
41

42 *Resolved*, That pastors and congregations be aware of, and respond faithfully to, legislative and judicial rulings
43 that call into question the value of those whose lives are rendered burdensome by disease, accident, or age; and be it
44 finally
45

46 *Resolved*, That pastors will seek opportunities in their teaching and preaching to address end of life issues in
47 such a manner that members of our congregations are prepared to think and act biblically when faced with decisions
48 at the end of life.
49
50

51
52 **To Commend CTCR Document “Gender Identity Disorder**
53 **or Gender Dysphoria in Christian Perspective”**

54
55 **RESOLUTION 14-09**
56

1 Report R59 (CW, p. 172)

2

3 WHEREAS, In recent years the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) has received questions
4 regarding sexual identity from:

5

- 6 • persons who are uncertain whether they are “truly” male or female
- 7 • those who are regularly dressing and presenting themselves as a member of the opposite sex
- 8 • those who are participating in hormonal or surgical procedures to change their sex identification from male
9 to female or from female to male

10

11 and

12

13 WHEREAS, The CTCR has also received questions from church workers who have asked for guidance in
14 pastoral care for individuals struggling with matters of gender identity; and

15

16 WHEREAS, Congregations, schools and universities of the Synod, being responsible to uphold the teachings of
17 the Word of God while also submitting to the governing authorities are experiencing mounting pressures as a result
18 of cultural and legal changes; and

19

20 WHEREAS, The CTCR has responded by producing the document “Gender Identity Disorder or Gender
21 Dysphoria in Christian Perspective,” (May 17, 2014); therefore be it

22

23 *Resolved*, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in convention commend the study, application, and use
24 of this document within its congregations, schools, and universities.

25

26

27

28

To Thank Alliance Defending Freedom

29

30

RESOLUTION 14-10

31

32 President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)

33

34 WHEREAS, Alliance Defending Freedom has worked since 1994 to support congregations and individuals as
35 they advocate for their right to freely live out their faith; and

36

37 WHEREAS, Alliance Defending Freedom has directly supported various efforts of The Lutheran Church—
38 Missouri Synod (LCMS) in recent years, including but not limited to:

39

- 40 • Representing Trinity Lutheran Church before the US Supreme Court on a major religious liberty issue
41 that will have implications for the First Amendment for years to come;
- 42 • Assembling a team to prepare LCMS President Harrison to testify in 2012 before the House of
43 Representatives Oversight Committee on the religious liberty implications of the Health and Human
44 Services (HHS) Mandate;
- 45 • Serving as trial counsel for Hosanna-Tabor Church and Early Childhood Center after the 6th Circuit’s
46 decision to litigate the case, if the US Supreme Court decided not to accept it for review;
- 47 • Speaking at numerous LCMS events: Free to be Faithful radio program; the LCMS Praesidium; the
48 President’s Committee on Religious Freedom; Concordia Plan Services; and at the launch of the
49 Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty; and

50

51 WHEREAS, Alliance Defending Freedom facilitated the LCMS signing on to several amicus briefs on marriage
52 and other issues in various courts; and

53

54 WHEREAS, Alliance Defending Freedom has allied with LCMS chaplains to secure legal protection of
55 conscience for our LCMS military chaplains; therefore be it

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Resolved, That the LCMS in convention thank Alliance Defending Freedom for its enduring work to defend religious liberty and freedom; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention thank Alliance Defending Freedom for its partnership and work with the LCMS; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention pledge to continue its partnership with Alliance Defending Freedom, whenever possible, for the mutual benefit of our common work in defending the rights of congregations and individuals to live out their faith freely.

15. REFORMATION

To Give Thanks for Gospel Focus of “The Wittenberg Project”

RESOLUTION 15-01

Report R1 (CW, p. 4); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

Introduction

In 1564, construction of the Old Latin School (*Alte Lateinschule*) began under the authority of Prince Elector August I (1526-1586), who was a staunch defender of Lutheran theology. The Old Latin School was built across from St. Mary’s Church, where Dr. Martin Luther preached more than 2,000 sermons. It was created to prepare young men to be of service to society and to the Church. In 2006, the Synod’s Central Illinois District Church Extension Fund helped to purchase the Old Latin School. So after the purchase of the school, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), Concordia Publishing House (CPH), and the Independent Evangelical-Lutheran Church (SELK) in Germany established the International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg (ILSW) for the sake of renovating the building and to do ministry together in Wittenberg, Germany. On Sunday May 3, 2015, the renovated Old Latin School was dedicated to the glory of God and for service to the Lord’s Church. Beginning on May 4, the first event of the newly dedicated Old Latin School was held. Confessional church leaders from around the world gathered in Wittenberg to discuss global challenges and opportunities under the theme, “Celebrating the Reformation Rightly: Remembrance, Repentance, Rejoicing.” Since then, other events have been held and many groups have made use of the Old Latin School.

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther on Oct. 31, 1517, posted 95 theses against the abuse of indulgences on the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, thereby igniting the Reformation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther wrote, “The true treasure of the Church is the most Holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God” (Thesis 62); and

WHEREAS, The pure, sweet Gospel of God’s grace in Jesus Christ is the only source of true comfort for sinful people in the presence of their holy Creator; and

WHEREAS, God used Dr. Martin Luther and other reformers to proclaim the Good News about Jesus Christ with renewed clarity and zeal, beginning in Wittenberg; and

WHEREAS, Wittenberg is attracting a growing number of visitors as we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS is celebrating this milestone Reformation anniversary under the theme, “It’s *Still* All About Jesus”; and

WHEREAS, The ILSW has established a Christian education and Gospel outreach center in “The Wittenberg Project”; and

WHEREAS, The ILSW was enabled to renovate the Old Latin School through the generous donations and prayers of faithful Lutheran people, congregations, schools, and other entities; and

WHEREAS, The International Lutheran Center in the Old Latin School is being used to proclaim the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ with Wittenberg-area residents, only about 15 percent of whom even profess to be Christian, and with as many as possible of the tens of thousands of visitors to this town so important for the proclamation of that Gospel; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2016 convention of the LCMS thank God for blessing The Wittenberg Project, and pray that He would use it to reach many more people with the Gospel; and be it further

1 transformed by works into a saint with the help of God’s grace; and

2
3 WHEREAS, Core to Luther’s complaint was the pastoral care for his parishioners to which he was obligated by
4 his office to preach the Word and to protect the glory that the Father reserves only to His Son, Jesus Christ, to justify
5 sinners in Christ alone (Rom. 4:5); and

6
7 WHEREAS, On the very day that he posted the “Ninety-Five Theses”, Martin Luther wrote to Cardinal Albert of
8 Mainz, “The first and only duty of bishops (pastors), however, is to see that the people learn the gospel and the love
9 of Christ. For on no occasion has Christ ordered that indulgences should be preached, but He forcefully commanded
10 the gospel to be preached” (Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works*, American Edition, 48:47); and

11
12 WHEREAS, Luther himself decried the fact that the Lutheran church bore his name, to which he never counseled
13 nor gave consent, for it was not about him but to give glory alone to Jesus Christ and His Word; and

14
15 WHEREAS, The heart of the Reformation, then and now, is the care of souls, namely, to bring consolation to
16 troubled consciences by declaration of God’s justifying Word to sinners; and

17
18 WHEREAS, Christ Himself currently is working to communicate the love of His Father through His Church to all
19 those who have ears to hear; and

20
21 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), Concordia Seminary, Concordia Theological
22 Seminary, Concordia Publishing House, Concordia Historical Institute, and Lutheran Hour Ministries, among others,
23 are offering ample resources to congregations to utilize in their efforts to celebrate and publish the Gospel of Jesus
24 Christ; and

25
26 WHEREAS, The LCMS has established a Website that can serve as an entry point for locating these resources, at
27 www.lutheranreformation.org; therefore be it

28
29 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the LCMS be encouraged to use the vast resources available in their own
30 celebrations of the Reformation, for the consolation of troubled consciences outside and inside the church; and be it
31 further

32
33 *Resolved*, That clergy and church workers promote www.lutheranreformation.org and its resources on their
34 church and school websites, social media, and other catechetical and evangelistic outlets.

35
36
37

38 **To Honor 500th Anniversary of Reformation by Growing in the Word**
39 **and Showing Christ to the World**

40
41 **RESOLUTION 15-04**

42
43 Report R1 (*CW*, pp. 5, 8–9); President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)

44
45 WHEREAS, In the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017 we are celebrating the triumph of the Gospel,
46 not of Martin Luther or any other individual or church body, and that the Lutheran Reformation is “*still* all about
47 Jesus”; and

48
49 WHEREAS, The source of renewal and reformation is always in the Word, as the Lord Jesus says, “If you abide
50 in My word . . . you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31–32); and

51
52 WHEREAS, Luther’s Gospel discovery was because of his personal immersion in the Word; and

53
54 WHEREAS, As we celebrate the blessings of the Reformation . . . not something that is ours alone, but is for others
55 as well, as Dr. Francis Pieper said in his address to the Synod in 1908,

56

1 We must not forget: God is present with His grace only among the humble. He who would be something in the
 2 Church only apparently accomplishes something. And finally God casts him aside. God's power has the unique
 3 property that it is only powerful in the weak. Let us be so minded by God's grace that we are nothing, and that
 4 God's grace and God's Word are everything. God grant that we never advocate for something that is ours, but
 5 only and always for God's Word!

6
 7 and

8
 9 WHEREAS, That witness could take such forms as witnessing in our various vocations and supporting ministries
 10 of witness and mercy in our congregations, circuits, districts, and the Synod; therefore be it

11
 12 *Resolved*, That the members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged to commit to grow in
 13 faith themselves, personally and corporately, by reading through the entire Scriptures in 2017; and be it further

14
 15 *Resolved*, That as we grow in the Word ourselves, we would be humble and effective witnesses to the power of
 16 Christ's forgiveness and mercy in a world that badly needs it, by the same Spirit that inspired the Lutheran
 17 Reformation.

18
 19
 20
 21 **To Respectfully Decline Overture**

22
 23 **RESOLUTION 15-05**

24
 25 WHEREAS, The floor committee has considered all overtures assigned to it and has concluded, for various
 26 reasons, that one overture should be declined; therefore be it

27
 28 *Resolved*, That the following overture be respectfully declined for the reason given:

29

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reason</u>
15-01	To Encourage Study of Ninety-Five Theses and Augsburg Confession (Circuit 16, South Wisconsin District)	Committee deemed overture too impractical to present on floor

30
 31
 32
 33
 34
 35

16. FAMILY, YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

To Celebrate Ministry of Rev. Dr. Terry K. Dittmer

RESOLUTION 16-01

Overture 16-04 (CW, p. 477); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. Terry K. Dittmer was brought to the waters of Holy Baptism on September 5, 1948, and ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry on June 23, 1974; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. Dittmer has faithfully and capably served the Lord and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Youth Ministry for 37 years, with the past 15 years of service as Director of Youth Ministry for the LCMS, and will retire from ministry following the 2016 National Youth Gathering; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. Dittmer has strengthened the faith of many and brought into the fellowship of our Lord an unknown number through his Christ-centered commitment to the young people of the LCMS; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2016 LCMS convention join in thanks and praise to God for Rev. Dr. Dittmer and his years of faithful service and outstanding work for the LCMS; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS extend its sincere appreciation to Rev. Dr. Dittmer and pray God’s richest blessings on him as the Lord guides his walk of faith in his retirement.

To Make Strengthening Lutheran Families a Mission Priority

RESOLUTION 16-02

Overture 16-01 (CW, p. 476); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, The foundation of every human society is the family as created and sustained by God (Gen. 1:26–28; 12:13; Matt. 19:1–9); and

WHEREAS, The family as created and sustained by God is under constant attack from the devil, the world, and the flesh; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther’s emphasis and teaching on the household estate and the family vocations of husband and wife, father, mother, and child was a key insight of the Reformation; and

WHEREAS, The unmarried and widowed also constitute an essential and God-pleasing part of the family (1 Cor. 7:8); and

WHEREAS, Two demographic reports commissioned by the Stewardship Ministry of the Office of National Mission indicate that the biblical pattern of marriage, family, and child-rearing is negatively impacted by the secular culture of today; and

WHEREAS, These same reports indicate a decline of the Lutheran family over the past four decades in terms of accepting and nurturing God’s gift of life with joy and thanksgiving; and

WHEREAS, The family home is to be the place of forming Christian disciples; and

WHEREAS, Disciplining our children at home and in the church is key to reaching lost children and families; and

1 WHEREAS, Children are a blessing according to the Word of God, and serve as the future of the Church; and

2
3 WHEREAS, The Office of National Mission has begun a *Lutheran Family Initiative* among its various
4 programmatic ministries to begin looking at ways to strengthen the Lutheran family; and

5
6 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) currently has six mission priorities, to wit:

- 7 1. Plant, sustain, and revitalize distinctly Lutheran churches
- 8 2. Support and expand theological education
- 9 3. Perform human care in close proximity to Word and Sacrament ministry
- 10 4. Collaborate with the Synod’s members and partners to enhance mission effectiveness
- 11 5. Nurture pastors, missionaries, and professional church workers to promote spiritual, emotional, and
- 12 physical well-being
- 13 6. Enhance early childhood, elementary, and secondary education and youth ministry

14
15 therefore be it

16
17 *Resolved*, That the convention commend the work of the Office of National Mission’s *Lutheran Family*
18 *Initiative*; and be it further

19
20 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention amend the mission priorities to include “Strengthen and support the
21 Lutheran family in living out God’s design.”

22 23 24 25 **To Encourage Christian Care and Discipling of Fathers**

26 27 **RESOLUTION 16-03**

28
29 Overture 16-02 (CW, p. 476)

30
31 WHEREAS, It is clear from Scripture that our Heavenly Father delights in and exhorts the raising of children in
32 the fear and admonition of the Lord that they may offer Him their praise (Deut. 6:1–9; LC 172); and

33
34 WHEREAS, Scripture tells us that the children’s father is to be a spiritual leader in the household, leading them in
35 prayer, teaching them godly ways, and nurturing them as they grow (Eph. 5:23, 6:4); and

36
37 WHEREAS, A study of the role of how a father’s attendance in church affects a child’s attendance in church
38 states, “It is the religious practice of the father of the family that, above all, determines the future attendance at or
39 absence from church of the children” [Cite: [http://www.touchstonemag.com/archives/article.php?id=16-05-024-
40 v#ixzz49v9ms2dk](http://www.touchstonemag.com/archives/article.php?id=16-05-024-v#ixzz49v9ms2dk)]; therefore be it

41
42 *Resolved*, That congregations be encouraged to deliberately encourage, exhort, and catechize men of all ages to
43 fulfill their God-given role as the spiritual head of their households; and be it further

44
45 *Resolved*, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod encourage congregations to create specific ministries
46 that are designed for the purpose of Christian care and the enabling of fathers to disciple their children in the nurture
47 and admonition of the Lord; and be it further

48
49 *Resolved*, That we give thanks to God for and promote the use of the excellent resources for fathers produced by
50 Concordia Publishing House, Lutheran Laymen’s League, and others; and be it finally

51
52 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention amend the mission priorities to include “Strengthen and support the
53 Lutheran family in living out God’s design.”

**To Increase Engagement of Lutheran Young Adults
in Ministry and Service Work of LCMS**

RESOLUTION 16-04

Report R1.2 (CW, pp. 14–15, 30); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has a long and distinguished history of acts of mercy and of Christ-centered ministry to all ages; and

WHEREAS, God commands in Paul’s letter to Timothy, “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching, reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching” (1 Tim. 4:12–13); and

WHEREAS, Research shows nearly six in ten (59%) of young people who grow up in Christian churches end up walking away from either their faith or from the church at some point in their twenties, and that the Millennial Generation has increasingly (44 to 52 percent) identified themselves as un-churched in the last decade; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Youth Ministry seeks to support young adults as they grow in the Christian faith, and engage them through service opportunities, resources, and leadership training; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Young Adult Corps and other young adult service opportunities provide Lutheran young adults an increased opportunity to serve in Christ’s name and grow as current and future leaders for the LCMS; therefore be it

Resolved, That LCMS young adults, campus ministries, and congregations be provided with resources to meet the spiritual needs of young adults in their congregations and communities; and be it further

Resolved, That LCMS intentionally provide an increased number of service opportunities for LCMS young adults; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS ensure that the Office of LCMS Youth Ministry will continue to provide for support for Lutheran Young Adult Corps, young adult servant events, and Young Adult Volunteers for the LCMS Youth Gathering; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod fund Lutheran Young Adult Corps and young adult service opportunities to ensure ongoing opportunities for acts of mercy, faith growth, and training for young adults in our church body; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations pray for their young adults, the congregations and ministries that serve them, and the leadership of Lutheran Young Adult Corps and other young adult servant events; and be it finally

Resolved, That the congregations encourage their young adults to participate in Lutheran Young Adult Corps and other young adult service opportunities.

[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]

To Increase Our Efforts To Retain College-Age Youth

RESOLUTION 16-05

Report R1.2 (CW, pp. 22–24); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

1
2 WHEREAS, The college years have historically been a time where many of our young people are tempted to fall
3 away from the faith as they find themselves confronted by dominant secular and increasingly anti-Christian
4 worldviews; and

5
6 WHEREAS, We have experienced escalating turmoil on our nation's university campuses in recent years,
7 including the loss of freedom of speech and religious expression; and

8
9 WHEREAS, An annual survey of over 153,000 college freshmen, "The American Freshman," demonstrates that
10 college freshmen are increasingly distancing themselves from any religion (28% in 2015 compared to 12% in 1971);
11 and

12
13 WHEREAS, According to a recent Gallup poll in 2015, the percentage of Christians among this age group
14 continues to trend lowest among college age young adults (18–24); and

15
16 WHEREAS, One of the greatest tasks each generation has is to hand over the faith to the one that follows it; and

17
18 WHEREAS, We all wish to join the Apostle John in saying of the young people of the church, "I have no greater
19 joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth" (3 John 4); and

20
21 WHEREAS, We are witnessing increased zeal by many of our LCMS college students to confess their faith in the
22 public square, although it is getting increasingly more difficult to do so; and

23
24 WHEREAS, The enormous challenges that our young people face on our university campuses also present
25 equally tremendous opportunities for our collective witness to the truth of God's Word in the academic square and
26 the marketplace of ideas; therefore be it

27
28 *Resolved*, That we give thanks to God for the renewed emphasis on campus ministry in the Synod through
29 "LCMS U" and continue to encourage congregations, circuits, and districts to intentionally support local campus
30 ministry and outreach wherever possible; and be it further

31
32 *Resolved*, That we encourage all LCMS families, pastors, youth workers, and congregations to increase their
33 own efforts to help connect their graduating high school students to our LCMS U campus ministries as early as
34 possible; and be it finally

35
36 *Resolved*, That the Synod encourage efforts to be made by LCMS U in the next triennium to develop a strategic
37 and comprehensive plan to help congregations and families better prepare high school graduates for the transition to
38 college life, develop resources to help those going to college better understand the challenges and worldview
39 frameworks that they will face during their college years, and increase training opportunities and resources to aid
40 our college age youth in boldly witnessing to their faith on campus and in the public square.

17. PREACHING AND CHURCH WORKER CONTINUING EDUCATION

To Enhance Clergy Continuing Education

RESOLUTION 17-01

Overture 17-01 (CW, p. 477)

WHEREAS, Pastors are called to “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim. 4:2) and to “continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it...” (2 Tim. 3:14); and

WHEREAS, Our Synod is blessed with excellent seminaries where the foundation for pastoral formation is properly laid and the theological grounding so necessary for pastoral ministry is established. In the tradition of Luther, however, our Synod also recognizes that pastoral formation is a life-long endeavor and that the early years of ministry are a critical time in that learning process and a time of significant and critical transition for them and for the congregations they serve; and

WHEREAS, The PALS (Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support) initiative was designed as a collaborative partnership between The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) districts and the Synod to support new pastors and their wives in their first few years in the ministry, facilitating the transition from seminary life to parish ministry, offering opportunities for new pastors to apply their seminary education as they begin ministry with a unique flock in a specific place; and

WHEREAS, During the PALS meetings, the new pastors worship, study and discuss new ministry experiences in the company of an experienced pastor. They choose topics to study and ministry skills to hone that are most pertinent to their and their congregation’s specific needs; and

WHEREAS, Our culture and society have become increasingly secularized and hostile to the faith, our pastors need more than ever to be engaged in a process of life-long education and development to be best prepared to raise up disciples for Christ by teaching the faithful, reaching the lost, and sharing Christ’s love through care and acts of mercy for this generation and generations to come; and

WHEREAS, While presently over 200 pastors are involved in PALS, over 500 pastors are involved in continuing education events hosted by the seminaries, and another 70 pastors are enlisted as Doctor of Ministry students each year; and

WHEREAS, One can never know the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions too well, or study and practice ways to apply this knowledge and skills in specific ministry contexts too much; and

WHEREAS, In 2013 the Synod in convention passed resolution 5-08B “To Establish a Standard for Continuing Education of Pastors” and also passed resolution 5-02A “To Support and Encourage participation in Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support Initiative” in follow-up to similar resolutions passed in 2010, 2007, 2004, 2001, and 1998 calling for continued study and how best to certify clergy and encourage continuing education; and

WHEREAS, A task force comprised of members of the seminary faculties and Council of Presidents has met over the past three years to begin developing a list of qualified continuing education resources and activities allowing for a seamless process for continuing education that will be utilized by pastors following seminary graduation; therefore be it

Resolved, That every pastor in the LCMS be encouraged to develop a continuing education portfolio which may be recorded under question 27 of the Council of Presidents’ Self Evaluation Tool (SET) from the time he graduates from the seminary until he retires, thus modeling for his members a discipline of life-long learning; and be it further

Resolved, That pastors participate in at least one continuing education experience annually and that each pastor

1 decide which continuing education experiences would be most beneficial; and be it further

2
3 *Resolved*, That the first three years of continuing education for newly ordained pastors can be met through the
4 PALS program or equivalent program; and be it further

5
6 *Resolved*, That pastors be encouraged to make use of existing venues for continuing education such as our
7 seminary symposia and seminary seminars, classes offered by our Concordia University System on campus or on-
8 line, pastors conferences, Grace Place, Doxology, etc.; and be it finally

9
10 *Resolved*, That because Synod expects pastors to be involved in continuing education, congregations be
11 encouraged to support these efforts with time and necessary finances.

12
13
14
15 **To Encourage Participation in Continuing Theological Education by Ministers of Religion—**
16 **Commissioned and Lay Workers**

17
18 **RESOLUTION 17-02**

19
20 Committee 17 General Assignment (*CW*, p. 477); President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)

21
22 WHEREAS, All Christians are called to “always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a
23 reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15); and

24
25 WHEREAS, The current state of our culture necessitates ongoing growth in our knowledge of God’s saving Word
26 and the faithful articulation and confession of that Word in church, school, and world, according to 2 Peter 3:18:
27 “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,”; therefore be it

28
29 *Resolved*, That for the sake of a clear confession of God’s Word, ministers of religion—commissioned be
30 encouraged to take advantage of available continuing education programs; and be it further

31
32 *Resolved*, That the districts of our Synod be concerned with fostering the theological growth of their
33 commissioned ministers and lay workers and providing, when possible, opportunities for continuing education; and
34 be it finally

35
36 *Resolved*, That LCMS congregations and schools be urged to support these efforts with necessary time and
37 finances.

38
39
40
41 **To Endorse Preach the Word Project as Celebration of 500th Anniversary of Reformation**

42
43 **RESOLUTION 17-03**

44
45 Overture 15-02 (*CW*, p.475)

46
47 WHEREAS, October 31, 2017, marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, when Dr. Martin Luther posted
48 on the door of the Castle Church the Ninety-Five Theses, his invitation to debate how one receives the blessings of
49 Jesus Christ; and

50
51 WHEREAS, Dr. Luther writes of preachers and proper preaching:

52
53 The first and only duty of the bishops, however, is to see that the people learn the gospel and the love of Christ.
54 For on no occasion has Christ ordered that indulgences should be preached, but he forcefully commanded the
55 gospel to be preached. (*Luther’s Works* 48:47)

1
2 and
3
4
5
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10 and
11

WHEREAS, Dr. Luther also writes:

The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God” (Luther’s Works 31:31, Ninety-Five Theses), and St. Paul writes, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17), and, again, “I charge you ... preach the word.” (2 Tim. 4:1, 2)

12 WHEREAS, In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and beneath the theme “It’s *Still* All about
13 Jesus,” the President’s Office has initiated the Preach the Word Project, which invites pastors to improve their craft
14 of preaching the pure, sweet Gospel and the laity their hearing of it; and
15

16 WHEREAS, Both seminaries of our Synod endeavor to prepare men to preach the Word of Christ crucified and
17 risen for the salvation of people to the fullest of each man’s ability and with competent skills but also seek to
18 engender an understanding that preaching is to involve lifelong development of those skills; and
19

20 WHEREAS, Our seminaries likewise energetically support the Synod’s increasing emphasis on continuing
21 education for all pastors; therefore be it
22

23 *Resolved*, That the 2016 LCMS convention, as one way to honor the historic event of the Reformation,
24 encourage pastors and congregations to participate in the Preach the Word Project.
25
26
27

To Encourage Regular Sermon Evaluation by District Presidents and Circuit Visitors

RESOLUTION 17-04

28
29
30
31
32 President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)
33

34 WHEREAS, Our risen Lord willed that “repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed” in His name to
35 all nations (Luke 24:47); and
36

37 WHEREAS, Holy Scripture teaches that it is required of all ministers of the Gospel that they be found faithful (1
38 Cor. 4:5), and that faithfulness to the preaching office includes “rightly dividing the word of truth,” (2 Tim. 2:15),
39 and that St. Paul says “Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save
40 both yourself and your hearers (1 Tim. 4:16); and
41

42 WHEREAS, The apostle Paul admonishes all pastors to “hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he
43 may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it” (Titus 1:9) and to
44 “teach what accords with sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1); and
45

46 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Confessions acknowledge the need for faithful preaching in the churches, according to
47 the following statements:
48

49 “And if we must speak of the outward appearance, attendance upon church is better among us than among the
50 adversaries. For the audiences are held by useful and clear sermons. But neither the people nor the teachers have
51 ever understood the doctrine of the adversaries [There is nothing that so attaches people to the Church as good
52 preaching...]” (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV, paragraph 50) “On the Mass” *Concordia
53 Triglotta*; translated from the German text, p. 401).
54

55 “If you want to keep the churches with you, then you must strive that they be rightly taught and preached to...”
56 (Ap. VI:33 “On Confession” *Concordia Triglotta*; translated from the German text, p. 290).

1
2 “As in other matters pertaining to faith, love, and patience it is not enough simply to teach and instruct, but
3 there must also be daily exhortation, so on this subject (i.e., the teaching concerning the Sacrament) we must be
4 persistent in preaching, lest people become indifferent and bored” (*LC, Lord’s Supper, §44, Tappert, p. 451*).

5
6 “Since these important matters also concern ordinary people and laymen who for their eternal salvation must as
7 Christians know the difference between true and false doctrine...” (*Formula of Concord: Solid Declaration,*
8 *§8a, Tappert, p. 505*);

9
10 and

11
12 WHEREAS, C.F.W. Walther in *Kirche und Amt (Church and Office*, trans. Mueller) also recognizes, “Rightly
13 distinguishing the Law and the Gospel is the most difficult and highest art of Christians in general and of
14 theologians in particular” (Thesis III, p. 42) and that “The *forma* of a Christian,—that which makes a person a
15 Christian—is that he knows how to seek his salvation in Christ and thus to escape the Law” (Thesis III, p. 49); and

16
17 WHEREAS, One of the chief duties of district presidents is supervision of doctrine, according to Bylaw 4.4.5:
18 “Each district president, in accordance with the Constitution of the Synod, shall supervise the doctrine, the life, and
19 the official administration on the part of the ordained or commissioned ministers who are members through his
20 district or are subject to his ecclesiastical supervision, and shall inquire into the prevailing spiritual conditions of the
21 congregations of his district” (*2013 Handbook, 2013, p. 192*); therefore be it

22
23 *Resolved*, That district presidents continue to carry out their role of doctrinal supervision as well as the
24 scriptural and confessional admonitions for faithful preaching; and be it further

25
26 *Resolved*, That all district presidents and circuit visitors be urged to make sermon evaluation a regular part of
27 their visitations, using the Synod structure and resources available from the Synod and sister districts.

18. WORKER WELLNESS

To Commend Work of Concordia Plan Services and Its President and CEO James Sanft

RESOLUTION 18-01

Report R13 (*CW*, pp. 74–76); President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)

WHEREAS, For over 50 years the ministries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), through the Concordia Plans, have provided care for the enrolled workers and retirees of LCMS ministries and their families, resulting in great blessings to the recipients of such care; and

WHEREAS, Through the aggregation of financial resources, the LCMS is enabled to carry out its intention to “10. 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” (Constitution Article III, Tenth Objective); and

WHEREAS, Through Concordia Plan Services (CPS) and the Concordia Plans, the ministries of the LCMS collaboratively support the physical and financial wellbeing of each participating worker serving congregations and ministries of all sizes, locations, and settings; and

WHEREAS, CPS and the Concordia Plans continue to adapt and revise services in response to the changing legal, regulatory, and economic environment and to reflect best practices in employee benefits; and

WHEREAS, CPS and the Concordia Plans continue to identify and address future opportunities to enhance the physical and financial wellbeing of pastors, teachers, and other church workers and their families; and

WHEREAS, Through CPS and the Concordia Plans, the ministries of the LCMS are able to participate in benefit plans that are uniquely aligned with the shared beliefs and practices of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, CPS and the Concordia Plans continue to maintain high quality programs and services that are appropriate to provide to those who have answered the call to serve the Lord and His Church (Rom. 4:4; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17–18); therefore be it

Resolved, That the LCMS continue to pray for and support the efforts of CPS and the Concordia Plans; and be it further

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention give thanks and praise to God our loving Father for the blessings He has provided to His workers through CPS and the Concordia Plans, and for the community of LCMS ministries that “walk together” in caring for workers and their families, so that the Word of God might continue to be freely proclaimed and heard; and be it finally

Resolved, That the LCMS in convention give thanks to James Sanft, President and CEO of CPS, for his exemplary dedication, leadership, and vision for the care of God’s professional church workers now and in the future, by standing and singing the Common Doxology.

To Task Board for National Mission to Assess Worker Wellness and Make Recommendations for Worker Care

RESOLUTION 18-02

Reports R1.2, R13 (*CW*, pp. 27, 74–76); President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)

1 WHEREAS, Jesus invites his followers, including ministers of the Gospel, to “[c]ome to me, all who labor and
2 are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me ... and you will find rest for
3 your souls” (Matt. 11:28–29); and
4

5 WHEREAS, Grace was given to the church and its members, including ordained and commissioned ministers, for
6 “building up the body of Christ ... to maturity, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...” (Eph. 4:7–
7 16); and
8

9 WHEREAS, Rest was built into creation along with attending to God’s creation, especially the people of his
10 creation, and in the pilot, Church Worker Family Needs Assessment (CW-FNA) in the Pacific South West, Kansas
11 and Ohio Districts, 47 percent of the church workers (950) who took the survey reported that they rarely or never
12 invested appropriately in Sabbath rest or leisure; and
13

14 WHEREAS, District presidents in a spring, 2016 survey identified the primary worker wellness issues to be
15 burnout, stress, and depression, followed by marriage and family, diet and health, and finances; and
16

17 WHEREAS, The wellness of single and married church workers and their marriages and families is crucial to the
18 health of the local congregation; and
19

20 WHEREAS, The Concordia Plan Services (CPS), the LCMS Office of National Mission (ONM), and the
21 Concordia Center for the Family (CCF) at Concordia University Ann Arbor (CUAA) have partnered with
22 Congregation Family Services, a provider of family ministry research and consultation, in a pilot research project
23 called the LCMS CW-FNA to deliver solid researched-based information to provide the church with a portrait of
24 church worker needs and health; therefore be it
25

26 *Resolved*, That the Board for National Mission take up the responsibility for
27

- 28 1. Assessing the gaps in ministerial wellness throughout the Synod
- 29 2. Promoting worker wellness within the Synod through official publications and special mailings
- 30 3. Facilitating cooperation and the sharing of resources between RSOs and specialized worker wellness
31 programs within Synod
- 32 4. Responding to the needs and requests of districts and district presidents in the identification and provision
33 of ministerial wellness programming resources and funding
- 34 5. Studying, developing, and encouraging opportunities and suggestions for sabbaticals
- 35 6. Working with Mission Advancement to identify funding sources and solicit contributions for worker
36 wellness throughout Synod
37

38 and be it further
39

40 *Resolved*, That the Office of National Mission provide bi-annual progress reports and conversation with the
41 Council of Presidents; and be it finally
42

43 *Resolved*, That the Office of National Mission provide a report of its progress to the 2019 Synod convention.
44

45 *[The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report*
46 *of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]*
47
48

49 **Addressing Indebtedness of Church Work Professionals**

50 **RESOLUTION 18-03**

51 Overtures 9-03–04, 9-08 (CW, pp. 379–381); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)
52

53 WHEREAS, The Synod continues to pray that our Lord would send faithful laborers into the harvest fields (Luke
54 10:2); and
55
56

1
2 WHEREAS, Student indebtedness can be a deterrent for potential professional church workers; and
3
4 WHEREAS, The Synod takes seriously the Lord’s command that “the worker is worthy of his wage” (1 Tim.
5 5:18); and
6
7 WHEREAS, The cost of higher education has increased at a substantially higher rate than has anticipated
8 potential income; and
9
10 WHEREAS, Typical salaries for professional church workers may make it difficult to sustain a household and
11 also repay incurred debt; and
12
13 WHEREAS, Student indebtedness can discourage healthy stewardship; and
14
15 WHEREAS, One of the Synod’s foundational objectives is to “[r]ecruit and train pastors, teachers, and other
16 professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” (Constitution Article III 3); and
17
18 WHEREAS, Research done by the LCMS seminaries has shown that undergraduate debt and personal financial
19 management contribute significantly to subsequent educational loan debt; and
20
21 WHEREAS, Student indebtedness is a well-documented burden; and
22
23 WHEREAS, In order to qualify for federal loan programs, our seminaries and universities are being forced to
24 accommodate Federal Department of Education policies that may be in conflict with our shared beliefs and practices
25 in the Synod; and
26
27 WHEREAS, Attending a Concordia University System (CUS) school well equips men for subsequent seminary
28 training; and
29
30 WHEREAS, The average tuition paid by seminarians is under \$5,000 per year; and
31
32 WHEREAS, The seminaries are pursuing making financial counseling available to all students; therefore be it
33
34 *Resolved*, That the leadership of our Concordia seminaries and universities/colleges explore alternate funding
35 sources apart from federal loans; and be it further
36
37 *Resolved*, That schools in the CUS provide financial counseling to church worker students throughout their
38 academic career; and be it further
39
40 *Resolved*, That the congregations and ministries of the Synod be encouraged to identify and raise up the next
41 generation of leaders for the ministry of the church and support them in obtaining their training; and be it finally
42
43 *Resolved*, That districts of the Synod be encouraged to develop means by which they may assist students
44 preparing for church-work careers.
45
46
47

48 **To Encourage Congregations, Ministries, and Church Workers**
49 **to Develop an Intentional Wellness Care Plan**

50 **RESOLUTION 18-04**

51 Reports R1.2, R13 (*CW*, pp. 27, 74–76); President’s Report, Part 2 (*TB*, pp. 21–31)
52

53 WHEREAS, “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood” (Eph. 5:10–18) and these Satanic attacks on
54 congregations, ministries, marriages, families, and individuals can lead to despair, loneliness, poor choices, and sin;
55
56

1 and

2
3 WHEREAS, The most disciplined and faithful workers struggle with the weakness of the flesh (Rom. 7:18–25);
4 and

5
6 WHEREAS, Many congregations and ministries are facing numerical decline and financial pressures leading to
7 greater stress on workers; and

8
9 WHEREAS, Congregations and ministries know the value of healthy church workers; and

10
11 WHEREAS, Church workers know the gifts God has given to His own dear children even in the midst of
12 struggles and suffering; and

13
14 WHEREAS, There is measurable value in forming and following an intentional and articulated plan; therefore be it

15
16 *Resolved*, That congregation and ministry leaders be encouraged to become informed of LCMS– and
17 community–based resources in order to provide and assist church workers with emotional, physical, relational, and
18 spiritual wellness; and be it further

19
20 *Resolved*, That congregations and ministries be encouraged to develop intentional plans for church worker care
21 of body, mind, and spirit, drawing on the rich resources available including Concordia Plan Services, Grace Place
22 Wellness Ministries, DOXOLOGY: The Lutheran Center of Spiritual Care and Counsel, and Shepherd’s Canyon;
23 and be it finally

24
25 *Resolved*, That church workers be encouraged to develop an intentional self-care plan as part of their continuing
26 education portfolio.

27
28
29
30 **To Encourage District Presidents, Circuit Visitors, and Congregations**
31 **to Utilize Resources already Established for Ministerial Wellness**

32
33 **RESOLUTION 18-05**

34
35 Reports R1.2, R13 (CW, pp. 27, 30, 74–76); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, pp. 21–31)

36
37 WHEREAS, Ministry is demanding and the minister is to maintain high standards (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1); and

38
39 WHEREAS, On the basis of retreats offered at Shepherd’s Canyon Retreat since 2009, it is reported that common
40 sentiments of ministers’ spouses attending weeklong counseling retreats have included feelings of resentment,
41 powerlessness, intimidation, and sadness regarding dynamics within the congregation over which they have little
42 influence; and yet by the end of the retreat Shepherd’s Canyon reports that the retreat has resulted in many saved
43 ministries and hopeful marriages along with participants gaining additional tools, insights, and appreciation for
44 having experienced a safe place to work on themselves; and

45
46 WHEREAS, Based on Grace Place Wellness Ministries serving over 4000 pastors plus spouses in retreats, it was
47 learned that the primary challenges among pastors to be various forms of isolation, financial challenges, and dealing
48 with perceived unreasonable expectations of congregations; and in independent assessments of retreat participants
49 by the Alban Institute, respondents overwhelmingly report improvements in spiritual health (94%), intellectual
50 health (81%), along with physical wellbeing and health of relationships (77%), and The Barna Group reports that
51 attendees experienced improvement in emotional wellbeing (73%) and accountability (61%); and

52
53 WHEREAS, Concordia Plan Services (CPS) through their Employee Assistance Program and Pastoral Support
54 Network, Ministerial Care Coalition, and other wellness programs offer both preventive and treatment options for
55 the wellbeing of workers and families; and

56

1 WHEREAS, DOXOLOGY, The Lutheran Center of Spiritual Care and Counsel, has reported that women who
 2 have attended DOXOLOGY with their husbands have disclosed that their husbands who completed the program
 3 have experienced progress in handling stress, are more content and joyful in ministry, more attentive to wife and
 4 family, and relate more effectively with their members; and
 5

6 WHEREAS, DOXOLOGY reports that among other ministerial wellness results, 34 percent of pastors who
 7 participate in the three-part training and spiritual care program have noted a significant difference in their ministry
 8 as a result of being able to detect compassion fatigue and respond to it in healthy ways, and 46 percent of pastors
 9 have grown in their recognition and appreciation of emotional intelligence and its application in ministry; and
 10

11 WHEREAS, It is estimated that nearly 40 percent of ministers “lack awareness” of ministerial wellness resources
 12 already available; and
 13

14 WHEREAS, Over 70 percent of district presidents in a recent survey stated they would refer ministers to clinical
 15 pastoral education programs if they were vetted, affordable, and convenient; therefore be it
 16

17 *Resolved*, That Concordia Plan Services, DOXOLOGY, Grace Place Wellness Ministries, Shepherd’s Canyon
 18 Retreat, Soldiers of the Cross, and Veterans of the Cross be commended for their service to ministers and spouses;
 19 and be it further
 20

21 *Resolved*, That the above named ministries and other identified LCMS-approved ministerial wellness services
 22 be promoted within districts and circuits as valuable resources for ministerial and family care; and be it finally
 23

24 *Resolved*, that clinical pastoral education programs be identified, vetted and recommended through the Office of
 25 National Mission and Specialized Pastoral Ministry to district presidents and circuit visitors as sources of support for
 26 ordained and commissioned ministers who need to increase competency in pastoral care, explore a vocational
 27 change, and/or become revitalized for parish ministry.
 28
 29
 30

31 **To Respectfully Decline Overtures**
 32

33 **RESOLUTION 18-06**
 34

35 WHEREAS, The floor committee has considered all overtures assigned to it and has concluded, for various
 36 reasons, that certain overtures should be declined; therefore be it
 37

38 *Resolved*, That the following overtures be respectfully declined for the reasons given:
 39

<u>Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reason</u>
18-02	To Encourage CPS to Provide Paid Maternity Leave to Workers Enrolled in Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan Who Are New Adoptive Mothers	The responsibility of this overture lies with the local congregation; it is a human resources issue, not a benefit issue
18-03	To Encourage Annual Review of Reported Salary Information	This issue is already being addressed by CPS



THE
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