



**DAILY MINUTES  
OF THE  
39<sup>TH</sup> CONVENTION OF THE  
SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT, LCMS**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2022 (ONLINE SESSION)**

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**Wednesday Evening**

**The 39th Convention of the Southeastern District reconvened at 6:00 pm with a welcome from Pres. John Denninger.**

**Evening Devotions**

- Worship Leader: Grace Lutheran Church, Concord, North Carolina
  - Rev. Don Anthony
- Rev. Bill Beyer, Proclaimer, First Vice-President, SED, LCMS
- Music by Grace Choir

**Report from Registration Committee**

Online: 181 screens (20 doubles), 16 at Redeemer

**The Great Sending, Part II:** Rev. Dr. Jon Diefenthaler, Pres. Emeritus of SED, LCMS

The Functions of the SED Story, 83 years old this year

Identity – we have been part of the Great Sending, having been founded to “exploit the mission opportunities” in the five state mid-Atlantic region; first convention in Conover, NC in 1939; first called person was a full-time Mission Executive; this is our heritage and The Great Sending can aid us to continue

Repentance – Facing the ways we have not been faithful; particularly as we think of African-American Missions; Immanuel Lutheran College is a positive part of this history, except that it was segregated and the sixteen congregations accepted into the SED were not granted the same rights as other congregations; at the 1970 Convention a confrontation by Black pastors led to an increase in salaries of Black pastors and Blacks were represented in SED Leadership. We must continue to amend our lives to move to a better place. It’s a time of racial reckoning; and inclusion now of many ethnic new ministries and congregations.

Perspective – Looking through the hallways of the past to get a better understanding of where we are today so that we can move into the future. We are living in a post-churched America. We are outsiders rather than insiders. Fewer people have their lives centered on the church. “We are living in a new missionary age.”



Faith – The Yardstick to help us understand. Lutheran faith calls us to keep Law and Gospel at the center of what we do. Review “A Theological Statement of Mission” to understand The Great Sending (TGS). The Priesthood of All Believers and Vocation encourage us to be in mission in our daily lives. “Sola Scriptura [Scripture Alone]” gives us the basis for TGS.

It all comes down to two things – First: “Ora et Labora [pray and work]”. As we pray we stay in touch with the God whose heart beats with mission for all people and now we have to work to let this happen through us.

Second: Let’s have the suggested year of Jubilee dedicated to The Great Sending.

### **Report and Q&A with Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, LCMS President**

President Harrison showed his video report to the District lifting up the next Convention’s theme: “We Preach Christ Crucified”

He also showed a PowerPoint presentation with the following slides: COVID Blessings and Challenges; 963 Soldiers of the Cross Grants; 30 “Take Heart” Doxology Retreats (now for Commissioned Ministers); 7-03 Task Force CUS [Concordia University System] Lutheran Identity & Mission; New Leadership at a number of schools; Church Relations with International Church Bodies; Religious Freedom in Finland; Ukraine (have taken in over \$2 million in assistance for projects); LWML; Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sudan/South Sudan; Office of International Mission (12 staff for 300 missionaries & families); Average 1 Year missionary funding in advance; Livonia Project; Dominican Seminary; Spanish Hymnal and App; Taiwan Seminary separating from ELCA counterparts; Africa 15 Seminaries; Rebuilt Seminary in India; Making Disciples for Life Conferences; Life Network; Disaster Relief; Million Dollar Life Match; 19,000 Everyone His Witness Workbooks Sold; 19,000 Registrations for National Youth Gathering; Rural and Small Town Ministry; Child Protection Program; Best Financial Shape of 30+ years; \$3.5 Million per year to Seminaries; “Set Apart to Serve” Church Worker Recruitment; Relationships Count 2016 LCMS Youth Ministry Study; Large Catechism coming; \$2 Million Church Planting Grant; 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of LCMS

President Harrison then spent some time answering questions from participants; Reading list for 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary?

What can we learn from founders?: “Undaunted Courage” and absolutely committed to Scripture and Small Catechism;

What does “Woke Culture” mean? It includes racial justice but also sexual ambiguity which denies the Fatherhood of God and Jesus;

What about suicides? Luther did not condemn them outright, but as victims of mental illness that does not pull them out of Jesus’ care;

What can be done to raise up new church workers? A challenging issue because demographics are working against recruitment, though Youth Gathering will be tremendous tool for recruiting. Invite all young men to consider it not just a select few. How about small congregations; how can they be served? We still train lay leaders.

What has COVID left in congregations? People are surprisingly resilient. What is the state of relationships with other Lutheran denominations in U.S.A.? We have relationships with the NALC, but handicapped by the issue of ordination of women. Still talking with Wisconsin Synod people and good friends with them; also with the small Norwegian synod. Remarkably they want to be talking and we're grateful for that.

President Harrison ended with thanks to President Denninger for his decade of service.

### **Special Recognitions**

The most recent Lay Deacon Class, training focused on outreach and evangelism; so that the trainees can assist congregations identify with their communities; also the Interethnic Lay Deacon program;

The first cohort was displayed on slides-21-eswpsps-w==q-21==2]1=-wq[-sa

Judy Koucky, Archivist for the last 39 years, since 1983, was presented with a special recognition by Deac. Sally Hiller at St. Paul, Falls Church, VA recently. The video of the presentation was shown.

Steve Heeman, former SED Vice-President of Finance, through Lutheran Church Extension Fund was recognized for his twenty years of service in LCEF with the Walter Hauck award and induction into the Silver Eagles of LCEF.

**Convention Adjourned at 8:30 pm** until Thursday for in-person session in Richmond, VA, registration beginning at 3 pm, session at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary D. Rueter, Secretary Pro-Tem  
(Reviewed by Beth Elgert, Rev. Dr. Roy Minnix, & Donna Roye)