



**DAILY MINUTES
OF THE
39TH CONVENTION OF THE
SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT, LCMS**

FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2022 (IN-PERSON SESSION)

The 39th Convention of the Southeastern District reconvened at 9 AM.

Morning Devotions

Rev. Dr. Greg Walton, Chaplain

Music by Redeemer, Richmond, Virginia

Business Session

Report of the Registration Committee

Pastor Voting Delegates – 108

Lay Voting Delegates – 120

Total – 228 Voting Delegates

Advisory Delegates – 30

All Others – 46

Total Attendance - 304

Secretary Pro Tem declared that a quorum was present.

Approval of Thursday Evening Minutes

The Minute Review Committee is reviewing the minutes of last night's session and they will be approved when all reviews are in.

President Denninger made the following statement about the previous evening's moves on removing Overture BL 04-22-15 from the Omnibus Resolution.

"Last evening, minutes before the 39th convention was gavelled to order, a good faith decision was made by the Convention Chair, Floor Committee Chair, and Parliamentarian to honor the request of a duly credentialed voting delegate to endeavor to take from Resolution BL 04-22-10 Omnibus A, Overture OV BL 04- 22 -15 that had been determined by the Floor Committee to be most appropriately placed in an Omnibus Resolution that would result in further consideration of the referenced Overture by the Southeastern District Board of Directors.

"During the unfolding of that process, the requirement of Bylaw X. 1. Amendments was noted by the Parliamentarian: 'These Bylaws may be amended at a District Convention by the majority vote of those members present at a regular session, provided there is written notice to congregations concerning the proposed amendment 30 days in advance of the Convention.'

Another delegate expressed belief that this Bylaw requirement had been met by the dissemination of advance convention materials to SED congregations and/or voting

delegates, which included the Overture in question. In response, the Chair ruled, in effect, that such dissemination did not meet the Bylaw requirement of 'written notice to congregations concerning the proposed amendment 30 days in advance of the Convention.'

"After the Chair's ruling was challenged by another duly credentialed voting delegate, a vote of convention delegates upheld the ruling of the Chair, resulting in the referenced Overture remaining in the referenced Omnibus Resolution, which would send the Overture to the District Board of Directors for careful consideration. The Omnibus Resolution will be considered during today's convention session."

Floor Committee 01: Missions: Chair: President Elect Bill Harmon.

Committee 1 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

MD 01-22-01A To Declare a Year of Jubilee

(Overtures: MD 01-22-01; MD 01-22-02)

WHEREAS, The priesthood of all believers have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit to carry out the Great Commission to go into all the world; and

WHEREAS, The vision of the Southeastern District (SED) is to connect our neighbors to Jesus so that lives are transformed and God's Kingdom grows; and

WHEREAS, The SED has made available through book and video means the published resource The Great Sending – God's Heart Beating Through You; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in Convention in 2019 established seven mission priorities; therefore be it

RESOLVED, The SED continue to support the seven priorities identified at the 2019 LCMS Convention:

1. Plant, sustain, and revitalize Lutheran churches;
2. Support and expand theological education;
3. Perform human care in close proximity to Word and Sacrament ministries;
4. Promote and nurture the spiritual, emotional, financial, and physical wellbeing of pastors and professional church workers;
5. Collaborate with the Synod's members and partners to enhance mission effectiveness;
6. Enhance early childhood education, elementary and secondary education, and youth ministry; and
7. Strengthen and support the Lutheran family in living out God's design; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the SED in Convention declares the 85th anniversary of the District as a year of Jubilee in 2024, a season of celebration and sending, where congregations, schools, and service organizations focus on the Great Sending; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the President of the SED work with congregations to provide resources and guidance for the Jubilee.

In discussion a friendly amendment was accepted, inserting the year of the Jubilee, 2024.
Passed: Yes – 199; No – 16

Committee 1 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

MD 01-22-02 To Expand Partnerships Among English-Speaking and Interethnic Congregations

WHEREAS, The Southeastern District (SED) has experienced considerable growth among ethnic ministries; and

WHEREAS, Interethnic ministries have an opportunity to give witness to the Gospel to non-Christians and unchurched communities; and

WHEREAS, There is an opportunity for English-speaking congregations and interethnic specific missions to learn from and support each other with emphasis on generational language barriers and equipping second-generations with the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in partnership with the SED is supporting a national missionary for Spanish-speaking people and establishing a National Missionary Training Center within the SED; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the SED President work with congregations and ethnic ministries within the SED to create paths for partnership; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That new ways of connecting with new people groups for the sake of the Gospel be established.

Seeing no speakers to the resolution, the vote was called.

Passed: Yes – 207; No – 8

Committee 1 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

MD 01-22-03A To Conduct a Southeastern District Staffing and Facility Study
(Overture MD-01-22-03)

WHEREAS, The harvest is plentiful as 10% of the nation's population lives within the borders of the Southeastern District (SED); and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 Pandemic has provided churches and schools unique opportunities to utilize technologies and resources in different ways in order to do ministries; and

WHEREAS, The use of technology may allow the SED to reach and expand in new ways across a geographically, ethnically, and culturally diverse District; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the SED President appoint a task force to conduct a study of district staffing and facility needs in order to promote the vision of the SED and support and empower congregations, schools and other ministries; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the President present the SED Board of Directors with its findings before the next SED Convention; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the SED President present findings of the report and any action taken from the report to the next convention.

After a brief discussion, the vote was called.

Passed: Yes – 186; No – 32

Committee 1 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

MD 01-22-04 To Call for Prayer for Peace

WHEREAS, The conflict between Russia and Ukraine is ongoing, displacing the people of Ukraine and creating painful tragedy, human suffering and threatening world peace; and

WHEREAS, The Ukrainian Lutheran Church continues to minister to the people of Ukraine with human care needs and the hope of the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as well as other human care agencies are working with our partners in Ukraine; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the members of the Southeastern District continue to pray for peace and reconciliation in Ukraine, Russia, and throughout the world; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the members of the SED be encouraged to support agencies and organizations within the church to promote peace, reconciliation between warring parties and aid and comfort to those displaced or affected by the war; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the SED pray for LCMS workers all over the world and especially in areas of war and conflict.

Seeing no speakers to the resolution, the vote was called.

Passed: Yes – 203; No – 12

Floor Committee 1 was thanked and dismissed.

Report from Southeastern District Board Chairperson: Beth Elgert

Mrs. Elgert began with a reading of Acts 6, the selection of deacons. She then related the makeup of the Board of Directors and the task of the Board to oversee the work of the District. She related stories of Board members accepting a challenge to do something in their own neighborhood. She challenged all delegates to do something similar in their own neighborhoods with many examples. Please accept the challenge of this convention to live as those who are sent.

Floor Committee 02: Congregational Outreach: Chair: First Vice President Elect
Rev. Dr. Lloyd Gaines

Committee 2 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

CO 02-22-01A Towards Racial Justice and the Great Commission

WHEREAS, Racial injustice is a shameful sin, as well as an obstacle to the Great Commission, it would be irresponsible of us not to examine our human failings with respect both to the Great Commandment of love and the Great Commission to make disciples of all people; and

WHEREAS, Racial injustice remains a severe obstacle to carrying out the Great Commission of making disciples of all tribes, languages, and nations through the Gospel and drawing them into the body of Christ; and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther taught, and we confess, that the Fifth Commandment, You shall not murder, means we should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbors, but help and defend them in every physical need, which most of us have shamefully failed to do especially regarding our fellow Americans who are Black; and

WHEREAS, The picture of Christians that we have often given others is not that of compassionate people, but instead of people whose faith is without much love when it comes to racial injustices, an offense that has kept many people, Black and White, and people of other ethnic groups from joining our church; and

WHEREAS, We lament the widespread silence of Christians in the face of slavery and other racial injustices; and

WHEREAS, The impact of slavery is deeply embedded in our nation's culture - enforced by law, custom, and habits, including extreme racist laws and lynching that terrorize Black people, especially in the South, as well as discrimination throughout the nation in jobs, housing, education, and other areas that enforced preferential treatment of Whites and pushed a great many Black and people of other ethnic groups into absolute or relative poverty, doing significant damage to families; and



WHEREAS, Racial injustices, past and present, cause great suffering to many Americans and harm our entire nation; and

WHEREAS, Past discrimination leaves in place economic and social liabilities that would persist even if racial prejudice suddenly disappeared; and

WHEREAS, Racial justice, for which all of us are responsible, does not depend only on our kindness toward others (essential as that is), but on just laws, institutions, and practices that are genuinely fair and reflect action to repair unfairness that has accumulated over centuries of racial injustices and oppression; and

WHEREAS, Many LCMS convention resolutions on the issue of race have asserted the clear biblical teaching that all humans, whatever the color of their skin, have been created in the image of God and redeemed through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; yet we continue to lag in mission outreach that crosses racial lines, and in addressing racial injustices that divide our nation – offenses that put us in need of God's mercy and call us to action; and

WHEREAS, The report of Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations (Racism and the Church 1994) documents a disturbing pattern in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod of following the path of our surrounding culture regarding slavery and other racial injustices, thus conforming to the world rather than being transformed in Christ (Romans 12:2); and

WHEREAS, Our former policy of having racially segregated churches and schools resulted in turning people of color and other ethnic groups away from our church doors and in fewer new members of color, yet these habits and attitudes of old sins persist, making our outreach across racial lines more difficult now than it should be; and

WHEREAS, Despite some commendable exceptions, too few Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod members have been active or vocal in protesting racial injustices, a silence that is seen as consent; and

WHEREAS, We give thanks to God for courageous leaders among us, Black and White, along with the thousands of people of color forgiven and filled with the merciful love of Christ, who over the years have overcome racial barriers and do so even today, we still have much to learn about how to be racially inclusive; for all of which we seek the grace of God to find more faithful ways of reflecting God's love and our unity in Christ; and

WHEREAS, To reach deeply into the life of our congregations, an unprecedented church-wide campaign that is truly filled with the love and joy of the Holy Spirit cries out for our response; and

WHEREAS, A Day of Repentance and Prayer for Racial could be enhanced with simple but starkly honest background material, highlighting racial injustices in the nation's

history, and even in its Christian churches, including our own Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod; and

WHEREAS, Such an event should be held Synod-wide urging all LCMS pastors, congregations, and other affiliates of Synod to participate perhaps on the first Sunday of February or the Sunday closest to the Juneteenth celebration; and

WHEREAS, This event should be a joyous, Spirit-filled day that can deepen our faith in Christ, empower us to seek racial justice, and help us eagerly to welcome people across all racial and ethnic groups into fellowship with us through our Lord and Savior; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That by the next Synod Convention, we respectfully urge the President of Synod and its district presidents to have designated a specified annual Sunday as "A Day of Repentance and Prayer for Racial Justice and Healing" in our land urging all LCMS pastors and congregations and other affiliates of Synod to participate, and be it

RESOLVED, That we see this day of corporate and individual repentance and prayer as a long-overdue confession of sins against people of color, which most of us, by our silence, have mainly kept hidden even from ourselves, and for which we truly apologize, seek their forgiveness, and beg for God's great mercy that sets us free to be reconciled with all people regardless of race or color; and finally be it

RESOLVED, That we become known as a church body that eagerly welcomes people across all racial and ethnic groups into fellowship with us through our Lord and Savior.

Several persons approached microphones to speak. One spoke against the resolution as painting with too broad a brush and appearing to be a "critical race theory" product. Another questioned the use of a 1994 report for a basis of a whereas. Another spoke against the unclarity of the term racial justice. A couple of friendly amendments were made (10th whereas added the word "yet" before we still; first resolved, inserted words "we respectfully urge" before the President of Synod, "to have" before "designate", change designate to "designated," and "annual" before Sunday; 2nd resolved correct the typo of "or" between race and color. Several also spoke in favor of the resolution as promoting proper repentance and in accord with the historical background of discrimination in the LCMS.

A substitute motion was presented by Jim Knill, Pastoral delegate, Triangle, VA, and was read by the Secretary Pro Tem.

SUB CO 02-22-01A

WHEREAS, The Holy Scriptures affirm that all human beings have a common mother, frequently noted in scientific literature as Mitochondrial Eve (geneticists Rebecca Cann, Robert Lewin, and others), making us all brothers and sisters from the beginning; and



WHEREAS, In many instances, both church and world have ignored that fact and have sought to create or even incite divisions along racial lines; and

WHEREAS, Our sinful human nature has sought to elevate one race and devalue others; and

WHEREAS, These sinful divisions and devaluations have caused, and in some instances still cause pain and suffering to portions of God's people, the economic and social effects of which are real; and

WHEREAS, God Himself seems to have shown His displeasure with racial distinctions in that, when Moses' sister protested her brother's marriage to a Cushite (Ethiopian) woman, the Lord made Miriam a leper for a time; and

WHEREAS, There is no room in the Kingdom of God or among His people for divisions and discrimination in word and deed, nor is there room even for sinful division and discrimination in the heart now, be it therefore

RESOLVED, That the congregations and the people of the Southeastern District of the LCMS do everything necessary that there be zero deeds or words among us that support or encourage racial divisions; and be it

RESOLVED, That each of us examine our hearts to see if we hold or harbor any prejudicial thoughts against anyone of a different race and, if we do, repent, seek God's forgiveness, and live with a renewed heart and attitude; and

RESOLVED, That if any racial offenses done by us against an individual or individuals become known to us, we seek reconciliation, in order that there may be true unity in the Body of Christ among us; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That any congregations, school, or other entity within the Southeastern District that is discovered to be engaging in racial division or discrimination be called to account, brought to acknowledge its offensive behavior, and guided by proper authorities within the church body to bring its behavior within the clear will of the God they are established to serve.

Delegates were asked if they wished to consider the Substitute Motion.

Agreed: Yes - 115; No - 108

In order to get the resolution in printed form to the delegates, this issue was placed on the table for a time.

Committee 2 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

CO 02-22-02A To Address the Lutheran Teacher Shortage and Low Teacher Salaries by Initiating a Student Debt Assistance Program for LCMS Commissioned Minister – Teacher

Overture: OV CO 02-22-04

WHEREAS, Our Lutheran Schools struggle to find rostered teachers to serve in the classrooms of our High Schools, Middle Schools, Elementary Schools, Pre-schools and Child Development Centers¹; and

WHEREAS, Research has shown that a primary reason for this struggle is the lower salary offered for teachers within the Lutheran school systems^{2 3}; and

WHEREAS, Concordia Plans reported in 2021 that 27% of LCMS workers have student debt that averages \$46,000 per student; and

WHEREAS, The reality of student loan debt is an important part of the decision to seek employment outside the Lutheran school; and

WHEREAS, The Southeastern District LCMS already has in place a Tuition Assistance Program to financially assist those who have pledged their service to become rostered LCMS workers, which has in the past three years awarded 48 students more than \$98,700, and has resources in place to assist present rostered workers seek student loan repayment; and

WHEREAS, It is a value that we fill our schools with rostered workers⁴; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That a National Lutheran Teacher Student Debt Assistance Program be developed that recognizes the service of Lutheran Teachers through student loan debt repayment assistance; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a committee comprised of members of the Education Department of the Concordia University System, LCMS School Ministry, Concordia Plans, The Foundation, and the Council of Presidents develops the loan repayment assistance process; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a special, designated offering to establish this program be taken during the National Lutheran Schools Weeks of 2024, 2025, and 2026; and be it further

RESOLVED, That reports of this work be provided through regular communications of the Synod; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District, LCMS memorialize the Synod in Convention to adopt National Lutheran Teacher Student Debt Assistance Program.

Footnotes:

1. The number of new commissioned teachers has steadily declined since 2005 (Concordia University System [CUS] Board for University Education [BUE] statistics); and

The fulfillment rate of requests for first-year Synod-trained candidates to LCMS calling entities has declined from 63 percent in 2010 to 30 percent in 2018 because of the lack of available Synod-trained candidates (CUS BUE statistics);

The CUS only graduated 23 early childhood educators, 39 elementary educators, and 32 secondary educators in 2018 (CUS BUE statistics); (2019 Resolution 12:02A, p.222 of 2019 LCMS Convention Proceedings)
2. Theme 8 of Office of National Mission's "LCMS Church Worker Wellness Insights," presentation by Rev. Robert Zagore, Office of National Mission to Gospel 2019
 - ❖ Financial wellbeing is unique among worker needs in that the major problems are beyond the worker's ability to change – most often the problem is that the workers are in a mathematically impossible situation
 - Workers are under-paid for their skill level and workload
 - Costs for health care are being pushed to the workers
 - Young workers are burdened with significant student debt
 - ❖ Many calling bodies are unable to pay their workers what is necessary
 - *"The toughest work is being done in the places that can pay the least"* (i.e. dying congregations, inner-city churches, immigrant ministries, etc.)
3. Note: Conclusion of Final Report of the Blue-Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools (2019 R.63)
"Lutheran education is a noble calling, yet it is facing significant challenges. Data support a real need for synodical entities to bring resolution to indebtedness for church workers. With the impending retirement of many teachers and administrators coupled with the diminishing numbers of Lutheran Teacher Diploma (LTD) candidates enrolling in the Concordia University System, there is an increased sense of urgency to recruit and retain qualified young people in the Lutheran teaching ministry. The desire to enter the vocation of education is lessening due to several factors including classroom management issues, public perception of the profession and state regulations. Additionally, many students are coming out of college with significant debt and are paid salaries below recommended levels. The trendline on debt and salary must change or the teacher shortage will likely continue. Teachers and administrators are in a great position to influence current and future students about the joys and rewards of church work and need to be intentional in their efforts to help recruit new students for the Concordia University System." (2019 LCMS Convention Workbook, p.344-348.)
4. The 2016 Synod Convention Res. 8-01A, "To Encourage and Strengthen the Lutheran Ethos of Our LCMS Early Childhood Centers, Elementary Schools, and High Schools" specifically identified that a characteristic of a Lutheran school with a strong Lutheran ethos has "LCMS-trained Lutheran teachers ... who know and are committed to the truths of the Scriptures as confessed in our Lutheran Confessions (2019 LCMS Convention Proceedings, Resolution 12-02 A, p.221)"

An amendment was moved to support Classical Lutheran College (in formation). The Chair ruled the amendment out of order and the Convention supported the ruling .

Yes – 180; No – 28



Friendly amendments were made to the first resolved to substitute “student loan debt repayment assistance” in place of “forgiveness”, and in second resolved, replace “forgiveness” with “loan repayment assistance.”

Passed: Yes – 188; No - 22

Committee 2 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

CO 02-22-03 To Give Thanks for Concordia College - New York and Explore Future Lutheran Higher Education Opportunities in the East Coast Region
(Overture CO 02-22-05)

WHEREAS, Concordia College - New York served as an institution of higher education for over 140 years; and

WHEREAS, Through the Concordia University System, countless women and men receive a quality, Christian education to be sent out to live their vocations in the name of Jesus; and

WHEREAS, Concordia College - New York continues to have a significant impact on the church at large through the witness of the priesthood of believers who attended the college; and

WHEREAS, With the closure of Concordia College - New York, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has no Higher Education learning center on the East Coast of the United States; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District gives thanks to God for Concordia College - New York and its contribution to the wider church and society; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District gives thanks to God for the Care and Comfort Committee that raised dollars to support the staff members of Concordia College – New York who were losing jobs due to the closure of the school; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District in Convention instructs the District President to work with other District Presidents in the East Coast Region and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in identifying opportunities for the establishment of a new higher education learning center, either physically or virtually, based in the East Coast Region.

Seeing no speakers to the resolution, the vote was called.

Passed: Yes - 183; No – 20



Committee 2 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

CO 02-22-04 To Provide Disaster Response Training for Every Circuit of the Southeastern District

(Overture CO 02-22-06)

WHEREAS, Natural and man-made disasters have caused devastation in the Southeastern District in recent years; and

WHEREAS, Our District and Synod have been actively involved in disaster response ministry, working with local congregations to serve hurting neighbors and give witness to the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS Disaster Response office has created a national organization of over 20,000 Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) volunteers, and an excellent LERT basic training course; and

WHEREAS, The ministry of SED congregations will be well-served when local leaders are knowledgeable about LCMS disaster response ministry options; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Circuit Visitors of the Southeastern District, or their designee, participate in a LERT basic training course prior to the end of 2023; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That congregations of the SED be encouraged to host a LERT basic training course during the next triennium.

Seeing no speakers to the resolution, the vote was called.

Passed: Yes - 187; No – 19

Committee 2 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

CO 02-22-05 To Promote and Support Bringing Called Church Workers to the Southeastern District

(Overture CO 02-22-03)

WHEREAS, Overall enrollment in the church worker programs in the Concordia University System is declining; and

WHEREAS, It is very difficult for churches to find qualified candidates to fill vacancies for ordained and commissioned positions; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has already made a financial reduction in the cost of tuition for men going into the pastoral ministry; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District continue to place an emphasis on bringing Called Church Workers into the District; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District make every effort to promote and support individual congregations in their efforts to encourage our youth and any other interested individuals in the ministry of the Church; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District continue to encourage congregations to establish a salary scale that provides for the financial viability of its church workers; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District continue to seek to help candidates for the ministry by providing tuition financial support not only for pastoral candidates but to include all Call-eligible candidates attending the Concordia University System.

A friendly amendment was made to last whereas: “individual” to “men” (for pastors)
Passed: Yes - 200; No – 17

The substitute motion (SUB CO 02-22-01A) was taken off the table.
Many speakers spoke in favor of or opposed the substitute resolution.
The President asked for a vote for closure of debate:
Yes – 199; No – 26

The Substitute Motion came before the Assembly.
Passed: Yes – 115; No - 108

Floor Committee 2 and its resolutions were set aside for a time.

Floor Committee 03: Stewardship & Finance – Co-chairs: Tom DeMik & Joe Carlin

Committee 3 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

SF 03-22-01 To Enable the Sharing of Best Practices and Lessons Learned among the Southeastern District Churches, Schools, and Early Childhood Centers

(Overture SF 03-22-01)

WHEREAS, The Southeastern District is comprised of many churches, schools, and early childhood centers; and

WHEREAS, Southeastern District churches, schools, and early childhood centers operate in diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, The Southeastern District’s churches, schools, and early childhood centers benefit from the collaboration of best practices; and

WHEREAS, To many churches, schools, and early childhood centers in the Southeastern District this support was critical during these last few years; and

WHEREAS, This support will be even more critical in the future; and

WHEREAS, We as churches can collectively benefit from the lessons learned from the many churches of the Southeastern District; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That each church be encouraged to commit to share individual lessons learned dealing with the financial and operational burdens; and be it further

RESOLVED, That each church be encouraged to share best practices and lessons learned of delivering the message of Jesus Christ to its congregation and community; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District establish the means and methods to efficiently and effectively share these across the District.

A Friendly amendment was accepted to both resolves to “encourage” churches.

Passed: Yes – 189; No - 9

Committee 3 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

SF 03-22-02 To Form a Partnership between the Southeastern District and the LCMS Foundation to Establish a Full-time Estate and Endowment Planning Support

WHEREAS, The members of the churches of the Southeastern District are looking to optimize their estate planning in a charitable way; and

WHEREAS, The Southeastern District has over 10% of the nation’s population and does not have a dedicated LCMS Foundation representative; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS Foundation provides estate planning and endowment support; and

WHEREAS, The churches, schools and childcare centers of the Southeastern District could be benefactors of these services; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District form a partnership with the LCMS Foundation so that there would be at least one full time worker making presentations and developing gift plans throughout the Southeastern District; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District encourage congregations, schools and ministries to engage in gift planning in their congregations.

Seeing no speakers to the motion, the vote was called.

Passed: Yes – 132; No - 71

Committee 3 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

SF 03-22-03 Omnibus C (friendly amendment to upper right box)

(Overtures: SF 03-22-02, SF 03-22-04)

WHEREAS, Requests for recognition of noteworthy actions and labors of love are brought to the Southeastern District's attention at every convention; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the following overtures be received as expressions of encouragement and gratitude:

Overture Number	Title	Encouragement/Thanks
SF 03 22 02	To Recognize and Thank the LCMS and LCEF for the Strengthened and Expanded "Soldiers of the Cross" COVID-19 Response Initiative	To say thank you to LCMS, LCEF, and LHHF who provided care for SED workers during COVID-19.
CO 03 22 04	To Thank the Southeastern District, Its Churches and Congregants for the Support to the Concordia College – New York Employees Care and Comfort Fund	In appreciation for support from SED congregations, schools, and members to the Concordia College – New York Care and Comfort Fund

A friendly amendment was made to correct wording of thanks in upper right box.

Passed: Yes - 193; No - 12

Floor Committee 3 was thanked and dismissed.

Floor Committee 04: Bylaws – Chair: Mrs. Beth Elgert

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-02 To Ratify the Action of the Board of Directors Regarding the Southeastern District's Articles of Incorporation

(Overture BL 04-22-01)

WHEREAS, Synod 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"; and

WHEREAS, This review of the Second Amended And Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Southeastern District of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod was completed after the 2018 District Convention; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors of the District received the approved document and accepted it at their December 5, 2019 regular meeting (SED Bylaws X.3); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District in Convention ratify the decision of the Board of Directors that approved the Second Amended And Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Southeastern District of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod as approved by the Synod's Committee on Constitutional Matters.

Passed: Yes - 197; No - 6

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-03A To Bring Southeastern District Bylaws into Harmony with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Resolutions of the Synod

(Overture BL 04-22-03)

WHEREAS, The 2019 Convention of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod made several changes to the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws which were subsequently ratified by the congregations of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 4.1.1.2 (a) requires that the Bylaws of the districts of the Synod not conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, A review of the Southeastern District, LCMS (SED) Bylaws by the District Board of Directors (BOD) disclosed several instances where the District's Bylaws needed to be brought into harmony with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaws 3.9.2.2.3 and 4.1.1.2 (b) require districts of the Synod to submit all changes to the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) for examination to ascertain that they are in harmony with the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, In response to the SED BOD submission of proposed changes in accordance with Synod Bylaws 3.9.2.2.3 and 4.1.1.2 (b), the CCM issued its Opinion (date) recommending that certain further changes be made to bring the SED Bylaws into harmony; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Article V.2.a of the Bylaws of the SED be amended as follows:

- a. Each voting congregation of the District shall be entitled to nominate from the minister of religion-ordained roster of the Synod two (2) persons for the office of District President. Congregations shall also be entitled to nominate two (2) persons for all other positions to be filled. Nominations for offices designated for ministers of religion-ordained or ministers of religion-commissioned must be made from the appropriate roster and according to ~~residence~~ **their congregational membership** within the District or region as required. Lay nominations must also be made according to ~~residence~~ **their congregational membership** within the District or region as required. **Mid-term board**

members selected regionally, who find themselves residing in a designated region other than that of their election because regional designation was changed by the District may finish out their current terms of office.

and be it,

RESOLVED, That Article V.3.a of the Bylaws of the SED be amended as follows:

- a. Vice Presidents shall be nominated by congregations within the defined District region in which they will reside and serve, if elected. In addition, nominees will be from among those on the minister of religion-ordained roster of the respective District region.

and be it

RESOLVED, That Article V.3.c of the Bylaws of the SED be amended as follows:

- a. ~~Following~~ **Upon** the election of the **regional** Vice Presidents a **final separate election will take place ranking the Vice Presidents by separate ballots with a simple majority of voting delegates determining the second and third Vice Presidents in line of succession.** ~~by the convention delegates shall be held to determine the ranking of the Vice Presidents.~~

and be it

RESOLVED, that Article V.4.c of the Bylaws of the SED be amended as follows:

- a. Candidates receiving a majority on the first ballot shall be declared elected. In the election of the President and Vice Presidents, if no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the candidate receiving the least number of votes is to be eliminated from each successive ballot until one candidate has received a majority vote. In all other elections when a second or succeeding ballot is required for a majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes and all candidates receiving less than 15% of the votes cast shall be dropped from the ballot, unless fewer than two candidates receive 15% or more of the votes cast, in which case the three highest candidates shall constitute the ballot. In every election, balloting shall continue until every position has been filled by majority vote.

and be it

RESOLVED, That Article VI.1 be amended as follows:

1. The President, **an officer of the district**, ~~is shall be~~ the chief executive officer of the District and serves as a voting member of the Board of Directors. The President shall also perform the duties of a District President, **serving as the ecclesiastical supervisor of all rostered workers in the district**, under the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod. The President shall be a full-time, salaried official of the district, and the President (except one called to fill an unexpired term of less than 18 months) may not serve as a Pastor of a congregation.

and be it

RESOLVED, That Article VII.4 of the Bylaws of the SED be amended as follows:

1. Each member congregation of a Circuit shall be entitled to notice of and representation at a meeting of its Circuit, ~~Multi-congregation parishes are represented by one voting pastoral delegate (if not vacant) and one voting lay delegate, plus advisory delegates for each congregation that does not supply a voting delegate.~~ **Each** Circuit shall establish its own organization to achieve its objectives and to meet its responsibilities in and to the Circuit, the District, and the Synod.
and be it finally

RESOLVED, That Article X of the Bylaws of the SED be amended as follows, a new X.4 is added and then current X.4 is renumbered to X.5.

1. These Bylaws may be amended at a District Convention by the majority vote of those members present at a regular session, provided there is written notice to congregations concerning the proposed amendment 30 days in advance of the Convention.
2. The Board of Directors shall submit proposed amendments to the Synod's Commission on Constitutional Matters to ensure they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod prior to consideration by the District Convention. The Board of Directors will also obtain legal guidance to ensure that any proposed amendments are not inconsistent with the laws of the District of Columbia.
3. In the event an amendment is approved by the District in Convention without prior approval of the Synod's Commission on Constitutional Matters, such amendment will be contingent on approval of the Commission on Constitutional Matters. The amended articles or bylaws shall become effective immediately upon, and only upon, approval of the Commission on Constitutional Matters. Should the Commission on Constitutional Matters not approve the adopted changes, the District Board of Directors may modify the amendments to comply with the Commission on Constitutional Matters' requirements upon their two-thirds vote.
4. **When necessitated by amendments to the Synod Constitution or Bylaws or otherwise expressly directed by a resolution of the Synod in convention, amendments may be made by a two-thirds majority of the District Board of Directors. Such amendment shall be drafted by the Board of Directors Policy Committee and shall be reviewed in advance by the LCMS Commission on Constitutional Matters.**
5. Amendments to the District Articles of Incorporation shall be approved by a District Convention. The provisions and processes for such amendments shall be the same as for amendments to the Bylaws.

An objection was raised by a delegate that the Convention could not vote on this matter because the changes to the resolution had not come to them before the thirty days necessary before making a Bylaws change. After discussion it was determined to delay a vote on this resolution until further research was done.

Passed: Yes - 197; No - 6

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-04 To Ratify the Reassignment of Certain Congregations to Circuits

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 5.1.2 empowers districts to establish visitation circuits; and

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.1.2 (a) states the “an electoral circuit shall consist either of one or two adjacent visitation circuits, as shall be determined by the district board of directors on the basis of the following requirements: each pair of delegates shall represent 7 to 20 member congregations, involving an aggregate confirmed membership ranging from 1,500 to 10,000,” and

WHEREAS, District Bylaw VII, 1 empowers the District Board of Directors to assign congregations to circuits and requires that such assignments be ratified by the District in Convention; and

WHEREAS, The District Board of Directors appointed a Task Force in Fall 2019 to study the current grouping of congregations so that each Circuit would qualify as an electoral circuit; and

WHEREAS, The Task Force completed their work, congregations were consulted, results were shared with Circuit Visitors, and presentations were made during webinars to professional church workers; and

WHEREAS, Every Southeastern District congregation impacted by the Task Force’s recommendations was given an opportunity to make the final decision on whether or not they wished to move to a new electoral circuit and this overture reflects the final decision of each impacted congregation; and

WHEREAS, The Southeastern District Board of Directors received this report and approved it at their regular meeting on February 11, 2022; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the following congregations are moved to new circuits:

Southern Region Recommendation:

Grace by-the-Sea, Nags Head NC moves to Circuit (C)13E from C12

Central Region Recommendations:

Redeemer, Fredericksburg VA moves to C8 from C9.0

Living Hope, Stafford VA moves to C8 from C9.0

Northern Region recommendations:

St. Paul’s, Glen Burnie MD moves to C3 from C4

Galilee, Chester MD moves to C4 from C1

Trinity, Chesterton MD moves to C4 from C1



First Lutheran, Towson MD moves to C3 from C2
Holy Cross, Towson MD moves to C3 from C2
Pilgrim, Bethesda, MD moves to C7 from C6
Calvary, Silver Spring MD moves to C7 from C6
Christ Deaf, Silver Spring MD moves to C7 from C6
and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District in Convention ratify the work of the Board of Directors.

Passed: Yes - 210; No - 8

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-05 On Changing the Size Requirements for Electoral Circuits in the Synod
(Overtures: BL 04-22-04, BL 04-22-11, BL 04-22-12)

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (Synod) had a million more members (35% more) during the time when our current electoral circuit minimum size requirements were set; and

WHEREAS, An increasingly large number of circuits ask for exceptions to the current rules for valid electoral circuits; and

WHEREAS, Our Synod leaders have let it be known the number of exceptions has grown excessive and needs to change downward; and

WHEREAS, The recent COVID-19 pandemic has decreased attendance and membership in many congregations of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Within the Southeastern District we have experienced the increased need for exemptions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The Southeastern District at its 2022 Convention submit a resolution to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Convention that the number of communicant members for an electoral circuit be lowered; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the required number of communicant members reflect the change in our Synod membership.

A friendly amendment was received to change “numbers” to “members” in 1st Resolved.

Passed: Yes - 209; No - 14

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-07 To Change to a Four-Year Convention Cycle

(Overtures: BL 04 -22-08, BL 04-22-09)

WHEREAS, It has been studied and discussed for several years to move from a three-year district and national convention cycle to a four-year cycle; and

WHEREAS, Such a change would save millions of dollars in district and national convention expenses; and

WHEREAS, Moving to a four-year convention cycle would demonstrate a sensitivity to the financial challenges facing many congregations and a commitment to practice wise stewardship; and

WHEREAS, In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the Synod and many Districts pivoted temporarily to a four-year convention cycle without great difficulty; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District in Convention memorialize the Synod to adopt a four-year convention cycle, effective upon completion of the 2023 national convention.

Passed: Yes - 170; No - 51

Lunch Break (A midday dinner was provided.)

At 1:15 PM the Convention reconvened.

With regard to Resolution 04-22-03a, it was moved and seconded to adopt a procedure whereby the Convention would give approval to these Bylaw changes and then submit them directly to each voting congregation of the SED, and the congregations shall by official action express their affirmative or negative vote and indicate the same to the District office. The proposed amendment shall become effective at the expiration of six months from the date on which the amendment is submitted for vote, provided a two-thirds majority of the votes cast within that period shall have favored the amendment. At the end of the six-month period the SED President shall announce the outcome of the voting by the congregations.

Passed: Yes - 162; No - 35

Report from Registration Committee

Pastor Voting Delegates – 99

Lay Voting Delegates – 114

Total – 213 Voting Delegates

Advisory Delegates – 30

All Others – 46

Total Attendance - 289

Secretary Pro Tem declared that a quorum was present.



Committee 4 returned to the podium and placed
BL 04-22-03A Bring SED Bylaws into accord with LCMS Bylaws
once again before the convention. The vote was called.

Passed: Yes - 185; No - 18

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-06A To Strengthen the Nonvoting Advisory Delegate Participation at Conventions

(Overture BL 04-22-10)

WHEREAS, Currently, there are 12,010 Ministers of Religion – Commissioned (Church Worker Update System - March 2021) who serve the mission and ministry of congregations, schools, child development centers, camps, compassion centers, and mission work throughout the national and global mission fields; and

WHEREAS, The current structure of the Synod does not allow for a third category of voting delegates at district and Synod conventions (Synod Handbook: Article IX, Article XII.10.b); and

WHEREAS, The Synod highly values Ministers of Religion – Commissioned for their eagerness to serve the Lord and His Church (2019 Resolution. 9-17, “To Study Voting Privilege in the LCMS” p.201 of 2019 LCMS Convention Proceedings); and

WHEREAS, Ministers of Religion – Commissioned are considered Advisory Members with representation, voice, but no vote at conventions of districts and Synod, along with “those ordained ministers not eligible for election as a voting delegate” under Bylaw 3.1.2.1(d) ... (p.101 Handbook 2019) with representation, voice, but no vote at conventions of districts and Synod; and

WHEREAS, At least one other district (Northern Illinois) utilizes the voice and guidance of their Ministers of Religion – Commissioned in district convention through a non-counted advisory member vote; and

WHEREAS, This honors the bylaw and structure of the Convention while allowing the Nonvoting Advisory Delegate voice to be heard and their vote recognized; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District enable Nonvoting Advisory Delegates to provide a preliminary non-binding vote during its regular convention, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the results of the advisory vote be published prior to the delegate vote; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this become effective with the next District Convention in 2025, and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District in Convention memorialize the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Convention to pass a like-minded resolution.

Passed: Yes - 118; No - 85

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-08 To Amend Synod Constitution to Grant Lay Vote to Every Congregation
(Overture BL 04-22-07)

WHEREAS, The Constitution of the Synod Article V.A. deals with voting members of the Synod and states: "All organized congregations that have joined the Synod hold voting membership.," and

WHEREAS, "Multi-congregation parishes" are allowed to send a single lay delegate to the district convention (ByLaw 3.1.2.1.c); and

WHEREAS, Each individual congregation is a member of the Synod and should be entitled to a lay vote; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District in Convention memorialize the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at its 2023 convention to

1. Give all organized congregations that hold membership in the Synod the opportunity to be represented by a lay delegate and a pastoral delegate at district conventions.
2. Retain a single vote for a pastor who represents more than one congregation.
3. Amend ByLaw 3.1.2.1.c of the Synod Constitution as follows:

"All organized congregations that have joined the Synod holding 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."

Passed: Yes - 182; No - 27

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-09 To Develop an Ethics Policy for the Southeastern District When Dealing with the Disposition of a Congregation's Property

(Overture BL 04-22-05)

WHEREAS, Congregations, in the course of writing Constitutions and Bylaws, specify where their assets should go in the case of dissolution; and

WHEREAS, These documents, or copies thereof, are reviewed by the Constitution Review Task Force, approved by the Southeastern District Board of Directors, and kept on file at the District Office; and

WHEREAS, In the course of resourcing congregations, the Southeastern District may counsel a congregation on the disposition of church property; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District in Convention direct the District Board of Directors to develop a policy statement that advises District officials working with a congregation involving the distribution of property; and be it

RESOLVED, That the policy includes disclosure of the District's interest in the disposition of the congregation's property and that the congregation controls the disposition of their property.

Passed: Yes - 189; No - 15

Committee 4 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

BL 04-22-10 Omnibus A

(Overture BL 04-22-06, BL 04-22-15)

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 referred to

Number	Title	Reason
OV BL 04- 22- 06	To Give Thanks for a New Partnership Qualifying Electoral Circuit 3, Baltimore East to Vote	Referred back to Circuit Realignment Committee for further conversation.
OV BL 04- 22 -15	To Amend Southeastern District Bylaw, Article VI, Duties of Officers re Allowing the District President to Serve as a Pastor of a Congregation	Referred back to Board of Directors to direct the Committee on Staffing to include this consideration in their work on staffing.

Passed: Yes - 184; No – 18

Floor Committee 4 was thanked and dismissed.

Floor Committee 05: Theology & Practice – Chair: Rev. Bill Beyer, 1st Vice President

Committee 5 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

TP 05-22-01 To Support the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s Specific Ministry Pastor Program

(Overture TP 05-22-01)

WHEREAS, There is a severe shortage of pastors and church workers anticipated in the near future; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), gathered in Convention in 2007, created another path to ordination with the Specific Ministry Pastor Program (SMP) thus enabling more men to become ordained as Specific Ministry Pastors; and

WHEREAS, The SMP program has already enabled several Circuits of the Southeastern District (SED) to benefit from the SMP program including twenty-seven SMP pastors currently serving congregations, and eight other students are currently enrolled in the program; and

WHEREAS, There are not enough eligible students preparing for church work in the current Seminary program to meet the current, much less future needs of the church; and

WHEREAS, Many congregations are currently without pastors or other needed church workers; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the SED provide increased funding for SMP students to encourage enrollment and completion of the SMP program; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the SED form a strategic partnership with the Ft. Wayne and St. Louis Seminaries to enroll sixteen students in the SMP program within the SED over the next triennium: and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the SED memorialize the 2023 Convention of the LCMS for Synod to expand its current support of the SMP program by increasing funding and enrollment.

Passed: Yes - 181; No - 24

Committee 5 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

TP 05-22-02 To the Use of the Koinonia Project Process to Resolve Conflict Due to Differences in Ministry and Practice

(Overture TP 05-22-02)

WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach us to love one another and seek unity (1 Peter 1:3-8, Colossians 3:12-14, Ephesians 4:3); and

WHEREAS, In a fractured society, where division and discord are celebrated and encouraged, the church has an opportunity for witness; and

WHEREAS, The members of the church, including the workers, are to be the light of Christ and the example of forgiveness, restoration, and love; and

WHEREAS, The Koinonia Project materials were written by Rev. Dr. Herbert Mueller, are available for review [<https://www.lcms.org/about/leadership/president/koinonia-project>], is approved for use by the Synod Council of Presidents, is currently being used successfully by the Synod Council of Presidents; and

WHEREAS, This conflict resolution process is preferred to bringing formal charges against another in the Southeastern District and promotes harmony; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the members of the Southeastern District commit to seeking unity with each other, bearing with each other, putting the best construction on every situation, and offering the benefit of the doubt to each other; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District leadership provide training for all Professional Church Workers and others across the Southeastern District in the Koinonia Project during the next triennium; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the members of the Southeastern District affirm and engage in the Koinonia Project prior to and as part of the dispute resolution process; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District memorialize the 2023 Convention of the LCMS to follow a similar pattern for conflict resolution.

Passed: Yes - 179; No - 21

Committee 5 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

TP 05-22-03 To Explore Non-Residential Opportunities for Pastoral Education

(Overture TP 05-22-03)

WHEREAS, Our Lord invites us, “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. (Matthew 9:37-38)”; and

WHEREAS, The call throughout the generations for churches to be led by pastors trained and equipped for Biblically grounded, Confessionally sound, and Contextually appropriate ministry; and

WHEREAS, The need to raise up new pastors in a time when current pastors are retiring, and residential enrollment is decreasing at our Seminaries; and

WHEREAS, The challenge of residential education in the 21st century includes the financial costs, not only of tuition (which is currently covered by the seminaries), but also housing and basic living expenses such as food and clothing, the length of study while living with these burdens, and the challenges of these transitions in various life stages all limiting the opportunities for men to answer the call to service; and

WHEREAS, The opportunity of life and ministry in the 21st century, including technological advances for communication and learning, mid-life career changes, and the potential to recruit men whose life situations may limit the possibility of residential formation; and

WHEREAS, The adaptability of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to send workers for the harvest, even in an age before our current technology: “More than half of those who graduated from the seminary in Fort Wayne during the first nine years of the school’s existence attended from one to two years: about one third of them, two to three years. The aim was to provide men with the most practical instructions so that they would enter the work as early as possible. (Carl S. Meyer, *Moving Frontiers*, p. 217)”; and

WHEREAS, The history of Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to provide training in our present context, including the decision to create seminaries in North America, rather than returning to Germany for pastoral education; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The Southeastern District in convention encourage the District Leadership and Synod to explore further non-residential opportunities for pastoral education and ordination, for the sake of the church.

A Friendly amendment to the 4th Whereas was accepted – “Not only of tuition [which is currently covered by the seminaries] but ...”

Passed: Yes - 177; No - 25

Floor Committee 5 was thanked and dismissed.

Floor Committee 2 returned to the podium.

Committee 2 read, moved and seconded the following rewritten resolution.

TP 02-22-07A Toward Racial Equality and the Great Commission

WHEREAS, The sin of racism is an obstacle to the Great Commission, it would be irresponsible of us not to examine our human failings with respect both to the Great Commandment of love and the Great Commission to make disciples of all tribes, languages, and nations through the Gospel and drawing them into the body of Christ (2 Corinthians 19:7, Romans 2:4, Galatians 2:6, Ephesians 6:9, Colossians 3:25, 1 Peter 1:17, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24:47, Acts 1:8); and

WHEREAS, Martin Luther taught, and we confess, that the Fifth Commandment, You shall not murder, means we should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbors, but help and defend them in every physical need, which many have shamefully failed to do especially regarding our fellow Americans who are Black and people of other ethnic minority groups (Luke 10:25–37, Proverbs 24:1-2, Ephesians 4:31-32, Matthew 25:42-43, Matthew 5:22, 1 John 4: 19-21, Proverbs 31:8-9); and

WHEREAS, We lament the silence of Christians in the face of slavery in the past and other racial injustices that continue to this day, such as discrimination in jobs, housing, education, and other areas, past and present, which cause great suffering to many Americans and harm our entire nation, which leaves in place economic and social liabilities that would persist even if racial prejudice suddenly disappeared; and

WHEREAS, Justice, which goes beyond kindness toward others, is based on laws, institutions, and practices that are fair and just to all; and

WHEREAS, Many LCMS convention resolutions on the issue of race have asserted the clear biblical teaching that all humans, whatever the color of their skin, have been created in the image of God and redeemed through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; yet we continue to lag in mission outreach that crosses racial lines, and in addressing racial injustices – offenses that put us in need of God's mercy and call us to action¹; and

WHEREAS, The report of Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations (Racism and the Church 1994) documents a disturbing pattern in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod of following the path of our surrounding culture regarding slavery and other racial injustices, thus conforming to the world rather than being transformed in Christ (Romans 12:2); and

WHEREAS, Our former policy of having racially segregated churches and schools resulted in turning people of color and other ethnic groups away from our church doors and in fewer new members of color, yet these habits and attitudes of old sins persist, making our outreach across racial lines more difficult now than it should be; and

WHEREAS, We give thanks to God for courageous leaders among us who over the years have overcome racial barriers and do so even today, we still have much to learn about how to be racially inclusive; for all of which we seek the grace of God to find more faithful ways of reflecting God's love and our unity in Christ; and

WHEREAS, To reach deeply into the life of our congregations, a church-wide campaign that is truly filled with the love and joy of the Holy Spirit cries out for our response; and

WHEREAS, A Day of Repentance and Prayer for Racial could be enhanced with simple but starkly honest background material, highlighting sins of racism in our nation's history, and even in its Christian churches, including our own Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod; and

WHEREAS, Such an event should be held Synod-wide urging all LCMS pastors, congregations, and other affiliates of Synod to participate perhaps on Life Sunday or another specified date; and

WHEREAS, This event should be a joyous, Spirit-filled day that can deepen our faith in Christ, empower us to seek justice, and help us eagerly to welcome people across all racial and ethnic groups into fellowship with us through our Lord and Savior; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That by the next Synod Convention, we respectfully urge the President of Synod and its district presidents to incorporate within our annual celebration of life an encouraging call to repent of all sins against the equal value of life created in God's image, including, but not limited to, all sins devaluing people due to their tribe, language, skin color, or people group, urging all LCMS pastors and congregations and other affiliates of Synod to participate, and be it

RESOLVED, That we see this day of repentance and prayer as a long-overdue confession of sins of commission and omission against people of color, for which we truly repent, and seek God's forgiveness and great mercy in Christ, that sets all of us free to be reconciled with all people regardless of race or color, and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we become known as a church body that eagerly welcomes people across all racial and ethnic groups into fellowship with us through our Lord and Savior.

Footnotes:

1. "Repentance and Hope: A Missional Appreciation and Appraisal of LCMS Educational Institutions for the Training Black Church Workers" by Matthew E. Borrasso and "Concordia Selma Closes: Putting the Demise of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Educational Institutions for Black Ministry in Historical Perspective" by Matthew E. Borrasso. Both of these resources can be found in the Convention's YAPP.

2. “Racism and the Church: Overcoming the Idolatry”. A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, February 1994. <https://files.lcms.org/file/preview/CF31F293-63FA-4763-9793-C227DF3867E7>

An amendment was presented and accepted as friendly to change “Justice” to “Equality” in the title. Other delegates also spoke to the resolution. A lengthy amendment to the 1st Resolved was also accepted to replace the words “have a specified Sunday, perhaps Life Sunday, as ‘A Day of Repentance and Prayer for Racial Justice and Healing’ in our land” with “incorporate within our annual celebration of life an encouraging call to repent of all sins against the equal value of life created in God’s image, including, but not limited to, all sins devaluing people due to their tribe, language, skin color, or people group”.

Passed: Yes - 151; No - 55

Committee 2 read, moved and seconded the following resolution.

CO 02-22-06 To Support Luther Classical College In Order To Provide, For The Southeastern District, Faithful Lutheran Pastors And Teachers Who Will Not Be Burdened With Extraordinary Student Debt

WHEREAS, The SED desires to bring qualified pastors and teachers to the SED; and

WHEREAS, The burden of student debt dissuades men from pursuing the pastoral office and also dissuades men & women from pursuing the vocation of Lutheran school teacher; and

WHEREAS, Luther Classical College (Casper, WY; www.lutherclassical.org), starting in 2025, will prepare men to enter into the seminary and serve as faithful Lutheran pastors; and

WHEREAS, Luther Classical College will prepare men & women to serve as faithful Lutheran teachers; and

WHEREAS, Luther Classical College is intentionally limiting tuition to \$8,500/yr; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District support and promote the work of Luther Classical College (www.lutherclassical.org/promote); and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District encourage congregations to become financially supporting congregations of Luther Classical College (www.lutherclassical.org/supporting-congregations), and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Southeastern District commend this overture to Synod in Convention.

Much discussion ensued, some favorable, others opposed.

A motion was made and seconded to amend the orders of the day to hear a presentation on Luther Classical College

Failed Yes – 88; No 115

Terminate debate on the resolution.

Yes - 181; No -23

Resolution Failed: Yes - 54; No – 151

Floor Committee 2 was thanked and dismissed.

Recognition of Outgoing Vice Presidents, BOD Members, Circuit Visitors, and Reconcilers

President Denninger introduced all those in these offices who were present and had them stand. The Convention applauded to thank them for their service.

Installation of Vice Presidents, Circuit Visitors, and BOD Members

5th Vice President Christopher Esget installed those who were elected to office at the convention, except for the President Elect who will be installed at a later date.

First, the Vice Presidents were installed.

Then the Circuit Visitors were installed.

And finally the members of the Board of Directors were installed.

President Denninger gave thanks for the work of the staff, Chaplain, Parliamentarian, Secretary Pro Tem, Floor Committees, Presenters, and all.

Adjournment at 3:03 PM, Blessing, and Sending

Respectfully submitted,

Gary D. Rueter, Secretary Pro Tem

(Reviewed by Beth Elgert, Rev. Dr. Roy Minnix, & Donna Roye)