

## **2018 DISTRICT CONVENTION COMMITTEE**

### **PRESIDENT OF THE DISTRICT**

Rev. Dr. Anthony J. Steinbronn  
E-mail: [steinbronna@njdistrict.org](mailto:steinbronna@njdistrict.org)

1168 Springfield Ave.  
Mountainside, NJ 07092

Office: 908-233-8111  
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### **MANAGER**

Rev. Brad Hildebrandt

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### **ASSISTANT MANAGERS**

David Pry

Larry Schumann

Caren Vogt

### **RECORDING SECRETARY**

Rev. Dr. Richard Serina

### **TREASURER**

Mr. Bill Webster  
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### **WORSHIP**

Rev. Deric Taylor

### **REGISTRATION AND HOUSING**

Larry Schumann

### **EXHIBITS**

Rev. David Behm  
Rev. Aaron Uphoff

E-Mail: [pastorbehm@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbehm@gmail.com)

### **COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER**

Mrs. Caitlin Dinger  
E-mail: [dingerc@njdistrict.org](mailto:dingerc@njdistrict.org)

Office: 908-233-8111

### **DISTRICT OFFICE SECRETARY**

Elaine Schleifer  
Email: [schleifere@njdistrict.org](mailto:schleifere@njdistrict.org)

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## RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

Rev. Dick Izzard, Chair  
Rev. Deric Taylor  
Rev. Andrew Dinger  
Rev. Paul Huneke  
Rev. Craig Lutz  
Rev. John Greig

## ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Bill Schmidt, Chair  
Rev. David Rowold  
Rev. Mike Dunne

## NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Rev. Stephen Gewecke, Chair  
Rev. Chris Schonberg  
Mrs. Caren Vogt  
Mr. Ken French  
Mrs. Charlotte Visbeck

## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mrs. Caitlin Dinger, Chair  
Rev. Anthony Iovine  
Rev. Ben Dolby

## WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Rev. Deric Taylor  
Rev. Bob Holsten

# **THE NEW JERSEY DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

**NEW JERSEY DISTRICT OFFICE  
1168 Springfield Ave.  
Mountainside, NJ 07092**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President	The Rev. Dr. Anthony J. Steinbronn
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	The Rev. Stephen A. Gewecke
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	The Rev. Deric Taylor
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President	The Rev. Andrew Dinger
Secretary	The Rev. Dr. L. Richard Serina
Treasurer	Mr. Chris Koerner
Clergy at Large	Vacant
Clergy at Large	The Rev. Andrew Nelson
Teacher	Ms. Allison Johnson
Legal Advisor	Mr. Charles Karcher
Lay Members: Circuit # 1	Mr. William Schmidt
Circuit # 2	Mr. Olugbenga Adesokan
Circuit # 3	Mr. David Pry
Circuit # 4	Vacant
Circuit # 5	Vacant
Circuit # 6	Ms. Randi Rutan

## **DISTRICT RECONCILERS**

The Rev. Andrew Dinger  
Mrs. Caitlin May-Dinger

Ms. Beth Ann Meyer  
The Rev. Deric Taylor

**VICE PRESIDENTIAL REGIONS, OFFICERS,  
CIRCUIT VISITORS AND CONGREGATIONS**

**CIRCUIT # 1 – HUDSON**

Visitor	The Rev. Robert Holsten St. Paul, Closter
Area Vice President	The Rev. Deric Taylor Our Savior, Fairlawn
Lay Representative	Mr. William Schmidt
Congregations	Cliffside Park, Trinity Closter, St. Paul East Rutherford, Immanuel Maywood, Zion New Milford, St. Matthew Ridgewood, Bethlehem Westwood, Zion

**CIRCUIT # 2 – PASSAIC RIVER**

Visitor	The Rev. Gary Timm Redeemer, Westfield
Area Vice President	The Rev. Deric Taylor Our Savior, Fairlawn
Lay Representative	Mr. Olugbenga Adesokan
Congregations	Bloomfield, St. John Clifton, St. John Fair Lawn, Our Savior Jersey City, Tumaini Kristo Livingston - Grace Lyndhurst, St. Matthew Newark, Christ Assembly Newark, Redeemer Union, Grace Union, St. Matthew Verona, Calvary Westfield, Redeemer

**CIRCUIT # 3 – HIGHLANDS**

Visitor	The Rev. Stephen Vogt Prince of Peace, Hamburg
Area Vice President	The Rev. Andrew Dinger
Lay Representative	Mr. David Pry
Congregations	Blairstown, Good Shepherd Hackettstown, Gethsemane Hamburg, Prince of Peace Newton, Redeemer Oak Ridge, Holy Faith Pompton Lakes, St. Paul Ringwood, Christ the King Stanhope, Our Savior

**CIRCUIT # 4 – CENTRAL JERSEY**

Visitor	The Rev. David Behm Trinity, Morris Plains
Area Vice President	The Rev. Andrew Dinger
Lay Representative	Keith Brotherson
Congregations	Basking Ridge, Somerset Hills Flemington, St. Paul Montville, Holy Spirit Morris Plains, Trinity Mountain Lakes, King of Kings Randolph, Good Shepherd Somerset, Holy Trinity

**CIRCUIT #5 – SOUTH JERSEY**

visitor	The Rev. Daniel Sparling Holy Cross, Bordentown
Area Vice President	<u>The Rev. Stephen Gewecke</u> St. Peter, Hopewell
Lay Representative	Vacant
Congregations	Blackwood, Luther Memorial Bordentown, Holy Cross Bridgeton, St. John's Carney's Point, Trinity Hopewell, St. Peter Lanoka Harbor, Village Lawrenceville, Holy Trinity Medford, Calvary New Egypt, Rose of Sharon

**CIRCUIT #6 – RARITAN VALLEY**

Visitor	The Rev. Christian Schonberg Good Shepherd, Point Pleasant
Area Vice President	<u>The Rev. Stephen Gewecke</u> St. Peter, Hopewell
Lay Representative	Ms. Randi Rutan
Congregations	Dayton, Faith East Brunswick, Christ Memorial Fords, Our Redeemer Howell, Prince of Peace Manalapan, St. Thomas Old Bridge, Good Shepherd Point Pleasant, Good Shepherd Tinton Falls, Luther Memorial

## 2018 NJD CONVENTION AGENDA

**Thursday, May 31, 2018**

### PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

3:00 PM Registration Opens  
3:00 PM Meeting of the Convention Committee  
8:30 PM Opportunity for Conversation and Fellowship (with open bar  
from 8:30 p.m. -- 10:30 p.m.)

**Friday, June 1, 2018**

### PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

8:00 AM Registration Opens  
8:30 AM Floor Committee Open Hearings: Missions  
Life Together  
Ecclesiastical Supervision  
Church and Culture

### CONVENTION AGENDA

Session #1

10:00 AM Opening Devotion  
10:15 AM Report on Registration and Announcements  
Opening of Convention  
Adoption of Agenda and Parliamentary Guidelines  
Introduction of Guests  
Introduction of New Workers  
Resolutions Committee  
Resolution (Missions)  
Nominations Report  
Election Procedures and Elections – Floor Committee on Elections  
District President  
Vice-Presidents  
Ranking of the Vice-Presidents  
District Secretary  
District Treasurer  
Circuit Visitors  
NJD Board of Directors  
CHEF Trustees  
Nominations Committee for 2021 NJD Convention

District Reports  
NJD Leaders and Learners (Steinbronn)  
CHEF (Visbeck)  
ALOA (Carpenter)  
Resolutions Committee  
Resolution (Missions)  
Resolution (Missions)  
Resolution (Missions)

12:30 PM Session #1 ends

12:30 PM Lunch (Advisory Ordained and Commissioned Minister  
Delegates caucus to elect Synodical Convention Delegates at  
the beginning of the lunch break)

### Session #2

1:30 PM *Report of the District President -- Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn*

1:50 PM *NJD BOD Report on Long-Range Planning -- Rev. Dr. Rick Serina*

2:00 PM *Convention Essayist Presentation -- Dr. Mark Seifrid*

3:00 PM Break – delegates are invited to visit the exhibit area

### Session #3

3:30 PM *Convention Essayist Presentation -- Dr. Mark Seifrid*

4:30 PM *Report of the Synodical President, part one*

5:15 PM Closing Prayer – Rev. Robert Holsten

6:15 PM Dinner – Convention Hall

8:00 PM Convention Worship Service (with the installation of the  
District President) – Rev. Dr. Herb Mueller, preacher

Martin Luther Chapel  
4100 Terrace Avenue  
Pennsauken, NJ

10:00 PM Presidential Reception – Rev. Dr. Herb Mueller (Synod 1st Vice  
President), Rev. Chris Esget (Synod East Region Vice President), and  
NJ District President (open bar from 10:00 p.m. until Midnight)



**Saturday, June 2, 2018**

Session #4

- 7:30 AM Opening Devotion
- 7:45 AM *Report of the Synodical President, part two*
- 8:30 AM Report on Registrations and Announcements
- 8:45 AM Pastors' Wives Reception in the "Living Room" (adjacent to the pool area) with Beverly Yahnke (Doxology)
- + parsonage depletion hazards...the module examines the necessity of self-care
  - + the disciple's guide to resilience...the module explores healthy responses to stress
- 8:45 AM Guest Presentations
- |                                    |                      |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Lutheran Church Extension Fund     | Bart Day             |
| Lutheran Women's Missionary League | Arlene Price         |
| Lutheran Hour Ministries           | Bruce Sutherland     |
| Kairos Network                     | Matt Peeples         |
| LSMNJ                              | Colleen Frankenfield |
- 9:30 AM Resolutions Committee
- Resolution (Life Together)
  - Resolution (Life Together)
  - Resolution (Life Together)
  - Resolution (Church/Culture)
  - Resolution (Church/Culture)
  - Resolution (Church/Culture)
  - Resolution (Life Together)
  - Resolution (Eccl. Supervision)
  - Resolution (Eccl. Supervision)
- 11:15 AM Installation of New Jersey District Officers, Board of Directors, and Circuit Visitors
- 11:30 AM Final Report on Registration
- 11:45 AM Closing Devotion

**VOTING DELEGATES NEW JERSEY DISTRICT CONVENTION**

**BASKING RIDGE – Somerset Hills**

The Rev. John Grieg  
Lay Delegate: Karen Gil

**DAYTON – Faith**

The Rev. Ariel Hidalgo

**BLACKWOOD – Luther Memorial**

The Rev. Ebenezer Mallepalle  
Lay Delegate: Joe Schwartz

**EAST BRUNSWICK – Christ Memorial**

The Rev. Bruce Smith  
Lay Delegate: Howard Lange

**BLAIRSTOWN – Good Shepherd**

Vacant

**EAST RUTHERFORD – Immanuel**

Vacant

Lay Delegate: Robert Rudinger

**BLOOMFIELD – St. John**

Vacant

**FAIR LAWN – Our Savior**

The Rev. Deric Taylor  
Lay Delegate: Robert Blume

**BORDENTOWN - Holy Cross**

The Rev. Daniel Sparling

**FLEMINGTON - St. Paul**

The Rev. Robert Mueller

**BRIDGETON - St. John**

The Rev. Gary Hall

**FORDS – Our Redeemer**

The Rev. Christopher Sadlo  
Lay Delegate: Joy Sadlo

**CARNEY'S POINT – Trinity**

Vacant

**HACKETTSTOWN – Gethsemane**

Vacant

Lay Delegate: Steve Providoshin

**CLIFFSIDE PARK – Trinity**

The Rev. John Schroter

**HAMBURG – Prince of Peace**

The Rev. Stephen Vogt  
Lay Delegate: Seth Stephens

**CLIFTON – St. John**

The Rev. Aaron Mol

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP – St. Peter**

The Rev. Stephen Gewecke  
Lay Delegate: Norm Klesat

**CLOSTER – St. Paul**

The Rev. Robert Holsten  
Lay Delegate: Roy Merz

**HOWELL – Prince of Peace**

The Rev. Ken Fosse  
Lay Delegate: Ken French

**JERSEY CITY – Tumaini Kristo**  
Vacant  
Lay Delegate: William Koehler

**LANOKA HARBOR – Village**  
Vacant  
Lay Delegate: William Schnorbus

**LAWRENCEVILLE – Holy Trinity**  
Vacant  
Lay Delegate: Bruce Wade

**LIVINGSTON – Grace**  
The Rev. Dr. Richard Vossler  
Lay Delegate: Richard Banagan

**LYNDHURST – St. Matthew**  
Vacant

**MANALAPAN- St. Thomas**  
Pastor: Vacant  
Lay Delegate : William Zak

**MAYWOOD – Zion**  
The Rev. Edward Lazarchak  
Lay Delegate: John Blume, Jr.

**MEDFORD – Calvary**  
Vacant  
Lay Delegate: Mary Ryan

**MONTVILLE – Holy Spirit**  
The Rev. Michael Dunne  
Lay Delegate: Amy Reichert

**MORRIS PLAINS – Trinity**  
The Rev. David Behm  
Lay Delegate: Ryan Evanko

**MOUNTAIN LAKES – King of Kings**  
The Rev. Ben Dolby

**NEWARK – Christ Assembly**  
The Rev. Lawrence Gboeah  
Lay Delegate: Edwin Dwah

**NEW EGYPT – Rose of Sharon**  
Vacant

**NEW MILFORD – St. Matthew**  
The Rev. Anthony Iovine

**NEWTON – Redeemer**  
The Rev. Brian Handrich  
Lay Delegate: Steve Naumowicz

**OAK RIDGE – Holy Faith**  
The Rev. Craig Lutz  
Lay Delegate: Harold Lewis

**OLD BRIDGE – Good Shepherd**  
The Rev. Phil Ressler  
Lay Delegate: Bob Shipley

**POINT PLEASANT – Good Shepherd**  
The Rev. Chris Schonberg  
Lay Delegate Hank Voss

**POMPTON LAKES – St. Paul Lutheran  
Church of the Incarnation**  
The Rev. Eric Reiker

**RANDOLPH – Good Shepherd**  
The Rev. Aaron Uphoff  
Lay Delegate: Larry Chenault

**RIDGEWOOD – Bethlehem**  
The Rev. Matthew Peeples  
Lay Delegate Kevin Qualters

**RINGWOOD – Christ the King**  
The Rev. Dr. Richard Serina  
Lay Delegate: Richard Hoffmann

**SOMERSET – Holy Trnity**  
The Rev. Andrew Dinger  
Lay Delegate: Tom Jennings

**STANHOPE – Our Savior**  
The Rev. Daniel Merz  
Lay Delegate: Daniel Slavik

**TINTON FALLS – Luther Memorial**  
The Rev. Jace Dietrie  
Lay Delegate: Robert Panarella

**UNION – Grace / St. Matthew**  
Vacant

**VERONA – Calvary**  
The Rev. Adam Kuder  
Lay Delegate: Dylan Behlen

**WESTFIELD – Redeemer**  
The Rev. Gary Timm  
Lay Delegate: Mike King

**WESTWOOD – Zion**  
The Rev. Thomas Pranschke  
Lay Delegate: William Schmidt



**ADVISORY DELEGATES – ORDAINED MINISTERS**

The Rev. Ryan Ankersen	The Rev. Dr. Woody Mather
The Rev. Mark Bartels	The Rev. Philip Matarazzo
The Rev. Paul Basil	The Rev. Roy Minnix
The Rev. Dennis Bottoms	The Rev. Andrew Nelson
The Rev. Donald Brand	The Rev. Irwin Pflueger
The Rev. Rolf Buchmann	The Rev. John M. Rieker
The Rev. Edward Callahan	The Rev. Dennis Rockett
The Rev. Oscar Casachahua	The Rev. David Russert
The Rev. Robert Clancy	The Rev. Daniel Schmalz
The Rev. Arthur Doring	The Rev. Paul Sparling
The Rev. Timothy Drawbaugh	The Rev. Robert Vogel
The Rev. Thomas Edge	The Rev. Paul Voitko
The Rev. Roland Feickert	The Rev. John Welge
The Rev. J. Daniel Fenco	The Rev. Max Wilk
The Rev. David Grell	The Rev. Otto Zeeb
The Rev. Dr. Frederick Harm	
The Rev. Brad Hildebrandt	
The Rev. Paul Huneke	
The Rev. Richard Izzard	
The Rev. Harry Johnson	
The Rev. Dale Johnston	
The Rev. Robert Klemm	
The Rev. William Klettke	
The Rev. Henry Loeber	

Advisory Delegates -- Commissioned Ministers  
(Principals, Teachers, DCE's, Deaconesses, LCMS Certified Lay Minister)

Jane Borchin

Laura Mortenson

Roger Borchin

Rachel Mol

Shirley Carpenter

Mary Nordeen

Caitlin May Dinger

Elizabeth Prauner

Lois Doring

Douglas Puls

Edward Heinz

Maryann Puls

Sandra Hofmann

Leah Steinbronn

Joanne Jocus

Caren Vogt

Allison Johnson

Naomi Vogt

Carol Johnson

Jon Wiegand

Karen Koromhas

Gloria Zupfer

George Lofmark

## A PRIMER OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

### A. PURPOSE OF PARLIAMENTARY LAW AND PROCEDURE

Parliamentary procedure assists a deliberative and decision-making assembly in carrying out its purpose and aims in an orderly, fair, and expeditious manner.

It is not the purpose of parliamentary procedure to make difficult the conduct of business in an assembly, to entangle an assembly in technicalities, or to provide a channel for individuals to flaunt their parliamentary knowledge.

Parliamentary law protects six basic rights:

- 1) The right of the majority to make a decision;
- 2) The right of the minority to be heard in hopes that it may become the majority;
- 3) The right of absentees to be protected;
- 4) The right of the assembly to be comfortable and to hear;
- 5) The right of the individual member to be honored; and
- 6) The orderly consideration of one subject at a time.

### B. BASIC STEPS OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The chairman and members of the assembly are to be acquainted with and observe eight basic parliamentary steps to take care of convention business in an orderly and fair manner. They are:

#### MEMBERS:

1. *Address the chair.* “Mr. Chairman” (or “Mr. President”)
2. *Await recognition,* by the chair.
3. *Make a motion.* “I move that...”
4. *Second the motion.* (*unless not required*)

#### CHAIR:

5. *States the motion.* (Or rules it out of order)
6. *Calls for discussion.* (Unless motion is undebatable)  
  
“Is there any discussion?” or “Are there any remarks?”  
ample opportunity must always be given for expression of opinions and for discussion.
7. Takes the vote. (Or “Puts the question”)
8. States the results.

“The ‘ayes’ have it and the motion is carried.” Or, “The ‘noes’ have it and the motion is lost” The vote does not go into effect until the results are announced.



**BASIC PARLIAMENTARY PRINCIPLES  
FOR THE NEW JERSEY DISTRICT CONVENTION**

1. A district delegate convention is a parliamentary assembly called to deliberate and to make decisions. It receives the reports of the district president, the board of directors and the committees. In addition, the convention deliberates and makes decisions on recommended resolutions of designated floor committees which have considered proposed resolutions (overtures) from congregations.
2. All voting delegates have equal rights, privileges, and obligations.
3. The vote of the majority decides. The will of a district convention is determined by the taking of a vote.
4. Free discussion of every proposition or resolution presented for decision is an established right for all delegates, voting and advisory. To accomplish the closure of debate a delegate must gain the recognition of the chair and, without any comment for or against the pending resolution, say, "I move the previous question." If seconded, the motion is put to an immediate vote. If adopted by a two-thirds majority, discussion is terminated and the pending resolution is put to the assembly without further debate. The convention has the right to decide when it has heard sufficient discussion. This right, however, is to be exercised with restraint.
5. Both proponents and opponents of a given proposal have rights which must be safeguarded. The decision belongs to the majority, but the right to discuss, the right to be heard, and the right to oppose is to be upheld. A member of the majority on one question is often a member of the minority on another.
6. The simplest and most direct parliamentary procedure for accomplishing a purpose is to be followed rather than taking devious routes and multiple technicalities.
7. Every delegate has the right to know what question is before the convention and what its effect will be, for every action taken by a deliberative body is to be taken knowledgeably.
8. Voting delegates are not bound and are not to be bound by previous instructions of their home.

## PROPOSED STANDING RULES

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1. Each delegate, when recognized by the chairman, shall state his/her name and the congregation s/he represents.
2. Speakers from the floor shall be limited to two (2) minutes in addressing the convention.
3. Speakers will alternate, pro and con, clergy and lay person.
4. There will be no repeat speakers until all desiring to speak have been heard once.
5. While any voting delegate may call the question at any time, after every 15 minutes of debate on any one motion there shall be an automatic call of the question by the chairman.
6. Instead of a voice vote on motions before the convention, the chairman shall ordinarily call for the raising of the right hand.
7. If a substitute motion is offered, the convention shall first decide by *majority* vote whether or not to consider it. If the decision is in the affirmative and the substitute motion is adopted, the original motion fails. If the substitute motion does not receive favorable action either to consider or to adopt, the original motion will again be put before the convention.
8. Questions of privilege shall be addressed *in writing* to the chairman.
9. A limit of two (2) amendments to any resolution shall be allowed.
10. Members of the New Jersey District Board of Directors shall have the privilege of speaking from the floor.
11. Resolutions not acted on at this convention before adjournment die.
12. Unless covered by these Standing Rules, parliamentary procedures shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order (2011 Edition). All decisions of the Parliamentarian shall be final and unappealable.

## 2018 District Convention Report – the New Jersey District

The 2017 New Jersey population was estimated to be 8,953,745 people, residing in 21 counties and 566 municipalities; with the following population distributions:

<u>Gender</u>	population	percentage
Female	4,577,819	51.32%
Male	4,375,926	48.68%

### Age (median age = 40.0)

Homeland (Z)	2005-2025	1,418,493	15.84%
Millennial (Y)	1982-2004	2,589,455	28.92%
Gen X (13 <sup>th</sup> )	1961-1981	2,511,743	28.05%
Boomer	1946-1960	1,570,789	17.54%
Silent	1925-1945	742,862	8.30%
GI	1901-1924	120,403	1.34%

### Racial/Ethnic

Asian		760,101	8.49%
Asian Indian	310,242		
Chinese	131,757		
Filipino	116,184		
Korean	98,755		
Black/African American		1,141,065	12.74%
White		5,254,732	58.69%
Hispanic/Latino		1,615,108	18.04%
Puerto Rican	449,600		
Mexican	223,958		
Cuban	87,452		
Pac Is/Am Indian		182,739	2.04%

### Marital Status (Population 15+)

Never married	2,387,334	32.14%
Married	3,796,710	51.12%
Divorced	598,349	8.06%
Separated	148,014	1.99%
Widowed	497,305	6.70%

### Employment Status (Population 16+)

Blue Collar	1,438,697	31.83%
White Collar	3,081,482	68.17%

<u>Household size</u>	population	percentage
1-person	827,097	25.25%
2-person	976,405	29.81%
3-person	568,498	17.35%
4-person	515,230	15.73%
5-person	235,873	7.20%
6-person	89,052	2.72%
7-or-more person	63,636	1.94%

Household income

Less than \$10,000	165,801	5.06%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	113,130	3.45%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	248,830	7.60%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	245,052	7.48%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	341,194	10.42%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	514,852	15.72%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	414,161	12.64%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	578,631	17.66%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	326,468	9.97%
\$200,000 or more	327,672	10.00%

As one surveys the religious landscape regarding those who reside in New Jersey, the population can be placed within these religious categories and preferences:

		2014	2004
Catholic & Orthodox		34.0%	39.2%
Catholic	33.5%		
Orthodox	0.5%		
Historic Mainline Protestant		16.8%	18.8%
Baptist	5.0%		
Congregational	1.5%		
Episcopalian/Anglican	1.9%		
Lutheran	2.6%		3.1%
Methodist	3.4%		
Presbyterian/Reformed	2.3%		
Other Protestant Denominations		6.7%	5.8%
Other Non-Christian Religious		10.9%	11.4%
Buddhism/Hindu/Sikh/Taoist	0.9%		
Islam/Baha'i	0.3%		
Judaism	7.9%		
Mormon	0.4%		
None/No Preference or Spiritual		31.2%	24.4%

## **The State of the New Jersey District – LC-MS**

The New Jersey District comprises fifty congregations, with 10,892 baptized members and 9,167 communicant members and an average Sunday worship attendance around 3,718. Fifteen congregations operate a preschool ministry, five congregations operate a preschool ministry plus an additional grade, and one congregation operates a preschool through eighth grade ministry. As a Lutheran presence, we are almost invisible in a State that numbers nearly 9,000,000 residents (one out of every 822 residents is a LC-MS member).

We continue to see that many of our congregations are growing smaller in terms of both baptized and communicant membership; and that the average age of those who worship are getting older. We also know that this trend has been taking place for many, many years now, beginning already in the early 1980s. At present, of the fifty New Jersey District congregations, eight are close to closing their doors since their average worship attendance is below twenty-five now and another fifteen congregations worship below fifty members on an average Sunday morning.

The crisis situation in which we find ourselves is this: we no longer live in a church culture but in an un-churched and de-churched culture. This state of affairs both challenges and invites God's people to acquire and possess a proper ministry balance between edification and evangelism; most importantly, to become more missionary in our posture and orientation toward those who are not Christians.

### **Pressing Ministry Challenges**

#### **Ministry challenges related to evangelism**

- + how do we witness to, and evangelize, people “who are not like us” – a people who have built their lives upon non-Christian narratives, especially the growing segment of the population who have “no religious or spiritual preference (31.2% of NJ residents)”
- + we struggle to reach the younger generations with the Gospel (nearly 45% of NJ residents are under the age of thirty-six – Millennial and Homeland generations)

#### **Ministry challenges related to becoming a mature disciple of Jesus Christ**

- + for many Christians, their identity and mission is defined more by a “church member” mentality than by what the Scriptures have to say about “who they are in Christ” and “why they are in the world”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Scriptures use many different words to help us understand who we are in Christ: disciple, priest, witness, servant, steward, living letter, temple of the Holy Spirit, salt, light, etc. For example, a disciple is a believer in Jesus Christ who is an active student of God's Word, building one's life on the words and practices of Jesus Christ – someone who is stamped and fashioned in

- + for many within our congregations, who grew up within the Lutheran church, they stopped studying the Scriptures at age thirteen or fourteen when they were confirmed and have not grown in their knowledge of Christ and His way of living

### **Ministry challenges related to our life together as the body of Christ**

- + there has been an increasing erosion in denominational loyalty since the 1970s
- + we are struggling to pay our bills, compensate our called church workers, and maintain our physical plant/properties – let alone have significant dollars for the extension of His kingdom to the ends of the earth

### **Ministry challenges related to living out our Christian faith before a watching world**

- + we have many ex-neighborhood congregations that were established by Northern European ethnic peoples who were raised within, or were very familiar with, the Lutheran faith; however, most of these ethnic groups no longer reside in the neighborhood in which our congregations are located and we do not know how to minister to, and connect with, our new neighbors
- + we struggle to...
  - + communicate the Biblical message in oral, print, broadcast and digital culture; and how to use social media effectively for social engagement and ministry in the “public square”
  - + overcome, and speak into, a culture that perceives and judges the Christian faith to be irrelevant in answering the big questions, and dealing with the day-to-day problems, that people have in, and with, life
  - + engage in a ministry of Christian apologetics; in other words, how to defend the Christian faith in a secularized and pluralistic culture so that we are “able to give a reason for the hope that lives within us, yet with gentleness and respect” to the many kinds of people who are trying to making sense of life, and the realities around us, without the hypothesis of the Triune God...and how to be, live, and witness as His people in a post-churched world

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the mold of Jesus Christ and is a living witness to Him. Jesus identified two marks of a disciple: if you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples (Matthew 7:24-27; John 8:31-32); and if you love one another (John 13:34-35).

## What Is Our Reflective Response to This Present Reality?

From the very beginning of time and human history, God's fundamental mission is to save humankind; for God desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of their salvation in Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:4).

So that His mission might be accomplished in the lives of all peoples, God has entrusted His people with four ministries.

- + **an evangelistic ministry**, as they seek to evangelize large numbers of non-Christians through their life of witness and Gospel proclamation and bring them, by God's grace, to faith in Jesus Christ
- + **a maturational ministry**, as they grow up into Christ, who is the Head of the body, and become mature disciples of Jesus, who are also His stewards, servants, priests, witnesses, salt, light, and living letters
- + **an organic ministry**, as they are connected to each other in relationships that live out the "one another" admonitions of the New Testament, with each believer using his or her gifts for the building up of the body and for the common good
- + **an incarnational ministry**, so that wherever they go, and to whomever they come into contact with, they are able to be His ambassadors and living letters, mediating His mind and word and demonstrating His love, concern and compassion for others

### New Jersey District -- Four Desired Outcomes:

The New Jersey District Board of Directors has identified four desired outcomes that guide the ministry labors of the District President in his relationship with the professional church workers and congregational members of the New Jersey District congregations. These desired outcomes are:

- + to equip people in New Jersey District congregations for Christian leadership (Synodical emphasis: life together)
- + church workers who are spiritually mature, professionally competent and living a healthy family life (Synodical emphasis: life together)
- + to equip members of New Jersey congregations for their outreach ministries and to enable them to bring saving faith to the unchurched residents of New Jersey (Synodical emphasis: witness)
- + to encourage New Jersey congregations in their social and human care ministries (Synodical emphasis: mercy)

The following statements describe core, strategic focuses that will guide the New Jersey District during the next triennium (2018-2021) as we seek to fulfill the Lord's Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-49) and Great Commandment (Matthew 25:31-45; Luke 10:25-37; John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7-12, 19-21).

### **Ten Strategic Focuses:**

- Focus #1: a District-wide process that addresses the pressing issues and adaptive challenges that are facing Professional Church Workers and New Jersey District congregations by...
- + clearly identifying and stating the pressing issues and adaptive challenges that we are facing together in ministry
  - + thinking biblically and theologically about these issues and challenges; and discovering what the Scriptures have to say about these things (since all theology and ministry practices are normed by Scripture)
  - + formulating an action plan that is congregationally owned and constructed; a plan that identifies the next steps to be taken...and then implementing that ministry plan
- Focus #2: connecting and networking as we form and equip ourselves for ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- + twice a year the District President convenes a Saturday meeting for the congregational presidents of the New Jersey District so that we might grow in our leadership skills and abilities, mutually encourage each other in our leadership labors, and to discuss ways in which we can address the pressing issues that we are facing in our respective congregations
  - + pastors are invited to attend a monthly learning community led by Rev. Dick Izzard and Rev. Paul Huneke
  - + church planters, and young pastors engaged in congregational revitalization, meet weekly with Rev. Matt Peoples (Director of *the Kairos Network*)
- Focus #3: identifying twenty to thirty pastors for potential pastoral ministry service in New Jersey congregations; they will be the next generation of pastoral leaders to shape the District's ministry culture and lead it into the future



- Focus #4: strengthening New Jersey District congregations through equipping resources and events, along with the onsite or online ministry of specialized District staff and NJD church workers...plus the ministry curriculum of the *New Jersey District Leaders and Learners* program
- + evangelistic ministry
    - + LASSIE method of witnessing the Gospel Mark Woods
    - + how did Jesus do evangelism Steinbronn
    - + life is all about stories: helping people make sense of their story in light of His story Steinbronn
    - + joining Jesus on His mission: how to be an everyday missionary Greg Finke
  - + maturational ministry
    - + Divine Drama (with notes from the Bethel Bible Series)
      - + the biblical narrative selected pastors/teachers
      - + our narrative selected pastors/teachers
    - + wise scribes trained for the kingdom: the parables of Jesus Steinbronn
    - + fifty stories that every Christian should know and why these stories really matter Huneke/Steinbronn
  - + organic ministry
    - + family life ministry Caitlin Dinger
    - + Stephen's ministry selected pastors/teachers
    - + adult Lutherans organized for action Shirley Carpenter
    - + revitalization movement Steinbronn
  - + incarnational ministry
    - + joining Jesus on His mission: how to be an everyday missionary Greg Finke
    - + mission leadership formation series Steinbronn

- Focus #5: extending His Kingdom through the formation of mission leaders and church planters; and establishing new congregations
- + *the Kairos Network* has a ministry goal of forming 100 mission leaders and planting ten churches in the next ten years, beginning in 2018
  - + mission leadership formation series Steinbronn
    - + foundational courses
      - + the mission of God
      - + discipleship: "who I am in Christ" and "why am I here"
    - + contextual courses
      - + personal and biblical worldview...and the worldview of the major non-Christian and non-Trinitarian world religions and cultural "isms" (such as naturalism, existentialism, etc.)
      - + culture learning and how to exegete and understand the plurality of worldviews and designs for living that are being embraced and expressed in their core allegiances, beliefs, and values
    - + contextualization courses
      - + communication theory, seven dimensions of cross-cultural communication, and "communicating the Gospel God's way"
      - + apostolic contextualization and Christian apologetics
- Focus #6: the formation of missionaries and church planters for labor in densely urban congregational and mission contexts
- + wise scribes trained for the kingdom: the parables of Jesus as a theology of mission Steinbronn
  - + joining Jesus on His mission: how to be an everyday missionary Greg Finke
  - + the church planting formation process of *the Kairos Network* Matt Peeples
  - + mission leadership formation series Steinbronn

- Focus #7: design and establish a “restart” model for densely urban and suburban congregational ministry
- + affirming and ensuring that every task of the Church makes sense and has a purpose only as it leads to the mission of “making disciples of all peoples”; the Great Commission lays a double obligation upon the ministry of the church:
    - + the strengthening of present disciples in their already existing discipleship through edification
    - + proclaiming the Gospel to those who are not yet His disciples with the hope that they will become His disciples through evangelism
  - + *the Kairos Network* has a ministry goal of forming 100 mission leaders and several of these mission leaders could be sent to help a congregation experience a new chapter of ministry in that place
  - + participation in a revitalization process that seeks to discover and assess...
    - + local institutional factors such as "what kind of church are we...why do we do what we do...what are supposed to be doing"
    - + local contextual factors such as "who is my neighbor...am I my brother's keeper...what is happening in the world outside of my church's walls"
    - + local institutional strategies such as "what kind of church would we like to be according to the Scriptures...where do we begin, when, and with whom"
    - + local contextual strategies such as "redeveloping a missionary mindset for North America and how to proclaim the Gospel to people who have embraced, and who live by, non-Christian and non-Trinitarian core allegiances and narratives"
  - + exegeting one's congregation and community in order to know and understand their core beliefs, core values and communal life ways
  - + discerning ways of talking and living that communicates the Gospel into the minds and lives of those who are disconnected from Christ (Romans 10:9-17; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

Focus #8: exploring and embracing the counsel and practices of the five Word-gifts from our ascended Lord, given to equip His people for their work of edification and evangelism (Ephesians 4:11-16)

- + disciples, as "wise scribes," know that the Scriptures are the great treasure store of soteriological and hermeneutical wisdom for making sense of the "human story"
- + life is all about stories and every person has a story, filled with many conversations, scenes and snapshots
- + everyone lives by a script...so how have you been scripted by your sinful human nature (1st skin) and by your culture (2nd skin)
- + how have you gone about making sense of life's story -- for the way we understand life depends on what conception we have of the human story
- + not all interpretations of life's story are true for many false prophets have gone out into the world -- the prophets connected with the many non-Christian and non-Trinitarian world religions, along with the many cultural "isms" of our time such as naturalism, pessimistic existentialism, secularism, positivism, etc.
- + God has a story -- the metanarrative -- that makes sense of every human story...for the sacred scriptures make known two kinds of wisdom so that every human being can make sense of his or her story in light of His story and His promises of salvation in Jesus Christ
  - + soteriological wisdom...to make us wise unto salvation which is by grace, through faith, in Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:15)
  - + hermeneutical wisdom...to help us make sense of life's story in light of His story/stories (Matthew 13:11, 16-17, 51-52; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Focus #9: developing a process to interface with, and minister to, "at-risk" congregations so that they might experience a new chapter of ministry

- + there are ten NJD congregations that worship less than thirty people, with most of them located in densely urban contextual settings, so how can we strengthen the Word and Sacrament ministry in these congregations

- Focus #10: exploring creative and innovative ways of ministry configurations at the congregational and circuit levels
- + approximately one-third of NJD congregations are "stand alone" congregations; that is, they can fully compensate a pastor and sufficiently fund their congregational ministry without receiving additional income from "non-congregational sources"
  - + model 1...one of these "stand alone" congregations would partner with an "at-risk" NJD congregation so that, over the next couple of years, the "at-risk" congregation could be strengthened through this ministry partnership
  - + model 2...two or more NJD congregations could come together in order to start a new congregation, with each congregation selling its facilities and finding a new worship location
  - + model 3...two NJD congregations decide to form a "dual parish" in which they are served by one pastor...the two churches come together and reach an agreement concerning worship times, office hours, and ministry expectations for the shared pastor; and then how much each congregation will contribute toward the pastor's compensation...and because each congregation is now served part-time by a pastor (thereby reducing the financial costs to each congregation), additional funds could be made available to call a part-time church worker for specialized ministry such as a "director of Christian education" or a "director of Christian outreach"
  - + model 4...five NJD congregations located in a circuit or region could "covenant" together so that they are served by three full-time pastors (and possibly a specialized staff person)
  - + model 5...a NJD congregation resolves to close, entrusting its assets to the New Jersey District so that it can strengthen existing, and extend into new places, Word and Sacrament ministry and gift designated LC-MS 501c3 ministries like LWML, Lutheran Hour Ministries, etc. through a "memorandum of understanding" with the NJD
    - + the assets received from the closing, and property sale, of St. Luke, Elizabeth are being used to foster the church planting labors of *the Kairos Network* in urban settings like Hoboken
    - + the assets received from the closing, and future property sale, of St. John Harrison are being used to foster the cross-cultural ministry of Dr. Eric Moeller among the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking residents of Harrison and Newark, along with gifting three designated 501c3 ministries (LWML, Lutheran Hour Ministry, Veterans of the Cross)

In closing, the Professional Church Workers and Congregations of the New Jersey District are thankful for the specialized and sacrificial ministry of these special servants:

- + Caren Vogt (Lutheran Schools)
- + Caitlin Dinger (Christian Education, Communications and Internet/Social Media, Family and Youth Ministry)
- + Dave Hildebrandt (Property Management, Annual Golf Classic Tournament)
- + Elaine Schleifer (Assistant to the District President and District Secretary)
- + Bill Webster (Business Manager and Finances)
- + Rev. Dick Izzard (Congregational Consultant, Advisor to the District President and Church Worker Well-being)
- + Rev. Paul Huneke (Congregational Consultant, Advisor to the District President and Church Worker Well-being)
- + Rev. Brad Hildebrandt (Congregational Consultant, Advisor to the District President)
- + Rev. Matt Peebles (Director, the Kairos Network)
- + Dr. Eric Moeller (Missionary to NJ Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking residents)
- + Bill Schmidt (Director, Ministry to Armed Forces and Veterans, Operation Barnabas)
- + Larry Schumann (Property Management, Advisor to the District President)

As with the Christians in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, we have this good work that is ours in Christ Jesus and He is the One working through us to accomplish His saving intentions toward all people. Therefore we can rejoice in this “partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a work in you will carry it to completion until the Day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:3-6).

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn  
District President, New Jersey District, LC-MS

**SUPPLEMENT TO PRESIDENT'S REPORT**  
**CHURCH WORKER STATISTICS**

**2018**

**PASTORS**

**ENTERED THE DISTRICT**

Jace Detrie (Mid-South)  
Ben Dolby (Southeastern)  
Kenneth Fosse (Atlantic)  
John Greig (Ohio)  
Matthew Lytikainen (SEM)  
Woody Mather (Atlantic)  
Philip Matarazzo (SELC)  
Daniel Merz (SEM)  
Eric Moeller (Texas)  
Aaron Mol (SEM)  
Matthew Peeples (Mid-South)  
David Russert (Atlantic)  
Daniel Sparling (Eastern)  
Gary Timm (Rocky Mountain)

**CHANGES WITHIN THE DISTRICT**

Ben Mallepalle

**CANDIDATE OR EMERITUS**

Dennis Bottoms (EM)  
Donald Brand (EM)  
Andrew Nelson (EM)  
John Welge (EM)

**TRANSFERRED TO OTHER DISTRICTS**

Peter Alexander (Pacific Southwest)  
James Buckman (Northern Illinois)  
Roland Feickert (Eastern)  
Shawn Found (Mid-South)  
Robert Kuppler (Southeastern)  
Otto Reinbacher (Southeastern)  
David Rowold (New England)  
Mark Stillman (Florida-Georgia)  
William Willenbrock (Michigan)

**RESIGNED**

Ray Hagan  
Terry Herzberg

**DECEASED**

Evan Haener  
Bruce Opsahl  
Eugene Thiemann

**Teachers /Directors of Christian Education/Deaconesses**

**ENTERED THE DISTRICT**

Rachel Mol

**TRANSFERRED TO OTHER DISTRICTS**

Diane Frusco (Florida-Georgia)

David Kisser (New England)

Mary Middleton (Florida-Georgia)

Rachel Sabanosh (South Wisconsin)

**RESIGNED**

Susan Marks



**Caitlin May Dinger**  
**Communications Coordinator & Christian Education Specialist**  
**Email: [dingerc@njdistrict.org](mailto:dingerc@njdistrict.org)**

### **Communications**

*"...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect..." ~ 1 Peter 3:15*

**The NJ District website at [www.njdistrict.org](http://www.njdistrict.org)** is mobile-friendly, and contains links to important district ministries, contact information for all district staff, how to find district congregations & schools, resources for pastors, workers, and lay people, and links to give/donate to district missions & ministries. We average 500+ unique visitors each week; most visitors seek contact info, district calendar, and special events or news/blog items.

**Two weekly electronic newsletters.** Along with a number of other occasional updates to targeted sub-groups, district newsletters are sent to subscriber lists totaling 1459 individuals:

- *Servant to Servant* - for pastors, rostered workers, and congregational presidents. Includes important updates from the District President and district staff.
- *The Grapevine* - for anyone interested in district & congregational news and updates. Subscribe at [www.tinyurl.com/njdnewsletters](http://www.tinyurl.com/njdnewsletters).

**Social Media.** The NJ District Facebook (@njdistrict), Twitter (@njdistrict), and Instagram (@njdistrict) accounts are the most active. Most popular features are the free graphics for Advent and Lent/Holy Week/Easter that are made available to all district congregations for use on their social media channels, and an annual photo-a-day "Advent Calendar" that is shared on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, with individual participants tagging their photos with the hashtag #njdadvent.

**Consultations with congregations, pastors, and circuit meetings.** I am very happy to serve as a pair of "friendly critical" eyes, with the goal of improving & strengthening your congregation's digital ministry. I can provide a fresh look at your congregation's website and social media presence, as well as print materials, to help you communicate more effectively with congregational members and with your surrounding community. People in your community are already connecting with one another via social media. Join the conversation that's already taking place, and be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in you!

### **Christian Education**

*Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. ~ Psalm 78:1-4*

**The following numbers represent the total reported enrollment in Christian education programs (Sunday school, youth group) for NJ District congregations in 2015-2016:**

- 3 years old & under: 71
- 4 years old through 4th grade: 257
- 5th through 8th grade: 141
- 9th through 12th grade: 60

**Congregations, facing the challenges of fewer children, increasingly disconnected families, and diminished volunteer rosters, are seeking renewal and rebirth of a Christian education ministry that shares the Gospel with children, youth, and families in practical, life-shaping and life-sharing ways.** There is no perfect curriculum that will do this for you, and no "magic bullet" solution to this challenge. God's Word alone is our source of power and the content of our faith. God's Word alone is our

hope for renewal and rebirth as we face these challenges. “I did nothing; I let the Word do its work,” wrote Martin Luther, reflecting on his role in the Reformation. “I simply taught, preached, and wrote God’s Word; otherwise I did nothing. And while I slept, or drank Wittenberg beer with my friends Philipp and Amsdorf, the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that no prince or emperor ever inflicted such losses upon it. I did nothing; the Word did everything.... For it is almighty, and takes captive the hearts, and when the hearts are captured the work will fall of itself” (*The Second Sermon, March 10, 1522*).

**Annual Resource Sharing & Training.** Seven to twelve congregations attended the annual Children, Youth, and Family Ministry event in 2015, 2016 and 2017. At this event, various “home-centered, church-supported” models of ministry were shared, and free resources made available for parent-supported confirmation ministry, outreach-focused VBS, and intergenerational service learning. Ongoing discussions are held and free resources made available on the “Home-Centered, Church-Supported Ministry” group on Facebook (join here: [www.facebook.com/groups/njdfamilyfriendly](http://www.facebook.com/groups/njdfamilyfriendly)).

**Youth Ministry.** As the number of youth in our congregations dwindles, so too, does the number of youth connected to district wide youth ministry programs. The district did not host a Winter Youth Gathering in 2018 for the first time in decades. However, new models and ministry opportunities are being born. The first-ever NJ District “Mystery Bus Tour” (August 2017) included 45 participants from six congregations. Regional youth ministry collectives are being explored, as congregations work together to build relationships and strengthen support networks among Lutheran youth and their families. The potential for dual-parish or multi-parish directors of Christian education (DCE) or Christian outreach (DCO) is great, and would be a huge support to our pastors as they seek to lead our congregations in these areas.

Please stop by the Youth Ministry table in the exhibitors’ hall to pick up free resources, and get the latest info on the 2019 National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis.

**Congregational Consultations.** Working with a congregation’s pastor and Christian education team, I have been able to provide curriculum review and support, and program planning helps for Sunday school, VBS, confirmation, youth, and adult education programs. I would love to meet with your congregation’s team.

Please let me know how I can be of service to you in the areas of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry, as we seek together to tell the coming generations the glorious deeds of the Lord, and the wonders He has done for us in Christ.

## **David Hildebrandt**

Staff Report/June 2018

**Please accept my Staff Report of my involvement with the**

**NJ District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod**

**Entitled: “Change of Life”**

Prior to my eighteen years with the NJ District, I had been with a National and International Steel Company as a Marketing and Sales Representative with Carpenter Technology Corporation--- who moved me and my wife Barbara from the Chicago land area in 1969. **(Change of Life #1)**

After almost twenty years of employment, I was moved to form my own small Steel Company—Lahill Steel Corporation. **(Change of Life #2)**

Almost nineteen year ago, I had a heart attack at work, and was rushed to the hospital. After quadruple bypass surgery and nine months of recovery, we---my wife, family and I—decided on a “life change” not only for me but for us. **(Change of Life #3)** I had been the Congregation President at Calvary Lutheran in Verona and during that time, I had the pleasure of knowing the then District President, Rev. Dr. Sandman, who I reached out to for prayer and direction. His suggestions lead me to an opportunity with the LCMS and in February of 2000 I was offered a position as a Gift Counselor for both the New York and the New Jersey Districts, which I accepted. **(Change of Life #4)**

After a number of years, the LCMS Foundation had a directional change and a new need developed at the NJ District, that of a “dual” role of Gift Councilor and Business Manager, which I was asked to fill. **(Change of Life #5)**

Since that time, I have not only been the Business Manager **(Change of Life #6)**, NJ District Stewardship Leader **(Change of Life #7)** but also a Congregation Revitalization coach. **(Change of Life #8)**

**Change of Life #9** was The Funding of Ministry in the New Jersey District. Over these many years, the funding started with my role as a Gift Counselor. Here, I worked with individuals from a number of the District Congregations in setting up Charitable Remainder Trusts. The trust would be funded in a variety of ways including from a directive in an estate plan; resulting with National and local Ministries having or to receive over THREE MILLION DOLLARS from these activities. I was also asked to develop two District Fund Raisers: The “Seeds Campaign” and “His Way”. The proceeds from these activities of over THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND helped the continuing of ministry in the District and in extending a call to then Mission Executive now District President Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn.

Fifteen years ago I had a dream of bringing together individuals from various Congregations within the District that had like interests; that of a special golf outing that included a district wide fund raiser. From that dream the Mission Golf Classic was developed. We just recently completed the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Mission Classic on May 3<sup>rd</sup> with the net proceeds going to the Kairos Network, in support of new mission and church planting initiatives. The Classic has developed scholarships, funded youth summer camp projects, assisted the Malaria initiative, Backpacks for Life, Comfort Dogs, and youth initiatives, with over a QUARTER MILLION DOLLARS being given out.

Most recently I was asked to be a Property Manager (**Change of Life #10**), as the District sadly experienced congregations that have closed. During the “Property Manager” period of closures and over my prior years of experience, I have had some varied responsibilities. During that time, sadly, I have had involvement in congregation closings at: Clifton-Plainfield-North Bergen-Harrison-Mahwah-Elizabeth-and the Clinton area.

However, most recently, I have been involved, in part, of the newly formed Ministry Management Team (**Change of Life #11**) that has been charged with helping to assist NEW MINISTRY growth within the NJ District.

This final Staff role may very well be the most important activity that I have been part of to date; as the recent congregation assets that have come to the District from the various closings have been the financial support for the NEW MINISTRIES opportunities within the District.

Nineteen years ago I felt it was time for a “Life Change” and as I look to the future, I believe it is time for me, to once again, look to a **“Life Change-----Number 12”**.

With that said, I have prayed to the Lord for guidance as I say to those in the NJ District—Thank You for the opportunity to serve you and the Lord.

A special Thank You of friendship goes out to Reverends Klettke-Izzard-Huneke-Sadlo-Herzberg-Kuppler-Nelson-Steinbronn and to the best Administrative Specialist anyone could ever have—Elaine Schleifer.

**GOD BLESS**

## NJ District Education report for 2018 Convention

By Caren Vogt

Lutheran Education, like our churches, are experiencing difficult times in New Jersey. Although our schools are rated among the best by the state for education and reaching out to the whole family, we often miss the mark in meeting the needs of our community as a whole. We have closed two preschools in the last 3 years, 5 others are struggling to stay open and be financially stable. We have only one elementary school, Our Redeemer in Fords, who is struggling to stay open. We have four preschools currently in transition. Two are looking for new directors to lead their schools, while two others have found directors to lead their school. We want to welcome Douglas Puls as the new director at Christ Memorial and Martha Gilmore as the new director of Redeemer Preschool, Westfield. We have provided conferences each year in the spring. The Spring Educator's Conference for Pastors, DCE's, Directors and Teachers has provided trainings and CEU's with both Lutheran and Secular presenters to help our churches and schools in their ministry. An average attendance of 55 participants per year. We encourage you to send your teachers and ministry team to the annual conference, as well to make suggestions for future conferences.

Out of 20 preschools and 1 elementary only three operate with hours for working parents (6am to 6pm). The rest still have half day programs or extended programs, but they often don't meet the hours of working parents. Parents need consistent care 12 months of the year for their children. Parents also wish they can make one stop when looking for childcare for their children. Our schools need to look at school age care for siblings of preschool children in our care. Providing before and after school, holidays, school closings, and care for all ages during the summer. The schools that have made these adjustments seem to be doing well, while still maintaining a high quality educational program.

Our Churches need to be active in our schools. Our retired members could volunteer to be greeters. Welcoming parents and be encouragers. Sharing their wisdom when parents have concerns and offering prayers for the parents they meet. Members could visit new parents and welcome them to the school family and share information about the church. Keep each of the school families in the prayers of the church. Attend school functions and mingle with the parents sharing the gospel and finding out if there is any way the church can be of service to them. Members can reach out to staff and become a prayer partner with a staff member. Offer your time and talents to staff to make the school program the best it can be. Reward your hard-working staff with messages of encouragement and praise. Hold a dinner for staff and parents after a long day just to let them know you care. Doing these things and others will help you see your school in action and help you to keep the ministry of your school in the forefront of your church's ministry plan.

Please support all of schools with prayers, financial gifts, encouragements, and the many gifts and talents with which God has blessed you. Our Schools are a powerful outreach ministry into our communities. With Church and School working together the Gospel message will reach many.

## REPORT OF THE OUTREACH COUNCIL

“Don’t tell them what Lutherans do, tell them who Jesus is!”  
Lutheran Hour Speaker, Rev. Greg Seltz -

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Rev. Ben Dolby  
Rev. Michael Dunn  
Rev Matt Haas  
Rev. Richard Izzard (Chair)  
Rev. Gary Timm

Raise level of Congregational commitment to outreach

To encourage NJD Congregations, Pastors and Lay Leaders to participate in Conferences promoting Outreach e.g. Best Practices, etc.

To Sponsor and promote Workshops in the District helping Congregations to find ways to engage their communities, e.g Net Fishing Events, Lutheran Hour Ministries’ Mission U, LCEF Demographics, FIVETWO, Seasons of Discovery, etc.

Articles on Outreach for Servant-to-Servant and Grapevine promoting and encouraging outreach.

Share ideas with Congregations what others are doing in the District in the area Outreach, and encouraging Congregations to “feed” off and learn from one another.

To advocate ways for Congregations to engage and impact their respective communities.

To encourage Congregations to build on Mission and Vision Statements that endorse actions that will assist the Congregation in reaching those who do not know Christ.



## **REVITALIZATION**

**Rev. Richard C. Izzard**

Greg Finke in Joining Jesus on His Mission writes, “We’re not on mission for Jesus, but with Jesus!” Jesus invites us to join with Him in what He is already doing. With almost ½ of LCMS Congregations winning one or less to Jesus, revitalization calls us to join with Jesus in “Seeking and saving the lost.” (Luke 19:10) Recent surveys uncover the fact that many LCMS congregations do not believe that their only priority is bringing people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. We speak of priorities, but the word priority is singular. We can have only one priority. Once established, we can then prioritize our different ministries in support of our one priority.

Revitalization has become a “buzz” word, with many thinking of it as just another program. But revitalization is as old as God’s promise in Genesis 3:15. By the precious sacrifice of Christ, from the cross to the empty tomb, we have been revitalized. With Christ having paid the price of defeating “sin, death and the devil,” we are called to live in a “newness of life,” (Romans 6:5) being entrusted by God with the message and ministry of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19)

Revitalization in our churches only begins when we make the simplest of all confessions, “Jesus is Lord.” He is not simply a Lord, He is the Lord. He is Lord of all, or He is not Lord at all. He is Lord of each of our strategically placed New Jersey congregations. Our ministries, decisions, actions, thinking are to reflect His Lordship and His preeminence. The Church belongs to the preeminent Lord, or it is not a Church.

We who are called into fellowship with Jesus who is not only the Lord but He is also the Head of His Church. Jesus is the Head, not the Pastor, not Voters or Council, nor traditions, or personal likes and dislikes, or popular convictions, not even majority vote. Jesus is the Head of the Church. It is His direction that counts. It is His opinions that matter. It is His ideas, thoughts and judgments that are of first importance. Without His direction we can easily wander off course and forget the business we are in. And without the passion of Christ for the lost, we will never put the energy into the on-going ministry of revitalization.

Knowing Jesus is Lord and that He is the Head of the Church, we are called and commissioned to be the Body of Christ. Personally, one of the most challenging tasks in ministry was “to explain the unexplainable” love of God in Christ Jesus. But that’s the genius of God calling the Church to be the body of Christ. “The Church is the only organization that exists for the benefit of others.” The risen and exalted Lord returned to earth to be nearer to us than ever before. The Church becomes a body that is identical with Christ’s own body. Since the ascension, “Christ’s place on earth has been taken by His body, the Church. The Body of Christ becomes visible to the world in the congregation gathered round the Word and Sacrament.” (Bonhoeffer’s Cost of Discipleship) As the Body of Christ, revitalized and renewed in the Spirit we are to be “so sacrificially loving that the people around us, who don’t believe what we believe, will soon be unable to imagine the community without us.”

How to engage our communities is ONLY hindered by a lack of creativity and a unwillingness to let our only priority dictate our actions. There are a host of technical solutions that will help us maintain our status quo. But may we, who have been revitalized by the preciousness of God’s love for us in Christ, seek diligently and passionately adaptive solutions, generated by God’s Spirit in response to Christ’s mission and His command to “Go, and make disciples of all nations.” (Matthew 28:19)

To view the District Staff's video reports, please visit the link below:

[www.njdistrict.org/reports2018](http://www.njdistrict.org/reports2018)

## Christian Heritage Endowment Fund (CHEF)

In 1983 through a gift to the New Jersey District Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, The Christian Heritage Endowment Fund (CHEF) was established. Its purpose was to assist the churches of the New Jersey District and its pastors to create new programs, enhance their ministries and spread the news of our Risen Lord and Savior.

At each convention of the New Jersey District, a Board of Trustees is elected to oversee the disbursement of the monies in the fund. During this past term, the trustees reviewed the By-Laws of the Fund and the formula for equitable distribution of the monies within. In 2010, the trustees invested the Fund in an annuity to provide a more reliable source of funding for disbursement during the two grant periods yearly, January 15 and August 15. This has proven to provide the consistency which was desired. This year the trustees also established a grant maximum of \$10,000. per request. Renewable grants remain renewable under this guideline.

The trustees also discussed increasing the categories for grants. After a brisk discussion, it was determined that the five categories presently utilized offer wide interpretation and thus congregations should be able to utilize them for any project being considered.

These are the categories for which grants were offered this past triennium:

- Grants for new ministry, out reach mission (3 yr. renewable)
- Grants for leadership development, house church leaders
- Grants for technology
- Grants to assist in bringing message to the disabled
- Grants for Church Workers sabbaticals

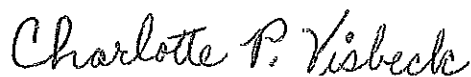
All grants are for up to 50% of the project

In honor of the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation, CHEF offered a grant of \$500. for celebration events involving a minimum of two churches. We were delighted that four events were held with nine churches involved.

The members of the CHEF Board of Trustees would like to remember Mrs. Ewald Mueller. It was her initial gift which began CHEF. We were saddened to learn of her passing this past year.

The following have served as Trustees of CHEF this past triennium: Rev. Brian Handrich, Vice Chair; John Blume; Chris Koerner, District Treasurer; Steve Naumowicz; Linda Panarella and William Zak. Advisors to the Trustees were President Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn and Business Manager Bill Webster.

Respectfully submitted,



Charlotte P. Visbeck, Chair

## Grant Disbursements Fall 2015 – Spring 2018

### Fall 2015

Holy Cross, Mahwah	\$ 8,000.	New Ministry *
Luther Memorial, Tinton Falls	3,900.	Technology

### Spring 2016

Redeemer, Westfield	2,750.	Technology
St. Thomas, Manalapan	4,000.	Technology

### Fall 2016

Holy Cross, Mahwah	8,000.	New Ministry
Holy Trinity, Lawrenceville	6,500.	New Ministry *
Calvary, Verona	7,945.	Technology

### Spring 2017

Our Savior, Fair Lawn	5,000.	New Ministry *
Good Shepherd, Old Bridge	10,000.	Technology

### Fall 2017

NJ District LWML	2,500.	Technology
Holy Trinity, Lawrenceville	6,500.	New Ministry *
New Jersey District LC-MS	8,000.	New Ministry *
St, Thomas, Manalapan	3,000.	Technology
Bethlehem, Ridgewood	8,500.	Technology

### Spring 2018

Holy Trinity, Somerset	<u>10,000.</u>	New Ministry *
	<u>\$94,595.</u>	* Renewable 3 yr. Grant

### 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Reformation Grants - \$ 2,250.

Augustana Picnic: Good Shepherd, Randolph and Trinity, Morris Plains  
 Martin Luther Movie: Zion, Westwood; St. Paul, Closter and St. Matthew, New Milford  
 Joint Services: St. Paul, Hopewell and Holy Trinity, Lawrenceville  
 Holy Trinity, Somerset; Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Stanhope and Trinity,  
 Morris Plains

### Total Grants Fall 2015 – Spring 2018: \$ 96,845.

### Financial Report July 1, 2015 – January 31, 2017:

CHEF Alliance Fund Annuity	June 1, 2015	\$ 464,515.00
	January 31, 2017	441,611.06
Affinity CHEF Checking Acct.	June 1, 2015	\$ 20,391.15
Affinity Account Closed	August 5, 2016	1,731.72
Northfield CHEF Checking Acct.	June 1, 2016	\$ 5,000.00
	January 31, 2017	13,784.13

## **NJ DISTRICT 2018 CONVENTION OVERTURES**

### **Overture 1**

#### **To Ensure Timely and Transparent Financial Reporting in the Synod**

WHEREAS, A principle of Biblical stewardship is to be accountable with the resources with which one has been entrusted, as expressed in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14 ff.); and

WHEREAS, Much is required of those to whom God has entrusted his gifts. As Jesus said, “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more” (Luke 12:48b, ESV); and

WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach “it is required of stewards that they be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2, ESV); and

WHEREAS, The Synod has historically recognized its responsibility of accountability and faithfulness in the handling of the finances entrusted to it by its members, as is witnessed in Bylaw 1.5.4, “The Synod and each of its agencies shall fully disclose their financial books and records to any member congregation of the Synod;” and

WHEREAS, The Synod in previous conventions has expressed its opinion that such accountability and faithfulness be found additionally in regular reporting of such financial disclosure by adopting 2010 Convention Resolution 4-03, “To Broadly Communicate the Statement of Financial Position of LCMS,” which reads in its totality:

“WHEREAS, It is helpful to understand the Synod’s financial position and communicate it to the members of the congregations of Synod; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That each November, the Vice-President–Finance—Treasurer of the Synod use widely available means, (i.e., The Lutheran Witness, Reporter, the LCMS Website) to state the financial position of the Synod in a format easily understood by persons unfamiliar with financial terminology.” (2010 Convention Proceedings, p. 120); and

WHEREAS, The members of the Synod expressed even further the need for full transparency in all areas of financial disclosure by adopting 2016 convention RESOLUTION 9-04A, “To Improve Disclosures Related to Financial Gifts from God’s Stewards for Special Appeals,” which stated in part,

“... WHEREAS, Monies for special appeals requested by corporate Synod (e.g., following natural disasters) are reported only in part in Synod publications (e.g., Reporter and The Lutheran Witness) and sometimes only annually; and ...

WHEREAS, Donors and members of the Synod are interested in the impact of funds raised for special appeals and will appreciate improved disclosure of results; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the financial offices of corporate Synod continue to recognize the desire of donors and members of the Synod to improve processes of reporting and work to provide clear, timely, and transparent accounting for all funding and special appeals, so that the Body of Christ

may experience the joy of Gospel-centered mission and ministry beyond the local context or community.” (2016 Convention Proceedings, p. 189); and

WHEREAS, It was reported to the 2013 Convention of the Synod by the Board of Directors in its Report on the Disposition of Funding the Mission Recommendations (R6-03-01) that “the decline in the Synod’s annual unrestricted revenue continues...The board believes that congregations will respond through better, open, and honest communication about the great things God is able to accomplish for His kingdom when we work together. Numerous conventions have passed resolutions calling on congregations to maintain and increase unrestricted support for district and Synod ministries, yet the unrestricted support passed through our districts to the Synod has continued to decline at the average rate of \$1 million each year.” (2013 Convention Workbook 2013, p. 114-115); and

WHEREAS, In 2016, the Chief Financial Officer of the Synod, in reporting to the Synod about offerings received, stated, “This sharing from God’s bounty continues to decline. Although the amount of decline in the past three years has not been as severe as the average decline of the previous 20 years, it is still trending negatively. In the face of continued declining unrestricted revenues, the ability of Synod, Inc. to respond quickly and nimbly to mission and ministry opportunities and challenges laid before us by our Lord also declines, as does our ability to “fill in the gap” when restricted revenues, needed to fund much of our mission and ministry activities, fall short of their goals. The financial challenges facing our beloved Synod persist. I believe that these challenges are of our own making, a product of how we distribute the resources provided by our loving Father.” (2016 Convention Workbook, pp. 61-62); and

WHEREAS, There have been few tangible reports about the financial struggles of the Synod, such as the need to trim \$4 million dollars from the budget of the Synod (ref. July 7, 2017 Reporter, <https://blogs.lcms.org/2017/international-national-mission> and the May 19-20, 2017 Synod Board of Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4769>), these reports are less than sufficient to keep the members of the Synod regularly informed about the financial condition of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, It has been widely reported, albeit not in the official channels of the Synod communications, that the Synod has only minimal days of operating capital in its cash reserves, which would seemingly place the synod in a precarious financial position (ref. Paragraph 45, Financial Reports of the February 17-18, 2017 LCMS Board of Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4659>), which stated that without funds held on behalf of the two Seminaries, Synod had only a 5 days of cash available); and

WHEREAS, In the face of such challenging financial times, transparency and regularity in reporting of the financial situation of the Synod is of utmost importance to the members and constituency of the Synod who have a vested interest in the financial viability of the Synod and who merit clear, concise, and timely reports; and

WHEREAS, The president of the synod recommended in his report to the Synod in 2016 that the synod have “Uniform Financial Reporting.” (2016 Today’s Business, p. 28); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Synod in convention direct the Chief Financial Officer to report quarterly in the Synod’s official publications about the financial position of the Synod in a format easily understood by persons unfamiliar with financial terminology, such reporting to include, but not limited to income and expenses, budget versus spending, cash reserves and cash position, etc.; and be it further

RESOLVED, That these quarterly reports include information about the regular Synod budget and the reporting on special appeals as stipulated in 2016 Resolution 9-04A; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod be shrewd managers with the resources God has given it; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Synod give thanks to God for the resources He has entrusted to us, recognizing  
“That the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (Psalm 24:1, ESV).

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-03)

## Overture 2

### To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724

Whereas the Texas District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, at its 2015 convention, adopted the following resolution: RESOLUTION: 02-01-15A

RE: OVERTURES 02-04-15, 02-05-15, 02-06-15, 02-07-15, 02-08-15, 02-09-15, 02-10-15, 02-11-15, 02-12-15, 02-13-15

SUBJECT: TO OVERRULE CCM OPINION 14-2724

WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries, notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

WHEREAS, Article III. 2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod identifies an objective of the Synod as 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;” and

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

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

WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in Resolution 8-32B); and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally congregational in nature; and

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

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and



WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any event; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy; and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

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

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations and others to give 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; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the congregations of the Texas District and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Texas District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

RESOLVED, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Texas District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void and of no effect.  
Rev. Larry Krueger, Chairman  
Rev. Brian Hesse, Secretary

and

WHEREAS, The above resolution appears in the 2016 LCMS Convention Workbook as Overture 2-04; and

WHEREAS, Three other LCMS districts, three district boards of directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations also adopted this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Two other overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention that also requested that CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) regarding the CCM says, in part:

An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action.

(Emphasis added)

And

WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, No disposition of these overtures whatsoever is recorded in the 2016 Synod convention Proceedings; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the resolution quoted above be submitted as an overture to the 2019 Synod convention by the adoption of this, current resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be done in a fitting and orderly way” (I Corinthians 14:40).

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 1-04)

## OVERTURE 3

### To Overrule Board of Directors' May 2017 Resolution 12-14, re Bylaw 7.1.2

WHEREAS, The 2016 Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in its Resolution 12-14 [*“Regarding the Right of an Accuser to Appeal When a District President or President of the Synod Fails to Act or Declines to Suspend”*] and according to Bylaw 7.1.2, deferred its rightful and legislative authority regarding the development of ecclesiastical supervision bylaws with respect to and inclusion of the President of the Synod, the decision given to Synod’s Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14, in accordance with Bylaw 7.1.2, set forth a specific path and timeline for consideration, negotiation and counsel to be conducted with the Council of Presidents, with any proposed amendments to the bylaws to be reviewed by the Commission on Constitutional Matters and the Commission on Handbook; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14 states that the Commission on Constitutional Matters in Op. 16-2791 *“has indicated portions of the expulsion processes of Synod’s Bylaws are presently in an unconstitutional state with respect to Const. Art. XI B 1–3 and Const. Art. XIII 2”*; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors, acting under Bylaw 7.1.2 and at the express direction of the 2016 Resolution 12-14, in May of 2017 adopted changes to the bylaws of the Synod regarding ecclesiastical supervision; and

WHEREAS, The Constitution of Synod defines clearly, precisely, and fully the supervisory role of the President of Synod, wherein the President of Synod has *“the supervision regarding the doctrine and the administration of a. All officers of the Synod; b. All such as are employed by the Synod; c. The individual district of the Synod; d. All district presidents” (XI.B.1)*; and

WHEREAS, The President of Synod, as ecclesiastical supervisor, is limited in the exercise of said power, assuming *“only such rights as have been expressly conferred” (XI A.1)* [*“The officers of the Synod must assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by the Synod, and in everything pertaining to their rights and the performance of their duties, they are responsible to the Synod.”*], which are expressly conferred to be *“the power to advise, admonish, and reprove....conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod” (XI.B.3)*; and

WHEREAS, Synod’s Constitution expressly confers upon the District Presidents the duty to *“exercise supervision over”* their district’s ministers and to *“visit and...hold investigations in the congregations” (XII.7)*, including the District Presidents being empowered *“to suspend from membership”* their district’s ministers (XII.8); and

WHEREAS, Prior to the year 2016 and CCM Op. 16-2791, numerous CCM opinions [to wit Ag. 1970, Op.15-2750, 13-2669, 10-2581, 03-2354, and 03-2338, A and C] interpreted the President of Synod’s scope of ecclesiastical supervision do not include supervision over individual workers and congregations expressed in Article XII.7,8; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That Synod in convention, as the ultimate legislative body of Synod [*Bylaw 1.4.1: “The delegate convention of the Synod is the legislative assembly that ultimately legislates policy, program, and financial direction to carry on the Synod’s work on behalf of and in support of the member*

*congregations. It reserves to itself the right to give direction to all officers and agencies of the Synod. Consequently, all officers and agencies, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, shall be accountable to the Synod for all their actions, and any concerns regarding the decisions of such officers or agencies may be brought to the attention of the Synod in convention for appropriate action. This provision does not apply to specific member appeals to the Concordia Plans, which has its own appeal process for such cases.*] considers the following to be steps to the resolution of this matter; and be it further

RESOLVED, That changes, subsequent to 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, made under Bylaw 2.14 “Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod,” under Bylaw 2.15 “Expulsion of a District President or Officer from Membership in the Synod”, under Bylaw 2.16 “Expulsion of a President of Synod from Membership in the Synod”, and under Bylaw 2.17 “Expulsion of Individuals from Membership in the Synod as a Result of Sexual Misconduct or Criminal Behavior”, as a result of 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, as adopted by the Board of Directors (May 2017) be overruled and of no effect; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 and 2.17 be returned to and replaced by the same corresponding Bylaws as set forth in the 2013 Synod Handbook; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a Blue Ribbon Task Force of seven members, with four members appointed by the 35 District Presidents, three of whom shall be District Presidents, and three members appointed by the President of Synod, be authorized and formed to conduct a thorough study of the ecclesiastical supervision matter, including Articles III, VI, VII (studies of Articles VI and VII were previously resolved by the 2010 Convention), XI, XII, and XIII, and make recommendations to the 2022 Synod Convention, including any necessary revisions of constitutional provisions, with the purpose of evangelically resolving the current difficulty and division among us; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all relevant CCM opinions such as 16-2791, 16-2793, 16-2794, 16-2797, 17-2822, 17-2828 and 17-2836 be placed in abeyance until the 2022 Convention and any necessary action at the 2022 convention; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Synod in convention affirm the powers provided to the Synod President “*to advise, admonish and reprove...conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod*” do not include direct supervisory responsibilities of individual members of Synod, since such individuals are under the ecclesiastical supervision of District Presidents; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the convention pray for peace and harmony in the Synod as it moves forward in mission and ministry.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 2-01)

## Overture 4

### To Explore Consolidation/Merger of Congregations/ Ministries

Whereas, many of our congregations are continuing to decline in membership and financial stability

Whereas, many of these same congregations and pastors are highly engaged in creative outreach, Learning Communities, Transforming Churches Network, etc and

Whereas, this dissonance of effort and results can produce high anxiety and so lower levels of creativity, and

Whereas, it would benefit the pastors to have a colleague to work with in a shared ministry, and

Whereas, our pastors are generally highly gifted in various tasks of pastoral ministry, but none in every task, and

Whereas, at every church closing, many of those current members fall through the cracks and cease attending worship,

Whereas, when a congregation and pastor is in crisis mode it is difficult to think beyond keeping the lights on, and

Whereas, we have many rostered and trained DCEs that were raised in NJ and moved back to NJ in a desire for the ministry in NJ but are unable to be called by our smaller congregations

Whereas, one of the roles of a district is to support current congregations and workers, be it

Resolved, the the NJ District explore, promote and facilitate ministry options for congregations to yoke together in dual parish ministries, combined ministries, regional parish models, etc, that would be served by multi-pastorates, deaconesses, DCE, etc so as to make full use of the giftedness of the church and be it further

Resolved, that the NJ District help congregations in developing creative ways to manage the resource of land and facilities, including the sale of said properties so that the current congregation could continue and thrive in a new way.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 1-03)

## Overture 5

### To Adopt Data Privacy Best Practices

WHEREAS, The District and Synod collect personal identity and contact information from convention delegates and from those who vote for President of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Best practices for data privacy include the safeguarding of such personal information, its use only in the official conduct of business, and strict limitations on its disclosure; and

WHEREAS, Our delegates in convention take positions at odds with the culture, making disclosure of their personal information a security concern. For example, the Family Research Council in DC and donors to California Prop 8 were attacked professionally and personally for the same positions on marriage that our delegates enacted in 2016 14-02A, 14-03A, and 14-04; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3 now prohibits non-official use or distribution of the list of congregation-selected voters for President of Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Synod openly publishes the street addresses of national delegates as part of the Convention Workbook, which is posted on the Internet and easily downloaded; and

WHEREAS, The Secretary of Synod's office sells copies of this list to interested parties, which use them mainly for political ends. In 2016, some of those distributions disclosed national delegate e-mail addresses without consent; and

WHEREAS, LCMS districts have used their access to voters lists to send advocacy-type mailings and e-mails directly to those who vote for synod officials; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District affirms its commitment to data privacy best practices, including protection of identity and contact information for its district convention delegates, and the use or distribution of that information only for official business and with consent of the persons involved; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District adopts a practice, consistent with LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3, which prohibits its use of private voter contact information in connection with synod-level elections; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt practices that stop the public disclosure of delegate street addresses and require prior consent for any distribution of their personal contact information.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-02)

**Overture 6**  
**To have the District President Serve as a Part Time Position**

WHEREAS, the New Jersey District of the LCMS encompasses the smallest geographic area of the districts of the LCMS, and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey District has the second fewest number of congregations (54 NJ, 53 SELC, 9619 communicant NJ, 12376 communicant SELC), and

WHEREAS, congregational financial support has decreased to the point at which the district must use savings, and continued sale of closed church properties to maintain the current level of spending at a district level, and

WHEREAS, larger districts both geographically (SELC, encompasses 11 states and 2 Canadian provinces) and in number (Oklahoma, 82 congregations) are served by part-time district presidents who regularly also serve as parish pastor, and

WHEREAS, the NJ District has also allowed for the district president to serve as a parish pastor, and

WHEREAS, it would be of best stewardship of the resources that God has entrusted to the churches and the district to consider how other districts have organized themselves to best accomplish the mission of the church, and

WHEREAS, pastors have been called in to pastoral congregational ministry and the church would lose a great resource to remove these men from the congregational ministry to serve as solely a DP, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey District President be a part-time position, both in time and compensation, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the NJ DP be allowed to serve a congregation as pastor.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-01)



## **Overture 7**

### **To Engage in Ministry to Transgendered Persons**

WHEREAS, All persons are created in God’s image and are made to glorify Him ([Genesis 1:27](#); [Isaiah 43:7](#)); and

WHEREAS, God’s design was the creation of two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female ([Genesis 1:27](#); [Matthew 19:4](#); [Mark 10:6](#);) which designate the fundamental distinction that God has embedded in the very biology of the human race; and

WHEREAS, Distinctions in masculine and feminine as ordained by God are part of the created order and should find expression in every human heart ([Genesis 2:18, 21–24](#); [1 Corinthians 11:7–9](#); [Ephesians 5:22–33](#); [1 Timothy 2:12–14](#)); and

WHEREAS, The Fall of man into sin and God’s subsequent curse have introduced brokenness and futility into God’s good creation ([Genesis 3:1–24](#); [Romans 8:20](#)); and

WHEREAS, According to a 2016 study from the UCLA School of Law, about 1.4 million Americans identify as transgender; and

WHEREAS, Transgenderism differs from hermaphroditism or intersexualism in that the sex of the individual is not biologically ambiguous but psychologically ambiguous; and

WHEREAS, The state of New Jersey prohibits licensed counselors from any attempt to change a child’s “gender expression”; and

WHEREAS, the church does not have a good history at ministering to transgendered persons often due to our uncomfortability with the topic or harsh, unloving, hypocritical manner in which we speak to them often while refusing to speak publicly against other sexual sins such as divorce, remarriage, pornography, sexual harassment, coarse language, etc, and

WHEREAS, the CTCR has produced a 2014 paper entitled, “Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria in Christian Perspective” which begins to address this topic; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the NJ District in convention affirm God’s good design that gender identity is determined by biological sex and not by one’s self-perception—a perception which is often influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God’s design ([Ephesians 4:17–18](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commend the CTCR for their current work and request they produce a full study on practical ministry to transgendered persons, and be it

RESOLVED, That we grieve the reality of human fallenness which can result in such biological manifestations as intersexuality or psychological manifestations as gender identity confusion and point all to the hope of the redemption of our bodies in Christ ([Romans 8:23](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend love and compassion to those whose sexual self-understanding is shaped by a distressing conflict between their biological sex and their gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we invite all transgender persons to trust in Christ and to experience renewal in the Gospel ([1 Timothy 1:15–16](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we love our transgender neighbors, seek their good always, welcome them to our churches and, as they repent and believe in Christ, receive them into church membership ([2 Corinthians 5:18–20](#); [Galatians 5:14](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we regard our transgender neighbors as image-bearers of God and therefore condemn acts of abuse or bullying committed against them; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we oppose efforts to alter one’s bodily identity (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgery) to refashion it to conform with one’s perceived gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we continue to oppose steadfastly all efforts by any governing official or body to validate transgender identity as morally praiseworthy ([Isaiah 5:20](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our love for the Gospel and urgency for the Great Commission must include declaring the whole counsel of God, proclaiming what Scripture teaches about God’s design for us as male and female persons created in His image and for His glory ([Matthew 28:19–20](#); [Acts 20:27](#); [Romans 11:36](#)).

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary  
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 4-03)

## **Overture 8**

### **To Combat Racism within the Church and Society**

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches, “God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,” (Acts 17:26); and

WHEREAS, All people are created in the same image of God, no matter what human distinguishing identifiers might be (Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6; cf. Acts 17:25, 26) and

WHEREAS, central to the doctrine of creation is the truth of the equal value of all humans grounded in the unsurpassable worth that God places in them, demonstrated by the unsurpassable price he paid for each individual person, and

WHEREAS, In Jesus, God became a human and so identifies fully with every human (Hebrews 2:17), not only Israel but all of humanity and that his mission embraces all of humankind (Matt. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38), and

WHEREAS, Any claim that there is something about the nature of another human being as such that renders that person to be of inferior value not only denies the biblical doctrine of creation, but also calls into question what the Scriptures teach about the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As a human, Jesus descended from Adam, whom God created (Luke 3:38), and whom all human beings have as progenitor. To deny the full humanity of any fellow human being is at the same time to compromise the apostolic truth that in Christ “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col. 2:9), that is, that he truly “was made man” (Nicene Creed).

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ has removed all barriers between all human beings, making peace through His cross (Eph. 2:13-16), and

WHEREAS, The Apostle Peter said, “God doesn’t show favoritism, but in every nation the person who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him” (Acts 10:34–35); and

WHEREAS, The Book of Concord teaches that all Christians will make the will of Christ supreme in their own lives and in human society, and so opposing all forms of racism (AC Ap V 1-3, )

WHEREAS, ““That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself,” Dr. Martin Luther wrote in the Large Catechism, is “really your God.” “If any one boasts,” he continued, “of great learning, wisdom, power, prestige, family, and honor, and trusts in them, he also has a god, but not the one, true God.” If anyone should claim superiority over others and treat them as inferior because of racial origin or characteristics, we may add, that person, too, has a god, but not the one true God. Racism is at its core idolatry

WHEREAS, racism in the church poisons and cripples all sincere efforts “to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). and physical characteristics or cultural customs are made to serve as “a dividing wall of hostility” that separates brothers and sisters in Christ—to which the only appropriate response must be “Is Christ divided?” (1 Cor. 1:13). Racism in the church, in its essence, is a blatant denial of the unity of the body of Christ, into which all who have been baptized into his name have been incorporated: “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13), and

WHEREAS, Foremost in the list of “the fruit of the Spirit,” which is to characterize the life of those who have been set free from the tyranny of their sinful flesh, is love (Gal. 5:22; cf. 5:13-26). The “new commandment” given by Jesus to his disciples is that they love one another as he has loved them, for “by this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35; cf. 1 John 2:8-11; 4:20-5:3; Phil. 2: 4-5)

The law of love cannot be made an excuse for respect of persons. That is to say, keeping one precept of the law does not give one license to disobey the full requirements of the law of love. James says, “If you really fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors” (James 2:8-9), and

WHEREAS, in white nationalist/separatist, alt-right, Evropa Identity, etc the worth of an individual or group as determined principally by genetic origins, biological characteristics, or cultural heritage, race is the primary basis for drawing conclusions about the comparative worth of an individual,

(cf. Ayn Rand, “Any white person who brought the element of civilization had the right to take over this continent”, To graduating class of West Point, 1974;

“Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.. look with confidence to the ultimate universal acknowledgement of the truths upon which our system rests? It is the first government ever instituted upon the principles in strict conformity to nature, and the ordination of Providence, in furnishing the materials of human society. Many governments have been founded upon the principle of the subordination and serfdom of certain classes of the same race; such were and are in violation of the laws of nature. Our system commits no such violation of nature's laws.” Alexander Stevens, Vice President to the Confederacy, “Cornerstone Address” March 21, 1861;

“To be white is to be a striver, a crusader, an explorer and a conqueror. We build, we produce, we go upward ... For us, it is conquer or die. This is a unique burden for the white man, that our fate is entirely in our hands. And it is appropriate because within us, within the very blood in our veins as *Children of the Sun*, lies the potential for greatness. That is the great struggle we are called to. We are not meant to live in shame and weakness and disgrace. We were not meant to beg for moral validation from some of the most despicable creatures to ever populate the planet. We were meant to overcome—overcome all of it. Because that is natural and normal for us. Because for us, as Europeans, it is only normal again when we are great again...the concepts that are now designated “problematic” and associated with whiteness—power, strength, beauty, agency, accomplishment. Whites do and other groups don’t ... We don’t exploit other groups. We don’t gain anything from their presence. They need us, and not the other way around.” Richard Spencer, Hail Trump Speech, November 2016 )

WHEREAS, Christians of differing national or ethnic origins must not claim Christ as exclusively their own, as if to say that their view of him most closely approximates the biblical portrayal of him.

WHEREAS, the Synod in convention has passed the following resolutions

- 1971 — Res. 9-32:** To Encourage Christian Action to Combat Racism
- 1973 — Res. 9-22:** To Continue Efforts to Combat Racism
- 1977 — Res 10-18A:** To Make Every Effort to Eliminate Racism
- 1979 — Res 4-11:** To Reaffirm Efforts to Combat Racism
- 1981 — Res 8-07:** To Oppose Racism and Violence
- 1983 — Res 3-09:** To Clarify Position on Anti-Semitism
- 1992 — Res 3-03:** To Combat All Racism
- 1995 — Res 2-05A:** To Commend for Study the CTCR Document *Racism and the Church*, and

WHEREAS, As the 1992 resolution states, racism is contrary to God’s Word and a sin against Him. Synod by-law 2.3.1 (a) states:

“It shall be the policy of the Synod to decline membership to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or other congregational privileges to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin.”

WHEREAS, Racism and white supremacy are present all over the world in various white supremacist movements known as “white nationalism” or “alt-right”; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey District of the LCMS, denounce every form of racism, including alt-right white supremacy, white separatists, British Israelism, Evropa Identity as antithetical to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and be it further,

RESOLVED, That we denounce and repudiate white supremacy and every form of racial and ethnic hatred as a scheme of the devil intended to bring further suffering and division to the world and to hinder the Gospel; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we earnestly pray, both for those who advocate racist ideologies and those who are thereby deceived, that they may see their error through the light of the Gospel, repent and come to know the peace and love of Christ through redeemed fellowship in the Kingdom of God, which is established from every nation, tribe, people, and language. and be it further

RESOLVED, to reaffirm the resolution the Synod in convention of 1992, “It shall be the policy of the Synod to decline membership to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or other congregational privileges to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin.” and be it finally

RESOLVED, that it shall be the policy of the New Jersey District of the LCMS to deny membership any member of Synod who espouses racists ideology as is found in white nationalist/separatists, etc. groups, and to suspend membership any member who refuses to repent of such ideology as it denies the Confessions to which we are to all subscribe.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

( Refer to Resolution 4-02)

**Overture 9**

**ASSISTING CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH**

**Whereas** Congregations need to find creative ways to engage their communities,

**Whereas** many people in the community know little about the local Lutheran Church

**Whereas** the need is for members to interact with community residents in caring ways

**Whereas** in many Church budgets there is limited money available for much needed projects,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the New Jersey District establish a fund to assist Congregations with “seed” money to impact their communities. The Fund’s oversight would be the responsibility of the Outreach Council. Congregations would submit a request, including a description of their activity, start date, people who will put the plan into action, desired results and date of conclusion, followed by a final report presented to the Outreach Council The Outreach Council, once receiving a request will first get the “go ahead” from the BOD, before final approval. The results where shared with the District through the Grapevine and Servant to Servant.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

NJ District Outreach Council

(Refer to Resolution 1-01)

## Overture 10

### GREAT COMMISSION INITIATIVE!

**Whereas** Jesus clearly states His purpose “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10) and whereas with absolute conviction we believe, teach and confess that only trust in the Lord Jesus is the only answer to the question “what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:31)

**Whereas** the Mission Statement of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod reads, “In grateful response to God’s grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of The LCMS is vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world.”

**Whereas** Jesus plainly commissioned His disciples to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19) never telling the world to go to Church but for His church to go to the world.

**Whereas** Jesus unmistakably teaches “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

**Whereas** St. Peter emphatically confessed “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

**Whereas** St. Paul undeniably taught “All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

**Whereas** we hold firmly to Scriptures teaching, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God!” (Ephesians 2:8) And again, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift. (Romans 3:23,24)

**Whereas** it is evidently clear that part of the phenomenal growth of the early Church was the people’s amazement, seeing how they loved one another reminding us that we love because we are first loved. (1 John 4:19)

**Whereas** St Paul warns us that “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly place, (Ephesians 6:12). There is no doubt that Satan wants to keep people out of church, and if he can’t keep them out, he wants to get them out, and if he can’t keep them out or get them out, he will work to render the church ineffective.

**Whereas** churches are not impacting their communities with the Gospel as shown by a sharp decrease in disciple-making and the spiritual apathy of some who confess that Jesus is both Savior and Lord.

**Whereas** wide spread Biblical illiteracy has added to the lack of concern for those who do not know Christ.

**Whereas** 80+% of Congregations in the United States are at best plateau or in a state of decline.

**Whereas**, according to some recent studies, only 4% of the young people in the United States are presently involved in any religious instruction.

**Whereas** for today's church, the "Body of Christ" to attract people from today's society, people within the world's society must begin to see a clear difference between people who confess Christ and those who do not! St Paul urges us "to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called..." (Ephesians 4:1)

**Whereas** when you "google" "why are Christians so..." among the top ten answers are "critical, judgmental, and unloving."

**Whereas** we no longer live in a church culture, but in a culture that is hostile towards the church, no longer allowing God in our schools, business, and places of public gatherings.

**Whereas** non-churched people don't have the same appreciation for our creeds, confessions and traditions until they know we really care about them as people and not simply as "numbers" to add to our roles.

**Whereas** effective and persuasive witness demands the unity of the Church.

**Whereas** the LCMS and its Congregations firmly confess that we are justified by faith through grace and boldly profess that we are "not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes..." (Romans 1:16)

**Whereas** our mission is to love the world God loves, and to welcome "sinners" (Luke 15:2) To love others as Christ does, necessitates that we find way to include people and not erect barriers to keep them out.

**Whereas** St. Paul "vigorously" teaches that those whom God has called are "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11-16)

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that ignoring Christ's command "to go" and to "seek and save the lost" is not acceptable, and that the excuses we use for not sharing Christ's love and sacrifice in our communities is more of the devil and does not witness to how big and great and strong is our God.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that every Congregation, which God has strategically placed throughout the State of New Jersey, rededicate themselves to join with Jesus in mission as "ambassadors for Christ," finding ways to effectively and courageously engage their respective communities.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that by the Spirit's guidance each Congregation will intentionally set realistic but challenging goals to impact and engage their communities by first studying and better understanding the demographics of their communities towards the goal of being the best church for their community. (LCEF has an excellent resource, "Mission-in-site)

**BE IT RESOLVED** that each of our Congregations will hold at least three net fishing events before Ash Wednesday, 2019, mutually sharing their experiences both with churches of their Circuit and District.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that because we are called to be "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) and directed to "let our lights shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven," (Matthew 5:16) that we respectfully request all Circuit Visitors to encourage the congregations of their Circuits to be more incarnational and missional, reporting at their respective Circuit meetings the efforts of each Congregation and sharing the results with the Outreach Council of the District.



**BE IT RESOLVED** that we come to a better understanding of what God is already doing in our communities, reminding ourselves that we “are not on mission for Jesus, but rather with Jesus,” knowing that the Head of the Church graciously invites us to join Him in mission, promising to come alongside of us through the power, wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Outreach Council and other member Congregations of the New Jersey District will aid and support those Congregations that are requesting assistance as to “where to begin?” and “how do we get started?” and “what sources are available?”

**BE IT RESOLVED** that all congregations of the New Jersey District will use their God given creativity to impact their communities with the love of God, and to adaptively find ways to “Lift high the Cross” in the marketplace.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the congregations of the New Jersey District will give prayerful and financial support to our missionaries working within the District in the areas of Church plants, Urban Ministry, and restarts.

**AND FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Congregations of the New Jersey commit themselves to hastening the day when “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 5:10-11)

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

NJ District Outreach Council

(Refer to Resolution 1-02)

## Overture 11

### Sexual Harassment

Whereas, we live in a sexually charged culture; and whereas the notion that humans are sexual creatures with needs and desires is not often addressed by the Church apart from the Sixth Commandment; and whereas the term sexual harassment implies repeated, if not deliberate actions and comments, not just an off-hand remark or an unplanned action, and whereas the rules of engagement, and personal and professional conduct are ill defined, sometimes questioned, but seldom discussed;

Whereas, the news outlets are full of stories of individuals who are said to be victims of sexual abuse, violence, etc... and whereas those Church who volunteer or work in our congregations are not immune from such charges;

Whereas, church workers will from time to time encounter troubled individuals who seek out their counsel and advice; and whereas such counsel will happen in private discussions and behind closed doors;

Whereas, church workers themselves may not have the best attitude with regard to this issue, and may in fact be targets for lawsuits;

Whereas, some of our own (clergy and lay people) may have been victimized in the past;

Whereas, it has been quite a few years since the District and her pastors have had training in this area;

And whereas there is a spiritual dimension to sexuality that has not been adequately explored or discussed;

Be it resolved that the New Jersey District congregations direct the District to offer teaching and training on this important issue; that we direct our pastors, pastoral conference(s) and circuits to spend some time discussing at length, not just sexual harassment, but related issues as well.

We ask now that the district and her clergy give attention to the following issues:

What is sexual harassment? Do we all know it when it happens? Are we agreed on what it is and what it isn't? What is the district's responsibility and liability?

Where are the lines of casual banter and conversation among friends, and between coworkers?

How do we address one another when it happens?

How is the district (president) supposed to supervise its pastors, workers and congregations in this matter?

How do congregations exercise supervision of volunteers and support staff?

How can the District instruct congregations in providing adequate liability coverage?

Be it Resolved that the NJD in order to protect herself, and to set an example for her congregations offer a day-long event (retreat or seminar) on the issue of sexual harassment.

We should seek advice and input from Synod personnel, from the insurance industry, lawyers, police and others who have something intelligent to offer.

Not only should pastors should be **required** to attend, but also retired clergy who may serve vacancies or as pulpit supply to congregations. Deacons, office workers and especially youth workers should also be in attendance.

Be it further resolved that such teaching be offered, if not required, within 18 (eighteen) months of the passage of this resolution, and periodically thereafter.

And be it further resolved that clergy who from time to time enter our district be made aware of policies that come as a result of these events.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church  
Hamburg, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 4-01)

**Overture 12**

**To Support the Well-being of All the Church’s Workers in the New Jersey District**

WHEREAS, The well-being of the church’s workers is vital to the ministry and mission of the church; and

WHEREAS, Those who are called to serve the church in various capacities are well advised to care for themselves so that they can carry out their ministries to the best of their ability; and

WHEREAS, Congregations, schools, and other agencies are vital to the well-being of their ministers as they support those ministers in pursuit of their well-being; and

WHEREAS, Major challenges to the well-being of the church’s ministers are known and documented, along with effective strategies to deal with those challenges to enhance their wellbeing; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention express its support for all efforts of congregations, schools, and agencies to care for our workers and support them in their wellbeing, including the following components of holistic well-being: spiritual, financial, vocational, intellectual, relational, emotional, and physical; and be it further

*Resolved*, That our congregations, schools, and agencies be encouraged to do all they can to support the holistic well-being of their ministers, focusing on intentional, strategic, practical efforts at preventing problems before they develop and resolving them before they become crises; and be it further

*Resolved*, That our congregations, schools, and agencies be encouraged to support the holistic well-being of all their other workers as well; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the church’s workers of the New Jersey District be encouraged to care for themselves in every aspect of holistic well-being so that they can continue to serve to the best of their ability with the gifts and strength that God supplies.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

NJ District Congregational Services Committee

(Refer to Resolution 3-04)

## Overture 13

### To Direct the President of Synod to Assure the Provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) Are Followed

WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 (To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724)<sup>1</sup> was not brought forward for debate at the 2016 LCMS National Convention; and

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<sup>1</sup> TO OVERRULE CCM OPINION 14-2724

WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries, notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

WHEREAS, Article III. 2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod identifies an objective of the Synod as 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;” and

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

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

WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in Resolution 8-32B); and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally congregational in nature; and

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

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any event; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy; and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

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

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations and others to give 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; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the congregations of the Texas District and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 was submitted by four LCMS districts, three district boards of directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations; and

WHEREAS, Two other overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention that also requested that CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) regarding the CCM says, in part: “An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action;” and

WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, No disposition of these overtures whatsoever is recorded in the 2016 Synod convention Proceedings; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That Overture 2-04 as found in the LCMS 2016 National Convention Workbook be submitted as an overture to the 2019 Synod convention by the adoption of this, current resolution; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2(c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be done in a fitting and orderly way” (I Corinthians 14:40).

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*Resolved*, That the Texas District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

*Resolved*, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the Texas District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void and of no effect.

(Refer to Resolution 2-02)

**Missions**

**1 Resolution 1-01**

**2 To Assist Congregation Outreach**

3 WHEREAS, Congregations may need assistance in finding ways to engage their communities; and

4 WHEREAS, Members of our congregations would like to interact with their community in caring  
5 ways; and

6 WHEREAS, Many congregations do not have the resources available to engage in outreach;  
7 therefore be it

8 *Resolved*, The New Jersey District establish a fund to assist congregations with seed money to  
9 impact their communities; and be it further

10 *Resolved*, That this fund would be managed by the Outreach Council in consultation with the  
11 New Jersey District Board of Directors; and be it finally

12 *Resolved*, That results of all outreach projects be published through the Grapevine and Servant to  
13 Servant so as to encourage other congregations' outreach activities.

**1 Resolution 1-02**  
**2 To Reaffirm the Urgency of Making Disciples**

3 WHEREAS, Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore  
4 go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and  
5 of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am  
6 with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20); and

7 WHEREAS, The LCMS adopted the following statement in Convention in 1995, “In grateful  
8 response to God's grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the  
9 mission of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is vigorously to make known the love of  
10 Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities, and the world;” therefore

11 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District reaffirm the urgency of making disciples and the Mission  
12 Statement of the LCMS; and further

13 *Resolved*, That every congregation that God has strategically placed throughout the State of New  
14 Jersey, rededicate themselves to join with Jesus in mission as “ambassadors for Christ,” finding  
15 ways to boldly engage their communities; and be it further

16 *Resolved*, That every congregation will engage their communities by studying and understanding  
17 the demographics of their communities; and be it further

18 *Resolved*, That all Circuit Visitors encourage the congregations of their Circuits to be more  
19 incarnational and missional, reporting at their respective Circuit meetings the efforts of each  
20 congregation and sharing the results with the Outreach Council of the District; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That the Outreach Council and member congregations of the New Jersey District aid  
22 and support those congregations that are requesting assistance; and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That all congregations will use their God given creativity to find way to impact their  
24 communities with the love of Jesus; and be it further

25 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the New Jersey District will join together to give prayerful  
26 and financial support to those missionaries working within the District in the areas of church  
27 plants, urban ministry, restarts, etc.; and be it finally

28 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District commit itself to hastening the day when “at the name of  
29 Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue  
30 confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:10-11).



**1 Resolution 1-03**  
**2 To Explore New Models of Church Ministry In Order to Continue to Reach Our**  
**3 Communities**

4 WHEREAS, Many of our congregations are continuing to decline in membership and financial  
5 stability; and

6 WHEREAS, Many of these same congregations and pastors are highly engaged in creative  
7 outreach, Learning Communities, Transforming Churches Network, Kairos Network, etc.; and

8 WHEREAS, This dissonance of effort and results can produce high anxiety and so lower levels of  
9 creativity which affects our ability to continue reaching our communities; and

10 WHEREAS, Our pastors are highly gifted in various tasks of pastoral ministry, but none in every  
11 task; and

12 WHEREAS, It would benefit our pastors to have a colleague to work with in a shared ministry;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, At every church closing, many of those current members become disengaged from  
15 congregational life, no longer receive pastoral care, and cease attending worship; and

16 WHEREAS, When a church closes we cease to have a Gospel-centered presence in that  
17 community; and

18 WHEREAS, One of the roles of a district is to support the members of Synod, both congregations  
19 and workers to be effective at reaching their community; and

20 WHEREAS, The Preamble Synod reads, “Our Lord’s will that the diversities of gifts should be  
21 for the common profit 1 Cor 12:4-31”; therefore be it

22 *Resolved*, That the NJ District explore, promote and facilitate new ministry options for  
23 congregations to yoke together in dual parish ministries, combined ministries, regional parish  
24 models, city parish, missional communities, multi-site, church planting, church replanting and  
25 church mergers that would be served by multi-pastorates, deaconesses, DCEs, other church  
26 workers, and missionaries, along with the priesthood of all believers so as to make full use of the  
27 giftedness of the church; and be it further

28 *Resolved*, That the NJ District help congregations in developing creative ways to manage the  
29 resource of land and facilities, including the sale of said properties so that the Gospel would  
30 continue to go out in that community and thrive in a new way; and be it finally

31 *Resolved*, That the NJ District promote and train local leaders for the work of ministry and  
32 outreach; and be it finally

33 *Resolved*, That the NJ District partner with other districts which are currently involved in this  
34 type of work in order to learn the best practices of the church models.

**1 Resolution 1-04**  
**2 To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724**

3 WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 (To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724) was not brought forward for  
4 debate at the 2016 LCMS National Convention which was submitted by four LCMS districts,  
5 three district boards of directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations and two other  
6 overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention that also requested that  
7 CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

8 WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2(c) regarding the CCM says, in part: “An opinion rendered by  
9 the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a  
10 convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the  
11 commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution,  
12 Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor  
13 committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the  
14 convention with recommendations for appropriate action;” and

15 WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

16 WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New  
17 Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much  
18 prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries,  
19 notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

20 WHEREAS, Article III.2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
21 identifies an objective of the Synod as to “Strengthen congregations and their members in giving  
22 bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and  
23 extend that Gospel witness into all the world;” and

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

28 WHEREAS, Article XIV of the Constitution states, “The Synod in convention may adopt bylaws  
29 that are consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod, which controls and  
30 supersedes such bylaws and all other rules and regulations of the Synod”; and

31 WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of  
32 the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the  
33 Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters  
34 related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in  
35 Resolution 8-32B); and

36 WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran  
37 Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally  
38 congregational in nature; and

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

42 WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion  
43 and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to  
44 restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds  
45 overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member  
46 congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members  
47 for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

48 WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on  
49 behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the  
50 restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any  
51 event; and

52 WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work  
53 Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the  
54 next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and  
55 congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and  
56 their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have  
57 mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and  
58 practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy;  
59 and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to  
60 communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations  
61 and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and  
62 stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and  
63 congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to  
64 communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

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

69 WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations  
70 and others to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son,  
71 and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world; therefore be it

72 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the New Jersey District and of The Lutheran Church—  
73 Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to  
74 send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

75 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries,  
76 recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts  
77 to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy  
78 Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

79 *Resolved*, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by  
80 congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of  
81 the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son  
82 and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as  
83 requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential  
84 support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission  
85 partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it further

## **NJ DISTRICT 2018 CONVENTION OVERTURES**

### **Overture 1**

#### **To Ensure Timely and Transparent Financial Reporting in the Synod**

WHEREAS, A principle of Biblical stewardship is to be accountable with the resources with which one has been entrusted, as expressed in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14 ff.); and

WHEREAS, Much is required of those to whom God has entrusted his gifts. As Jesus said, “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more” (Luke 12:48b, ESV); and

WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach “it is required of stewards that they be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2, ESV); and

WHEREAS, The Synod has historically recognized its responsibility of accountability and faithfulness in the handling of the finances entrusted to it by its members, as is witnessed in Bylaw 1.5.4, “The Synod and each of its agencies shall fully disclose their financial books and records to any member congregation of the Synod;” and

WHEREAS, The Synod in previous conventions has expressed its opinion that such accountability and faithfulness be found additionally in regular reporting of such financial disclosure by adopting 2010 Convention Resolution 4-03, “To Broadly Communicate the Statement of Financial Position of LCMS,” which reads in its totality:

“WHEREAS, It is helpful to understand the Synod’s financial position and communicate it to the members of the congregations of Synod; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That each November, the Vice-President–Finance—Treasurer of the Synod use widely available means, (i.e., The Lutheran Witness, Reporter, the LCMS Website) to state the financial position of the Synod in a format easily understood by persons unfamiliar with financial terminology.” (2010 Convention Proceedings, p. 120); and

WHEREAS, The members of the Synod expressed even further the need for full transparency in all areas of financial disclosure by adopting 2016 convention RESOLUTION 9-04A, “To Improve Disclosures Related to Financial Gifts from God’s Stewards for Special Appeals,” which stated in part,

“... WHEREAS, Monies for special appeals requested by corporate Synod (e.g., following natural disasters) are reported only in part in Synod publications (e.g., Reporter and The Lutheran Witness) and sometimes only annually; and ...

WHEREAS, Donors and members of the Synod are interested in the impact of funds raised for special appeals and will appreciate improved disclosure of results; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the financial offices of corporate Synod continue to recognize the desire of donors and members of the Synod to improve processes of reporting and work to provide clear, timely, and transparent accounting for all funding and special appeals, so that the Body of Christ

may experience the joy of Gospel-centered mission and ministry beyond the local context or community.” (2016 Convention Proceedings, p. 189); and

WHEREAS, It was reported to the 2013 Convention of the Synod by the Board of Directors in its Report on the Disposition of Funding the Mission Recommendations (R6-03-01) that “the decline in the Synod’s annual unrestricted revenue continues...The board believes that congregations will respond through better, open, and honest communication about the great things God is able to accomplish for His kingdom when we work together. Numerous conventions have passed resolutions calling on congregations to maintain and increase unrestricted support for district and Synod ministries, yet the unrestricted support passed through our districts to the Synod has continued to decline at the average rate of \$1 million each year.” (2013 Convention Workbook 2013, p. 114-115); and

WHEREAS, In 2016, the Chief Financial Officer of the Synod, in reporting to the Synod about offerings received, stated, “This sharing from God’s bounty continues to decline. Although the amount of decline in the past three years has not been as severe as the average decline of the previous 20 years, it is still trending negatively. In the face of continued declining unrestricted revenues, the ability of Synod, Inc. to respond quickly and nimbly to mission and ministry opportunities and challenges laid before us by our Lord also declines, as does our ability to “fill in the gap” when restricted revenues, needed to fund much of our mission and ministry activities, fall short of their goals. The financial challenges facing our beloved Synod persist. I believe that these challenges are of our own making, a product of how we distribute the resources provided by our loving Father.” (2016 Convention Workbook, pp. 61-62); and

WHEREAS, There have been few tangible reports about the financial struggles of the Synod, such as the need to trim \$4 million dollars from the budget of the Synod (ref. July 7, 2017 Reporter, <https://blogs.lcms.org/2017/international-national-mission> and the May 19-20, 2017 Synod Board of Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4769>), these reports are less than sufficient to keep the members of the Synod regularly informed about the financial condition of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, It has been widely reported, albeit not in the official channels of the Synod communications, that the Synod has only minimal days of operating capital in its cash reserves, which would seemingly place the synod in a precarious financial position (ref. Paragraph 45, Financial Reports of the February 17-18, 2017 LCMS Board of Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4659>), which stated that without funds held on behalf of the two Seminaries, Synod had only a 5 days of cash available); and

WHEREAS, In the face of such challenging financial times, transparency and regularity in reporting of the financial situation of the Synod is of utmost importance to the members and constituency of the Synod who have a vested interest in the financial viability of the Synod and who merit clear, concise, and timely reports; and

WHEREAS, The president of the synod recommended in his report to the Synod in 2016 that the synod have “Uniform Financial Reporting.” (2016 Today’s Business, p. 28); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Synod in convention direct the Chief Financial Officer to report quarterly in the Synod’s official publications about the financial position of the Synod in a format easily understood by persons unfamiliar with financial terminology, such reporting to include, but not limited to income and expenses, budget versus spending, cash reserves and cash position, etc.; and be it further

RESOLVED, That these quarterly reports include information about the regular Synod budget and the reporting on special appeals as stipulated in 2016 Resolution 9-04A; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod be shrewd managers with the resources God has given it; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Synod give thanks to God for the resources He has entrusted to us, recognizing  
“That the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (Psalm 24:1, ESV).

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-03)

## Overture 2

### To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724

Whereas the Texas District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, at its 2015 convention, adopted the following resolution: RESOLUTION: 02-01-15A

RE: OVERTURES 02-04-15, 02-05-15, 02-06-15, 02-07-15, 02-08-15, 02-09-15, 02-10-15, 02-11-15, 02-12-15, 02-13-15

SUBJECT: TO OVERRULE CCM OPINION 14-2724

WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries, notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

WHEREAS, Article III. 2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod identifies an objective of the Synod as 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;” and

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

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

WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in Resolution 8-32B); and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally congregational in nature; and

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

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any event; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy; and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

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

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations and others to give 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; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the congregations of the Texas District and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Texas District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

RESOLVED, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Texas District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void and of no effect.  
Rev. Larry Krueger, Chairman  
Rev. Brian Hesse, Secretary

and



WHEREAS, The above resolution appears in the 2016 LCMS Convention Workbook as Overture 2-04; and

WHEREAS, Three other LCMS districts, three district boards of directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations also adopted this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Two other overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention that also requested that CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) regarding the CCM says, in part:

An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action.

(Emphasis added)

And

WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, No disposition of these overtures whatsoever is recorded in the 2016 Synod convention Proceedings; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the resolution quoted above be submitted as an overture to the 2019 Synod convention by the adoption of this, current resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be done in a fitting and orderly way” (I Corinthians 14:40).

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 1-04)

## OVERTURE 3

### To Overrule Board of Directors' May 2017 Resolution 12-14, re Bylaw 7.1.2

WHEREAS, The 2016 Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in its Resolution 12-14 [*“Regarding the Right of an Accuser to Appeal When a District President or President of the Synod Fails to Act or Declines to Suspend”*] and according to Bylaw 7.1.2, deferred its rightful and legislative authority regarding the development of ecclesiastical supervision bylaws with respect to and inclusion of the President of the Synod, the decision given to Synod’s Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14, in accordance with Bylaw 7.1.2, set forth a specific path and timeline for consideration, negotiation and counsel to be conducted with the Council of Presidents, with any proposed amendments to the bylaws to be reviewed by the Commission on Constitutional Matters and the Commission on Handbook; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14 states that the Commission on Constitutional Matters in Op. 16-2791 *“has indicated portions of the expulsion processes of Synod’s Bylaws are presently in an unconstitutional state with respect to Const. Art. XI B 1–3 and Const. Art. XIII 2”*; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors, acting under Bylaw 7.1.2 and at the express direction of the 2016 Resolution 12-14, in May of 2017 adopted changes to the bylaws of the Synod regarding ecclesiastical supervision; and

WHEREAS, The Constitution of Synod defines clearly, precisely, and fully the supervisory role of the President of Synod, wherein the President of Synod has *“the supervision regarding the doctrine and the administration of a. All officers of the Synod; b. All such as are employed by the Synod; c. The individual district of the Synod; d. All district presidents”* (XI.B.1); and

WHEREAS, The President of Synod, as ecclesiastical supervisor, is limited in the exercise of said power, assuming *“only such rights as have been expressly conferred”* (XI A.1) [*“The officers of the Synod must assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by the Synod, and in everything pertaining to their rights and the performance of their duties, they are responsible to the Synod.”*], which are expressly conferred to be *“the power to advise, admonish, and reprove....conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod”* (XI.B.3); and

WHEREAS, Synod’s Constitution expressly confers upon the District Presidents the duty to *“exercise supervision over”* their district’s ministers and to *“visit and...hold investigations in the congregations”* (XII.7), including the District Presidents being empowered *“to suspend from membership”* their district’s ministers (XII.8); and

WHEREAS, Prior to the year 2016 and CCM Op. 16-2791, numerous CCM opinions [to wit Ag. 1970, Op.15-2750, 13-2669, 10-2581, 03-2354, and 03-2338, A and C] interpreted the President of Synod’s scope of ecclesiastical supervision do not include supervision over individual workers and congregations expressed in Article XII.7,8; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That Synod in convention, as the ultimate legislative body of Synod [Bylaw 1.4.1: *“The delegate convention of the Synod is the legislative assembly that ultimately legislates policy, program, and financial direction to carry on the Synod’s work on behalf of and in support of the member*

*congregations. It reserves to itself the right to give direction to all officers and agencies of the Synod. Consequently, all officers and agencies, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, shall be accountable to the Synod for all their actions, and any concerns regarding the decisions of such officers or agencies may be brought to the attention of the Synod in convention for appropriate action. This provision does not apply to specific member appeals to the Concordia Plans, which has its own appeal process for such cases.*] considers the following to be steps to the resolution of this matter; and be it further

RESOLVED, That changes, subsequent to 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, made under Bylaw 2.14 “Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod,” under Bylaw 2.15 “Expulsion of a District President or Officer from Membership in the Synod”, under Bylaw 2.16 “Expulsion of a President of Synod from Membership in the Synod”, and under Bylaw 2.17 “Expulsion of Individuals from Membership in the Synod as a Result of Sexual Misconduct or Criminal Behavior”, as a result of 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, as adopted by the Board of Directors (May 2017) be overruled and of no effect; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 and 2.17 be returned to and replaced by the same corresponding Bylaws as set forth in the 2013 Synod Handbook; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a Blue Ribbon Task Force of seven members, with four members appointed by the 35 District Presidents, three of whom shall be District Presidents, and three members appointed by the President of Synod, be authorized and formed to conduct a thorough study of the ecclesiastical supervision matter, including Articles III, VI, VII (studies of Articles VI and VII were previously resolved by the 2010 Convention), XI, XII, and XIII, and make recommendations to the 2022 Synod Convention, including any necessary revisions of constitutional provisions, with the purpose of evangelically resolving the current difficulty and division among us; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all relevant CCM opinions such as 16-2791, 16-2793, 16-2794, 16-2797, 17-2822, 17-2828 and 17-2836 be placed in abeyance until the 2022 Convention and any necessary action at the 2022 convention; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Synod in convention affirm the powers provided to the Synod President “*to advise, admonish and reprove...conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod*” do not include direct supervisory responsibilities of individual members of Synod, since such individuals are under the ecclesiastical supervision of District Presidents; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the convention pray for peace and harmony in the Synod as it moves forward in mission and ministry.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 2-01)

## Overture 4

### To Explore Consolidation/Merger of Congregations/ Ministries

Whereas, many of our congregations are continuing to decline in membership and financial stability

Whereas, many of these same congregations and pastors are highly engaged in creative outreach, Learning Communities, Transforming Churches Network, etc and

Whereas, this dissonance of effort and results can produce high anxiety and so lower levels of creativity, and

Whereas, it would benefit the pastors to have a colleague to work with in a shared ministry, and

Whereas, our pastors are generally highly gifted in various tasks of pastoral ministry, but none in every task, and

Whereas, at every church closing, many of those current members fall through the cracks and cease attending worship,

Whereas, when a congregation and pastor is in crisis mode it is difficult to think beyond keeping the lights on, and

Whereas, we have many rostered and trained DCEs that were raised in NJ and moved back to NJ in a desire for the ministry in NJ but are unable to be called by our smaller congregations

Whereas, one of the roles of a district is to support current congregations and workers, be it

Resolved, the the NJ District explore, promote and facilitate ministry options for congregations to yoke together in dual parish ministries, combined ministries, regional parish models, etc, that would be served by multi-pastorates, deaconesses, DCE, etc so as to make full use of the giftedness of the church and be it further

Resolved, that the NJ District help congregations in developing creative ways to manage the resource of land and facilities, including the sale of said properties so that the current congregation could continue and thrive in a new way.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 1-03)

## Overture 5

### To Adopt Data Privacy Best Practices

WHEREAS, The District and Synod collect personal identity and contact information from convention delegates and from those who vote for President of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Best practices for data privacy include the safeguarding of such personal information, its use only in the official conduct of business, and strict limitations on its disclosure; and

WHEREAS, Our delegates in convention take positions at odds with the culture, making disclosure of their personal information a security concern. For example, the Family Research Council in DC and donors to California Prop 8 were attacked professionally and personally for the same positions on marriage that our delegates enacted in 2016 14-02A, 14-03A, and 14-04; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3 now prohibits non-official use or distribution of the list of congregation-selected voters for President of Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Synod openly publishes the street addresses of national delegates as part of the Convention Workbook, which is posted on the Internet and easily downloaded; and

WHEREAS, The Secretary of Synod's office sells copies of this list to interested parties, which use them mainly for political ends. In 2016, some of those distributions disclosed national delegate e-mail addresses without consent; and

WHEREAS, LCMS districts have used their access to voters lists to send advocacy-type mailings and e-mails directly to those who vote for synod officials; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District affirms its commitment to data privacy best practices, including protection of identity and contact information for its district convention delegates, and the use or distribution of that information only for official business and with consent of the persons involved; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District adopts a practice, consistent with LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3, which prohibits its use of private voter contact information in connection with synod-level elections; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt practices that stop the public disclosure of delegate street addresses and require prior consent for any distribution of their personal contact information.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-02)

**Overture 6**  
**To have the District President Serve as a Part Time Position**

WHEREAS, the New Jersey District of the LCMS encompasses the smallest geographic area of the districts of the LCMS, and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey District has the second fewest number of congregations (54 NJ, 53 SELC, 9619 communicant NJ, 12376 communicant SELC), and

WHEREAS, congregational financial support has decreased to the point at which the district must use savings, and continued sale of closed church properties to maintain the current level of spending at a district level, and

WHEREAS, larger districts both geographically (SELC, encompasses 11 states and 2 Canadian provinces) and in number (Oklahoma, 82 congregations) are served by part-time district presidents who regularly also serve as parish pastor, and

WHEREAS, the NJ District has also allowed for the district president to serve as a parish pastor, and

WHEREAS, it would be of best stewardship of the resources that God has entrusted to the churches and the district to consider how other districts have organized themselves to best accomplish the mission of the church, and

WHEREAS, pastors have been called in to pastoral congregational ministry and the church would lose a great resource to remove these men from the congregational ministry to serve as solely a DP, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey District President be a part-time position, both in time and compensation, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the NJ DP be allowed to serve a congregation as pastor.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-01)

## **Overture 7**

### **To Engage in Ministry to Transgendered Persons**

WHEREAS, All persons are created in God’s image and are made to glorify Him ([Genesis 1:27](#); [Isaiah 43:7](#)); and

WHEREAS, God’s design was the creation of two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female ([Genesis 1:27](#); [Matthew 19:4](#); [Mark 10:6](#);) which designate the fundamental distinction that God has embedded in the very biology of the human race; and

WHEREAS, Distinctions in masculine and feminine as ordained by God are part of the created order and should find expression in every human heart ([Genesis 2:18, 21–24](#); [1 Corinthians 11:7–9](#); [Ephesians 5:22–33](#); [1 Timothy 2:12–14](#)); and

WHEREAS, The Fall of man into sin and God’s subsequent curse have introduced brokenness and futility into God’s good creation ([Genesis 3:1–24](#); [Romans 8:20](#)); and

WHEREAS, According to a 2016 study from the UCLA School of Law, about 1.4 million Americans identify as transgender; and

WHEREAS, Transgenderism differs from hermaphroditism or intersexualism in that the sex of the individual is not biologically ambiguous but psychologically ambiguous; and

WHEREAS, The state of New Jersey prohibits licensed counselors from any attempt to change a child’s “gender expression”; and

WHEREAS, the church does not have a good history at ministering to transgendered persons often due to our uncomfortability with the topic or harsh, unloving, hypocritical manner in which we speak to them often while refusing to speak publicly against other sexual sins such as divorce, remarriage, pornography, sexual harassment, coarse language, etc, and

WHEREAS, the CTCR has produced a 2014 paper entitled, “Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria in Christian Perspective” which begins to address this topic; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the NJ District in convention affirm God’s good design that gender identity is determined by biological sex and not by one’s self-perception—a perception which is often influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God’s design ([Ephesians 4:17–18](#)); and be it further



RESOLVED, that we commend the CTCR for their current work and request they produce a full study on practical ministry to transgendered persons, and be it

RESOLVED, That we grieve the reality of human fallenness which can result in such biological manifestations as intersexuality or psychological manifestations as gender identity confusion and point all to the hope of the redemption of our bodies in Christ ([Romans 8:23](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend love and compassion to those whose sexual self-understanding is shaped by a distressing conflict between their biological sex and their gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we invite all transgender persons to trust in Christ and to experience renewal in the Gospel ([1 Timothy 1:15–16](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we love our transgender neighbors, seek their good always, welcome them to our churches and, as they repent and believe in Christ, receive them into church membership ([2 Corinthians 5:18–20](#); [Galatians 5:14](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we regard our transgender neighbors as image-bearers of God and therefore condemn acts of abuse or bullying committed against them; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we oppose efforts to alter one’s bodily identity (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgery) to refashion it to conform with one’s perceived gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we continue to oppose steadfastly all efforts by any governing official or body to validate transgender identity as morally praiseworthy ([Isaiah 5:20](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our love for the Gospel and urgency for the Great Commission must include declaring the whole counsel of God, proclaiming what Scripture teaches about God’s design for us as male and female persons created in His image and for His glory ([Matthew 28:19–20](#); [Acts 20:27](#); [Romans 11:36](#)).

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary  
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 4-03)

## **Overture 8**

### **To Combat Racism within the Church and Society**

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches, “God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,” (Acts 17:26); and

WHEREAS, All people are created in the same image of God, no matter what human distinguishing identifiers might be (Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6; cf. Acts 17:25, 26) and

WHEREAS, central to the doctrine of creation is the truth of the equal value of all humans grounded in the unsurpassable worth that God places in them, demonstrated by the unsurpassable price he paid for each individual person, and

WHEREAS, In Jesus, God became a human and so identifies fully with every human (Hebrews 2:17), not only Israel but all of humanity and that his mission embraces all of humankind (Matt. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38), and

WHEREAS, Any claim that there is something about the nature of another human being as such that renders that person to be of inferior value not only denies the biblical doctrine of creation, but also calls into question what the Scriptures teach about the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As a human, Jesus descended from Adam, whom God created (Luke 3:38), and whom all human beings have as progenitor. To deny the full humanity of any fellow human being is at the same time to compromise the apostolic truth that in Christ “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col. 2:9), that is, that he truly “was made man” (Nicene Creed).

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ has removed all barriers between all human beings, making peace through His cross (Eph. 2:13-16), and

WHEREAS, The Apostle Peter said, “God doesn’t show favoritism, but in every nation the person who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him” (Acts 10:34–35); and

WHEREAS, The Book of Concord teaches that all Christians will make the will of Christ supreme in their own lives and in human society, and so opposing all forms of racism (AC Ap V 1-3, )

WHEREAS, ““That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself,” Dr. Martin Luther wrote in the Large Catechism, is “really your God.” “If any one boasts,” he continued, “of great learning, wisdom, power, prestige, family, and honor, and trusts in them, he also has a god, but not the one, true God.” If anyone should claim superiority over others and treat them as inferior because of racial origin or characteristics, we may add, that person, too, has a god, but not the one true God. Racism is at its core idolatry

WHEREAS, racism in the church poisons and cripples all sincere efforts “to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). and physical characteristics or cultural customs are made to serve as “a dividing wall of hostility” that separates brothers and sisters in Christ—to which the only appropriate response must be “Is Christ divided?” (1 Cor. 1:13). Racism in the church, in its essence, is a blatant denial of the unity of the body of Christ, into which all who have been baptized into his name have been incorporated: “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13), and

WHEREAS, Foremost in the list of “the fruit of the Spirit,” which is to characterize the life of those who have been set free from the tyranny of their sinful flesh, is love (Gal. 5:22; cf. 5:13-26). The “new commandment” given by Jesus to his disciples is that they love one another as he has loved them, for “by this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35; cf. 1 John 2:8-11; 4:20-5:3; Phil. 2: 4-5)

The law of love cannot be made an excuse for respect of persons. That is to say, keeping one precept of the law does not give one license to disobey the full requirements of the law of love. James says, “If you really fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors” (James 2:8-9), and

WHEREAS, in white nationalist/separatist, alt-right, Evropa Identity, etc the worth of an individual or group as determined principally by genetic origins, biological characteristics, or cultural heritage, race is the primary basis for drawing conclusions about the comparative worth of an individual,

(cf. Ayn Rand, “Any white person who brought the element of civilization had the right to take over this continent”, To graduating class of West Point, 1974;

“Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.. look with confidence to the ultimate universal acknowledgement of the truths upon which our system rests? It is the first government ever instituted upon the principles in strict conformity to nature, and the ordination of Providence, in furnishing the materials of human society. Many governments have been founded upon the principle of the subordination and serfdom of certain classes of the same race; such were and are in violation of the laws of nature. Our system commits no such violation of nature's laws.” Alexander Stevens, Vice President to the Confederacy, “Cornerstone Address” March 21, 1861;

“To be white is to be a striver, a crusader, an explorer and a conqueror. We build, we produce, we go upward ... For us, it is conquer or die. This is a unique burden for the white man, that our fate is entirely in our hands. And it is appropriate because within us, within the very blood in our veins as *Children of the Sun*, lies the potential for greatness. That is the great struggle we are called to. We are not meant to live in shame and weakness and disgrace. We were not meant to beg for moral validation from some of the most despicable creatures to ever populate the planet. We were meant to overcome—overcome all of it. Because that is natural and normal for us. Because for us, as Europeans, it is only normal again when we are great again...the concepts that are now designated “problematic” and associated with whiteness—power, strength, beauty, agency, accomplishment. Whites do and other groups don’t ... We don’t exploit other groups. We don’t gain anything from their presence. They need us, and not the other way around.” Richard Spencer, Hail Trump Speech, November 2016 )

WHEREAS, Christians of differing national or ethnic origins must not claim Christ as exclusively their own, as if to say that their view of him most closely approximates the biblical portrayal of him.

WHEREAS, the Synod in convention has passed the following resolutions

- 1971 — Res. 9-32:** To Encourage Christian Action to Combat Racism
- 1973 — Res. 9-22:** To Continue Efforts to Combat Racism
- 1977 — Res 10-18A:** To Make Every Effort to Eliminate Racism
- 1979 — Res 4-11:** To Reaffirm Efforts to Combat Racism
- 1981 — Res 8-07:** To Oppose Racism and Violence
- 1983 — Res 3-09:** To Clarify Position on Anti-Semitism
- 1992 — Res 3-03:** To Combat All Racism
- 1995 — Res 2-05A:** To Commend for Study the CTCR Document *Racism and the Church*, and

WHEREAS, As the 1992 resolution states, racism is contrary to God’s Word and a sin against Him. Synod by-law 2.3.1 (a) states:

“It shall be the policy of the Synod to decline membership to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or other congregational privileges to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin.”

WHEREAS, Racism and white supremacy are present all over the world in various white supremacist movements known as “white nationalism” or “alt-right”; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey District of the LCMS, denounce every form of racism, including alt-right white supremacy, white separatists, British Israelism, Evropa Identity as antithetical to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and be it further,

RESOLVED, That we denounce and repudiate white supremacy and every form of racial and ethnic hatred as a scheme of the devil intended to bring further suffering and division to the world and to hinder the Gospel; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we earnestly pray, both for those who advocate racist ideologies and those who are thereby deceived, that they may see their error through the light of the Gospel, repent and come to know the peace and love of Christ through redeemed fellowship in the Kingdom of God, which is established from every nation, tribe, people, and language. and be it further

RESOLVED, to reaffirm the resolution the Synod in convention of 1992, “It shall be the policy of the Synod to decline membership to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or other congregational privileges to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin.” and be it finally

RESOLVED, that it shall be the policy of the New Jersey District of the LCMS to deny membership any member of Synod who espouses racists ideology as is found in white nationalist/separatists, etc. groups, and to suspend membership any member who refuses to repent of such ideology as it denies the Confessions to which we are to all subscribe.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

( Refer to Resolution 4-02)

**Overture 9**

**ASSISTING CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH**

**Whereas** Congregations need to find creative ways to engage their communities,

**Whereas** many people in the community know little about the local Lutheran Church

**Whereas** the need is for members to interact with community residents in caring ways

**Whereas** in many Church budgets there is limited money available for much needed projects,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the New Jersey District establish a fund to assist Congregations with “seed” money to impact their communities. The Fund’s oversight would be the responsibility of the Outreach Council. Congregations would submit a request, including a description of their activity, start date, people who will put the plan into action, desired results and date of conclusion, followed by a final report presented to the Outreach Council The Outreach Council, once receiving a request will first get the “go ahead” from the BOD, before final approval. The results where shared with the District through the Grapevine and Servant to Servant.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

NJ District Outreach Council

(Refer to Resolution 1-01)

## Overture 10

### GREAT COMMISSION INITIATIVE!

**Whereas** Jesus clearly states His purpose “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10) and whereas with absolute conviction we believe, teach and confess that only trust in the Lord Jesus is the only answer to the question “what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:31)

**Whereas** the Mission Statement of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod reads, “In grateful response to God’s grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of The LCMS is vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world.”

**Whereas** Jesus plainly commissioned His disciples to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19) never telling the world to go to Church but for His church to go to the world.

**Whereas** Jesus unmistakably teaches “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

**Whereas** St. Peter emphatically confessed “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

**Whereas** St. Paul undeniably taught “All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

**Whereas** we hold firmly to Scriptures teaching, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God!” (Ephesians 2:8) And again, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift. (Romans 3:23,24)

**Whereas** it is evidently clear that part of the phenomenal growth of the early Church was the people’s amazement, seeing how they loved one another reminding us that we love because we are first loved. (1 John 4:19)

**Whereas** St Paul warns us that “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly place, (Ephesians 6:12). There is no doubt that Satan wants to keep people out of church, and if he can’t keep them out, he wants to get them out, and if he can’t keep them out or get them out, he will work to render the church ineffective.

**Whereas** churches are not impacting their communities with the Gospel as shown by a sharp decrease in disciple-making and the spiritual apathy of some who confess that Jesus is both Savior and Lord.

**Whereas** wide spread Biblical illiteracy has added to the lack of concern for those who do not know Christ.

**Whereas** 80+% of Congregations in the United States are at best plateau or in a state of decline.

**Whereas**, according to some recent studies, only 4% of the young people in the United States are presently involved in any religious instruction.

**Whereas** for today's church, the "Body of Christ" to attract people from today's society, people within the world's society must begin to see a clear difference between people who confess Christ and those who do not! St Paul urges us "to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called..." (Ephesians 4:1)

**Whereas** when you "google" "why are Christians so..." among the top ten answers are "critical, judgmental, and unloving."

**Whereas** we no longer live in a church culture, but in a culture that is hostile towards the church, no longer allowing God in our schools, business, and places of public gatherings.

**Whereas** non-churched people don't have the same appreciation for our creeds, confessions and traditions until they know we really care about them as people and not simply as "numbers" to add to our roles.

**Whereas** effective and persuasive witness demands the unity of the Church.

**Whereas** the LCMS and its Congregations firmly confess that we are justified by faith through grace and boldly profess that we are "not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes..." (Romans 1:16)

**Whereas** our mission is to love the world God loves, and to welcome "sinners" (Luke 15:2) To love others as Christ does, necessitates that we find way to include people and not erect barriers to keep them out.

**Whereas** St. Paul "vigorously" teaches that those whom God has called are "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11-16)

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that ignoring Christ's command "to go" and to "seek and save the lost" is not acceptable, and that the excuses we use for not sharing Christ's love and sacrifice in our communities is more of the devil and does not witness to how big and great and strong is our God.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that every Congregation, which God has strategically placed throughout the State of New Jersey, rededicate themselves to join with Jesus in mission as "ambassadors for Christ," finding ways to effectively and courageously engage their respective communities.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that by the Spirit's guidance each Congregation will intentionally set realistic but challenging goals to impact and engage their communities by first studying and better understanding the demographics of their communities towards the goal of being the best church for their community. (LCEF has an excellent resource, "Mission-in-site)

**BE IT RESOLVED** that each of our Congregations will hold at least three net fishing events before Ash Wednesday, 2019, mutually sharing their experiences both with churches of their Circuit and District.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that because we are called to be "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) and directed to "let our lights shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven," (Matthew 5:16) that we respectfully request all Circuit Visitors to encourage the congregations of their Circuits to be more incarnational and missional, reporting at their respective Circuit meetings the efforts of each Congregation and sharing the results with the Outreach Council of the District.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that we come to a better understanding of what God is already doing in our communities, reminding ourselves that we “are not on mission for Jesus, but rather with Jesus,” knowing that the Head of the Church graciously invites us to join Him in mission, promising to come alongside of us through the power, wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Outreach Council and other member Congregations of the New Jersey District will aid and support those Congregations that are requesting assistance as to “where to begin?” and “how do we get started?” and “what sources are available?”

**BE IT RESOLVED** that all congregations of the New Jersey District will use their God given creativity to impact their communities with the love of God, and to adaptively find ways to “Lift high the Cross” in the marketplace.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the congregations of the New Jersey District will give prayerful and financial support to our missionaries working within the District in the areas of Church plants, Urban Ministry, and restarts.

**AND FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Congregations of the New Jersey commit themselves to hastening the day when “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 5:10-11)

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

NJ District Outreach Council

(Refer to Resolution 1-02)



## Overture 11

### Sexual Harassment

Whereas, we live in a sexually charged culture; and whereas the notion that humans are sexual creatures with needs and desires is not often addressed by the Church apart from the Sixth Commandment; and whereas the term sexual harassment implies repeated, if not deliberate actions and comments, not just an off-hand remark or an unplanned action, and whereas the rules of engagement, and personal and professional conduct are ill defined, sometimes questioned, but seldom discussed;

Whereas, the news outlets are full of stories of individuals who are said to be victims of sexual abuse, violence, etc... and whereas those Church who volunteer or work in our congregations are not immune from such charges;

Whereas, church workers will from time to time encounter troubled individuals who seek out their counsel and advice; and whereas such counsel will happen in private discussions and behind closed doors;

Whereas, church workers themselves may not have the best attitude with regard to this issue, and may in fact be targets for lawsuits;

Whereas, some of our own (clergy and lay people) may have been victimized in the past;

Whereas, it has been quite a few years since the District and her pastors have had training in this area;

And whereas there is a spiritual dimension to sexuality that has not been adequately explored or discussed;

Be it resolved that the New Jersey District congregations direct the District to offer teaching and training on this important issue; that we direct our pastors, pastoral conference(s) and circuits to spend some time discussing at length, not just sexual harassment, but related issues as well.

We ask now that the district and her clergy give attention to the following issues:

What is sexual harassment? Do we all know it when it happens? Are we agreed on what it is and what it isn't? What is the district's responsibility and liability?

Where are the lines of casual banter and conversation among friends, and between coworkers?

How do we address one another when it happens?

How is the district (president) supposed to supervise its pastors, workers and congregations in this matter?

How do congregations exercise supervision of volunteers and support staff?

How can the District instruct congregations in providing adequate liability coverage?

Be it Resolved that the NJD in order to protect herself, and to set an example for her congregations offer a day-long event (retreat or seminar) on the issue of sexual harassment.

We should seek advice and input from Synod personnel, from the insurance industry, lawyers, police and others who have something intelligent to offer.

Not only should pastors should be **required** to attend, but also retired clergy who may serve vacancies or as pulpit supply to congregations. Deacons, office workers and especially youth workers should also be in attendance.

Be it further resolved that such teaching be offered, if not required, within 18 (eighteen) months of the passage of this resolution, and periodically thereafter.

And be it further resolved that clergy who from time to time enter our district be made aware of policies that come as a result of these events.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church  
Hamburg, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 4-01)

## Overture 12

### To Support the Well-being of All the Church's Workers in the New Jersey District

WHEREAS, The well-being of the church's workers is vital to the ministry and mission of the church; and

WHEREAS, Those who are called to serve the church in various capacities are well advised to care for themselves so that they can carry out their ministries to the best of their ability; and

WHEREAS, Congregations, schools, and other agencies are vital to the well-being of their ministers as they support those ministers in pursuit of their well-being; and

WHEREAS, Major challenges to the well-being of the church's ministers are known and documented, along with effective strategies to deal with those challenges to enhance their wellbeing; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention express its support for all efforts of congregations, schools, and agencies to care for our workers and support them in their wellbeing, including the following components of holistic well-being: spiritual, financial, vocational, intellectual, relational, emotional, and physical; and be it further

*Resolved*, That our congregations, schools, and agencies be encouraged to do all they can to support the holistic well-being of their ministers, focusing on intentional, strategic, practical efforts at preventing problems before they develop and resolving them before they become crises; and be it further

*Resolved*, That our congregations, schools, and agencies be encouraged to support the holistic well-being of all their other workers as well; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the church's workers of the New Jersey District be encouraged to care for themselves in every aspect of holistic well-being so that they can continue to serve to the best of their ability with the gifts and strength that God supplies.

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Signature of President or Chairman

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Signature of Secretary

NJ District Congregational Services Committee

(Refer to Resolution 3-04)

## Overture 13

### To Direct the President of Synod to Assure the Provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) Are Followed

WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 (To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724)<sup>1</sup> was not brought forward for debate at the 2016 LCMS National Convention; and

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<sup>1</sup> TO OVERRULE CCM OPINION 14-2724

WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries, notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

WHEREAS, Article III. 2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod identifies an objective of the Synod as 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;” and

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

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

WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in Resolution 8-32B); and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally congregational in nature; and

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

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any event; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy; and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

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

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations and others to give 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; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the congregations of the Texas District and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 was submitted by four LCMS districts, three district boards of directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations; and

WHEREAS, Two other overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention that also requested that CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) regarding the CCM says, in part: “An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action;” and

WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, No disposition of these overtures whatsoever is recorded in the 2016 Synod convention Proceedings; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That Overture 2-04 as found in the LCMS 2016 National Convention Workbook be submitted as an overture to the 2019 Synod convention by the adoption of this, current resolution; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2(c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be done in a fitting and orderly way” (I Corinthians 14:40).

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*Resolved*, That the Texas District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

*Resolved*, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the Texas District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void and of no effect.

(Refer to Resolution 2-02)

**Missions**

**1 Resolution 1-01**

**2 To Assist Congregation Outreach**

3 WHEREAS, Congregations may need assistance in finding ways to engage their communities; and

4 WHEREAS, Members of our congregations would like to interact with their community in caring  
5 ways; and

6 WHEREAS, Many congregations do not have the resources available to engage in outreach;  
7 therefore be it

8 *Resolved*, The New Jersey District establish a fund to assist congregations with seed money to  
9 impact their communities; and be it further

10 *Resolved*, That this fund would be managed by the Outreach Council in consultation with the  
11 New Jersey District Board of Directors; and be it finally

12 *Resolved*, That results of all outreach projects be published through the Grapevine and Servant to  
13 Servant so as to encourage other congregations' outreach activities.

**1 Resolution 1-02**  
**2 To Reaffirm the Urgency of Making Disciples**

3 WHEREAS, Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore  
4 go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and  
5 of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am  
6 with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20); and

7 WHEREAS, The LCMS adopted the following statement in Convention in 1995, “In grateful  
8 response to God's grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the  
9 mission of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is vigorously to make known the love of  
10 Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities, and the world;” therefore

11 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District reaffirm the urgency of making disciples and the Mission  
12 Statement of the LCMS; and further

13 *Resolved*, That every congregation that God has strategically placed throughout the State of New  
14 Jersey, rededicate themselves to join with Jesus in mission as “ambassadors for Christ,” finding  
15 ways to boldly engage their communities; and be it further

16 *Resolved*, That every congregation will engage their communities by studying and understanding  
17 the demographics of their communities; and be it further

18 *Resolved*, That all Circuit Visitors encourage the congregations of their Circuits to be more  
19 incarnational and missional, reporting at their respective Circuit meetings the efforts of each  
20 congregation and sharing the results with the Outreach Council of the District; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That the Outreach Council and member congregations of the New Jersey District aid  
22 and support those congregations that are requesting assistance; and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That all congregations will use their God given creativity to find way to impact their  
24 communities with the love of Jesus; and be it further

25 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the New Jersey District will join together to give prayerful  
26 and financial support to those missionaries working within the District in the areas of church  
27 plants, urban ministry, restarts, etc.; and be it finally

28 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District commit itself to hastening the day when “at the name of  
29 Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue  
30 confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:10-11).

**1 Resolution 1-03**  
**2 To Explore New Models of Church Ministry In Order to Continue to Reach Our**  
**3 Communities**

4 WHEREAS, Many of our congregations are continuing to decline in membership and financial  
5 stability; and

6 WHEREAS, Many of these same congregations and pastors are highly engaged in creative  
7 outreach, Learning Communities, Transforming Churches Network, Kairos Network, etc.; and

8 WHEREAS, This dissonance of effort and results can produce high anxiety and so lower levels of  
9 creativity which affects our ability to continue reaching our communities; and

10 WHEREAS, Our pastors are highly gifted in various tasks of pastoral ministry, but none in every  
11 task; and

12 WHEREAS, It would benefit our pastors to have a colleague to work with in a shared ministry;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, At every church closing, many of those current members become disengaged from  
15 congregational life, no longer receive pastoral care, and cease attending worship; and

16 WHEREAS, When a church closes we cease to have a Gospel-centered presence in that  
17 community; and

18 WHEREAS, One of the roles of a district is to support the members of Synod, both congregations  
19 and workers to be effective at reaching their community; and

20 WHEREAS, The Preamble Synod reads, “Our Lord’s will that the diversities of gifts should be  
21 for the common profit 1 Cor 12:4-31”; therefore be it

22 *Resolved*, That the NJ District explore, promote and facilitate new ministry options for  
23 congregations to yoke together in dual parish ministries, combined ministries, regional parish  
24 models, city parish, missional communities, multi-site, church planting, church replanting and  
25 church mergers that would be served by multi-pastorates, deaconesses, DCEs, other church  
26 workers, and missionaries, along with the priesthood of all believers so as to make full use of the  
27 giftedness of the church; and be it further

28 *Resolved*, That the NJ District help congregations in developing creative ways to manage the  
29 resource of land and facilities, including the sale of said properties so that the Gospel would  
30 continue to go out in that community and thrive in a new way; and be it finally

31 *Resolved*, That the NJ District promote and train local leaders for the work of ministry and  
32 outreach; and be it finally

33 *Resolved*, That the NJ District partner with other districts which are currently involved in this  
34 type of work in order to learn the best practices of the church models.



**1 Resolution 1-04**  
**2 To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724**

3 WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 (To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724) was not brought forward for  
4 debate at the 2016 LCMS National Convention which was submitted by four LCMS districts,  
5 three district boards of directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations and two other  
6 overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention that also requested that  
7 CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

8 WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2(c) regarding the CCM says, in part: “An opinion rendered by  
9 the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a  
10 convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the  
11 commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution,  
12 Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor  
13 committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the  
14 convention with recommendations for appropriate action;” and

15 WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

16 WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New  
17 Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much  
18 prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries,  
19 notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

20 WHEREAS, Article III.2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
21 identifies an objective of the Synod as to “Strengthen congregations and their members in giving  
22 bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and  
23 extend that Gospel witness into all the world;” and

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

28 WHEREAS, Article XIV of the Constitution states, “The Synod in convention may adopt bylaws  
29 that are consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod, which controls and  
30 supersedes such bylaws and all other rules and regulations of the Synod”; and

31 WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of  
32 the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the  
33 Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters  
34 related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in  
35 Resolution 8-32B); and

36 WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran  
37 Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally  
38 congregational in nature; and

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

42 WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion  
43 and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to  
44 restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds  
45 overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member  
46 congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members  
47 for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

48 WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on  
49 behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the  
50 restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any  
51 event; and

52 WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work  
53 Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the  
54 next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and  
55 congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and  
56 their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have  
57 mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and  
58 practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy;  
59 and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to  
60 communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations  
61 and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and  
62 stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and  
63 congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to  
64 communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

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

69 WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations  
70 and others to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son,  
71 and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world; therefore be it

72 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the New Jersey District and of The Lutheran Church—  
73 Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to  
74 send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

75 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries,  
76 recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts  
77 to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy  
78 Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

79 *Resolved*, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by  
80 congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of  
81 the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son  
82 and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as  
83 requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential  
84 support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission  
85 partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it further

86     *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to  
87     adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void  
88     and of no effect; and be it further

89     *Resolved*, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw  
90     3.9.2.2(c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an  
91     overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

92     *Resolved*, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be  
93     done in a fitting and orderly way” (1 Cor. 14:40).

## Ecclesiastical Supervision

### 1      **Resolution 2-01**

### 2      **To Overrule LCMS Board of Directors' May 2017 Resolution 12-14, re Bylaw 7.1.2**

3      WHEREAS, The 2016 Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in its Resolution  
4      12-14 [*“Regarding the Right of an Accuser to Appeal When a District President or President of*  
5      *the Synod Fails to Act or Declines to Suspend”*] and according to Bylaw 7.1.2, deferred its  
6      rightful and legislative authority regarding the development of ecclesiastical supervision bylaws  
7      with respect to and inclusion of the President of the Synod, the decision given to Synod’s Board  
8      of Directors; and

9      WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14, in accordance with Bylaw 7.1.2, set forth a specific path and  
10     timeline for consideration, negotiation and counsel to be conducted with the Council of  
11     Presidents, with any proposed amendments to the bylaws to be reviewed by the Commission on  
12     Constitutional Matters and the Commission on Handbook; and

13     WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14 states that the Commission on Constitutional Matters in Op. 16-  
14     2791 “has indicated portions of the expulsion processes of Synod’s Bylaws are presently in an  
15     unconstitutional state with respect to Const. Art. XI B 1–3 and Const. Art. XIII 2”; and

16     WHEREAS, The Board of Directors, acting under Bylaw 7.1.2 and at the express direction of the  
17     2016 Resolution 12-14, in May of 2017 adopted changes to the bylaws of the Synod regarding  
18     ecclesiastical supervision; and

19     WHEREAS, The Constitution of Synod defines clearly, precisely, and fully the supervisory role  
20     of the President of Synod, wherein the President of Synod has “the supervision regarding the  
21     doctrine and the administration of a. All officers of the Synod; b. All such as are employed by the  
22     Synod; c. The individual district of the Synod; d. All district presidents” (XI.B.1); and

23     WHEREAS, The President of Synod, as ecclesiastical supervisor, is limited in the exercise of said  
24     power, assuming “only such rights as have been expressly conferred” (XI A.1), which are  
25     expressly conferred to be “the power to advise, admonish, and reprove...conscientiously use all  
26     means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts  
27     of the Synod” (XI.B.3); and

28     WHEREAS, Synod’s Constitution expressly confers upon the District Presidents the duty to  
29     “*exercise supervision over*” their district’s ministers and to “visit and...hold investigations in the  
30     congregations” (XII.7), including the District Presidents being empowered “to suspend from  
31     membership” their district’s ministers (XII.8); and

32     WHEREAS, Prior to the year 2016 and CCM Op. 16-2791, numerous CCM opinions (to wit Ag.  
33     1970, Op.15-2750, 13-2669, 10-2581, 03-2354, and 03-2338, A and C) interpreted the President  
34     of Synod’s scope of ecclesiastical supervision do not include supervision over individual workers  
35     and congregations expressed in Article XII.7,8; therefore, be it

36     *Resolved*, That Synod in convention, as the ultimate legislative body of Synod<sup>1</sup> considers the

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<sup>1</sup>Bylaw 1.4.1: “*The delegate convention of the Synod is the legislative assembly that ultimately legislates policy, program, and financial direction to carry on the Synod’s work on behalf of and in support of the member congregations. It reserves to itself the right to give direction to all officers and agencies of the Synod. Consequently, all officers and agencies, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, shall be accountable to*

37 following to be steps to the resolution of this matter; and be it further

38 *Resolved*, That changes, subsequent to 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, made under Bylaw  
39 2.14 “Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod,” Bylaw 2.15  
40 “Expulsion of a District President or Officer from Membership in the Synod”, Bylaw 2.16  
41 “Expulsion of a President of Synod from Membership in the Synod”, and Bylaw 2.17 “Expulsion  
42 of Individuals from Membership in the Synod as a Result of Sexual Misconduct or Criminal  
43 Behavior”, as a result of 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, as adopted by the Board of Directors  
44 (May 2017) be overruled and of no effect; and be it further

45 *Resolved*, That Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 and 2.17 be returned to and replaced by the same  
46 corresponding Bylaws as set forth in the 2013 Synod Handbook; and be it further

47 *Resolved*, That a Blue Ribbon Task Force of seven members, with four members appointed by the  
48 35 District Presidents, three of whom shall be District Presidents, and three members appointed  
49 by the President of Synod, be authorized and formed to conduct a thorough study of the  
50 ecclesiastical supervision matter, including Articles III, VI, VII (studies of Articles VI and VII  
51 were previously resolved by the 2010 Convention), XI, XII, and XIII, and make  
52 recommendations to the 2022 Synod Convention, including any necessary revisions of  
53 constitutional provisions, with the purpose of evangelically resolving the current difficulty and  
54 division among us; and be it further

55 *Resolved*, That all relevant CCM opinions such as 16-2791, 16-2793, 16-2794, 16-2797, 17-2822,  
56 17-2828 and 17-2836 be placed in abeyance until the 2022 Convention and any necessary action  
57 at the 2022 convention; and be it further

58 *Resolved*, That Synod in convention affirm the powers provided to the Synod President “to  
59 advise, admonish and reprove...conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and  
60 maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod” do not include direct  
61 supervisory responsibilities of individual members of Synod, since such individuals are under the  
62 ecclesiastical supervision of District Presidents; and be it finally

63 *Resolved*, That the convention pray for peace and harmony in the Synod as it moves forward in  
64 mission and ministry.

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*the Synod for all their actions, and any concerns regarding the decisions of such officers or agencies may be brought to the attention of the Synod in convention for appropriate action. This provision does not apply to specific member appeals to the Concordia Plans, which has its own appeal process for such cases.”*

**1 Resolution 2-02**  
**2 To Direct the President of Synod to Assure the Provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) Are**  
**3 Followed**

4 WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 (To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724)<sup>2</sup> was not brought forward for

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<sup>2</sup> TO OVERRULE CCM OPINION 14-2724

WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries, notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

WHEREAS, Article III. 2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod identifies an objective of the Synod as 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;” and

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

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

WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in Resolution 8-32B); and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally congregational in nature; and

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

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any event; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy; and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

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

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations and others to give 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; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the congregations of the Texas District and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Texas District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

5 debate at the 2016 LCMS National Convention; and

6 WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 was submitted by four LCMS districts, three district boards of  
7 directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations; and

8 WHEREAS, Two other overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention  
9 that also requested that CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

10 WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) regarding the CCM says, in part: “An opinion rendered by  
11 the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a  
12 convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the  
13 commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution,  
14 Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor  
15 committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the  
16 convention with recommendations for appropriate action;” and

17 WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

18 WHEREAS, No disposition of these overtures whatsoever is recorded in the 2016 Synod  
19 convention Proceedings; therefore be it

20 *Resolved*, That Overture 2-04 as found in the LCMS 2016 National Convention Workbook be  
21 submitted as an overture to the 2019 Synod convention by the adoption of this, current resolution;  
22 and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw  
24 3.9.2.2(c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an  
25 overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

26 *Resolved*, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be  
27 done in a fitting and orderly way” (I Corinthians 14:40).

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*Resolved*, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the Texas District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void and of no effect.

## Life Together

**1 Resolution 3-01**  
**2 To Explore the Feasibility of Alternate Options of the New Jersey District President**  
**3 as Full-Time Position**

3 WHEREAS, The New Jersey District of the LCMS encompasses the smallest geographic area of  
4 the districts of the LCMS; and

5 WHEREAS, The New Jersey District has the second fewest number of congregations and  
6 communicants (54 NJ, 53 SELC, 9619 communicant NJ, 12376 communicant SELC) among  
7 synodical districts; and

8 WHEREAS, Congregational financial support has decreased to the point at which the district  
9 must use savings, and continued sale of closed church properties to maintain the current level of  
10 spending at a district level; and

12 WHEREAS, Larger districts both geographically (SELC, encompasses 11 states and 2 Canadian  
13 provinces) and in number (Oklahoma, 82 congregations) are served by part-time district  
14 presidents who regularly also serve as parish pastor; and

15 WHEREAS, It would be of best stewardship of the resources that God has entrusted to the  
16 churches and the district to consider how other districts have organized themselves to best  
17 accomplish the mission of the church; and

18 WHEREAS, Pastors have been called to congregational ministry and the church loses a great  
19 resource when these men move from the congregational ministry to serve solely as District  
20 President; and

21 WHEREAS, The New Jersey District in convention has already permitted the District President  
22 to serve as a parish pastor; therefore be it

23 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District Board of Directors discuss and evaluate the best possible  
24 use of district resources and personnel, including the role of the District President as a possible  
25 part-time position, both in time and compensation, with adequate use of all district staff and  
26 elected officials to accomplish kingdom work; and be it further

27 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District Board of Directors prepare a report and recommendations  
28 to the 2021 New Jersey District Convention that includes the viability of such an arrangement of  
29 a part-time District might serve.



**1 Resolution 3-02**  
**2 To Adopt Data Privacy Best Practices**

3 WHEREAS, The District and Synod collect personal identity and contact information from  
4 convention delegates and from those who vote for President of Synod; and

5 WHEREAS, Best practices for data privacy include the safeguarding of such personal  
6 information, its use only in the official conduct of business, and strict limitations on its  
7 disclosure; and

8 WHEREAS, Our delegates in convention take positions at odds with the culture, making  
9 disclosure of their personal information a security concern. For example, the Family Research  
10 Council in DC and donors to California Prop 8 were attacked professionally and personally for  
11 the same positions on marriage that our delegates enacted in 2016 14-02A, 14-03A, and 14-04;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3 now prohibits non-official use or distribution of the list of  
14 congregation-selected voters for President of Synod; and

15 WHEREAS, The Synod openly publishes the street addresses of national delegates as part of the  
16 Convention Workbook, which is posted on the Internet and easily downloaded; and

17 WHEREAS, The Secretary of Synod's office sells copies of this list to interested parties, which  
18 use them mainly for political ends (In 2016, some of those distributions disclosed national  
19 delegate e-mail addresses without prior consent); and

20 WHEREAS, LCMS districts have used their access to voters lists to send advocacy-type mailings  
21 and e-mails directly to those who vote for synod officials; therefore be it

22 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District affirms its commitment to data privacy best practices,  
23 including protection of identity and contact information for its district convention delegates, and  
24 the use or distribution of that information only for official business and with consent of the  
25 persons involved; and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District adopts a practice, consistent with LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3,  
27 which prohibits the use of private voter contact information in connection with synod-level  
28 elections; and be it finally

29 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt best  
30 practices that stop the public disclosure of delegate personal information other than name and  
31 congregational membership such as but not limited to street addresses and email addresses, and  
32 require prior consent for any distribution of their personal contact information.

**1 Resolution 3-03**  
**2 To Ensure Timely and Transparent Financial Reporting in the Synod**

3 WHEREAS, A principle of Biblical stewardship is to be accountable with the resources with  
4 which one has been entrusted, as expressed in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14 ff.); and

5 WHEREAS, Much is required of those to whom God has entrusted his gifts. As Jesus said,  
6 “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they  
7 entrusted much, they will demand the more” (Luke 12:48b, ESV); and

8 WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach “it is required of stewards that they be found faithful” (1  
9 Corinthians 4:2, ESV); and

10 WHEREAS, The Synod has historically recognized its responsibility of accountability and  
11 faithfulness in the handling of the finances entrusted to it by its members, as is witnessed in  
12 Bylaw 1.5.4, “The Synod and each of its agencies shall fully disclose their financial books and  
13 records to any member congregation of the Synod;” and

14 WHEREAS, The Synod in previous conventions has expressed its opinion that such  
15 accountability and faithfulness be found additionally in regular reporting of such financial  
16 disclosure by adopting 2010 Convention Resolution 4-03, “To Broadly Communicate the  
17 Statement of Financial Position of LCMS,” which reads in its totality:

18 “WHEREAS, It is helpful to understand the Synod’s financial position and communicate  
19 it to the members of the congregations of Synod; therefore be it

20 *Resolved*, That each November, the Vice-President–Finance—Treasurer of the Synod use  
21 widely available means, (i.e., The Lutheran Witness, Reporter, the LCMS Website) to  
22 state the financial position of the Synod in a format easily understood by persons  
23 unfamiliar with financial terminology.” (2010 Convention Proceedings, p. 120); and

24 WHEREAS, The members of the Synod expressed even further the need for full transparency in  
25 all areas of financial disclosure by adopting 2016 convention RESOLUTION 9-04A, “To  
26 Improve Disclosures Related to Financial Gifts from God’s Stewards for Special Appeals,” which  
27 reads in part,

28 “...WHEREAS, Monies for special appeals requested by corporate Synod (e.g.,  
29 following natural disasters) are reported only in part in Synod publications (e.g., Reporter  
30 and The Lutheran Witness) and sometimes only annually; and ...

31 WHEREAS, Donors and members of the Synod are interested in the impact of funds  
32 raised for special appeals and will appreciate improved disclosure of results; therefore be  
33 it

34 *Resolved*, That the financial offices of corporate Synod continue to recognize the desire  
35 of donors and members of the Synod to improve processes of reporting and work to  
36 provide clear, timely, and transparent accounting for all funding and special appeals, so  
37 that the Body of Christ may experience the joy of Gospel-centered mission and ministry  
38 beyond the local context or community.” (2016 Convention Proceedings, p. 189); and

39 WHEREAS, It was reported to the 2013 Convention of the Synod by the Board of Directors in its

40 Report on the Disposition of Funding the Mission Recommendations (R6-03-01) that “the decline  
41 in the Synod’s annual unrestricted revenue continues...The board believes that congregations will  
42 respond through better, open, and honest communication about the great things God is able to  
43 accomplish for His kingdom when we work together. Numerous conventions have passed  
44 resolutions calling on congregations to maintain and increase unrestricted support for district and  
45 Synod ministries, yet the unrestricted support passed through our districts to the Synod has  
46 continued to decline at the average rate of \$1 million each year.” (2013 Convention Workbook  
47 2013, p. 114-115); and

48 WHEREAS, In 2016, the Chief Financial Officer of the Synod, in reporting to the Synod about  
49 offerings received, stated, “This sharing from God’s bounty continues to decline. Although the  
50 amount of decline in the past three years has not been as severe as the average decline of the  
51 previous 20 years, it is still trending negatively. In the face of continued declining unrestricted  
52 revenues, the ability of Synod, Inc. to respond quickly and nimbly to mission and ministry  
53 opportunities and challenges laid before us by our Lord also declines, as does our ability to “fill in  
54 the gap” when restricted revenues, needed to fund much of our mission and ministry activities,  
55 fall short of their goals. The financial challenges facing our beloved Synod persist. I believe that  
56 these challenges are of our own making, a product of how we distribute the resources provided by  
57 our loving Father.” (2016 Convention Workbook, pp. 61-62); and

58 WHEREAS, There have been few tangible reports about the financial struggles of the Synod,  
59 such as the need to trim \$4 million dollars from the budget of the Synod (ref. July 7, 2017  
60 Reporter, <https://blogs.lcms.org/2017/international-national-mission> and the May 19-20, 2017  
61 Synod Board of Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4769>),  
62 these reports are less than sufficient to keep the members of the Synod regularly informed about  
63 the financial condition of the Synod; and

64 WHEREAS, It has been widely reported that the Synod has only minimal days of operating  
65 capital in its cash reserves, which would seemingly place the synod in a precarious financial  
66 position (ref. Paragraph 45, Financial Reports of the February 17-18, 2017 LCMS Board of  
67 Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4659>), which stated that  
68 without funds held on behalf of the two Seminaries, Synod had only a 5 day reserve of cash  
69 available); and

70 WHEREAS, In the face of such challenging financial times, transparency and regularity in the  
71 reporting of the financial situation of the Synod is of utmost importance to the members and  
72 constituency of the Synod who have a vested interest in the financial viability of the Synod and  
73 who merit clear, concise, and timely reports; and

74 WHEREAS, The President of the Synod recommended in his report to the Synod in 2016 that the  
75 Synod have “Uniform Financial Reporting.” (2016 Today’s Business, p. 28); therefore be it

76 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention direct the Chief Financial Officer to report quarterly in  
77 the Synod’s official publications about the financial position of the Synod in a format easily  
78 understood by persons unfamiliar with financial terminology, such reporting to include, but not  
79 limited to income and expenses, budget versus spending, cash reserves and cash position, etc.;  
80 and be it further

81 *Resolved*, That these quarterly reports include information about the regular Synod budget and the  
82 reporting on special appeals as stipulated in 2016 Resolution 9-04A; and be it further

83 *Resolved*, That the Synod be shrewd managers with the resources God has given it; and be it  
84 finally

85 *Resolved*, That the Synod give thanks to God for the resources He has entrusted to us, recognizing  
86 “That the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (Psalm 24:1, ESV).

**1 Resolution 3-04**  
**2 To Support the Well-being of All the Church's Workers in the New Jersey District**

3 WHEREAS, The well-being of the church's workers is vital to the ministry and mission of the  
4 church; and

5 WHEREAS, Those who are called to serve the church in various capacities are well advised to  
6 care for themselves so that they can carry out their ministries to the best of their ability; and

7 WHEREAS, Congregations, schools, and other agencies are vital to the well-being of their  
8 rostered workers and staff as they support those ministers in pursuit of their well-being; and

9 WHEREAS, Major challenges to the well-being of the church's rostered workers and staff are  
10 known and documented, along with effective strategies to deal with those challenges to enhance  
11 their wellbeing; therefore be it

12 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention express its support for all efforts of  
13 congregations, schools, and agencies to care for our rostered workers and staff and support them  
14 in their wellbeing, including the following components of holistic well-being: spiritual, financial,  
15 vocational, intellectual, relational, emotional, and physical, leading to a chaste and decent life;  
16 and be it further

17 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District Board of Directors maintain current and equitable  
18 compensation and holistic care guidelines for all rostered workers and staff that takes into account  
19 the cost of living differences throughout the state, and the worker's years of experience and  
20 education levels, as is done by most other districts; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That our congregations, schools, and agencies support the holistic well-being of their  
22 rostered workers and staff, including the district's minimum compensation guidelines, and  
23 intentional, strategic, practical efforts at preventing problems before they develop and resolving  
24 them before they become crises; and be it further

25 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District rostered workers and staff be encouraged to care for  
26 themselves in every aspect of holistic well-being making use of Ministerial Care Coalition and  
27 the resources they provide so that they can continue to serve to the best of their ability with the  
28 gifts and strength that God supplies; and be it finally

29 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District Board of Directors give compensation and care guidelines  
30 to the congregations by December 2018 and follow up regularly by the district president and  
31 circuit visitors incorporated in the required congregation visitations.

## Church and Culture

### 1     **Resolution 4-01**

### 2     **To Address the Sexual Integrity of Ministers and the Care for Victims of Abuse**

3     WHEREAS, God calls His people to holiness and Christ has specifically summoned His  
4     followers to sexual purity (Matt. 5:27–28; 1 Thes. 4:3–5); and

5     WHEREAS, Sexual sin robs us of our joy in God and is especially grievous to our souls (1 Cor.  
6     6:18); and

7     WHEREAS, Many church bodies are seeking to address the scandal of sexual abuse by members  
8     of their clergy; and

9     WHEREAS, We acknowledge our own fallenness and the need to prevent such appalling sins  
10    from happening within our own ranks; and

11    WHEREAS, The Bible calls ministers of the gospel—whether they are pastors, counselors,  
12    educators, missionaries, chaplains, or others—to be above reproach morally, both within the body  
13    of Christ and in the larger community (1 Tim. 3:1-13); and

14    WHEREAS, Scripture commands that believers are to be restrained even in their speech (Eph.  
15    4:29); and

16    WHEREAS, Sexually demeaning speech of any kind normalizes the denigration of others; and

17    WHEREAS, Believers are the salt of the earth and the light of the world so that our actions will  
18    glorify our Father in heaven (Matt. 5:13-14); and

19    WHEREAS, The holiness of our triune God and the gospel of Jesus Christ require the highest  
20    levels of integrity in personal, family, ministerial, and business relations; and

21    WHEREAS, Ministers serve as trusted members of the community, in public ministry, in  
22    personal and family counseling contexts, and as private citizens; and

23    WHEREAS, The erosion of moral fidelity has reached crisis proportions in our society; and

24    WHEREAS, Sexual infidelity and other violations of ministerial integrity always have tragic  
25    consequences for those who are victimized and for others indirectly impacted by those  
26    transgressions, especially in their relationship with our loving God; and

27    WHEREAS, Tragically, accusations of sexual abuse and harassment have been made within  
28    LCMS congregations, and other LCMS ministries; and

29    WHEREAS, Victims of sexual abuse and harassment are often dismissed and told that they are  
30    responsible at least in part for the sin perpetrated against them; therefore be it

31    *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention call on one another to build and maintain  
32    relationships and practices of integrity and fidelity to God and others in that we are to be people

33 above reproach (1 Tim 3:2; Col 1:22; Titus 1); and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That we urge all our spiritual leaders redouble their efforts to hold one another  
35 accountable to the highest standards of Christian moral practice; and be it further

36 *Resolved*, That we urge our seminaries and other related educational institutions to make  
37 ministerial integrity a major emphasis in the training of pastors, missionaries, educators, and other  
38 ministers; and be it further

39 *Resolved*, That we call on our churches to discipline those guilty of any sexual abuse in  
40 obedience to Matt. 18:6-17 as well as to cooperate with civil authorities in the prosecution of  
41 those cases; and be it further

42 *Resolved*, That we pray for those who have been harmed as a result of sexual abuse and urge our  
43 churches to offer support, compassion, and biblical counseling to them and their families; and be  
44 it further

45 *Resolved*, That we commit ourselves as disciples of Christ to lives of purity in thought, word, and  
46 deed; and be it further

47 *Resolved*, That we call on New Jersey District to continue and to expand efforts to teach the  
48 whole counsel of God regarding sexual purity, human dignity, and the dangers of pornography;  
49 and be it further

50 *Resolved*, That we remind all our congregations of their moral responsibility to implement any  
51 appropriate church discipline and restoration processes; and be it further

52 *Resolved*, That we encourage pastors and congregations to develop and implement sound policies  
53 and procedures to protect our children and staff from sexual abuse and harassment; and be it  
54 finally

55 *Resolved*, That we urge all our people to pray for victims of abuse and harassment, to stand for  
56 their protection from abuse, and to support safe and healthy children's ministries in our churches  
57 and communities.

**1 Resolution 4-02**  
**2 To Denounce Ethno-Nationalism and Supremacy as a Belief that is Anti-Gospel**

3 WHEREAS, Scripture teaches, “God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all  
4 the face of the earth,” (Acts 17:26); and

5 WHEREAS, All people are created in the same image of God, no matter what human  
6 distinguishing identifiers might be (Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6; cf. Acts 17:25, 26); and

7 WHEREAS, Central to the doctrine of creation is the truth of the equal value of all humans  
8 grounded in the unsurpassable worth that God places in them, demonstrated by the unsurpassable  
9 price he paid for each individual person; and

10 WHEREAS, In Jesus, God became a human and so identifies fully with every human (Heb. 2:17),  
11 and his mission embraces all of humankind (Matt. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38); and

12 WHEREAS, Any claim that there is something about the nature of another human being as such  
13 that renders that person to be of inferior value not only denies the biblical doctrine of creation, but  
14 also calls into question what the Scriptures teach about the incarnation of Jesus Christ;<sup>1</sup> and

15 WHEREAS, The Apostle Peter said, “God doesn’t show favoritism, but in every nation the  
16 person who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him” (Acts 10:34–35); and

17 WHEREAS, The Book of Concord teaches that all Christians will make the will of Christ  
18 supreme in their own lives and in human society, and so opposing all forms of racism (AC Ap V  
19 1-3); and

20 WHEREAS, Racism and racial superiority is idolatry<sup>2</sup>; and

21 WHEREAS, Racism is a blatant denial of the unity of the body of Christ, into which all who have  
22 been baptized into his name have been incorporated (1 Cor. 12:13) for Jesus Christ has removed  
23 all barriers between all human beings, making peace through His cross (Eph. 2:13-16); and

24 WHEREAS, James says, “If you really fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, ‘You shall  
25 love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are  
26 convicted by the law as transgressors” (James 2:8-9); and

27 WHEREAS, Christians of differing national or ethnic origins must not claim Christ as exclusively  
28 their own, as if to say that their view of him most closely approximates the biblical portrayal of  
29 him.

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<sup>1</sup> As a human, Jesus descended from Adam, whom God created (Luke 3:38), and whom all human beings have as progenitor. To deny the full humanity of any fellow human being is at the same time to compromise the apostolic truth that in Christ “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col. 2:9), that is, that he truly “was made man” (Nicene Creed)

<sup>2</sup> “That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself,” Dr. Martin Luther wrote in the Large Catechism, is “really your God.” “If any one boasts,” he continued, “of great learning, wisdom, power, prestige, family, and honor, and trusts in them, he also has a god, but not the one, true God.” If anyone should claim superiority over others and treat them as inferior because of racial origin or characteristics, we may add, that person, too, has a god, but not the one true God.



30 WHEREAS, the Synod in convention has passed the following resolutions  
31 **1971 — Res. 9-32:** To Encourage Christian Action to Combat Racism  
32 **1973 — Res. 9-22:** To Continue Efforts to Combat Racism  
33 **1977 — Res 10-18A:** To Make Every Effort to Eliminate Racism  
34 **1979 — Res 4-11:** To Reaffirm Efforts to Combat Racism  
35 **1981 — Res 8-07:** To Oppose Racism and Violence  
36 **1983 — Res 3-09:** To Clarify Position on Anti-Semitism  
37 **1992 — Res 3-03:** To Combat All Racism  
38 **1995 — Res 2-05A:** To Commend for Study the CTCR Document *Racism and the*  
39 *Church*, and

40 WHEREAS, As the 1992 resolution states, “racism is contrary to God’s Word and a sin against  
41 Him.” Synod by-law 2.3.1 (a) states: “It shall be the policy of the Synod to decline membership  
42 to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or other congregational privileges to any  
43 Christian because of race or ethnic origin;” therefore be it

44 WHEREAS, In what is sometimes known as white nationalism or separatism, alt-right, British  
45 Israelism, Evropa Identity, Nation of Islam, Zionism and others, the worth of an individual or  
46 group is determined principally by genetic origins, biological characteristics, or cultural heritage,  
47 which becomes the primary basis for drawing conclusions about the comparative worth of an  
48 individual<sup>3</sup>

49 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District of the LCMS, denounce every form of racism, including  
50 alt-right white supremacy, white separatists, British Israelism, and Evropa Identity, et. al., as  
51 antithetical to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and be it further,

52 *Resolved*, That we repent of our own sins of the idolatry of nationalism and racism and denounce  
53 and repudiate white supremacy and every form of racial and ethnic hatred as a scheme of the  
54 devil intended to bring further suffering and division to the world and to hinder the Gospel; and  
55 be it further

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<sup>3</sup> For example,

“Any white person who brought the element of civilization had the right to take over this continent”, Ayn Rand, “To the Graduating Class of West Point”, 1974;

“Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.. look with confidence to the ultimate universal acknowledgement of the truths upon which our system rests? It is the first government ever instituted upon the principles in strict conformity to nature, and the ordination of Providence, in furnishing the materials of human society. Many governments have been founded upon the principle of the subordination and serfdom of certain classes of the same race; such were and are in violation of the laws of nature. Our system commits no such violation of nature's laws.” Alexander Stevens, Vice President to the Confederacy, “Cornerstone Address” March 21, 1861;

“To be white is to be a striver, a crusader, an explorer and a conqueror. We build, we produce, we go upward ... For us, it is conquer or die. This is a unique burden for the white man, that our fate is entirely in our hands. And it is appropriate because within us, within the very blood in our veins as *Children of the Sun*, lies the potential for greatness. That is the great struggle we are called to. We are not meant to live in shame and weakness and disgrace. We were not meant to beg for moral validation from some of the most despicable creatures to ever populate the planet. We were meant to overcome—overcome all of it. Because that is natural and normal for us. Because for us, as Europeans, it is only normal again when we are great again...the concepts that are now designated “problematic” and associated with whiteness—power, strength, beauty, agency, accomplishment. Whites do and other groups don’t ... We don’t exploit other groups. We don’t gain anything from their presence. They need us, and not the other way around.” Richard Spencer, “Hail Trump Speech”, November 2016

56 *Resolved*, That we reaffirm the resolution the Synod in convention of 1992, “It shall be the policy  
57 of the Synod to decline membership to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or  
58 other congregational privileges to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin;” and be it  
59 further

60 *Resolved*, That it shall be the policy of the New Jersey District of the LCMS to deny membership  
61 any member of Synod who espouses racists ideology such as is found in ethno-,  
62 nationalist/separatists, etc. groups, and to suspend the membership of any member who refuses to  
63 repent of such ideology as it denies the Confessions and the Scriptures to which we subscribe;  
64 and be it further

65 *Resolved*, That we acknowledge that we still must make progress in rooting out any remaining  
66 forms of intentional or unintentional racism in our midst; and be it finally

67 *Resolved*, That we earnestly pray, both for those who advocate racist ideologies and those who  
68 are thereby deceived, that they may see their error through the light of the Gospel, repent of these  
69 hatreds, and come to know the peace and love of Christ through redeemed fellowship in the  
70 Kingdom of God, which is established from every nation, tribe, people, and language.

**1 Resolution 4-03**  
**2 To Engage in Ministry to Transgendered Persons**

3 WHEREAS, All persons are created in God’s image and are made to glorify Him (Gen. 1:27; Isa.  
4 43:7); and

5 WHEREAS, God’s design was the creation of two distinct and complementary sexes, male and  
6 female (Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4; Mk 10:6;) which designate the fundamental distinction that God  
7 has embedded in the very biology of the human race; and

8 WHEREAS, Distinctions in masculine and feminine as ordained by God are part of the created  
9 order and should find expression in every human heart (Gen 2:18, 21–24; 1 Cor 11:7–9; Eph  
10 5:22–33; 1 Tim 2:12–14); and

11 WHEREAS, The Fall of man into sin has introduced brokenness and futility into God’s good  
12 creation (Gen 3:1–24; Rom 8:20); and

13 WHEREAS, According to a 2016 study from the UCLA School of Law, about 1.4 million  
14 Americans identify as transgender; and

15 WHEREAS, Transgenderism differs from hermaphroditism or intersexualism in that the sex of  
16 the individual is not biologically ambiguous but psychologically ambiguous; and

17 WHEREAS, The state of New Jersey prohibits licensed counselors from any attempt to change a  
18 child’s “gender expression”; and

19 WHEREAS, the church does not have a good history of ministering to transgendered persons  
20 often due to our uncomfortability with the topic or to the harsh, unloving, hypocritical manner in  
21 which we speak often while refusing to speak publicly against other sexual sins such as divorce,  
22 remarriage, pornography, sexual harassment, coarse language, etc, and

23 WHEREAS, the CTCR has produced a 2014 paper entitled, “Gender Identity Disorder or Gender  
24 Dysphoria in Christian Perspective” which begins to address this topic; now, therefore, be it

25 *Resolved*, That the NJ District in convention affirm God’s good design that gender identity is  
26 determined by biological sex and not by one’s self-perception—a perception which is often  
27 influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God’s design (Eph. 4:17–18); and be  
28 it further

29 *Resolved*, That we commend the CTCR for their current work and request they produce a full  
30 study on practical ministry to transgendered persons, and be it

31 *Resolved*, That we grieve the reality of human fallenness which can result in manifestations of  
32 sexuality outside of the teaching of Scripture and point all to the redemption of our bodies in  
33 Christ (Rom. 8:23); and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That we extend love and compassion to those whose sexual self-understanding is  
35 shaped by a distressing conflict between their biological sex and their gender identity; and be it  
36 further

37 *Resolved*, That we invite all transgender persons to trust in Christ and to experience renewal in

- 38 the Gospel (1 Tim 1:15–16); and be it further
- 39 *Resolved*, That we love our transgender neighbors, seek their good always, welcome them to our  
40 churches and, as they repent and believe in Christ, receive them into church membership  
41 (2 Cor. 5:18–20; Gal. 5:14); and be it further
- 42 *Resolved*, That we regard our transgender neighbors as image-bearers of God and therefore  
43 condemn acts of abuse or bullying committed against them; and be it further
- 44 *Resolved*, That we oppose efforts to alter one’s bodily identity (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy,  
45 gender reassignment surgery) to refashion it to conform with one’s perceived gender identity; and  
46 be it further
- 47 *Resolved*, That we continue to oppose steadfastly all efforts by any governing official or body to  
48 validate transgender identity as morally praiseworthy (Isa. 5:20); and be it further
- 49 *Resolved*, That our love for the Gospel and urgency for the Great Commission must include  
50 declaring the whole counsel of God, proclaiming what Scripture teaches about God’s design for  
51 us as male and female persons created in His image and for His glory (Matt. 28:19–20; Acts  
52 20:27; Rom. 11:36);
- 53 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District provide resources and training on this topic to help pastors  
54 and congregations minister to those struggling with sexual sins; and be it finally
- 55 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District memorialize the Synod in convention to request the  
56 CTCR to study this issue in more depth and provide Gospel-centered resources on how to engage  
57 in ministry to transgendered persons.

# Statement of Vision for the Presidency of the NJ District

Rev. Stephen Gewecke

The practical expression of District faces in two directions. From the Synodical perspective a District is “Synod in this place.” As such the District is an extension of the Synod or the local presence of the Synod among us. However, from the front steps of your church, District will have a different look. Congregations desire District to be a source of identity and unity, a means of accountability, a resource in times of need, and perhaps even a source of inspiration.

To this end, we would do well to work on fostering an ever greater sense of unity among us. The Scriptures talk about us being the family or household of God. We certainly find that expressed in our congregations. We regularly turn to one another for fellowship, care, and encouragement. Yet doesn’t this identity extend beyond our congregations to our District, Synod, and even all of Christ’s Church? We would do well, not only to speak of this truth but, to practice it. We would do well to intentionally foster collegiality among our pastors in learning communities, circuit meetings, and pastor’s conferences. Our congregations will only find a healthy and positive identity in District as our pastors bear this attitude in themselves and their ministry. Then leaders and members of our congregations can begin to catch and take up this identity.

It would also serve us well to work on communications between our congregations and the District. A number of years ago there was a Districtwide event that greatly impacted me. It revealed that people loved and deeply cared about their District. The passion was palpable. But at the same time there was a high level of frustration among them regarding the relationship between congregations and District. People felt disconnected from the District. That dialog was strangely encouraging to me because the beginning of change is to be found in unrest. Since that time we have made strides toward greater connectedness but still more may be done. Through congregational visitation, information sharing sessions with lay leaders, training sessions, celebrations, and keen responsiveness in communication, we can continue to build goodwill and joy in our relationship of congregation and District.

Third, we will want to look to reap the benefits of an emphasis on increasing the vitality and health of our congregations and District. Efforts to begin new ministry and plant new congregations has begun among us through the Kairos Network. We will want to encourage and support this work. At the same time, we will want to encourage the vitality of all our existing congregations. New models of partnership in ministry can be explored to foster, strengthen, and invigorate the proclamation of the gospel in every corner of New Jersey. We will also want to place an emphasis on revitalizing our District Councils to help foster the work of our congregations. In particular, we can endeavor to reconstitute the work of the Outreach and Congregational Services Councils which have been virtually dormant in recent years.

May our heavenly Father grant us his grace to continue the proclamation of the gospel here in NJ and enable us by his Holy Spirit to be strong and bold on behalf of Jesus Christ.

**A Ministry Vision for the New Jersey District**  
**Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn**

For the past six years, you have given me the great privilege of serving as your District President; if I would be elected to a third and final term, these thoughts would guide my ministry in your midst.

**The vision of the church is given to us from Christ, who is the Head of the Church...and He has given us a Great Commission** (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-49) **and a Great Commandment** (Matthew 25:31-45; Luke 10:25-37; John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7-12, 19-21).

The vision of our Lord for His people is simple and clear: "go and make disciples of all nations." Throughout His ministry, Jesus called disciples to Himself and taught them many things about being one of His disciples. Jesus summarized this life of discipleship in this way: "a wise person is someone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice" (Matthew 7:24-27); and identified two fundamental practices of a disciple when He said: "if you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples" (John 8:31-32) and "if you love one another" (John 13:34-35).

In response to these words of Jesus, the first major focus of the District will be to increase the biblical literacy of His people through the teaching ministry of the District's *Leaders and Learners* program and through the leadership of the *Congregation Services' Council*. During the next three years, there will be frequent training events involving these resources: the *Divine Drama* (with notes from the *Bethel Bible Series*), *fifty stories that every Christian should know*, and *the parables of Jesus* so that we can grow in our knowledge of the Scriptures, possess a comprehensive understanding of His story, make sense of our story in light of His story and how we are to live as His people in the 21st century.

In response to these words of Jesus, the second major focus of the District will be to equip His people in how to share His story of salvation in Jesus Christ with others through the teaching ministry of the District's *Leaders and Learners* program and through the leadership of the *Outreach Council*. During the next three years, there will be frequent training events involving these resources: *the LASSIE method of witnessing the Gospel* (Rev. Mark Woods), *how did Jesus do evangelism and life is all about stories: helping people make sense of their story in light of His story* (Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn), *joining Jesus on His mission: how to be an everyday missionary* (Rev. Greg Finke); and *the mission leadership series* -- six, one-day workshops designed to form disciples in their life as a missionary (the six workshops are outlined in strategic focus #5 of my convention report).

In response to these words of Jesus, the third major focus of the District will be for me to personally, and frequently, visit the pastors and congregations of the District so that they might be encouraged and strengthened in their ministry of Word and Sacrament -- being joined in this visitation ministry by the other members of the District's *Growth Council* (three Vice-Presidents and six Circuit Visitors) -- and, when invited to do so, to assist the pastors and congregations in addressing the pressing issues and ministry opportunities that they have through a threefold process: (1) identifying and stating the pressing issues and adaptive challenges that we are facing together; (2) thinking biblically and theologically about these issues and opportunities and discovering together what the Scriptures have to say about these things (since all theology and ministry practices are normed by God's Word); and (3) formulating a ministry plan that is congregationally owned and constructed, a ministry plan that identifies the next steps to be taken and how to go about implementing those steps so that we, along with many others, will be blessed in our future life together.

A final thought from Martin Luther -- the Christian life can be summarized in two words: faith and love whereby every believer is placed midway between God and one's neighbor, becoming God's instrument of blessing through their witnessing of the Gospel and deeds of love, compassion and mercy.

## NOMINATIONS FOR DISTRICT OFFICERS

### DISTRICT PRESIDENT

The following have been nominated and have given written notice of their approval to have their names placed on the ballot:

Rev. Stephen Gewecke- 9  
Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn -25

The following declined nomination for President: Rev. Andrew Dinger,  
Rev. Bruce Smith and Rev. Deric Taylor,

### DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENT

The following have been nominated by the congregations of their respective Vice Presidential regions, and have given written approval to allow their names to stand in nomination:

#### AREA 1

Rev. Deric Taylor - 6  
Rev. Dr. L. Richard Vossler - 1

#### AREA 3

Rev. Stephen Gewecke - 4

#### AREA 2

Rev. Andrew Dinger - 6  
Rev. Brian Handrich - 1  
Rev.,. Stephen Vogt - 1

The following declined the nomination for Vice President Area 1: Rev. Robert Holsten, Rev. Anthony Iovine, Rev. John Schroter Area 2: Rev. Benjamin Dolby, Rev. Michael Dunne

## **NOMINATIONS FOR CIRCUIT VISITORS**

Following is the list of nominees for Circuit Visitors, provided by following the procedure outlined in Bylaw 5.11 of the constitution of Synod.

Circuit #1	Rev. Robert Holsten	Circuit #4	Rev. David Behm
Circuit #2	Rev. Dr. David Rowold*	Circuit #5	Rev. Dan Sparling
Circuit #3	Rev. Daniel Merz	Circuit #6	Rev. Chris Schonberg

The following declined the nomination for Circuit Visitor – Circuit 2: Rev. Deric Taylor

## **CIRCUIT FORUM ELECTION RESULTS TO BE RATIFIED BY THE CONVENTION**

Circuit #1	Rev. Robert Holsten	Circuit #4	Rev. David Behm
Circuit #2	Rev. Gary Timm **	Circuit #5	Rev. Dan Sparling
Circuit #3	Rev. Daniel Merz	Circuit #6	Rev. Chris Schonberg

\*This nomination was withdrawn due to the acceptance of a call by Rev. Dr. Rowold to another district.

\*\* Per synodical bylaw 5.2.2(f) Rev. Gary Timm was selected by the district president.



## NOMINATIONS FOR 2018 CONVENTION

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lay Person – Circuit # 1	( 6 year term)	William Schmidt
Lay Person – Circuit # 3	( 6 year term)	Jason Kiefer David Pry
Lay Person – Circuit # 5	( 6 year term)	Norm Klesat
Secretary:	(3 year term)	Rev. Andrew Dinger Rev. Richard Serina
Treasurer	(3 year term)	Maggie Bowie Christian Koerner
Clergy at Large (2)	(3 year term)	Rev. John Grieg Rev. Brian Handrich Rev. Anthony Iovine Rev. Richard Izzard Rev. Philip Ressler Rev. Dan Schmalz Rev. Bruce Smith Rev. Gary Timm Rev. Aaron Uphoff
Commissioned Minister at Large	(3 year term)	Allison Johnson

### CHRISTIAN HERITAGE ENDOWMENT FUND TRUSTEES

(Candidate may be either clergy or lay person who is skilled in investments)

Region #1	(3 year term)	Shirley Carpenter Alan Fields Terry Shine Rev. Deric Taylor
Region #2	(3 year term)	Sharon Czebotar Rev. Brian Handrich Christa Piper Rev. Eric Rieker Gay Van Etten
Region #3	(3 year term)	Charlotte Visbeck William Zak

## **CHRISTIAN HERITAGE ENDOWMENT FUND LAY PERSON AT LARGE**

Tettie Augustine Addy  
H. Zoe Dahnshaw  
Douglas Montone  
David Rocker  
Larry Schumann  
Charlotte Visbeck  
William Zak

## **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE FOR 2021 NJ DISTRICT CONVENTION**

(Candidates elected to this convention committee may also serve in other elected office of the District)

Clergy (2):

Rev. Stephen Gewecke  
Rev. Robert Holsten  
Rev. Philip Ressler  
Rev. Chris Sadlo  
Rev. Chris Schonberg  
Rev. Stephen Vogt

Commissioned Minister:

Allison Johnson  
Caren Vogt

Lay Persons:

Charles Carter  
Jason Kiefer  
Carol Pry  
William Schmidt  
Charlotte Visbeck

## **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE 2019 SYNODICAL CONVENTION**

Lay Persons:

Larry Chenault  
Rob Loeber  
Jason Kiefer  
Paul Onder  
William Schmidt

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**Directions and Transportation**

**Directions to our Hotel**

From NJ Turnpike-take exit 4 follow RTE. 73 N, 100 yards to first traffic light at Fellowship Road. Turn right onto fellowship Rd. Proceed 1/4 mile to hotel on the left.

**Local Airports**

■ **Philadelphia International Airport**

- Distance from hotel: 22.3 mi.
- Drive time: 30 min.

**Directions:** I-95 North. Walt Whitman Bridge to New Jersey. I-295 North to Exit 36A. Through 1st light (Fellowship Road) take right turn onto Fellowship Road NORTH, and cross over Route 73 onto Fellowship Road. At 1st light (.25 miles) turn left.

Get turn by turn directions.

■ **Newark International Airport**

- Distance from hotel: 71.6 mi.
- Drive time: 1.12 hr.

**Directions:** NJ Turnpike South to Exit 4 (Route 73 North), 100 yards to 1st traffic light at Fellowship Road. Turn right onto Fellowship Road North. Proceed 1/4 mile to hotel on the left.

Get turn by turn directions.

■ **Atlantic City International Airport**

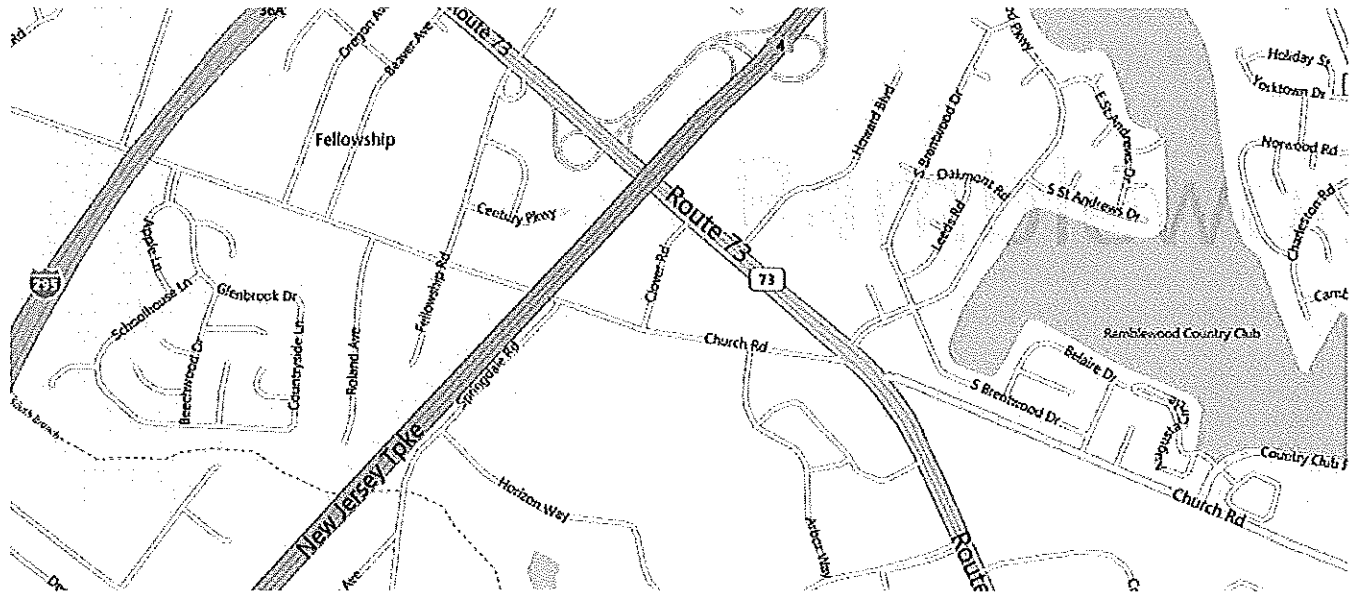
- Distance from hotel: 46.7 mi.
- Drive time: 57 min.

**Directions:** Exit Airport to Atlantic City Expressway West to Rte 73 North to Fellowship Road in Mt. Laurel. Turn right onto Fellowship Rd and proceed for 1/4 mile to hotel on the left.

Get turn by turn directions.

**Local Map**







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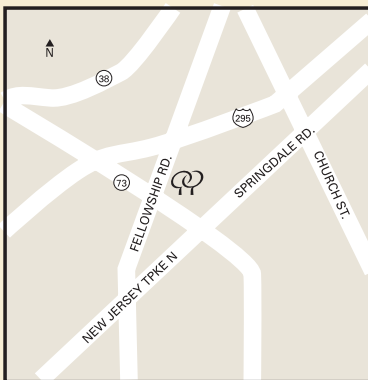
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- Alice Paul Homestead Museum - 3 miles
- Promenade at Sagemore - 4 miles
- Sahara Sam's Oasis Indoor Water Park - 9 miles
- Adventure Aquarium - 9 miles
- Battleship New Jersey & Children's Garden - 9 miles
- Philadelphia Art Museum - 11 miles
- National Constitution Center - 11 miles
- Downtown Philadelphia - 15 miles
- Historic Batsto Village - 30 miles
- Long Beach Island - 50 miles
- Atlantic City - 60 miles
- Seaside Heights Beach - 70 miles
- Cape May - 95 miles



**Driving directions to: 4100 Terrace Avenue, Pennsauken Township, NJ  
Martin Luther Chapel, Pennsauken, NJ from New Jersey District Convention**

 515 Fellowship Rd  
Mt Laurel, NJ 08054

1. Head **southwest** on **Fellowship Rd** toward **E Park Dr** 0.5 mi
2. Turn right onto **NJ-73 N** 4.1 mi
3. Slight left onto **NJ-90 W** (signs for **Betsy Ross Bridge**) 1.0 mi
4. Take the **U.S. 130 S** exit toward **Camden** 0.5 mi
5. Merge onto **US-130/N Crescent Blvd/Westfield Camden Turnpike**  
Continue to follow US-130/N Crescent Blvd 2.6 mi
6. Slight right toward **Terrace Ave** 276 ft
7. Turn left onto **Terrace Ave** 351 ft

 To: 4100 Terrace Avenue, Pennsauken Township, NJ

86     *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to  
87     adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void  
88     and of no effect; and be it further

89     *Resolved*, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw  
90     3.9.2.2(c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an  
91     overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

92     *Resolved*, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be  
93     done in a fitting and orderly way” (1 Cor. 14:40).



## Ecclesiastical Supervision

### 1 Resolution 2-01

### 2 To Overrule LCMS Board of Directors' May 2017 Resolution 12-14, re Bylaw 7.1.2

3 WHEREAS, The 2016 Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in its Resolution  
4 12-14 [*“Regarding the Right of an Accuser to Appeal When a District President or President of*  
5 *the Synod Fails to Act or Declines to Suspend”*] and according to Bylaw 7.1.2, deferred its  
6 rightful and legislative authority regarding the development of ecclesiastical supervision bylaws  
7 with respect to and inclusion of the President of the Synod, the decision given to Synod’s Board  
8 of Directors; and

9 WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14, in accordance with Bylaw 7.1.2, set forth a specific path and  
10 timeline for consideration, negotiation and counsel to be conducted with the Council of  
11 Presidents, with any proposed amendments to the bylaws to be reviewed by the Commission on  
12 Constitutional Matters and the Commission on Handbook; and

13 WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14 states that the Commission on Constitutional Matters in Op. 16-  
14 2791 “has indicated portions of the expulsion processes of Synod’s Bylaws are presently in an  
15 unconstitutional state with respect to Const. Art. XI B 1–3 and Const. Art. XIII 2”; and

16 WHEREAS, The Board of Directors, acting under Bylaw 7.1.2 and at the express direction of the  
17 2016 Resolution 12-14, in May of 2017 adopted changes to the bylaws of the Synod regarding  
18 ecclesiastical supervision; and

19 WHEREAS, The Constitution of Synod defines clearly, precisely, and fully the supervisory role  
20 of the President of Synod, wherein the President of Synod has “the supervision regarding the  
21 doctrine and the administration of a. All officers of the Synod; b. All such as are employed by the  
22 Synod; c. The individual district of the Synod; d. All district presidents” (XI.B.1); and

23 WHEREAS, The President of Synod, as ecclesiastical supervisor, is limited in the exercise of said  
24 power, assuming “only such rights as have been expressly conferred” (XI A.1), which are  
25 expressly conferred to be “the power to advise, admonish, and reprove...conscientiously use all  
26 means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts  
27 of the Synod” (XI.B.3); and

28 WHEREAS, Synod’s Constitution expressly confers upon the District Presidents the duty to  
29 “*exercise supervision over*” their district’s ministers and to “visit and...hold investigations in the  
30 congregations” (XII.7), including the District Presidents being empowered “to suspend from  
31 membership” their district’s ministers (XII.8); and

32 WHEREAS, Prior to the year 2016 and CCM Op. 16-2791, numerous CCM opinions (to wit Ag.  
33 1970, Op.15-2750, 13-2669, 10-2581, 03-2354, and 03-2338, A and C) interpreted the President  
34 of Synod’s scope of ecclesiastical supervision do not include supervision over individual workers  
35 and congregations expressed in Article XII.7,8; therefore, be it

36 *Resolved*, That Synod in convention, as the ultimate legislative body of Synod<sup>1</sup> considers the

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<sup>1</sup>Bylaw 1.4.1: “*The delegate convention of the Synod is the legislative assembly that ultimately legislates policy, program, and financial direction to carry on the Synod’s work on behalf of and in support of the member congregations. It reserves to itself the right to give direction to all officers and agencies of the Synod. Consequently, all officers and agencies, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, shall be accountable to*

37 following to be steps to the resolution of this matter; and be it further

38 *Resolved*, That changes, subsequent to 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, made under Bylaw  
39 2.14 “Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod,” Bylaw 2.15  
40 “Expulsion of a District President or Officer from Membership in the Synod”, Bylaw 2.16  
41 “Expulsion of a President of Synod from Membership in the Synod”, and Bylaw 2.17 “Expulsion  
42 of Individuals from Membership in the Synod as a Result of Sexual Misconduct or Criminal  
43 Behavior”, as a result of 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, as adopted by the Board of Directors  
44 (May 2017) be overruled and of no effect; and be it further

45 *Resolved*, That Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 and 2.17 be returned to and replaced by the same  
46 corresponding Bylaws as set forth in the 2013 Synod Handbook; and be it further

47 *Resolved*, That a Blue Ribbon Task Force of seven members, with four members appointed by the  
48 35 District Presidents, three of whom shall be District Presidents, and three members appointed  
49 by the President of Synod, be authorized and formed to conduct a thorough study of the  
50 ecclesiastical supervision matter, including Articles III, VI, VII (studies of Articles VI and VII  
51 were previously resolved by the 2010 Convention), XI, XII, and XIII, and make  
52 recommendations to the 2022 Synod Convention, including any necessary revisions of  
53 constitutional provisions, with the purpose of evangelically resolving the current difficulty and  
54 division among us; and be it further

55 *Resolved*, That all relevant CCM opinions such as 16-2791, 16-2793, 16-2794, 16-2797, 17-2822,  
56 17-2828 and 17-2836 be placed in abeyance until the 2022 Convention and any necessary action  
57 at the 2022 convention; and be it further

58 *Resolved*, That Synod in convention affirm the powers provided to the Synod President “to  
59 advise, admonish and reprove...conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and  
60 maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod” do not include direct  
61 supervisory responsibilities of individual members of Synod, since such individuals are under the  
62 ecclesiastical supervision of District Presidents; and be it finally

63 *Resolved*, That the convention pray for peace and harmony in the Synod as it moves forward in  
64 mission and ministry.

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*the Synod for all their actions, and any concerns regarding the decisions of such officers or agencies may be brought to the attention of the Synod in convention for appropriate action. This provision does not apply to specific member appeals to the Concordia Plans, which has its own appeal process for such cases.”*

**1 Resolution 2-02**  
**2 To Direct the President of Synod to Assure the Provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) Are**  
**3 Followed**

4 WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 (To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724)<sup>2</sup> was not brought forward for

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<sup>2</sup> TO OVERRULE CCM OPINION 14-2724

WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries, notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

WHEREAS, Article III. 2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod identifies an objective of the Synod as 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;” and

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

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

WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in Resolution 8-32B); and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally congregational in nature; and

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

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any event; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy; and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

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

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations and others to give 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; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the congregations of the Texas District and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Texas District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

5 debate at the 2016 LCMS National Convention; and

6 WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 was submitted by four LCMS districts, three district boards of  
7 directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations; and

8 WHEREAS, Two other overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention  
9 that also requested that CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

10 WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) regarding the CCM says, in part: “An opinion rendered by  
11 the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a  
12 convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the  
13 commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution,  
14 Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor  
15 committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the  
16 convention with recommendations for appropriate action;” and

17 WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

18 WHEREAS, No disposition of these overtures whatsoever is recorded in the 2016 Synod  
19 convention Proceedings; therefore be it

20 *Resolved*, That Overture 2-04 as found in the LCMS 2016 National Convention Workbook be  
21 submitted as an overture to the 2019 Synod convention by the adoption of this, current resolution;  
22 and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw  
24 3.9.2.2(c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an  
25 overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

26 *Resolved*, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be  
27 done in a fitting and orderly way” (I Corinthians 14:40).

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*Resolved*, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the Texas District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void and of no effect.

## Life Together

**1 Resolution 3-01**  
**2 To Explore the Feasibility of Alternate Options of the New Jersey District President**  
**3 as Full-Time Position**

3 WHEREAS, The New Jersey District of the LCMS encompasses the smallest geographic area of  
4 the districts of the LCMS; and

5 WHEREAS, The New Jersey District has the second fewest number of congregations and  
6 communicants (54 NJ, 53 SELC, 9619 communicant NJ, 12376 communicant SELC) among  
7 synodical districts; and

8 WHEREAS, Congregational financial support has decreased to the point at which the district  
9 must use savings, and continued sale of closed church properties to maintain the current level of  
10 spending at a district level; and

12 WHEREAS, Larger districts both geographically (SELC, encompasses 11 states and 2 Canadian  
13 provinces) and in number (Oklahoma, 82 congregations) are served by part-time district  
14 presidents who regularly also serve as parish pastor; and

15 WHEREAS, It would be of best stewardship of the resources that God has entrusted to the  
16 churches and the district to consider how other districts have organized themselves to best  
17 accomplish the mission of the church; and

18 WHEREAS, Pastors have been called to congregational ministry and the church loses a great  
19 resource when these men move from the congregational ministry to serve solely as District  
20 President; and

21 WHEREAS, The New Jersey District in convention has already permitted the District President  
22 to serve as a parish pastor; therefore be it

23 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District Board of Directors discuss and evaluate the best possible  
24 use of district resources and personnel, including the role of the District President as a possible  
25 part-time position, both in time and compensation, with adequate use of all district staff and  
26 elected officials to accomplish kingdom work; and be it further

27 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District Board of Directors prepare a report and recommendations  
28 to the 2021 New Jersey District Convention that includes the viability of such an arrangement of  
29 a part-time District might serve.

**1 Resolution 3-02**  
**2 To Adopt Data Privacy Best Practices**

3 WHEREAS, The District and Synod collect personal identity and contact information from  
4 convention delegates and from those who vote for President of Synod; and

5 WHEREAS, Best practices for data privacy include the safeguarding of such personal  
6 information, its use only in the official conduct of business, and strict limitations on its  
7 disclosure; and

8 WHEREAS, Our delegates in convention take positions at odds with the culture, making  
9 disclosure of their personal information a security concern. For example, the Family Research  
10 Council in DC and donors to California Prop 8 were attacked professionally and personally for  
11 the same positions on marriage that our delegates enacted in 2016 14-02A, 14-03A, and 14-04;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3 now prohibits non-official use or distribution of the list of  
14 congregation-selected voters for President of Synod; and

15 WHEREAS, The Synod openly publishes the street addresses of national delegates as part of the  
16 Convention Workbook, which is posted on the Internet and easily downloaded; and

17 WHEREAS, The Secretary of Synod's office sells copies of this list to interested parties, which  
18 use them mainly for political ends (In 2016, some of those distributions disclosed national  
19 delegate e-mail addresses without prior consent); and

20 WHEREAS, LCMS districts have used their access to voters lists to send advocacy-type mailings  
21 and e-mails directly to those who vote for synod officials; therefore be it

22 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District affirms its commitment to data privacy best practices,  
23 including protection of identity and contact information for its district convention delegates, and  
24 the use or distribution of that information only for official business and with consent of the  
25 persons involved; and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District adopts a practice, consistent with LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3,  
27 which prohibits the use of private voter contact information in connection with synod-level  
28 elections; and be it finally

29 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt best  
30 practices that stop the public disclosure of delegate personal information other than name and  
31 congregational membership such as but not limited to street addresses and email addresses, and  
32 require prior consent for any distribution of their personal contact information.

**1 Resolution 3-03**  
**2 To Ensure Timely and Transparent Financial Reporting in the Synod**

3 WHEREAS, A principle of Biblical stewardship is to be accountable with the resources with  
4 which one has been entrusted, as expressed in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14 ff.); and

5 WHEREAS, Much is required of those to whom God has entrusted his gifts. As Jesus said,  
6 “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they  
7 entrusted much, they will demand the more” (Luke 12:48b, ESV); and

8 WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach “it is required of stewards that they be found faithful” (1  
9 Corinthians 4:2, ESV); and

10 WHEREAS, The Synod has historically recognized its responsibility of accountability and  
11 faithfulness in the handling of the finances entrusted to it by its members, as is witnessed in  
12 Bylaw 1.5.4, “The Synod and each of its agencies shall fully disclose their financial books and  
13 records to any member congregation of the Synod;” and

14 WHEREAS, The Synod in previous conventions has expressed its opinion that such  
15 accountability and faithfulness be found additionally in regular reporting of such financial  
16 disclosure by adopting 2010 Convention Resolution 4-03, “To Broadly Communicate the  
17 Statement of Financial Position of LCMS,” which reads in its totality:

18 “WHEREAS, It is helpful to understand the Synod’s financial position and communicate  
19 it to the members of the congregations of Synod; therefore be it

20 *Resolved*, That each November, the Vice-President–Finance—Treasurer of the Synod use  
21 widely available means, (i.e., The Lutheran Witness, Reporter, the LCMS Website) to  
22 state the financial position of the Synod in a format easily understood by persons  
23 unfamiliar with financial terminology.” (2010 Convention Proceedings, p. 120); and

24 WHEREAS, The members of the Synod expressed even further the need for full transparency in  
25 all areas of financial disclosure by adopting 2016 convention RESOLUTION 9-04A, “To  
26 Improve Disclosures Related to Financial Gifts from God’s Stewards for Special Appeals,” which  
27 reads in part,

28 “...WHEREAS, Monies for special appeals requested by corporate Synod (e.g.,  
29 following natural disasters) are reported only in part in Synod publications (e.g., Reporter  
30 and The Lutheran Witness) and sometimes only annually; and ...

31 WHEREAS, Donors and members of the Synod are interested in the impact of funds  
32 raised for special appeals and will appreciate improved disclosure of results; therefore be  
33 it

34 *Resolved*, That the financial offices of corporate Synod continue to recognize the desire  
35 of donors and members of the Synod to improve processes of reporting and work to  
36 provide clear, timely, and transparent accounting for all funding and special appeals, so  
37 that the Body of Christ may experience the joy of Gospel-centered mission and ministry  
38 beyond the local context or community.” (2016 Convention Proceedings, p. 189); and

39 WHEREAS, It was reported to the 2013 Convention of the Synod by the Board of Directors in its

40 Report on the Disposition of Funding the Mission Recommendations (R6-03-01) that “the decline  
41 in the Synod’s annual unrestricted revenue continues...The board believes that congregations will  
42 respond through better, open, and honest communication about the great things God is able to  
43 accomplish for His kingdom when we work together. Numerous conventions have passed  
44 resolutions calling on congregations to maintain and increase unrestricted support for district and  
45 Synod ministries, yet the unrestricted support passed through our districts to the Synod has  
46 continued to decline at the average rate of \$1 million each year.” (2013 Convention Workbook  
47 2013, p. 114-115); and

48 WHEREAS, In 2016, the Chief Financial Officer of the Synod, in reporting to the Synod about  
49 offerings received, stated, “This sharing from God’s bounty continues to decline. Although the  
50 amount of decline in the past three years has not been as severe as the average decline of the  
51 previous 20 years, it is still trending negatively. In the face of continued declining unrestricted  
52 revenues, the ability of Synod, Inc. to respond quickly and nimbly to mission and ministry  
53 opportunities and challenges laid before us by our Lord also declines, as does our ability to “fill in  
54 the gap” when restricted revenues, needed to fund much of our mission and ministry activities,  
55 fall short of their goals. The financial challenges facing our beloved Synod persist. I believe that  
56 these challenges are of our own making, a product of how we distribute the resources provided by  
57 our loving Father.” (2016 Convention Workbook, pp. 61-62); and

58 WHEREAS, There have been few tangible reports about the financial struggles of the Synod,  
59 such as the need to trim \$4 million dollars from the budget of the Synod (ref. July 7, 2017  
60 Reporter, <https://blogs.lcms.org/2017/international-national-mission> and the May 19-20, 2017  
61 Synod Board of Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4769>),  
62 these reports are less than sufficient to keep the members of the Synod regularly informed about  
63 the financial condition of the Synod; and

64 WHEREAS, It has been widely reported that the Synod has only minimal days of operating  
65 capital in its cash reserves, which would seemingly place the synod in a precarious financial  
66 position (ref. Paragraph 45, Financial Reports of the February 17-18, 2017 LCMS Board of  
67 Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4659>), which stated that  
68 without funds held on behalf of the two Seminaries, Synod had only a 5 day reserve of cash  
69 available); and

70 WHEREAS, In the face of such challenging financial times, transparency and regularity in the  
71 reporting of the financial situation of the Synod is of utmost importance to the members and  
72 constituency of the Synod who have a vested interest in the financial viability of the Synod and  
73 who merit clear, concise, and timely reports; and

74 WHEREAS, The President of the Synod recommended in his report to the Synod in 2016 that the  
75 Synod have “Uniform Financial Reporting.” (2016 Today’s Business, p. 28); therefore be it

76 *Resolved*, That the Synod in convention direct the Chief Financial Officer to report quarterly in  
77 the Synod’s official publications about the financial position of the Synod in a format easily  
78 understood by persons unfamiliar with financial terminology, such reporting to include, but not  
79 limited to income and expenses, budget versus spending, cash reserves and cash position, etc.;  
80 and be it further

81 *Resolved*, That these quarterly reports include information about the regular Synod budget and the  
82 reporting on special appeals as stipulated in 2016 Resolution 9-04A; and be it further



83 *Resolved*, That the Synod be shrewd managers with the resources God has given it; and be it  
84 finally

85 *Resolved*, That the Synod give thanks to God for the resources He has entrusted to us, recognizing  
86 “That the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (Psalm 24:1, ESV).

**1 Resolution 3-04**  
**2 To Support the Well-being of All the Church's Workers in the New Jersey District**

3 WHEREAS, The well-being of the church's workers is vital to the ministry and mission of the  
4 church; and

5 WHEREAS, Those who are called to serve the church in various capacities are well advised to  
6 care for themselves so that they can carry out their ministries to the best of their ability; and

7 WHEREAS, Congregations, schools, and other agencies are vital to the well-being of their  
8 rostered workers and staff as they support those ministers in pursuit of their well-being; and

9 WHEREAS, Major challenges to the well-being of the church's rostered workers and staff are  
10 known and documented, along with effective strategies to deal with those challenges to enhance  
11 their wellbeing; therefore be it

12 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention express its support for all efforts of  
13 congregations, schools, and agencies to care for our rostered workers and staff and support them  
14 in their wellbeing, including the following components of holistic well-being: spiritual, financial,  
15 vocational, intellectual, relational, emotional, and physical, leading to a chaste and decent life;  
16 and be it further

17 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District Board of Directors maintain current and equitable  
18 compensation and holistic care guidelines for all rostered workers and staff that takes into account  
19 the cost of living differences throughout the state, and the worker's years of experience and  
20 education levels, as is done by most other districts; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That our congregations, schools, and agencies support the holistic well-being of their  
22 rostered workers and staff, including the district's minimum compensation guidelines, and  
23 intentional, strategic, practical efforts at preventing problems before they develop and resolving  
24 them before they become crises; and be it further

25 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District rostered workers and staff be encouraged to care for  
26 themselves in every aspect of holistic well-being making use of Ministerial Care Coalition and  
27 the resources they provide so that they can continue to serve to the best of their ability with the  
28 gifts and strength that God supplies; and be it finally

29 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District Board of Directors give compensation and care guidelines  
30 to the congregations by December 2018 and follow up regularly by the district president and  
31 circuit visitors incorporated in the required congregation visitations.

## Church and Culture

### 1     **Resolution 4-01**

### 2     **To Address the Sexual Integrity of Ministers and the Care for Victims of Abuse**

3     WHEREAS, God calls His people to holiness and Christ has specifically summoned His  
4     followers to sexual purity (Matt. 5:27–28; 1 Thes. 4:3–5); and

5     WHEREAS, Sexual sin robs us of our joy in God and is especially grievous to our souls (1 Cor.  
6     6:18); and

7     WHEREAS, Many church bodies are seeking to address the scandal of sexual abuse by members  
8     of their clergy; and

9     WHEREAS, We acknowledge our own fallenness and the need to prevent such appalling sins  
10    from happening within our own ranks; and

11    WHEREAS, The Bible calls ministers of the gospel—whether they are pastors, counselors,  
12    educators, missionaries, chaplains, or others—to be above reproach morally, both within the body  
13    of Christ and in the larger community (1 Tim. 3:1-13); and

14    WHEREAS, Scripture commands that believers are to be restrained even in their speech (Eph.  
15    4:29); and

16    WHEREAS, Sexually demeaning speech of any kind normalizes the denigration of others; and

17    WHEREAS, Believers are the salt of the earth and the light of the world so that our actions will  
18    glorify our Father in heaven (Matt. 5:13-14); and

19    WHEREAS, The holiness of our triune God and the gospel of Jesus Christ require the highest  
20    levels of integrity in personal, family, ministerial, and business relations; and

21    WHEREAS, Ministers serve as trusted members of the community, in public ministry, in  
22    personal and family counseling contexts, and as private citizens; and

23    WHEREAS, The erosion of moral fidelity has reached crisis proportions in our society; and

24    WHEREAS, Sexual infidelity and other violations of ministerial integrity always have tragic  
25    consequences for those who are victimized and for others indirectly impacted by those  
26    transgressions, especially in their relationship with our loving God; and

27    WHEREAS, Tragically, accusations of sexual abuse and harassment have been made within  
28    LCMS congregations, and other LCMS ministries; and

29    WHEREAS, Victims of sexual abuse and harassment are often dismissed and told that they are  
30    responsible at least in part for the sin perpetrated against them; therefore be it

31    *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention call on one another to build and maintain  
32    relationships and practices of integrity and fidelity to God and others in that we are to be people

33 above reproach (1 Tim 3:2; Col 1:22; Titus 1); and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That we urge all our spiritual leaders redouble their efforts to hold one another  
35 accountable to the highest standards of Christian moral practice; and be it further

36 *Resolved*, That we urge our seminaries and other related educational institutions to make  
37 ministerial integrity a major emphasis in the training of pastors, missionaries, educators, and other  
38 ministers; and be it further

39 *Resolved*, That we call on our churches to discipline those guilty of any sexual abuse in  
40 obedience to Matt. 18:6-17 as well as to cooperate with civil authorities in the prosecution of  
41 those cases; and be it further

42 *Resolved*, That we pray for those who have been harmed as a result of sexual abuse and urge our  
43 churches to offer support, compassion, and biblical counseling to them and their families; and be  
44 it further

45 *Resolved*, That we commit ourselves as disciples of Christ to lives of purity in thought, word, and  
46 deed; and be it further

47 *Resolved*, That we call on New Jersey District to continue and to expand efforts to teach the  
48 whole counsel of God regarding sexual purity, human dignity, and the dangers of pornography;  
49 and be it further

50 *Resolved*, That we remind all our congregations of their moral responsibility to implement any  
51 appropriate church discipline and restoration processes; and be it further

52 *Resolved*, That we encourage pastors and congregations to develop and implement sound policies  
53 and procedures to protect our children and staff from sexual abuse and harassment; and be it  
54 finally

55 *Resolved*, That we urge all our people to pray for victims of abuse and harassment, to stand for  
56 their protection from abuse, and to support safe and healthy children's ministries in our churches  
57 and communities.

**1 Resolution 4-02**  
**2 To Denounce Ethno-Nationalism and Supremacy as a Belief that is Anti-Gospel**

3 WHEREAS, Scripture teaches, “God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all  
4 the face of the earth,” (Acts 17:26); and

5 WHEREAS, All people are created in the same image of God, no matter what human  
6 distinguishing identifiers might be (Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6; cf. Acts 17:25, 26); and

7 WHEREAS, Central to the doctrine of creation is the truth of the equal value of all humans  
8 grounded in the unsurpassable worth that God places in them, demonstrated by the unsurpassable  
9 price he paid for each individual person; and

10 WHEREAS, In Jesus, God became a human and so identifies fully with every human (Heb. 2:17),  
11 and his mission embraces all of humankind (Matt. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38); and

12 WHEREAS, Any claim that there is something about the nature of another human being as such  
13 that renders that person to be of inferior value not only denies the biblical doctrine of creation, but  
14 also calls into question what the Scriptures teach about the incarnation of Jesus Christ;<sup>1</sup> and

15 WHEREAS, The Apostle Peter said, “God doesn’t show favoritism, but in every nation the  
16 person who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him” (Acts 10:34–35); and

17 WHEREAS, The Book of Concord teaches that all Christians will make the will of Christ  
18 supreme in their own lives and in human society, and so opposing all forms of racism (AC Ap V  
19 1-3); and

20 WHEREAS, Racism and racial superiority is idolatry<sup>2</sup>; and

21 WHEREAS, Racism is a blatant denial of the unity of the body of Christ, into which all who have  
22 been baptized into his name have been incorporated (1 Cor. 12:13) for Jesus Christ has removed  
23 all barriers between all human beings, making peace through His cross (Eph. 2:13-16); and

24 WHEREAS, James says, “If you really fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, ‘You shall  
25 love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are  
26 convicted by the law as transgressors” (James 2:8-9); and

27 WHEREAS, Christians of differing national or ethnic origins must not claim Christ as exclusively  
28 their own, as if to say that their view of him most closely approximates the biblical portrayal of  
29 him.

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<sup>1</sup> As a human, Jesus descended from Adam, whom God created (Luke 3:38), and whom all human beings have as progenitor. To deny the full humanity of any fellow human being is at the same time to compromise the apostolic truth that in Christ “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col. 2:9), that is, that he truly “was made man” (Nicene Creed)

<sup>2</sup> “That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself,” Dr. Martin Luther wrote in the Large Catechism, is “really your God.” “If any one boasts,” he continued, “of great learning, wisdom, power, prestige, family, and honor, and trusts in them, he also has a god, but not the one, true God.” If anyone should claim superiority over others and treat them as inferior because of racial origin or characteristics, we may add, that person, too, has a god, but not the one true God.

30 WHEREAS, the Synod in convention has passed the following resolutions  
31 **1971 — Res. 9-32:** To Encourage Christian Action to Combat Racism  
32 **1973 — Res. 9-22:** To Continue Efforts to Combat Racism  
33 **1977 — Res 10-18A:** To Make Every Effort to Eliminate Racism  
34 **1979 — Res 4-11:** To Reaffirm Efforts to Combat Racism  
35 **1981 — Res 8-07:** To Oppose Racism and Violence  
36 **1983 — Res 3-09:** To Clarify Position on Anti-Semitism  
37 **1992 — Res 3-03:** To Combat All Racism  
38 **1995 — Res 2-05A:** To Commend for Study the CTCR Document *Racism and the*  
39 *Church*, and

40 WHEREAS, As the 1992 resolution states, “racism is contrary to God’s Word and a sin against  
41 Him.” Synod by-law 2.3.1 (a) states: “It shall be the policy of the Synod to decline membership  
42 to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or other congregational privileges to any  
43 Christian because of race or ethnic origin;” therefore be it

44 WHEREAS, In what is sometimes known as white nationalism or separatism, alt-right, British  
45 Israelism, Evropa Identity, Nation of Islam, Zionism and others, the worth of an individual or  
46 group is determined principally by genetic origins, biological characteristics, or cultural heritage,  
47 which becomes the primary basis for drawing conclusions about the comparative worth of an  
48 individual<sup>3</sup>

49 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District of the LCMS, denounce every form of racism, including  
50 alt-right white supremacy, white separatists, British Israelism, and Evropa Identity, et. al., as  
51 antithetical to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and be it further,

52 *Resolved*, That we repent of our own sins of the idolatry of nationalism and racism and denounce  
53 and repudiate white supremacy and every form of racial and ethnic hatred as a scheme of the  
54 devil intended to bring further suffering and division to the world and to hinder the Gospel; and  
55 be it further

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<sup>3</sup> For example,

“Any white person who brought the element of civilization had the right to take over this continent”, Ayn Rand, “To the Graduating Class of West Point”, 1974;

“Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.. look with confidence to the ultimate universal acknowledgement of the truths upon which our system rests? It is the first government ever instituted upon the principles in strict conformity to nature, and the ordination of Providence, in furnishing the materials of human society. Many governments have been founded upon the principle of the subordination and serfdom of certain classes of the same race; such were and are in violation of the laws of nature. Our system commits no such violation of nature's laws.” Alexander Stevens, Vice President to the Confederacy, “Cornerstone Address” March 21, 1861;

“To be white is to be a striver, a crusader, an explorer and a conqueror. We build, we produce, we go upward ... For us, it is conquer or die. This is a unique burden for the white man, that our fate is entirely in our hands. And it is appropriate because within us, within the very blood in our veins as *Children of the Sun*, lies the potential for greatness. That is the great struggle we are called to. We are not meant to live in shame and weakness and disgrace. We were not meant to beg for moral validation from some of the most despicable creatures to ever populate the planet. We were meant to overcome—overcome all of it. Because that is natural and normal for us. Because for us, as Europeans, it is only normal again when we are great again...the concepts that are now designated “problematic” and associated with whiteness—power, strength, beauty, agency, accomplishment. Whites do and other groups don’t ... We don’t exploit other groups. We don’t gain anything from their presence. They need us, and not the other way around.” Richard Spencer, “Hail Trump Speech”, November 2016

56 *Resolved*, That we reaffirm the resolution the Synod in convention of 1992, “It shall be the policy  
57 of the Synod to decline membership to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or  
58 other congregational privileges to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin;” and be it  
59 further

60 *Resolved*, That it shall be the policy of the New Jersey District of the LCMS to deny membership  
61 any member of Synod who espouses racists ideology such as is found in ethno-,  
62 nationalist/separatists, etc. groups, and to suspend the membership of any member who refuses to  
63 repent of such ideology as it denies the Confessions and the Scriptures to which we subscribe;  
64 and be it further

65 *Resolved*, That we acknowledge that we still must make progress in rooting out any remaining  
66 forms of intentional or unintentional racism in our midst; and be it finally

67 *Resolved*, That we earnestly pray, both for those who advocate racist ideologies and those who  
68 are thereby deceived, that they may see their error through the light of the Gospel, repent of these  
69 hatreds, and come to know the peace and love of Christ through redeemed fellowship in the  
70 Kingdom of God, which is established from every nation, tribe, people, and language.

**1 Resolution 4-03**  
**2 To Engage in Ministry to Transgendered Persons**

3 WHEREAS, All persons are created in God’s image and are made to glorify Him (Gen. 1:27; Isa.  
4 43:7); and

5 WHEREAS, God’s design was the creation of two distinct and complementary sexes, male and  
6 female (Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4; Mk 10:6;) which designate the fundamental distinction that God  
7 has embedded in the very biology of the human race; and

8 WHEREAS, Distinctions in masculine and feminine as ordained by God are part of the created  
9 order and should find expression in every human heart (Gen 2:18, 21–24; 1 Cor 11:7–9; Eph  
10 5:22–33; 1 Tim 2:12–14); and

11 WHEREAS, The Fall of man into sin has introduced brokenness and futility into God’s good  
12 creation (Gen 3:1–24; Rom 8:20); and

13 WHEREAS, According to a 2016 study from the UCLA School of Law, about 1.4 million  
14 Americans identify as transgender; and

15 WHEREAS, Transgenderism differs from hermaphroditism or intersexualism in that the sex of  
16 the individual is not biologically ambiguous but psychologically ambiguous; and

17 WHEREAS, The state of New Jersey prohibits licensed counselors from any attempt to change a  
18 child’s “gender expression”; and

19 WHEREAS, the church does not have a good history of ministering to transgendered persons  
20 often due to our uncomfortability with the topic or to the harsh, unloving, hypocritical manner in  
21 which we speak often while refusing to speak publicly against other sexual sins such as divorce,  
22 remarriage, pornography, sexual harassment, coarse language, etc, and

23 WHEREAS, the CTCR has produced a 2014 paper entitled, “Gender Identity Disorder or Gender  
24 Dysphoria in Christian Perspective” which begins to address this topic; now, therefore, be it

25 *Resolved*, That the NJ District in convention affirm God’s good design that gender identity is  
26 determined by biological sex and not by one’s self-perception—a perception which is often  
27 influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God’s design (Eph. 4:17–18); and be  
28 it further

29 *Resolved*, That we commend the CTCR for their current work and request they produce a full  
30 study on practical ministry to transgendered persons, and be it

31 *Resolved*, That we grieve the reality of human fallenness which can result in manifestations of  
32 sexuality outside of the teaching of Scripture and point all to the redemption of our bodies in  
33 Christ (Rom. 8:23); and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That we extend love and compassion to those whose sexual self-understanding is  
35 shaped by a distressing conflict between their biological sex and their gender identity; and be it  
36 further

37 *Resolved*, That we invite all transgender persons to trust in Christ and to experience renewal in



- 38 the Gospel (1 Tim 1:15–16); and be it further
- 39 *Resolved*, That we love our transgender neighbors, seek their good always, welcome them to our  
40 churches and, as they repent and believe in Christ, receive them into church membership  
41 (2 Cor. 5:18–20; Gal. 5:14); and be it further
- 42 *Resolved*, That we regard our transgender neighbors as image-bearers of God and therefore  
43 condemn acts of abuse or bullying committed against them; and be it further
- 44 *Resolved*, That we oppose efforts to alter one’s bodily identity (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy,  
45 gender reassignment surgery) to refashion it to conform with one’s perceived gender identity; and  
46 be it further
- 47 *Resolved*, That we continue to oppose steadfastly all efforts by any governing official or body to  
48 validate transgender identity as morally praiseworthy (Isa. 5:20); and be it further
- 49 *Resolved*, That our love for the Gospel and urgency for the Great Commission must include  
50 declaring the whole counsel of God, proclaiming what Scripture teaches about God’s design for  
51 us as male and female persons created in His image and for His glory (Matt. 28:19–20; Acts  
52 20:27; Rom. 11:36);
- 53 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District provide resources and training on this topic to help pastors  
54 and congregations minister to those struggling with sexual sins; and be it finally
- 55 *Resolved*, That the New Jersey District memorialize the Synod in convention to request the  
56 CTCR to study this issue in more depth and provide Gospel-centered resources on how to engage  
57 in ministry to transgendered persons.

# Statement of Vision for the Presidency of the NJ District

Rev. Stephen Gewecke

The practical expression of District faces in two directions. From the Synodical perspective a District is “Synod in this place.” As such the District is an extension of the Synod or the local presence of the Synod among us. However, from the front steps of your church, District will have a different look.

Congregations desire District to be a source of identity and unity, a means of accountability, a resource in times of need, and perhaps even a source of inspiration.

To this end, we would do well to work on fostering an ever greater sense of unity among us. The Scriptures talk about us being the family or household of God. We certainly find that expressed in our congregations. We regularly turn to one another for fellowship, care, and encouragement. Yet doesn't this identity extend beyond our congregations to our District, Synod, and even all of Christ's Church? We would do well, not only to speak of this truth but, to practice it. We would do well to intentionally foster collegiality among our pastors in learning communities, circuit meetings, and pastor's conferences. Our congregations will only find a healthy and positive identity in District as our pastors bear this attitude in themselves and their ministry. Then leaders and members of our congregations can begin to catch and take up this identity.

It would also serve us well to work on communications between our congregations and the District. A number of years ago there was a Districtwide event that greatly impacted me. It revealed that people loved and deeply cared about their District. The passion was palpable. But at the same time there was a high level of frustration among them regarding the relationship between congregations and District. People felt disconnected from the District. That dialog was strangely encouraging to me because the beginning of change is to be found in unrest. Since that time we have made strides toward greater connectedness but still more may be done. Through congregational visitation, information sharing sessions with lay leaders, training sessions, celebrations, and keen responsiveness in communication, we can continue to build goodwill and joy in our relationship of congregation and District.

Third, we will want to look to reap the benefits of an emphasis on increasing the vitality and health of our congregations and District. Efforts to begin new ministry and plant new congregations has begun among us through the Kairos Network. We will want to encourage and support this work. At the same time, we will want to encourage the vitality of all our existing congregations. New models of partnership in ministry can be explored to foster, strengthen, and invigorate the proclamation of the gospel in every corner of New Jersey. We will also want to place an emphasis on revitalizing our District Councils to help foster the work of our congregations. In particular, we can endeavor to reconstitute the work of the Outreach and Congregational Services Councils which have been virtually dormant in recent years.

May our heavenly Father grant us his grace to continue the proclamation of the gospel here in NJ and enable us by his Holy Spirit to be strong and bold on behalf of Jesus Christ.

**A Ministry Vision for the New Jersey District**  
**Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn**

For the past six years, you have given me the great privilege of serving as your District President; if I would be elected to a third and final term, these thoughts would guide my ministry in your midst.

**The vision of the church is given to us from Christ, who is the Head of the Church...and He has given us a Great Commission** (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-49) **and a Great Commandment** (Matthew 25:31-45; Luke 10:25-37; John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7-12, 19-21).

The vision of our Lord for His people is simple and clear: "go and make disciples of all nations." Throughout His ministry, Jesus called disciples to Himself and taught them many things about being one of His disciples. Jesus summarized this life of discipleship in this way: "a wise person is someone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice" (Matthew 7:24-27); and identified two fundamental practices of a disciple when He said: "if you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples" (John 8:31-32) and "if you love one another" (John 13:34-35).

In response to these words of Jesus, the first major focus of the District will be to increase the biblical literacy of His people through the teaching ministry of the District's *Leaders and Learners* program and through the leadership of the *Congregation Services' Council*. During the next three years, there will be frequent training events involving these resources: the *Divine Drama* (with notes from the *Bethel Bible Series*), *fifty stories that every Christian should know*, and *the parables of Jesus* so that we can grow in our knowledge of the Scriptures, possess a comprehensive understanding of His story, make sense of our story in light of His story and how we are to live as His people in the 21st century.

In response to these words of Jesus, the second major focus of the District will be to equip His people in how to share His story of salvation in Jesus Christ with others through the teaching ministry of the District's *Leaders and Learners* program and through the leadership of the *Outreach Council*. During the next three years, there will be frequent training events involving these resources: *the LASSIE method of witnessing the Gospel* (Rev. Mark Woods), *how did Jesus do evangelism and life is all about stories: helping people make sense of their story in light of His story* (Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn), *joining Jesus on His mission: how to be an everyday missionary* (Rev. Greg Finke); and *the mission leadership series* -- six, one-day workshops designed to form disciples in their life as a missionary (the six workshops are outlined in strategic focus #5 of my convention report).

In response to these words of Jesus, the third major focus of the District will be for me to personally, and frequently, visit the pastors and congregations of the District so that they might be encouraged and strengthened in their ministry of Word and Sacrament -- being joined in this visitation ministry by the other members of the District's *Growth Council* (three Vice-Presidents and six Circuit Visitors) -- and, when invited to do so, to assist the pastors and congregations in addressing the pressing issues and ministry opportunities that they have through a threefold process: (1) identifying and stating the pressing issues and adaptive challenges that we are facing together; (2) thinking biblically and theologically about these issues and opportunities and discovering together what the Scriptures have to say about these things (since all theology and ministry practices are normed by God's Word); and (3) formulating a ministry plan that is congregationally owned and constructed, a ministry plan that identifies the next steps to be taken and how to go about implementing those steps so that we, along with many others, will be blessed in our future life together.

A final thought from Martin Luther -- the Christian life can be summarized in two words: faith and love whereby every believer is placed midway between God and one's neighbor, becoming God's instrument of blessing through their witnessing of the Gospel and deeds of love, compassion and mercy.

## NOMINATIONS FOR 2018 CONVENTION

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lay Person – Circuit # 1	( 6 year term)	William Schmidt
Lay Person – Circuit # 3	( 6 year term)	Jason Kiefer David Pry
Lay Person – Circuit # 5	( 6 year term)	Norm Klesat
Secretary:	(3 year term)	Rev. Andrew Dinger Rev. Richard Serina
Treasurer	(3 year term)	Maggie Bowie Christian Koerner
Clergy at Large (2)	(3 year term)	Rev. John Grieg Rev. Brian Handrich Rev. Anthony Iovine Rev. Richard Izzard Rev. Philip Ressler Rev. Dan Schmalz Rev. Bruce Smith Rev. Gary Timm Rev. Aaron Uphoff
Commissioned Minister at Large	(3 year term)	Allison Johnson

### CHRISTIAN HERITAGE ENDOWMENT FUND TRUSTEES

(Candidate may be either clergy or lay person who is skilled in investments)

Region #1	(3 year term)	Shirley Carpenter Alan Fields Terry Shine Rev. Deric Taylor
Region #2	(3 year term)	Sharon Czebotar Rev. Brian Handrich Christa Piper Rev. Eric Rieker Gay Van Etten
Region #3	(3 year term)	Charlotte Visbeck William Zak

## **CHRISTIAN HERITAGE ENDOWMENT FUND LAY PERSON AT LARGE**

Tettie Augustine Addy  
H. Zoe Dahnshaw  
Douglas Montone  
David Rocker  
Larry Schumann  
Charlotte Visbeck  
William Zak

## **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE FOR 2021 NJ DISTRICT CONVENTION**

(Candidates elected to this convention committee may also serve in other elected office of the District)

Clergy (2):

Rev. Stephen Gewecke  
Rev. Robert Holsten  
Rev. Philip Ressler  
Rev. Chris Sadlo  
Rev. Chris Schonberg  
Rev. Stephen Vogt

Commissioned Minister:

Allison Johnson  
Caren Vogt

Lay Persons:

Charles Carter  
Jason Kiefer  
Carol Pry  
William Schmidt  
Charlotte Visbeck

## **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE 2019 SYNODICAL CONVENTION**

Lay Persons:

Larry Chenault  
Rob Loeber  
Jason Kiefer  
Paul Onder  
William Schmidt

## NOMINATIONS FOR DISTRICT OFFICERS

### DISTRICT PRESIDENT

The following have been nominated and have given written notice of their approval to have their names placed on the ballot:

Rev. Stephen Gewecke- 9  
Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn -25

The following declined nomination for President: Rev. Andrew Dinger,  
Rev. Bruce Smith and Rev. Deric Taylor,

### DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENT

The following have been nominated by the congregations of their respective Vice Presidential regions, and have given written approval to allow their names to stand in nomination:

#### AREA 1

Rev. Deric Taylor - 6  
Rev. Dr. L. Richard Vossler - 1

#### AREA 3

Rev. Stephen Gewecke - 4

#### AREA 2

Rev. Andrew Dinger - 6  
Rev. Brian Handrich - 1  
Rev.,. Stephen Vogt - 1

The following declined the nomination for Vice President Area 1: Rev. Robert Holsten, Rev. Anthony Iovine, Rev. John Schroter Area 2: Rev. Benjamin Dolby, Rev. Michael Dunne

### **NOMINATIONS FOR CIRCUIT VISITORS**

Following is the list of nominees for Circuit Visitors, provided by following the procedure outlined in Bylaw 5.11 of the constitution of Synod.

Circuit #1	Rev. Robert Holsten	Circuit #4	Rev. David Behm
Circuit #2	Rev. Dr. David Rowold*	Circuit #5	Rev. Dan Sparling
Circuit #3	Rev. Daniel Merz	Circuit #6	Rev. Chris Schonberg

The following declined the nomination for Circuit Visitor – Circuit 2: Rev. Deric Taylor

### **CIRCUIT FORUM ELECTION RESULTS TO BE RATIFIED BY THE CONVENTION**

Circuit #1	Rev. Robert Holsten	Circuit #4	Rev. David Behm
Circuit #2	Rev. Gary Timm **	Circuit #5	Rev. Dan Sparling
Circuit #3	Rev. Stephen Vogt	Circuit #6	Rev. Chris Schonberg

\*This nomination was withdrawn due to the acceptance of a call by Rev. Dr. Rowold to another district.

\*\* Per synodical bylaw 5.2.2(f) Rev. Gary Timm was selected by the district president.

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**Directions and Transportation**

**Directions to our Hotel**

From NJ Turnpike-take exit 4 follow RTE. 73 N, 100 yards to first traffic light at Fellowship Road. Turn right onto fellowship Rd. Proceed 1/4 mile to hotel on the left.

**Local Airports**

■ **Philadelphia International Airport**

- Distance from hotel: 22.3 mi.
- Drive time: 30 min.

**Directions:** I-95 North. Walt Whitman Bridge to New Jersey. I-295 North to Exit 36A. Through 1st light (Fellowship Road) take right turn onto Fellowship Road NORTH, and cross over Route 73 onto Fellowship Road. At 1st light (.25 miles) turn left.

Get turn by turn directions.

■ **Newark International Airport**

- Distance from hotel: 71.6 mi.
- Drive time: 1.12 hr.

**Directions:** NJ Turnpike South to Exit 4 (Route 73 North), 100 yards to 1st traffic light at Fellowship Road. Turn right onto Fellowship Road North. Proceed 1/4 mile to hotel on the left.

Get turn by turn directions.

■ **Atlantic City International Airport**

- Distance from hotel: 46.7 mi.
- Drive time: 57 min.

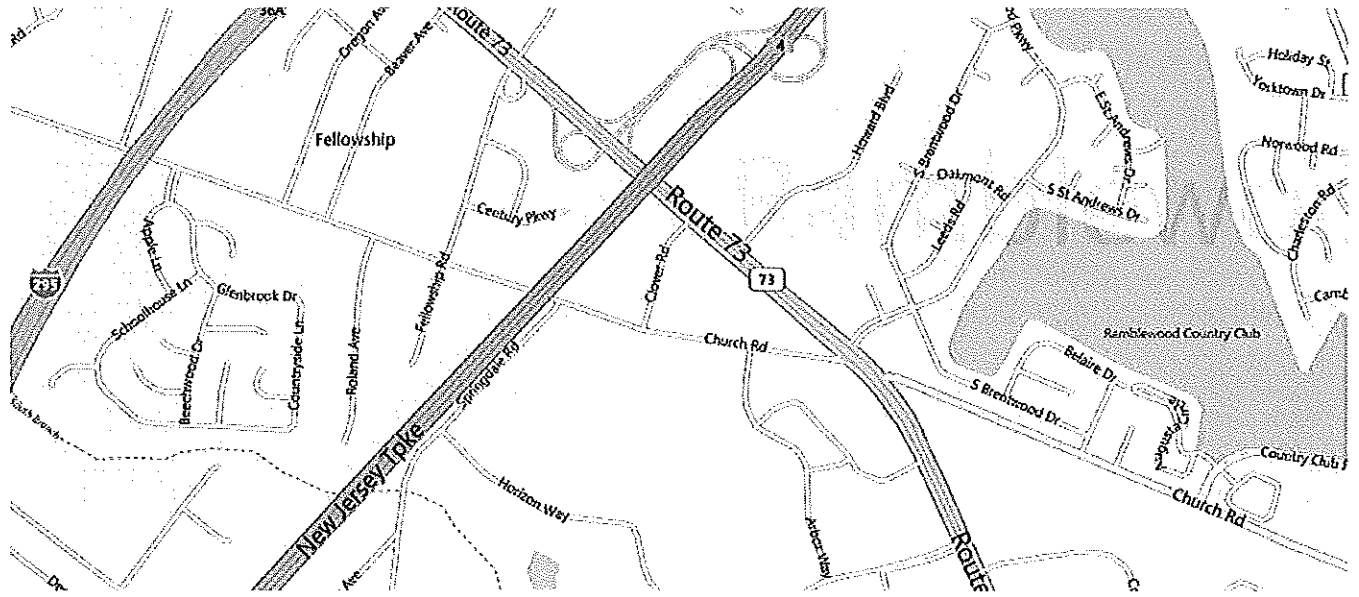
**Directions:** Exit Airport to Atlantic City Expressway West to Rte 73 North to Fellowship Road in Mt. Laurel. Turn right onto Fellowship Rd and proceed for 1/4 mile to hotel on the left.

Get turn by turn directions.

**Local Map**









#### LOCATION

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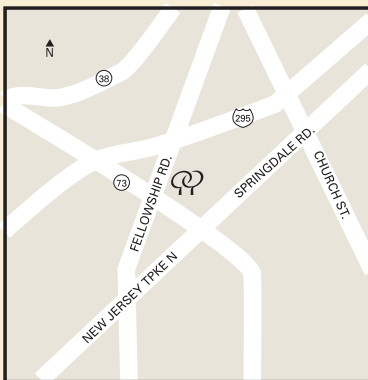
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- Promenade at Sagemore - 4 miles
- Sahara Sam's Oasis Indoor Water Park - 9 miles
- Adventure Aquarium - 9 miles
- Battleship New Jersey & Children's Garden - 9 miles
- Philadelphia Art Museum - 11 miles
- National Constitution Center - 11 miles
- Downtown Philadelphia - 15 miles
- Historic Batsto Village - 30 miles
- Long Beach Island - 50 miles
- Atlantic City - 60 miles
- Seaside Heights Beach - 70 miles
- Cape May - 95 miles



**Driving directions to: 4100 Terrace Avenue, Pennsauken Township, NJ  
Martin Luther Chapel, Pennsauken, NJ from New Jersey District Convention**

 515 Fellowship Rd  
Mt Laurel, NJ 08054

1. Head **southwest** on **Fellowship Rd** toward **E Park Dr** 0.5 mi
2. Turn right onto **NJ-73 N** 4.1 mi
3. Slight left onto **NJ-90 W** (signs for **Betsy Ross Bridge**) 1.0 mi
4. Take the **U.S. 130 S** exit toward **Camden** 0.5 mi
5. Merge onto **US-130/N Crescent Blvd/Westfield Camden Turnpike**  
Continue to follow US-130/N Crescent Blvd 2.6 mi
6. Slight right toward **Terrace Ave** 276 ft
7. Turn left onto **Terrace Ave** 351 ft

 To: 4100 Terrace Avenue, Pennsauken Township, NJ