

August 12, 2020

To: District Pastors, Congregational Chairmen, Congregational Treasurers
Subject: 2021 District and Synod Mission Intention
2021 Together In Mission Intention

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” Col. 2:6-7

Dear Ministry Partners,

Grace, mercy, and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

The South Dakota District has chosen as its theme for the upcoming 2021 District Convention “Rooted in Christ, Abounding in Thanksgiving,” based on St. Paul’s words in Colossians 2:6-7. Your congregation is rooted in Christ Jesus as you boldly and clearly proclaim to your people and community that the forgiveness of sins and eternal life are only found in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Each of your members is rooted in Christ by baptism into His name and by faith that His suffering, death, and resurrection has taken away all of their sins and they have a home in eternal life with Him. This saving work of Jesus leads each of us to abound in thanksgiving for the abundant mercy and grace the Triune God has shown to us. Overflowing with thanksgiving for all that God has done for us, we seek to share the life-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with our family, friends, community, and people around the world that they might share in our thanksgiving.

The South Dakota District values the partnership it has with congregations as we work together to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in South Dakota and around the world through various missions and ministries. We thank God that, empowered by the Holy Spirit, your congregation has been committed, through your prayers and mission commitments, to participating in the mission and ministry of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the South Dakota District. As the result of the generosity of the congregations in our District and through the intentional stewardship of the offerings the District has received from your congregations, even in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, the District looks forward to ending the 2020 fiscal year in a stable position.

An example of our District congregations working together to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ around the world is our Together In Mission partnership. Delegates to the 2018 District Convention adopted Resolution 3-07, “To Support the Ministries of Reverend David Warner and Reverend Daniel Jastram Through Together In Mission.” While the 2021 District Convention will decide about future allocations of Together In Mission funds, the District is still requesting congregations to determine their pledges to the Together In Mission project. The District is also requesting that congregational financial support of Together In Mission be **in addition to and over and above** what congregations pledge to remit to support the work of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the South Dakota District.

Please allow me to remind you that, at the 2009 District Convention, the delegates adopted Resolution 1-02 encouraging congregations to *annually* increase their District and Synod Mission Intention *equal to the annual cost of living increase*. For 2021 it appears that the cost of living increase will be approximately 1.2%. Thank you, in advance, for prayerfully considering how your congregation can assist to maintain the missions and ministries that you have agreed to do in partnership with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the South Dakota District.

In addition, 2009 District Convention Resolution 1-02 also directs our congregations to work together so that “congregations that God has blessed with greater membership and with greater financial resources welcome and prioritize the opportunity to help ‘make up the difference’ in the District Work Program where partner congregations with small membership and financial resources have been limited in their giving.”

Enclosed is your Synod and District Mission and Together In Mission Intention Form for 2021. Because the District’s 2021 fiscal year begins on January 15, 2021, please return this form to the South Dakota District Office no later than January 4, 2021. The District Office, however, would appreciate it if your congregation could return these forms earlier when possible. Your Intention Form not only assists the District in its budgeting and financial planning, but is information required by our auditors to show the level of income the District can reasonably expect to receive from its congregations.

The South Dakota District work program for 2021 has not yet been finalized. Enclosed, however, is a graph displaying the District’s Estimated Income and Expenses for 2020. This will inform your congregation of how your financial offerings to the District are being utilized.

Again, thank you for partnering with the South Dakota District and the other congregations of our District as your pastor(s) and congregation proclaim to your communities the wonderful Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ. We are all “Rooted in Christ, Abounding in Thanksgiving.”

God’s riches blessings be upon your congregation!

Sincerely in Christ,

Reverend Darren R. Olson, Executive Secretary
The South Dakota District, LCMS

Encl. 2021 Synod and District Mission/Together In Mission Intention Form
2020 District Work Program Summary Sheet