

# Convention Announcements

- Dates:** February 16-18, 2025
- Location:** Sioux Falls Convention Center
- Theme:** “*God’s Gospel: Salvation Power*” Romans 1:16-17
- Registration:** \$200 per delegate paid in advance by mail. Receive badges and meal tickets at the Convention Center
- Convention Worship:** Worship Service with Holy Communion, 7:00 p.m. Sunday, February 16th, at Christ Lutheran Church, 4801 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Worship Service with Installation of Officers, 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at the Convention Center
- Convention Preachers:** Opening Service: The Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
Installation Service: The Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer, President of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
- Times of Sessions:**
- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Session | 10:00 – 12:00 p.m. Monday, February 17   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session | 1:15 - 3:00 p.m. Monday, February 17     |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Session | 3:30 – 6:15 p.m., Monday, February 17    |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Session | 8:00 – 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 18  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Session | 10:30 – 12:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 18 |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Session | 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 18   |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> Session | 3:30 – 5:15 p.m., Tuesday, February 18   |
- Synodical Representative:** The Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
- Convention Essayist:** The Reverend Dr. Jeffrey Oswald  
Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, Missouri
- Convention Chaplain:** The Reverend Corey Aker, Senior Administrative Pastor  
Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Convention Parliamentarian:** Mr. Matthew Naasz, Legal Counsel, The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
- Convention Manager:** Mr. Chad Zinnel, Business Manager, The South Dakota District  
of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
- Public Relations Director:** The Reverend Paul Winckler, Assistant to The President of The  
South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
- Assistant Secretary:** Mrs. Krista Erickson, Lay Member  
Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Convention Accompanist:** The Reverend Howard Shane, Emeritus Pastor  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

# Convention Committees

<b>Committee 1:</b>	<b>Administration</b> Work Assignment:  Committee Members:	President's Report; Treasurer's Report; Board of Directors Minutes Reverend Steve Weispfennig, Chairman DCE Liz Peters Reverend David Otten Mr. Adam Schulz Mr. Scot Eisenbraun
<b>Committee 2:</b>	<b>Mission and Ministry</b> Work Assignment: Committee Members:	Mission and Ministry; Special Ministries Reverend Greg Lehr, Chairman Commissioned Minister Hope Genzlinger Reverend Chris Davis Mr. Dave Peterson Mr. Brad Schardin
<b>Committee 3:</b>	<b>Registration, Credentials and Excuses</b> Work Assignment: Committee Members:	Registration, Credentials and Excuses Reverend Dr. Brian Mosemann, Chairman Reverend Iver Possehl
<b>Committee 4:</b>	<b>Nominations</b> Work Assignment:  Committee Members:	Develop Slates of Candidates for Offices to be filled by election, 2025 Convention Reverend Daniel Grimmer, Chairman Reverend Dr. Christopher Ascher Mrs. Jan Larson Mr. Rick Rathert Mr. James Schnaidt
<b>Committee 5:</b>	<b>Elections</b> Work Assignment:  Committee Members:	As stipulated by District Handbook, Bylaw 5.21 District President will appoint the Chairman during the first session of the Convention

**NOTE:** Correspondence regarding resolutions proposed by Floor Committees should be addressed to committee chairmen as listed below. If requested, floor committees may hold hearings Monday morning, February 17, 2025, 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. at the Convention Center.

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**Committee 1:**

**Administration**

Reverend Steve Weispfennig, Chairman  
St. John's Lutheran Church  
1009 Jackson Street  
Yankton, SD 57078  
Telephone: (605) 665-7337  
E-Mail: [steve.stjohnsyankton@gmail.com](mailto:steve.stjohnsyankton@gmail.com)

**Committee 2:**

**Mission and Ministry**

Reverend Greg Lehr, Chairman  
Zion Lutheran Church  
1400 South Duluth Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
Telephone: (605) 338-5226  
E-Mail: [glehr@zionlutheransf.com](mailto:glehr@zionlutheransf.com)

# Special Standing Rules

(These rules are among those which prevail for Conventions of the Synod.)

1. The Chair shall see that the agenda is followed as closely as possible.
2. Delegates wishing to address the Convention, when recognized by the Chair, shall state their name, and the name and location of the congregation, or of the administrative unit that they represent.
3. No delegate may speak in debate for longer than two (2) minutes per speech. No delegate may speak more than twice on the same motion on the same day and may not speak the second time until all delegates desiring to speak the first time have had the opportunity. The Chair shall have discretion to make exceptions to this rule. When a Floor Committee is called on to answer a question or to give information, this rule shall not apply.
4. A delegate who speaks on an issue may not move to call the question at the close of his/her speech. Any other voting delegate may call the question at any time.
5. Most votes will be taken by electronic key pad ballot. The Chair shall have discretion, however, to call for a vote other than by electronic key pad ballot. Instead of only a voice vote on such motions before the Convention, the Chair shall ordinarily also call for the raising of the right hand.
6. If a substitute motion is offered and seconded, the presenter shall be offered two (2) minutes to provide the rationale for offering it, and a member of the Floor Committee shall be offered two (2) minutes to present rationale for not considering the proposed substitute, after which the Convention shall decide by majority vote without further debate whether or not to consider the substitute. If the decision is in the affirmative and the substitute motion is adopted, the original motion fails. If the substitute motion does not receive a favorable action either to consider or to adopt, the original motion is again considered. (This is an adaptation of the so-called "Behnken rule" for dealing with substitute motions, as observed by the Synod.)
7. The presenter of any Resolution from a Floor Committee shall move adoption of the Resolution. Because it is understood that there is support from other members of the Floor Committee, a second shall not be required.
8. The preface, preamble, rationale, and whereas sections shall be regarded as integral parts of Resolutions and therefore subject to the same consideration and adoption as the main motion.
9. Whenever possible, amendments to proposed Resolutions and substitute Resolutions shall be submitted to the District Office or Convention Office for publication in *Today's Business* prior to Convention consideration of the resolutions to which they pertain. When this is not possible, as in the course of a discussion, a written copy of proposed amendments shall be provided to the Secretary either before or immediately after being offered from the floor.
10. Whenever an amendment is offered from the floor that seeks to make editorial or other helpful suggestions to a pending resolution coming from a Floor Committee, the Chair of the Floor Committee shall have the option of accepting such an amendment. If it is accepted, then the amendment is made without further debate or formal vote of the assembly.
11. In order to promote an orderly and non-distracting convention atmosphere, the following guidance shall apply to the use, and area of use, of electronic equipment, including wired and wireless communication devices, including laptops, cell phones, pagers, PDAs, or other similar devices. In all cases where use is permitted, the sound-producing capabilities of such

devices shall not be used. Except as approved by convention staff, personal extension cords shall not be allowed on the convention floor.

Seating Area of Convention Hall	Type of Use Permitted			Laptop Computers (no communication, e.g. e-mail or Internet)
	Voice	Text Messages	Other Electronic Communications, including laptops	
Voting Delegate	No	No	No	Yes
BOD, Special Guests	No	Yes	Yes	---
Advisory Delegate	No	Yes	Yes	---
Visitors	No	Yes	Yes	---

12. At such time as “pro-con” discussion is occurring, the front microphone will be designated the “pro” microphone and the back microphone will be designated as the “con” microphone. Motions or questions may be made from any microphone.
13. No motion to reconsider or rescind shall be made or called up during the last day of the Convention.
14. Resolutions prepared by the Floor Committees, which are not acted upon by the Convention before adjournment, die.
15. Unless covered by these standing rules of the Convention, parliamentary procedure shall be governed by the most recent edition of Roberts *Rules of Order Newly Revised*. Above all, the rules of Christian love and behavior shall apply.

# Parliamentary Procedure

## A. Purpose of Parliamentary Law and Procedure

The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to carry out the aims of the assembly in an orderly and fair manner, to expedite business, and to ensure justice and fairness to all, both the majority and the minority.

## B. Basic Steps of Parliamentary Procedure

The Chairman and members of the assembly should be acquainted with and observe nine basic, essential 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. Identify yourself thus: "I am a pastoral/lay delegate from \_\_\_\_\_ congregation, city."
4. Make the motion. "I move that..."
5. Second the motion. (Unless not required)

### **Chair:**

6. States the motion. (Or rules it out of order)
7. Calls for discussion. (Unless motion is undebatable)
8. Take the vote. (Or "Puts the Question")
9. States the results.  
"The 'yesses' 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.

# A PRIMER OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

## A. PURPOSE OF PARLIAMENTARY LAW AND PROCEDURE

The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to carry out the aims of the assembly in an orderly and fair manner, to expedite business, to insure justice and fairness to all, both the majority and the minority.

It is not the purpose of parliamentary procedure to make the conduct of business in an assembly difficult, or to entangle an assembly in technicalities, or to provide a channel for individuals to flaunt their parliamentary knowledge. The purpose is to make business flow more smoothly and make it easier for everyone.

Above all, there should be a spirit of Christian love and trust.

## B. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE AT A GLANCE

The motions or points listed below, 1 through 9, are in order of precedence. In other words:

A. When any of them is pending, you may not introduce one listed below it.

B. You may introduce one that is listed above it.

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	May Speaker Be Interrupted To Make this Motion?	Is Second Required?	Is Motion Debatable?	Can This Motion Be Amended?	Is Vote Required? What%Required?
1. Adjourn	I move we adjourn.	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
2. Recess	I move we recess.	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
3. Raise a question of privilege	Question of privilege Mr. Chairman. . .	Yes	No	No	No	No vote required
4. Lay on the table	I move to table this matter.	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
5. Previous question	I move the previous question.	No	Yes	No	No	2/3 vote
6. Postpone definitely or to a certain time	I move we postpone this matter until. . .	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
7. Commit or refer	I move we refer this matter to a committee.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
8. Amend a motion	I move this be amended to read. . .	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
9. Main motion	I move that. . .	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

The items listed below are general points, proposals, and motions, and they have no order of procedure over one another. You may introduce any one of them at any time, except:

- A. When a motion to adjourn is pending;
- B. When a motion to recess is pending;
- C. When a question of privilege is pending.

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	May Speaker Be Interrupted To Make this Motion?	Is Second Required?	Is Motion Debatable?	Can This Motion Be Amended?	Is Vote Required? What%Required?
1. Object to error in procedure due to a personal affront	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	No
2. Request for Information	Request for Information	Yes, if urgent	No	No	No	No
3. Verify voice vote by taking actual count	I call for a division of the house	No	No	No	No	No, unless someone objects then majority
4. Object to consider a matter you think improper	I object to consideration of this question	Yes	No	No	No	Yes - 2/3
5. Take up a matter which has been tabled	I move we take from the table	No	Yes	No	No	Yes majority
6. Reconsider matter already disposed of	I move we reconsider our action relative to	Yes	Yes	Yes, if original motion was debatable	No	Majority
7. Consider matter out of scheduled order	I move we suspend rules & consider	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
8. Vote on a ruling of the chair	I appeal the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Yes, if original motion was debatable	No	Majority

### C. SUBSTITUTE MOTION

In the case of a substitute motion we shall follow an adaptation of the so-called "Behnken Rule." See page 4, point 6 for more information.



# Convention Agenda

## Sunday, February 16, 2025

- 4:30-6:00 p.m. Delegate Registration, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, Exhibit Hall #2
- 7:00-8:30 p.m. Opening Service – Christ Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls  
Synod President, The Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison – Preacher

## Monday, February 17, 2025

- 7:30-9:00 a.m. Registration
- 8:00-9:00 a.m. Floor committee hearings – Convention Center, Ballroom A
- 9:15-9:45 Orientation of Delegates – Convention Center, Exhibit Hall #2  
*(Due to the introduction and practice of the electronic voting system, all delegates are expected to participate in the Orientation Session.)*
- 9:00-5:00 p.m. Exhibits – Convention Center Ballroom A
- 10:00-Noon First Session – Convention Center, Exhibit Hall #2
- Noon-1:15 p.m. Recess/Noon Meal (meal ticket required) – Convention Center, Ballroom A
- 1:15-3:00 p.m. Second Session – Convention Center, Exhibit Hall #2
- 3:00-3:30 p.m. Recess/Coffee Break #1–Convention Center, Ballroom A
- 3:30-6:15 p.m. Third Session – Convention Center, Exhibit Hall #2
- 6:15 p.m. Recess/Dinner On Your Own

## Tuesday, February 18, 2025

- 7:00-8:00 a.m. Breakfast Buffet (meal ticket required) - Convention Center
- 8:00-3:30 p.m. Exhibits – Convention Center Ballroom A
- 8:00-10:00 a.m. Fourth Session – Convention Center, Exhibit Hall #2
- 10:00-10:30 a.m. Recess/Coffee Break #2
- 10:30-Noon Fifth Session – Convention Center, Exhibit Hall #2
- Noon-1:30 p.m. Recess/Noon Meal (meal ticket required)
- 1:30-3:00 p.m. Sixth Session – Convention Center, Exhibit Hall #2
- 3:00-3:30 p.m. Recess/Coffee Break #3 – Convention Center
- 3:30-5:15 p.m. Seventh Session – Convention Center
- 3:50 p.m. Adjournment
- 4:00 p.m. Closing Worship

# The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

## Roster of Officers

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: The Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.....Elected Third Term 2021  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President: The Reverend Randy R. Sturzenbecher.....Elected Second Term 2021  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President: The Reverend Timothy J. Rynearson .....Elected Second Term 2021  
Secretary: The Reverend Dr. Thomas C. Brown..... Appointed Mid-Term 2021\*  
Treasurer: Mr. Kent Harnisch ..... Elected First Term 2021  
Lay Member: Mr. David Zuercher.....Elected Second Term 2021  
Lay Member: Mr. Doug Klipfel..... Appointed Mid-Term 2021\*\*  
\*Appointed after Reverend David Otten resigned.  
\*\*Appointed after David Andrews resigned.

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## Circuit Visitors

Circuit 1 Visitor..... Reverend Kevin Moore \*  
Circuit 2 Visitor.....Reverend Matthew Wurm  
Circuit 3 Visitor..... Reverend Wade Harr  
Circuit 4 Visitor..... Reverend David Warner\*\*  
Circuit 5 Visitor..... Reverend Ryan Loeslie  
Circuit 6 Visitor..... Reverend Thomas Christopher  
Circuit 7 Visitor..... Reverend Corey Aker  
Circuit 8 Visitor.....Reverend Steven Weispfennig  
\*Appointed after Reverend Jordan Andreasen resigned.  
\*\*Appointed after Reverend John Fries resigned.

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## District Reconcilers

The 1992 Synodical Convention with its Resolution 5-01B adopted a new process of conflict resolution, replacing the previous adjudication process with a new reconciliation process. The resolution allows each District to name four Reconcilers, who are asked to serve for a period of six years on both the District level and the Synodical level when named to special Dispute Resolution Panels or in other unique circumstances.

In order to fill these positions, Circuit Visitors in each District of the Synod were asked to submit names of pastors and laymen to their District Boards of Directors. The Board of Directors was given final selection process. Special intensive training was provided by the Synod.

The four Reconcilers of The South Dakota District are:

Reverend Dr. Thomas Brown  
SD District Reconciler  
846 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Spearfish, SD 57783

Reverend Chris Davis  
SD District Reconciler  
701 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Milbank, SD 57262

Mr. Steve Jastram  
SD District Reconciler  
828 North Columbia Circle  
Sioux Falls, SD 57103

Mr. Matthew Naasz  
SD District Reconciler  
506 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Rapid City, SD 57701

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## **2025 Convention Nominating Committee**

(Elected by the 2021 District Convention)

Pastors:            Reverend Daniel Grimmer  
                         Reverend Dr. Christopher Ascher

Laymen:            Mrs. Jan Larson  
                         Mr. Rick Rathert  
                         Mr. James Schnaidt

NOTE: According to Bylaw 5.11 of the District Handbook, page 16, the District President shall recommend to the Convention a list of candidates for the Committee on Nominations for the next Convention of the District, to be elected at this Convention. Additional candidates may be placed in nomination by the Convention, with two pastors and three laymen to be elected.

## Roster Ministers of Religion – Ordained (Active)

Aker, Corey	Sioux Falls, SD
Althoff, Albert	Hartford, SD
Anderson, Ray	SMP, Aberdeen, SD
Andreasen, Jordon	Missionary, Romania
Ascher, Christopher	Sioux Falls, SD
Asmus, Aaron	Sioux Falls, SD
Bakat, Albert	EIIT, Sioux Falls, SD
Bauer, Micah	Brookings, SD
Bierman, Bret	SMP, Mansfield, Stratford and Aberdeen, SD
Birtell, Brad	Watertown, SD
Bless, Matthew	Vermillion, SD
Bobby, Jacob	Yankton, SD
Bobby, Samuel	Missionary, Latvia
Brown, Thomas	Spearfish, SD
Christopher, Thomas	Alexandria, SD
Davis, Christopher	Milbank, SD
Deardoff, Sr., Daniel	Brandon, SD
Domenichelli, Jonah	Missionary, Germany
Drehman, Arthur	Corona and Wilmot, SD
Drevlow, Ryan	Aberdeen, SD
Edwards, Lucas	Rapid City, SD
Erickson, Donald	Alcester, SD
Gatnoor, Jenina	Lincoln, NE
Greenmyer, Joseph	Parkston and Emery (Clayton), SD
Greenseth, Ray	Murdo, Draper and Presho, SD
Grimmer, Daniel	Mitchell, SD
Handschke, Samuel	Pierre, SD
Harr, Wade	Winner, Hamill and Reliance, SD
Hinckley, Robert	Deadwood and Sturgis, SD
Hinners, Gregory	Norris, Midland and Philip, SD
Jenson, Jens	Armour, SD
Johnson, Kenneth	Avon and Springfield, SD
Jones, Joshua	Rapid City, SD
Koester, Kevin	Huron, SD
Kumm, Michael	Dakota Dunes, SD
Laskowsky, Kurt	Centerville and Hurley, SD
Lehr, Gregory	Sioux Falls, SD
Lemcke, Brian	Delmont and Tripp, SD
Lindenberg, David	Rapid City, SD
Loeslie, Ryan	Dimock, SD
Ludwig, Alan	Aberdeen and Columbia, SD
McCarthy, Christopher	Wall and Creighton, SD
Meadows, Bryan	Rapid City, SD
Mercer, Dennis	SMP, Black Hawk, SD

Moeller, Robert ..... Britton and Ferney, SD  
 Moore, Kevin..... Redfield and Doland, SD  
 Mork, Joshua ..... Howard and Madison, SD  
 Mosemann, Brian ..... Menno, Scotland, Marion and Parker, SD  
 Mueller, Thomas..... Sisseton and Waubay, SD

Nemera, Chera ..... EIT, Sioux Falls, SD  
 Neugebauer, Nathan ..... Milbank and Reville, SD  
 Newell, William ..... Sioux Falls, SD  
 Nix, Matthew ..... Sioux Falls, SD

Otten, David..... Gettysburg and Lebanon, SD

Rensner, Jason ..... Sioux Falls, SD  
 Richert, Jeremy ..... Dakota Dunes, SD  
 Ring, Marcus..... Gregory, SD  
 Rynearson, Timothy ..... Brookings, Flandreau and White, SD

Sailer, Scott ..... Sioux Falls, SD  
 Schopp, Chad..... Aberdeen and Columbia, SD  
 Schroeder, Dean ..... Tyndall and Utica, SD  
 Schulte, Gary..... Rapid City, SD  
 Slavens, Doug ..... Sioux Falls, SD  
 Smith, Jacob ..... Aberdeen, SD  
 Spiehs, L. Scott ..... Wolsey, Wessington Springs and Woonsocket, SD  
 Strable, David ..... Onida, Blunt and Harrold, SD  
 Sturzenbecher, Randy..... Black Hawk, SD

Thole, Samuel..... Brookings, Flandreau and White SD

Utecht, Peter..... Hot Springs, SD

Warner, David..... Custer and Hill City, SD  
 Weeman, Richard ..... Wolsey, Wessington Springs and Woonsocket, SD  
 Weispfennig, Steven..... Yankton, SD  
 Winckler, Paul..... Sioux Falls, SD  
 Wurm, Matthew..... Brookings, SD

Yeadon, Jeremy ..... Groton and Andover, SD

## District Missionaries at Large

Sutton, Albert..... SMP, Rapid City, SD  
 Utecht, Andrew ..... Rosebud, SD

## Military Chaplains – Reserve

Jenson, Jens..... Armour, SD

## Retired Pastors

Anderson, Robert ..... Custer, SD  
 Andreasen, Phill ..... Sioux Falls, SD

Bauman, Gene .....	Spearfish, SD
Bernau, Wayne .....	Madison, SD
Bohlmann, Robert.....	Custer, SD
Denke, Glenn.....	Winner, SD
Doremus, Dwaine .....	Ellendale, ND
Ellis, David .....	Yankton, SD
Farden, John.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Fritsch, Lyle .....	Tea, SD
Gardner, Robert.....	Hot Springs, SD
Gies, Clark .....	Fairfax, SD
Goldammer, Gordon .....	Custer, SD
Grams, Craig .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Greinke, Kenneth.....	Lee's Summit, MO
Gunderson, David.....	Kansas City, MO
Hartman, Stephen .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Hartwig, Raymond .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Haugen, Paul .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Heckmann, Robert.....	Canton, SD
Helling, Melbourne.....	Viborg, SD
Howlett, Joseph .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Huber, Terell .....	Emery, SD
Jacobsen, Gary .....	Gregory, SD
Johnson, Larry.....	Webster, SD
Luttmann, Richard .....	Sioux Falls, SD
McKillop, Don.....	Plankinton, SD
Meadows, Philip .....	Rapid City, SD
Merrill, John .....	Hot Springs, SD
Meyer, Wade .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Mischnick, Mark.....	Mitchell, SD
Morfitt David.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Mueller, James .....	Yankton, SD
Naasz, Terry .....	Rapid City, SD
Nour, Nabil.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Paepke, William .....	Piedmont, SD
Pomplun, Ray .....	Aberdeen, SD
Possehl, Iver .....	Brookings, SD
Reiner, Mark .....	Rapid City, SD
Sattgast, Dale .....	Huron, SD
Schmidt, Kenneth .....	Rapid City, SD
Schultz, Glenn .....	Rapid City, SD
Sestak, Peter .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Shane, Howard .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Soyk, Kenneth .....	Mitchell, SD

Uecker, Warren ..... Custer, SD  
Urbach, Jon Bradford ..... Pierre, SD  
Warnier, Paul ..... Alcester, SD

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**Pastors – Candidate Status**

Dawson, John ..... Sioux Falls, SD  
Kalb, Jeffrey ..... Browns Valley, MN  
Welton, Adam ..... Madison, SD

## Ministers of Religion - Commissioned (Active)

Alberts, Jacquelyn .....	Brandon, SD
Birkmire, Amber.....	Rapid City, SD
Bridges, Kristy.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Dobbs, Scot .....	Rapid City, SD
Esser, Tia.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Fjelstad, Jade .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Frerking, Krystal .....	Rapid City, SD
Geistfeld, Sierra.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Genzlinger, Hope.....	Rapid City, SD
Holdorf, Leanne Rae .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Miller, Heather .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Mlnarik, Kathryn.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Newell, Kristen.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Ockander, Marli .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Pinn, Jon.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Prouty, Kristi .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Slavens, Elizabeth .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Solinsky, Ann .....	Rapid City, SD
Vercruyse, Britney .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Vogel, LeAnn .....	Rapid City, SD

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## Ministers of Religion - Commissioned (Candidate)

Andreasen, Alison .....	Romania
Dooley, Karen.....	Hot Springs, SD
Graumann, Natalie .....	Rapid City, SD
Grimmer, Christine .....	Mitchell, SD
Holt, Sherlyn .....	Arlington, SD
Hoogland, Lacey.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Kolb, Linda.....	Big Stone City, SD
Loeslie, Valerie .....	Dimock, SD
Noble, Jennifer .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Rattei, Faith .....	North Sioux City, SD



Robertson, Ruth .....	Madison, SD
Schmitt, Ellen.....	Yankton, SD
Shane, Brenda.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Smith, Mavis .....	Fargo, ND
Utecht, Katie .....	Belle Fourche, SD
Wendt, Nikol .....	Rapid City, SD
Wombold, Dawn .....	Rapid City, SD

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## Ministers of Religion – DCE

Miller, Haley Jo .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Peters, Elizabeth .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Petersen, Lorien .....	Rapid City, SD
Schmitt, Joshua .....	Yankton, SD

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## Ministers of Religion Commissioned - Teacher Evangelist

Belitz, Larry.....	Hot Springs, SD
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## Ministers of Religion Commissioned – Emeritus

Allen, Marianne.....	Hot Springs, SD
Fowler, Eleanor .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Geidel, David .....	Dimock, SD
Herther, Ann .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Hoyme, Kristie .....	Dell Rapids, SD
Lafrentz, Louise .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Merrill, Kenlyn.....	Hot Springs, SD
Nielsen, George.....	Rapid City, SD
Palmreuter, Kenneth.....	Rapid City, SD
Palmreuter, Martha.....	Rapid City, SD
Peters, Joyce .....	North Sioux City, SD
Sayles, Priscilla .....	Rapid City, SD
Schilf, Paul.....	Brandon, SD
Schoenborn, Marlys.....	Rapid City, SD
Sopko, Darlene .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Tams, Sandra .....	Sioux Falls, SD
Uecker, Carol.....	Custer, SD



Withee, Jane ..... Grand Junction, CO  
Withee, Roxanne ..... Rapid City, SD



## Roster of Congregations & Parishes by Circuit

### Circuit 1 – 15 Congregations, 7 Parishes

Aberdeen, Saint Paul.....	Parish
Leola, Saint Paul	
Aberdeen, Our Savior.....	Parish
Columbia, Saint John	
Andover, Zion.....	Parish
Groton, Saint John	
Ferney, Saint Paul.....	Parish
Britton, Saint John	
Cresbard, Concordia.....	Parish
Wecota, Immanuel	
Mansfield, Trinity.....	Parish
Stratford, Saint Paul	
Aberdeen, Saint John	
Redfield, Messiah.....	Parish
Doland, Redeemer	

### Circuit 2 – 12 Congregations, 7 Parishes

Brookings, Mount Calvary.....	Parish
Brookings, Peace.....	Parish
Flandreau, Redeemer	
White, Zion	
Corona, Trinity.....	Parish
Wilmot, Our Savior	
Milbank, Bethlehem.....	Parish
Reville, Saint John	
Milbank, Emanuel.....	Parish
Sisseton, Emanuel.....	Parish
Waubay, Zion	
Watertown, Mount Olive.....	Parish

**Circuit 3 – 17 Congregations, 8 Parishes**

Chamberlain, Zion .....	Parish
Gettysburg, Emmanuel.....	Parish
Lebanon, Christ	
Gregory, Saint John.....	Parish
Hamill, Zion.....	Parish
Winner, Christ	
Reliance, Trinity	
Midland, Saint Peter .....	Parish
Norris, Saint John	
Philip, Our Redeemer	
Murdo, Messiah .....	Parish
Draper, Saint Paul	
Presho, Zion	
Onida, Holy Cross .....	Parish
Harrold, Immanuel	
Blunt, Trinity	
Pierre, Faith .....	Parish

**Circuit 4 – 13 Congregations, 10 Parishes**

Black Hawk, Divine Shepherd .....	Parish
Creighton, Emmanuel.....	Parish
Wall, First	
Custer, Our Redeemer .....	Parish
Hill City, Our Savior	
Deadwood, Grace.....	Parish
Sturgis, Blessed Emmanuel	
Hot Springs, Bethesda.....	Parish
Rapid City, Bethlehem.....	Parish
Rapid City, Our Redeemer .....	Parish
Rapid City, Peace .....	Parish
Rapid City, Zion .....	Parish
Spearfish, Saint Paul .....	Parish

**Circuit 5 – 13 Congregations, 8 Parishes**

Armour, Redeemer .....	Parish
Delmont, Zion .....	Parish
Tripp, Emmaus	
Dimock, Immanuel.....	Parish
Mitchell, Zion.....	Parish
Parkston, Faith.....	Parish
Emery, Saint Peter	
Plankinton, Saint Paul .....	Parish
White Lake, Trinity	
Huron, Mount Calvary.....	Parish
Wolsey, Saint John.....	Parish
Wessington Springs, Zion	
Woonsocket, Mount Olive	

**Circuit 6 – 16 Congregations, 9 Parishes**

Alexandria, Saint Martin .....	Parish
Spencer, Trinity	
Canistota, Zion .....	Parish
Montrose, Saint John	
Centerville, First English.....	Parish
Hurley, Zion	
Freeman, Saint Paul.....	Parish
Hartford, Trinity.....	Parish
Marion, Bethesda .....	Parish
Parker, First English	
Menno, Immanuel	
Scotland, Saint Paul	
Howard, Saint John .....	Parish
Madison, Our Savior	
Tea, Risen Savior .....	Parish
Wentworth, Saint Peter.....	Parish

**Circuit 7 – 9 Congregations, 8 Parishes**

- Brandon, Blessed Redeemer ..... Parish
- Sioux Falls, Christ..... Parish  
Sioux Falls, Trinity
- Sioux Falls, Faith ..... Parish
- Sioux Falls, Lord of Life ..... Parish
- Sioux Falls, Memorial ..... Parish
- Sioux Falls, Our Redeemer ..... Parish
- Sioux Falls, Resurrection..... Parish
- Sioux Falls, Zion ..... Parish

**Circuit 8 – 10 Congregations, 7 Parishes**

- Alcester, Peace ..... Parish
- Avon, Zion..... Parish  
Springfield, Our Savior
- Dakota Dunes, Holy Cross ..... Parish
- Tyndall, Saint John ..... Parish  
Utica, Martinus
- Vermillion, Concordia ..... Parish
- Wagner, Saint John ..... Parish  
Fairfax, Trinity
- Yankton, Saint John's ..... Parish

# South Dakota District Early Childhood, Elementary and High Schools

(Alphabetical by city)

The Lighthouse – Preschool.....	Aberdeen, SD
Divine Shepherd Classical Lutheran Academy and Early Childhood Center.....	Black Hawk, SD
Blessed Redeemer – Preschool.....	Brandon, SD
Peace Lutheran – Early Childhood Center and School.....	Brookings, SD
Zion Lutheran – Preschool.....	Canistota, SD
Holy Cross Lutheran Preschool.....	Dakota Dunes, SD
Redeemer Lutheran – Preschool.....	Flandreau, SD
Saint John’s Lutheran – Preschool.....	Groton, SD
Trinity Lutheran Learning Center – Preschool/Early Childhood Center.....	Hartford, SD
Bethesda Lutheran School – Preschool-2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade.....	Hot Springs, SD
Mount Calvary Lutheran – Preschool.....	Huron, SD
Emanuel Lutheran – Preschool.....	Milbank, SD
Faith Lutheran – Preschool/Early Childhood Center.....	Pierre, SD
Zion Lutheran School – Preschool – 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade.....	Rapid City, SD
His Ark Christian Child Development Center.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Sioux Falls Lutheran School Association – Preschool-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade.....	Sioux Falls, SD
Risen Savior Lutheran – Preschool.....	Tea, SD
Saint John’s Lutheran – Preschool.....	Yankton, SD

# District President's Report to the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District, LCMS

President Scott C. Sailer

## **“God’s Gospel: Salvation Power” Romans 1:16-17**

*16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” (Romans 1:16-17).*

It is an honor to bring you this report at the end of my third term as the President of the beloved South Dakota District. What a joy it is to serve the Lord with you in this good place!

In the past triennium, we have walked together under the theme from the 2021 convention: “Rooted in Christ, Abounding in Thanksgiving,” a theme reflecting the strong and loving faithfulness of our Savior and our being rooted in Him. The theme verses for the 2021 convention were Colossians 2:6-7:

*“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”*

Our being rooted in Christ Jesus brings to us His unswerving care for us. Such rootedness in Christ was also the hallmark of the generations who had come before us in our District, since its founding in 1906. Our being rooted and built up in Christ ought to result in our living thankful and productive lives, which exhibit a multitude of deeds of kindness and words of witness. I am blessed to report that I see an abundance of such fruits of salvation in you, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, as I travel throughout our District. Now, I am blessed to report to you regarding some of those fruits of salvation in our life together as His Church, since the last District Convention in December 2021. As I do, you’ll see the mighty salvation power God has at work among us through His Gospel!

## **Buffeted but Not Broken by Covid**

May this be the final report on the nasty coronavirus pandemic of 2020-2021! The pandemic directly impacted the very earliest months of the 2021-2025 triennium, but it seems to have produced some lingering effects, too. That said, we are grateful to our wonderful God that, although we were buffeted by the virus, we were not broken. Pastors and church leaders and congregation members made decisions to the best of their ability, and they respected the decisions of other congregations as how to handle matters dealing with the pandemic. So, by God’s grace and the Spirit’s direction, the proclamation of God’s Word continued, on-line or in-person. Moreover, the saints continued to give their offerings to the Lord, so that, in most cases, our ministries did not suffer financially. This includes the ministries we do while we walk together as a District. Thank you for exhibiting such faith and faithfulness!

But are there some troubling lingering effects? Consider worship attendance. Back in 2016, our average weekend worship attendance among our 107 congregations at the time was 83. At the end of 2020, our congregations, making many adjustments because of Covid, averaged 53 in in-person attendance (on-line attendance was not counted in the numbers reported to the Synod).

God blessed us with a bounce-back in attendance, after the pandemic, with our average attendance in 2022 being 70, but we haven’t bounced back all the way to our pre-Covid numbers. I’m sure the reasons for this are many and various; we can’t place blame only on the virus. The solution? We will need to commit ourselves to weekly attendance in the Divine Service. We will



need to seek the sheep who have wandered away, even as we let the light of the Gospel shine so as to attract the unchurched to the riches of God's grace. In these ways, it is possible for us to bounce back to pre-2020 levels.

### **Blessed by Adjustments to How the District Carries Out Its Ministry**

Have you noticed some of the new approaches to how the District is serving our church workers, congregations, schools, and other ministries?

- We used to have "Services Areas"; we now have the Mission and Ministry Council.
- We used to have one Executive Assistant to the District President, an Executive Secretary; we now have an Assistant to the President and a part-time Education Executive.
- Mr. Randy Gayken served as our part-time Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) Vice-President until the end of October 2023, after 5 ½ years of service in this position. After he retired, we were served for a time by an Interim VP for LCEF, Mr. Kai Larson, from the Minnesota South District. Very recently, that changed when LCEF hired a full-time Vice-President to be shared by our District and the North Dakota District.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is guiding the development of these approaches so that we can be more effective in our Kingdom work. Allow me to explain more about these new approaches to the ministry done by our District:

**Mission and Ministry Council:** This Council was launched by the passing of 2021 District Convention Resolution 2-04. The main task of the Council is to ensure that helpful resources are provided to our workers, congregations, and schools, to assist them in carrying out the Lord's work. The Mission and Ministry Council, very ably chaired by Krista Erickson and advised by Rev. Paul Winckler, has replaced the Service Area committee structure, at least for the past triennium. Its future will be decided by the upcoming District Convention.

Consider some of the fruit the Spirit has worked through the efforts of the Mission and Ministry Council: 1) P.A.S.S. It On workshops were held in 2023 and 2024, 2) District Men's Retreats were planned and carried out in 2023 and 2024, due to the discussions coming out of meetings of the Council.

Much more about the work of the Mission and Ministry Council can be found in other sections of this Convention Workbook. I think our delegates should pass Resolution 2-01 at this Convention, so that the Council can continue and expand on its excellent work.

**District Executive Staff:** For many years, our District had an Executive Secretary, who assisted the District President in such areas as overseeing our District's subsidized ministries and assisting our church workers, congregations, and schools in ministry areas such as education and stewardship. When Rev. Darren Olson, our most recent Executive Secretary, accepted a call to Sioux Falls Lutheran School in July of 2021, the District's Board of Directors realized there was a need to especially assist the Lutheran schools in the District with such things as identifying candidates for call lists. Upon Rev. Olson's departure for his new call, the Board identified Mr. Dave Geidel, a retired, rostered commissioned minister and former school principal, now living in rural Dimock, as a possible candidate to serve as an "interim," part-time Executive Secretary to work with our schools. Mr. Geidel agreed to serve in this position in May of 2022, for what eventually became a 3-year appointment. He went to work assisting our Lutheran day schools and pre-schools. Later in 2022, Mr. Geidel's position would come to be known as "Education Executive," because he is our District's specialist in working with schools.

The Board of Directors soon created a second Executive Staff position: Assistant to the President. This person would oversee the subsidized ministries of the District, such as the two Native American ministries and our deaf ministry. He would also serve as the right-hand man to

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the District President in visiting and encouraging the pastors and other church workers. In addition, he would be the staff person overseeing the work of the brand-new Mission and Ministry Council.

Rev. Paul Winckler was called to this new position, and he was installed as Assistant to the President on November 20, 2022.

It has been a tremendous blessing to have two District Executive staff persons in place so that one of them can concentrate on the needs of our schools and educators, and the other can devote his time to the many other areas of ministry that require attention, resources, and encouragement. One of the resolutions before us in the upcoming Convention deals with amending our Bylaws to continue to grant the Board of Directors sufficient authority and latitude to appoint Executive Officers to assist the District President. I hope the resolution passes.

**LCEF Vice-President:** It is important for our District to have a Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) Vice-President 1) to encourage congregations and individuals to invest in LCEF to provide a financial pool of funds for church and school building projects, 2) to help South Dakota District ministries apply for loans, and 3) to promote the ministry solution resources available through LCEF. We are still getting used to the blessed reality that our District is a member of the Synod's LCEF, after having had our own Church Extension Fund for many decades. We are grateful a new LCEF Vice-President has been hired to steer the LCEF ship in the Dakotas.

### **Partnerships in Gospel Ministry**

The Book of Ecclesiastes posits: "And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him – a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Eccl. 4:12). What does this mean? There is strength and safety – and even joy – when work is undertaken together. So it is in the Church. Sometimes, an individual congregation finds it very difficult to continue operating because of financial limitations brought about by population loss and other factors. The struggling congregation will then seek a ministry partner in a neighboring community in order to maintain their presence in their own community. The resulting parish, made up of two LCMS congregations, is able to continue to let their Gospel lights shine when they support a pastor together, by way of an official parish agreement. This is why we have so many dual parishes (24 of them), tri-point parishes (7 of them), and even one quad-parish. When you do the math, you will find that seventy-three of our 105 LCMS congregations in South Dakota are in such Word and Sacrament ministry partnerships. We are among the leaders in the Synod in the number of multi-congregation parishes we have.

Our congregations partner in other ways, too. The congregations send in offerings for ministry in our District and beyond, in addition to what they are already doing in their own congregations. The fruit borne through such generosity is the ability to provide salaries for various kinds of mission work: overseas missionaries, campus ministers, the afore-mentioned Native American missionaries and a deaf ministry pastor. Not one of our congregations could do this alone! But 105 congregations working together can, and they are.

I want to make special mention of the newest ministry the Lord is carrying out and multiplying in South Dakota, thanks to our collective prayer and financial support: Lutheran Family Service (LFS). What a blessing their individual and family counselors have been to many of our church workers and lay people! What a blessed adoption resource they are to Christian couples! What a blessed resource LFS is as their experts make presentations on marriage, caring for caregivers, the danger of pornography, and much more!

Your ongoing financial support for LFS is crucial, as they maintain offices in Sioux Falls and Deadwood, and extend their reach into Rapid City by way of the Deadwood office, as well. The

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LFS resolution we'll consider in this Convention will be critical in extending the ministry agreement currently in force between our District and Lutheran Family Service.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for your generous support of the many partnerships in the Gospel the Lord is carrying out in our District!

Before I leave this topic, there are a couple realities we will face as we head into the future:

- Many of our congregations are gradually getting smaller and are finding it increasingly more difficult to go it on their own.
- There are fewer pastors and other church workers available to serve our congregations, schools, and other ministries.

Therefore, the need for circuits, regions of the District, and congregations to do more cooperative ministry will increase. The need to raise up more church workers will be ever before us.

### **Unprecedented Actions**

Late in 2023 and early in 2024, we took a very unusual action as a District; it was, in fact, unprecedented. Almost always, it is at the Synod and District Conventions of our church body, where official business is conducted. But what happens when a very important matter arises between conventions, and, what's more, that matter had involved resolutions adopted by previous conventions? This happened with not one, but two, issues that came up here in South Dakota after the 2021 District Convention:

- 1) Whether to end the requirement that congregations pay for subscriptions to the *Lutheran Witness* for all congregational households, per a 1976 District Convention resolution, and
- 2) Whether to amend a resolution from the 2021 District Convention regarding which overseas missionaries our District would support via the Together in Mission (TIM) program.

Regarding the *Lutheran Witness* matter, the cost of a year's subscription to the *Witness* had nearly doubled from 2022 to 2024, thereby creating unexpected, much higher expenses for the congregations and the District.

Regarding the Together in Mission matter, three missionaries from South Dakota (Revs. Samuel Bobby, Jordon Andreasen, and Jonah Domenichelli) had accepted calls overseas after the 2021 District Convention, and the Board wanted to include them as recipients of our support, too. The "problem" was that the Convention resolution specified only Missionary Daniel Jastram and Missionary Cory Rajek as the recipients of our TIM support.

What could we do? The Board of Directors did some research and found that the Synod Constitution, in Article XII.2 and 6, and in Article XI.B.8, provided us with the rationale and permission for putting those matters to a vote of our congregations in between conventions. When all the voting was finished on December 31, 2023, 72% of the participating congregations had voted to end the policy of congregations paying for subscriptions to the *Lutheran Witness* for all their households. An even larger majority, 96%, voted to add the other three South Dakota pastors to the group of missionaries receiving our support.

Many thanks are due to our congregational leaders and pastors for getting their congregations involved in this novel, unprecedented vote. By the way, this Convention will ratify the congregational vote in order to get it into the permanent records of the District via the Convention minutes.

## Not Ashamed of That Powerful Gospel

I have a confession to make: I was a little selfish in choosing the theme and theme verses for the Convention! Romans 1:16 is my confirmation verse, given to me by my pastor, Rev. Garland Wittmayer, on April 22, 1973: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek* (RSV). I was a serious confirmation student who took his confirmation verse seriously. I've lived in the powerful and profound peace that comes through the knowledge of the Good News that I have a mighty and gracious Savior in Jesus Christ. I've lived with the knowledge that Christ uses the Gospel message, shared by me (the saint-sinner that I am), to bless the lives of others.

This is my last Convention as your District President. Thank you for electing me to serve you, the first time back in 2015, and a couple times thereafter. After 10 years in this position, I'll be retiring when the next President is installed this coming spring, a month or two after his election. .

Before then, I look forward to the Convention. Think of it! We get to do His Kingdom work in this marvelous part of God's Kingdom called South Dakota, as members of the LCMS South Dakota District. Most of the time, this work is done in our congregations and schools. But in February, we get to do the work of the Lord together in Convention.

At the Convention, we'll get to worship together, study together, pray together, make decisions together, converse over coffee together, and hear reports together on what God is doing among us by His Word and Spirit and through you.

We'll carry out those Convention activities because of the Gospel, and only because of the Gospel -- the Good News of Jesus' saving work for dead-in-sin nobodies. Think of it! Christ made you and me alive, and He keeps us alive when He *words* His way into our lives. He uses words of forgiveness and salvation taught to you, preached to you, applied with water upon you, and attached to bread and wine for you. Oh, yes, our theme is so true: *"God's Gospel: Salvation Power."*

At the Convention, we'll consider what may lie ahead of us as God's people, even as we thank Him for what He has already done for us in the 119 year history of our beloved LCMS South Dakota District. We are hope-filled because the tomb is completely empty. Christ is risen! He lives, and He is with us. We are hopeful because God has been faithful. He keeps His promises.

I'll see you in February, my dear sisters and brothers in Christ!

Rev. Dr. Scott C. Sailer  
President, LCMS South Dakota District  
Romans 1:16; 16:25-27  
*"...not ashamed of the Gospel"*

# District Mission Reports

## EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

Dave Geidel, Dimock, SD

### 1. Schools – Five Schools, Thirteen Early Childhood/Preschools

- Sioux Falls Lutheran School - Infant – High School serving around 500 children. They also offer before school (63) and after school care (124).
- Zion Lutheran School, Rapid City - Preschool – Fifth Grade serving around 175 children with current efforts to expand their school
- Peace Lutheran Early Childhood Center and School, Brookings - Infant (30) – Third Grade serving around 122 children.
- Divine Shepherd Lutheran Classical School, Blackhawk – Infant – Fifth Grade serving around 45 children.
- Bethesda Lutheran School, Hot Springs – Preschool – Fifth Grade serving around 30 children.
- 13 “Free Standing” Early Childhood Centers and/or Preschools without schools in Aberdeen, Brandon, Canistota, Dakota Dunes, Flandreau, Groton, Hartford, Huron, Milbank, Pierre, Sioux Falls, Tea and Yankton. These programs each serve from 6 – 120 children.
- Around 1240 children have the privilege of attending a Lutheran Christ-centered program

### 2. National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) with LCMS School Ministry

- Meets and exceeds school accreditation standards
- Thorough self-study with Seven Standard Area (Elementary and High School) and Ten Standard Areas (EC/Preschool)
- Submitted to a Validation Team of five to eight people 30 days ahead of a site visit
- Two SD District Schools completed the process in 2023/2024 and received their certificates
  - Bethesda Lutheran School, Hot Springs
  - Sioux Falls Lutheran School
- St. John’s Lutheran Preschool, Yankton completed the process and had a Validation Team visit Oct. 20-22, 2024. This report was submitted before the Validation Team visit.

### 3. Big Challenge for Schools: Staffing

- Synodically trained teacher numbers cannot fill the need
- Intentionally recruiting solid Christian teachers in the community
- Resources to use to retain our Lutheran identity
  - *Welcome to the Family* available on Amazon
  - CPH offers *A Simple Explanation of Lutheranism*
  - CPH also offers *A Simple Explanation of...* assortment covering 10 topics

#### 4. Resources for starting a school

- LCMS School Ministry “Resources” tab LuthEd <https://www.luthed.org/>
- NLSA Self-Study Documents would be a good resource also found on LuthEd
- Lutheran Education Association (LEA) <https://www.lea.org/>

#### 5. Microschools

- What is a Microschool?
  - Multiple ages learn together in a single classroom
  - Education is highly personalized
  - Can be imbedded in other schools, churches, businesses
  - Opened quickly in non-traditional spaces
  - Higher emphasis on parental involvement
- Micro Schools <https://www.microschoolrevolution.com/about-microschools/>
- [Starting A Christian School | Soaring Education Services](#)
- Rev. Dr. Matt Hoehner, Christ Community Lutheran Schools, St. Charles, MO is passionate about starting Microschools. Rev. Hoehner’s desire is to see more children in Christ-centered Lutheran schools. There are different models, some imbedded within an existing school to meet specific needs, some independent.
- Two congregations in the SD District have started microschools: Peace, Brookings and Divine Shepherd, Blackhawk

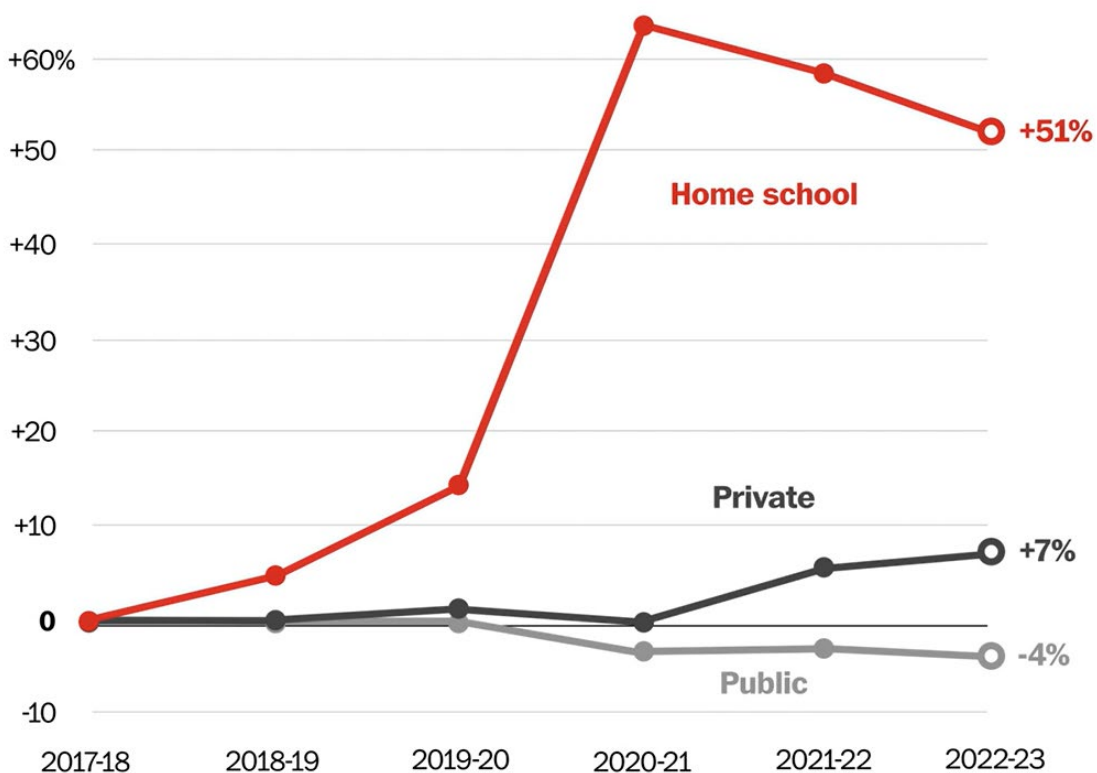
#### 6. South Dakota School Choice - [About Us • SD Partners in Education](#)

- South Dakota Partners in Education (SDPE) offers tax-credit scholarships to children in South Dakota who attend a non-public school and who meet the requirements of the program. These scholarships are funded through donations. SDPE is the [Scholarship Granting Organization \(SGO\)](#) in South Dakota.
- 2023/2024 Impact
  - 45 participating schools
  - 1,671 student scholarships granted
  - \$1,972 average scholarship amount

#### 7. Top Ten Reasons Why Congregations Start Lutheran Schools

- Strengthening the congregation
- Nurture the children’s faith
- Help parents fulfill their role as Christian parents
- Strengthen the communities
- Provide a safe, caring place for children
- Help children see all of their lives from the perspective of God’s Word
- Demonstrate the high value the congregation places on children
- Enhance the public relations of the congregation
- Seek out the lost
- Fulfill the congregation’s responsibility for the Christian Education of it’s children

#### 8. School Choice Trends [info@schoolchoiceweek.com](mailto:info@schoolchoiceweek.com) - Parents are desiring change and more choice.



**9. Fall Educators Conferences, October 10-11, 2024, Sioux Falls Lutheran School**

- Thursday, October 10 – Sectionals were offered and a business meeting was conducted
- Friday, October 11 – Dr. Brad Allies, Concordia University Wisconsin was the keynote speaker presenting *The ABC's of Defending Your Faith*
- Concordia University Wisconsin staff members Dr. Amy Lindgren, Dr. Nicole Muth, Dr. Adam Paape, Dr. Jim Pingel and Dr. Val Keiper lead the sectionals following the keynote

**10. School Visits, Etc.**

- 40+ visits to Early Childhood Centers, Preschools and Schools since February of 2022.
- Met with several governing boards, spoke at one school dinner auction, provided a back-to-school in-service, hosted a School Administrators gathering, served as the NLSA SD District Commissioner consulting with schools seeking accreditation, and attended the annual National Accreditation Commissioners meetings in St. Louis, many emails and phone conversations
- Attended way too many meetings

***Train a child in the way he should go,  
and when he is old he will not turn from it.***

Proverbs 22:6

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## Ministry to the Deaf, Sioux Falls, SD

Reverend Matthew W. Nix, Sioux Falls, SD

What a joy it is to serve in South Dakota. Not that things are perfect here, but as I travel to other parts of our country, I still see signs of COVID most anywhere I look. The other thing I notice in talking with people (both from within the LCMS and out) is that the mindset is not the same as most of our people have.

That being said, we are not without our own challenges here at home. Our winters make visits and service much more unpredictable. The distance between our people makes gathering more difficult. We also have the same problems most other churches are having, such as children falling away to many other activities pulling them every way but to church. You have peer pressure challenging both young and old alike.

I guess you could say deaf ministry is much like your church. There are some differences, but all in all, we deal with God's gifts and share them with sinners. Our church hasn't changed much in the past four years. Though some have joined others have moved and some have died. A number of our people outside of Sioux Falls have relocated, so our visits have had to be modified. The one thing that has changed is the number of people we have contact with in Rapid City has gone down so I do not make that trip as often as I used to.

We still work with a good number of non-members, which has its ups and downs. Whether it is in the hospital, homes, in public or at the church, it is always a joy to share the love and promise of Christ. It would be nice to see them a little more regularly on Sunday morning, but we thank God for the opportunities He provides.

We have been looking for ways to be more visible here in Sioux Falls. We have looked at signage that might let others know where we are before they are right in front of our building. We have also looked in to activities we could do to let others know us better. If you have any ideas please send me a note. Main Street Living is still a huge benefit, especially for those living out of town. I will quite often hear comments about it and how happy they are that Lynda is interpreting it for them.

I would like to thank you, the South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, for your support of deaf ministry over the years. Without you this ministry would not be possible. In closing I would like to ask three things of you; 1 – would you continue to keep us in your prayers, that more deaf would be lead to faith in Jesus. 2 – if you know of any deaf, please let me know. 3 – if you have any ideas of how we might be more effective please share them with me.



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## **Missionary-at-Large to the Native American People at Pine Ridge**

Reverend Albert G. Sutton, Rapid City, SD

Yesterday, at our adult bible study, we had a discussion on what brings faith. Is it scientific proof, miracles, or even popular opinion? Of course, the answer is No! It is ALWAYS the WORD, working to bring faith. As the book of Romans says, "The Gospel is the power of God for salvation!"

As I reflect on that moment, I am reminded of God's power. Here we sit in a newly remodeled building, teaching adult Bible study, waiting for children to come into our afterschool program. The tribe owns the building. The tribe has issued a ban on missions that are not Native run. This was a concession from the ban of all Christian churches that preceded it a couple of weeks earlier. Yet here we sit discussing faith and the power of God. A moment almost missed by me until I sat down to write this. Further, none of this happened three years ago!

After Covid the South Dakota District partnered with the Tribe to remodel the old, abandoned building that we had used for the ministry for many years. This remodel turned out great with the addition of a kitchen. This allows us, and the tribe, to have community events and funerals. After the initial construction costs, our lease consists of paying for the utilities. This allows both of our entities continued use of the building.

In the last three years we have added an after-school program and adult Bible study on the first and third weeks of the month to compliment our holding services on the second and fourth weeks of the month. We now get down to the reservation once a week for ministry in one form or another.

Jeff and Diane Falin continue to be a blessing as Jeff helps with the driving and Diane teaches the children for the after-school program and Sunday school. I would not know what to do without them! My wife, Sarah, has taken up the position of chief cook in the wake of the retirement of Larry and Doris Belitz. Titus and Elizabeth, our still-at-home children aid in many ways as well. Donna Utecht is still our Mother-in-the-faith and comes faithfully to help when she is not traveling to visit grandchildren and great grandchildren. By the way she will be 95 when you read this! Aaron and Bria Sutton have moved back and are now coming regularly to help as well. Aaron is our 25-year-old son and had his start in our ministry playing cowboys and Indians with the local boys and got stuck up in a tree a couple times by the more aggressive older boys.

In addition to our normal services, we hold several community BBQ's and events per year. We usually do a VBS, Christmas and Easter give-away and Reformation carnival. This year we held a health fair put on by some local pharmacy students. This, with the addition of the home visits, hospital visits, hospice work and local outreach keeps us very busy.

We have also been blessed with a new-to-us pulpit, altar, and lectern and some table and chairs from Trinity, Belle Fourche. We pray for the former members there to find new church homes, thank God for his season of ministry there, and pray for the community at large.

All of our work has not been without its challenges though. The months of August and September we had septic backup issues in the building. We had more instances of cleaning up septic messes than we had actual services. We hope this has been resolved now, with the tribe doing some repairs to the main line. Sadly, we have lost many long-time members as they are now with Jesus. Many others have moved away to live in Rapid City. We still have sporadic contact with them through home and hospital visits. In 2023 we lost two children to gun violence. One family came to our after-school program only and the second was very close to our church and a multi-generational family. I had previously buried his mother, now him and finally his great-

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great grandfather. It was a time of intense ministry and of course a story of Christ's redemptive power all in its own.

We continue to thank you all for your support of this great ministry by the district and, as always, we covet your continued prayers!

# Missionary-at-Large to the Native American People

Reverend Andrew E. Utecht, Rosebud, SD

## Rosebud Lutheran/Lord's Warriors Lutheran District Report 2025

Here on the Rosebud Reservation we are not ashamed of the Gospel, it is the power of God for salvation. It is important to not be ashamed especially amid the clear contrast of the different religions. While in much of South Dakota those who don't attend church would pick Christianity if it came down to it, in Rosebud people might just as easily, or perhaps even more readily choose the traditional Native American religion. People here also might choose no organized religion, and instead live a lifestyle of addiction and everything that goes with it.

We are not ashamed to share Jesus Christ, and him crucified. We do this on Sunday at Rosebud Lutheran with a regular attendance around 30, and in Lord's Warriors Lutheran in Parmelee with a regular attendance anywhere from 12-40. We also have mid-week Bible school, a daily radio devotion, summer VBS in 3 communities, and make plenty of home visits, as we care for many more people. Along with Baptisms, Funerals, and a few weddings, we continue to share Christ



Crucified. 2025 marks 32 years of ministry here.

One of the areas of life where Christ crucified as the power of God which is also a regular part of the ministry here is the house blessings, to remove evil spirits. As the traditional religion keeps and uses spirits, people have troubles with them on a regular basis. To be able to pray in faith, Our Father... deliver us from the evil one, is a true blessing, and to be able to share and teach people the freedom of following Christ is a joy.



One of the greatest joys has been teaching some young men and women of Christ, and helping them to walk in His way, so they are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. One young woman, Tessa, (pictured as she wanted to dance at the front of church to share with some visitors), recently stated, "I read my Bible before I go to bed. "and "Christian music is better than Rap music" This came especially after a couple of church groups came over the summer, and helped her to grow in her life in Christ. Her close relative, Terrance, is a regular help in church, helping me to lead the worship service, and attending not only in Rosebud, but also in Parmelee. Having them and their family brings great joy.

We have also have been having our Rosebud kids help with Bible school, and in particular we have one boy, Aiden, who loves puppets. He has his own puppets he brings to church, and then he loves to help when we do puppets for VBS. He also encourages his cousins to help, and it all makes sharing Christ quite fun.

It is also a joy to share the ministry with different groups who come to help, from Brookings, Pierre, Sioux Falls, our churches in our circuit and zone LWML. We know that we are in this together as the SD District LCMS. We continue the Puppet Place at the SD State Fair. We also appreciate all the prayers, the financial support, the cookies, the quilts, the portals of prayer, and so many other donations that people share and encourage both our church members, and my family as we share Christ here. THANK YOU for sharing the Salvation Power of God's Gospel with us.



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## **Campus Ministry SDSU, Brookings, SD**

Reverend Matthew E. Wurm and Reverend Micah L. Bauer, Brookings, SD

Mount Calvary has effectively become the home church of many SDSU students. It is often the first congregation where young people are truly accepted as full-fledged adults, and they become integrated in the life of the church. They worship with us, learn with us, and serve with us.

So far in the fall semester of 2024, we have worshipped with at least 62 students, averaging 21 in worship each week and 15 in our campus Bible study. In addition, we gave CPH Pew Bibles to over 80 students this fall semester, including a reading plan and information on Lutheran Student Fellowship (LSF).

Every Sunday, we worship together, eat lunch together, and study God's Word together in the evening. The students have devotions every Tuesday and some event every week. Alumni who have stayed in Brookings or relocated back to Brookings help the students by hosting meals or events.

LSF has been hosting an annual spring conference on topics of interest, e.g. "Speaking Truth in Love" and "Handling Hurts with Hope."

Last year, Papua New Guinea began sending its best and brightest high school graduates to SDSU to study in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Currently there are more than 50 students from Papua New Guinea at SDSU, and we minister to some of them. This spring, we were blessed to baptize and confirm one of them.

Thanks be to God for faithfully working in and through SDSU campus ministry for over 75 years. And thank you for your continued support of this ministry.

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## Concordia Lutheran Church and Student Center USD, Vermillion, SD

Reverend Matthew A. Bless

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

The campus ministry at Concordia Lutheran Church in Vermillion, SD, serving the University of South Dakota, probably looks a bit different than usual, and at the very least drastically different than when I first arrived three years ago. When I arrived in the 2021-22 school year, we were averaging around 4 students at services and about 2 at Bible Studies, which were held on campus at that time. In both 2022-23 and 23-24, our average attendance tripled to about 12 at services and grew at Bible Studies as well, starting in the spring semester of 2023, when moving our Bible Study to Concordia caused it to grow to about 10 students, which is about where we stayed in 2023-24. As of the time of this writing, through September 29, we are averaging 16 students at service and 12 at Bible Study. [Addendum: this has slowed a bit in recent weeks as of 11/14. We're back at our numbers from last year or thereabouts. However, the good news is that we continue to see these same faces and have an excellent base of students that are in attendance at Concordia regularly!] We also have good turn-outs at our periodical fundraisers (D-Days bake sale and Advent/Lenten suppers), community outreach opportunities (our Reformation Day outreach) and student gatherings like movie nights and potlucks. God be praised for His wonderful work of providing hearers of the Word on the campus of USD!

I could point to a lot of factors for this, but I think the largest is a core group of undergraduate students that we added at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year who have been instrumental in encouraging those around them to be in service and have even begun inviting their friends from non-Missouri backgrounds to services and Bible Studies. There was also at this time a group of graduate students who were doing the same, but most of them have moved on to their next stage of life, so the fact that our numbers have not only survived that loss, but have actually *thrived* in the aftermath of the inevitable consequences of campus life is a wonderful reality!

One of the biggest success stories that I have to mention is the sheer influx of students new to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, often from other Lutheran denominations but occasionally from other Christian denominations entirely. In the 2023-24 school year, we received four into membership through confirmation from the student population. Already at the time of this writing, I am preparing two more to be received into membership, with others considering the possibility. College is a great time of independence, and at USD there is an astounding abundance of students using that independence to discover the true Salvation Power of God's Gospel!

With all of this wonderful success, I would still like to note one area of need: your help! Even with the sheer growth of our campus ministry over the past few years, a good portion of those students are from districts outside of South Dakota. Our contingency of South Dakota students is growing, but your assistance is still very much needed! Please do not hesitate to talk to your graduating high school students about where they plan to attend college, encourage them to check out Concordia and let the campus ministries in those locations know via the map found at <https://www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/national/campus-ministry/lcms-u-chapter-map> and please continue to pray for Concordia and all our dedicated campus ministries in the South Dakota District and beyond!

Soli Deo Gloria!

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## Report of Initial Membership - Individuals

The procedure for admitting into membership in the Synod Ministers of Religion – Ordained (Pastors) and Ministers of Religion – Commissioned (Teachers and DCE’s) was changed by the 1986 Convention of the Synod. Eligible individuals become members of the Synod by the Rites of Ordination and Installation (in the case of pastors) and by Rites of Commissioning and Installation (in the case of teachers and other church workers). (2023 Handbook, 2.6.2 and 2.6.3, p. 58). During the past triennium, the following individuals were received into membership:

### ORDAINED

2022  
Ray Anderson  
Thomas Mueller

2023  
Dennis Mercer

2024  
Joseph Greenmyer

2025  
Thomas Pendrod

### COMMISSIONED

2022  
Michael Leapley  
Leanne Holdorf

2023  
Sierra Geistfeld

2024  
Kristi Prouty  
Jade Fjelstad

2025

Action Requested: That the new members be recognized and welcomed.

# Report on the Admission of Congregations into Membership in the Synod and on Revisions of Articles of Incorporation, Constitutions and By-Laws of Congregations

Pursuant to the regulations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which govern the admission of congregations into Synodical membership, as well as the revision and amendment of Articles of Incorporation, Constitutions and By-laws of congregations, the following report is made. Please refer to the 2023 Handbook of the Synod, pages 56.

The procedure for congregations applying for membership is as follows:

1. Submit Articles of Incorporation (Constitution) and By-laws to District President.
2. District President refers documents to the District Constitution Committee for review.
3. District Constitution Committee examines documents and informs congregation of any necessary changes that must be made.
4. When documents are in order, this fact is reported by the District Constitution Committee to the District President who presents the application for membership to the District Board of Directors.
5. The Board of Directors acts on the application at any regular meeting.
6. The President and Secretary of the congregation, as representatives of the newly-admitted congregation sign the Constitution of the Synod in a special worship service normally attended by the District President.
7. District President presents certificate of membership to the congregation.
8. Signatures preserved by District Secretary.

The procedure for review of Articles of Incorporation, Constitutions and By-Laws is:

1. Mandatory to submit any change in all documents to District President.
2. District President refers to District Constitution Committee for review.
3. District Constitution Committee notifies District President when documents are in harmony with Holy Scripture, the Confessions and the teaching and practices of the Synod and laws of South Dakota.
4. District President presents documents to District Board of Directors for approval.
5. When approved by the Board of Directors the congregation is notified that it may function under the new documents as a member of the Synod.
6. The congregation files a restated Articles of Incorporation with the State of South Dakota.
7. These actions reported to the next convention of the District.

As you can see, the District Constitution Committee plays a major role in the review process of corporate documents of member congregations and of congregations applying for membership.

The committee has normally has two members. Rev. David Otten serves as Chairman, and Rev. Jordon Andreasen had served as the other committee member. Another member is being sought. Providing legal advice, particularly regarding the compliance of congregations' governing documents with the codified law for non-profit agencies in South Dakota, is the District's legal counsel. Mr. Matthew Naasz, a member of Peace, Rapid City, has served as legal counsel since 2020.

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## Corporate Documents Approved by the Board of Directors

Bylaw 2.4.1 of the Synod, p. 56 of the 2023 Handbook of the Synod, stipulates that the action of the District Board of Directors in approving the revised Articles of Incorporation, Constitutions, and By-laws of congregations be reported to the District Convention. The Board of Directors of the South Dakota District approved the following documents in the past triennium:

**Black Hawk**, Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church, Bylaws, June 13, 2022.

**Hartford**, Trinity Lutheran Church, Bylaws, June 5, 2023.

**Mitchell**, Zion Lutheran church, Amended Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, June 5, 2023.

**Sioux Falls**, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bylaws, June 13, 2022.

**Sioux Falls**, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Bylaws, September 11, 2023.

**Watertown**, Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Bylaws, June 13, 2022 (first of two submissions in the triennium).

**Yankton**, St. John's Lutheran Church, Amended Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, March 6, 2023.

## Documents in Process of Review by DCC

The District Constitution Committee is currently considering the official documents of the following congregations:

**Alcester**, Peace Lutheran Church

**Andover**, Zion Lutheran Church

**Custer**, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

**Deadwood**, Grace Lutheran Church

**Gettysburg**, Emmanuel Lutheran Church

**Huron**, Mt. Calvary (Learning Center)

**Watertown**, Mt. Olive Lutheran Church (second of two submissions in the triennium)



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## Pastoral Candidates Ordained and Installed

**Anderson, Ray N.** (St. Louis, MO, 2021) ordained and installed by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer at St. Paul and St. Paul Lutheran Churches, Aberdeen and Leola, South Dakota as SMP Assistant Pastor on January 23, 2022.

**Greenmyer, Joseph R.** (Ft. Wayne, IN, 2024) ordained and installed by Reverend Ryan L. Loeslie at Faith and St. Peter's Lutheran Churches, Parkston and Emery, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on June 30, 2024.

**Mercer, Dennis D.** (Ft. Wayne, IN, 2023) ordained and installed by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer at Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church, Black Hawk, South Dakota as SMP Assistant on January 22, 2023.

**Mueller, Thomas P.** (St. Louis, MO, 2022) ordained and installed by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer at Emanuel and Zion Lutheran Churches, Sisseton and Waubay, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on August 14, 2022.

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## Pastors Transferred from Other Districts

**Bernau, Wayne A.** (Minnesota South District) Emeritus, Madison, South Dakota on July 20, 2024.

**Birtell, Brad E.** (Nebraska District) installed at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on December 10, 2023 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Bobby, Jacob C.** (Nebraska District) installed at St. John's Lutheran Church, Yankton, South Dakota as Associate Pastor on January 28, 2024 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Davis, Christopher B.** (Minnesota North District) installed at Emanuel Lutheran Church, Milbank, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on December 11, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Drehman, Arthur J.** (English District) installed at Our Savior's and Trinity Lutheran Churches, Wilmot and Corona, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on September 11, 2022 by Reverend Matthew E. Wurm.

**Erickson, Donald E.** (Iowa West District) installed at Peace Lutheran Church, Alcester, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on May 29, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Huber, Terell O.** (Nebraska District) Emeritus, Emery, South Dakota on October 1, 2022.

**Lemmermann, Scott A.** (Missouri District) installed at St. John's and Zion Lutheran Churches, Montrose and Canistota, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on October 16, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Ludwig, Alan G.** (Indiana District) installed at Our Savior and St. John's Lutheran Churches, Aberdeen and Columbia, South Dakota as Assistant Pastor on June 11, 2023 by Reverend Timothy Rynearson.

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**Moeller, Robert E.** (Minnesota South District) installed at St. Paul and St. John Lutheran Churches, Ferney and Britton, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on November 24, 2024 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Mork, Joshua D.** (Nebraska District) installed at Our Savior and St. John's Lutheran Churches, Madison and Howard, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on July 14, 2024 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Newell, William J.** (Central Illinois District) installed at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota as Senior/Administrative Pastor on August 6, 2023 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Reiner, Mark W.** (Rocky Mountain District) Emeritus, Rapid City, South Dakota on September 7, 2023.

**Schopp, Chad C.** (Indiana District) installed at Our Savior and St. John's Lutheran Churches, Aberdeen and Columbia, South Dakota as Senior/Administrative Pastor on October 13, 2024 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Schulte, Gary R.** (Missouri District) installed at Zion Lutheran Church, Rapid City, South Dakota as Associate Pastor on February 25, 2024 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Yeadon, Jeremy T.** (Indiana District) installed at St. John's and Zion Lutheran Churches, Groton and Andover, South Dakota as Sole Pastor on June 5, 2022 by Reverend Timothy Rynearson.

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## Pastors Transferred to Other Districts

**Cooper, Loren D.**, September 6, 2024 (Emeritus) to the Indiana District.

**Ford, Colin E.**, March 29, 2023 (Candidate) to the Michigan District.

**Fries, John J.**, November 28, 2022 (Sole Pastor, Grace and Blessed Emmanuel Lutheran Churches, Deadwood and Sturgis, South Dakota) to the Kansas District.

**Heermann, William G.**, October 7, 2024 (Sole Pastor, St. John's and Trinity Lutheran Churches, Wagner and Fairfax, South Dakota) to the Nebraska District.

**Herzberg, Martin J.**, March 27, 2023 (Candidate) to the Southern Illinois District.

**Koch, Timothy A.**, April 4, 2022 (Sole Pastor, Emanuel Lutheran Church, Milbank, South Dakota) to the Kansas District.

**Kurowski, Peter M.**, August 11, 2022 (Sole Pastor, Zion and St. John Lutheran Churches, Canistota and Montrose, South Dakota) to the Missouri District.

**Makelin, Terry J.**, July 10, 2024 (Sole Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Freeman, South Dakota) to the Nebraska District.

**Navurskis, Christopher A.**, May 22, 2023 (Senior Administrative Pastor, Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Huron, South Dakota) to the Iowa East District.

**Olson, Darren R.**, December 16, 2022 (Candidate) to the Nebraska District.

**Rajek, Cory J.**, September 1, 2024 (Latvia Missionary) to the Missouri District.

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**Redhage, Lloyd W.**, September 11, 2023 (Sole Pastor, St. John and St. Paul Lutheran Churches, Britton and Ferney, South Dakota) to the Iowa East District.

**Thorson, Clint O.**, October 30, 2023 (Sole Pastor, Our Savior and St. John's Lutheran Churches, Madison and Howard, South Dakota) to the Rocky Mountain District.

**Willms, Levi R.**, May 22, 2023 (Pastor, St. John's Lutheran Church, Yankton, South Dakota) to the Minnesota North District.

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## Pastoral Moves Within The District

**Althoff, Albert F.** (Emeritus, Crooks, South Dakota) installed as Assistant Part-Time Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Hartford, South Dakota on October 30, 2022 by Reverend Nabil Nour.

**Bobby, Samuel** (Senior Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, South Dakota) installed as Senior Administrative Pastor of St. Paul and St. Paul Lutheran Churches, Aberdeen and Leola, South Dakota on January 23, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Drevlow, Ryan A.** (Senior Pastor, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota) installed as Senior Administrative Pastor of St. Paul and St. Paul Lutheran Churches, Aberdeen and Leola, South Dakota on January 14, 2024 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Handschke, Samuel P.** (Associate Pastor, Faith Lutheran Church, Pierre, South Dakota) installed as Senior Administrative Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Pierre, South Dakota on March 13, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Hinckley, Jr., Robert M.** (Sole Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Chamberlain, South Dakota) installed as Sole Pastor of Grace and Blessed Emmanuel Lutheran Churches of Deadwood and Sturgis, South Dakota on March 17, 2024 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Koester, Kevin W.** (Associate Pastor, Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Huron, South Dakota) installed as Sole Pastor of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Huron, South Dakota on March 10, 2024 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Kumm, Dr. Michael L.** (Emeritus, Sioux City, Iowa) installed as Assistant Pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Dakota Dunes, South Dakota on January 16, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**McKillop, Don C.** (Emeritus, Belle Fourche, South Dakota) installed as Sole Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Belle Fourche, South Dakota on May 21, 2023 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Meadows, Bryan W.** (Associate Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Rapid City, South Dakota) installed as Senior Administrative Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Rapid City, South Dakota on February 12, 2023 by Reverend David Warner.

**Richert, Jeremy D.** (Sole Pastor, Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Dakota Dunes, South Dakota) installed as Senior Administrative Pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Dakota Dunes, South Dakota on January 16, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

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**Sturzenbecher Randy R.** (Sole Pastor, Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church, Black Hawk, South Dakota) installed as Senior Administrative Pastor of Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church, Black Hawk, South Dakota on January 22, 2023 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Winckler, Paul M.** (Senior Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Rapid City, South Dakota) installed as Assistant to the President of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod on November 20, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

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## Candidate Status Granted

**Ford, Colin E.**, Sole Pastor, Concordia and Immanuel Lutheran Churches, Cresbard and Wecota, South Dakota; Candidate status granted November 6, 2022.

**Herzberg, Martin J.H.**, Sole Pastor, Trinity and Our Savior Lutheran Churches, Corona and Wilmot, South Dakota; Candidate status granted March 4, 2022.

**Olson, Darren R.**, Missionary-at-Large, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Candidate status granted June 28, 2022.

**Welton, Adam J.**, Sole Pastor, St. Peter Lutheran Church, Wentworth, South Dakota; Candidate status granted September 15, 2024.

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## Pastors Retired

**Heckmann, Robert E.**, Candidate, Canton, South Dakota retired June 5, 2024.

**Heermann, William G.**, Pastor, St. John and Trinity Lutheran Churches of Wagner and Fairfax, South Dakota retired June 17, 2024.

**Howlett, Joseph F.**, Candidate, Sioux Falls, South Dakota retired January 25, 2022.

**McKillop, Don C.**, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Belle Fourche, South Dakota retired April 29, 2024.

**Nour, Nabil S.**, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Hartford, South Dakota retired October 27, 2024.

**Meyer, Wade R.**, Pastor, Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota retired January 1, 2023.

**Possehl, Iver L.**, Pastor, Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota retired July 31, 2023.

**Soyk, Kenneth A.**, Pastor, Faith Lutheran Church, Parkston, South Dakota retired August 31, 2023.

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## Pastors Called to Glory

**Boeder, Charles F.**, Emeritus, December 6, 2022.

**Dell, Monty A.**, Emeritus, July 28, 2022.

**Kramer, Charles F.**, Emeritus, March 13, 2024.

**Lemmermann, Scott A.**, Sole Pastor, Zion and St. John Lutheran Church, Canistota and Montrose, South Dakota, November 25, 2023

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## Pastors Removed from Roster

**Lessman, Bradley R.** (Pastor, St. Paul and Trinity Lutheran Churches of Plankinton and White Lake, South Dakota) resigned February 7, 2022.

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## Teachers – DCE’s – Deaconess’ Commissioned & Installed

**Fjelstad, Jade C.** (Concordia, Seward, Nebraska, 2024) commissioned and installed as Teacher at Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota on April 24, 2024 by Reverend Corey Aker.

**Geistfeld, Sierra C.** (Concordia, Seward, Nebraska, 2023) commissioned and installed as Teacher at Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota on August 23, 2023 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Holdorf, Leanne R.** (Concordia, Seward, Nebraska, 2021) commissioned and installed as Teacher at Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota on January 24, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Leapley, Michael S.** (Concordia, Seward, Nebraska, 2022) commissioned and installed as Director of Christian Education at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, South Dakota on March 20, 2022 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Prouty, Kristi A.** (Concordia, Seward, Nebraska, 2024) commissioned and installed as Teacher at Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota on April 24, 2024 by Reverend Corey Aker.

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## Teachers - DCE’s Transferred From Other Districts

**Fowler, Eleanor L.** (Texas District) Emeritus, Sioux Falls, South Dakota on February 19, 2024.

**Gates, Andra S.**, (Florida-Georgia District) Candidate, Yankton, South Dakota on August 1, 2023.

**Newell, Kristen A.**, (Central Illinois District) installed as Principal at Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota on August 23, 2023 by Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer.

**Rattei, Faith J.**, (Minnesota South District) Candidate, North Sioux City, South Dakota on January 25, 2022.

**Shane, Brenda K.**, (Minnesota North District) Candidate, Sioux Falls, South Dakota on November 21, 2024.

**Utecht, Katie A.**, (California-Nevada-Hawaii District) Candidate, Belle Fourche, South Dakota on August 15, 2022.

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## Teacher - DCE Moves Within The District

**Alberts, Jacquelyn M.**, (Teacher, Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota) installed as Teacher at Blessed Redeemer Lutheran Church and School, Brandon, South Dakota on August 20, 2023 by Reverend Daniel Deardoff, Sr.

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## Teachers – DCE’s - Deaconess Transferred To Other Districts

**Deeter, Nicholas P.L.**, (Teacher, Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota) July 17, 2023 to the Nebraska District.

**Gates, Andra S.**, (Candidate, Yankton, South Dakota) July 9, 2024 to the Mid-South District.

**Koopman, Karleen J.**, (Emeritus, Lored, Texas) July 8, 2024 to the Texas District.

**Korthase, Amanda M.** (Candidate, Sioux Falls, South Dakota) June 19, 2024 to the Mid-South District.

**Leapley, Michael S.**, (Director of Christian Education, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, South Dakota) July 1, 2024 to the South Wisconsin District.

**Lenz, Rodney G.**, (Candidate, Sioux Falls, South Dakota) April 22, 2022 to the Kansas District.

**Lenz, Tina M.**, (Emeritus, Sioux Falls, South Dakota) April 22, 2022 to the Kansas District.

**Moldenhauer, Allison R.**, (Candidate, Brenham, Texas) September 27, 2022 to the Southern District.

**Navurskis, Miriam E.**, (Candidate, Huron, South Dakota) May 2, 2023 to the Iowa East District.

**Olson, Susan K.**, (Teacher, Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota) August 1, 2024 to the Nebraska District.

**Yung, Janice J.**, (Emeritus, San Antonio, Texas) December 15, 2022 to the Texas District.

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## Candidate Status Granted

**Graumann, Natalie**, Candidate Status granted October 15, 2024.

**Lenz, Rodney L.**, Candidate Status granted June 30, 2021.

**Olson, Susan K.**, Candidate Status granted September 1, 2023.

**Withee, Jane M.**, Candidate Status granted July 17, 2023.

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## Teachers – DCE’s Reinstated to the Roster

**Moldenhauer, Allison R.**, (Candidate, Brenham, Texas) reinstated September 13, 2022.

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## Teachers – Retired

**Herther, Ann P.**, Teacher, Sioux Falls Lutheran School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota retired May 31, 2023.

**Withee, Jane M.**, Teacher Zion Lutheran Church and School, Rapid City, South Dakota retired July 5, 2024.

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## Teachers – Called to Glory

**Consoer, Paul C.**, Emeritus, November 3, 2022.



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## Congregational Changes

Trinity Lutheran Church, Belle Fourche, South Dakota whose Constitution was accepted on March 1, 2021; Application for Membership was approved on June 13, 2022 and signed the Constitution of the Synod on August 28, 2022 was accepted into the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Belle Fourche, South Dakota disbanded April 29, 2024.

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## Centennials – Congregations

Redeemer Lutheran Church, Flandreau, South Dakota, 1921  
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Leola, South Dakota, 1921  
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, South Dakota, 1925  
St. John Lutheran Church, Tyndall, South Dakota, 1924

## 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries – Congregations

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ferney, South Dakota, 1900

## 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries – Congregations

Zion Lutheran Church, Canistota, South Dakota, 1885  
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Dimock, South Dakota, 1882  
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Freeman, South Dakota, 1882  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Hartford, South Dakota, 1881  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Milbank, South Dakota, 1882  
Martinus Lutheran Church, Utica, South Dakota, 1882  
St. Peter Lutheran Church, Wentworth, South Dakota, 1882  
Trinity Lutheran Church, White Lake, South Dakota, 1884  
St. John Lutheran Church, Wolsey, South Dakota, 1884  
St. John's Lutheran Church, Yankton, South Dakota, 1882

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# Reports of Circuit Visitors

## Circuit 1 (Aberdeen)

Reverend Kevin Moore, Circuit Visitor

In the last triennium, through “God’s Gospel: Salvation Power” in Word and Sacrament, our Lord has blessed the people, pastors and congregations of Circuit 1 of the South Dakota District to walk together in the joy and bold confession of our Savior, Jesus. In a world lost in sin and captive to the devil, the Lord continues to be at work through His Word and Sacrament among us when and where it pleases Him. Such work in the circuit includes:

I. Circuit Worship Services take place in recognition of the fullness of our unity in the Word and Sacraments of our Lord Jesus on Epiphany, the Vigil of Easter, and Reformation.

II. Circuit Youth are gathering at St. Paul’s in Aberdeen for Bible Study and various activities twice a month. The Circuit Pastors organize two one-day retreats for both Confirmation age and High School youth each year in the Winter and Spring.

III. Circuit retreats and presentations take place as often as possible to encourage the growth of the Word of God in our midst.

IV. Circuit congregations have worked to build-up the Rural Gospel Initiative (RGI), an LCMS registered service organization, to encourage and help support current and future projects and ministry within the Circuit.

Besides this work in the Circuit, the Lord has been at work in His congregations:

At St. John, Groton & Zion, Andover Rev. Jeremy Yeadon was installed as pastor on June 5, 2022.

At Our Savior, Aberdeen & St. John, Columbia Rev. Dr. Al Ludwig was installed as Assistant Pastor on June 11, 2023. Senior Pastor Rev. Jordon Andreasen accepted the Lord’s call to serve as Synod Missionary to the saints in Romania, and in December 2023 he and his family began their preparation for service there. Rev. Chad Schopp was installed as Senior Pastor on October 13, 2024.

At Concordia, Cresbard & Immanuel, Wecota, Rev. Colin Ford resigned from his call at the end of October 2022. Retired pastor Rev. David Seeger was contracted to serve the vacancy in 2023-24, but his service was delayed and greatly limited by serious injuries sustained in a car accident. He continues to recover. The parish remains vacant and is being served by Rev. David Otten and SMP Pastor Tom Penrod of Emmanuel, Gettysburg.

At St. Paul’s, Aberdeen & St. Paul’s, Leola, Rev. Ray Anderson was Ordained and Installed as assistant Pastor on January 23, 2022 to serve Leola. Mr. Michael Leapley was commissioned and installed as Director of Christian Education on March 20, 2022. Senior Pastor Rev. Samuel Bobby accepted a call in February, 2023 to teach at the Luther Academy, the seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia, and serve as a missionary pastor there. He took up service in Riga, Latvia in August 2023. Rev. Ryan Drevlow was installed as Senior Pastor for the parish on January 14, 2024. Director of Christian Education Michael Leapley accepted the Lord’s call and began serving at Brookfield Lutheran Church, Brookfield, Wisconsin on July 1, 2024.

At St. John, Britton & St. Paul, Ferney, Rev. Lloyd Redhage retired from full time service and accepted the call and began serving the Lord’s saints at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Charlotte,

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IA as part-time retired pastor on September 17, 2023. Rev. Larry Johnson of Webster served the vacancy until Rev. Robert Moeller was installed as Pastor on November 24, 2024.

At Messiah, Redfield & Redeemer, Doland, Rev. Kevin Moore continues to serve God's people as Pastor.

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## **Circuit 2 (Watertown)**

Reverend Matthew Wurm, Circuit Visitor

2022

April 15 – Circuit Tre Ore Service at Mt. Calvary-Brookings, offerings supporting Rev. Dr. Sam Bobby

Aug. 14 – Tom Mueller Ordination & Installation at Emanuel-Sisseton & Zion-Waubay

Sept. 11 – Arthur Drehman Installation at Our Savior's-Wilmot & Trinity-Corona

Oct. 9 – 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lutheran Student Fellowship at Mt. Calvary-Brookings

Oct 30 – Circuit Reformation Service at Zion-Reville; 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of LCMS

Dec. 11 – Rev. Dr. Christopher Davis is installed at Emmanuel-Milbank

2023

Jan 21 – Stewardship Conference with Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador at Mt. Calvary-Brookings

April 7 – Circuit Tre Ore Service at Mt. Calvary-Brookings, offerings supporting Lutheran Family Services

July 30 – Rev. Iver Possehl retires from Mt. Olive-Watertown

Dec 10 – Installation of Rev. Brad Birtell at Mt. Olive-Watertown

2024

March 29 – Circuit Tre Ore service at Mt. Calvary-Brookings, offerings supporting Lutheran Family Services

May – Work begins with Apostolic Lutherans in Watertown and Lake Norden, learning the Lutheran confessions and bi-monthly teaching

June 26 – Circuit Forum and David's Harp church music presentation at Peace-Brookings

July 28 – Rev. Nathan Neugebauer celebrates 10 years of ministry at Bethlehem-Milbank and St. John's-Reville

September – An independent Lutheran congregation is formed in Hayti from members of local Apostolic Lutheran Churches

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## **Circuit 3 (Pierre)**

Reverend Wade Harr, Circuit Visitor

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

As out-going visitor, I'd like to express my thanks and appreciation to the pastors and congregations of this vast circuit along with the families of these faithful church workers. It's been a joy working alongside you in this place where the mutual consolation of the brethren is a hallmark of Word and Sacrament ministry. We saw a number of challenges these past three years with pastoral calls and acts of nature. Here on the South Dakota prairie weather often dictates what can and cannot be done on a daily basis. As circuit visitor, I'm especially thankful for the work and insight Missionary Andrew Utecht has brought to our monthly Winkels and the wisdom he displays in dealing with the challenges he faces. He is an integral partner in the work God is doing among us in this circuit. In March of 2024, Pastor Hinckley accepted the call to serve God's people outside the circuit. The workload doubled overnight, but the power of prayer and the Holy Spirit has not been without its effects. I should like to mention in this report the fruitful Winkels I've been privileged to lead and from which I have greatly benefited. In addition to our regular exegetical and confessional studies, we've been able to give some time and energy to

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a study of Bonhoeffer's "Life Together," and more recently a discussion of St. Basil's "On the Holy Spirit." These short studies have often without intention wed well with the entire Winkel. One fall we were able to collaborate with the Mitchell Circuit to provide a one day Winkel in which Dr. Brian Mosemann was our presenter. It provided a different format in which each circuit conducted its own business during the lunch hour. My thanks to Dr. Mosemann and Pastor Loeslie for making this dual circuit conference possible. Our congregations were also blessed by the addition of Vicar Tom Penrod who attended our Winkels and has been serving faithfully under the very capable tutelage of Pastor Otten in Gettysburg and points east. His willingness to learn and teach us have been much appreciated. His commitment toward a called and ordained ministry among us has served to invigorate and encourage us toward on-going faithfulness despite declining numbers both in terms of membership and financial support. God be praised for His people coming together in service to Him and each other. Although many throughout the district brand us "the Pierre Circuit," I should point out that we don't use that nomenclature in our circles. We know that hand in hand we are much bigger and broader than Pierre, stretching south to the Nebraska border and north to "the other" Dakota. Our people traverse the Rosebud Sioux Reservation and zigzag back and forth over the time zone as far west as Philip. As Circuit #3, we prefer to think of ourselves as the Circuit of the Holy Trinity, the place where the baptized live and move and have their being because His name abides among us not only in Pierre but throughout the vast expanse of His prairie creation. The Holy Trinity more accurately describes the work that's being done and sustained by grace. It certainly resonates with the number of tri-parishes that our pastors serve with distances between. My thanks to these pastors and the members who regularly hold up the prophets' hands in many and various ways. My thanks also to our pastors at Faith in Pierre for so often hosting us and providing us sanctuary on the prairie. It's an exciting time to see where the Holy Trinity is leading us in our future together.

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## **Circuit 4 (Black Hills)**

Reverend David Warner, Circuit Visitor

The salvation power of God's Gospel bears fruit in the Black Hills Circuit. As sinners gathered around the forgiveness of Christ, delivered through Word, Water, Wheat and Wine, the people and pastors of Circuit 4 are moved by the Good News to proclaim and celebrate the grace and mercy of God, revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus, to love one another and our neighbors as Christ has loved us, and to work for the expansion of the Kingdom of God.

Both the most notable fruit and the most difficult setback for God's Kingdom in the Black Hills during the 2021 – 2024 period relate to the mission congregation in Belle Fourche. Following several years of development, Trinity Lutheran Church of Belle Fourche was founded and recognized by the LCMS as a member congregation. Pastor Don McKillop, who had been serving the mission, was called to pastor Trinity, his installation occurring May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023. We give thanks for the many ways that the salvation power of the Gospel was proclaimed and distributed through Trinity, Belle Fourche.

It was a disappointment to all when in the spring of 2024 the congregation voted to close, due to various challenges that had confronted them. The church materials and furnishings of Trinity were distributed between Circuit congregations, and Pastor McKillop worked hard to ensure all the remaining members of Trinity got connected to other LCMS congregations. We give thanks for the work of the Holy Spirit through Pastor McKillop and all the saints at Trinity, Belle Fourche. Circuit 4 continues to work to strengthen the bonds between our congregations. Examples include a combined Circuit Forum and Convocation in August of 2022. We elected Synodical delegates, and heard Dr. Daniel Jastram present on the LCMS mission in Japan at Zion, Rapid City. The turnout was excellent.

Our circuit congregations also support the Rally Breakfast and Dinner served by Blessed Emmanuel, Sturgis. Members of circuit congregations have helped serve at the event for years. In 2021 Blessed Emmanuel asked for more substantial and organized support, and offered to

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share the proceeds with the Circuit Pastors Conference. This new arrangement has worked well, and many members of our various congregations have become friends.

The Circuit Pastors Conference decided to create a Mission and Ministry Grant Fund with the monies received from the Rally Breakfast. Normally limited to \$500, these grants are intended to help Circuit congregations and other entities or persons within them with **local** mission and ministry needs and opportunities. Examples of grants include support for Circuit members attending seminary, VBS costs, community meal costs, and purchasing LCMS materials for evangelism training.

Zion Lutheran, Rapid City and Bethesda Lutheran, Hot Springs continue to proclaim the resurrection through their Lutheran schools. Zion is currently in a capital campaign to build new facilities to allow their school to expand. They are currently right at capacity for students and facility. And now Divine Shepherd, Black Hawk already running an Early Childhood Development Center, has added a primary school, using a classical one-room school model. Classes began in the Fall of 2024. Peace in Rapid City also attempted to re-open their Early Childhood Center in 2024. Due to severe building upgrade requirements, they were not able to do so.

As of the date of this writing, all Circuit 4 positions for ordained pastors are filled, for which we give thanks to the Lord of the Harvest. Circuit Visitor Rev. John Fries accepted a call to Kansas in 2022, and was replaced in November by Rev. David Warner.

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## **Circuit 5 (Mitchell)**

Reverend Ryan Loeslie, Circuit Visitor

The past three years have been enjoyable in the Mitchell Circuit. We are blessed to enjoy good unity in doctrine and practice while enjoying one another as pastors and congregations.

Our Winkel meets monthly for worship, fellowship, business, and study. We have been studying Martin Chemnitz's Church Order as a study in pastoral theology, while we have had a Greek study of the pastoral epistles, and now we have moved on to the book of James. Quite often our wives and children enjoy time with one another while the pastors have their meeting. This familial quality of our Winkel is a great strength, and we hope that continues.

Our congregations enjoy good stability in the Mitchell Circuit, though we certainly have challenges in this fallen world and a culture which is growing increasingly anti-Christian. Here is a short rundown on the ministry happening at our congregations:

St. John – Wolsey, Zion – Wessington Springs, and Mount Olive – Woonsocket continue to be served by Rev. Scott Spiehs and Rev. Richard Weeman.

Mount Calvary – Huron saw the departure of Rev. Chris Navurskis as Senior Pastor. Rev. Kevin Koester has moved into the position of Sole Pastor, while Rev. Dale Sattgast has provided part-time assistance in his retirement.

Zion – Mitchell established a vicarage program the summer of 2022. The Zion vicars have quickly become a fixture in the congregation, and they have greatly benefited from Rev. Daniel Grimmer's oversight. Zion is also busy building a brand new fellowship hall, which they hope will be completed by Christmas 2024.

I am grateful to the saints at Immanuel – Dimock over the past three years. Immanuel remains a steady and faithful congregation in the heart of the Mitchell Circuit. They have graciously supported my work as Circuit Visitor and more recently as vacancy pastor at Faith – Parkston.

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Faith – Parkston said goodbye to Rev. Ken Soyk after 19 years of faithful service in the summer of 2023, as he entered retirement. Faith and St. Peter – Clayton formed an official dual parish that summer in preparation for the calling of their next pastor. After an extensive parsonage remodel and ten-month vacancy, Faith and St. Peter welcomed Rev. Joseph Greenmyer as their new pastor in 2024. We were glad to welcome Pastor Greenmyer back to the Mitchell Circuit, as he had served his vicarage at Zion – Mitchell.

Redeemer – Armour is served by Rev. Jens Jenson, who continues to serve as a reserve chaplain in the United States Air Force.

Zion – Delmont and Emmaus – Tripp continue to be served by Rev. Brian Lemcke.

St. Paul – Plankinton and Trinity – White Lake shared joint Sunday evening worship services led by Pastor Jenson for two and a half years. Now recently Rev. Don McKillop has picked up the vacancy work, taking residence in Plankinton.

Our congregations are largely composed of South Dakota Lutherans whose families have been in their churches for generations. They are honest people who are skilled and know well how to work the land and make a living in this part of God's creation. Though our people are very self-sufficient, God's Gospel power is very evident in the lives of our congregations. We know that the Gospel is God's good news to us in his Son, and we enjoy all the blessings of Christ through faith, not works. I have enjoyed my work as Circuit Visitor, counseling and encouraging these congregations who have many good works, and yet do not boast in them. With confidence in our pastors and congregations, I believe we will brave these turbulent times of the Christian church and come through stronger.

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## **Circuit 6 (Freeman)**

Reverend Tom Christopher, Circuit Visitor

Circuit 6 (Freeman) is comprised of the following congregations:

St. Martin's Lutheran Church, Alexandria, SD and Trinity Lutheran Church, Spencer SD

Rev. Thomas Christopher

Zion Lutheran Church, Canistota, SD and St. John Lutheran Church, Montrose, SD

Vacant

First English Lutheran Church, Centerville, SD and Zion Lutheran Church, Hurley, SD

Rev. Kurt Laskowsky

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Freeman, SD

Vacant

Trinity Lutheran Church, Hartford, SD

Vacant

St. John Lutheran Church, Howard, SD and Our Savior Lutheran Church, Madison, SD

Rev. Joshua Mork

Bethesda Lutheran Church, Marion, SD, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Menno, SD, First English Lutheran Church, Parker, SD, and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Scotland, SD

Rev. Brian Mosemann

Risen Savior Lutheran Church, Tea, SD

Vacant

St. Peter Lutheran Church, Wentworth, SD

Vacant

I first of all want to thank the pastors of our Circuit, and of all the District, for their faithful service. As the years go on, the number of people in the pews in many of our rural congregations is dwindling, but the Church never shrinks and the elect Saints of God still gather around Word and Sacrament! Of all the blessings of this past triennium, the greatest is that Jesus is still being

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preached into the ears of the Saints and by the hearing of that powerful Gospel faith is planted and grown unto eternal life.

The pastors and congregations of our circuit continue to rejoice in God's Gospel power to save as the eternally elect saints continue to gather around Word and Sacrament even as we have been hit with some challenges and received some blessed joys in the last trennium. We rejoice to have received three new congregations in our circuit after action of the last convention: Risen Savior in Tea, First English in Centerville, and Zion in Hurley. Pastors Domenichelli and Laskowsky are also blessings to our brotherhood in the circuit, and even though Pastor Domenichelli now serves as missionary and pastor in Germany, he remains a part of our circuit and in constant contact with his brother pastors. The circuit also joyfully received Rev. Joshua Mork and his wife, Samantha, at Josh's installation on July 14.

2023 saw a beloved pastor and friend in the circuit, Rev. Scott Lemmerman, serving Canistota and Montrose, called to glory on November 26, the first pastor in our circuit to die in office. But it was with Gospel hope that we gathered on December 23 for a memorial service at Zion in Canistota as the Saints gave thanks for Rev. Lemmerman's short but very faithful and appreciated pastorate in the parish. Since then we have had several of our pastors either accept calls to other parts of the Vineyard or resign due to health reasons. As this report is written we find ourselves in a position where we have only four called pastors still serving in our circuit — five of our 9 pastorates are vacant! But the Word and Sacrament ministry goes on and we trust God will soon fill again all the pulpits in our circuit.

The brother pastors of the circuit join in monthly Winkels and other gatherings and we have begun to reboot our circuit-wide congregational gatherings for worship, Bible Study, and fellowship that before 2020 we were doing three times a year, but just haven't got back to yet.

By God's grace the Gospel is still being preached to the joy and strengthening of God's elect saints in the Freeman circuit of our beloved South Dakota District. May God, through His blessed Means of Grace, keep us all in these difficult days and bring us at last to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord!

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## Circuit 7 (Sioux Falls)

Reverend Corey Aker, Circuit Visitor

In the Sioux Falls Circuit, we are built on the powerful word of the Gospel. Salvation is proclaimed from the pulpits of our nine congregations. First, some of the major changes. Rev. Darren Olson was able to set the tone for Chaplaincy at our Sioux Falls Lutheran School (SFLS). Having taken a Call to serve the Lord elsewhere, the work of Chaplaincy has been carried by the ten association Church Workers: Pastors Aker, Ascher, Asmus, Drevlow, Newell, Rensner, and Slavens and DCEs Peters and Miller along with Deaconess Korthase. Although the might and power of God through the Gospel remains constant, those He raises to lead His congregations changes. In addition to Pastor Olson taking a Call, Pastor Meyer retired and **Lord of Life** Called Pastor Newell to lead them in their Gospel work in East Sioux Falls. Lord of Life is the one SF congregation offering exclusively contemporary worship, led and loved by their members. Pastor Drevlow received a Call and Deaconess Korthase got married and moved out of the area making **Our Redeemer** our circuit's sole vacancy. Revs. Shane and Morfitt have served admirably in their time of vacancy and their leaders continue to ensure the Gospel is proclaimed and the worship life remains vibrant! We are proud of our association school which has seen considerable growth — 40% in the last five years! This means new teachers and staff, new students and families, and new building projects. Executive Director, Tia Esser, and **SFLS** fearlessly instills the love of Christ's Gospel each day in their thriving community. Living righteously by faith, **Blessed Redeemer** has tirelessly focused on proclaiming Christ to the people of Brandon, adding Saturday night worship and continuing to share the love of Jesus with the children of their preschool. Change is on the horizon for Blessed Redeemer as their faithful shepherd, Pastor

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Deardoff, plans to retire. Their mother church, **Faith**, continues their work of unashamedly proclaiming the Gospel to the Sioux Falls Whittier neighborhood, led by Pastors Aker and Rensner. For two summers, their VBS was taken to the neighborhood. Hosting kids from the neighborhood and congregation, the righteous of Faith brought the Bible to life on the Whittier Middle School football field. Serving the NE part of town, **Christ** is ably pointing their faithful to focus on Christ alone through active, vibrant worship. Pastor Nix serves as their pastor along with his work in **Trinity Church of the Deaf**, a fine outreach of the SD District! From NW to SW Sioux Falls, Pastor Ascher serves as pastor to the saints of **Resurrection** where they have a wonderful Childcare Center called His Ark. In addition to his duties as part-time theology teacher at SFLS, Pastor Ascher is serving the vacancy in Hartford. The generosity of God's saints from Resurrection pours out into the community! Central to Sioux Falls and mother of all our congregations, **Zion** continues to forge new connections into the community through their Gospel outreach – Streets of Bethlehem, childcare center, vibrant children's ministry led by Chez Shoup, excellent youth ministry led by Jacob Shoup, and engaging worship for all ages led by Pastor Lehr and Jacob. Rounding us out is **Memorial** to the south. Recent upgrades to the campus have been enjoyed by one of our District's largest congregations. Dedicated to ministering to all ages, DCE Peters oversees the children's ministry and DCE Miller oversees Youth ministry. Pastors Asmus and Slavens, who also serves as a part-time theology teacher at SFLS, have been partnering in their leadership amongst the active saints of Memorial. Here we find another congregation soon to experience change as Pastor Asmus will be retiring this spring. Many of our congregations also support African ministries and/or childcare/pre-school and we are actively looking for when, where, and how to plant new ministries. The Sioux Falls Circuit joyfully joins the rest of our SD District in fearlessly proclaiming the Gospel!

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## **Circuit 8 (Yankton)**

Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Circuit Visitor

By God's salvation power, the saints of the Yankton Circuit continue to be strengthened by the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the power of Word and Sacrament ministry. We are thankful for the faithful service of the ordained and commissioned ministers in the Yankton Circuit to empower God's people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead.

Peace Lutheran, Alcester welcomed Rev. Don Erickson on May 29, 2022 after Rev. Brent Keller accepted a Call to Trinity Lutheran, Guttenberg and St. Paul Lutheran, McGregor, IA in the January 2022. Rev. Paul Warnier, Pastor Emeritus, served the vacancy.

Zion Lutheran, Avon and Our Savior's Lutheran, Springfield is served by Rev. Ken Johnson. Zion in particular, despite its small-town setting, has a number of young families and children strengthening their congregation.

Holy Cross Lutheran, Dakota Dunes welcomed back Rev. Dr. Michael Kumm (after retiring in 2018) as Assistant Pastor on January 16, 2022, along with Senior Pastor, Rev. Jeremy Richert. Holy Cross Lutheran Preschool continues to serve the community with the Gospel.

St. John's Lutheran, Tyndall and Martinus Lutheran, Utica is served by Rev. Dean Schroeder. Martinus, like Zion, Avon, also has a vibrant ministry of young families and children while being in a very rural setting.

Concordia Lutheran, Vermillion, served by Rev. Matthew Bless, has seen growth and increased participation with its campus ministry to students at the University of South Dakota.

St. John's Lutheran, Wagner and Trinity Lutheran, Fairfax, bid farewell and Godspeed to Rev. Bill Heermann, who retired in June 2024 after St. John's, Wagner celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with District President, Rev. Dr. Scott Sailer as the guest preacher. Despite its rural setting, Trinity also sees a number of young families and children participating in the congregation's life. The



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vacancy is served by Rev. Ken Johnson in Wagner and Rev. Clark Gies, Pastor Emeritus, in Fairfax.

St. John's Lutheran, Yankton welcomed Rev. Dr. Jacob Bobby as Associate Pastor on January 28, 2024 after Rev. Levi Willms accepted a Call to Trinity Lutheran, Sauk Rapids, MN in May 2023. The congregation celebrated its 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with festivities in October 2022, with former pastor emeritus Rev. Dave Gunderson as the guest preacher. St. John's Lutheran Preschool continues to share the Gospel with young children and their families in the Yankton area, and is working toward re-accreditation. St. John's is also served by Senior Pastor Rev. Steve Weispfennig and DCE Josh Schmitt.

Deaconess Andra Gates completed her service as a winter deaconess at Concordia Lutheran, Sarasota, FL in 2023. She continued to assist the pastors of the Yankton Circuit, especially St. John's, Yankton, until accepting a Call to Redeemer Lutheran, Mountain Home, AR in September 2024.

Following Circuit Realignment at the 2021 South Dakota District Convention, the parish of First English Lutheran, Centerville, and Zion Lutheran, Hurley were relocated to Circuit 6 (Freeman).

The Ordained and Commissioned workers of the circuit meet regularly for "Winkel" gatherings. At the Winkel, they worship and celebrate the Lord's Supper together, share ministry joys and concerns, and study the Gospel of Mark. Other matters of casuistry and study are taken up as needed. The church workers and their families also gather for an annual summer event (picnic or minor league baseball game) and Christmas party. The 2024 Circuit Convocation welcomed retired DCE Mark Schoepp presenting on "Caring for Aging Parents."

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**NOTE: These reports were written prior to the publication of the Convention Workbook; therefore some activities which occurred between that date and the time of convention are not included in these reports.**

## ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT JOB DESCRIPTION

South Dakota District LCMS  
Ministry Description –  
Assistant to the President (Executive Secretary)  
(adopted by the  
District's Board of  
Directors 8/4/2022)

**Position:** Assistant to the President (Executive Secretary)

### **Position General Description & Purpose:**

- A. Serve as the Assistant to the District President in getting to know the pastors and congregations and their needs, challenges, and opportunities. He will especially seek to visit with and encourage pastors as they carry out their ministries. He will also serve in various other administrative capacities in order to help carry out the responsibilities and programs of the District.
- B. Serve as the primary District staff member promoting God's mission of making disciples of all nations and of seeking and saving the lost, and in promoting the call of the Christian to serve our neighbors with deeds of love.
- C. Provide accountability and oversight for District-subsidized ministries in our responsibility of carrying out the mission opportunities our Lord puts before us.
- D. Serve as the supervisor of the Mission and Ministry Council (*per 2021 District Res. 2-04A*) or whatever structure succeeds it in providing support and ministry resources to church workers, congregations, and schools.
- E. Ensure that Biblical principles of stewardship are promoted throughout the District (*per Synod Bylaw 4.6*).

### **Working Relationships:**

Responsible to the District President, and under the supervision of the Board of Directors.

### **Term of Service:**

The Board of Directors shall normally appoint the Executive Secretary for a 3-year term, which shall expire at the time of one of the meetings of the Board of Directors held within six months of the completion of the District Convention. The Executive Secretary shall be appointed from a list of candidates provided by the District President and approved by the Board of Directors. At the close of each term, the incumbent shall be eligible to be appointed again. When the term of office of the Executive Secretary expires after a District Convention, and the President recommends that a different person serve as the Executive Secretary, the incumbent may continue to serve until a new Executive Secretary is installed. In the event that the incumbent is not appointed or declines his reappointment, his salary and benefits shall be provided until he accepts another position or for a period not to exceed six months.

### **Duties and Responsibilities:**

- A. Work as the Assistant to the District President
  1. Assist the President in getting to know the pastors and congregations, and report to the President the needs, challenges and opportunities that our workers and ministries are experiencing.
  2. Visit with and encourage pastors as they carry out their ministries.
  3. Serve as the director of the Lay Leadership Institute (arranging for instructors, promoting and scheduling classes).
  4. Serve as the director of Student Aid.
  5. Attend the annual gathering of Mission Executives and/or Stewardship Executives of the LCMS.

6. Attend and report at the meetings of the District Board of Directors, serving as an advisory member of the Board.
  7. Request quarterly reports from District-subsidized ministries, review the reports, and inform the Board of Directors as to the vitality and activities of the ministries.
  8. Perform an annual evaluation of all called District-subsidized ministries and staff for District budget, and seek budget recommendations from them.
  9. Assist with the call process for workers in District-subsidized ministries.
  10. Connect with LCMS organizations that resource this position, such as the Synod's Offices of International and National Mission (OIM, ONM).
  11. Carry out miscellaneous responsibilities, as requested by the District President and the Board of Directors.
- B. Work in Promoting God's Mission of Making Disciples and of the Christian's Obligation of Serving our Neighbor
1. Promote the mission work determined by District Convention or District Board of Directors' action, such as Together in Mission (TIM) and church planting efforts.
  2. With the assistance of the Mission and Ministry Council, strengthen congregations and their members in proclaiming the Gospel in their home, workplace, community, and congregation.
  3. With the assistance of the Mission and Ministry Council, equip and encourage individuals, congregations, and circuits in expressing their Christian concern, love, and compassion in meeting human needs to engage their community and world.
  4. Encourage collaboration and healthy partnerships with mission organizations, groups, and congregations, helping to identify a variety of ministry partners and resources, and connecting these to congregations and ministries.
  5. Evaluate the need for new ministries within the District and work within the District policies and procedures to advance new ministry opportunities.
- C. Work with District-Subsidized Ministries
1. Regular visitation with all District-subsidized ministry church workers to assess and respond to their spiritual, relational, emotional, physical, and educational needs.
  2. Provide the first line level of accountability for District-subsidized ministries, workers, and grant recipients, assisting them to keep activities within the policies and budget of the District.
- D. Work with the Mission and Ministry Council (or whatever structure succeeds it)
1. Assist the District President and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President in recruiting members of the Council.
  2. Supervise the work of the Mission and Ministry Council, and with the chairman of the Council, establish the meeting dates.
- E. Work in Promoting Biblical Stewardship
1. Ensure that Biblical principles of stewardship are promoted throughout the District by way of any means deemed appropriate (e.g., appointing a point person, articles in the email newsletter, etc.).

**Qualifications:**

- A person of the Word and prayer.
- Committed to the historical theological position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
- An active member of a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation.
- A leader with significant years of experience within congregations or schools of The

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- Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
  - Familiarity with church polity evidenced by experience with District and Synod on some level.
  - An effective team member with demonstrated competencies in:
    1. People skills (listening, caring, loving people)
    2. Teaching
    3. Team building and collaboration
    4. Strategic Planning and implementation
    5. Visionary
    6. Growth mindset
    7. Helping others develop interpersonal relationships
    8. Self-starter
    9. Knowledge of ministry resources
    10. Coach/Mentor
    11. Strong administration and follow-through
    12. Maintains confidentiality
    13. Maintains objectivity
    14. Comfortable with extensive travel
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## **EDUCATION EXECUTIVE (PART-TIME) JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Ministry Description**

South Dakota District--LCMS  
Education Executive (a part-time position)

The Education Executive position is part-time (20 hours or less) and may be done remotely. It is a contracted position, without benefits, and it may be filled by an LCMS rostered minister-commissioned, an LCMS rostered minister-ordained, or an LCMS layperson. The Education Executive is accountable to the District's Board of Directors and is under the supervision of the District President. The Board of Directors shall set the salary annually. Travel expenses within the District and to authorized Synod meetings and LEA convocations are covered by the District.

### **Responsibilities:**

This person shall serve as the primary District staff member providing resources, direction, and encouragement to the schools of the District, to their faculties and staffs, and to LCMS-rostered commissioned ministers serving in the District. To that end, he or she will:

1. Support the early childhood centers and preschools by communicating with their directors and teachers, an on-site visit to each annually or every other year, and by providing resources.
2. Support the Lutheran schools, especially by communicating with their administrators, an on-site visit to each, and by providing resources.
3. Assist the Lutheran schools and congregations in the call process and developing call lists, when calling commissioned ministers of religion.
4. Ensure that planning for the Fall Teachers' Conference is being done.
5. Stay informed concerning the activities of the South Dakota Christian Schools Association.
6. Stay informed concerning the federal and state legislation impacting private education.
7. Encourage and check on the well-being of the called Directors of Christian Education and deaconesses.
8. Give an in-person or written report to the regular meetings of the District's Board of Directors, serving as an advisory member of the Board.

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9. Serve as a member of the District's Mission and Ministry Council or whatever structure succeeds it.
  10. Attend the annual meeting of education executives of the Synod.
  11. Attend the occasional Lutheran Education Association (LEA) convocations.
  12. Serve as the NLSA commissioner of the District.
  13. Other duties as assigned.

**Term of Service:**

The Board of Directors shall normally appoint the Education Executive for a 3-year term, which shall expire at the time of one of the meetings of the Board of Directors held within six months of the completion of the District Convention. The Education Executive shall be appointed from a list of candidates provided by the District President and approved by the Board of Directors. At the close of each term, the incumbent shall be eligible to be appointed again. When the term of office of the Education Executive expires after a District Convention, and the President recommends that a different person serve as the Education Executive, the incumbent may continue to serve until such time as a contract is accepted and a new Education Executive is installed.

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## **Assistant to the President's Report**

Reverend Paul Winckler, Assistant to the President

The 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of the South Dakota District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod gathers under the banner of Romans 1:16-17. The heart of this passage, indeed the heart of all scripture, is Jesus and the assurance and confidence given to all who believe in Him.

In October 2022 I accepted the call as Assistant to the District President, moving into this new position not entirely certain of all that the future may hold, but moving forward in the hope of that assurance and confidence of Jesus, knowing that He who begins all things will bring all things to completion according to His good will.

Having been a life-long South Dakotan, I knew quite a bit about our state but I knew that there would be much more to learn. I have been blessed, over these last two years, to have you all, pastors and people, teach me more about your ministries and your communities. It is a privilege to have so many of you invite me to come to your congregations on Sundays to preach and lead studies. I have had the opportunity to fill the pulpits of 43 of our congregations (some multiple times!), providing opportunities for pastors to take time away to be with family or recover from illness or attend to the many responsibilities of the office, as well as giving some of our vacancy pastors an occasional respite.

The beautiful thing about our LCMS fellowship is that we are not a “top-down” organization. As President Sailer often says, in our Synod the “congregation is queen” and we in District or Synod have the honor of advising, not directing, the queen. It is a joy to fill this role of advisor in many capacities.

Over the last two years I have had the opportunity to facilitate connection with our District and the services of the Synod to support the good work being done by our congregations. We have hosted Rev. Dr. Mark Wood from the Office of National Mission twice to discuss tools and services in the areas of strategic planning, congregational ReVitality, witness and outreach, as well as church planting. Tools such as these have proven invaluable for congregations for effective planning.

God has blessed our District with many gifts, chief among these are God's people. A people who are certainly not ashamed of the Gospel but boldly answer the call to serve, share, and support. The gift of dedicated volunteers who desire to grow in faith, serve the congregation, and support the pastor through studying in the Lay Leadership Institute. The gift of revenue from farmland owned by the District has helped me and dozens of sons and daughters of our District attend colleges and seminaries to study for full-time church work vocations.

The Mission and Ministry Council has been a special blessing to our District, pulling together dedicated lay-leaders and church workers from across South Dakota and pulling in resources from across the Synod to examine and address needs and opportunities to work together boldly in the mission of the Gospel. There is certainly more to say and more reasons to celebrate, especially those highlights found in reports from Missionaries, Native American Ministry, Deaf Ministry, and Campus Ministry.

We look back with joy, giving thanks to God for his many blessings and we look ahead with hope and confidence in the blessings of God our Father who gives great gifts, God the Son who has redeemed us, and God the Holy Spirit who calls us and equips us to be bold in faith, love, service and witness.

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## Mission and Ministry Council

Krista Erickson, Chairman

Established by the 2021 Convention, the Mission & Ministry Council has been joyfully centered on the saving power of the Gospel while working to provide support and resources to church workers, congregations, schools, and other ministries in our District. The Council is currently comprised of ten representatives from all eight circuits—a combination of pastors, commissioned workers, and lay members—as well as four advisory members: our District President, First Vice President, Assistant to the President, and Education Executive.

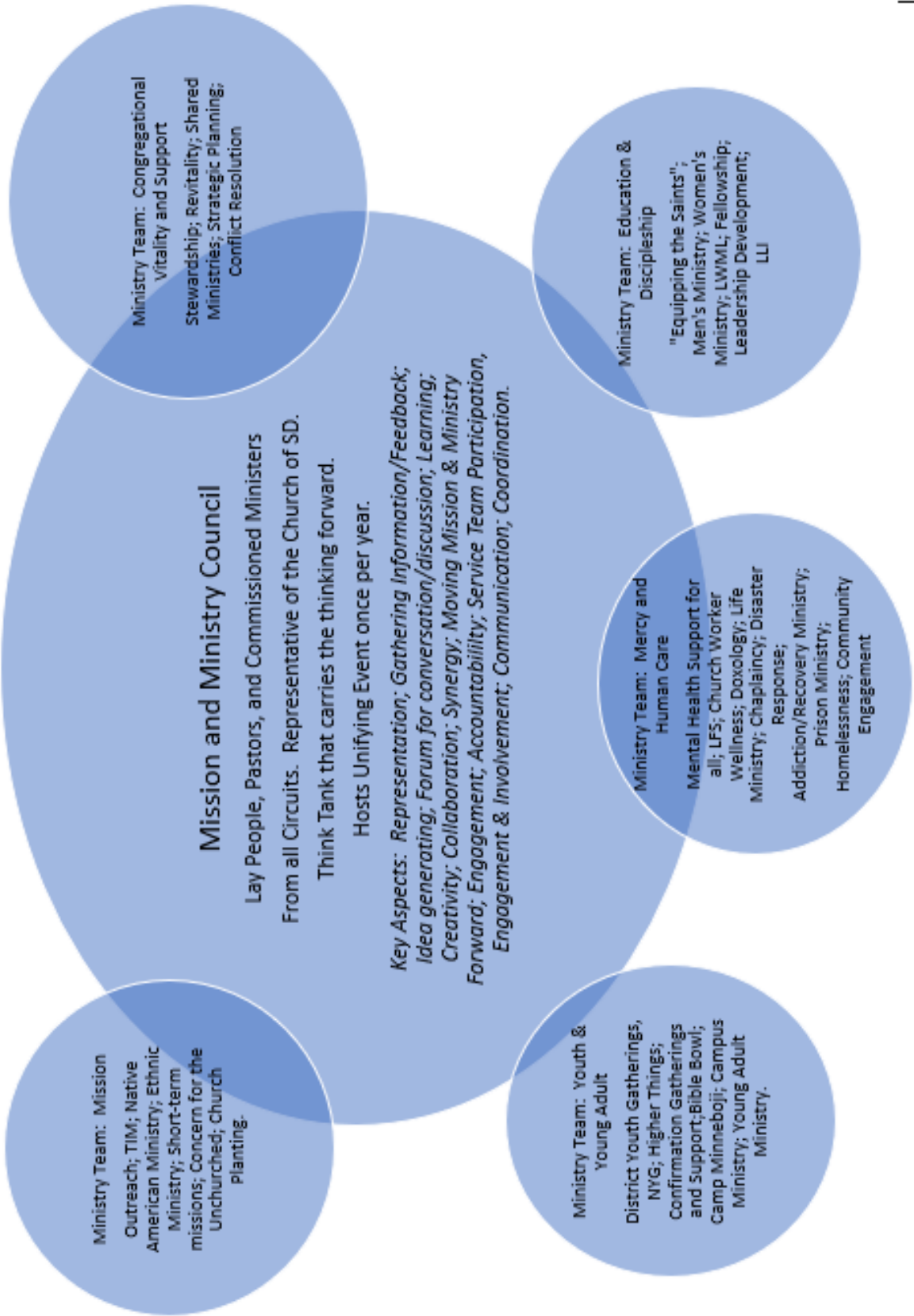
As a new council, we first examined the purpose of the Mission & Ministry Council as stated in the Convention resolution and learned about previous structures for providing resources and support within our District. We participated in a presentation on the church's mission and explored the needs of our neighbors and of our church workers, congregations, schools, and other ministries, being mindful of the wonderful work already being done in these areas. This set the tone for the group to further study, prioritize, and address both needs and opportunities. Reports at each meeting from national youth leaders, mental and physical health professionals, our missionaries to Native Americans, church worker development leaders, rural and small town ministry workers, and more provide us the opportunity to gather and process information, generate ideas, and prayerfully plan as a body.

The Council has identified five Ministry Areas which encompass current ministries and projects: Mission; Youth & Young Adult; Mercy & Human Care; Education & Discipleship; and Congregational Vitality & Support. The Mission & Ministry Council serves to support these areas and to encourage and assist with collaboration. We have held focus groups in each of these areas, inviting various ministry leaders to share their experience and ideas, and hope to expand this to create a larger network for engaging and partnering in ministry. Furthermore, God has generously provided a wealth of wonderful resources, and we have tasked ourselves with both providing an accessible, easy-to-use list of those resources and facilitating the means of delivery.

P.A.S.S. It On! is one such way in which the Mission & Ministry Council is delivering ideas and inspiration for mission and ministry. This annual workshop is designed to supply our church workers and lay members with the knowledge and tools for serving the Lord and our neighbors while proclaiming the salvation power of the Gospel. Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler of the Lutheran Hour was the plenary speaker for the 2023 inaugural event, and breakout sessions included the topics of evangelism, youth ministry, finance, church leadership, mental wellness, caring for church workers, and stewardship. The 2024 event focused on the intersection of faith and culture, with Rev. Dr. Greg Seltz from the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty delivering the keynote address. Other presentations centered on truth, identity, and purpose; defending the faith; and a Biblical response to LGBTQ, followed by a panel discussion and Q&A. It is an incredible blessing to provide these events at no cost to attendees, and the turnout and feedback have been overwhelmingly positive.

The development of Men's Ministry is another exciting way in which the Council is working. In 2023 Peace Lutheran in Brookings hosted a men's retreat, with retired SDSU football coach John Stiegelmeier encouraging men to live their faith boldly. The 2024 "Man Up!" retreat took place at Campfire Cabins in the Black Hills, with fellowship activities, a servant event, and inspiration for men to lead as faithful followers of Christ. Look for more to come!

We are truly inspired by and grateful for the many faithful servants with whom God has so graciously blessed our District and look forward to continuing His Kingdom work with you!





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## **District Archives**

Reverend Robert and Mrs. Kim Heckmann, Harrisburg, SD

God's Gospel, Salvation Power. That's what the work of your SD District LCMS archivists amounts to, year in and year out. We are empowered by the Lord to keep track of God's work in SD congregations whether it be installations of pastors, DCE's or deaconesses, coming to our district eager to bring that Good News of salvation in Jesus, or teachers who love to work with God's children, bringing that Good News of Jesus to their young charges every day in their classrooms.

Your archivists have been storing that information in District archives with the able assistance of President Sailer, Assistant to the President Winckler, Mr. Chad Zinnel, and Mrs. Julie Pike. Duties also include getting archival/historical information out to interested parties, in SD and all across the nation for that matter, when there are questions about past marriages, confirmations, baptisms and funerals. Feel free to contact us whenever you need any sort of records or information from the District. We'll do our best to dig it up.

We have also been organizing and updating records for our District congregations on an ongoing basis. Generally, congregations keep their own records but when a congregation closes its doors after ministering God's Word and Sacraments to their communities for many decades, records come to the archivists. Do contact us when you have questions about any historical documents we may have at the District office having to do with an active or "retired" congregation.

As your SD District LCMS archivists, we are here to serve you. Let us know when we can be of assistance to you as we work together to serve the Lord in His Kingdom, on our way to Glory!

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## **Sioux Falls Hospital Chaplaincy Program**

Reverend Matthew Nix, Sioux Falls, SD

What an honor it is to be able to share the love of Christ with people I may have never met before. As your hospital chaplain, I try to share the comfort and peace of God with those who may be feeling no comfort and little peace. Nobody wants to be in the hospital. We all want to be healthy and able to enjoy the life we have been blessed with. But when times of physical, mental or spiritual pain happen, God's Word is able to bring comfort and peace.

Over these past four years, the visits have been many. Let me share just a few with you. The birth of a child is supposed to be a time of great joy. But when that birth happens long before the due date, that joy can be shattered. But that shattered joy can be restored if you have skilled medical staff and a caring pastor. The pastor was able to baptize the child soon after the birth, the medical staff was able to care for both mother and child over the next few months and I was blessed to be able to share Jesus until they were able to leave the hospital and go home. Another someone needing surgery, being told that the odds of surviving the surgery were minimal at best. Visiting with them and their family and seeing the faith they have regardless of the outcome. Then, being able to visit when everything went well and the doctors almost couldn't believe it. Being able to be there when someone is in a bed they will never get out of while their parents and child sit nearby. Sharing the promises of meeting again on the last day. What a comfort God is for those who trust in Him.

I would like to encourage you to remember me when you or someone you know is going to be in one of our Sioux Falls' hospitals. It is almost impossible to get a list of LCMS patients anymore. Please contact me so that I am able to visit. Also, if you are in one of our hospitals let the chaplain there know that you are LCMS and would like a visit by an LCMS chaplain. Many of them know me or at least of me and will usually contact me. I can be reached at (605-338-LCMS).

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Thank you again for allowing this ministry to happen. There are countless pastors and others who truly appreciate your support.

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## **Church Worker Education Debt Assistance (CWEDA)**

Rev. Dr. Scott C. Sailer, for the District Board of Directors

Since it was established by action of the 2004 District Convention, the Church Worker Education Debt Assistance fund – or CWEDA – has provided grants to rostered church workers in The South Dakota District. Such grants are needed by our pastors, teachers, deaconesses, and DCEs because most of the new workers coming into our District are bearing significant debt from four to seven years of payments for tuition and housing from their college and seminary training. Typically, each of the workers assisted through CWEDA brings from \$30,000-80,000 in such debt with them into their brand-new ministries in South Dakota. A few bear more than \$100,000 in debt. With beginning salaries for brand-new pastors in South Dakota being around \$40,000, and salaries for new commissioned ministers in the low to mid-\$30,000s, it is easy to see that such debt is difficult for them to manage. Therefore, the CWEDA grants have been a tremendous blessing to our church workers.

The grants are funded by undesignated gifts to the District. In addition, there is a small CWEDA endowment fund, totaling about \$29,000. Congregations, church groups, and individuals are encouraged to consider a gift to the CWEDA endowment fund.

The Board of Directors set aside \$20,000 for CWEDA grants in 2021 and 2022. In the summer of 2022, the Board authorized a “bonus” awarding of grants, in addition to the normal year-end awarding of grants. In 2023 and 2024, the Board set aside \$40,000 each year.

The increases in 2023 and 2024, along with the “bonus” grants in 2022, were the result of the adoption of 2021 District Convention Res. 1-07, “To Allow Grants from the District Assistance Fund to Church Workers to Pay Down Student Loans.” The resolution authorizes the Board of Directors of the District “to annually transfer a portion of the balance of the Assistance fund to be used to supplement the Church Worker Educational Debt Assistance grants.”

Here is a listing of the number of grants and the average grant amount for the past four years:

2021:	13 grants awarded (12 pastors and 1 commissioned minister)	\$1,538 – average grant
2022:	14 grants awarded (11 pastors and 3 commissioned ministers)	\$1,500 – average grant
	Summer of 2022 “bonus” grants: 10 grants (7 pastors, 3 commissioned)	\$1,800 – average grant
2023:	10 grants awarded (7 pastors and 3 commissioned ministers)	\$4,000 – average grant
2024:	5 grants awarded (4 pastor and 1 commissioned minister)	\$4,000 – average grant.

The Lord has graciously given us full-time workers in the Church. His generous people in the District have been the Lord’s instruments to assist these workers in this special way with CWEDA grants. I join these workers in the District in expressing our thanks to you for this needed, tangible support!

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## **Lay Leadership Institute**

Reverend Paul Winckler, Assistant to the President

In 2007 the South Dakota District inaugurated the Lay Leadership Institute with the goal of strengthening laity the in faith and equipping them to serve as leaders in their congregations. Since it’s inception dozens of laypeople have enrolled in the programs, including some men who have moved into the pastoral ministry through the seminaries and SMP.

LLI classes are offered on a Fall/Spring semester schedule and the cost remains \$200 per participant. To complete the program participants enroll in nine classes. Courses are taught by Pastors and DCE's of the District and include in-person learning opportunities combined with electronic and teleconference class meetings.

Over the last triennium five classes were offered and 29 students enrolled in classes. Among those students, two successfully completed the entirety of the course and many more are on the way to achieving completion.

New to the LLI program over these last years has been the combination of the "Worship" and "Homiletics" classes into one "Proclaiming the Gospel in Worship" class. This new class focuses on reading a prepared sermon text instead of students writing their own sermon.

A special thank you to all who helped with the LLI classes over the triennium, including our instructors: DCE Joshua Schmitt, Rev. Christopher Navurskis, Rev. Kevin Koester, Rev. Dr. Brian Mosemann, Rev. Micah Bauer, and Rev. Tim Rynearson. Thank also to Rev. Sam Handschke and the people of Faith Lutheran in Pierre as well as Rev. Kevin Koester and the people of Mt. Calvary Lutheran in Huron for hosting classes.

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## **TOGETHER IN MISSION**

### **Reverend Dr. Daniel Jastram, Missionary to Japan and Asia**

Dear Pastors and Congregations of the South Dakota District:

As an LCMS missionary kid born and raised in Japan, I always had difficulty answering the question "Where are you from?" Hartford, South Dakota was my family home in the States where we always came for furloughs. Niigata Japan was my family home overseas where my parents served as missionaries. These two "homes" each have exerted a life-long influence for my current missionary work in Japan.

After graduating from my international high school in Tokyo Japan I returned to Hartford and Sioux Falls. Then following college in Vermillion, seminary, graduate school, and a call into LCMS ministry as professor and pastor, I followed in the footsteps of my father and accepted this call as a missionary to Japan where I have now served for eight and a half years.

My parents, after twenty-three years of LCMS missionary work in Japan, had returned to the States in 1976 to serve at Emmanuel Gettysburg, South Dakota. They and their colleagues left behind in Japan a well-established Lutheran partner church body with over 30 Japanese congregations, about 30 Japanese pastors, two Japanese Lutheran high schools, and one jointly owned and operated seminary in Tokyo.

However, in the following decades, liberal theology overcame the Japan Lutheran Church. After more than fifty years of considering women's ordination, and under the influence of liberal Lutheran church bodies and entities, and after a dozen years of dedicated theological dialog and brotherly admonition from the LCMS, the Japan Lutheran Church finally broke relations with the LCMS in 2021 by officially adopting the ordination of women as pastors.

As that break was officially recognized by the 2023 LCMS convention, our Japan mission work took on a new direction. Instead of supporting the previous church body partner, we now focus on three goals: 1) to provide regular worship services in Japan faithful to sound Lutheran doctrine and practice; 2) to manage translation work of Lutheran theological resources; 3) to nurture relations with local Lutheran pastors who desire to be faithful to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

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Over the past eight and a half years, God has richly blessed this work in Japan. During my initial mission support raising, South Dakota District congregations became generous partners through my visitation of 42 out of the 114 district congregations.

This support made it possible to establish our mission station in Tokyo and to begin work on our current mission goals. We provide regular Divine Services of Word and Sacrament at three different worship sites. We manage the translation of substantive theological texts now reaching nine titles. We nurture close relations with six identified Japanese Lutheran pastors dedicated to sound Lutheran teaching and practice. One of these six is currently enrolled in the Ph.D. Missiology intensive study curriculum at our LCMS seminary. One serves at our LCMS “sister congregation” in Kobari Niigata. And three eagerly look forward to official theological dialog with the LCMS to clarify specific points of unity in doctrine and practice.

Mission efforts like these depend on your generous Together In Mission (TIM) district partnership. Your partnership, and the additional sustaining contributions of individuals, congregations, and LWML groups make this mission work possible. As the sole LCMS missionary currently serving in Japan, I thank you.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, for your TIM partnership and for the contributions of individuals and church groups throughout the South Dakota District.

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## **TOGETHER IN MISSION**

### **Reverend Jonah Domenichelli, Missionary to Germany**

Dear pastors and congregations of the South Dakota District:

It is truly a joy to work with you as partners in delivering the Gospel: God's power unto salvation, to those living abroad in an area of the world where we would expect the good news of Christ to be present.

In 2020, I was ordained and was called by Christ to serve the beloved saints of a small rural congregation in Tea, SD for the first three years of my ministry. Just shy of a year ago, in November 2023, I was called through the LCMS Office of International Missions (OIM) to serve as a career missionary in Germany to plant a church where Word and Sacrament ministry is sorely lacking. To my surprise the specific mission target was not German nationals as you might suspect, but rather US men, women and children, living in Germany, near and around Spangdahlem Air Base, a US air base with lots of DoD, military, and expatriate personnel around that location. That is not to say that I would not or could not serve German nationals, only that my focus are those US persons (your sons, daughters, grandchildren, etc...) who have been sent to serve in Germany at the behest of the US government or simply living abroad, who are in desperate need of the Gospel received through real, tangible Word and Sacrament ministry.

As a retired Airman of the US Air Force, and having lived in Germany before, I felt this call was important because I had experienced a similar situation when I served in this country. I received my orders to serve in Germany in 2007. I went willingly in service of my country taking along my wife and my 11-month-old son. What I did not expect was that even though I was moving to “the-land-of-Luther,” I would be confronted with a very secular culture and a huge limitation to receive faithful Word and Sacrament ministry. That is not to say we don't have faithful LCMS chaplains who are serving around the world, but at the time my family and I were stationed in Germany, there was not a faithful LCMS pastor available to serve us, nor a body of believers we could be in full fellowship with. In many ways this left us lonely and without a strong cohort of Lutherans to help us through some of the most difficult and strenuous times in our life.

This new call brings with it challenges and struggles, but also joy, thanksgiving and praise to our living God. On June 1, 2024, we arrived in country with nothing but suitcases. Within 1 week of

arrival, we were able to find an adequate home for our family to live in, thanks be to God! It's fitting place to live, as the distances between our mission location and the children's school were the important factors to finding the right home for our family. We enrolled our children in the nearest international school and we spent the first two months working on the paperwork to establish residency in Germany, find vehicles sufficient for our family, and furnish our home with the necessary items such as beds, a table and kitchen supplies. As we worked toward getting ourselves established, I also worked toward coming up with a plan for planting a church near Spangdahlem AB, Germany, and acquiring the necessary items to hold Divine Service. As we planned our way, the Lord established our steps. I coordinated with the Kaiserslautern Evangelical Lutheran Church (KELC), an LCMS sponsored, English-speaking congregation located in Kaiserslautern, Germany near Ramstein Air Base, to assist with identifying LCMS families living near Spangdahlem AB. Upon identifying three families, I contacted each of them to determine their desire to be a part of a new church plant closer to their area. Each family agreed with joy. Four families in total, including the Domenichelli family, came together through Word and Sacrament to form a new congregation in the Spangdahlem area. At the time of submitting this letter in October 2024, for publication in the 2025 South Dakota District Convention Workbook, we have held four Divine Services with six Bible Studies with this new church plant congregation since September 1, 2024.

So, I give thanks to God for you dear saints of the South Dakota District for the support you have provided thus far. Your partnership in the Gospel matters. We could not have made it here, set up a place to live, and begun working on this church plant without your faithful prayers and offerings to God on our behalf through the Together In Mission (TIM) program. Your mission dollars matter. We thank God for everything that He has provided. The growth of this new church plant is His workmanship through His saving Gospel. Together we are witnessing the work of the Holy Spirit who calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies His people into the body of Christ. The same body you dear saints are a part of and receive the Gospel into your ears and mouths for you every Lord's Day. Please continue steadfast in these things and greet each other with the love of Christ on our behalf.

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## **TOGETHER IN MISSION**

### **Reverend Jordon Andreasen, Missionary to Romania**

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the South Dakota District,  
„Căci mie nu mi-e rușine de Evanghelia lui Hristos, fiindcă ea este puterea lui Dumnezeu pentru mântuirea fiecăruia care crede...” Romani 1:16

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel (of Christ), for it is the power of God for salvation of everyone who believes...” Romans 1:16

It is with joy that I am granted to share this report not only as a former pastor of the district, but now as your missionary serving as a Church Planter and Theological Educator with the budding Confessional Lutheran Church of Romania.

These words of St. Paul are words of promise and exhortation for us as the people of God. They are words of promise and strength as we do not see the efforts of the church through human invention or strategy, but rather in terms of God's work in Christ. We faithfully administer and trust God to work through His promised Means of Grace to bring about faith and salvation. When questions arise, we do not turn to our wisdom, but the Word of Christ. We do not seek to preach something new or better than what Jesus preached. We seek to hold fast to the confession that we have received. Jesus himself only proclaimed what He was given from the Father we are not above our teacher! This is true in Romania as it is in Africa, Asia and in South Dakota!

At the time of my writing this report (October 2024) we are only now preparing to depart for Brașov, Romania. We have been deployed to St. Louis spending time learning Romanian as we

awaited the birth of our son Simeon. It has been a blessing for all this to take place before moving overseas. It will indeed be a blessing as we move and adjust to life in Romania. Even more, to be about the work of proclaiming Christ clearly! By the time this report is available for the convention I will, God willing, be further acquainted with and increasingly involved in the evangelistic work in Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria and Greece and elsewhere! As we do this work it is in this simple reality of God's promise and work through His Word and Sacraments. This is only our work in that God has called us to preach and teach without shame. He is the one who will work faith through His promised means. That is our trust and that is the lens through which we work and see what He is doing.

This too is your place and work. It may have greater complexities in a District and congregations much larger than are present here, but the truth is the same. The same danger to doubt God's work, the same danger to lean on our own understanding exists there as here. The same danger for other things to remove our gaze and focus from God's Word and promises. God works where and when He pleases through the Word and Sacraments, we are called by Him to be faithful. These are not things for which we are ashamed, but the source of confidence and faith in Christ Jesus who is the Savior of the World! We look to Christ, we cling to His forgiveness and we give a defense for the hope that is within us until He returns.

May the Lord bless you all and grant that we all remain steadfast in the Truth of Christ until He comes!

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## **TOGETHER IN MISSION**

### **Reverend Sam Bobby, Missionary to Latvia**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ of the Beloved South Dakota District,

I submit this report with all humility and joy, ever thankful and amazed at God's work in and through His church. I commend President Sailer for choosing such a befitting theme for this year's convention. Like St. Paul, how can we be ashamed of such a great salvation? The gospel truly is the power of God who, through the Word made flesh, brings us eternal gifts well beyond our sinful imagination.

I wish to inform you of the work God is doing here in Riga, Latvia by utilizing your convention theme. The gospel is the power of God for salvation to all who believe, and I see that power manifesting itself in the work God has put before me and the rest of the missionaries at Luther Academy, Riga, Latvia. One mark of God's gospel power has been trust. On the mission field, so much is out of your control, so God calls you back over and over to your baptismal promises and teaches you to trust Him.

But this trust extends well beyond me individually. Luther Academy is the seminary for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL), a church with whom we in the LCMS have been in fellowship since 2002. In 2018, one of their bishops came across a new law that allowed an accredited educational institution within a European Union (EU) country to extend its accredited program to all the countries of the EU *if* that program introduced an English-speaking component. That is how the LCMS became involved. Leadership in the LCMS realized for some time that sending potential pastors from the Eurasia region to ecumenical seminaries resulted in pastors with poor doctrine and very little practical training. This new law would give the LCMS an opportunity to partner with the ELCL and provide an accredited professional seminary degree.

This is where so much of what followed was simply trusting in the Lord because of the Savior and gospel we shared. Through the extensive work of missionaries prior to me arriving, a reduced residency seminary offered in English was formed. Would students enroll? They had to trust the Lord! That trust was not in vain. Students from all over the region enrolled, and within a couple of

years these missionaries had well over 20 students studying through this fledgling confessional Lutheran seminary program located in the heart of the Baltic region.

I was called to Luther Academy to teach classes on Lutheran doctrine. Since arriving, I have also taken on the roll of chaplain and Director of Vicarage. This year we have 26 total students from 16 different countries. These students are men from all walks of life who will go back to their churches and regions to proclaim the gospel as the power of God for salvation just like St. Paul says. I work with them and the pastors from their home congregations to ensure that the vicarage process is effective and faithful. I organize all our Monday evening chapel services, and I teach our students the importance of the Lutheran Confessions and sound doctrine.

I cannot overstate the potential impact Luther Academy could have throughout Eurasia. Each of these pastors will spend the rest of their days, God willing, shepherding their flocks, witnessing to Christ through the life of the church, and teaching, training, and counseling people in God's word. Each soul is precious to God, and the work done through Luther Academy, through each pastor God sends from here, has the prospect of claiming innumerable men, women, and children for Christ. Will that happen by necessity? No, but I trust that God will bring it to completion because of the gospel and the power that gospel engenders.

Another manifestation of the power of the Gospel is thankfulness. My family and I are thankful for you and for the support you provide. This thankfulness is not mere words but a deep recognition that we are joined by our common need for Jesus and our common desire for all to be saved and come to the knowledge of our Lord. We continue in this joint gospel venture with all of you *because* of all of you. Thank you.

We here at Luther Academy will see our first class graduate next spring, and we are very excited. You should be excited too. These pastors go out because of your partnership and commitment and because all of us trust the power of the gospel to accomplish that for which God sent it.

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## **TOGETHER IN MISSION**

**Reverend Cory Rajek**

**Office of International Mission, Missionary – Eurasia Region, Riga, Latvia**

*"Be strong and courageous ... for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you." (Deuteronomy 31:6)*

The words above are part of Moses' great goodbye spoken to the people of Israel as he prepared to hand over leadership to Joshua. Moses served his purpose. He led the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt, through the forty years of wilderness wandering, and to the shores of the Promised Land. But, with the Lord's good pleasure, it was now time to move on. His time of leading God's people was over.

As I reflect upon this text, I can resonate a bit with what Moses must have been experiencing. In a span of about three years, I left Faith Lutheran in Pierre to serve first as a missionary/theological educator in Riga, Latvia, then as an associate regional director (ARD) of Eurasia, then as a regional director (RD) of Eurasia, and finally as the Executive Director of the Office of International Mission (OIM). As a missionary/theological educator, I taught seminary students from the Eurasia region at the regional seminary started by the LCMS. This seminary, called Luther Academy – Riga, is now fully accredited in the European Union and has a student body approaching 40. Aside from teaching, I also served on the academic council where I worked to develop the curriculum for the seminary. Additionally, I worked with our local partner church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia, to plant an English-speaking congregation in Riga for tourists and expats. After a short time teaching at the seminary, I had served my purpose, and with the Lord's good pleasure, it was time to move on.

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Next, I was appointed as ARD for the Eurasia region. In this role, I mainly worked directly with LCMS partner churches and in planting a Lutheran church in Israel. Currently, a small group of native Israelis are meeting for worship services conducted in Hebrew and soon there will be a native Israeli man who will be ordained as a Lutheran pastor to serve this group. After a very short time as ARD, I had served my purpose, and with the Lord's good pleasure, it was time to move on.

Following my six-month service as ARD, I was appointed as the Eurasia RD after my predecessor retired from the position. As the RD for Eurasia, I was responsible for LCMS mission and business activities from the birthplace of Lutheranism to the Holy Land to the heart of Islam in the Middle East to India, which is the LCMS's first international church plant, and finally, to the formerly atheistic Soviet Union. The Eurasia Region is OIM's largest region in land mass. It was a busy year of meeting with missionaries and church partners, developing strategic plans, approving budgets and regional expenses, and giving lectures on what LCMS international mission is all about. In addition, I worked to expand our Lutheran church plants beyond Israel to several other countries. But after a year as RD, I had served my purpose, and with the Lord's good pleasure, it was time to move on.

In January 2024, I accepted a call to serve as the Executive Director of OIM. In fact, as I now write this report, I am serving in St. Louis in this capacity. As the Executive Director of OIM, I oversee the staff in St. Louis, all LCMS international missionary care, the overall direction (mission and business) of international mission for the LCMS and OIM's interactions with LCMS church partners around the world among other things. Additionally, I represent OIM to the LCMS at large and the good work our OIM missionaries are doing internationally.

While my role over the last few years has dramatically changed, the mission our Lord has given has not changed. He continues to make disciples through Word and Sacrament as He has promised in Matthew 28. With the support of people and districts like South Dakota, OIM will continue to work toward Planting Lutheran Churches and connecting people to the places where our Savior has promised to be present. On a personal note, I cannot express enough my profound thankfulness to the South Dakota District for the support I received over the last few years. It has been a great privilege and honor to partner with you in the mission God has given us. Thank you for all you have done for me and the Lord be with you!



**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH –  
MISSOURI SYNOD**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND  
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**

**JANUARY 14, 2024**

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH –  
MISSOURI SYNOD**

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of  
South Dakota District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

### Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of South Dakota District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, a nonprofit organization (the Church), which comprise the statement of financial position as of January 14, 2024, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Church as of January 14, 2024, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Church and to meet our ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Church's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

### ***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Church's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Church's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

## Report on Summarized Comparative Information

Other auditors previously audited the Church's 2023 financial statements, and they expressed an unmodified opinion on those audited financial statements in their report dated September 11, 2023. In our opinion, the summarized information presented herein as of and for the year ended January 14, 2024, is consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements from which it has been derived.

*Wohlberg Ritzman + Co., LLC*

Yankton, South Dakota  
August 31, 2024

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
 JANUARY 14, 2024  
 WITH SUMMARIZED COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR JANUARY 14, 2023

**ASSETS**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS:</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 135,108	\$ 91,914
Accounts receivable	684	1,506
Accrued interest receivable	11,309	405
Lease receivable	53,925	-
Prepaid expenses	8,772	8,378
Contributions receivable	706,437	757,369
Short-term investments	2,841,865	2,957,079
Current maturities-loans receivable	<u>22,523</u>	<u>11,690</u>
Total current assets	<u>3,780,623</u>	<u>3,828,341</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Long-term investments	913,670	907,018
Lease receivable - less current portion	53,762	-
Gifts receivable	192,044	183,744
Loans receivable - less current maturities	37,773	12,168
Property & equipment, net	<u>168,850</u>	<u>183,511</u>
Total non-current assets	<u>1,366,099</u>	<u>1,286,441</u>
<b>RESTRICTED ASSETS</b>		
Farmland	<u>25,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>
Total restricted assets	<u>25,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 5,171,722</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 5,139,782</u></b>

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES:</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 125,002	\$ 111,070
Unearned revenue - lease	<u>107,687</u>	<u>-</u>
Total current liabilities	<u>232,689</u>	<u>111,070</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	1,084,219	1,116,857
Designated by the board	<u>1,609,325</u>	<u>1,588,363</u>
Total without donor restrictions	<u>2,693,544</u>	<u>2,705,220</u>
With donor restrictions:		
Purpose restrictions	1,480,771	1,575,188
Time restrictions	<u>764,718</u>	<u>748,304</u>
Total with donor restrictions	<u>2,245,489</u>	<u>2,323,492</u>
Total net assets	<u>4,939,033</u>	<u>5,028,712</u>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 5,171,722</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 5,139,782</u></b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part  
of these financial statements.

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD**

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
 YEAR ENDED JANUARY 14, 2024  
 WITH SUMMARIZED COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 14, 2023

	<b>2024</b>			<b>2023</b>
	<u>Without Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>With Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>SUPPORT, REVENUES, AND GAINS/LOSSES</b>				
Support:				
District congregations	\$ 453,405	\$ 771,886	\$ 1,225,291	\$ 1,316,672
Synodical entities & out of state congregations	78,035	34,019	112,054	150,656
Other	1,448	60,565	62,013	151,292
Revenue:				
Lutheran witness	125,488	-	125,488	85,907
Conventions, conferences, & workshops	93,644	-	93,644	75,273
Interest income	13,439	59,517	72,956	6,064
Investment income	54,145	-	54,145	(11,081)
Lease Income	57,250	-	57,250	-
Other	-	-	-	1,337
Net unrealized and realized gains/(losses)	<u>11,297</u>	<u>34,224</u>	<u>45,521</u>	<u>(153,479)</u>
Total Support, Revenue, and Gains/Losses	<u>888,151</u>	<u>960,211</u>	<u>1,848,362</u>	<u>1,622,641</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Program activities:				
World and national missions	78,349	-	78,349	76,163
Preparing church workers	246,004	-	246,004	210,775
Congregational services	875,464	-	875,464	844,736
Support services:				
Synodical budget	377,085	-	377,085	374,962
Management and general	<u>361,139</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>361,139</u>	<u>371,603</u>
Total Expenses	<u>1,938,041</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,938,041</u>	<u>1,878,239</u>
Reclassification of Net Assets:				
Net assets released from restriction in satisfaction of				
Purpose restrictions	395,465	(395,465)	-	-
Time restrictions	<u>642,749</u>	<u>(642,749)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Change in Net Assets	(11,676)	(78,003)	(89,679)	(255,598)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	<u>2,705,220</u>	<u>2,323,492</u>	<u>5,028,712</u>	<u>5,284,310</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$ 2,693,544</u>	<u>\$ 2,245,489</u>	<u>\$ 4,939,033</u>	<u>\$ 5,028,712</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part  
of these financial statements.

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD**

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES  
 YEAR ENDED JANUARY 14, 2024  
 WITH SUMMARIZED COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 14, 2023

	<u>2024</u>							<u>Total</u>	<u>2023</u> <u>Total</u>
	<u>Program Activities</u>				<u>Support Services</u>				
	<u>World and National Missions</u>	<u>Preparing Church Workers</u>	<u>Congregational Services</u>	<u>Total Program</u>	<u>Synodical Budget</u>	<u>Management and General</u>	<u>Total Support</u>		
Expenses									
Salaries and wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 334,106	\$ 334,106	\$ -	\$ 156,404	\$ 156,404	\$ 490,510	\$ 463,954
Employee benefits	-	-	112,782	112,782	-	63,960	63,960	176,742	185,250
Payroll taxes	-	-	-	-	-	11,969	11,969	11,969	12,042
Subsidies, grants and other assistance	78,349	171,004	114,700	364,053	377,085	-	377,085	741,138	729,823
Building and office expenses	-	-	-	-	-	72,217	72,217	72,217	59,963
Communicates, publications and promotion	-	-	139,358	139,358	-	-	-	139,358	89,588
Conventions, conferences, workshops, and meetings	-	-	92,060	92,060	-	-	-	92,060	111,249
Information technology	-	-	-	-	-	10,888	10,888	10,888	10,043
Insurance	-	-	2,009	2,009	-	5,481	5,481	7,490	5,900
Professional services	-	75,000	-	75,000	-	7,776	7,776	82,776	104,777
Travel, mileage	-	-	79,967	79,967	-	9,393	9,393	89,360	78,646
Depreciation expense	-	-	482	482	-	23,051	23,051	23,533	27,004
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b><u>\$ 78,349</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 246,004</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 875,464</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,199,817</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 377,085</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 361,139</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 738,224</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,938,041</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,878,239</u></b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part  
of these financial statements.



**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD**

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
 YEAR ENDED JANUARY 14, 2024  
 WITH SUMMARIZED COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 14, 2023

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Cash Flows From Operating Activities</b>		
Change in net assets	\$ (89,679)	\$ (255,598)
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	23,533	27,004
Investment income	(99,666)	190,319
(Gain) on sale of property and equipment	-	(141)
(Increase) decrease in assets:		
Accounts receivable	823	2,705
Interest receivable	(10,904)	6,935
Contributions receivable	50,932	(43,833)
Prepaid expenses	(394)	1,011
Gifts receivable	(8,299)	54,497
Leases receivable	(107,687)	-
Increase (decrease) in liabilities:		
Accounts payable	13,932	(30,517)
Unearned revenue - leases	<u>107,687</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>(119,722)</u>	<u>(47,618)</u>
 <b>Cash Flows From Investing Activities</b>		
Decrease (increase) in loans receivable	(36,438)	13,922
Purchase of investments	(870,620)	(870,536)
Proceeds from sales of investments	1,081,408	857,008
Purchases of property and equipment	<u>(11,434)</u>	<u>(34,534)</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	<u>162,916</u>	<u>(34,140)</u>
 Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	43,194	(81,758)
 Cash & cash equivalents, beginning of year	<u>91,914</u>	<u>173,672</u>
Cash & cash equivalents, end of year	<u>\$ 135,108</u>	<u>\$ 91,914</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part  
of these financial statements.

## **SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**JANUARY 14, 2024**

#### **1. DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

##### **Nature of Business**

South Dakota District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (the Church) is a non-profit organization responsible for uniting in a corporate body, the congregations, pastors, and teachers, who are members of the Church, situated or residing within the geographical boundaries of the South Dakota District; and for perpetuating the good work of disseminating the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

##### **Summary of Significant Accounting Principles**

This summary of significant accounting policies of the Church is presented to assist in understanding the financial statements. The financial statements and notes are representations of the Church's management who is responsible for their integrity and objectivity. These accounting principles conform to generally accepted accounting principles and have been consistently applied in the preparation of financial statements.

##### **Basis of Presentation**

Financial statement presentation follows the recommendations of the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). The FASB requires the Church to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to two classes of net assets: net assets without donor restrictions and net assets with donor restrictions.

##### **Summarized Comparative Financial Information**

The financial statements include certain prior year summarized comparative information in total but not by net asset class. Such information does not include sufficient detail to constitute a presentation in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. Accordingly, such information should be read in conjunction with the Church's audited financial statements for the year ended January 14, 2023, from which the summarized information was derived.

##### **Cash and Cash Equivalents**

For financial statement reporting purposes, the Church includes all cash accounts not subject to withdrawal restrictions or penalties to be cash equivalents.

## **SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS JANUARY 14, 2024**

#### **1. DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued**

##### **Lease Receivable**

The Church is a lessor for a farmland lease. The Church recognizes a lease receivable and unearned lease revenue.

At the commencement of the lease, the Church initially measures the lease receivable at the present value of payments expected to be received during the lease term. Subsequently, the lease receivable is reduced by the principle portion of lease payments received. The unearned lease revenue is initially measured as the initial amount of the lease receivable, adjusted for lease payments received at or before the lease commencement date. The unearned lease revenue is recognized as revenue over the life of the lease term.

Key estimated and judgements how the Church determines (1) the discount rate it uses to discount the expected lease receipts to present value (2) lease term, and (3) lease receipts.

- The Church uses its estimated incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate for leases.
- The lease term includes the period of the lease. Lease receipts included in the measurement of the lease receivable are composed of fixed payments from the lessee.

The Church monitors changes in circumstances that would require a remeasurement of its lease and will remeasure the lease receivable and unearned lease revenue if certain changes occur that are expected to significantly affect the amount of the lease receivable.

##### **Receivables and Credit Policies**

Trade receivables are uncollateralized obligations due under normal trade terms requiring payment within 30 days from the invoice date. Loan receivables are stated at principal amounts and are collateralized if an asset is acquired with the loan proceeds. Personal loans do not require collateral. Any loan payment that is 30 or more days past due, the borrower will be charged a late payment fee for each month the payment is past due. The business office will send a delinquency notice to the borrower reporting the actions taken with a copy of notice to the Church president. Due to the uncertainty regarding collection of fees, delinquency fees are recognized as income when received.

## **SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS JANUARY 14, 2024**

1. DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued

#### **Investments**

Investments in marketable securities with readily determinable fair values and all investments in debt securities are valued at their fair value in the statements of financial position. Realized and unrealized gains and losses are included in the change in net assets in the statement of activities.

#### **Property and Equipment**

Property and Equipment consists of furniture and equipment stated at original cost or, if donated, at the fair market value of the asset at the date of gift if the useful life is more than a year. Expenditures for maintenance and repairs which do not improve or extend the life of an asset are charged to expense as incurred. Expenditures for maintenance which do improve or extend the life of an asset is charged to the property accounts.

#### **Fair Value Measurements**

The Church defined fair value as the exchange price that would be received for an asset or paid to transfer a liability (an exit price) in the principal or most advantageous market for the asset or liability in an orderly transaction between market participants on the measurement date. The Church required that valuation techniques maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

## SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS JANUARY 14, 2024

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued

##### **Fair Value Measurements, continued**

The Church also adopted a fair value hierarchy, which prioritizes inputs into three broad levels:

Level 1: Inputs are quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that can be accessed at the measurement date.

Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset either directly or indirectly. Level 2 inputs include the following:

- Quoted prices for similar Assets or Liabilities in active markets;
- Quoted prices for similar Assets or Liabilities in markets that are not active;
- Inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability;
- Inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means (market-corroborated inputs).

If the asset or liability has a specified (or contractual) term, the Level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3: Inputs are unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

##### **Net Assets**

Net assets, revenues, gains, and losses are classified based on the existence or absences of donor or grantor-imposed restriction. Accordingly, net assets and changes therein are classified and reported as follows:

- *Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions* – Net assets available for use in general operation and not subject to donor (or certain grantor) restrictions.

## SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS JANUARY 14, 2024

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued

##### **Net Assets, continued**

- *Net Assets With Donor Restrictions* – Net assets subject to donor or certain grantor-imposed restrictions. Some donor or grantor-imposed restrictions are temporary in nature, such as those that will be met by the passage of time or other events specified by the donor or grantor. Other donor or grantor-imposed restrictions are perpetual in nature where the donor stipulates that resourced be maintained in perpetuity. Gifts of long-lived assets or gifts of cash restricted of the acquisition of long-lived assets are recognized as revenue when the assets are placed in service. Donor or grantor-imposed restrictions are released when a restriction expires, that is, when the stipulated time has elapsed, when the stipulated purpose for which the resourced was restricted has been fulfilled, or both.

##### **Public Support and Revenue**

The Church's public support and revenue is recognized when received or unconditionally pledged and is recorded as net assets with donor restrictions or net assets without donor restrictions depending on the existence and nature of any donor-imposed restrictions. Support and revenue that are restricted by the donor are reported as increases in net assets with donor restrictions in the reporting period in which the support and revenue are recognized and are reclassified as net assets without donor restrictions upon satisfaction of the time or purpose restrictions.

##### **Donated and Contributed Services**

US GAAP requires recognition of professional services received if those services (a) create or enhance long-lived assets or (b) require specialized skills, are provided by individuals possessing those skills, and would typically need to be purchased if not provided by donation. Most of the services received by the Church do not meet these criteria. Contributions of tangible assets are recognized at fair value when received.

For the year ended January 14, 2024, no donated services were recognized as revenue. Board members and other volunteers have contributed a significant amount of time to the activities of the Church without compensation. The financial statements do not reflect the value of those contributed services since they do not meet the criteria for recognition.

## **SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS JANUARY 14, 2024**

1. DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued

#### **Donated and Contributed Services, continued**

Pastors and lay people contribute a significant amount of time to the activities of the Church without compensation. However, the financial statements do not reflect the value of these contributed services because they do not meet the recognition criteria prescribed by generally accepted accounting policies.

#### **Use of Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates, and those differences could be material.

#### **Functional Allocation Expenses**

The costs of providing the various program activities and supporting services have been summarized on a functional basis in the statement of activities. The statement of functional expenses presents the natural classification detail of expenses by function. Accordingly, certain costs, have been allocated among the programs and supporting services benefitted.

#### **Income Taxes**

The Church is exempt from income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Taxes, is not required to be filed. In addition, the Church qualifies for the charitable contribution deduction under 170(c)(2).

#### **Implementation of New Accounting Standard and Restatement**

During the year ended January 14, 2024, the Church implemented the provisions of FASB ASU 2016-02, Leases (Topic 842). ASU 2016-02 affects any entity that enters into a lease. The main difference between previous US GAAP and ASU 2016-02 is the recognition of an intangible lease asset and lease liability for the lessee and the recognition of a lease receivable and an unearned revenue for the lessor. There was no effect on the beginning net assets because of implementation of the standard.

## SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS JANUARY 14, 2024

#### 2. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY

Financial assets are available for general expenditure, that is, without donor or other restrictions limiting their use, within one year of the balance sheet includes:

Cash	\$ 135,108
Accounts receivable	684
Lease receivable	53,925
Contributions receivable	83,650
Investments	<u>62,731</u>
	<u>\$ 336,098</u>

#### 3. DEPOSIT CREDIT RISK

The Church maintains cash and cash equivalents balances in several local financial institutions. The accounts at each institution are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) for up to \$250,000. At times throughout the year, the Church's balance may exceed the FDIC limit. As of January 14, 2024, the Church had no uninsured cash balance.

#### 4. CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE AND DEFERRED GIFTS

Contributions receivable consist of unconditional promises to give that are due within one year and represent congregations commitments to the Church for the year ended January 14, 2024. The contributions receivable is recorded at net realizable value of \$706,437 as of January 14, 2024. Management considers all unconditional promises to give to be collectible and has determined that no allowance is necessary.

Irrevocable deferred gifts, including charitable remainder trusts, identify the Church as a beneficiary and are held in trust for the Church by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Foundation or other third-party trustee. Upon receiving notification of a deferred gift, the Church records the present value of the gift as a donor-imposed time or purpose restricted support. The present value of each gift is derived by applying a present value and actuarial formula to the current value. Increases or decreases in the present value of deferred gifts is recorded as changes in donor-imposed restricted net assets in the statements of activities and change in net assets. The value of these irrevocable deferred gifts is presented as gifts receivable on the statement of financial position.



**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

JANUARY 14, 2024

4. CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE AND DEFERRED GIFTS, continued

As of January 14, 2024, the present value of irrevocable deferred gifts is as follows:

One to five years	\$ 54,870
More than five years	<u>137,174</u>
	<u>\$ 192,044</u>

5. LOANS RECEIVABLE

The Church provides financial assistance to members of the congregation by offering loans intended to alleviate unexpected financial hardships and support individuals facing unforeseen challenges.

As of January 14, 2024 loans receivable consist of loans at a rate between 2.5% and 4.0% as follows:

<b><u>Assistance Loans</u></b>	
Number of loans	<u>10</u>
Total loan value	<u>\$ 60,296</u>

Annual maturities of loans receivable are as follows:

Current	\$ 22,523
Non-Current	<u>37,773</u>
	<u>\$ 60,296</u>

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JANUARY 14, 2024

6. INVESTMENTS

At January 14, 2024, the fair value of the Church’s investments are as follows:

	Assets at Fair Value as of January 14, 2024			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Edward Jones - Certificates of deposit	\$ -	\$1,032,574	\$ -	\$ 1,032,574
Edward Jones - Annuities	-	363,426	-	363,426
LCMS Foundation - Mutual funds	-	795,522	-	795,522
Luthern Church Extension Fund - Certificates of deposit		873,194		873,194
Luthern Church Extension Fund - Savings	-	<u>690,819</u>	-	<u>690,819</u>
Total investments accounted for at fair value	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$3,755,535</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 3,755,535</u>

7. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

As of January 14, 2024, property and equipment consist of the following:

Land and Building	\$ 585,346
Machinery and Equipment	4,955
Furniture and Fixtures	120,426
Vehicles	<u>21,063</u>
	731,790
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(562,940)</u>
Net property and equipment	<u>\$ 168,850</u>

8. REAL ESTATE

The Church holds 344 acres of farmland, the income from which is disbursed according to the donor’s wishes. The farmland is classified in the financial statements as donor restricted, and the carrying value of \$25,000 reflects its fair value as of the date of transfer to the Church. This property is being leased for the year ended 2024.

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JANUARY 14, 2024

9. NET ASSETS

Net assets at January 14, 2024, consist of the following:

Without Donor Restrictions:	
Undesignated	\$ 1,084,219
Designated by board	<u>1,609,325</u>
Total net assets without donor restrictions	<u>2,693,544</u>
With Donor Restrictions:	
Purpose restrictions:	
Grant support for deaf interpreter program	4,555
Support for professional church workers health	225
Mercy fund for professional church workers health	52,006
Short term international mission trips travel	491
Circuit rider ministry	21,110
New mission starts	24,920
New mission site purchase	10,500
Rosebud mission - special ministry need	10,000
Indian ministry - VBS program	468
Pine ridge - special ministry needs	29,543
Pine ridge - rent facilities	1,541
Pine ridge - schlenjerman bequest	366,239
Aberdeen circuit "1" fund	3,244
Black hills circuit "4" fund	8,083
Mitchell circuit "5" fund	3,413
Freeman circuit "6" fund	811
Sioux falls circuit "7" fund	107
International friends of sioux falls	704
General student aid funding	171,162
Seminary student aid funding	23,256
C.W.E.D.A grant finding	36
Special district office need fund	908
Camp Minneboji	10,828
Lutheran family service	43,559
Disaster relief, South Dakota	3,270
Orphan housing funding	2,739
Congregational pledge - current year	622,787
Irrevocable deferred gifts - LCMS foundation	<u>64,266</u>
Subtotal purpose restrictions	<u>1,480,771</u>

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JANUARY 14, 2024

9. NET ASSETS, continued

Time restrictions:

General student aid funding	523,615
Seminary student aid funding	532
Schamber Scholarship	54,141
CWEDA Grant endowment	28,080
Barnabus endowment	500
Deferred gifts	106,597
Orphan asylym trust	35,839
Investment	4,414
Synod Entities	<u>11,000</u>
Subtotal time restrictions	<u>764,718</u>
Total net assets with donor restrictions	<u>2,245,489</u>
Total net assets	<u>\$ 4,939,033</u>

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

JANUARY 14, 2024

10. BOARD DESIGNATED NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS

As of January 14, 2024, the Board of Directors designated net assets without donor restrictions as follows:

General:

CEF Balance remaining after consolidation	\$	841,299
Gain on Sale of Rapid City Property		227,993
Special fund - Lilly Smith Estate		209,989
Assistance loan fund		186,781
Sale of Tea property/future church plant		106,912
Synodical convention		17,835
Special fund - Kurt Huber Trust		10,000
Lay institute training		3,799
Master work comp policy dividend		2,010
Rural ministry workshops		1,375
District/national youth gatherings		<u>1,332</u>
Subtotal board designated		<u>1,609,325</u>
Current operating		1,012,908
Property		<u>71,311</u>
Subtotal undesignated		<u>1,084,219</u>
Total	\$	<u>2,693,544</u>

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JANUARY 14, 2024

11. NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS RELEASED

Net assets were released from donor restrictions during the year ended January 14, 2024, by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purpose or by occurrence of other events specified by donors were released as follows:

Program Restrictions Accomplished	
General student aid	\$ 89,835
Together in Mission (T.I.M)	76,254
Lutheran Family Services of Iowa	68,383
Rosebud Mission	54,818
Seminary student aid funding	42,888
Pine Ridge	40,000
New mission starts	12,000
Circuit pastor meetings or forums	6,378
C.W.E.D.A grant funding	2,020
Mery Fund for professional church workers	1,344
International friends of Sioux Falls	797
Chalaincy ministry	426
Protect my ministry	222
Deaf ministry	<u>100</u>
Subtotal purpose restrictions released	<u>395,465</u>
Time Restrictions	
Passage of specified time - congregation pledge	<u>642,749</u>
Total	<u>\$ 1,038,214</u>

12. LEASE RECEIVABLE

The Church entered into a farmland lease agreement effective December 21, 2022, through December 20, 2025, the lease calls for semi-annual payments of \$28,625 for three years at a discount rate of 5%.

**SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JANUARY 14, 2024

13. BENEFITS PLANS

The Church participates in various Concordia Plan Services of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Contributions paid for those plans were as follows:

Concordia Health plan	\$	119,171
Concordia Retirement Plan		32,586
Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan		8,428
Concordia Travel Accident Insurance Plan		188
Concordia Life Insurance and Accident Plan		<u>94</u>
	\$	<u>160,467</u>

14. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

*Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod Transactions*

Annually, the Church budgets an amount to support the Synod’s budget based on the commitments from congregations and the Church’s needs for mission and ministry work in South Dakota. The Church remits monthly payments to the Synod and then, at year-end, any amount over the year-end reserve set by the District’s Board of Directors is forwarded to the Synod. The Church contributed a total of \$377,085 to the Synod for the year ended January 14, 2024. As of January 14, 2024, \$54,750 was included in accounts payable in the accompanying statements of financial position for this purpose.

15. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Events, occurring after January 14, 2024, were evaluated by management on August 31, 2024, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, to ensure that any subsequent events that met the criteria for recognition and/or disclosure in these financial statements have been included. There are no significant subsequent events needing disclosure.

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## Lutheran For Life

Jill Johnsen, President

Lutherans For Life of South Dakota (LFLSD) is a state affiliate of the national organization of Lutherans For Life (LFL), organized in 1978 as a non-profit, pan-Lutheran mission. Our purpose is to give witness to, and equip Lutherans to give witness to the truth of the God-given sanctity of human life found only in God's word. Therefore our mission statement is: **"Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices FOR LIFE"**. The message of LFL is the heart-changing truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: the unique, primary message being, "Here is what God has done that gives value and dignity to all human life." LFL desires to pattern its manner after the Apostle Paul and **"speak the truth in love."** LFL strives to give witness, from a Biblical perspective, to the Church and society on the value and dignity of all human life from the youngest to the oldest, the preborn to the elderly, from the weakest to the strongest.

Education on life issues is our primary purpose. We encourage attendance at National LFL Life Conferences as well as at programs we develop or sponsor on the state level. Articles have been published in the South Dakota insert of the Lutheran Witness.

An ongoing project has been our Youth Essay Contest on Life Issues for students in grades 6-8th grades and 9-12th grades. This contest is sponsored by the Council of Federation Presidents of which South Dakota is one Federation. Our state currently awards \$500 for first place in each category and \$250 for second place. The 2025 theme for the Essay Contest is **"Fearfully and Wonderfully Made"** Psalm 139:13-14. State winners are eligible for national competition and is a way for young people to use their creative skills to share God's word.

Our Annual Meeting is held in early January and has been a time of sharing what our members have been doing in their local areas. Also in January is traditionally Life Sunday although it can be observed at any time. LFL resources are available through Concordia Publishing House (CPH). The 2025 theme is Life Shines in Darkness.

The Annual State-wide Diaper Derby provides friendly competition between Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day to collect disposable diapers and supplies. They are then delivered to a crisis pregnancy center or shelter, etc. in local communities. This shows support for God's gift of life while helping moms and dads in need. It's fun to see who can collect the most diapers or packages of baby wipes.

In 2024 we helped spread the word that the State Constitutional Amendment G was not in keeping with the will of God and that we should urge God's people to vote No. We were to show kindness to the unborn still in their mothers' wombs and speak for those who couldn't speak for themselves.

The Witness of the Crosses continues to be a bold, eye-catching display which serves as a reminder of the babies whose lives are taken as a result of abortion each year. Please contact us through our website or Facebook page to schedule the trailer and crosses at your church or event with the trailer spelling out the information about the recent statistics.

We are grateful for the generous supporters of Lutherans for Life of South Dakota, Inc.



## MAIN STREET LIVING

Jay Schaefer, Executive Director

Since January 6th, 2002, Main Street Living has been producing and airing liturgical LCMS worship services to homebound & nursing home individuals. The program is currently broadcast on ten television stations covering six states, eight LCMS districts, and over 1,100 LCMS congregations. We are a ministry that supports the work of pastors and their congregations as they reach those who are unable to attend in person worship.

Six unique regional programs are produced each week for South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Wisconsin markets. It is estimated that the program is viewed weekly in about 25,000 households, with approximately 37,000 viewers. Local pastors proclaim the Good News of Jesus each week and invite the viewing audience to attend local services in the congregation they serve.

### **Main Street Living can be viewed each Sunday morning in:**

**South Dakota** - Sioux Falls (KDLT & KCPO) & Rapid City (KEVN)

**North Dakota** - Eastern ND (KVRR) & Western (WDAYx)

**Iowa** - Sioux City (KCAU)

**Nebraska** - Lincoln (KLKN) & Omaha (WOWT/COZI)

**Central Minnesota** - Twin Cities (WFTC)

**Wisconsin** - La Crosse & Eau Claire (Fox 25/48 - WLAX/WEUX)

*- All 6 markets can be view anytime at [MainStreetLiving.com](http://MainStreetLiving.com)*

Jay Schaefer has been serving as Executive Director since 2021, and also edited and delivered services to television stations since 2016. The ministry recently contracted Joel Klein of Klein Media to record, edit, and deliver MN market episodes. This past summer a small group of editors have also been assisting with episode and hymn editing. In addition to this small team, a dedicated group of volunteers give their time and talents to process donations, schedule pastors for recordings, and facilitate recording days. This ministry could not exist without their generous help.

We have involved many more congregations and pastors in the ministry the past two years. The Nebraska market has included service recordings at Zion Lutheran (Kearney, NE) and St. Paul (Wisner, NE). The Minnesota market has added recordings at Prince of Peace (Baxter, MN) and Trinity Lutheran (Slayton, MN). We have also recorded choirs in Fargo, Sioux Falls and Black Hawk, SD; Sioux City, IA; Baxter, MN; and Eau Claire, WI. The video and audio of these choir recordings is available at [MainStreetLiving.com](http://MainStreetLiving.com) for pastors to use when visiting members. Future expansion into central Iowa and central Wisconsin is being discussed.

Since the pandemic donations, have been down and expenses have been up. While Main Street has a reserve fund from generous donors to help get us through, it will only last a few years. Congregational support makes a huge difference and can be as simple as informing members of the program. Other ways of support include praying for the ministry, including program information in church bulletin / newsletter, sharing broadcast times with those in need, and hosting a Main Street Living Sunday, in addition to financial support. We appreciate any support and/or ideas you may have.

Finally, we thank the pastors who proclaim God's Word on the program, keep this ministry in front of their congregations, and support us with their prayers. Main Street Living strives to provide production and administration, but it is the pastors who share the message that the world needs: forgiveness, life, hope, and salvation through Christ alone.

We thank you for your continued prayers and support of this ministry!

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## **LUTERAN FAMILY SERVICE**

Rev. Max Phillips, Executive Director

Lutheran Family Service has partnered with the South Dakota District for several years bringing supportive adoption services, and mental health wellness services to individuals, church workers, and congregations. Unlike most of the mental health and adoption industry we whole-heartedly embrace your convention theme in being “not ashamed of the Gospel,” for such is how we do our work. As a Recognized Service Organization of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, we strive to wrap the church and the love of Christ around those who are well and those who are struggling.

A primary focus of our work is to be a ready resource for church workers to help them deal with the stress of ministry and support them in the challenges of being the church in this, sometimes hostile, age. Our goal is to bring our ministry hearts into our work as highly educated and clinically trained therapists so that workers remain healthy in their mind and body, strong in their family relationships, and joyful in their serving.

Our support of church workers extends to care for those working within our Lutheran Schools, and those children and families they serve so well. At the Lutheran Educator’s Conference in Sioux Falls this year, LFS counselors are leading topics on supporting students with mental health concerns and those with gender identity confusion. A new partnership is growing at Zion Lutheran School in Rapid City with an LFS counselor serving on site one afternoon per week.

Our century-plus ministry of caring for orphans continues in South Dakota and other states. We are a leading voice in the church in support of life through pregnancy counseling and adoption as primary avenues of extending the church’s Biblically mandated work.

With the support and encouragement of the district in the past three years, we opened two offices in South Dakota (Sioux Falls and Deadwood) serving people in person at our offices and remotely via telehealth across the state. A third office, located within and hosted by the members at Divine Shepherd in Black Hawk, opened in October. Our South Dakota Lutheran Family Service staff includes three licensed mental health counselors, a grief specialist, and an adoption specialist. Our work includes groups, including those that support church worker spouses who have unique pressures to lovingly serving in their role. In addition, LFS pastors have filled pulpits across the district preaching the Gospel’s “power of God that brings salvation,” sharing ways this power is manifest through our caring mercy work.

We are thankful to God for all of you and the partnership we share to serve people in your District. Without your financial help, prayerful support, and district encouragement we would not have been able to serve so well and so many. We look forward to growing this partnership in the years ahead.

Find current information about Lutheran Family Service offices, offerings, and activity in South Dakota through our website at [www.LutheranFamilyService.org](http://www.LutheranFamilyService.org).

- 1 **OVERTURE: 1-01**  
2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO CELEBRATE AND LIVE OUT THE “GOD’S GOSPEL: SALVATION POWER” THEME**  
4  
5 **WHEREAS,** The theme of this 63<sup>RD</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church –  
6 Missouri Synod – *God’s Gospel: Salvation Power* (Romans 1:16-17) -- has been chosen to  
7 highlight that we, as a District comprised of 105 congregations, have the blessed status as God’s  
8 redeemed people only by the power of the Gospel; AND  
9  
10 **WHEREAS,** The Word of God makes it clear that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to turn unregenerate people  
11 from their sin and to bring them to faith through the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:14, Rom. 1:17; Rom.  
12 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23, 25; Eph. 1:13, et al.); AND  
13  
14 **WHEREAS,** Our Savior spoke of His disciples of every age as people whom He would employ as His  
15 “witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8);  
16 AND  
17  
18 **WHEREAS,** God’s Word continues to impress upon His Church that “now is the favorable time; behold, now  
19 is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2); AND  
20  
21 **WHEREAS,** There are countless opportunities in the rural, small town, and city settings of South Dakota to  
22 impact our neighbors through words of Gospel witness and deeds of love; AND  
23  
24 **WHEREAS,** According to the U.S. Religion Census website ([www.usreligioncensus.org](http://www.usreligioncensus.org)), that of the 886,667  
25 residents of South Dakota (2020 Census), 55.38% (or 491,026 people) are “adherents” of a  
26 religion, while 395,641 South Dakotans have no religious affiliation; AND  
27  
28 **WHEREAS,** The “Objectives” of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as stated in its Constitution (Article  
29 III. 1-2) recognizes the priorities of: 1) conserving and promoting the unity of the true faith; and,  
30 2) strengthening congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to  
31 the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extending that Gospel witness  
32 into all the world; THEREFORE BE IT  
33  
34 **RESOLVED:** That every congregation, ministry, and school of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran  
35 Church—Missouri Synod emphasize, on the basis of God’s inspired Word, that being witnesses  
36 is not something we must do under the Law of God, but rather being witnesses is a matter of  
37 who we are under the Gospel and the Grace of God; AND BE IT FURTHER  
38  
39 **RESOLVED:** That every congregation, ministry, and school of the District be encouraged to explore various  
40 ways that congregations, ministries, schools, and individuals may be more intentional in their  
41 lives as witnesses (with the help of such resources as the Synod’s *Every One His Witness*  
42 materials, e.g.), AND BE IT FINALLY  
43  
44 **RESOLVED:** That The South Dakota District, through its Mission and Ministry Council and District staff, and  
45 led by the *God’s Gospel: Salvation Power* theme, provide encouragement and resources that  
46 will better equip congregations, ministries, schools and individuals in their lives and service as  
47 bold, unashamed witnesses.  
48

49 Respectfully Submitted,  
50

51  
52 

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The Board of Directors of  
53 The South Dakota District LCMS

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

1 **OVERTURE: 1-02**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUALS AND WELCOME THEM INTO THE SOUTH DAKOTA**  
4 **DISTRICT OF THE LCMS**

5  
6 **WHEREAS,** During the triennium following the 2021 62<sup>nd</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District, the  
7 following individuals became rostered members of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
8 – Ministers of Religion – Ordained;

9  

<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Ray Anderson	Dennis Mercer	Joseph Greenmyer	Thomas Penrod
Thomas Mueller			

10 AND

11  
12 **WHEREAS,** During the same triennium, the following individuals became rostered members of The  
13 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod Ministers of Religion – Commissioned:

14  

<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Michael Leapley	Sierra Geistfeld	Kristi Prouty	
Leanne Holdorf		Jade Fjelstad	

15 AND

16  
17  
18 **WHEREAS,** The membership of the above individuals is held in The South Dakota District of The  
19 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod; THEREFORE BE IT

20  
21 **RESOLVED:** That this 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District recognize and welcome the above  
22 individuals as partners in the Gospel; AND BE IT FINALLY

23  
24 **RESOLVED:** That we pray God’s richest blessings upon these workers that the Holy Spirit would use  
25 them to extend God’s kingdom here on earth.

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Respectfully Submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reverend David Otten

\_\_\_\_\_  
DCE Elizabeth Peters

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Adam Schulz

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

1 **OVERTURE: 1-03**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT**  
4 **OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD CONCERNING THE EXECUTIVE**  
5 **OFFICERS OF THE DISTRICT**

6  
7 **RATIONALE:**

8 In 2022, during a time of vacancy in the Executive Secretary’s position, the District’s Board  
9 of Directors divided the former Executive Secretary’s position into the District’s two current  
10 Executive Officer positions: one is full-time (the Assistant to the President), and the other  
11 is part-time (the Education Executive). The ministry descriptions for these two current  
12 positions are included in the Administration section of the Convention Workbook. But, in  
13 summary, these officers assist the District President in the District’s work in areas such as  
14 subsidized ministries, missions, stewardship, and education. The current Executive Office  
15 known as “Assistant to the President” replaces most of the duties of the former position in  
16 the District known as “Executive Secretary.” The current Executive Office titled “Education  
17 Executive” is new. This office is responsible for providing resources, direction, and  
18 encouragement to the faculties and staffs of the LCMS schools in the South Dakota District.  
19 Having the knowledge and ability to assist in the calling of commissioned ministers and  
20 being well-versed in school legislation and regulations makes the Education Executive  
21 position in the District extremely valuable to our schools and their leaders.

22  
23 This change in District administration, implemented by the Board of Directors, has led to  
24 the necessity of updating certain Bylaws of the District. The amendments being proposed  
25 here will allow for greater flexibility in staffing in the District. And they will allow for greater  
26 attention to areas calling for greater expertise, such as is being done with the current  
27 Education Executive position.

28  
29 **WHEREAS,** The Constitution of the Synod, Article XII (Districts of the Synod and Their Regulation),  
30 says in section 12, “The districts are independent in the administration of affairs which concern  
31 their district only, it being understood, however, that such administration shall always serve the  
32 interests of the Synod.”; AND

33  
34 **WHEREAS,** The District’s Board of Directors has found it beneficial to serve the interests of the Synod  
35 in this place by employing up to two Executive Officers to assist the District President in  
36 his work, especially in the areas of subsidized ministries, missions, and education; AND

37  
38 **WHEREAS,** Assigning an Executive Officer the added responsibility of ensuring that “Biblical principles  
39 of stewardship are promoted throughout the District,” fulfills Synod Bylaw 4.6.1, which says  
40 that “each district shall elect or appoint a committee, board, or individual responsible for  
41 stewardship.”; THEREFORE BE IT

42  
43 **RESOLVED:** That the Bylaws of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be  
44 amended and adopted as follows, contingent on approval by the Synod’s Commission on  
45 Constitutional Matters:

46 [~~PRESENT/PROPOSED~~ WORDING]

47  
48 [BRACKETS ARE USED FOR EXPLANATIONS ONLY; THIS MATERIAL IS NOT PART OF THE  
49 AMENDMENTS.]

50

51 1.25 Responsibility [of the Board of Directors]

- 52 a. The Board of Directors shall be responsible to the District for its official actions and shall  
53 render a report of its activities to the District Convention or as often as the District may call  
54 upon it to do so.
- 55 b. The Board of Directors shall consult and plan with the ~~Executive Secretary~~ Executive  
56 Officers regarding all matters of program development, especially in the areas of District  
57 subsidized ministries, missions, stewardship and education, and with the Business  
58 Manager regarding financial development.
- 59 c. The setting of the budget shall be done by the Board of Directors taking into consideration  
60 the recommendations of the Planning Process of the District.

61

62 **III. ~~EXECUTIVE SECRETARY~~ EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

63 3.01 ~~Appointment and Responsibility~~ Accountability

- 64 a. Executive Officers may be appointed by the Board of Directors to assist the District  
65 President in the work of the District, particularly in the areas of District subsidized ministries,  
66 missions, stewardship, and education. These Executive Officers shall be accountable to  
67 the Board and supervised by the District President. The Executive Secretary of the Board  
68 is appointed by the Board of Directors with the approval of the then District President, to be  
69 its Executive Officer, and as such shall be under its supervision. The Board of Directors  
70 shall provide him them with a job descriptions and guidelines of his their duties.

71 3.03 ~~Term of Office~~ Terms of Office

- 72 a. His Their terms of office shall be for three years, reckoned from the time of the meeting of  
73 the Board of Directors at which they are appointed. The appointments are to be made within  
74 six months the first regular meeting of the Board of Directors, following an election a regular  
75 Convention of the District.
- 76 b. There are no term limits for the Executive Officers, but they are to go through the process  
77 of re-appointment each triennium following their initial appointment.
- 78 c. If there are vacancies in these offices, the Board of Directors may fill them as they see fit.

79

80 Respectfully Submitted,

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83

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board of Directors  
The South Dakota District LCMS

1 **OVERTURE: 1-04**  
2

3 **SUBJECT: TO APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT**  
4 **OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD CONCERNING ELECTIONS HELD**  
5 **AT THE DISTRICT CONVENTION**

6 **RATIONALE:** At the 2021 District Convention, some changes were made to the Bylaws of the District  
7 reflecting the policy of the Synod that women may serve on Boards of Directors of Districts  
8 and the Synod (2021 District Res. 1-05). Simple amendments, such as changing “layman”  
9 to “layperson,” were made to the Bylaws in order to use language that makes this more  
10 clear. But in the Election Procedure section of the Bylaws, it was discovered that two  
11 references to this layman/layperson or laymen/laypeople distinction were missed by the  
12 last convention. The adoption of this resolution will correct those errors.

13 Additionally, at the last Synod Convention (2023), clarity was given to election procedures  
14 for District offices, including for elections other than for President, Vice-Presidents, and  
15 Circuit Visitors (2023 Synod Res. 9-02, Section H). That proposed clarification is found in  
16 the 5.09 section of the District’s Bylaws (found on the second page of this resolution).

17 **WHEREAS,** It is the desire and the obligation of the The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—  
18 Missouri Synod to honor LC-MS convention resolutions and the resulting changes to the  
19 *Handbook of the Synod*, including those that pertain to the governing documents of LCMS  
20 entities (LCMS Bylaw 1.3.6, 2<sup>nd</sup> Restated Articles of Incorporation of The South Dakota  
21 District, Article III.C); AND

22 **WHEREAS,** Where errors are discovered, they should be corrected, since we are to conduct ourselves  
23 “decently and in order” (I Cor. 14:40); THEREFORE BE IT

24 **RESOLVED:** That the Bylaws of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be  
25 amended and adopted as follows, contingent on approval by the Synod’s Commission on  
26 Constitutional Matters:

27 [PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING]

28 [BRACKETS ARE USED FOR EXPLANATIONS ONLY; THIS MATERIAL IS NOT PART OF THE  
29 AMENDMENTS.]

30 **V. ELECTION PROCEDURE**

31 5.01 Time of Election and Term of Office

32 a. The President, Vice-Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the two ~~laymen~~  
33 laypeople on the Board of Directors shall be elected in the District Convention.

34 b. All officers and members of the Board of Directors shall serve for terms of three years  
35 or until their successors shall have qualified.

36 [There is no 5.02.]

37 5.03 Order of Election

38 a. The order for electing District officers shall be as follows:

39 1. President

40 2. Vice-Presidents

41 3. Secretary

42 4. Treasurer

- 43                            5. Two ~~Laymen~~ Laypeople for Board of Directors  
44                            6. Circuit Visitors  
45                            7. District Member of Synodical Nominating Committee (as required)  
46                            8. Other committees (as necessary).

47

48                            [The other bylaws in this section concern the nomination and election of the President, Vice-  
49                            Presidents, and Circuit Visitors, which bylaws require no changes.]

50

51                            5.09 Elections of Other Officers

- 52                            a. Elections of all officers other than District President, Vice-Presidents, and Circuit  
53                            Visitors shall be from the slate of candidates developed by the Committee on  
54                            Nominations or as otherwise specified.  
55                            b. Names of candidates are to be placed on the slate in alphabetical order without  
56                            distinctive marks, subject to approval by the Convention. Additional candidates may  
57                            be placed in nomination by the Convention, such nominations to include the written  
58                            consent of the nominee to serve.  
59                            c. A majority of all votes cast (disregarding voided ballots) shall be required to elect.  
60                            d. ~~In the event that no candidate receives the required majority vote, balloting shall~~  
61                            ~~continue until there is an election, in which case the candidate(s) receiving the smallest~~  
62                            ~~number of votes shall be eliminated from the balloting in each instance.~~  
63                            d. When a second or succeeding ballot is required for a majority, the candidate receiving  
64                            the fewest votes and all candidates receiving less than 15 percent of the votes cast  
65                            shall be dropped from the ballot, unless fewer than two candidates receive 15 percent  
66                            or more of the votes cast, in which case the three highest candidates shall constitute  
67                            the ballot.  
68                            e. There shall be no balloting during recess or after adjournment.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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The Board of Directors of  
The South Dakota District LCMS



- 1     **OVERTURE: 1-05**  
2  
3     **SUBJECT: SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT TO RATIFY CONGREGATIONAL VOTE TO RESCIND**  
4     **1976 DISTRICT CONVENTION RES. 3-03 REGARDING THE LUTHERAN WITNESS**  
5  
6     **RATIONALE:** A 1976 District Convention resolution (3-03) required that “...each congregation should be  
7     billed for its share of the *Lutheran Witness* blanket subscription” and that “the blanket  
8     subscription of our entire District be continued until a District Convention declines to  
9     continue it.” The congregations of The South Dakota District have dutifully provided the  
10    *Lutheran Witness* to their households since that time. However, the cost for a subscription  
11    to the *Lutheran Witness* has risen dramatically in recent years, from \$11.25/subscription  
12    for 2022, to \$17.21/subscription for 2023, and close to \$20/subscription for 2024. The  
13    District’s Board of Directors regard this increase as a financial challenge for many  
14    congregations. And they felt there was too much time until the next District Convention to  
15    change the policy by means of the usual method of conducting business: by convention  
16    action. Therefore, in their September 2023 meeting, the Board asked the District President  
17    to request a vote by the congregations of the District on whether to rescind the blanket  
18    subscription policy. This novel action of putting such a matter to a vote of congregations  
19    was based on Articles XII.2, XII.6, and XI.B.8 of the Synod’s Constitution.  
20  
21            After District President Sailer put the vote to the congregations in the last quarter of 2023,  
22            seventy-five of the District’s 106 congregations participated in the vote, with fifty-four  
23            congregations voting “yes” (to rescind 1976 Convention Res. 3-03) and with twenty-one  
24            congregations voting “no.” The vote to rescind passed by a 72% majority.  
25  
26            In addition to that strong congregational vote to rescind the 1976 resolution, the Board of  
27            Directors believes that the adoption of this resolution will officially uphold the requirement  
28            of 1976 Convention Res. 3-03 that “the blanket subscription of our entire District be  
29            continued until a District Convention declines to continue it.”  
30  
31    **WHEREAS,** The 1976 South Dakota District Convention (Res. 3-03) had required that each District  
32    congregation should be billed for its share of the *Lutheran Witness* subscription; AND  
33    **WHEREAS,** The same resolution also required that this “blanket subscription” policy was to continue  
34    until “a District Convention declined to continue it”; AND  
35    **WHEREAS,** A congregational vote in 2023, put forward by the District President between District  
36    conventions (per Synod Constitution Articles XI and XII), determined that the policy should  
37    be rescinded, having passed by a 72% majority; THEREFORE BE IT  
38    **RESOLVED:** That the South Dakota District in convention ratify the congregational vote of 2023 to  
39    rescind the blanket subscription, thus honoring the decline-to-continue clause of 1976  
40    District Convention Res. 3-03; AND BE IT FURTHER  
41    **RESOLVED:** That the congregations of the District encourage their members to subscribe on their own  
42    to the *Lutheran Witness*, the “official periodical of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod,”  
43    or to otherwise make the *Lutheran Witness* available to their members; AND BE IT  
44    FINALLY  
45    **RESOLVED:** That the congregations of the District be thanked and commended for having provided the  
46    *Lutheran Witness* to their member households for nearly fifty years.  
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To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

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Respectfully Submitted,

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The Board of Directors of  
The South Dakota District LCMS

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- OVERTURE: 1-06**
- SUBJECT: TO RESCIND 2003 DISTRICT CONVENTION RESOLUTION 1-04 CONCERNING THE TRIENNIAL DISTRICT PLANNING CONFERENCE**
- WHEREAS,** The Annual Planning Conference of the South Dakota District was instituted by the 54<sup>th</sup> Regular Convention of the District, in 1997, via adoption of Resolution 2-02, to assist the Board of Directors in planning the ministries of the District; AND
- WHEREAS,** 1997 Convention Resolution 2-02 also specified that the Annual Planning Conference was to involve the members of the Board of Directors of the District, the Circuit Counselors, a lay representative from each circuit, the Chairman of each ministry area, the District LWML President, the District LLL President, the District Personal Stewardship Counselor, and the District Executive Staff; AND
- WHEREAS,** The 56<sup>th</sup> Regular Convention of the District (2003 Res. 1-04) changed the frequency of the Planning Conference from being an annual event to a triennial event; AND
- WHEREAS,** 2003 District Convention Resolution 1-04 also mandated that the Triennial Planning Conferences are to be conducted in the “year when the Circuit Convocations are to be held,” that is, in the non-Convention year of the triennium (cf. Synod Bylaw 5.4.1); AND
- WHEREAS,** The same 2003 resolution stated in one of the resolved’s that “in the other two years conferences, circuits, congregations and individuals be encouraged to submit to our Board of Directors and/or the Program Area Chairmen mission and ministry opportunities”; AND
- WHEREAS,** Input into the planning and work of the ministries of the District can be sought from those entities in a variety of ways, including by the District staff, by Circuit Visitors in Winkels and in visits to congregations, and by committees established by the District (including the current Mission and Ministry Council); THEREFORE BE IT
- RESOLVED:** That the requirement of conducting a Triennial Planning Conference in the non-Convention year, from the 2003 District Convention Res. 1-04, be rescinded.

Respectfully Submitted

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The South Dakota District  
Board of Directors

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**OVERTURE: 1-07**

**SUBJECT: DISTRICT OFFICERS SERVING CONGREGATIONS AS ASSISTING PASTORS**

**WHEREAS,** In keeping with Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, where the Church is defined as “the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered;” AND

**WHEREAS,** The Church faces an urgent need for qualified men to serve congregations in accordance with Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession which states: “no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called;” AND

**WHEREAS,** There are offices that serve the South Dakota District that are required to be filled by men who have been ordained; AND

**WHEREAS,** The call to serve in the pastoral office is the primary and most essential office in the church, and service to the Synod in administrative offices are established to support the work of the pastoral office; AND

**WHEREAS,** When the District in convention resolved to make the office of the president strictly full-time in the 1970s, they could not imagine the travel and communication changes that would come in the next decades; AND

**WHEREAS,** When the District in convention resolved to make the office of the President strictly full-time, the District had 128 congregations, and 22,274 communicant members, while today we have 105 congregations and 20,318 communicant members, so that today we are both smaller and declining in number and utilize much faster and more robust communication technology than fifty years ago; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED:** That the bylaws of the South Dakota District of the LCMS be amended to allow any ordained men serving in offices of the District to also accept a call to serve a congregation as an assisting pastor, not as a sole, senior pastor or associate pastor, AND BE IT FURTHER

**RESOLVED:** That the prior convention resolution requiring the district president to serve in a strictly full-time capacity be rescinded, AND BE IT FINALLY

**RESOLVED:** That given the gravity of the Office of Holy Ministry and the necessity of the effective support from the District officers, serving a congregational call shall only be a voluntary choice for ordained men serving in a District Office.

Respectfully Submitted

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Circuit 4 Circuit Forum

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**OVERTURE: 1-08**

**SUBJECT: SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT PRESIDENT TO BE A CALLED PASTOR IF DESIRED**

**WHEREAS,** In the Rite of Ordination into the Holy Ministry (*LSB Agenda pg. 165*), the candidate responds in the affirmative to the public question, “Do you acknowledge that the Lord has called you through His Church into the ministry of Word and Sacrament?”; AND

**WHEREAS,** This response is for ordination of all pastors within our confession regardless of election to various offices; AND

**WHEREAS,** The candidate also promises within the Rite of Ordination that he will “perform the duties of your office in accordance with these Confessions, and that all your preaching and teaching and your administration of the Sacraments will be in conformity with Holy Scripture and with these Confessions?” (*LSB Agenda pg. 166*); AND

**WHEREAS,** Our Confessions speak of an official union, combining the administration of Word and Sacrament to a rightly ordered Call to a congregation; AND

**WHEREAS,** An elected South Dakota District President may have a burdened conscience due to his ordination vows, adherence to our Lutheran Confessions, and the prohibition of the South Dakota District’s bylaws; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED:** That the South Dakota District in regular Convention change her bylaws to permit an elected District President to either remain Called pastor or accept a Call as pastor to a congregation within our district if he so desires by changing Bylaw III. 2.01a to state, “The Office of the President ~~shall be a full-time position.~~ wherein he may also be a Called pastor to a congregation.”

Respectfully Submitted

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SDD Circuit 2 Circuit Forum

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**OVERTURE: 1-09**

**SUBJECT: TO ALLOW ALL ORDAINED OFFICERS OF THE SD DISTRICT TO SERVE AS CALLED PASTORS TO A CONGREGATION**

**WHEREAS,** In keeping with Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, where the Church is defined as “the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered;” AND

**WHEREAS,** There is a need for qualified men to serve congregations in accordance with Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession with states: “No one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called”; AND

**WHEREAS,** At the 2021 District Convention, Synod President Matthew Harrison said, “We got challenges. We need more pastors. We’re working on that.” AND

**WHEREAS,** There are offices that serve the South Dakota District that are required to be filled by men who have been ordained; AND

**WHEREAS,** It is in keeping with the concept of Christian freedom; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED:** That for such District Offices that require an ordained man to serve yet prohibit him from serving a congregation while holding the office, thus removing a worker from the harvest field of Matthew 9, the bylaws of the South Dakota District be changed to allow all ordained staff to serve a congregation in a part-time capacity if he receives and accepts such a call from a congregation; AND BE IT FINALLY

**RESOLVED:** That this part-time service to a congregation would not be mandatory for ordained men serving in a District office. Given the gravity of the Office of the Holy Ministry, such a congregational call ought not to be taken if doing so would negatively affect the officer’s duties to his district office or his service to a congregation.

Respectfully Submitted

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Freeman Circuit (Circuit 6) of the South Dakota District

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**OVERTURE: 1-10**

**SUBJECT: TO PRIORITIZE HOLDING FUTURE DISTRICT EVENTS SUCH AS CONVENTIONS, PASTORS CONFERENCES AND PLANNING CONFERENCES IN LCMS CHURCHES OR LUTHERAN SCHOOLS**

**WHEREAS,** The South Dakota District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) values the importance of fostering a strong sense of community and fellowship among its members; AND

**WHEREAS,** Holding District Conventions in churches or Lutheran schools can provide a more spiritually enriching environment, conducive to worship, prayer, and theological reflection; AND

**WHEREAS,** Utilizing church and school facilities can help strengthen the connection between the district’s administrative activities and its congregational and educational ministries; AND

**WHEREAS,** Gathering in churches or Lutheran schools can serve as a witness to the broader community, showcasing the vibrant faith and commitment of the LCMS; AND

**WHEREAS,** Significant cost savings can be achieved by using church and school facilities, allowing for better allocation of district funds towards mission and ministry initiatives; AND

**WHEREAS,** Hosting District events in these settings can promote stewardship by making use of existing resources within the LCMS community, potentially reducing costs associated with external venues; AND

**WHEREAS,** Many existing church and school facilities have ample space to accommodate large gatherings, ensuring that the needs of all attendees are met; AND

**WHEREAS,** It was the example of our Synod to hold national conventions in churches until the conventions grew too large, but our district conventions can still be held in such facilities; AND

**WHEREAS,** Potential challenges such as accessibility, capacity, and technological requirements can be addressed by working closely with host sites to ensure that all logistical needs are met, THEREFORE BE IT;

**RESOLVED:** That the South Dakota District of the LCMS will prioritize holding future District events such as conventions, pastors’ conferences and planning conferences in LCMS Churches or Lutheran schools whenever feasible; AND BE IT FINALLY

**RESOLVED:** That the District will work collaboratively with District congregations and District schools to identify suitable locations and ensure that the necessary logistical arrangements are made.

Respectfully Submitted

\_\_\_\_\_  
Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church and School  
Black Hawk, SD

1 **OVERTURE:** 1-11

2  
3 **SUBJECT:** **TO ENSURE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CONCORDIA HEALTH PLANS**

4  
5 **WHEREAS,** Healthcare costs are increasingly burdensome to congregations and schools, AND

6  
7 **WHEREAS,** Concordia Health Plans provides an invaluable service to the LCMS, AND

8  
9 **WHEREAS,** The pool of workers available to enroll in CHP is relatively small, AND

10  
11 **WHEREAS,** A larger pool of workers contributing to the overall plan should decrease costs, AND

12  
13 **WHEREAS,** There are other church bodies with whom we agree in biblical morality and medical ethics,  
14 AND

15  
16 **WHEREAS,** Our doctrine permits us to cooperate in externals with other church bodies in non-doctrinal  
17 matters, THEREFORE BE IT

18  
19 **RESOLVED:** That the Synod in convention would change the Bylaws so that Synod Board of Directors  
20 and Concordia Health Plans can work with other church bodies to increase collective  
21 worker enrollment in order to decrease overall cost and ensure sustainability, AND BE IT  
22 FURTHER

23  
24 **RESOLVED:** That the Synod in convention would appoint a task force to submit recommendations and  
25 considerations for reducing the cost at next convention, including the possibility of  
26 combining with other church bodies with whom we agree in biblical morality and medical  
27 ethics, AND BE IT FURTHER

28  
29 **RESOLVED:** That the Synod Board of Directors would seek out other church bodies who align with us  
30 in externals to this end, AND BE IT FINALLY

31  
32 **RESOLVED:** That the LCMS would retain a majority representation on the CHP Board.

33  
34 Respectfully Submitted

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Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Brookings, SD



- 1 **OVERTURE: 1-12**  
2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO THANK THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT AND TO CONFER**  
4 **THE TITLE OF “PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT”**  
5  
6 **WHEREAS,** The Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer has provided our District with faithful pastoral  
7 leadership as District President for the past ten years; AND  
8  
9 **WHEREAS,** The District President has reflected upon the “God’s Gospel: Salvation Power” theme in  
10 his convention report; AND  
11  
12 **WHEREAS,** The District President has provided invaluable pastoral leadership in his articles in the  
13 Lutheran Witness and the District President’s E-Mail Newsletter, in his visitations and  
14 preaching in many congregations for special occasions, and in his presence and  
15 participation in many District functions; AND  
16  
17 **WHEREAS,** President Sailer has announced his retirement following the installation of our next  
18 District President; THEREFORE BE IT  
19  
20 **RESOLVED:** That we thank the Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer for his faithful pastoral leadership; AND  
21 BE IT FURTHER  
22  
23 **RESOLVED:** That this convention confer upon the Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer the title of “President  
24 Emeritus of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod”; AND  
25 BE IT FURTHER  
26  
27 **RESOLVED:** That we give thanks to God for His servant the Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer; AND BE IT  
28 FINALLY  
29  
30 **RESOLVED:** That following the adoption of this Resolution the assembly will rise and sing the last  
31 verse of the hymn, “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness” (LSB#563)

32  
33 “Jesus, be endless praise to Thee,  
34 Whose boundless mercy hath for me,  
35 For me, and all Thy hands have made,  
36 An everlasting ransom paid.”  
37

38 Respectfully Submitted,  
39

40 \_\_\_\_\_  
41 Reverend Steve Weispfennig, Chairman  
42

43 \_\_\_\_\_  
44 DCE Liz Peters  
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46 \_\_\_\_\_  
47 Reverend David Otten  
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49 \_\_\_\_\_  
50 Mr. Adam Schulz  
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52 \_\_\_\_\_  
53 Mr. Scot Eisenbraun  
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To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

1   **OVERTURE:   2-01**

2  
3   **SUBJECT:       LCMS SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT TO CONTINUE TOGETHER IN MISSION (TIM)**  
4                   **SUPPORT AND TO ENCOURAGE CONGREGATIONAL INVOLVEMENT THEREIN**

5  
6   **RATIONALE:**

7   Since the 53<sup>rd</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District (1994), the District in Convention has adopted  
8   resolutions to partner with missionaries in a variety of mission fields. The initial District Convention  
9   resolution, Resolution 1-02 (1994), resolved that the financial gifts given to Together In Mission (TIM) by  
10   District congregations were to be “over and above” each congregation’s regular offerings for Synod and  
11   District mission support. By District Convention action, those missionaries or projects receiving support  
12   from District congregations through Together In Mission since 1994 have been:

- 13  
14       • Amy Kashenov serving in Kazakhstan (1994-2012)  
15       • Global Seminary Initiative, seminaries in Tanzania, Africa and Novosibirsk, Russia (2013-14)  
16       • Rev. Dr. Alan Ludwig, instructor at the Lutheran seminary in Novosibirsk, Russia (2015-2018)  
17       • Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram, serving in Southeast Asia and Rev. David Warner, serving in Spain (2018-  
18       2021)  
19       • Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram, Southeast Asia, and Rev. Dr. Corey Rajek, serving in Eurasia (2021-  
20       2025).

21  
22   Then, late in 2023, the District President, at the Board of Directors’ urging (and apart from District  
23   Convention action), put to the congregations the opportunity to support, via TIM, other missionaries from  
24   South Dakota sent to overseas mission fields in the past triennium. By a majority vote (72-3), the measure  
25   was adopted. At the time, Rev. Samuel Bobby was serving in Latvia, and Revs. Jordon Andreasen and  
26   Jonah Domenichelli, had received notice of calls to Romania and Germany, respectively. The two,  
27   subsequently, accepted the calls. All three – Missionaries Bobby, Andreasen, and Domenichelli – began  
28   receiving TIM support from South Dakota, toward the end of the past triennium. Meanwhile, Rev. Dr. Cory  
29   Rajek’s TIM support ended after the District’s 2023 fiscal year, because he became the Executive Director  
30   of the Office of International Mission of the LCMS.

31  
32   For the coming triennium, convention delegates are asked to consider renewing the LCMS South Dakota  
33   District’s commitment to support God’s mission efforts abroad through the TIM program.

34  
35   **WHEREAS,**       God’s mission (the *Missio Dei*, which belongs to Him and His love for the world) centers in  
36                   the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17); AND

37  
38   **WHEREAS,**       Just as God the Father sent (*apostello*) His Son Jesus into the world, Jesus sends all  
39                   believers into the world to “seek and to save the lost” (John 20:21-23; Luke 19:10); AND

40  
41   **WHEREAS,**       The Lord continues to call His Church from among the nations around the world to work  
42                   mutually in sending and receiving “laborers for the harvest” until that day when our Lord’s  
43                   mission is complete (Ephesians 4:1-7; Matthew 9:35-10:1); AND

44  
45   **WHEREAS,**       In Article 3.2, “Objectives” of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Constitution,  
46                   it states that the Synod shall “strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold  
47                   witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
48                   and extend that Gospel witness into all the world;” AND

49  
50   **WHEREAS,**       Continued support by District congregations of a Together In Mission project is faithful to  
51                   Christ’s desire for His Church and to the Synod’s stated objectives; THEREFORE BE IT

- 53 **RESOLVED:** That the District in convention affirm and ratify the 2023 vote by congregations of the  
54 District to add to its TIM offering recipients those pastors from South Dakota who accepted  
55 calls to overseas mission work, late in the past triennium; AND BE IT FURTHER  
56
- 57 **RESOLVED:** That the District in convention express its thanks to God for blessing the mission work of  
58 the last triennium's (Dec. 2021 – Feb. 2025) Together In Mission recipients: Rev. Dr. Daniel  
59 Jastram, missionary to Southeast Asia; Rev. Dr. Cory Rajek, Rev. Samuel Bobby, Rev.  
60 Jordon Andreasen, and Rev. Jonah Domenichelli, missionaries to Eurasia; AND BE IT  
61 FURTHER  
62
- 63 **RESOLVED:** That the District congregations adopt Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram, missionary to Southeast  
64 Asia, and missionaries to Eurasia: Rev. Jordon Andreasen (Romania), Rev. Samuel Bobby  
65 (Latvia), and Rev. Jonah Domenichelli (Germany), as the recipients of the District's TIM  
66 offerings, in equal measure, for the 2025-2028 triennium; AND BE IT FURTHER  
67
- 68 **RESOLVED:** That should other missionaries from South Dakota be called to overseas LCMS missionary  
69 service in the next triennium, they, too, will receive an equal share of the District's TIM  
70 support for the balance of the triennium; AND BE IT FURTHER  
71
- 72 **RESOLVED:** That should any of these missionaries retire from active missionary service or return from  
73 the mission field before 2028, the balance of the TIM offerings will go in equal measure to  
74 the missionaries still remaining in the field. If all of these workers should retire or return  
75 from the mission field before our next convention, the South Dakota District's Board of  
76 Directors will determine which missionary or missionaries will receive our congregations'  
77 TIM offerings for the remainder of the triennium; AND BE IT FURTHER  
78
- 79 **RESOLVED:** That every congregation of The South Dakota District, regardless of size, be encouraged  
80 to partner with the other District congregations by 1) remembering the work of missionaries  
81 Jastram, Bobby, Andreasen, and Domenichelli in their corporate and individual prayers  
82 and 2) by providing an annual commitment to TIM over and above their regular support of  
83 Synod and District missions; AND BE IT FINALLY  
84
- 85 **RESOLVED:** That the District President and the Assistant to the President work with the Office of  
86 International Mission of the LCMS to arrange for possible FOROs (Spanish for *forum*) in  
87 the Eurasia mission field, in the coming triennium, to give members of South Dakota District  
88 congregations the on-site opportunity to learn and serve and to encourage our missionaries  
89 and their families (cf. 2023 Synod Res. 2-07A).  
90

91  
92 Respectfully Submitted,  
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96 \_\_\_\_\_  
97 The Board of Directors of  
98 The South Dakota District LCMS  
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101

1 **Overture: 2-02**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO CONTINUE THE MISSION AND MINISTRY COUNCIL FOR THE SUPPORT OF**  
4 **WORKERS AND MINISTRIES**

5  
6 **BACKGROUND:**

7 Over the years, the South Dakota District has utilized various committee structures for  
8 providing resources to the ministries and workers within the District. For example, the  
9 Service Area format was in place from 2006 through 2021 (cf. 2006 Res. 1-34); those  
10 Service Areas were identified as Outreach, Parish Services, and Young Adult and Youth.

11 While the Service Area structure provided many blessings in the 15 years of its existence,  
12 the types, sources, and delivery of ministry resources for church workers, congregations,  
13 and schools changed dramatically in this electronic age. Our workers often find it more  
14 convenient to turn to the internet for resources than to rely on and wait for resources  
15 produced by the District. Moreover, recruiting our already busy church workers for service  
16 on the committees of our District has grown more challenging.

17 Therefore, at the 2021 Convention of the District, the Service Area structure was  
18 “suspended for the 2022-2025 triennium,” and in its place a “Mission and Ministry Council”  
19 comprised of representatives from every circuit in the District was authorized for the 2021-  
20 2025 triennium (cf. 2021 Res. 2-04). At this time, the Mission and Ministry Council has 10  
21 members (8 laypeople, 1 commissioned minister, and 1 ordained minister) and 4 advisory  
22 members (the District President, 1st Vice-President, the Assistant to the President, and the  
23 District’s Education Executive). The Council is chaired by one of the laypersons and is  
24 “supervised” by the Assistant to the President. Members are appointed by the District  
25 President and 1st Vice-President.

26 Since it began operating in December of 2022, the Mission and Ministry Council has helped  
27 to organize the P.A.S.S. It On! congregational resource workshops in November 2023 and  
28 November 2024, and a Men’s Retreat, held in December 2023, in Brookings, and another  
29 held in the Black Hills, the summer of 2024.

30 **WHEREAS,** In the past triennium, the Mission and Ministry Council structure of providing support and  
31 ministry resources has resulted in providing a variety of helpful events that have brought  
32 together church workers and church members for fellowship, education, and equipping for  
33 service; AND

34 **WHEREAS,** The involvement and interaction of laypersons and church workers on the Council has been  
35 particularly dynamic, yielding fresh ideas for Christian growth and service; AND

36 **WHEREAS,** Per Resolution 2-04 2021, the Mission and Ministry Council and Board of Directors have  
37 been charged to bring a plan for ongoing structure to provide support and ministry  
38 resources, the Board of Directors of the LCMS South Dakota District recommends  
39 continuing the Mission and Ministry Council concept for the 2025-2028 triennium;  
40 THEREFORE BE IT

41 **RESOLVED:** That the Mission and Ministry Council format be affirmed and that it be authorized by this  
42 Convention of the District for continuation; AND BE IT FINALLY

43 **RESOLVED:** That the 63rd Regular Convention of the LCMS South Dakota District affirm these goals  
44 for the work of the Mission and Ministry Council, as put forward in the original 2021 Res.  
45 2-04:

- 46 1) Identify the pressing human and spiritual needs of our neighbors, especially  
47 that of hearing the Gospel;

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- 48                    2) Identify the pressing personal and ministry needs of LCMS church workers  
49                    and the needs and opportunities of LCMS congregations, schools, and other  
50                    ministries in South Dakota;
- 51                    3) Prioritize the needs and plan ways to address those needs and opportunities;
- 52                    4) Make provision to implement vehicles to address needs and opportunities  
53                    (e.g., assigning ad hoc committees, conducting workshops, producing  
54                    resources); and
- 55                    5) Consider possible superior structures to provide support and ministry  
56                    resources to church workers and congregations, schools, and other  
57                    ministries.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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The South Dakota District  
Board of Directors

1 **OVERTURE: 2-03**

2 **SUBJECT: TO CONTINUE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT (LCMS)**  
3 **AND LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICE (IOWA)**

4  
5 **HISTORY:**

6 In 2018, Lutheran Family Service of Iowa (LFS) approached the Board of Directors of the  
7 South Dakota District about the possibility of working cooperatively in South Dakota. LFS  
8 is a Recognized Service Organization of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. They are  
9 owned by Missouri Synod congregations in Iowa and receive support from the Iowa East  
10 and West Districts of the LCMS. They do not receive funding from any governmental  
11 organization and so are free to practice our common Christian faith.

12  
13 The District entered into an agreement with LFS in December 2019 for LFS (1) to be  
14 available to consult with pastors and other church workers in the counseling work of the  
15 parish, (2) to work with church workers and their families about issues that those individuals  
16 and families are struggling with through telehealth counseling with counselors from LFS in  
17 Iowa, and (3) to train people in South Dakota to help others in various areas such as Elder  
18 Care, Dementia, Addictions, and Marriage challenges.

19  
20 The 2021 South Dakota District Convention resolved “to expand this ministry by asking  
21 God to open our eyes to whatever other good works “which God has prepared in advance,  
22 that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10), and to “commit to LFS \$75,000 for 2022,  
23 \$75,000 for 2023, and \$50,000 for 2024 to fund start-up costs and the operation of this  
24 ministry”. Half of the money was to come “from gifts and bequests that the District has  
25 received over the years and the other half would come from the congregations of the South  
26 Dakota District as ‘an over and above’ giving similar to our present ‘Together in Mission  
27 (TIM)’ gifts.”

28  
29 In 2022 the District received \$54,192 for LFS from the congregations of the District, 2023-  
30 -\$53,301, 2024 \_\_\_\_\_ . The goal for 2025 would be \$50,000. It will take a concerted  
31 effort on the part of all the congregations of the District to reach this goal.

32  
33 This commitment would be similar to the one the District makes with the Synod concerning  
34 TIM. For TIM the District pledges \$40,000 a year and would take that amount out of District  
35 funds if the money doesn’t come in from congregations. Every year the congregations  
36 have provided significantly more than that: 2022-\$71,759, 2023-\$75,849, 2024- . Every  
37 dollar received for TIM is sent on to the Synod. In other words, we have not had to take  
38 any money from District funds.

39  
40 The pledge for LFS would be the same amount (\$40,000) with the same arrangement:  
41 every dollar received would be sent on to LFS and if we don’t receive enough for the full  
42 pledge the money will be taken from District funds.

43  
44  
45 **WHEREAS:** The South Dakota District (LCMS) has been in partnership with Lutheran Family Service  
46 (Iowa) since 2019. Lutheran Family Service has provided counseling, adoption and other  
47 services to individuals, church workers and their families, as well as congregations. The  
48 SD District has provided financial and other support to LFS, AND

49  
50 **WHEREAS:** This arrangement has grown over the years to include counseling offices on both sides of  
51 South Dakota as well as tele-health which is accessible throughout the State, AND

52  
53 **WHEREAS:** The need for these services continues to grow exponentially, THEREFORE BE IT

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- 54  
55 **RESOLVED:** That the current partnership be continued for the next triennium, AND BE IT FURTHER  
56  
57 **RESOLVED:** That together we will seek to expand this ministry by asking God to open our eyes to  
58 whatever good works “which God has prepared in advance, that we should walk in them”  
59 (Ephesians 2:10), AND BE IT FURTHER  
60  
61 **RESOLVED:** That the money for this would primarily come from the congregations of the South Dakota  
62 District as money pledged and given over and above the regular contributions given for the  
63 work of District and Synod. This would be in a similar way as the South Dakota District  
64 funds its commitment to “Together in Mission,” AND BE IT FINALLY  
65  
66 **RESOLVED:** That this partnership would regularly be evaluated by the District Board of Directors and  
67 that the 2028 District Convention would reassess the partnership at that time.  
68

69 Respectfully Submitted,  
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71 \_\_\_\_\_  
72 South Dakota District  
73 Board of Directors  
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- 1   **OVERTURE: 2-04**  
2
- 3   **SUBJECT: TO ENCOURAGE WORKER WELLNESS AND IMPLEMENT A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR**  
4   **ADDRESSING WORKER WELLNESS**  
5
- 6   **WHEREAS,** Mankind is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), and even in our fallen state God  
7   continues to care and provide in great abundance (Isaiah 55:10 & Psalm 104:15-30); above  
8   all the assurance of salvation through Jesus (John 3:16) so that we might share in His joy  
9   for now and eternity (John 15:11) and that, as His people, we be well in body, mind, and  
10   spirit (3 John 2-3); AND
- 11   **WHEREAS,** The devil, the world, and our sinful nature seek to rob and destroy the joy and health of all  
12   people (John 10:10), including the men and women whom God has called into service as  
13   ordained and commissioned ministers of the church by way of illness, discouragement,  
14   disappointment, loneliness, and frustration, to the point that, according to reports by the  
15   Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 24 percent of church workers are diagnosed with  
16   anxiety and depression and 40 percent have considered leaving the ministry due to  
17   compounding stress; AND
- 18   **WHEREAS,** God, the One who gives many and various gifts, has blessed His world with people who  
19   serve in a variety of vocations including health sciences and caregiving to serve our well-  
20   being; AND
- 21   **WHEREAS,** 2021, District Convention Resolution 2-06 encouraged church workers and congregations  
22   to “become familiar with and utilize the various tools and supports at their disposal to  
23   restore, maintain, and increase their spiritual, emotional, relational, financial, vocational,  
24   and physical wellness,” AND
- 25   **WHEREAS,** 2023 Synod Convention Resolution 1-06A directed the Council of Presidents to “prioritize  
26   the matter of the wellness of church workers and their families through the development of  
27   a strategic plan for worker care that can be disseminated to and replicated by the district  
28   presidents,” AND
- 29   **WHEREAS,** 2023 Synod Convention Resolution 1-07 encouraged workers “to use the resources  
30   available through Concordia Plan Services (such as the Employee Assistance Program)  
31   or other similar programs not in conflict with our confession” and “congregations, circuit  
32   visitors, and district presidents of the Synod be encouraged to support the mental well-  
33   being of pastors and other professional church workers” and “each district of the Synod be  
34   encouraged to make available a paid or volunteer district mental health advocate for  
35   pastors and other professional church workers,” AND
- 36   **WHEREAS,** In extending a call to a worker the congregation obligates itself to support workers and  
37   provide for them, including care for health and well-being; THEREFORE BE IT
- 38   **RESOLVED:** That church workers be encouraged to avail themselves of appropriate care to sustain and  
39   regain spiritual, emotional, relational, financial, vocational, and physical wellness from  
40   reputable agencies, such as mental health resources of Lutheran Family Service; AND BE  
41   IT FURTHER
- 42
- 43   **RESOLVED:** That the District President, with the assistance of Lutheran Family Service and District  
44   Parish Nurse Representative, develop and implement a strategic plan for worker care



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45 congruent with recommendations of the Council of Presidents' strategic plan; AND BE IT  
46 FURTHER

47 **RESOLVED:** That church workers and congregations become familiar with the common themes  
48 surrounding the topic of worker wellness identified by Synod through worker surveys and  
49 group discussions (<https://www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/mercy/church-worker-wellness>)  
50 and utilize resources, tools, and supports in each area; AND BE IT FURTHER

51 **RESOLVED:** That congregations, ministry staff, and Winkels be encouraged to designate appropriate  
52 time in meetings to discussion and planning for worker wellness; AND BE IT FINALLY

53 **RESOLVED:** That ordained and commissioned ministers, congregations, and Lutheran schools give  
54 thanks to God for the work that has been done in these areas and for the many and various  
55 ways that the Lord provides for the needs of body and soul for all His people, joining with  
56 St. Paul in saying, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your  
57 reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about  
58 anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests  
59 be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will  
60 guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

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Respectfully Submitted,

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The Board of Directors of  
The South Dakota District LCMS

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
February 16-18 2025

- 1     **OVERTURE:   2-05**  
2  
3     **SUBJECT:     TO BUILD A CULTURE OF CHURCH WORK FORMATION AND RECRUITMENT**  
4  
5     **WHEREAS,**     Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to  
6                     the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest (Matt. 9:37-38); AND  
7  
8     **WHEREAS,**     Since 1847 to the present day, the LCMS frequently adopted resolutions in Synod  
9                     conventions to form and recruit pastors, teachers, Directors of Christian Education,  
10                    deaconesses, and other commissioned church workers to preach, teach, and share the  
11                    Gospel of Jesus for eternal salvation in these full-time vocations; AND  
12  
13    **WHEREAS,**     In the last five years, approximately twice as many LCMS pastors have exited the pastoral  
14                     office (by retirement, resignation, or death) as there are newly called and ordained pastors,  
15                     helping to create a shortage of pastors; AND  
16  
17    **WHEREAS,**     Commissioned minister formation programs in our Synod’s universities, likewise, are not  
18                     producing enough graduates to keep up with the demand, helping to create a shortage of  
19                     commissioned ministers; THEREFORE, BE IT  
20  
21    **RESOLVED:**    That the LCMS South Dakota District’s Executive Officers and District President, working  
22                     with the Mission and Ministry Council, make it a priority to provide resources and sponsor  
23                     events to assist congregations, schools, and church workers in intentional church work  
24                     formation and recruitment; AND BE IT FURTHER  
25  
26    **RESOLVED:**    That all congregations in the District be encouraged to provide generous grants to church  
27                     work students from their congregations and circuits, and make other intentional efforts to  
28                     recruit and encourage their children, youth, and adults to consider a full-time church work  
29                     vocation; AND BE IT FURTHER  
30  
31    **RESOLVED:**    That all pastors, Lutheran teachers, other commissioned church workers, and laity  
32                     intentionally encourage children and youth to consider a full-time church work vocation;  
33                     AND BE IT FURTHER  
34  
35    **RESOLVED:**    That South Dakota District congregations and schools be encouraged to make use of the  
36                     *Set Apart to Serve (SAS)* resources (found at [lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve](http://lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve)) and the SAS  
37                     church work recruitment curriculum (produced by Concordia Publishing House) and  
38                     available for download at [cph.org/set-apart-to-serve-school-resource-kit](http://cph.org/set-apart-to-serve-school-resource-kit)); AND BE IT  
39                     FINALLY  
40  
41    **RESOLVED:**    That both District and congregation leaders intentionally address the compensation of  
42                     church workers, foster church worker wellness, and encourage love and appreciation for  
43                     all ordained and commissioned ministers in the District’s congregations and schools.  
44

45                                     Respectfully Submitted,  
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48                                     \_\_\_\_\_  
49                                     The Board of Directors of  
50                                     The South Dakota District LCMS

- 1   **OVERTURE    2-06**  
2  
3   **SUBJECT:     ADOPTION— ONE OF GOD’S WAYS TO BUILD HIS FAMILY**  
4  
5   **WHEREAS,**    In the Old Testament several people were adopted: Moses by Pharoah’s daughter, Esther  
6                    by Mordecai. Also, in the Old Testament there are many passages encouraging God’s  
7                    people to look out for widows and orphans: “Father of the fatherless and protector of  
8                    widows is God in his holy habitation” (Psalm 68:5), and “He executes justice for the  
9                    fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing”  
10                   (Deuteronomy 10:18), AND  
11  
12   **WHEREAS,**    In the New Testament already in the first chapter adoption is front and center as Joseph  
13                    adopts Jesus. Adoption is also one way God describes how he chooses his people. “They  
14                    are the Israelites, and to them belongs the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of  
15                    the law, the worship, and promises” (Romans 9:4). “But when the fullness of time had  
16                    come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who  
17                    were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are  
18                    sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Galatians  
19                    4:4-6). “He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according  
20                    to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us  
21                    in the Beloved” (Ephesians 1:6-7), AND  
22  
23   **WHEREAS,**    In Baptism God has adopted us to be his own and he calls us to invite more into his family  
24                    by teaching his Word, baptizing through his Word, and living as his people, AND  
25  
26   **WHEREAS,**    There are thousands of children across this country who are waiting to be adopted, AND  
27  
28   **WHEREAS,**    There are many with special circumstances who are also waiting: embryos, those with  
29                    disabilities, older children/young adults, THEREFORE IT BE  
30  
31   **RESOLVED:**   That congregations, schools, and church workers study the issue of adoption, AND BE IT  
32                    FURTHER  
33  
34   **RESOLVED:**   That the use of educational materials from Lutherans for Life be studied and promoted,  
35                    AND BE IT FURTHER  
36  
37   **RESOLVED:**   That we support the work of the various Crisis Pregnancy Centers in South Dakota such  
38                    as the Alpha Center, Option 1, Black Hills Pregnancy Center (among others) AND BE IT  
39                    FINALLY  
40  
41   **RESOLVED:**   That we promote the work of Lutheran Family Service (Iowa) and other Recognized Service  
42                    Organizations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who have been and continue to be  
43                    involved with adoption placement and support.  
44  
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Respectfully Submitted,

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The Board of Directors of  
The South Dakota District LCMS

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church –Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

- 1 **OVERTURE: 2-08**  
2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO WALK TOGETHER AS A DISTRICT IN AFFIRMING OUR USE OF ONLY BREAD**  
4 **AND WINE IN THE ELEMENTS IN THE LORD’S SUPPER, AND TO ASK THE CTCR**  
5 **FOR GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF GLUTEN-FREE BREAD AND WINE IN WHICH THE**  
6 **ALCOHOL HAS BEEN REMOVED**  
7  
8 **WHEREAS,** Jesus Christ Himself instituted the Sacrament of the Altar, and He used bread and wine in  
9 His Supper, as taught in question 351 of the 2017 Small Catechism, AND  
10 **WHEREAS,** Many congregations have wrestled with the question of sacramentally using other liquids  
11 made from grapes, AND  
12 **WHEREAS,** Unfermented liquids such as grape juice were not available until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when  
13 the Reformed tradition developed a way to prevent fermentation so that they might be able  
14 to receive Communion without alcohol, AND  
15 **WHEREAS,** The Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article VII clearly confesses that when Jesus  
16 said, “do this,” he meant using bread and wine in addition to the Words of Institution and  
17 the act of distribution. *“Apart from this use, it is to be regarded as no Sacrament....”*<sup>1</sup> AND  
18 **WHEREAS,** In response to new prohibition laws, the 1917 convention of the LCMS appealed to the  
19 United States President Woodrow Wilson to allow the shipment of communion wine  
20 through the US Postal Service because “it is one of our religious tenets, and a belief based  
21 upon what we are convinced is a Biblical and hence a divine command, that in the  
22 celebration of the Lord’s Supper nothing but wine, i.e., fermented grape juice, may be  
23 used.” AND  
24 **WHEREAS,** The 1998 LCMS Convention Resolution 3-16B and 2001 LCMS Convention Resolution 3-  
25 16 both reaffirmed the use of bread and wine in the Sacrament of the Altar, AND  
26 **WHEREAS,** The CTCR last published a study of the Lord’s Supper, including the appropriate elements  
27 to use, in 1983, AND  
28 **WHEREAS,** Since 1983 there are now new options available for churches to use, such as non-alcoholic  
29 wine and gluten free bread, and while many churches have made use of these options, no  
30 Synodical theological review has been conducted, THEREFORE BE IT  
31 **RESOLVED:** That, in all our congregations and district celebrations of the Lord’s Supper, for the sake of  
32 conscience and the certainty of blessings received in the Sacrament of the Altar, the South  
33 Dakota District in convention insist upon walking together with our Synod in the reception  
34 of Christ’s body and blood under the visible elements of bread and wine, rejecting all  
35 substitutes, AND BE IT FINALLY  
36 **RESOLVED:** That the South Dakota District in convention urge the CTCR to study the matter of new  
37 alternatives such as non-alcoholic wine and gluten free bread for Sacramental use in the  
38 Lord’s Supper.

39 Respectfully Submitted,  
40  
41  
42

43 \_\_\_\_\_  
Circuit 4 Circuit Forum

<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Bente, *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions : A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord*, 2006, 575–76.  
Page | 124

- 1 **OVERTURE: 2-09**  
2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO AFFIRM THE USE OF TRUE WINE IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT**  
4  
5 **WHEREAS,** In the institution of His holy Supper, our Lord Jesus Christ used bread and wine (the term  
6 “fruit of the vine” in Mathew 266:29 would have been understood in Jesus’ day as referring  
7 to fermented wine,, and that fermented wine was used in the Lord’s Supper from the  
8 earliest time in the Church is clear from 1 Corinthians 11:221 which states that some were  
9 getting drunk from the cup) AND
- 10 **WHEREAS,** “As water and the application of water are a part of Baptism,, so bread and wine and their  
11 reception are the earthly elements of the Lord’s Supper. As we do not venture to substitute  
12 some other fluid for water in Baptism, so neither in the Lord’s Supper do we dare to  
13 substitute aught for bread and wine.” (Pieper, F. 1953, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol 3, pp 353-  
14 354; St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House), AND
- 15 **WHEREAS,** In the Lutheran Confessions it is assumed that wine is used in the administration of the  
16 Lord’s Supper (cf AC XII: “God attaches His Word of promise to the elements of the  
17 Sacrament – water, wine, or bread – and gives and strengthens the faith of those receiving  
18 them,” etc. (McCain, P.T. (Ed.). 2005, *Concordia, the Lutheran Confessions* (pp. 38-45).  
19 St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House). AND
- 20 **WHEREAS,** “In order not to introduce an element of uncertainty into the Sacrament ... the dignity of the  
21 Sacrament demands that we refrain from experimenting with all fluids of which it is not  
22 certain whether they are, or still are, ‘fruit of the vine.’” (Pieper, F. 1935 *Christian*  
23 *Dogmatics*, Vol 3 p 353, footnote 94). AND
- 24 **WHEREAS,** The 1983 CTCR Report *Theology and Practice of the Lord’s Supper*, states the  
25 understanding of our church that only wine should be used in the administration of the  
26 Lord’s Supper
- 27 All four accounts of the Lord's Supper speak of "the cup." The content of  
28 this cup was most definitely wine... In the oft-cited pastoral circumstance  
29 of an alcoholic communicant, the counsel of foregoing Communion for a  
30 period of time or the action of diluting the wine with water (perhaps done  
31 at the Lord's Supper itself) are preferable... The substitution of grape juice  
32 raises the question of whether the Lord’s instruction is being heeded. AND
- 33 **WHEREAS,** There is some question and doubt regarding whether “non alcoholic” wine can be  
34 considered true wine. AND
- 35 **WHEREAS,** We must be evangelical in our actions toward communicants who suffer from various  
36 medical conditions that may make the drinking of even a small amount of alcohol difficult.  
37 THEREFORE BE IT
- 38 **RESOLVED:** That pastors and congregations of the South Dakota District be reminded that only true  
39 wine is to be used in the celebration of the Sacrament; AND BE IT FURTHER
- 40 **RESOLVED:** That pastors and congregations of the South Dakota District explore evangelical and  
41 biblically/confessionally faithful ways of administering the Sacrament to Christians who  
42 have an intolerance to alcohol; AND BE IT FINALLY

43  
44

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church –Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

45 **RESOLVED:** That in all worship services held at District events such as conventions and conferences,  
46 only wine be used in the celebration of the Sacrament.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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Freeman Circuit (Circuit 6) of the SD District

1 **RESOLUTION: 1-01**

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3  
4 **SUBJECT: TO CELEBRATE AND LIVE OUT THE “GOD’S GOSPEL: SALVATION POWER” THEME**

5  
6 **WHEREAS,** The theme of this 63<sup>RD</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church –  
7 Missouri Synod – *God’s Gospel: Salvation Power* (Romans 1:16-17) -- has been chosen to  
8 highlight that we, as a District comprised of 105 congregations, have the blessed status as God’s  
9 redeemed people only by the power of the Gospel; AND

10  
11 **WHEREAS,** The Word of God makes it clear that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to turn unregenerate people  
12 from their sin and to bring them to faith through the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:14, Rom. 1:17; Rom.  
13 10:17; I Pet. 1:23, 25; Eph. 1:13, et al.); AND

14  
15 **WHEREAS,** Our Savior spoke of His disciples of every age as people whom He would employ as His  
16 “witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8);  
17 AND

18  
19 **WHEREAS,** God’s Word continues to impress upon His Church that “now is the favorable time; behold, now  
20 is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2); AND

21  
22 **WHEREAS,** There are countless opportunities in the rural, small town, and city settings of South Dakota to  
23 impact our neighbors through words of Gospel witness and deeds of love; AND

24  
25 **WHEREAS,** According to the U.S. Religion Census website ([www.usreligioncensus.org](http://www.usreligioncensus.org)), that of the 886,667  
26 residents of South Dakota (2020 Census), 55.38% (or 491,026 people) are “adherents” of a  
27 religion, while 395,641 South Dakotans have no religious affiliation; AND

28  
29 **WHEREAS,** The “Objectives” of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as stated in its Constitution (Article  
30 III. 1-2) recognizes the priorities of: 1) conserving and promoting the unity of the true faith; and,  
31 2) strengthening congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to  
32 the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extending that Gospel witness  
33 into all the world; THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

34  
35 **RESOLVED:** That every congregation, ministry, and school of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran  
36 Church—Missouri Synod emphasize, on the basis of God’s inspired Word, that being witnesses  
37 is not something we must do under the Law of God, but rather being witnesses is a matter of  
38 who we are under the Gospel and the Grace of God; AND BE IT FURTHER

39  
40 **RESOLVED:** That every congregation, ministry, and school of the District be encouraged to explore various  
41 ways that congregations, ministries, schools, and individuals may be more intentional in their  
42 lives as witnesses (with the help of such resources as the Synod’s *Every One His Witness*  
43 materials, e.g.), AND BE IT FINALLY

44  
45 **RESOLVED:** That The South Dakota District, through its Mission and Ministry Council and District staff, and  
46 led by the *God’s Gospel: Salvation Power* theme, provide encouragement and resources that  
47 will better equip congregations, ministries, schools and individuals in their lives and service as  
48 bold, unashamed witnesses.

49  
50 Respectfully Submitted,

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Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church –Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

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Reverend David Otten

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DCE Elizabeth Peters

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Mr. Adam Schulz

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Mr. Scot Eisenbraun



To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

1 **RESOLUTION: 1-02**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUALS AND WELCOME THEM INTO THE SOUTH DAKOTA**  
4 **DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

5  
6 **WHEREAS,** During the triennium following the 2021 62<sup>nd</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District, the  
7 following individuals became rostered members of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
8 – Ministers of Religion – Ordained;

9  

<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Ray Anderson	Dennis Mercer	Joseph Greenmyer	Thomas Penrod
Thomas Mueller			

10 AND

11  
12 **WHEREAS,** During the same triennium, the following individuals became rostered members of The  
13 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod Ministers of Religion – Commissioned:

14  

<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Michael Leapley	Sierra Geistfeld	Kristi Prouty	
Leanne Holdorf		Jade Fjelstad	

15 AND

16  
17  
18 **WHEREAS,** The membership of the above individuals is held in The South Dakota District of The  
19 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod; THEREFORE BE IT

20  
21 **RESOLVED:** That this 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District recognize and welcome the above  
22 individuals as partners in the Gospel; AND BE IT FINALLY

23  
24 **RESOLVED:** That we pray God’s richest blessings upon these workers that the Holy Spirit would use  
25 them to extend God’s kingdom here on earth.

26  
27 Respectfully Submitted,  
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30 \_\_\_\_\_  
31 Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman  
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34 Reverend David Otten  
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36 \_\_\_\_\_  
37 DCE Elizabeth Peters  
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39 \_\_\_\_\_  
40 Mr. Adam Schulz  
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42 \_\_\_\_\_  
43 Mr. Scot Eisenbraun  
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1     **RESOLUTION: 1-03**

2  
3     **SUBJECT:     TO APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT**  
4                   **OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD CONCERNING THE EXECUTIVE**  
5                   **OFFICERS OF THE DISTRICT**

6  
7     **RATIONALE:**

8                   In 2022, during a time of vacancy in the Executive Secretary’s position, the District’s Board  
9                   of Directors divided the former Executive Secretary’s position into the District’s two current  
10                  Executive Officer positions: one is full-time (the Assistant to the President), and the other  
11                  is part-time (the Education Executive). The ministry descriptions for these two current  
12                  positions are included in the Administration section of the Convention Workbook. But, in  
13                  summary, these officers assist the District President in the District’s work in areas such as  
14                  subsidized ministries, missions, stewardship, and education. The current Executive Office  
15                  known as “Assistant to the President” replaces most of the duties of the former position in  
16                  the District known as “Executive Secretary.” The current Executive Office titled “Education  
17                  Executive” is new. This office is responsible for providing resources, direction, and  
18                  encouragement to the faculties and staffs of the LCMS schools in the South Dakota District.  
19                  Having the knowledge and ability to assist in the calling of commissioned ministers and  
20                  being well-versed in school legislation and regulations makes the Education Executive  
21                  position in the District extremely valuable to our schools and their leaders.

22  
23                  This change in District administration, implemented by the Board of Directors, has led to  
24                  the necessity of updating certain Bylaws of the District. The amendments being proposed  
25                  here will allow for greater flexibility in staffing in the District. And they will allow for greater  
26                  attention to areas calling for greater expertise, such as is being done with the current  
27                  Education Executive position.

28  
29     **WHEREAS,**     The Constitution of the Synod, Article XII (Districts of the Synod and Their Regulation),  
30                   says in section 12, “The districts are independent in the administration of affairs which concern  
31                   their district only, it being understood, however, that such administration shall always serve the  
32                   interests of the Synod.”; AND

33  
34     **WHEREAS,**     The District’s Board of Directors has found it beneficial to serve the interests of the Synod  
35                   in this place by employing up to two Executive Officers to assist the District President in  
36                   his work, especially in the areas of subsidized ministries, missions, and education; AND

37  
38     **WHEREAS,**     Assigning an Executive Officer the added responsibility of ensuring that “Biblical principles  
39                   of stewardship are promoted throughout the District,” fulfills Synod Bylaw 4.6.1, which says  
40                   that “each district shall elect or appoint a committee, board, or individual responsible for  
41                   stewardship.”; THEREFORE BE IT

42  
43     **RESOLVED:**    That the Bylaws of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be  
44                   amended and adopted as follows, contingent on approval by the Synod’s Commission on  
45                   Constitutional Matters:

46     [PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING]

47  
48     [BRACKETS ARE USED FOR EXPLANATIONS ONLY; THIS MATERIAL IS NOT PART OF THE  
49     AMENDMENTS.]

50  
51                   1.25     Responsibility [of the Board of Directors]

- 52 a. The Board of Directors shall be responsible to the District for its official actions and shall  
53 render a report of its activities to the District Convention or as often as the District may call  
54 upon it to do so.
- 55 b. The Board of Directors shall consult and plan with the ~~Executive Secretary~~ Executive  
56 Officers regarding all matters of program development, especially in the areas of District  
57 subsidized ministries, missions, stewardship and education, and with the Business  
58 Manager regarding financial development.
- 59 c. The setting of the budget shall be done by the Board of Directors taking into consideration  
60 the recommendations of the Planning Process of the District.

61

62 **III. ~~EXECUTIVE SECRETARY~~ EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

63 3.01 ~~Appointment and Responsibility~~ Accountability

- 64 a. Executive Officers may be appointed by the Board of Directors to assist the District  
65 President in the work of the District, particularly in the areas of District subsidized ministries,  
66 missions, stewardship, and education. These Executive Officers shall be accountable to  
67 the Board and supervised by the District President. The Executive Secretary of the Board  
68 is appointed by the Board of Directors with the approval of the then District President, to be  
69 its Executive Officer, and as such shall be under its supervision. The Board of Directors  
70 shall provide him them with a job descriptions and guidelines of his their duties.

71 3.03 ~~Term of Office~~ Terms of Office

- 72 a. His Their terms of office shall be for three years, reckoned from the time of the meeting of  
73 the Board of Directors at which they are appointed. The appointments are to be made within  
74 six months the first regular meeting of the Board of Directors, following an election a regular  
75 Convention of the District.
- 76 b. There are no term limits for the Executive Officers, but they are to go through the process  
77 of re-appointment each triennium following their initial appointment.
- 78 c. If there are vacancies in these offices, the Board of Directors may fill them as they see fit.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

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Reverend David Otten

\_\_\_\_\_  
DCE Elizabeth Peters

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

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Mr. Adam Schulz

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Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

1   **RESOLUTION: 1-04**

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3   **SUBJECT:       TO APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT**  
4                   **OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD CONCERNING ELECTIONS HELD**  
5                   **AT THE DISTRICT CONVENTION**

6

7   **RATIONALE:** At the 2021 District Convention, some changes were made to the Bylaws of the District  
8                   reflecting the policy of the Synod that women may serve on Boards of Directors of Districts  
9                   and the Synod (2021 District Res. 1-05). Simple amendments, such as changing “layman”  
10                  to “layperson,” were made to the Bylaws in order to use language that makes this more  
11                  clear. But in the Election Procedure section of the Bylaws, it was discovered that two  
12                  references to this layman/layperson or laymen/lapeople distinction were missed by the  
13                  last convention. The adoption of this resolution will correct those errors.

14

15                   Additionally, at the last Synod Convention (2023), clarity was given to election procedures  
16                   for District offices, including for elections other than for President, Vice-Presidents, and  
17                   Circuit Visitors (2023 Synod Res. 9-02, Section H). That proposed clarification is found in  
18                   the 5.09 section of the District’s Bylaws (found on the second page of this resolution).

19

20   **WHEREAS,**     It is the desire and the obligation of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—  
21                   Missouri Synod to honor LC-MS convention resolutions and the resulting changes to the  
22                   *Handbook of the Synod*, including those that pertain to the governing documents of LCMS  
23                   entities (LCMS Bylaw 1.3.6, 2<sup>nd</sup> Restated Articles of Incorporation of The South Dakota  
24                   District, Article III.C); AND

25

26   **WHEREAS,**     Where errors are discovered, they should be corrected, since we are to conduct ourselves  
27                   “decently and in order” (1 Cor. 14:40); THEREFORE BE IT

28

29   **RESOLVED:**   That the Bylaws of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be  
30                   amended and adopted as follows, contingent on approval by the Synod’s Commission on  
31                   Constitutional Matters:

32

33   [~~PRESENT/PROPOSED~~ WORDING]

34

35   [BRACKETS ARE USED FOR EXPLANATIONS ONLY; THIS MATERIAL IS NOT PART OF THE  
36   AMENDMENTS.]

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39                   **V. ELECTION PROCEDURE**

40                   5.01   Time of Election and Term of Office

41                   a.   The President, Vice-Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the two ~~laymen~~  
42                   laypeople on the Board of Directors shall be elected in the District Convention.

43                   b.   All officers and members of the Board of Directors shall serve for terms of three years  
44                   or until their successors shall have qualified.

45 [There is no 5.02.]

46 5.03 Order of Election

47 a. The order for electing District officers shall be as follows:

48 1. President

49 2. Vice-Presidents

50 3. Secretary

51 4. Treasurer

52 5. Two ~~Laymen~~ Laypeople for Board of Directors

53 6. Circuit Visitors

54 7. District Member of Synodical Nominating Committee (as required)

55 8. Other committees (as necessary).

56

57 [The other bylaws in this section concern the nomination and election of the President, Vice-  
58 Presidents, and Circuit Visitors, which bylaws require no changes.]

59

60 5.09 Elections of Other Officers

61 a. Elections of all officers other than District President, Vice-Presidents, and Circuit  
62 Visitors shall be from the slate of candidates developed by the Committee on  
63 Nominations or as otherwise specified.

64 b. Names of candidates are to be placed on the slate in alphabetical order without  
65 distinctive marks, subject to approval by the Convention. Additional candidates may  
66 be placed in nomination by the Convention, such nominations to include the written  
67 consent of the nominee to serve.

68 c. A majority of all votes cast (disregarding voided ballots) shall be required to elect.

69 ~~d. In the event that no candidate receives the required majority vote, balloting shall~~  
70 ~~continue until there is an election, in which case the candidate(s) receiving the smallest~~  
71 ~~number of votes shall be eliminated from the balloting in each instance.~~

72 d. When a second or succeeding ballot is required for a majority, the candidate receiving  
73 the fewest votes and all candidates receiving less than 15 percent of the votes cast  
74 shall be dropped from the ballot, unless fewer than two candidates receive 15 percent  
75 or more of the votes cast, in which case the three highest candidates shall constitute  
76 the ballot.

77 e. There shall be no balloting during recess or after adjournment.

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79 Respectfully Submitted,

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Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

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Reverend David Otten

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DCE Elizabeth Peters

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Mr. Adam Schulz

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Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

1 **RESOLUTION: 1-05**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT TO RATIFY CONGREGATIONAL VOTE TO RESCIND**  
4 **1976 DISTRICT CONVENTION RES. 3-03 REGARDING THE LUTHERAN WITNESS**

5  
6 **RATIONALE:** A 1976 District Convention resolution (3-03) required that "...each congregation should be  
7 billed for its share of the *Lutheran Witness* blanket subscription" and that "the blanket  
8 subscription of our entire District be continued until a District Convention declines to  
9 continue it." The congregations of The South Dakota District have dutifully provided the  
10 *Lutheran Witness* to their households since that time. However, the cost for a subscription  
11 to the *Lutheran Witness* has risen dramatically in recent years, from \$11.25/subscription  
12 for 2022, to \$17.21/subscription for 2023, and close to \$20/subscription for 2024. The  
13 District's Board of Directors regard this increase as a financial challenge for many  
14 congregations. And they felt there was too much time until the next District Convention to  
15 change the policy by means of the usual method of conducting business: by convention  
16 action. Therefore, in their September 2023 meeting, the Board asked the District President  
17 to request a vote by the congregations of the District on whether to rescind the blanket  
18 subscription policy. This novel action of putting such a matter to a vote of congregations  
19 was based on Articles XII.2, XII.6, and XI.B.8 of the Synod's Constitution.  
20

21 After District President Sailer put the vote to the congregations in the last quarter of 2023,  
22 seventy-five of the District's one hundred and six congregations participated in the vote,  
23 with fifty-four congregations voting "yes" (to rescind 1976 Convention Res. 3-03) and with  
24 twenty-one congregations voting "no." The vote to rescind passed by a seventy two %  
25 majority.

26  
27 In addition to that strong congregational vote to rescind the 1976 resolution, the Board of  
28 Directors believes that the adoption of this resolution will officially uphold the requirement  
29 of 1976 Convention Res. 3-03 that "the blanket subscription of our entire District be  
30 continued until a District Convention declines to continue it."  
31

32 **WHEREAS,** The 1976 South Dakota District Convention (Res. 3-03) had required that each District  
33 congregation should be billed for its share of the *Lutheran Witness* subscription; AND

34 **WHEREAS,** The same resolution also required that this "blanket subscription" policy was to continue  
35 until "a District Convention declined to continue it"; AND

36 **WHEREAS,** A congregational vote in 2023, put forward by the District President between District  
37 conventions (per Synod Constitution Articles XI and XII), determined that the policy should  
38 be rescinded, having passed by a 72% majority; THEREFORE BE IT

39 **RESOLVED:** That the South Dakota District in convention ratify the congregational vote of 2023 to  
40 rescind the blanket subscription, thus honoring the decline-to-continue clause of 1976  
41 District Convention Res. 3-03; AND BE IT FURTHER

42 **RESOLVED:** That the congregations of the District encourage their members to subscribe on their own  
43 to the *Lutheran Witness*, the "official periodical of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod,"  
44 or to otherwise make the *Lutheran Witness* available to their members; AND BE IT  
45 FINALLY

46 **RESOLVED:** That the congregations of the District be thanked and commended for having provided the  
47 *Lutheran Witness* to their member households for nearly fifty years.

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To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
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Respectfully Submitted,

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Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

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Reverend David Otten

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DCE Elizabeth Peters

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Mr. Adam Schulz

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Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

1 **RESOLUTION: 1-06**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO RESCIND 2003 DISTRICT CONVENTION RESOLUTION 1-04 CONCERNING THE**  
4 **TRIENNIAL DISTRICT PLANNING CONFERENCE**

5  
6 **WHEREAS,** The Annual Planning Conference of the South Dakota District was instituted by the 54<sup>th</sup>  
7 Regular Convention of the District, in 1997, via adoption of Resolution 2-02, to assist the  
8 Board of Directors in planning the ministries of the District; AND

9  
10 **WHEREAS,** 1997 Convention Resolution 2-02 also specified that the Annual Planning Conference was  
11 to involve the members of the Board of Directors of the District, the Circuit Counselors, a  
12 lay representative from each circuit, the Chairman of each ministry area, the District LWML  
13 President, the District LLL President, the District Personal Stewardship Counselor, and the  
14 District Executive Staff; AND

15  
16 **WHEREAS,** The 56<sup>th</sup> Regular Convention of the District (2003 Res. 1-04) changed the frequency of the  
17 Planning Conference from being an annual event to a triennial event; AND

18  
19 **WHEREAS,** 2003 District Convention Resolution 1-04 also mandated that the Triennial Planning  
20 Conferences are to be conducted in the “year when the Circuit Convocations are to be  
21 held,” that is, in the non-Convention year of the triennium (cf. Synod Bylaw 5.4.1); AND

22  
23 **WHEREAS,** The same 2003 resolution stated in one of the resolved’s that “in the other two years  
24 conferences, circuits, congregations and individuals be encouraged to submit to our Board  
25 of Directors and/or the Program Area Chairmen mission and ministry opportunities”; AND

26  
27 **WHEREAS,** Input into the planning and work of the ministries of the District can be sought from those  
28 entities in a variety of ways, including by the District staff, by Circuit Visitors in Winkels and  
29 in visits to congregations, and by committees established by the District (including the  
30 current Mission and Ministry Council); THEREFORE BE IT

31  
32 **RESOLVED:** That the requirement of conducting a Triennial Planning Conference in the non-Convention  
33 year, from the 2003 District Convention Res. 1-04, be rescinded. AND BE IT FINALLY

34  
35 **RESOLVED:** The District Board of Directors may call a Planning Conference as it sees fit.

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38 Respectfully Submitted,

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41 \_\_\_\_\_  
42 Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

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45 Reverend David Otten

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47 \_\_\_\_\_  
48 DCE Elizabeth Peters

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51 Mr. Adam Schulz

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53 \_\_\_\_\_  
54 Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

1 **RESOLUTION: 1-07 (Overtures 1-08, 1-09)**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: DISTRICT OFFICERS SERVING CONGREGATIONS AS ASSISTING PASTORS**

4  
5 **WHEREAS,** In keeping with Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, where the Church is defined as  
6 "the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are  
7 rightly administered;" AND

8  
9 **WHEREAS,** The Church faces an urgent need for qualified men to serve congregations in accordance  
10 with Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession which states: "no one should publicly teach  
11 in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called;" AND

12  
13 **WHEREAS,** There are offices of the South Dakota District that are filled by ordained men; AND

14  
15 **WHEREAS,** Prior to 1974 the District President served a congregation and was District President.  
16 Since 1974 the District President has served full time; AND

17  
18 **WHEREAS,** The District bylaws 2.05 e. is the only restriction to the District President; AND

19  
20 **WHEREAS,** The call to serve in the pastoral office is the primary and most essential office in the  
21 church, and service to the Synod in administrative offices are established to support the  
22 work of the pastoral office; THEREFORE BE IT

23  
24 **RESOLVED:** That the Bylaws of the South Dakota District of the LCMS be amended to allow any  
25 ordained men serving in offices of the District to also accept a call to serve a  
26 congregation as an assisting Pastor AND BE IT FURTHER

27  
28 **RESOLVED:** That given the gravity of the Office of Holy Ministry and the necessity of the effective  
29 support from the District officers, serving a congregational call may be a voluntary choice  
30 for ordained men serving in a District Office. AND BE IT FINALLY

31  
32 **RESOLVED:** That the Bylaw 2.05 e., which reads "*He shall not serve a congregation as its Vacancy*  
33 *Pastor,*" be changed to "*He may serve as an assisting pastor.*"

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35 Respectfully Submitted,

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38 \_\_\_\_\_  
39 Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

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42 DCE Liz Peters

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45 Reverend David Otten

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47 \_\_\_\_\_  
48 Mr. Adam Schulz

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50 \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

**RESOLUTION: 1-10**

**SUBJECT: TO CONSIDER HOLDING FUTURE DISTRICT EVENTS SUCH AS CONVENTIONS, PASTORS CONFERENCES AND PLANNING CONFERENCES IN LCMS CHURCHES OR LUTHERAN SCHOOLS**

**WHEREAS,** The South Dakota District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LCMS) values the importance of fostering a strong sense of community and fellowship among its members; AND

**WHEREAS,** Holding District Conventions in churches or Lutheran schools can provide a more spiritually enriching environment, conducive to worship, prayer, and theological reflection; AND

**WHEREAS,** Utilizing church and school facilities can help strengthen the connection between the district's administrative activities and its congregational and educational ministries; AND

**WHEREAS,** Gathering in churches or Lutheran schools can serve as a witness to the broader community, showcasing the vibrant faith and commitment of the LCMS; AND

**WHEREAS,** Significant cost savings can be achieved by using church and school facilities, allowing for better allocation of District funds towards mission and ministry initiatives; AND

**WHEREAS,** Hosting District events in these settings can promote stewardship by making use of existing resources within the LCMS community, potentially reducing costs associated with external venues; AND

**WHEREAS,** Many existing church and school facilities have ample space to accommodate large gatherings, ensuring that the needs of all attendees are met; AND

**WHEREAS,** It was the example of our Synod to hold national conventions in churches until the conventions grew too large, but our district conventions can still be held in such facilities; AND

**WHEREAS,** Potential challenges such as accessibility, capacity, and technological requirements can be addressed by working closely with host sites to ensure that all logistical needs are met, THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED:** That the South Dakota District Board of Directors will consider holding future District events such as conventions, pastors' conferences and planning conferences in LCMS Churches or Lutheran schools whenever feasible; AND BE IT FINALLY

**RESOLVED:** That the District will work collaboratively with District congregations and District schools to identify suitable locations and ensure that the necessary logistical arrangements are made.

Respectfully Submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

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Reverend David Otten

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DCE Elizabeth Peters

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Mr. Adam Schulz

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Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

**RESOLUTION: 1-11**

**SUBJECT: TO STABILIZE THE COST OF BENEFITS OFFERED BY CONCORDIA PLAN SERVICES**

**WHEREAS,** Concordia Plan Services (CPS) provides significant blessings to workers enrolled in their health, retirement, and disability plans; AND

**WHEREAS,** The cost of the Concordia Health Plan, Retirement Plan, and Disability Plan offered by CPS is a substantial expense borne by congregations, schools, and other ministries of the LCMS; AND

**WHEREAS,** The pool of workers available to enroll in the CPS benefit plans is relatively small; AND

**WHEREAS,** A larger pool of workers contributing to the health plan, retirement plan, and disability plan would provide the opportunity to spread expenses over a larger membership base and would increase the ability of Concordia Plan Services to negotiate with vendors; AND

**WHEREAS,** There are other church bodies with whom we agree in biblical morality and medical ethics; AND

**WHEREAS,** Our doctrine permits us to cooperate in externals with other church bodies in non-doctrinal matters; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED:** That the Synod in convention would amend the Synod's Bylaws so that Concordia Plan Services can serve a wider population, by working with other church bodies to increase collective worker enrollment, in order to stabilize the overall cost of the benefits offered by CPS.

Respectfully Submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reverend Steven Weispfennig, Chairman

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Reverend David Otten

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DCE Elizabeth Peters

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Mr. Adam Schulz

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Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

1 **RESOLUTION: 1-12**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO THANK THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT AND TO CONFER**  
4 **THE TITLE OF “PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT”**

5  
6 **WHEREAS,** The Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer has provided our District with faithful pastoral  
7 leadership as District President for the past ten years; AND

8  
9 **WHEREAS,** The District President has reflected upon the “God’s Gospel: Salvation Power” theme in  
10 his convention report; AND

11  
12 **WHEREAS,** The District President has provided invaluable pastoral leadership in his articles in the  
13 Lutheran Witness and the District President’s E-Mail Newsletter, in his visitations and  
14 preaching in many congregations for special occasions, and in his presence and  
15 participation in many District functions; AND

16  
17 **WHEREAS,** President Sailer has announced his retirement following the installation of our next  
18 District President; THEREFORE BE IT

19  
20 **RESOLVED:** That we thank the Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer for his faithful pastoral leadership; AND  
21 BE IT FURTHER

22  
23 **RESOLVED:** That this convention confer upon the Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer the title of “President  
24 Emeritus of The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod”; AND  
25 BE IT FURTHER

26  
27 **RESOLVED:** That we give thanks to God for His servant the Reverend Dr. Scott C. Sailer; AND BE IT  
28 FINALLY

29  
30 **RESOLVED:** That following the adoption of this Resolution the assembly will rise and sing the last  
31 verse of the hymn, “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness” (LSB#563)

32  
33 “Jesus, be endless praise to Thee,  
34 Whose boundless mercy hath for me,  
35 For me, and all Thy hands have made,  
36 An everlasting ransom paid.”

37  
38 Respectfully Submitted,

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40 \_\_\_\_\_  
41 Reverend Steve Weispfennig, Chairman

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43 \_\_\_\_\_  
44 DCE Liz Peters

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46 \_\_\_\_\_  
47 Reverend David Otten

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50 Mr. Adam Schulz

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53 Mr. Scot Eisenbraun

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
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1 **RESOLUTION: 2-01**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: LCMS SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT TO CONTINUE TOGETHER IN MISSION (TIM)**  
4 **SUPPORT AND TO ENCOURAGE CONGREGATIONAL INVOLVEMENT THEREIN**

5  
6 **RATIONALE:**

7 Since the 53<sup>rd</sup> Convention of The South Dakota District (1994), the District in Convention  
8 has adopted resolutions to partner with missionaries in a variety of mission fields. The  
9 initial District Convention resolution, Resolution 1-02 (1994), resolved that the financial gifts  
10 given to Together In Mission (TIM) by District congregations were to be “over and above”  
11 each congregation’s regular offerings for Synod and District mission support. By District  
12 Convention action, those missionaries or projects receiving support from District  
13 congregations through Together In Mission since 1994 have been:

- 14
- 15 • Amy Kashenov serving in Kazakhstan (1994-2012)
- 16 • Global Seminary Initiative, seminaries in Tanzania, Africa and Novosibirsk, Russia  
17 (2013-14)
- 18 • Rev. Dr. Alan Ludwig, instructor at the Lutheran seminary in Novosibirsk, Russia  
19 (2015-2018)
- 20 • Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram, serving in Southeast Asia and Rev. David Warner, serving in  
21 Spain (2018-2021)
- 22 • Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram, Southeast Asia, and Rev. Dr. Corey Rajek, serving in Eurasia  
23 (2021-2025).
- 24

25 Then, late in 2023, the District President, at the Board of Directors’ urging (and apart from  
26 District Convention action), put to the congregations the opportunity to support, via TIM,  
27 other missionaries from South Dakota sent to overseas mission fields in the past triennium.  
28 By a majority vote (72-3), the measure was adopted. At the time, Rev. Samuel Bobby was  
29 serving in Latvia, and Revs. Jordon Andreasen and Jonah Domenichelli, had received  
30 notice of calls to Romania and Germany, respectively. The two, subsequently, accepted  
31 the calls. All three – Missionaries Bobby, Andreasen, and Domenichelli – began receiving  
32 TIM support from South Dakota, toward the end of the past triennium. Meanwhile, Rev.  
33 Dr. Cory Rajek’s TIM support ended after the District’s 2023 fiscal year, because he  
34 became the Executive Director of the Office of International Mission of the LCMS.

35  
36 For the coming triennium, convention delegates are asked to consider renewing the LCMS  
37 South Dakota District’s commitment to support God’s mission efforts abroad through the  
38 TIM program.

39  
40 **WHEREAS,** God’s mission (the *Missio Dei*, which belongs to Him and His love for the world) centers in  
41 the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17); AND

42  
43 **WHEREAS,** Just as God the Father sent (*apostello*) His Son Jesus into the world, Jesus sends all  
44 believers into the world to “seek and to save the lost” (John 20:21-23; Luke 19:10); AND

45  
46 **WHEREAS,** The Lord continues to call His Church from among the nations around the world to work  
47 mutually in sending and receiving “laborers for the harvest” until that day when our Lord’s  
48 mission is complete (Ephesians 4:1-7; Matthew 9:35-10:1); AND

49  
50 **WHEREAS,** In Article 3.2, “Objectives” of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Constitution,  
51 it states that the Synod shall “strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold  
52 witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
53 and extend that Gospel witness into all the world;” AND



- 54  
55 **WHEREAS,** Continued support by District congregations of a Together In Mission project is faithful to  
56 Christ's desire for His Church and to the Synod's stated objectives; THEREFORE BE IT  
57  
58 **RESOLVED:** That the District in convention affirm and ratify the 2023 vote by congregations of the  
59 District to add to its TIM offering recipients those pastors from South Dakota who accepted  
60 calls to overseas mission work, late in the past triennium; AND BE IT FURTHER  
61  
62 **RESOLVED:** That the District in convention express its thanks to God for blessing the mission work of  
63 the last triennium's (Dec. 2021 – Feb. 2025) Together In Mission recipients: Rev. Dr. Daniel  
64 Jastram, missionary to Southeast Asia; Rev. Dr. Cory Rajek, Rev. Samuel Bobby, Rev.  
65 Jordon Andreasen, and Rev. Jonah Domenichelli, missionaries to Eurasia; AND BE IT  
66 FURTHER  
67  
68 **RESOLVED:** That the District congregations adopt Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram, missionary to Southeast  
69 Asia, and missionaries to Eurasia: Rev. Jordon Andreasen (Romania), Rev. Samuel Bobby  
70 (Latvia), and Rev. Jonah Domenichelli (Germany), as the recipients of the District's TIM  
71 offerings, in equal measure, for the 2025-2028 triennium; AND BE IT FURTHER  
72  
73 **RESOLVED:** That should other missionaries from South Dakota be called to overseas LCMS missionary  
74 service in the next triennium, they, too, will receive an equal share of the District's TIM  
75 support for the balance of the triennium; AND BE IT FURTHER  
76  
77 **RESOLVED:** That should any of these missionaries retire from active missionary service or return from  
78 the mission field before 2028, the balance of the TIM offerings will go in equal measure to  
79 the missionaries still remaining in the field. If all of these workers should retire or return  
80 from the mission field before our next convention, the South Dakota District's Board of  
81 Directors will determine which missionary or missionaries will receive our congregations'  
82 TIM offerings for the remainder of the triennium; AND BE IT FURTHER  
83  
84 **RESOLVED:** That every congregation of The South Dakota District, regardless of size, be encouraged  
85 to partner with the other District congregations by 1) remembering the work of missionaries  
86 Jastram, Bobby, Andreasen, and Domenichelli in their corporate and individual prayers  
87 and 2) by providing an annual commitment to TIM over and above their regular support of  
88 Synod and District missions; AND BE IT FINALLY  
89  
90 **RESOLVED:** That the District President and the Assistant to the President work with the Office of  
91 International Mission of the LCMS to arrange for possible FOROs (Spanish for *forum*) in  
92 the Eurasia mission field, in the coming triennium, to give members of South Dakota District  
93 congregations the on-site opportunity to learn and serve and to encourage our missionaries  
94 and their families (cf. 2023 Synod Res. 2-07A).  
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Respectfully Submitted,

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Reverend Greg Lehr, Chairman

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Commissioned Minister Hope Genzlinger

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
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Reverend Chris Davis

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Mr. Dave Peterson

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Mr. Brad Schardin

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To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
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1 **RESOLUTION: 2-02**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO CONTINUE THE MISSION AND MINISTRY COUNCIL FOR THE SUPPORT OF**  
4 **WORKERS AND MINISTRIES**

5  
6 **BACKGROUND:**

7 Over the years, the South Dakota District has utilized various committee structures for  
8 providing resources to the ministries and workers within the District. For example, the  
9 Service Area format was in place from 2006 through 2021 (cf. 2006 Res. 1-34); those  
10 Service Areas were identified as Outreach, Parish Services, and Young Adult and Youth.

11 While the Service Area structure provided many blessings in the 15 years of its existence,  
12 the types, sources, and delivery of ministry resources for church workers, congregations,  
13 and schools changed dramatically in this electronic age. Our workers often find it more  
14 convenient to turn to the internet for resources than to rely on and wait for resources  
15 produced by the District. Moreover, recruiting our already busy church workers for service  
16 on the committees of our District has grown more challenging.

17 Therefore, at the 2021 Convention of the District, the Service Area structure was  
18 “suspended for the 2022-2025 triennium,” and in its place a “Mission and Ministry Council”  
19 comprised of representatives from every circuit in the District was authorized for the 2021-  
20 2025 triennium (cf. 2021 Res. 2-04). At this time, the Mission and Ministry Council has 10  
21 members (8 laypeople, 1 commissioned minister, and 1 ordained minister) and 4 advisory  
22 members (the District President, 1st Vice-President, the Assistant to the President, and the  
23 District’s Education Executive). The Council is chaired by one of the laypersons and is  
24 “supervised” by the Assistant to the President. Members are appointed by the District  
25 President and 1st Vice-President.

26 Since it began operating in December of 2022, the Mission and Ministry Council has helped  
27 to organize the P.A.S.S. It On! congregational resource workshops in November 2023 and  
28 November 2024, and a Men’s Retreat, held in December 2023, in Brookings, and another  
29 held in the Black Hills, the summer of 2024.

30 **WHEREAS,** In the past triennium, the Mission and Ministry Council structure of providing support and  
31 ministry resources has resulted in providing a variety of helpful events that have brought  
32 together church workers and church members for fellowship, education, and equipping for  
33 service; AND

34 **WHEREAS,** The involvement and interaction of laypersons and church workers on the Council has been  
35 particularly dynamic, yielding fresh ideas for Christian growth and service; AND

36 **WHEREAS,** Per Resolution 2-04 (2021), the Mission and Ministry Council and Board of Directors have  
37 been charged to bring a plan for ongoing structure to provide support and ministry  
38 resources, the Board of Directors of the LCMS South Dakota District recommends  
39 continuing the Mission and Ministry Council concept; THEREFORE BE IT

40 **RESOLVED:** That the Mission and Ministry Council format be affirmed and that it be authorized by this  
41 Convention of the District for continuation; AND BE IT FINALLY

42 **RESOLVED:** That the 63rd Regular Convention of the LCMS South Dakota District affirm these goals  
43 for the work of the Mission and Ministry Council, as put forward in the original 2021 Res.  
44 2-04:

- 45 1) Identify the pressing human and spiritual needs of our neighbors, especially  
46 that of hearing the Gospel;

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- 47                    2) Identify the pressing personal and ministry needs of LCMS church workers  
48                    and the needs and opportunities of LCMS congregations, schools, and other  
49                    ministries in South Dakota;
- 50                    3) Prioritize the needs and plan ways to address those needs and opportunities;
- 51                    4) Make provision to implement vehicles to address needs and opportunities  
52                    (e.g., assigning ad hoc committees, conducting workshops, producing  
53                    resources); and
- 54                    5) Consider possible superior structures to provide support and ministry  
55                    resources to church workers and congregations, schools, and other  
56                    ministries.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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Reverend Greg Lehr, Chairman

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Hope Genzlinger, Commissioned Minister

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Reverend Chris Davis

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Mr. Dave Peterson

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Mr. Brad Schardin

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1 **RESOLUTION: 2-03**

2 **SUBJECT: TO CONTINUE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT (LCMS)**  
3 **AND LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICE (IOWA)**

4  
5 **HISTORY:**

6 In 2018, Lutheran Family Service of Iowa (LFS) approached the Board of Directors of the  
7 South Dakota District about the possibility of working cooperatively in South Dakota. LFS  
8 is a Recognized Service Organization of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. They are  
9 owned by Missouri Synod congregations in Iowa and receive support from the Iowa East  
10 and West Districts of the LCMS. They do not receive funding from any governmental  
11 organization and so are free to practice our common Christian faith.

12  
13 The District entered into an agreement with LFS in December 2019 for LFS (1) to be  
14 available to consult with pastors and other church workers in the counseling work of the  
15 parish, (2) to work with church workers and their families about issues that those individuals  
16 and families are struggling with through telehealth counseling with counselors from LFS in  
17 Iowa, and (3) to train people in South Dakota to help others in various areas such as Elder  
18 Care, Dementia, Addictions, and Marriage challenges.

19  
20 The 2021 South Dakota District Convention resolved “to expand this ministry by asking  
21 God to open our eyes to whatever other good works “which God has prepared in advance,  
22 that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10), and to “commit to LFS \$75,000 for 2022,  
23 \$75,000 for 2023, and \$50,000 for 2024 to fund start-up costs and the operation of this  
24 ministry”. Half of the money was to come “from gifts and bequests that the District has  
25 received over the years and the other half would come from the congregations of the South  
26 Dakota District as ‘an over and above’ giving similar to our present ‘Together in Mission  
27 (TIM)’ gifts.”

28  
29 In 2022 the District received \$54,192 for LFS from the congregations of the District, 2023-  
30 -\$53,301, 2024 \_\_\_\_\_ . The goal for 2025 would be \$50,000. It will take a concerted  
31 effort on the part of all the congregations of the District to reach this goal.

32  
33 This commitment to LFS would be similar to the one the District makes with the Synod  
34 concerning TIM. For TIM the District pledges \$40,000 a year and would take that amount  
35 out of District funds if the money doesn’t come in from congregations. Every year the  
36 congregations have provided significantly more than that: 2022-\$71,759, 2023-\$75,849,  
37 2024- . Every dollar received for TIM is sent on to the Synod. In other words, we have  
38 not had to take any money from District funds.

39  
40 The pledge for LFS would be the same amount (\$40,000 annually) with the same  
41 arrangement: every dollar received would be sent on to LFS and if we don’t receive enough  
42 for the full pledge the money will be taken from District funds.

43  
44 **WHEREAS;** The South Dakota District (LCMS) has been in partnership with Lutheran Family Service  
45 (Iowa) since 2019. Lutheran Family Service has provided counseling, adoption and other  
46 services to individuals, church workers and their families, as well as congregations. The  
47 SD District has provided financial and other support to LFS, AND

48  
49 **WHEREAS;** This arrangement has grown over the years to include counseling offices on both sides of  
50 South Dakota as well as tele-health which is accessible throughout the State, AND

51  
52 **WHEREAS;** The need for these services continues to grow exponentially, THEREFORE BE IT  
53

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- 54 **RESOLVED:** That the current partnership be continued for the next triennium, AND BE IT FURTHER  
55  
56 **RESOLVED:** That together we will seek to expand this ministry by asking God to open our eyes to  
57 whatever good works “which God has prepared in advance, that we should walk in them”  
58 (Ephesians 2:10), AND BE IT FURTHER  
59  
60 **RESOLVED:** That the money for LFS would primarily come from the congregations of the South Dakota  
61 District as money pledged and given over and above the regular contributions given for the  
62 work of District and Synod. This would be in a similar way as the South Dakota District  
63 funds its commitment to “Together in Mission,” AND BE IT FINALLY  
64  
65 **RESOLVED:** That this partnership with LFS would regularly be evaluated by the District Board of  
66 Directors and that the 2028 District Convention would reassess the partnership at that time.  
67

68 Respectfully Submitted,  
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70 \_\_\_\_\_  
71 Reverend Greg Lehr, Chairman  
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73 \_\_\_\_\_  
74 Hope Genzlinger, Commissioned Minister  
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76 \_\_\_\_\_  
77 Reverend Chris Davis  
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79 \_\_\_\_\_  
80 Mr. Dave Peterson

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Mr. Brad Schardin

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
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- 1     **RESOLUTION: 2-04**  
2
- 3     **SUBJECT:        TO ENCOURAGE WORKER WELLNESS AND IMPLEMENT A STATEGIC PLAN FOR**  
4     **ADDRESSING WORKER WELLNESS**  
5
- 6     **WHEREAS,**     Mankind is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), and even in our fallen state God  
7                     continues to care and provide in great abundance (Isaiah 55:10 & Psalm 104:15-30); above  
8                     all the assurance of salvation through Jesus (John 3:16) so that we might share in His joy  
9                     for now and eternity (John 15:11) and that, as His people, we be well in body, mind, and  
10                    spirit (3 John 2-3); AND
- 11    **WHEREAS,**     The devil, the world, and our sinful nature seek to rob and destroy the joy and health of all  
12                     people (John 10:10), including the men and women whom God has called into service as  
13                     ordained and commissioned ministers of the church by way of illness, discouragement,  
14                     disappointment, loneliness, and frustration, to the point that, according to reports by the  
15                     Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 24 percent of church workers are diagnosed with  
16                     anxiety and depression and 40 percent have considered leaving the ministry due to  
17                     compounding stress; AND
- 18    **WHEREAS,**     God, the One who gives many and various gifts, has blessed His world with people who  
19                     serve in a variety of vocations including health sciences and caregiving to serve our well-  
20                     being; AND
- 21    **WHEREAS,**     2021 District Convention Resolution 2-06 encouraged church workers and congregations  
22                     to “become familiar with and utilize the various tools and supports at their disposal to  
23                     restore, maintain, and increase their spiritual, emotional, relational, financial, vocational,  
24                     and physical wellness,” AND
- 25    **WHEREAS,**     2023 Synod Convention Resolution 1-06A directed the Council of Presidents to “prioritize  
26                     the matter of the wellness of church workers and their families through the development of  
27                     a strategic plan for worker care that can be disseminated to and replicated by the district  
28                     presidents,” AND
- 29    **WHEREAS,**     2023 Synod Convention Resolution 1-07 encouraged workers “to use the resources  
30                     available through Concordia Plan Services (such as the Employee Assistance Program)  
31                     or other similar programs not in conflict with our confession” and “congregations, circuit  
32                     visitors, and district presidents of the Synod be encouraged to support the mental well-  
33                     being of pastors and other professional church workers” and “each district of the Synod be  
34                     encouraged to make available a paid or volunteer district mental health advocate for  
35                     pastors and other professional church workers,” AND
- 36    **WHEREAS,**     In extending a call to a worker the congregation obligates itself to support workers and  
37                     provide for them, including care for health and well-being; THEREFORE BE IT
- 38    **RESOLVED:**     That church workers be encouraged to avail themselves of appropriate care to sustain and  
39                     regain spiritual, emotional, relational, financial, vocational, and physical wellness from  
40                     reputable agencies, such as mental health resources of Lutheran Family Service; AND BE  
41                     IT FURTHER
- 42
- 43    **RESOLVED:**     That the District President, with the assistance of Lutheran Family Service Iowa (LFS) and  
44                     the District Parish Nurse Representative, develop and implement a strategic plan for

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45 worker care congruent with recommendations of the Council of Presidents' strategic plan;  
46 AND BE IT FURTHER

47 **RESOLVED:** That church workers and congregations become familiar with the common themes  
48 surrounding the topic of worker wellness identified by Synod through worker surveys and  
49 group discussions (<https://www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/mercy/church-worker-wellness>)  
50 and utilize resources, tools, and supports in each area; AND BE IT FURTHER

51 **RESOLVED:** That congregations (including Chairmen and Board of Elders), ministry staff, Lutheran  
52 School Boards, and Winkels be encouraged to designate appropriate time in meetings to  
53 discussion and planning for worker wellness; AND BE IT FINALLY

54 **RESOLVED:** That ordained and commissioned ministers, congregations, and Lutheran schools give  
55 thanks to God for the work that has been done in these areas and for the many and various  
56 ways that the Lord provides for the needs of body and soul for all His people, joining with  
57 St. Paul in saying, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your  
58 reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about  
59 anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests  
60 be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will  
61 guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4-7).

62

63 Respectfully Submitted,

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Reverend Greg Lehr, Chairman

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Hope Genzlinger, Commissioned Minister

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Reverend Chris Davis

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Mr. Dave Peterson

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Mr. Brad Schardin



To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
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1 **RESOLUTION: 2-05**

2  
3 **SUBJECT: TO BUILD A CULTURE OF CHURCH WORK FORMATION AND RECRUITMENT**

4  
5 **WHEREAS,** Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to  
6 the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest (Matt. 9:37-38); AND

7  
8 **WHEREAS,** Since 1847 to the present day, the LCMS frequently adopted resolutions in Synod  
9 conventions to form and recruit pastors, teachers, Directors of Christian Education,  
10 deaconesses, and other commissioned church workers to preach, teach, and share the  
11 Gospel of Jesus for eternal salvation in these full-time vocations; AND

12  
13 **WHEREAS,** In the last five years, approximately twice as many LCMS pastors have exited the pastoral  
14 office (by retirement, resignation, or death) as there are newly called and ordained pastors,  
15 helping to create a shortage of pastors; AND

16  
17 **WHEREAS,** Commissioned minister formation programs in our Synod’s universities, likewise, are not  
18 producing enough graduates to keep up with the demand, helping to create a shortage of  
19 commissioned ministers; THEREFORE, BE IT

20  
21 **RESOLVED:** That the LCMS South Dakota District’s Executive Officers and District President, working  
22 with the Mission and Ministry Council, make it a priority to provide resources and sponsor  
23 events to assist congregations, schools, and church workers in intentional church work  
24 formation and recruitment; AND BE IT FURTHER

25  
26 **RESOLVED:** That all congregations in the District be encouraged to provide generous grants to church  
27 work students from their congregations and circuits, and make other intentional efforts to  
28 recruit and encourage their children, youth, and adults to consider a full-time church work  
29 vocation; AND BE IT FURTHER

30  
31 **RESOLVED:** That all pastors, Lutheran teachers, other commissioned church workers, and laity  
32 intentionally encourage children and youth to consider a full-time church work vocation;  
33 AND BE IT FURTHER

34  
35 **RESOLVED:** That South Dakota District congregations and schools be encouraged to make use of the  
36 *Set Apart to Serve (SAS)* resources (found at [lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve](http://lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve)) and the SAS  
37 church work recruitment curriculum (produced by Concordia Publishing House) and  
38 available for download at [cph.org/set-apart-to-serve-school-resource-kit](http://cph.org/set-apart-to-serve-school-resource-kit)); AND BE IT  
39 FINALLY

40  
41 **RESOLVED:** That both District and congregation leaders intentionally address the compensation of  
42 church workers, foster church worker wellness, and encourage love and appreciation for  
43 all ordained and commissioned ministers in the District’s congregations and schools.

44  
45 Respectfully Submitted,

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48 \_\_\_\_\_  
49 Reverend Greg Lehr, Chairman

50  
51  
52 \_\_\_\_\_  
53 Hope Genzlinger, Commissioned Minister

To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod  
February 16-18 2025

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Reverend Chris Davis

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Mr. Dave Peterson

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Mr. Brad Schardin



To the 63<sup>rd</sup> Convention of  
The South Dakota District of  
The Lutheran Church –Missouri Synod  
February 16-18, 2025

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Reverend Chris Davis

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Mr. Dave Peterson

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Mr. Brad Schardin



## DISTRICT PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the 2025 South Dakota District Convention election of the District President and District Vice Presidents closed on Monday, December 16, 2024. It was allowed that any nominations post-marked by December 16 would be included in the nomination tally. In accord with Bylaw 5.05.d.4, South Dakota District Secretary Reverend Dr. Thomas Brown and the chairman of the nominating committee, Reverend Dan Grimmer, met in Murdo on Friday, December 20, to tabulate the nominations. Care was given to be generous to minor errors made on the nomination forms. In the case where multiple names were given, only the first was considered valid. In a case where copies of the ballot were made and multiple ballots sent in, the sender was asked which one they wanted to count for the nomination. Only one congregation's nominations were deemed entirely illegal as the name given was not eligible for election because the person was not on the ordained roster of the Synod (Bylaw 5.05.a.1 and 5.05.d.1). An attempt was made to contact that congregation but having received no response, those two ballots were not included in the tabulation.

### District President Nominations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Number of Nominations</u>
Reverend Corey Aker	2
Reverend Dr. Michael Kumm	1
Reverend Tim Rynearson	4
Reverend Randy Sturzenbecher	24
Reverend Paul Winckler	5

#### *Comments*

All five men are qualified under South Dakota District By-Law 5.05.a.1. However, District Bylaw 5.05.a.4 requires that the names of those men with at least five nominating votes for the Office of President shall be reported to the Convention, and District By-Law 5.05.b.1 says that the “*three ordained ministers receiving the highest number of votes in the nominating ballots of the congregations*” shall be the candidates to be considered. As only two men received the required five nominations, an exception will be needed to allow the next highest willing nominee to be on the ballot. Reverends Aker and Rynearson have both declined the nominations. Reverends Kumm, Sturzenbecher, and Winckler have accepted their nominations. Therefore, after the Convention allows an exception, and before any amendments to the slate of candidates from the floor (5.05.b.6), the slate of candidates for District President shall be:

Reverend Dr. Michael Kumm, Dakota Dunes, SD  
Reverend Randy Sturzenbecher, Black Hawk, SD  
Reverend Paul Winckler, Sioux Falls, SD

Although the District Bylaws do not require the tabulation of the nominations for District President to be a shared duty between the Secretary of the District and the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Reverends Brown and Grimmer jointly tabulated the nominations for both the District President and the Vice Presidents.

### District Vice-President Nominations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Number of Nominations</u>
Reverend Corey Aker	4
Reverend Dr. Chris Ascher	3
Reverend Aaron Asmus	2
Reverend Dr. Thomas Brown	3
Reverend Thomas Christopher	1
Reverend Wade Harr	2

Reverend Ryan Loeslie	1
Reverend Dr. Brian Mosemann	1
Reverend Tim Rynearson	3
Reverend Steve Weispfennig	1
Reverend Paul Winckler	2
Reverend Matthew Wurm	11

Bylaw 5.05.e.1 says “Candidates for the Office of Vice-President shall be in each instance the four ordained ministers receiving the highest number of votes in nominating ballots of the congregations.” Unlike the office of District President, the By-Laws have no requirement of five nominations to qualify for the ballot for the Vice Presidents. After the nomination process closed, Reverend Rynearson removed his name from consideration. Like the ballot for the Office of District President, Bylaw 5.05.e.6 gives the Convention the “right to alter each slate at the proper time by amendment.” Therefore, prior to any Convention amendments, the slate of candidates for the Vice Presidents shall be:

Reverend Corey Aker  
 Reverend Dr. Chris Ascher  
 Reverend Dr. Thomas Brown  
 Reverend Matthew Wurm

Respectfully Submitted,

Reverend Dr. Thomas Brown  
 Secretary, South Dakota District, LCMS

## Presidential Candidate Biographical Data

**Michael L. Kumm**

**Born:** June 13, 1952

**Family:**

**Married:** Janet B. (Wessel) Kumm – March 15, 2000

**Children:** Jeffrey, Michael, Jamie, Laura; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren

**Education:**

Community College of the Air Force	Assoc. - 1995
South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD	
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO	Alt Rte/MA – 2000/2006
Trinity Theological Seminary, Newburgh, IN	Ph.D – 2015

**Ministries Served:**

Blessed Redeemer, Brandon, SD	Delayed Vicar/Pastor 1999-2001
Saint Paul, West Frankfort, IL	Pastor 2001-2004
Concordia Seminary Professional Staff	Director of Alumni Relations 2004-2006
Holy Cross, Sugarloaf Township, Dupo, IL	Vacancy Pastor 2004-2006
Trinity, Millstadt, IL	Vacancy Pastor 2006
	Pastor 2006-2014
Holy Cross, Dakota Dunes, SD	Pastor 2014-2018
	Asst. Pastor 2022 to present

**District Service:**

Circuit Counselor (SID); SD District LLL Pastoral Advisor; Pastor's Conference Chaplain

**Synod Service:**

Interim General Manager, KFUE Radio	2010-2012
LCMS Board of Directors	Vice Chairman 2010-2013
	Chairman 2013-2023
International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg Board of Directors	Chairman 2012-2018

**Community Service:**

Chaplain, Sioux Falls Police Department	2000 to 2001
Founder of First Responder Chaplaincy, Millstadt, IL	
	Lead Chaplain 2008-2014
SD Department American Legion, Chaplain	2021 to present
Chaplain, Sioux City Police Department	2023 to present

### QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT PRESIDENT

**1. Describe your commitment to the doctrine and practice of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.**

I am 100% committed to the Holy Scriptures, and Lutheran Confessions, found in the Book of Concord, that I have sworn to at my ordination and each installation where I have served. This commitment standing on the Scriptures and Confessions are where the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod stands and separates us from others who do not take the sole source and foundation of our faith seriously. God help us all to remain steadfast in the one true faith.



**2. What challenges and opportunities do you see facing our South Dakota District?**

The Church at large faces many challenges locally, district, synod, nationally, and globally. The culture is not welcoming to our faith nor our morality. Thus, we find ourselves at odds with the culture and the world. Life issues, sexuality issues, and so many more will not be going away soon, and need to be dealt with. Likewise, our decreasing membership in churches across the nation is causing many to be “un-sustainable,” and forcing many to close. How do we continue to serve the members of those churches? How do we ensure those sheep continue to be fed with the nourishment of Word and Sacraments? I believe this is one of the biggest challenges the SD District faces. We need more pastors, yet we have the opportunity to help some of our retired brothers to find purpose in retirement of helping congregations as I have described above. Part-time ministry to these struggling congregations can be a boon and blessing to many. We must look for every opportunity to continue to provide Word and Sacrament ministry to all within the Church.

**3. What is your vision for The South Dakota District?**

The South Dakota District is strong, and I certainly would like to see it remain strong and even grow stronger. In my opinion, we can do that merely by being who we have sworn to be, faithful preachers and teacher of the one true faith, and holding to who we are as confessional Lutheran Christians. We must continue to reach out to those who are unchurched or lapsed. Statistics show us that growth doesn’t come about through programs, but the vast majority of growth comes when people have been invited by a member. We must encourage our members to reach out, invite, share, and most of all be “In the Word” (as Sainted LCMS President Al Barry loved to say). We have much to do and we must be ready to work.

**4. How do you see the role of District President?**

The District President is elected by the District. He is not a Synod officer. His work is in the District and that should be his focus. The Council of Presidents (COP) is a group made up of all 35 District Presidents, the 6 Vice-Presidents of Synod and the President of Synod. They meet 4 times a year, plus there are meetings of regional District Presidents. It is my opinion that these meetings take the District President from his District too often and for too long. How so? Committees, programs, etc. that the COP creates require time and effort that takes away from his District duties. I am not saying the COP should be eliminated. I am saying they are NOT officers of Synod, so there does not need to be so many meetings outside the realm of the District.

For many in the District, the District President is only known as the one who meets with them when their current pastor leaves, gets them call lists when they need a pastor, or comes to install/ordain a pastor when one accepts their call. There is much more this man is elected to do. He is the Ecclesiastical Supervisor of all rostered church workers, which can mean disciplinary and other human resource type actions and responsibilities. He also is charged with getting to know each congregation in his district so he may be of service to them in any condition they may be in. He serves as the administrator of the District, serves on the District Board of Directors, deals with budgeting, assisted by the Board of Directors, and Circuit Visitors. He must report his administration to the President of Synod, interview men from his district who apply to seminary, and deal with legal issues in congregations, and schools.

The District President has his finger on the pulse of a lot of different things, but I do think he needs to be connected with a congregation. With no malice toward any current or past District President in this district or others, but many District Presidents have accepted Divine Calls as part-time assistants at a congregation to remain connected to the parish life. I think this is extremely important. The District President is an overseer, a Bishop, if you will, and needs to be connected with a parish to see how the issues of the culture, the community, and the world are affecting his people, pastors, and church workers. The value of such is beyond measuring. The assistance of his Vice-Presidents, and Circuit Visitors, and judicious delegation of duties and oversight can allow this to happen and be successful.

5. **How would you assist the congregations and church workers of the District to remain theologically and confessionally strong?**

I personally prefer to lead by example. Show the congregations, church workers, and above all, pastors, what it means to be theologically and confessionally strong through preaching, teaching, encouraging, mentoring, loving, and caring of individuals, groups, congregations, et.al. Like St. Paul writes, *“For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”* (2 Corinthians 2:2) There is the core. Let us find ourselves gathered at the cross where our sins have been forgiven, our faith is strengthened, and the sure and certain hope of resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come is found. Grant it Lord, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

## Presidential Candidate Biographical Data

Randy R. Sturzenbecher

### **Personal:**

Born in Yankton, SD, August 31, 1964 to Rudy and Florence (nee: Hansen) Sturzenbecher  
Raised on the family farm near Parker, SD

### **Family:**

Married Vonda (nee: Berg) Sturzenbecher on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1985  
Children: Ryan Sturzenbecher, Sioux Falls, SD (33)  
Megan (nee Sturzenbecher) Zwiers, St. Cloud, FL (31)

### **Education:**

Parker Grade School, High School, Parker, SD	1982
South-East Vo Tech, Sioux Falls, SD, Diesel Mechanics	1984
Augustana University, Sioux Falls, SD - AA	1997
Vicarage Trinity, St. Johns Persia, Honey Creek, IA	2000
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO - MDiv	2001
Doxology	

### **Ministries Served:**

First English-Zion, Centerville-Hurley, SD	2001-2006
Divine Shepherd, Black Hawk, SD	2006-Present

### **District Service:**

Continuing Education Committee	
LWML Zone Counselor	
LWML District Jr., Sr., Counselor	
Youth Services Area Chairman	
CWEDA Secretary	
Secretary of Fall Pastors Conference	
Circuit 4 Circuit Visitor (Black Hills)	
Delegate to Synodical Convention	2016
Black Hills Lutheran School Chaplain	
Short term Missionary to Hong Kong	
District Realignment Committee	
President Board of Directors Higher Things	2023
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President SD District	2018-Present
Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) mentor	

### **Community Service:**

Rotary Vice President  
Kiwanis Member

## QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT PRESIDENT

### 1. Describe your commitment to the doctrine and practice of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105. I believe and freely confess that God's Word is true (John 17:17) and the only hope for sinners. It is the Word of God that is the rule and norm that guides and directs the doctrine and practice of our Synod. I believe that the three Creeds, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large and Small Catechism, and the Formula of Concord are right expositions of doctrine of God's Word. It is the Word of God

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only that accomplishes and succeeds in seeking and saving the lost (Isaiah 55:11 Luke 19:10). Our Synod follows the example of the first century church talking and walking together in the unity of Scriptures to bring the freedom and hope of Christ into the lives of His people. In a time when truth is viewed as subjective, and people will “accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.” (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:3-4) it is even more important that we walk together in God’s Word as a Synod and the Lutheran Confessions so that our witness to His truth is clear.

**2. What challenges and opportunities do you see facing our South Dakota District?**

The opportunities to tell the good news and offer hope are endless. Thanks be to God that He has put us here in this beloved South Dakota District to love Him and love and serve our neighbor.

God has blessed us with unending opportunities to share the good news of Jesus and offer hope and peace to our neighbors. God has blessed us with faithful Pastors, DCE’s and Deaconesses, as well as talented and faithful lay men and women to bring hope to the hurting and forgiveness to the forsaken. God has blessed us with faithful Lutheran daycares, early childhood centers, elementary and high schools, and faithful Lutheran school teachers and administrators that teach and catechize. The very foundations of faith are taught in our Lutheran early childhood centers, preschools, and daycares. Let’s not forget the countless, faithful parents and laypeople that shine brightly with the light of Christ as their hope, as they go to work! As our communities become more diverse, ethnic ministry opportunities abound. Even in our smaller communities there are opportunities to reach out with Bible studies that ground us in hope and forgiveness and build relationships. “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<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:15).

We do have challenges before us. Our post-Christian world is less and less tolerant of the truth of Jesus Christ. Many times what people think they know about Christianity is incorrect, allowing them to remain in their sin or live with a false confidence of their salvation. Church worker health and retention of workers must be guarded. With less church workers available we must work harder to make sure our current workers are and remain physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy. Along that line the growing number of vacancies puts more stress on the pastors that are serving them. Viability of our congregations becomes increasingly more challenging with older and smaller groups worshiping. As many of our rural churches become smaller, the financial implications impact budgets from the congregation up to the District and Synod. Church worker education debt adds another level of stress in the church worker’s life. Yes, we have significant challenges before us, but we are not without hope! “Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Romans 5:3-4).

**3. What is your vision for The South Dakota District?**

Faithfulness to God’s Word and His promises to us. The vision for a District President cannot be his own, lest pride and arrogance overtake him. The vision for the South Dakota District is given to us through God’s Word. “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful” (Hebrews 10:23).

Our Good Shepherd came to seek and save the lost and bring comfort and hope to the hopeless. We continue faithfully preaching and teaching the eternal and unchanging hope we have through Christ Jesus. We celebrate when one receives faith in Holy Baptism or

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receives Absolution through the blood of Christ. We are strengthened when the very body and blood of Jesus are placed in our hands and on our lips.

Guided by God's great commission, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 29:19-20), we continue looking for new opportunities to meet people with the promises of Christ. A cross-focused vision for the District is one that encourages all people to receive God's gifts of Word and Sacrament regularly, and continually looks for ways to serve and love our neighbors. Because the world in which we live is ever changing we must be intentional and creative in our reach into new areas with this Gospel hope. I envision more church plants or other creative ways, such as preaching stations, hub ministry or something like circuit riders of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. I pray that we will build Gospel-centered relationships in the many ethnic groups that are growing in South Dakota. I pray that we will support our pastors with resources that will help them stay healthy physically as well as emotionally.

**4. How do you see the role of District President?**

The District President is to be a pastor to the pastors and their families, encouraging and strengthening them and all the church workers in the District. The work of the Church is done well when our workers are healthy. The District President is to be a servant leader who supports and equips the ongoing ministry of the church or school. His role is supportive in providing information, counsel, and resources so the work of the church can move forward with the message of Christ. His role is to encourage congregations that struggle against the pressures of the world seeking to reform the church into its own image. His role holds pastors and congregations accountable to the Word of God and the Confessions for purity of doctrine and unity of the believers (Romans 16:17 Ephesians 4:14). His role is reconciler, always working to keep communication open and honest. His role is liaison between Synod and congregation.

**5. How would you assist the congregations and church workers of the District to remain theologically and confessionally strong?**

We remain fully committed to God's Word and the Confessions by careful and ongoing study of God's Word. I would encourage a faithful confession, in doctrine and practice, for the church workers through the teaching at Winkels and pastors and all workers conferences. Continuing education such as Doxology continues to strengthen our confession. Sabbaticals can be a useful tool for intentional focused study, strengthening faith and practice.

Strengthening and assisting congregations is primarily done through constant study of God's word, hearing it preached and receiving the Lord's Supper. The District President as well as the District staff will also be able to suggest Synod resources that may strengthen faithfulness.

Where we stand united, we give thanks to God. On those rare occasions when those called to lead fail in this, the goal is repentance, reconciliation, and restoration. This will require personal contact, admonition, and prayer. While the District President does play a role in the Synod at large, it is the President's first duty to ensure the workers under his supervision are cared for, guided, and shaped for faithful service to the Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 2:10).

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## Presidential Candidate Biographical Data

Paul M. Winckler

### Family Information:

- Born in Tyndall, SD on January 13, 1976 to Alton and Delores (nee: Delzer) Winckler
- Raised on the family farm between Tyndall and Tripp, SD, the youngest of six children. Graduated from Tripp-Delmont High School in 1994.
- Raised in the United Church of Christ, Friedens Reformed Church, Tripp, SD
- Married Laura G. Popkes on August 14, 1999 at Saint Mary's Catholic Church, Larchwood, Iowa
- Adult confirmation and received into membership at St. John Lutheran Church, Britton, SD in November 2000
- Laura has worked as a Homemaker for 9 years, Re-Sell It Shop Coordinator at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis for 3 years, and with the Child Nutrition Programs at Rapid City Area Schools and the Harrisburg School District for 12 years
- Laura and I have three children: Benjamin (24) a construction worker for Tailored Garage Door in Sioux Falls; Emily (21) a senior at South Dakota State University, Brookings, majoring in Psychology and Human Development and Family Studies; Caleb (18) a senior at Harrisburg High School

### Occupation, Education, Employment History, Involvement in the Church:

- Assistant to the District President, South Dakota District—LCMS since October 2022
- Graduated from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD, Summa Cum Laude with B.S. in History and Political Science in May 1998
- Community Development Specialist, Northeast Council of Governments, Aberdeen, SD, 1998-1999
- Park Manager, Fort Sisseton State Park, Lake City, SD, 1999-2005
- Director of Advancement, Presentation College, Aberdeen, SD, 2005-2007
- Employment Verification and Proofing Specialist, Verifications Inc., Aberdeen, SD, 2007-2008
- Graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO with Master of Divinity in May 2012
- Ministries Served:
  - Vicarage, Zion Lutheran Church, School and Preschool, Rapid City, SD, 2011-2012
  - Assistant Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, School, and Preschool, Rapid City, SD, 2012-2015
  - Associate Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, School and Preschool, Rapid City, SD, 2015-2017
  - Lead Associate Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church School and Preschool, Rapid City, SD, 2017-2022

### Other Service in the Church:

- Election Committee, South Dakota District Convention 2015
- South Dakota District Reconciler, 2017-2022
- Black Hills Lutheran School, School Board Pastoral Advisor (various times)
- Chair of Floor Committee 1, South Dakota District Convention 2018
- National Lutheran Schools Association Accreditation Visit Team, 2023 & 2024
- National Lutheran Schools Association School Shepherd Award Nominee, 2017
- District Mission Executive, 2022-Present
- District Stewardship Executive, 2022-Present
- Assistant District Coordinator, 2025 Youth Gathering
- Currently member at Zion Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

### **Service in the Community:**

- Volunteer Chaplain, Monument Health, Rapid City, SD
- Clinical Pastoral Education, Monument Health, Rapid City, SD
- Guest Worship and Bible Study Leader, St. Martin's Village, Rapid City, SD
- Support for families in addiction recovery in Sioux Falls area.
- Pennington County 4-H Club

### **QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT PRESIDENT**

#### **1. Describe your commitment to the doctrine and practice of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.**

The heart of our doctrine and practice is the love God has made known to His world in Jesus Christ our Lord. In the cross God has made His commitment to rescue you and me, sparing nothing, even giving up his own Son, according to His holy, inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word. And now, made alive in Christ, we are called to live in His grace and make His ways known, confidently and faithfully moving ahead, all the while knowing we can never exhaust His gifts. This is simple, straightforward Gospel drew me to the Lutheran confession 25 years ago, to the seminary 17 years ago, and ordination 13 years ago, where I vowed to remain constant in this truth to the best of my ability. I simply desire to hear the call of God and serve Him faithfully with the gifts He's given in the time He allows. I pray that God keep me faithful and, where I have erred, bring me to repentance and forgive me.

#### **2. What challenges and opportunities do you see facing our South Dakota District?**

The challenges of a "Post-Christian" America and world are well-documented and obvious to anyone who has spent any time considering where we now stand. Declines are discouraging and those who remain are exhausted by trying to do more with less. Anxiety and fatigue drown joy and sap enthusiasm that should come naturally to us who have been given the best reason for joy and enthusiasm.

The anxiety and fatigue can come from focusing on what is lacking. But consider, for a moment, what we do have:

- The truth of Gospel.
- The people who remain.
- The opportunity of a growing mission field in all communities as the "unchurched" increase.

This opportunity is great, but what do about it is not as clear and well-defined. How can those people who remain bring the truth to those who need to hear? This is the big opportunity and the big question before us as we consider our place in God's mission.

#### **3. What is your vision for The South Dakota District?**

The vision ought not be anything different than God's vision: building relationships, discipleship, baptizing, and teaching. It can seem so big and grand, but I would encourage people to think simple and small:

- Commit to being in the word and worship. Keep coming back and participate.
- Care for each other within the family of faith.
- Care and outreach to those who have been less involved or walked away.
- Witness to the "unchurched" and "unbelievers" with word and deed.

This good work mostly happens at the level of the congregation, focusing day-by-day, week-by-week, and month-by-month on small, simple, incremental, and realistic steps toward serving the communities where God has placed us with the gifts He's given us. As District, it is our place to support the congregation, workers and laity, as they build communities where this happens. The District can and should be a resource for opportunities to support and equip her people as they work together in her mission, with

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this question at the heart of our thinking, speaking and doing: “How, in the love of Christ, will I serve my neighbor?”

**4. How do you see the role of District President?**

I am grateful for the opportunity to have learned from President Sailer and have a great fondness for one of his favorite descriptions of the role of District Officials as “Advisors to the Queen.” The “Queen,” of course, is the local church, God’s own precious, blood-bought bride. We are blessed to come alongside to offer help and support as the “Queen” understands and embraces her place in the Kingdom. The “Advisors” ought not stand above the “Queen” or take her place, but stand alongside her, as guide pointing to the constant, unchanging principles that make her who she is as well as bringing to remembrance the responsibility and honor of the place she holds. The “Advisor’s” greatest joy is to see the “Queen” happily flourish and thrive in her place, being what her “King” sees and loves in her.

**5. How would you assist the congregations and church workers of the District to remain theologically and confessionally strong?**

We are blessed to have wonderful doctrine and incredible leaders, pastors, workers, and teachers. There is great knowledge and zeal for truth and integrity. With our doctrine, knowledge, and zeal I pray that we would strive for:

- Honesty and love in our speaking to the world and with each other.
- Kindness and boldness in our witness and outreach.
- Cooperation and service in our deeds.
- Humility and respect in our dealings with one another.
- Attitudes of joy and confidence.

These attitudes and actions are formed and shaped by being in the Word where the Holy Spirit guides us to be people of repentance and grace.



## Biographical Information for Vice-Presidential Nominations

### Corey Aker

**Born:** March 3, 1979 in Rapid City, SD

**Family:**

Married: Brooke (nee Peer) on January 2, 1998. Brooke is the reading and math specialist at Sioux Falls Lutheran School.

Children: Alyssa (Connor) Ihry, Married November 9, 2024. Alyssa is the General Manager of a restaurant in Minneapolis.  
Ethan Aker (22) Ethan works at HyVee in Sioux Falls.  
Andrew Aker (16) Andrew is a sophomore at Sioux Falls Lutheran School.  
Ella Aker (13) Ella is an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at Sioux Falls Lutheran School.

**Education:**

Black Hills State University, Spearfish, SD	BS – 2001
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO	MDiv – 2007

**Ministries Served:**

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Paducah, KY	2007-2016
Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD	2016-Present

**District Service:**

Circuit Visitor, Paducah Circuit	2012-2016
Mid-South District Lay Minister Teacher, Homiletics	2012-2013
LWML Zone Counselor, Sioux Falls	2017-2019
Circuit Visitor, Sioux Falls Circuit	2019-Present
Spring Pastors' Conference Chairman	2024

**Community Service:**

Paducah Lions Club, all leadership roles	2007-2014
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### Dr. Christopher Ascher

**Born:** July 1, 1976

**Family:**

Married: Laurie (nee: McClelland) Ascher on May 1, 1999

Children: Elizabeth (2002)  
Daniel (2005)  
Luke (2007)  
Rebecca (2011)

**Education:**

University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS	BSE – 1999
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis	MDiv – 2003
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis	DMin – 2014
International Academy of Apologetics, Evangelism and Human Rights, Strasbourg, France	Working toward Diploma

**Ministries Served:**

Mt. Calvary, Huron, SD	2003-2005
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Resurrection, Sioux Falls, SD 2005-Present  
Theology Teacher Lutheran High / Sioux Falls Lutheran 2017-Present

**District Service:**

LWML Zone Counselor (Huron) 2003-05  
Circuit Lutherans for Life Pastoral Counselor (Huron) 2003-05  
Circuit Secretary 2010-15  
District Youth Task Force 2003-2005, 2014-2022  
Camp Minneboji:  
    Counselor 2003-06, 13-14  
    Sports Director 2016-20  
    Director/Bible Study Leader 2021-Present  
Chair of South Dakota Mission Area for Stewardship 2005-2013  
Trainer/Speaker for "Consecrated Stewards" 2005-Present  
Delegate to Synodical Convention 2010, 2023  
Chair of Fall Church Workers/Pastors Conference 2011, 2021  
Floor Committee of District Convention 2012, 2025  
SD LLI Instructor: Homiletics 2012, 2015  
Early Childhood Center Consultant 2013-Present  
DCE Intern Supervisor 2015  
Ethnic Immigrant Institute for Theology  
Vicarage Supervisor 2017-2021

**Community Service:**

Organized "Volleyball for Life" fundraiser for Alpha Center 2004-15  
Various Boards/Committees for Sioux Falls Lutheran School 2005-Present  
Breakout Leader/Presenter for Higher Things Gatherings 2015-Present  
Various events in SF Rake the Town, Life Chain, etc.

**Dr. Thomas Brown**

**Born:** March 7, 1980

**Family:**

Married: Lucy (nee Schimmelpfennig) Brown on April 6, 2002  
Children: Zeke (2005)  
          Jackson (2006)  
          Olivia (2008)  
          Lydia (2009)  
          David (2011)  
          Mary (2012)  
          Anna (2014)  
          Naomi (2017)

**Education:**

M.Div., Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN, 2010  
D. Min., The Institute of Lutheran Theology, Brookings, SD, 2022

**Parish Ministry:**

Vicar, Zion, Mitchell, SD, 2009-2010  
Associate Pastor, Zion, Mitchell, SD, 2010-2015  
Senior Pastor, Zion, Mitchell, SD, 2015-2020  
Pastor, St. Paul, Spearfish, SD, 2020-present

**District Service:**

District Youth Service Area Board Member, 2011-2018  
District Young Adult Service Area Board Member, 2011-2018  
Chair of Spring Pastor's Conference, 2014  
Camp Minneboji Bible Study Teacher, 2015-2019  
Circuit Visitor, Mitchell Circuit, 2018-2020  
District Convention Floor Committee Chairman, 2021  
District Secretary, 2022-present  
Pastoral Delegate to LCMS Synodical Convention, 2023  
District Reconciler, 2024-present

**Community / Synodical Service**

Doctrinal Reviewer, Higher Things, 2023-present  
Authored *Seelsorger Journal* article on cohabitation, 2023  
9-06A Circuit Alignment Task Force Member for the 2026 LCMS Synodical Convention

**Matthew Wurm**

**Family:**

Kyra (wife of 17 years)

6 children: Micah (14)  
Annika (12)  
Aubrey (9)  
Isaac (7)  
Elena (5)  
Benjamin (5)

**Current Position:**

Senior Pastor of Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, 629 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. Brookings, SD 57006 since 6/1/2013.  
(11.5 years in the SDD)  
Graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; Ordained 2008

**Pastorates held:**

Trinity Lutheran Church, Bemidji, MN; 2008-2013  
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Brookings, SD; 2013-present

**District position held:**

Circuit Visitor – Circuit 2; 2020-present

**Church-related positions held:**

Vicarage Supervisor of five vicars from CLS and CTSWF  
DOXOLOGY Fellow; speaker on sexuality at conferences and contributor to the *Seelsorger Journal* on pastoral care: 2014- present

**Inter-church relations:**

Lake Preston Lutheran Churches (ELCA now NLCA): 2021-2024 advised departure from ELCA  
Apostolic Lutheran Churches (Lake Norden/Watertown): Held Lutheran Confessions studies and guided the start of an independent Confessional Apostolic Lutheran church. 2024-present.

**Community Involvement:**

Trail Life Troop SD5511; Troop leader 2019-present  
LGBT+ Family and Friends Support Group facilitator; 2021-present  
Brookings Adult Hockey League

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## Nominations for Circuit Visitors

The following are the results of the nominating process for Circuit Visitors carried out throughout The South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod according to Bylaw 5.2.2 of the 2023 Synodical Handbook. The list is submitted by the District Secretary and is subject to ratification by this District Convention.

### **Circuit 1 (Aberdeen)**

Reverend Jacob Smith  
St. Paul-St. Paul Lutheran Churches, Aberdeen–Leola, SD

### **Circuit 2 (Watertown)**

Reverend Matthew Wurm  
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Brookings, SD

### **Circuit 3 (Pierre)**

Reverend David Otten  
Emmanuel-Christ Lutheran Churches, Gettysburg-Lebanon, SD

### **Circuit 4 (Black Hills)**

Reverend David Warner  
Our Redeemer-Our Savior Lutheran Churches, Custer-Hill City, SD

### **Circuit 5 (Mitchell)**

Reverend Ryan Loeslie  
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Dimock, SD

### **Circuit 6 (Freeman)**

Reverend Thomas Christopher  
St. Martin-Trinity Lutheran Churches, Alexandria-Spencer, SD

### **Circuit 7 (Sioux Falls)**

Reverend Cory Aker  
Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

### **Circuit 8 (Yankton)**

Reverend Steven Weispfennig  
St. John's Lutheran Church, Yankton, SD

## Report of the Nominating Committee

This slate of nominees, together with pertinent biographical information, is provided for the offices of: District Secretary; District Treasurer; District Board of Directors (lay member) – 2 to be elected. A change of circumstances (i.e. the departure of a nominee from the District) may necessitate a change in this report prior to or during the Convention.

### FOR DISTRICT SECRETARY

NAME: REVEREND MICAH BAUER

BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Brookings, SD

**Education:**  
M. Div., 2015, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO  
S.T.M., 2016, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Vicarage at Our Savior, Carbondale, IL  
Pastor at Mount Calvary, Brookings, SD, 2016–present  
Lay Leadership Institute Instructor (Christian Doctrine)  
Presenter at LCMS–U “Witness” Conference, 2019  
DOXOLOGY Classic Program

NAME: REVEREND RYAN DREVLLOW

BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, SD

**Education:**  
M. Div., 2009, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Vicarage at Apostles Lutheran Church, Glendale, AZ  
Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church, Breckenridge, MN, 2009–2014  
Pastor at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD, 2014–present  
LWML Counselor, Fergus Falls Circuit, 2012–2014  
Sioux Falls Circuit Secretary, 2018–present  
Camp Minneboji Honors Camp Counselor, 2019

NAME: REVEREND DR. THOMAS BROWN

BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Spearfish, SD

**Education:**  
M. Div., 2010, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN  
D. Min., The Institute of Lutheran Theology, Brookings SD, 2022

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Vicarage at Zion, Mitchell, SD, 2009-2010  
Associate Pastor, Zion, Mitchell, SD, 2010–2015  
Senior Pastor, Zion, Mitchell, SD, 2015-2020

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Pastor, St. Paul, Spearfish, SD, 2020-Present  
District Youth Service Area Board Member, 2011-2018  
District Young Adult Service Area Board Member, 2011-2018  
Circuit Visitor, Mitchell Circuit, 2018-2020  
District Convention Floor Committee Chairman, 2021  
District Secretary, 2022-Present  
Doctrinal Reviewer, Higher Things, 2023-Present  
Authored *Seelsorger Journal* article on cohabitation, 2023  
Pastor Delegate to LCMS Synodical Convention, 2023  
District Reconciler 2024-Present

FOR **DISTRICT TREASURER**

NAME: KENT HARNISCH

BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
Resurrection Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

**Occupation:**  
CPA (Certified Public Accountant)

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Congregation Treasurer  
Congregation Vice Chairman  
Board of Stewardship Chairman  
Sunday School Teacher

**Other Experience/Positions:**  
Sioux Falls Lutheran School Association Board as Treasurer  
Trustee for Sioux Falls Lutheran School Association  
Thrivent/Lutheran Brotherhood/AAL Board Member  
Treasurer, SD District LCMS (2021-Present)

NAME: DAVID WITHEE

BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
Zion Lutheran Church, Rapid City, SD

**Occupation:**  
Retired CFO, Respec Engineering Consultants

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Congregation Chairman  
Board of Finance (Treasurer/Chair and Member)  
Co-Chair of Capital Campaign (1<sup>st</sup> campaign)  
Fulfillment chair of Capital Campaign (2<sup>nd</sup> campaign)  
Lead gifts director of Capital Campaign (3<sup>rd</sup> campaign)  
Choir and Praise Team Member  
Lay Delegate/LCMS Convention

**FOR LAY MEMBER, BOARD OF DIRECTORS (TWO TO BE ELECTED)**

NAME: DAVID BOGENHAGEN  
BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
Trinity Lutheran Church, White Lake, SD

**Occupation:**  
Farmer/Gravel Business

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Congregation Chairman  
Congregation Vice Chairman  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Trustee  
Board of Elders  
Sunday School Superintendent  
Sunday School, VBS, and Midweek Teacher  
Lay Delegate, LCMS Convention 2023  
Lay Representative to SD District Planning Conference

**Other Experience/Positions:**  
White Lake Cenex Board  
Aurora Country Farm Service Agency Director  
Aurora County Zoning Board  
Stickney Coop Elevator Board  
Washington Township Board

NAME: TIM EDEN  
BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

**Occupation:**  
Banking/Finance

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Head Elder  
Discipleship Board Member  
Chairman, Call Committee  
Sunday School Teacher  
Usher  
Handbell/Vocal Choirs

**Other Experience:**  
Camp Counselor, Camp Minneboji

NAME: DOUG KLIPFEL  
BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
Our Savior Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, SD

**Occupation:**  
Non-Destructive Testing/American Society for Nondestructive Testing Level III



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**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Sunday School Teacher  
Congregational Chairman  
Congregational Vice Chairman  
Board of Elders  
Board of Social Ministry  
At-Large Member, SD District LCMS, installed June 2023

NAME: RANDY KOERNER  
BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Freeman, SD

**Occupation:**  
Self-employed General Contractor

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Congregation Chairman  
Trustee  
Usher  
Board of Elders  
Lay Delegate, SD District Convention

**Other Experience/Positions:**  
City Building Inspector  
Planning and Zoning Commission  
Treasurer, Golden West Telecommunications  
Volunteer Fireman  
Former EMT

NAME: TODD WOODS  
BIOGRAPHY: **Church Membership:**  
St. John's Lutheran Church, Yankton, SD

**Occupation:**  
VP of Wealth 7 Trust, First Dakota Bank

**Church Experience/Positions:**  
Congregation Chairman  
Board of Elders  
Evangelism Committee  
Stewardship Committee  
Lay Delegate, SD District Convention

**Other Experience/Positions:**  
Chair, Yankton County Commission  
Chair, Sertoma  
Former Thrivent Agent  
Former Police Officer

**FOR PASTORAL MEMBER, DISTRICT CONVENTION NOMINATING COMMITTEE 2028**  
(2 to be elected)

**NAME:** BRIAN S. LEMCKE

**PARISH SERVED:** Zion and Emmaus Lutheran Churches, Delmont and Tripp, South Dakota; Sole Pastor 2018-Present  
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Mound City, MO; Sole Pastor 2013-2017  
St. John, St. Peter and Concordia Lutheran Churches Corning, Craig and Mound City, MO 2011-2013  
St. John, Holy Cross and Immanuel Lutheran Churches Agar, Onida and Harrold, SD 2003-2011

**BIOGRAPHY:** 2003 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN  
MO District Human Care Committee  
Pastors Conference & Professional Church Workers Conference Committees  
SD District LWML Pastoral Counselor  
Synod Convention Pastoral Delegate  
Cancer Awareness Board-American Cancer Society  
Deliver Senior meals to Shut-Ins  
Holt County MO Christmas Toy Fund  
Lions Club  
Food Pantry Executive Director

**NAME:** THOMAS MUELLER

**PARISH SERVED:** Emanuel and Zion Lutheran Churches 2022-Present  
Sisseton and Waubay, SD

**BIOGRAPHY:** 2022 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO

**NAME:** MARCUS RING

**PARISH SERVED:** St. Paul Lutheran Church 2011-2016  
Shreveport, LA  
St. John Lutheran Church 2017-Present  
Gregory, SD

**BIOGRAPHY:** 2011 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN  
LWML Zone Counselor – Chamberlain Zone  
District Bible Bowl Coordinator

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**NAME:** SAMUEL THOLE

**PARISH  
SERVED:** Peace, Redeemer and Zion Lutheran Churches, 2017-Present  
Brookings, Flandreau and White, South Dakota

**BIOGRAPHY:** 2017 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO

**FOR LAY MEMBER, DISTRICT CONVENTION NOMINATING COMMITTEE 2028**  
(3 to be elected)

**NAME:** KEEGAN AHART

**CHURCH**

**MEMBERSHIP:** St. Paul Lutheran Church, Spearfish, SD

**BIOGRAPHY:** Farmer/Mechanic

Trustee/Elder at Peace Lutheran Church in Alcester, SD and Vicar at Trinity Lutheran Church in Belle Fourche

**Other:** President of Newell Booster Club

**NAME:** MICHAEL BEYER

**CHURCH**

**MEMBERSHIP:** Blessed Redeemer Lutheran Church, Brandon, SD

**BIOGRAPHY:** Director of Business Office/Sanford Health

Congregational Chairman  
Congregational Vice-Chairman  
Board of Elders  
Building Expansion committee Chairman  
District Convention Congregational Lay Delegate

**OTHER:** Church choir member  
Brandon Valley High School Band Parent Board Member

**NAME:** GLENN HARNISCH

**CHURCH**

**MEMBERSHIP:** Faith Lutheran Church, Parkston, SD

**BIOGRAPHY:** AVP, Field Clams Manager/Crop Insurance

Choir Member  
Choir Director  
Sunday School Teacher  
Sunday School Superintendent  
Secretary/Voters Assembly  
Trustee  
Elder  
President

**OTHER:** Township Board; School Board; County Commissioner; Parkston Area development Board; Avera St. Benedicts Board of Directors; Avera St. Benedicts Foundation Board; Advisory Board/SD Farm and Ranch Management

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**NAME:** DAVID PETERSON

**CHURCH**

**MEMBERSHIP:** Trinity Lutheran Church, Mansfield, South Dakota

**BIOGRAPHY:** Dentist/LLI Graduate

High School Bible Class teacher

As LLI graduate I assist our Pastor in any way that he wants:

Visitation in nursing homes assisted living and independent living as well as hospital

Bible studies in retirement center

Elder

Lead services at our tri-parish once a month

**OTHER:**

My wife and I were missionaries at the Norwegian Mission society Hospital, Ngaoundere, Cameroon 1981-1982. We were part of an inner-city congregation in Melbourne, Australia for 2.5 years in the mid-70's. Our dental clinic is a teaching rotation for students from USD and LATC.