



The 59th Regular Convention of the
Southern Illinois District of
The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

February 3-5, 2022

Convention Workbook

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1 Introduction

2 Greetings in the name of Jesus! The *Workbook* that follows contains all the initial information
3 for the 59th Regular Convention of the Southern Illinois District of The Lutheran Church –
4 Missouri Synod. The various reports, overtures, and additional information is useful in
5 preparation for the upcoming convention. Because of the delay for the Convention, some of
6 these reports contain information that has since changed. Thank you for your understanding
7 and flexibility in this regard. The first issue of *Today's Business*, including biographical
8 information for nominees for office and proposed convention resolutions, will be made available
9 following the meeting of the floor committees. This will be released in mid-January. If you
10 notice any mistakes or omissions, please contact the district office and corrections will be made
11 in the first issue of *Today's Business*.

13 R-01 Report of the District President

15 **"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God**
16 **raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is**
17 **justified and with the mouth one confesses and is saved"** Romans 10:9-10

19 The 58th delegate convention of the Southern Illinois District met in O'Fallon, IL from
20 February 9-10, 2018. The theme: "Confessing Christ, Jesus is Lord" takes us to the central
21 teaching of the Christian faith. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and that by believing
22 you may have life in His name (John 20:31). God so loved the world that He sent Jesus into the
23 world. He "was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; He was crucified
24 also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again
25 according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of the Father.
26 And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have
27 no end" (Nicene Creed).

29 The theme from the last convention leads us will into the theme for this coming one. There
30 is but One Foundation for the one, holy, Christian, and apostolic Church. **"For no one can lay a**
31 **foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ"** (1 Corinthians 3:11). Jesus
32 is the both the bedrock and capstone of the Christian faith. At His return, every knee will bow, and
33 every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10-11). In a
34 world that is changing rapidly, there is one confession that saves (Jesus is Lord) and one
35 foundation to build upon (Jesus Christ). Peter quotes Psalm 118 as he writes: **"Behold, I am**
36 **laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chose and precious, and whoever believes in him will**
37 **not be put to shame"** (1 Peter 2:6). Jesus is this Rock of our salvation. Like living stones,
38 believers are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices
39 acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5).

1
2 By God's grace we are the recipients of an astonishing Christians heritage. We have been
3 entrusted with an inheritance that builds upon the One Foundation. Paul describes this: **"You are**
4 **fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the**
5 **foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in**
6 **whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In**
7 **Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit"** (Ephesians
8 2:19-21). This One Foundation shapes us all. You and I have been bought with a price, to glorify
9 God in our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:20).

10 11 **COVID-19 Challenges**

12
13 The outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020 has impacted almost everything since it began.
14 The state of Illinois ordered non-essential businesses and schools to close for two weeks in March
15 of that year. Churches were considered "non-essential" to the state. What was forecast to last a
16 fortnight continues to impact our communities, schools, and businesses today. Congregations
17 responded to the challenge. Many went to offering services on Facebook or YouTube. Others
18 held outdoor services where congregants remained in their cars and could tune into the service
19 on a low-power FM transmitter. Schools were closed for two weeks then opened for online
20 instruction only. Our congregations and schools are to be commended for their creativity and
21 resolve to return to worship and education as safely and quickly as possible. In-person worship
22 attendance was limited to 10 or less. By the end of May 2020, the governor lifted restrictions on
23 worship for churches due to the free exercise of religion clause in the First Amendment to the US
24 Constitution. Mask mandates have largely continued.

25
26 Throughout the Covid-19 outbreak, the three Illinois District Presidents are working
27 together with the LCMS President's office to address our concerns and response to the pandemic.
28 The Synod arranged contact with both First Liberty and the Alliance for Defending Freedom (ADF)
29 to consider legal challenges, especially if there is clear religious discrimination. The Illinois mask
30 mandate of August 2021 is an example. The Illinois Department of Public Health initially said that
31 churches were included in the mandate. Nearly two months later it was discovered that churches
32 were not under the mandate to wear masks. Instead, churches were encouraged to follow the
33 mandate and take other precautions to minimize the spread of the virus. We discussed the August
34 2021 mandate with both ADF and First Liberty. Both said that from a legal viewpoint it was not
35 religious discrimination. The law applied to everyone, not singling out churches. For them it was
36 a health issue, not one of religious freedom.

1 You will have the opportunity to consider resolutions regarding Covid-19 and the response
2 of the Southern Illinois District to government mandates. One thing to keep in mind is that Districts
3 are the Synod in this place. We do not have the freedom to pursue lawsuits against the
4 government either singly or together without the consent of the LCMS Board of Directors. There
5 is a tension between honoring the government and those in authority according to the Fourth
6 Commandment and Romans 13 and the apostles' response to the temple leadership when they
7 were ordered to stop teaching in the name of Jesus. In Acts 5:29 they boldly declared that they
8 must obey God rather than men. Delegates would do well to reflect on this tension as they
9 consider the resolutions before them this convention. Are we in an Acts 5:29 situation where we
10 must disobey government mandates? If so, how are these mandates prohibiting the proclamation
11 of Jesus Christ and Him crucified? Are masks, social distancing and attendance limits for a
12 worship service prohibiting the proclamation of the Gospel? What is the response of a Christian
13 in a pandemic that impacts all areas of society?

14
15 Most congregations followed the initial state mandate to close for two weeks to slow the
16 spread of the disease. It was a matter of public health and uncharted territory for all of us. In
17 hindsight, should the Church ever close its doors for public worship? It is very unfortunate that
18 the pandemic has become such a divisive and political issue. Government health officials have
19 flip-flopped on the issue of masks. Initially they were not recommended. Then they were required.
20 Now we hear a few public health officials saying that they should become permanent. Some claim
21 that outbreaks such as Covid take four years to run their cycle, ugh! If so, we are about halfway
22 through. The issues may be with us for a while. Personally, I cannot recommend congregations
23 halting services indefinitely again. We need God's Word for the soul as much as food for the body.
24 The Church is the body of Christ. We are joined and knit together by the Holy Spirit to be a family
25 of believers. It is unhealthy to neglect hearing the Word and gathering as a congregation. We may
26 need to wear masks and social distance along with extra cleaning measures. We may need to
27 hold more services to accommodate building capacity limits in a pandemic. This is preferable to
28 canceling church indefinitely. Holy Scripture says: **"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope
29 without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one
30 another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some,
31 but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near"** (Hebrews
32 10:23-25). Congregations, pastors, and the elders need to freely discuss what is best in their
33 circumstances.

34 35 **Around the District**

36
37 Since 2018, three congregations and a new mission have closed. Concordia, Cottage
38 Hills; St. Paul's, Hardin; St. John's, Maryville; and Christ the Vine Mission in Aviston have closed.
39 St. John's celebrated 175 years of serving in October. Their final service will be on January 2,

2022. Two new dual parishes have formed. St. John's, Kampsville and Our Redeemer, Carrollton. They are being served by Rev. Steve Jacobsen. Trinity, Anna and St. Luke's, Olmsted became a dual parish in 2020. They are currently being served by supply pastors. Circuit Visitor Jay Holden is scheduling them. Rev. Mike Kettner from Jacob is handling the homebound, care center and hospital calls. St. Matthew's, Brussels and Messiah, Alton have been served by Rev. Randy Fischer from Messiah, Alton for the past two years. These two congregations have not become a dual parish. Rev. Fischer retires from Messiah, Alton at the end of January 2022.

Pastoral vacancies in Southern Illinois are taking longer to fill than we would desire. The number of graduating seminarians has been low since the last convention in 2018. We are also running thin on pastors to do vacancy work and supply preaching across Southern Illinois. Pray the Lord of the Harvest that He may send laborers into His fields ripe unto harvest. The long anticipated pastoral shortage is beginning to materialize in our rural areas.

The last four years have witnessed the passing of several longtime SID pastors from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant. These include two past Southern Illinois District Presidents. The Rev. Dr. Alvin Kollmann in 2018 and the Rev. Dr. Herb Mueller, Jr. in 2020. Rev. William Schmidt, Rev. James Leidholdt, Rev. Fred Campbell, Rev. E. James Rivett, Rev. Bert Eickhoff, Rev. Leonard Laetsch, and Rev. Donald McKelvey entered eternal glory in this quadrennium.

District Missions

The changing demographics, smaller congregations and dual parishes have reduced the number of pastors available for prison ministry. Rev. Jeff Nehrt and Rev. David Kollmeyer continue to serve as coordinators for this ministry. The death of Rev. Jim Rivett is still felt as Rev. Rivett did so many things with prison ministry. The restrictions in place during the pandemic have curtailed a lot of visitations since March of 2020. We remain grateful for our faithful chaplains and the work they can do.

The Southern Illinois District Advocates 4 Life organized this quadrennium. Monica Shannon and Robin Schultz have brought leadership, energy, and coordination to life issues facing us in Illinois. They will have a presentation before the convention on Friday afternoon. The Lansdowne Community Initiative continues to expand. The Rev. Dr. Willie Stallworth will bring us up to date with a presentation of what the Lord has been doing through LCI. He will also provide

1 information on how you and your congregation may assist this community changing work in East
2 St. Louis.

3
4 Delegates will vote on a new International Mission Partnership in the Dominican Republic
5 with *Seminario Concordia el Reformador* (Concordia Seminary of the Reformer). This is a new
6 seminary in the DR for the training of pastors and deaconesses throughout the Caribbean, Central
7 America, and Northern South America. Rev. Joel Fritsche, formerly of Zion, Staunton, serves as
8 both a missionary and director of the seminary. *Seminario Concordia el Reformador* needs
9 partners to assist with the theological education of its students. We are asking the Southern Illinois
10 District to undertake this partnership. Dollars spent in the formation of pastors and deaconesses
11 will have a lasting impact wherever these workers go. They need our prayers, gifts, and
12 encouragement. It is an exciting opportunity to help partner churches in the western hemisphere.
13 If you have questions, Rev. Eric Wood, Mr. Jeff and Mrs. Bessie Fick have attended FORO's in
14 the Dominican Republic and can share their experiences with you.

16 Odds and Ends

17
18 District communications are undergoing major changes as we improve the website and
19 our presence on social media. Hopefully this will be operational by the time of the convention.
20 The full time staff of the Southern Illinois District remains unchanged since last 2018. We are
21 grateful for Mr. Jeff Fick as our School and General Executive. Mr. Fick does a great job in
22 coordinating parochial education. Ms. Leslie Sramek is the District President's Administrative
23 Assistant and District Bookkeeper. Leslie is in the process of becoming a deaconess through an
24 online program with Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. She is serving her internship in the District
25 Office. She has completed her first year of a four-year program.

26
27 2020 was a challenging year for my health. In July I developed osteomyelitis (bone
28 infection) in both feet. This led to the amputation of the small toe and fifth metatarsals on both
29 feet. The right foot healed in a timely fashion. The surgeon could not remove all the osteomyelitis
30 from the left foot. It was hoped that IV antibiotics and hyperbaric treatments would take care of
31 the remaining infection. They did not. I was referred to an orthopedic foot surgeon in Springfield.
32 He laid out a course of treatment that involved two more surgeries, two months apart. In between
33 were more IV antibiotics with antibiotic glass beads placed in the left foot. The treatment worked.
34 Both feet are healed. Thanks be to God!

Looking Ahead

These are challenging times politically, economically, and socially. For Christians there is never a reason to panic or fear. The Lord is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way (Psalm 46). Hymnist Henry Lyte wrote: *“Swift to its close ebbs our life’s little day; Earth’s joys grow dim, its glories pass away; Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me”* (LSB 878:4). Jesus Christ is the One Foundation upon which we stand. He will never leave you or forsake you. Upon Him, you can depend. May the Lord bless our gathering for convention and this next triennium!

Rev. Timothy J. Scharr, President

Southern Illinois District - LCMS

1 **R-02 Report of the First Vice President**
2

3 It has been my privilege to have served God's people in the Southern Illinois District as
4 First Vice-President this past triennium. I have been humbled and honored by this responsibility
5 of service that the congregations of our district have entrusted to me. Thank you for allowing me
6 to have this opportunity.

7 I thoroughly enjoy assisting President Scharr as he guides our district with a pastoral
8 heart and loving care for God's people. I also respect the devotion and dedication of the other
9 elected leaders of our district on the Praesidium, the Board of Directors, and the Board of
10 Spiritual Care that I witness in our times of meeting. I am grateful for the faithful service of our
11 staff members Jeff Fick and Leslie Sramek in our district office.

12 I represented our district's Board of Directors as an Advisory Delegate to the LCMS
13 convention in Tampa during July of 2019. I sat in for President Scharr at a synodical Council of
14 Presidents' meeting at the International Center in September of 2019. I represented our district
15 at a meeting with the pastoral leadership of Faith-Columbia and the presidents of the Missouri
16 and SELC districts in August of 2020.

17 I preached and performed the installation of Rev. Dr. Stephen Krenz as pastor of St.
18 Paul in Columbia in November of 2018. I also performed the installation of Rev. Mark Hofferber
19 at Trinity in Hoffman in October of 2019.

20 I covered the pastoral needs of the members of St. John in Baldwin from June 10 to
21 October 20, 2019 while their pastor was on a medical leave. I served as the vicarage supervisor
22 of Rev. Lyle Buettner of St. Paul in New Athens and Trinity in Darmstadt from June 2019 to May
23 2020. It was a great joy to be present for his ordination and installation as pastor of those
24 congregations on June 7, 2020.

25 I pray that God will continue to bless His people in our Southern Illinois District with the
26 pure preaching of His holy Word and the faithful sharing of His life-giving Sacraments under the
27 dedicated administration of our pastoral and lay leadership.

28 *Respectfully submitted,*

29 *Rev. Mark Alan Nebel*

30 *First Vice-President*
31
32

1 **R-03 The Report of the Second Vice President**

2
3 *Built on the Rock the Church shall stand even when steeples are falling.*
4 *Crumbled have spires in every land; bells still are chiming and calling,*
5 *Calling the young and old to rest, but above all the souls distressed,*
6 *Longing for rest everlasting.*
7

8 We gather in convention under the theme of “No Other Foundation,” drawn from the inspired
9 words of 1 Corinthians 3:11, “For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid,
10 which is Jesus Christ.” During these difficult days when churches seem to be crumbling and the
11 foundation of our society seems to be falling, I have had the honor of serving you as Second
12 Vice President of the Southern Illinois District. While we in the Church have faced challenges
13 from many sides, and problems that we could never have foreseen only three years ago at our
14 last convention, we have the unshakeable hope that our foundation in faith is firm. Jesus Christ
15 is the same yesterday, today, and forever, a solid rock on which to build during uncertain times.
16

17 As we build on the foundation that is Jesus Christ, congregations live on God’s grace given in
18 the Word and Sacraments as pastors and people gather together to give and receive God’s
19 gifts. This central theme has been a focus for President Scharr, the Presidium of the District,
20 and myself as a Vice President.
21

22 God has given pastors and congregations to work together to provide for and support each
23 other. I have had the joyful opportunity to represent President Scharr at the installation of a
24 pastor in the District so that God’s gifts in Word and Sacraments can expand in that parish. A
25 parish focused on the Means of Grace given by God through their pastor, received in faith by
26 the members, is a parish built on the firm foundation of Jesus Christ.
27

28 We have had extended discussion and prayerful consideration with the Presidium, in the Board
29 of Directors of the District, and with the Circuit Visitors, about how congregations can best
30 receive the Means of Grace during times of lockdowns due to Covid-19. We, as the elected
31 representatives of the District, have been diligent to consider ways to preserve the freedom to
32 worship and receive God’s gifts even when the government (under the umbrella of Covid-19
33 restrictions) has seemed less than supportive. Where God’s Word goes forth, there God is
34 present with His people. No epidemic or edict can stop that. God’s promise is sure, our
35 foundation is firm.
36

37 As our congregations struggle with many challenges, it is essential that we as pastors and
38 people find support in each other and see God’s love in each other. To encourage this
39 mentality, I have worked with the Presidium to host a Pastor/ Elder Workshop, led by Pastor
40 David Fleming of Doxology, to bring parish leaders together to find ways to work with each other
41 in joy according to God’s plan. I have also been very interested in working to support and
42 encourage pastors in their callings, as so many pastors face burnout and depression. In joy and
43 frustration, in success and sorrow, God has placed His people together to love and serve one
44 another even as Jesus Christ has served us. In this way also Jesus is our foundation.
45

46 The congregations of the SID have been on my heart and in my prayers. This is not an easy
47 time for the Church at large, or for congregations in particular. And yet, through it all, God is
48 faithful. The Church that builds on no other foundation than that of Jesus Christ and clings
49 unswervingly to His Word of truth will endure and be blessed, despite the efforts of Satan and
50 his willing accomplices in the world to bring about her downfall. If we try to build on anything

1 other than Jesus Christ and His Word, we will fall most certainly. But the deceptions of the devil,
2 the world, and our flesh do not form our foundation. The Church will stand firm, for her
3 foundation is nothing other than Jesus Christ alone. He alone is the rock on which we build.

4
5 Grant, then, O God, Your will be done, that when the church bells are ringing,
6 Many in saving faith may come where Christ His message is bringing:
7 "I know My own; My own know Me, You, not the world, My face shall see.
8 My peace I leave with you. Amen."

9
10 ("Built of the Rock" LSB 645 text: Public domain)

11
12 Respectfully submitted,
13 Kirk Clayton
14 Second Vice-President
15

R-04 The Report of the District Treasurer

As the 3 years of the current triennium continues to play out we can look back and say we thought we had seen it all – until 2020 arrived! However what will remain steadfast is God's blessings in the Southern Illinois District. We can see his blessings through our many thriving congregations and the offerings they are able to give. We can see it through the mission opportunities that we are able to support with our funds. We can see it in the dedicated staff that we have at the district office and the many church workers and lay people all working together to do as Jesus commands in Matthew 28:19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

A thorough look at the district finances and the investment balances will give you a clue as to what the people of the district are up to. Of the annual budget which totals around \$1,000,000 each year, mission spending is 30%. Over 30% of the mission budget goes to prison ministry. The remainder goes to mission expansion, campus ministries and regular mission work in our district.

Another major expenditure in our annual budget is the amount sent to LCMS. 27% of our congregation income is sent to the synod. The remainder of the budget is used to support our congregations with the staff at the district including our District President, School Administrator and General Executive and the district accountant.

The district staff is responsible for many activities that flow through the bank accounts of the board restricted funds. These activities are outside of the operating budget and generally hover around \$275,000 at any given time. Board restricted funds are monies received (not from offerings) that are designated by the board for specific purposes. Of the 30 plus board restricted funds, the purpose of the larger ones include convention income/expenses, strategic ministry planning, district disaster relief, institutional chaplains, LCMS prison & jail ministry, student loan debt reduction, school of music, elderly miscellaneous, and many others.

And finally, the district is responsible for a large balance of donor restricted funds. The donor restricted funds are invested with the LCMS Foundation. These funds were restricted by the donor, when given, for purposes such as special gifts endowment, student aid endowment, mission site endowment, church extension endowment and the scholarship fund. The total of these funds continues to grow with our moderate risk investment strategy and was over \$620,000 as of June, 2020.

Our challenge as a district in the future is the continued decline in congregational giving to the district. As our congregations feel the financial strains of this crazy world, so does our district and it is reflected in the amount of congregation offerings sent to the district. Congregational giving has declined over the last four years and we are praying that 2020 will "buck" the trend. We can be confident however that God will provide what we need at all times to accomplish his purposes for us and the district!

Respectfully submitted, Julie Johnson, District Treasurer

R -05 The Report of the Schools and General Executive

I am thankful for the support of our office staff and the partnership with the ninety-two congregations and thirty-nine educational agencies throughout the district. It is an honor and privilege to serve God's Kingdom in this place and work with so many dedicated professional church workers and lay leaders that have a love for our Lord Jesus Christ and a commitment to the ministry!

Lutheran Education: Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary

The Southern Illinois District has 38 Lutheran education sites: ten free-standing preschools, twenty elementary schools, three Lutheran high schools, and five early childhood centers. Over half of our SID congregations are involved in supporting Lutheran education preschool through high school. The enrollment in these educational programs reported a 9% increase within the past year. The current enrollment for elementary and high school is 3,142 students compared to last year of 2,855. The overall enrollment from Early Childhood through High school is 3,421 students.

In 2020-21, about 13% of students in grades PK-12 indicated that they had NO church membership – what an opportunity to reach out to families and communities in Southern Illinois.

We have baptized 115 students during the past four years in our SID schools and either baptized or confirmed another 144 adults whose children attended SID schools! It is my fervent prayer that the Holy Spirit will continue to bless our schools and congregations as we proclaim the Gospel message through our programs of Lutheran education!

Elementary tuition averages \$2,335 per student (1st child, member) and \$3,492 (1st child, non-member) which ranges from \$0 - 4,788 for members and \$0 - 6,000 for non-member students. Starting base for teacher salaries ranged from \$25,972 – 36,678 with an average base salary in the SID of \$30,267 (the SID base for 2021 was \$36,678).

Little Lambs Preschool, Maryville, and Bethel Lutheran Preschool, DuQuoin, ceased operation during the past triennium. St. Paul Lutheran School, Troy closed their elementary level, however, the preschool program remains open. Christ Lutheran School, Jacob, closed at the end of the 2021 school year. A service of Thanksgiving for 147 years was held in June 2021.

Zion Lutheran School, Litchfield and Immanuel Lutheran School, Murphysboro have completed building additions (classrooms, offices) and enhanced their facilities during the past triennium.

We have welcomed new administrators and Preschool directors to our Lutheran schools during the past four years: Christina DeBoard, Trinity-Centralia; Kaela Powley, St. John-Chester; Darrin Houck, Holy Cross, Collinsville; Myra Farrell, Trinity-Edwardsville; Nancy Stallard (Development Director), Unity-East St. Louis; Christopher Dehning, Trinity-Hoyleton; Mark Lofink, Zion-Litchfield; Veronica Manwaring, Immanuel-Murphysboro; Dennis Fancher, Immanuel, Okawville; Pamela Bierbaum; Immanuel, Okawville; Jamie Crouch, Zion, Staunton; John Hostert, St. Mark, Steeleville; and Timothy Lochhead, St. Mark, Steeleville, Sarah Koch, Zion, Bethalto; Ken Krueger, Trinity, Edwardsville; Joseph Gerth, St. Paul, Hamel; John Schaff, Trinity Hoyleton; Timothy Moore, Zion, Litchfield; Jody Liszewski, Immanuel, Okawville; Robin Booth, Trinity, Red Bud; Vikki Harms, Zion, Mascoutah; Jenna Schultz, St. Paul, Wood River; Susan Lilienkamp, St. Paul, Troy.

Sixteen of our SID Lutheran schools are accredited by National Lutheran School Accreditation: Zion, Belleville; Zion, Bethalto; Good Shepherd, Collinsville; Holy Cross, Collinsville; Unity, East St. Louis; Trinity, Edwardsville; St. Paul, Hamel; Trinity, Hoffman; Trinity, Hoyleton; Zion, Litchfield; Immanuel, Okawville; St. John, Red Bud; Trinity, Red Bud; St. Paul, Troy, Metro-East LHS, Edwardsville, and Christ Our Savior LHS, Evansville. Christ Our Savior, Evansville is duly accredited with NLSA and COGNIA (AdvancEd). St. Paul, Hamel is accredited with NLSA and CCLE (Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education). These programs are committed to school improvement plans and submit annual reports to the SID Accreditation Committee. Due to COVID, six of the schools filed a Validation Team Visit Extension during the 2019 – 20 school year and had their visit during the 2020 – 21 or 2021 - 2022 academic year.

SID – NLSA Commission Members are: Bob Mayhew (Chairman), Collinsville; Beth Boester, Hoffman; Amy Kurtz, Nashville; Bill Becker, Red Bud; Francee Kasten, Hoyleton, and Jeffrey Fick (advisory).

Thank You District Servants!!!!!!

We are tremendously blessed with all of our ordained, commissioned, and lay workers in the Southern Illinois District. All of these servants to our Lord have put forth an extraordinary amount of effort throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. To our servants of the Lord in the teaching and preaching ministry, we say thank you for touching the hearts of many, the wisdom you've shared, the support you've given, and the love you've shown. All of these reveal the ways the Lord Jesus is at work in you.

We are reminded in Colossians 3:23 – 24, Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord. We say thank you for all that you do and we pray God's richest blessings upon your ministry.

Youth:

Twenty-eight SID congregations participated in the 2019 LCMS Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota with 312 youth and 98 adults/chaperones attending. Plans are currently being made to attend the Youth Gathering July 9 – 13, 2022 in Houston. Many SID congregations, youth, and leaders have also participated in Higher Things conferences offered throughout the United States each summer. The theme for this past summer was "Forgiven." Conferences were held in July 2021 at ND, CO, MI, TX.

Finances:

The District budgets have decreased slightly during the past triennium in congregational pledges/giving and a decrease of the SID Budget to the synod.

| <u>YEAR</u> | <u>FOR SYNOD(Actual)</u> | <u>FOR SID(Actual)</u> | <u>TOTAL BUDGET(Actual)</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2018 | \$246,824 | \$784,363 | \$1,031,187 |
| 2019 | \$229,253 | \$796,615 | \$1,025,867 |
| 2020 | \$228,678 | \$770,334 | \$999,013 |

Where does the money come from?

88% of the District's budgeted income comes from congregational commitments. The remaining 12% comes from various subscriptions, fees, reimbursements, and investments.

Where does the money go?

In the current 2022 Budget, 27% of the congregational commitments go to Synod. 29% of the Budget goes to SID Mission work: District expansion (8%), Campus ministry (6%), Regular

1 mission work (4%), and Prison ministry (11%). The remaining 44% is earmarked for services and
2 support of SID congregations in their work: District office salaries, benefits, auto, office expenses
3 (utilities, maintenance, postage, and supplies), accounting, and other related support expenses.
4

5 God has indeed blessed the Southern Illinois District during the past triennium! May we continue
6 to seek His will for our personal lives, the mission and ministry of our local congregations, and the
7 work of the district and national offices!
8

9
10 District Office Personnel:
11

12 Rev. Timothy Scharr – SID President

13 Jeffrey A. Fick – Schools and General Executive

14 Leslie Sramek – Administrative Assistant to President/Bookkeeper

15 Paul Reeves – LCEF Vice President (SID and Mid South districts)
16

17
18 Respectfully submitted,
19

20 Jeffrey A. Fick

21 Schools and General Executive
22
23

R- 06 Report of the Southern Illinois District Board of Directors

During the 2018-2021 triennium, the Board of Directors met quarterly and had one special meeting in May 2020. The Board filled all its subcommittees and appointed members to the commissions of the District as prescribed by the bylaws. All of the directors elected at the 2018 Convention served throughout this triennium with the exception of the 2nd Vice President, Rev. Benjamin Ball. After being elected as a vice-president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Rev. Ball resigned from the SID Board of Directors following the Synod Convention in 2019. According to the Bylaws of the District, the District President appointed Rev. Dr. Kirk Clayton to serve as 2nd Vice President of the District, and Rev. Timothy Mueller to fill Rev. Clayton's previous position on the Board as representative of the Board of Spiritual Care. The Directors of the District are thanked for their time and energy to serve Christ and His Church.

At the July 2018 meeting, the Board adopted the Endowment Investment Policy that had been developed by the Board's Fund Advisory Committee.

At the May 2019 meeting, the Board adopted a Travel Reimbursement policy.

At the August 2020 meeting, the Board of Directors adopted changes to the District's Bylaws to keep them in conformity with the changes made to the Synod Constitution and Bylaws at the 2019 Synod Convention.

In November 2020, the Board of Directors took a complete, unanimous vote by email to postpone the District Convention for 2021 due to COVID restrictions. This vote was ratified at the next meeting of the Board on February 6, 2021.

At the April 2021 meeting, the Board of Directors received its official visit from the regional LCMS vice-president, Rev. Benjamin Ball.

Throughout the Triennium, the Board of Directors approved updates to the Constitutions and Bylaws of St. John, Ruma; St. John, New Minden; Zion, Litchfield; St. Paul, Hamel; St. James, Glen Carbon; St. John, Maryville; and Trinity, Hoyleton.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Peter III, secretary

R-07 Report of the Mission Board

2 Kings 7 tells the story of how the Syrians had besieged the city of Samaria resulting in widespread starvation for the Israelite people. A group of lepers outside the city finally decided they would surrender to the Syrians. The worst that could happen is that they would be killed. They would soon starve to death anyway. When they came to the Syrian camp it was empty. The Bible tells us in 2 Kings 7:6–7 (ESV) *“⁶ For the Lord had made the army of the Syrians hear the sound of chariots and of horses, the sound of a great army, so that they said to one another, ‘Behold, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to come against us.’”⁷ So they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys, leaving the camp as it was, and fled for their lives.”* At first the lepers gathered all this bounty for themselves but then they came to their senses. 2 Kings 7:9 (ESV) *“We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news...Now therefore come; let us go and tell the king’s household.”*

As a district we pray the Holy Spirit gives us the insight of the lepers. We are spiritual lepers because of our sin. We deserve nothing but to be cast out of the city of God and die. However, we have a “day of good news.” By Word and Sacrament, we know Jesus who gives us forgiveness, life and salvation. However, if we keep this good news to ourselves “we are not doing right.” We have such a great abundance of blessings from Jesus how can we not share this with others. To that end our district is involved in multiple missions to bring the word of forgiveness to all men.

One of our chief mission efforts is prison ministries. In this summary of district missions, it is impossible to go into detail about all that is going on in this field. Please consult their report found elsewhere in this convention book. In summary, at times we have provided regular worship and Bible Study in over 20 prisons, manned by both clergy and lay volunteers. We also have a reentry program for returning inmates called Freed in Christ and continue to work on the legal details of opening a halfway house called Lutheran House of Mercy. We have been the leader in prison ministry throughout the entire Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. With help from the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League we organized a national prison ministry conference and even provided the synodical prison ministry handbook. However, the prison ministry is facing challenges. One of our key workers was Rev. Jim Rivett. A prison chaplain most of his life, even in his retirement he continued to fill in at various prisons wherever he was needed. In the Lord’s wisdom, this last year, Pastor Rivett was taken to the mansion Jesus had prepared for him. His death leaves us with the challenge of finding workers in the various prisons he served. We have an excellent prison ministry committee served by Jon Hohgreve, Pastor Jeff Nehrt, and Pastor David Kohlmeyer. They are praying that the Lord of the harvest will provide workers. In honor of Pastor Rivett the committee is presently working to establish a Jim Rivett Memorial Jumpstart Prison Ministry Fund.

The immediacy of this need for prison chaplains has been tempered by yet a second challenge. Due to COVID, at this time, we are not allowed to send workers to the prisons. We need to pray that God will soon allow the ministry of the Word to resume in these locations. Sad to say we often treat the imprisoned like the lepers in our story. They are separated from us and we have our own concerns. But these people also desperately need the comforting word of forgiveness. God grant that our missions may resume quickly. In the meantime, as a district we continue to support our prison chaplains through our mission grants. Even though they cannot go into the prisons they continue to serve their various congregations. It should be noted our prison grants are also congregational grants. That is, our working in the prisons also benefits our numerous

1 small town and rural parishes which would not be able to support a full-time worker without the
2 assistance of the district. This is the third challenge we face as more people leave the rural
3 areas to move to urban areas. Our smaller churches are left with declining membership. Some
4 of this challenge is met with dual parish arrangements. Unfortunately, that only increases the
5 challenge of the prison ministry as we have fewer pastors to fill the chaplaincies. Again, we
6 need to pray to the Lord of the harvest to provide laborers. Certainly, the demands upon the
7 district are only going to increase if we are to continue this important ministry.

8
9 A second major area of mission work is our campus ministries. The oldest of these is Our Savior
10 Lutheran Church in Carbondale. Here the congregation is the campus ministry. Many years ago,
11 the former Lutheran Student Center and Our Savior Lutheran congregation joined together into
12 one ministry. Over the last three years Rev. Bob Gray and Rev. Jay Holden served both a
13 thriving congregation and a large campus population at Southern Illinois University at
14 Carbondale. In addition to the usual Word and Sacrament ministry to church members as well
15 as students they also provide extensive counseling at a particularly challenging time for these
16 young people. In addition, they conduct regular Bible Study and social activities for the Chinese
17 and other foreign students. There are times when we cannot bring the Gospel to the nations, so
18 the Lord is bringing the nations to us. Pastor Gray will be retiring but the church hopes to call
19 someone to continue this joint ministry. The challenge here is that because of a lack of funds at
20 the district level, our support for this ministry has been reduced considerably. Our other campus
21 ministry is at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. Here the ministry is a joint effort with
22 Trinity Lutheran Ministries at Edwardsville and the Southern Illinois District. In the past they
23 offered weekly opportunities for Bible Study during the school year as well as monthly meetings
24 during the summer. They also organized many trips to area Christian events and conducted on
25 campus social activities. They are active members of LCMS U (the synodical campus ministry).
26 The particular challenge here is that Trinity's pastor and campus chaplain, Rev. Jared DeBlieck
27 accepted a call to Purdue University. The church now only has one pastor, Rev. John Schank.
28 Obviously, the demands of a large parish don't leave much time for campus ministry. The
29 church has continued to provide weekly Bible Study with the help of students from Concordia
30 Seminary and funding from the district. They also provide transportation to worship services, but
31 because of the shortage of manpower many other activities have been curtailed. Of course, as
32 in the prison ministry, many of these activities have ceased anyway because of COVID. But we
33 look forward to the day when extensive campus ministry can resume. However, that will only be
34 possible with increased support from the district. Still even in these difficult circumstances the
35 mission continues to grow. In the last triennium the district began an international student
36 ministry at SIUE with the part-time ministry of Bessie Fick. Before COVID affected the campus,
37 Bessie organized English as a second language classes, planned social events, and provided
38 personal counseling for the international students at SIU Edwardsville. Even during COVID she
39 keeps in regular contact with the various students.

40
41 Another area of extensive mission work is in East St. Louis. Chief of these is Unity Lutheran
42 Mission School. Started by the Southern Illinois District, it now receives only a small portion of
43 its operating budget from the district. The school provides quality education as well as daily
44 teaching about Jesus to over 190 K-8 students in the East St. Louis area under the direction of
45 Principal, Rev. Aaron Dickerson. They are excited that, after some delay, they have found a
46 new development officer, Mrs. Nancy Stallard. With Nancy's help they hope to revitalize their
47 annual fund drive and "Share the Miracle Dinners". Every family pays tuition at Unity, and every
48 family needs financial aid. Be sure to read their detailed report found elsewhere in this
49 convention book. The district also helps Unity Lutheran Church and their pastor Rev. Willie
50 Stallworth to provide word and sacrament ministry to that community. We hope to encourage
51 continued and expanded work together with the school. Flowing from the work of Unity

1 congregation and Rev. Stallworth, we support the Lansdowne Initiative which provides housing
2 and other improvements in the area around the school and church. In conjunction with this
3 initiative the district has supported annual repair and cleanup events for those who need
4 assistance. In this way, we fulfill the Lord's command both to preach His word and love the
5 neighbor.

6
7 One of the new missions that was begun this last year is the Southern Illinois District Advocates
8 for Life Team. As of October 30, 2019, President Scharr appointed a District Life Coordinator,
9 Monica Shannon, and Administrator, Robin Schultze. They have formed a 9-person committee
10 (A4L Team) to support pro-life issues in the district. The team provides pro-life materials for
11 local congregations, organizes trips to both local and national pro-life events, supports local
12 pregnancy care centers, as well as provides the 40 Days of Prayer program. In the future they
13 hope to support an SID group to the national March for Life and promote an LCMS Life
14 Conference. Their newest endeavor is to establish a Southern Illinois District adoption fund for
15 families in our district. Please vote in favor of their resolution at this district convention.

16
17 All of these mission efforts are important but the most exciting news is the beginning of a new
18 international ministry. With the convention's approval we will begin a partnership with Seminario
19 Concordia El Reformador in the Dominican Republic. The Seminario Concordia (SCER) has
20 been established for the training of men for the pastoral ministry and women for the deaconess
21 ministry in Latin America. Students come from the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Guatemala,
22 Venezuela, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Spain and Panama. This is an ideal partnership as the
23 seminary administrator, Joel Fritsche, has ties to our Southern Illinois District. Also, it's close
24 proximity to us will make it easier for visits and short-term mission trips. A reminder that this
25 project is separate from our regular district budget, and will require financial gifts above and
26 beyond their regular mission offerings.

27
28 Finally, at this district convention, our convention essay focuses on congregational planting. It
29 should be remembered we do assist smaller parishes throughout our district. Congregations
30 such as Hope, Mt. Carmel; Our Redeemer, Golconda; Faith, Saline County; as well as our new
31 mission start, Christ Our Vine in Clinton County continues to proclaim the Gospel thanks to your
32 support. What new missions can we make in the coming three years?

33
34 In the Large Catechism Luther reminds us, "Neither you nor I could ever know anything of
35 Christ, or believe in him and take him as our Lord, unless these were first offered to us and
36 bestowed on our heart through the preaching of the Gospel by the Holy Spirit. The work is
37 finished and completed, Christ has acquired and won the treasure for us by his suffering, death,
38 and resurrection, etc. But if the work remained hidden and no one knew of it, it would have been
39 all in vain, all lost. In order that this treasure might not be buried but put to use and enjoyed,
40 God has caused the Word to be published and proclaimed, in which he has given the Holy Spirit
41 to offer and apply to us this treasure of salvation." God grants our district to continue to publish
42 and proclaim this Gospel through our missions.

43
44 Respectfully submitted,
45 Rev. John Lukomski, chairman

1 **R - 08 Report of the Board for Congregational Support**

2
3 The Board of Congregational Support has seen two primary focal points over the past triennium.
4 The first being issues with communication in the district both between congregations and from
5 the district office to all members of the district. The second focal point morphed from attempting
6 once again to produce quality educational conferences for the Southern Illinois District to
7 addressing what could be addressed during the pandemic.

8
9 The board began by discussing the limits of the communication avenues within the district and
10 found that the primary form of communication from the district office to the members of the
11 district was not very streamlined. The old form was that of a number of (sometimes as many as
12 5 or 6) small announcements being sent from the district office to any person that happened to
13 be on the email list. This system had 2 main problems. The first problem was that it was by
14 nature borderline "spam" to peoples email due to the frequency of messages sent per day
15 depending on any single day's events. Secondly there was no hard and fast rule on how one
16 was able to get on that email list to even receive the announcements. One of the first things the
17 B.O.C.S. did was to streamline this system by using Constant Contact and converting the
18 information coming from the District Office to more of a newsletter format. We ran into some
19 issues getting this fully implemented, but were eventually able to get it in place. This system
20 uses an "opt in/ opt out" idea where people can add or remove themselves from the email list as
21 they see fit, allowing for a much cleaner communicative form.

22
23 The B.O.C.S. then began to tackle the task of creating a quality educational conference for the
24 congregations of the SID to utilize. This process started with the creation and distribution of an
25 emailed survey where recipients were able to select from a predetermined list of topics/issues
26 that affected their congregations. Once the board received the results of the survey we began
27 to make plans for a few smaller single topic conferences to be implemented in the third year of
28 the triennium. As planning progressed in this area the pandemic began and all efforts in this
29 avenue were forced to shift. After working with Rev. Scharr he was able to meet with a number
30 of pastors via Zoom and address many of their questions and concerns during the beginning of
31 the pandemic itself and has continued to do so. There were also a couple of Zoom based
32 lectures and speaking engagements that were implemented in the summer and fall.

33
34 May God continue to bless the work and workers of the Southern Illinois District and His church
35 on earth.

36
37 Respectfully Submitted
38 DCE Thomas Westphal
39 Chairman SID Board of Congregational Support
40
41

R-09 Reports of the Office and Personnel Committee

The Office and Personnel Committee this past triennium consisted of myself as chairman, Don Duensing (Principal of Christ Our Rock LHS), Duane Meyer, and Virgil Gramenz. We are joined in our meetings by President Scharr, Mr. Jeff Fick and Leslie Sramek. We met on a quarterly basis, usually at the district office.

This committee makes a yearly recommendation on any changes to the base of the Salary Scale for the district's Board of Directors to consider, taking into consideration the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. For 2019 we recommended a two percent increase. For 2020 it was a 1.6% increase. For 2021 our recommendation was for a half percent increase.

As requested by Resolution 3-06A of the 2018 convention, throughout the triennium we discussed how we might increase the Salary Scale quicker for those on the lower end while slowing the advance of that scale for those on the higher end. We began with work that had been done by a previous Multiplier Review Committee. We considered a .01 factor increase in the acceleration rate for the first ten years as well no factor increase after years 30 or 35. We also considered encouraging our workers toward getting an advanced degree by doing that factor acceleration rate only in that column of the scale. We discussed an adjustment to the multiplier based on zip codes, not counties. We learned that Concordia Plan Services is working on a system by zip codes that could be applied to a base salary. Ultimately, with a concern to balance the compensation for the workers with the fiscal realities of our congregations we decided to recommend no changes to the scale at the present time. Congregations will use these guidelines as such and will pay their workers what they are able to pay.

We recommended to the Board of Directors that three additions be made to the Salary Guidelines. One does encourage congregations to consider the ten percent increase for extra duties (sports, music, youth, etc.) to be a minimum amount and that extra compensation or release time be provided to workers whose extra duties cover many activities. In response to a phone call to the district office about this topic, we added wording encouraging congregations to provide an extra two weeks of paid time off to male workers after he and his wife have a baby. We also recommended that wording be added to encourage congregations and pastors to arrange a sabbatical leave for him after 15 years in the ministry and seven years in that congregation. Those items became overtures for the floor committees to consider.

The National Nursing League was renting out the east end of the district office building. We extended the lease by one year in December of 2019. Unfortunately, they had to break their lease with us in September of 2020. We are working with a local realtor to find a new tenant for that part of the building.

We added an AED device to the building. We thank Matt Bierman for his assistance in purchasing a Zoll AED Plus at a discounted price. Improved communication with congregations happened with the addition of Constant Contact. Our thanks to Rev. Sean Smith for his assistance in this.

Other items that were brought to our attention over the last triennium included a new vehicle purchased for President Scharr's use (thanks to Leslie's tough negotiating skills!), a new sign in front of the building and the need for landscaping around it and the sealing of the parking lot, and concerns about delayed or missing items in the Postal Service's delivery of mail to the office. We also approved a Travel Expense and Reimbursement Policy and Procedures

1 statement that is in line with LCMS policy. This committee must make the decision on any
2 building needs that cost more than \$500.

3 *Respectfully submitted,*

4 *Rev. Mark Alan Nebel*

5 *Chairman*

6

R-09 Report of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund

The mission of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund is to support the church in fulfilling its mission of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ by being a Christ-centered servant partner of the LCMS ensuring that funds are available now and in the future.

The Southern Illinois District is one of thirty- one LCMS Districts that are partners in ministry with LCEF. Through a wide array of investment opportunities, loan products, and innovative services, LCEF seeks to work with congregations, schools, workers, and other ministries in finding solutions to the challenges of ministry in an ever- changing world.

LCEF is blessed to have committed investors throughout the LCMS, including those in the Southern Illinois District who value the important work LCEF does in support of the church. At the end of June 30, 2020, LCEF had total deposits of over \$1.7 billion, with deposits in the Southern Illinois District totaling \$ 25,399,477 which resulted in a gain in investments of \$943,894 from June 30, 2017.

Because of the strong support from our investors, LCEF is able to offer low-cost loans to ministries for building expansion, facilities renovations and repairs, and a host of other ways to support the ministry. LCEF also offers home loans for Rostered Church Workers. During the last triennium, LCEF provided funding for the following ministries in Southern Illinois: Zion Lutheran Church in Litchfield, Zion Lutheran Church in Belleville, Zion Lutheran Church in Bethalto, Hope Lutheran Church in Jerseyville, Faith Lutheran Church in Godfrey, and Holy Cross Lutheran Church In Collinsville. LCEF is grateful for the opportunity to assist these ministries and looks forward to future opportunities to help expand ministries in Southern Illinois.

LCEF also offers a full complement of services to assist our ministries. These services include: Capital Funding which helps a ministry to raise additional funding for a building project, a special ministry, or even retire existing debt, Ministry Clarity which assists congregations in determining exactly what God has called the church to do in that part of the Kingdom, Consecrated Stewards which assists a congregation in its annual giving, and Demographic studies which assists a ministry in understanding its community. These are just some of the ways in which LCEF can provide information and expertise to a ministry as it seeks the best way to reach and serve its community.

Undoubtedly, we are living in a very challenging time. The challenges of today were enhanced with the onset of the Pandemic we now face. As congregations and workers faced these unsettling times, LCEF responded in a real and tangible way to support the church. This included sending online streaming kits to 165 churches in early April ahead of Easter services, offering more than \$60,000 of gift cards to food pantries, families in need and others negatively impacted by the pandemic, hosting educational webinars with subject matter experts focused on early childhood centers, online giving and the SBA Payment Protection Program loan, and donating \$1 million through the Synod's Soldiers of the Cross-Amplified program to the 35 LCMS Districts for their church workers with unmet financial needs stemming from the pandemic.

LCEF is the church's ministry partner and seeks to assist whenever a need arises. A word of personal thanks to all of the wonderful people in Southern Illinois who continue to support the

1 work of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund. Through your support, LCEF is making a
2 difference in the Kingdom! God's blessings to each of you and the ministries you support.

3

4

R-10 Report of the Lutheran Foundation

In 2015, the Southern Illinois District entered a partnership with the LCMS Foundation to provide Christian estate gift planning services to its ministries and its members. The Foundation also offers expertise in helping ministries receive, steward and distribute gifts from members who had generously included the ministry in their will or estate plan.

Working with the District, its leaders and its members has been an honor, and I'm grateful to report on how God has blessed our work over the past three years.

- Since 2017, 40 members have created plans for nearly \$4.5 million in future gifts to the ministry.
- To-date, \$260,000 of previously planned gifts have matured and been distributed to support ministry and mission within the district.

These gifts are a result of the joyful response to God's love found in the hearts of individuals within our district! They include cash, stocks, real estate, personal property, and other types of assets that the Foundation can convert for ministry use.

When a donor includes their congregation or beloved ministry within their will or estate plan, it's often the donor's wish that the ministry use that gift to create a long-term source of funding. Congregations and ministries with the vision and organization to manage and grow such gifts can be blessed through these resources for years to come.

- In the Southern Illinois district, 10 ministries (including multiple congregations, schools, and other ministries) are using the LCMS Foundation's investment services to manage and grow more than \$3.4 million in assets.

The mission of the LCMS Foundation is "Linking Christians with giving opportunities." This mission is accomplished through our vision that "every Christian has a Lifetime Plan for Giving." How is this accomplished? Through the Transfer the Blessings ministry of the Foundation, in which we partner with congregations to help their members create the best plans for what will become of their God-given assets when they're called home to heaven.

We do this by taking members through the *Lifetime Plan for Giving* process. It's a four-part process that includes meeting with a Gift Planning Counselor to discover the plan for generosity that has been placed in their hearts. Since 2015, 32 congregations within the Southern Illinois District have hosted *Lifetime Plan for Giving* presentations. After each presentation, a Gift Planning Counselor has met with willing members privately to guide them on the best ways to make charitable gifts from their estate, as well as the best ways to pass gifts on to the family that they love.

And just as we believe it's important for individuals to have a thoughtful plan for their assets, it's also essential that ministries have the expertise and resources to receive, manage and distribute gifts that God's faithful stewards have provided. The Foundation can also help congregations invest or steward gifts from members in a way that helps them meet ministry needs now and in the future.

1 The LCMS Foundation looks forward to another triennium of working closely with the District to
2 provide the comprehensive charitable expertise and services to help God's faithful stewards
3 plan and direct their passion for generosity to family and all ministries.
4

5 Respectfully submitted,
6 Scott A. Radden, CTFA
7 Gift Planning Counselor
8 LCMS Foundation
9

R-11 Reports of the Circuits

Report of Circuit 1

Report of Circuit 2

Circuit 2 is a circuit undergoing constant change. Concordia Lutheran Church, in Cottage Hills, in the midst of the epidemic, conducted final services on April 19th, 2020, and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Hardin held their final service on August 8th of the same year. While sharing in the sentiment of loss by those who were members of those congregations, we rejoice in the life in Word and Sacrament ministries that those congregations have provided in their communities, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Most members were absorbed into other congregations close by.

Messiah, Alton: Rev. Randy Fischer

Messiah Lutheran Church continues in outreach to the surrounding community through its outreach and missions. By way of technical innovation, the congregation has been reaching out, by way of live and recorded services, meetings, and classes. In outreach, Pastor Fischer has been providing Bible study to residents at the Alton Mental Health Center on Saturday mornings.

As of this writing, Pastor Fischer intends to retire in January of 2022. The congregation looks forward to working through the district to find interim support, as it seeks the Lord's will in looking to the future.

Zion, Bunker Hill: Rev. Brian Holle

The congregation of Zion has remained relatively stable in its leadership over the last triennium. Like many congregations during COVID-19, there was a juggling of worship schedules and programs over an eighteen-month period. The routine has returned to a pre-COVID "normal" absence of the few members who have yet to return.

The members are currently reflecting upon what the congregation once "was" and "did" to what it "is" and "does" now, in anticipation of what it might "be" and "do," moving toward the future. They look to the district for assistance for congregations and church workers, as they come out of the pandemic response mode and encourage the district to resume the godly habit of regular, consistent, weekly worship and Bible study.

Furthermore, they look to the district to lead and advise in a manner consistent with a church body, mindful of our religious (and civil) liberties and realities of those enemies of the

1 Church, who seek to secularize the Church, thereby eroding liberties, and driving a wedge
2 between God, and His Church.

4 **St. Matthew's, Brussels: Rev. Randy Fischer, Vacancy Pastor**

5 St. Matthew's is an increasingly aging congregation in a remote location of Calhoun
6 County, now served by Pastor Randy Fischer, who commutes from Alton, Illinois. Despite
7 demographic make-up of the congregation, and the social distancing of the COVID-19
8 pandemic, they did conduct Vacation Bible School in June 2021, having ninety children in
9 attendance. With Pastor Fischer's (interim pastor) impending retirement, as of this writing, they
10 seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the role of under-shepherd.

12 **Emmaus, Dorsey: Rev. David Kern**

13 The brothers and sisters of Emmaus Lutheran Church, celebrate 162 years of outreach
14 to Dorsey and the surrounding community. Having faced COVID-19, ministry to an aging
15 congregation has been most challenging, while maintaining the climate of social distancing.

16 Since the last convention, the mission relationship with Rev. Joshua Lange and his wife,
17 who served in China was ended with their return to the U.S., and a new mission bond was
18 formed with Rev. David Bush, and his wife, Barbara, serving at the Hong Kong Lutheran School
19 for the Deaf. In local mission outreach, the congregation has also served locally in Bible study
20 at the Illinois Youth Center at Grafton, Illinois. The congregation also continues to share in
21 preparing seminary students, seeking the path to become pastors.

23 **Hope, Jerseyville: Rev. David Wilshek**

24 The congregation of Hope has undergone many changes over the last triennium. Some
25 of the congregational leaders are the same, but in different roles. Pastor Wilshek served this
26 congregation at one time upon finishing his studies at the seminary and subsequently accepted
27 a full-time appointment as a military chaplain.

28 Now retired from the Air Force, Pastor Wilshek accepted the call and returned to the
29 congregation in April 2021. He has renewed interest in visitation of prospective members,
30 former members and current membership.

31 Since the last convention, Hope Lutheran Church has opened a relationship, in support
32 of a Deaconess Church Worker in Thailand. While attendance was a concern, as in many
33 congregations, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the weekly attendance now is rebounding. The

members look to grow qualitatively in their faith by the power of the Holy Spirit, as they seek for the future in Jerseyville.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David Kern

Metro North Circuit Visitor

No Reports Submitted

Zion, Bethalto: Rev. Kale Hanson

Our Redeemer, Carrollton: Rev. Steven Jacobsen (Dual Parish)

St. John's, Kampsville: Rev. Steven Jacobsen (Dual Parish)

Faith, Godfrey: Rev. David Schultz, Vacancy Pastor

St. Paul, Wood River: Rev. David Schultz

Report of Circuit 3

SID Circuit #3 consists of Zion- Carpenter, Trinity-Edwardsville, St. Paul-Hamel, Hope-Highland, St. James-Glen Carbon, St. Paul-Troy, and Trinity-Worden. The congregations of Circuit #3 enjoy the fellowship of the Gospel and many familial connections. The following is a brief summary of the life and faith of these congregations.

Zion – Carpenter and Trinity – Worden - The saints of God at Trinity - Worden and Zion - Carpenter have been blessed in the last triennium! Capital improvements at both congregations were conducted (roofing, sidewalks, driveways, etc.). With sadness we released two assistant pastors to other fields of service (Rev. Dr. James Lee to Concordia Chicago; and Rev. Michael Monterastelli to service in Oklahoma). The people of God have been very faithful during the Wuhan Virus Pandemic in both attendance and giving. Drive in services have been very important to serving the needs of our members. We also started a food bank and grocery delivery during the lockdown.

Trinity – Edwardsville is served by Senior Pastor, the Rev. John Shank. Trinity's Associate Pastor call is currently vacant and is in the call process, having been faithfully served by Pastor Jared DeBlieck (Call received and accepted, *University Lutheran Church in West Lafayette, Indiana, the LCMS-U campus outreach to Purdue University*). She continues to be served by DCE Eric Dunn. Trinity continues to serve her community through the operation of Trinity Lutheran School. The school is being served by interim principal Myra Farrell and Trinity looks forward to issuing a divine call for a principal. She also operated Trinity Daycare, which has been growing and increasing offerings to meet the needs of their community. These three entities are under the aegis of Trinity Lutheran Ministries. An important part of Trinity's service to the District and Synod is the operation of LCMS U at Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville. The Lord has richly blessed Trinity during the past triennium with many joys and gifts, she rejoices over her 49 baptisms and 55 confirmations, to God be the glory!

St. Paul-Hamel - Since 1856, St. Paul Lutheran Church and School of (New Gehlenbeck) Hamel has lived by the preaching of Christ crucified. As the children of God gather by and around His Word and Sacrament, sinners have been forgiven, consciences put at ease and the name of Jesus has been glorified. The highlight of this past triennium has been the return of the Rev. William Weedon as Assistant Pastor of our congregation, following his service as Chaplain and Director of Worship of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Pastor Weedon hosts a daily podcast at www.thewordendures.org Our congregation was featured on The 10 Minute Bible Hour, a YouTube channel, introducing hundreds of thousands of viewers to Confessional Lutheran Theology and Practice as Pastor Weedon answered questions posed by the host. At the 2019 Synod Convention, Pastor Ball was elected 6th Vice-President for the Central Region of the LCMS. As he has taken on these new duties, he is thankful for the continued, faithful, assistance of the Rev. William Gleason, our Associate Pastor. Our school continues to thrive as the only Classical Lutheran School in Metro St. Louis. We have added staff as enrollment continues to increase. Our school, served by Principal Kate Thaelke, received both National Lutheran Schools Accreditation and accreditation by the Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education. Our congregation remains dedicated to faithfully instructing her children in God's Word and the Small Catechism and doing so tuition free. While there are many things to be thankful for in the life of our congregation, our thanksgiving is grounded in the giving of the Son of God into death for the salvation of the world. His resurrection gives life in

1 this world of decay, disease and death. We give thanks for His mercy as He keeps our
2 congregation in the one true faith while the Neon Cross continues to shine on Old Route 66.

3 Hope-Highland - Over the past triennium, Hope has welcomed over 100 new members
4 via baptism, new member class, and transferring in. The Word was faithfully preached and the
5 sacraments administered by vacancy pastor Rev. Dr. James Lee. Pastor Busacker was installed
6 in April, 2018. Pastor Busacker received the Doctor of Ministry degree in May, 2018 from
7 Concordia Seminary, St Louis. The members at Hope faithfully support the work of God's
8 church and seek to engage their community with compassion and care. May the Lord continue
9 to bless and keep the saints at Hope Lutheran in Highland in his amazing grace.

10 St. James – Glen Carbon – "God has blessed St James, Glen Carbon, these past three
11 years. In February, 2019, the church called Aaron Mueller as their first full-time pastor in twelve
12 years. And this month (Sept. 2020) St James hired Cheryl Schnicker as part-time Office
13 Manager. St. James also rejoices to join as an association congregation of Metro-East
14 Lutheran High School, to God be the glory. With the concerns about the Coronavirus and the
15 desire to love our neighbors to the best of our ability, St James now has three worship services,
16 limited to a capacity of fifty people on Sunday mornings. Hopefully, when God wills, we will soon
17 be able to worship together again."

18 St. Paul-Troy - St Paul's Lutheran Church and School in Troy, IL, continues serving this
19 community with the crucified and risen Savior Jesus Christ in word and deed. The past three
20 years have brought many changes and challenges to St. Paul's. In February 2019, Pastor
21 Mitchell Schuessler accepted a call to St. John Lutheran Church, Clarinda, IA. His final service
22 was held on March 10, 2019. Pastor Timothy Landskroener became the interim pastor on March
23 11th. The congregation issued calls in November 2019 and in February 2020; both pastors
24 declined the call. Pastor Landskroener accepted a call to Immanuel Lutheran Church in
25 Shobonier, IL and departed St. Paul's Lutheran on February 16, 2020. Pastor Albert Collver
26 became the interim pastor on February 17th. Due to COVID-19, the congregation canceled
27 public worship and began offering virtual services on March 22, 2020. Public in person worship
28 resumed on June 21, 2020. Videos of the services continue to be available each week on
29 YouTube. In July 2020, the congregation voted to restructure the school, which eliminated
30 grades 6-8. On July 26, 2020, St. Paul's issued a Divine Call to Pastor Albert Collver, who
31 accepted it and was installed on August 30th. St. Paul's Lutheran School began in person
32 classes on August 10 and thus far by the grace of God has continued despite the COVID-19
33 Pandemic. The church and school continue to thank the Lord for his many blessings as they
34 bear witness to our Savior Jesus in the Troy community.

35
36 May our Lord continue to bless the congregations of the SID Circuit #3 as they work to
37 make His Gospel known both within and without the wall of their churches.

38 Respectfully Submitted,
39 Rev. John Schank

Report of Circuit 4

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Collinsville

The Lord in His gracious will continues to provide the promise of Christ crucified for the forgiveness of sinners and hope to those who seek. In the last three-year Holy Cross has entered into the vicarage program having the joy of seeing men grow in the ministry and even being ordained. Our past Vicars have been Rev. Greg Barto, Mr. Joe Pierson and our current Vicar Mr. Ben Leeper. Holy Cross continues in the Resident Field Education program.

Holy Cross School received three new teachers, Mr. Darrian Houck who is also our Principle, Ms. Stephine Faulders who serves as our second-grade teacher, and Mrs. Joy Elowsky who is the Director of Parish Music. Holy Cross Lutheran School also issued a Divine Call to Alyssa Robinson to serve as our fourth grade teacher. To show the unity of Holy Cross as a church and school we celebrated with a One in Christ service where all the church families, and all the school families participated in one service to thank and praise God for all that takes place at Holy Cross Lutheran Church and School.

Holy Cross also installed new audio visual equipment to be able to provide Live Streaming access to our services and events. This has been a true blessing during the COVID pandemic.

Jerusalem Lutheran Church, Collinsville

On October 7, 2018, Rev. Dr. Alvin V. Kollmann was called to his eternal home. He had been supervising pastor from 1961 until May 2015 when he was succeeded by Rev. Dr. Douglas A. Nicely, while still staying active in congregational affairs as pastor emeritus. Rev. Dr. Nicely was assisted by Rev. Ralph E. Laufer until November 2018. After that, Rev. James A. Lucas was able to assist with services once again on an occasional basis. In March 2019, Rev. Dr. Nicely retired from full-time chaplaincy at Memorial Hospital while continuing to serve as Jerusalem's called pastor.

In April 2018, the congregation began using the Lutheran Service Book, nearly all being donated. They were visited by representatives of Destination Lithuanian America in August 2018 who designated the church a Lithuanian Heritage Site. In October 2019 they received the gift of a residential property to be used to support the congregation. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, services were suspended March 15, 2020 but the same week Rev. Dr. Nicely began sending out daily email devotions to over 100 members and friends. A special Easter Sunday service was held from the front steps of the church. From May 10 through June 14, services were held in the church parking lot while members and several neighbors listened to FM 88.5 on their car or home radios. Indoor worship resumed June 14 with social distancing and masks. During the past triennium they had two baptisms and three confirmations. Also, during the time of restrictions, eight new members were received through transfers.

Jerusalem annually provides a scholarship to a MELHS graduate planning study for church work at a Synodical college/university. They distribute imprinted wall calendars to the surrounding neighborhood. Until the Coronavirus restrictions, they continued their traditional well-attended semi-annual Mission Festivals, annual Anniversary Services and Friendship

1 Sundays which included guest speakers and luncheons as well as music by the Jerusalem
2 choir. They also continued their special evening Christmas Music Services. Despite these
3 challenging times, Jerusalem had much for which to be thankful. Praise be to God!

5 **Unity Lutheran Church, East St Louis**

6 Matthew 25:40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of
7 these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

8
9 The major focus of Unity Lutheran Congregation, over the past three years, has been the
10 continuation and fostering the outreach initiative of the Lansdowne Community Initiative-LCI.

11
12 The following have been achieved:

- 13
14 a. Five (5) homes have been renovated. Three (3) additional homes are being
15 acquired.
- 16 b. Four families have been served with new and above standard living
17 arrangements.
- 18 c. Twenty (20) people have been served through new housing.
- 19 d. \$325,000.00 were raised to change the Lansdowne Community; much more is
20 needed.
- 21 e. Over 1200 volunteers served to renovate houses and Clean-up the Lansdowne
22 Community.
- 23 f. LCI has grown to be a major mission of the Southern Illinois District
- 24 g. A BobCat; a major piece of equipment was donated to Unity Lutheran Church to
25 aid in the ongoing clean-up efforts of the LCI Community.
- 26 h. Unity Lutheran Church has become a gathering place for the community. United
27 Way has an office at Unity Church. "We Power" a service development agency
28 operates out of Unity Church's facilities.
- 29 i. Five (5) souls were brought to the saving grace of our Lord and savior Jesus
30 Christ through these Christ led efforts.

31 These are just a few reflections of the mission initiatives of Unity Lutheran Church. Unity Church
32 continues to be a guiding light of hope and salvation to the community that it serves. The
33 members at Unity remain committed to modeling their faith, by serving the community. Please,
34 continue to pray and support the mission at Unity Lutheran Church.

37 **Concordia Lutheran Church, Granite City**

38
39 No report.

42 **St John's Lutheran Church, Maryville**

43
44 No report.

Hope Lutheran Church, Granite City

For the last three years, since the time of the last convention, Rev. Alan Beuster has served as the pastor of Hope Lutheran Church. It has been a time of blessings from God for both their pastor and the congregation.

Hope is an elderly congregation and during these three years God has called a large number of their members to their eternal home with Him. We rejoice in the confidence of knowing that these members have transferred to the joy and peace of the Church Triumphant. At the same time, the Holy Spirit has led and blessed Hope with a steady stream of new members that has kept their membership and worship attendance numbers at a fairly constant level.

COVID-19, of course, like with all churches, has given Hope some struggles and challenges; but at the same time presented new opportunities. During the pandemic, Hope has now begun live streaming of both a daily devotion and Sunday morning worship services. Hope has also been able to offer a second service in a parking lot format each Sunday to accommodate those unable to be in the sanctuary. The additional outreach to those outside of Hope through these electronic means has been significant.

God has also continued to bless Hope with excellent facilities and financial prosperity. Upgrades to church property in the last three years includes refurbishing of the brick in the bell tower, an automated bell system for both call to worship and use at funerals, completion of all new flooring in auxiliary rooms, a new sound and speaker system throughout the sanctuary, resurfacing of the parking lot, and a new furnace in the fellowship hall. Currently, a new electronic sign is being installed on the front lawn and a new camera system in the sanctuary to further enhance live streaming.

For all these many blessings may all glory and honor be to God.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Collinsville

By the grace of God, Good Shepherd continues to rejoice in the salvation we have in Jesus Christ. We were also blessed in being able to help another church in the area. In January of 2018, Good Shepherd was asked by St James Lutheran Church of Glen Carbon to share one of our associate pastors, Pastor Aaron Mueller, in an attempt to revitalize St James. We supported Pastor Mueller's service for a year, and a number of Good Shepherd members transferred to help with the revitalization. Over the year, attendance at St James grew to a level where Pastor Mueller was called to full-time service. He was installed on February 10, 2019.

In 2020, during the Coronavirus pandemic, Good Shepherd responded by hosting Drive-In Services. These services were held in the parking lot, with Pastors Walther and Adle leading from a raised platform, while the audio was transmitted over an FM signal to the car radios. Switching to this format allowed us to never miss a Sunday service, as well as making for a memorable Holy Week outdoors.

Good Shepherd Lutheran School also responded well to the pandemic. By switching to remote learning, teachers and students were able to finish out the year. They celebrated graduation outdoors, similar to the drive-in Sunday services.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev Scott Adle, Circuit Visitor

1 **Report of Circuit 5**

3 **Report of Circuit 6**

5 During the last triennium Circuit 6 was blessed to witness and enjoy two installations. Rev.
6 Dr. Stephen Krenz was installed as the pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Columbia in the
7 fall of 2018, and Rev. Ralph Laufer was installed as the pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church,
8 East Carondelet, in the fall of 2019. During the Covid pandemic in 2020, the pastors of our
9 circuit continued to study together and support one another by having monthly meetings, either
10 via Zoom or in person. We continue to celebrate the Lord's goodness to us in granting us
11 faithful congregations and enjoy a fraternal spirit as we work, study and fellowship together.

13 St. Paul's, Columbia. For the past triennium St. Paul's Lutheran has continued to have the
14 privilege of being part of Christ's mission in the Columbia, IL, community. The work of serving
15 Christ in the community has been an important element in St. Paul's existence since the
16 congregation was established 180 years ago. After twenty years of faithful pastoral care, Rev.
17 Steven Theiss retired from his service to St. Paul's in 2017. Rev. Dr. Stephen Krenz accepted
18 the call to serve the saints of this congregation in the later part of 2018. In the last three years
19 the congregation was able to pay off its twenty-year building loan and finished refurbishing an
20 early church and school building. Recently the congregation has been participating in the
21 Synod's Re-Vitality long range planning process and hopes to complete that by the summer of
22 2021. In addition, the congregation joyfully sponsors a pre-school, expanded their community
23 food pantry, and recently placed its weekly worship services on YouTube.

25 Holy Cross, East Carondelet. Holy Cross continues to be blessed with Word and Sacrament
26 ministry through the work of its new pastor, Rev. Ralph Laufer. Holy Cross decided to call Rev.
27 Laufer, a bi-vocational church worker, to be its pastor in May of 2019. He accepted the call and
28 was installed later that year. Rev. Laufer gets up around 2:30 a.m. most mornings to work his
29 first job, then performs pastoral duties in the afternoon. He also leads and preaches at all the
30 services at Holy Cross.

32 Christ Our Savior, Freeburg. Three decades ago, Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in
33 Freeburg began as a mission congregation of the Southern Illinois District, and in 2021 the
34 congregation and its pastor, Rev. Bruce Keseman, are celebrating their thirtieth anniversary
35 together. Like other congregations, they made changes to adapt to the Covid pandemic,
36 including livestreaming all services and providing interactive online Bible studies. During the
37 past triennium, Christ Our Savior expanded its outreach to those who battle mental illness,
38 providing weekly and semi-weekly Bible study and pastoral care to two (sometimes three)
39 facilities. With the assistance of a generous grant from the SID Mission Board, Christ Our
40 Savior is in the process of starting a parish music school, with the intent of supplying the church
41 with future church musicians and the community with a needed service. Further, the school will
42 provide evangelism opportunities and connect area families to parish life. Although the joint
43 campus ministry effort at Southwestern Illinois Community College has ceased, Pastor
44 Keseman continues to help coordinate an annual regional campus ministry conference. Christ
45 Our Savior hosts at least two onsite and two offsite pastor-led Bible studies for the community
46 and parish every week. In addition, outreach continues through their popular music festival,

1 their annual Strawberry Festival, VBS, and Trunk or Treat. In the wider church, Christ Our
2 Savior's pastor and young people have been active participants in Higher Things conferences,
3 they hold joint Epiphany and Ascension services with Trinity Lutheran Church in Millstadt, and
4 members of the congregation participate actively in LCMS work by serving on district and synod
5 boards. After paying off both their mortgage and renovation loan, the congregation is now
6 considering building an expansion to add much needed education and fellowship space.

7
8 Trinity, Millstadt. Trinity Lutheran Church in Millstadt continues to be served by its
9 administrative pastor, Rev. Peter Ill, and its assistant pastor, Rev. Todd Wilken. In addition to
10 focusing on Word and Sacrament ministry in the congregation and outreach to the community,
11 Trinity serves the church at large by supporting its pastors in their vocations outside the
12 congregation. Pastor Ill serves the saints of SID as the district's secretary and Pastor Wilken is
13 the long time host of the radio program, *Issues, Etc.* The congregation responded to the Covid
14 pandemic in 2020 by livestreaming its services. In the past, Trinity has been involved in hosting
15 workshops and services for its circuit and district and is looking forward to doing more of the
16 same.

17
18 Holy Cross, Renault. Holy Cross, Renault, entered a new circuit (Circuit 6) and installed a new
19 full time pastor in 2015. Spelled out in the call documents received by Pastor Terry Grebing
20 prior to his accepting the call was the expressed desire that the pastor "help us do what we are
21 called by God to do." Some five years later, a signature feature of Holy Cross remains a
22 phenomenal sense of ownership on the part of the laity. While behind-the-scenes lay efforts
23 have been evident over the past three years, "partnership in the Gospel " has been especially
24 pronounced during the pandemic to ensure that everything is as safe and secure as possible.

25 Ministry during the triennium has included outreach events such as a Wurstmarkt and
26 Country Store, a "Rich in Years" recognition of members 80+ years old, a Confirmation Reunion
27 for classes in 5-year intervals, a Community Food Drive for Christmas, supporting the Backpack
28 Program, a Children's Day Service on the last Sunday of April, and a VBS with 60+ children
29 attending with only 25% of those in attendance being members. In light of the Savior's
30 emphasis on little children, year round ministry to and through children is vital to Holy Cross.
31 The rationale remains: "If we desire children to be the church of the future, they need to be part
32 of the church of the present."

33 During 2019 the congregation formed a "Media Committee" consisting of an Advisor, a Web
34 Page Designer, a Facebook Designer, and an Email Messenger. Added just recently was a
35 Video Specialist to handle streaming of sermons and children's messages as well as entire
36 services. For a small congregation like Holy Cross, this Media Committee has been a true
37 Godsend for meeting the spiritual needs of God's people beyond the House of God. In light of
38 the pandemic, as Holy Cross looks forward to the future, its annual theme for 2020 seems very
39 appropriate: "A Timely Transition Together in Christ."

40
41 Holy Cross, Wartburg. Holy Cross, Wartburg, has been joyfully engaging in Word and
42 Sacrament ministry during the past three years. In 2019 Holy Cross held its first summer
43 church picnic with good attendance despite the rain. The congregation also continues to
44 provide a Good Friday service in the German language. In 2020 Holy Cross had to cancel the
45 picnic and Good Friday service due to the pandemic. However, the congregation adapted
46 nicely and held outdoor drive-in style worship services for many months. Participants were able
47 to worship in their cars while tuning in on their car radios. Worship was conducted from the
48 front step of the historic church with an altar being brought out every Sunday. Holy Cross also

1 set up a speaker system so that worshippers could sit in lawn chairs while maintaining social
2 distancing. Worship was enriched by the church's organist playing a portable keyboard in front
3 of the church and Holy Communion was celebrated outdoors. All services were live streamed
4 on the church's YouTube channel. These outdoor services attracted a number of visitors who
5 expressed interest in joining Holy Cross. The congregation continues to be blessed by God as
6 it celebrates "God's grace in a country place!"

7
8 Immanuel, Waterloo. Immanuel, Waterloo, continues to be served by Rev. Merritt Demski and
9 Rev. Dr. Antonin (Tony) Troup. In 2019 Immanuel's two pastors switched positions, with Pastor
10 Demski becoming the Administrative Pastor and Pastor Troup becoming the Associate Pastor.
11 This transition has gone very smoothly and has brought about many blessings. Immanuel's
12 preschool also experienced some leadership changes when Mrs. Cindy Troup retired as the
13 Preschool Director. Linda Polansky is now Immanuel's Preschool Director. Mrs. Polansky was
14 instrumental in installing a fence around the preschool, a concrete slab for the playground, and
15 a large shed to store outdoor equipment. During the pandemic, Immanuel ministered to God's
16 people by live streaming services and by providing numerous family devotions/chapel services
17 so that members could receive the Lord's Supper. Those who desired to receive Christ's gifts
18 were given numerous opportunities to do so. Additionally, membership and offerings remained
19 steady during the pandemic. Immanuel's outreach ministry was enhanced in 2018 when the
20 congregation's mission team went to Paraguay to build a bathroom for the Lutheran Hour
21 Ministry office in Asuncion and hold Vacation Bible School in a suburb of Asuncion. Eighteen
22 Immanuel members went on this trip. Immanuel has also reached out to the community by
23 holding a drama called "The Living Last Supper." Thirteen Immanuel members serve as actors
24 in this drama, portraying Jesus and his twelve disciples receiving and reacting to the news that
25 one of the disciples would betray Jesus. Immanuel continues to nurture God's people with
26 God's Word with five weekly adult Bible studies, midweek classes (grades 5-8), and Vacation
27 Bible School. Due to the pandemic in the summer of 2020, Immanuel partnered with Holy
28 Cross Lutheran Church in Wartburg to provide church and community members with a virtual
29 VBS. Students picked up activity packets and study guides at the church, and then attended
30 classes and other activities online. Thanks be to God, attendance at VBS was only slightly less
31 than normal.

32
33 Rev. Tony Troup, Circuit Visitor
34
35

Report of Circuit 7

Over the Last three years, there have been quite a few changes in circuit 7 which is the furthest east and north of all the circuits in SID. Since the 2018 SID convention of the 7 congregations then listed, there has been a change in the pastoral leadership in 5 of them. The only 2 that have remained the same since the last convention has been Trinity Lutheran, luka and Hope Lutheran Church, Mt. Carmel. In addition to this Circuit 7 has had an additional congregation added to its roster: Our Savior Lutheran Church, Carmi. With this addition, Circuit 7 now has a total of 8 congregations with a possibility of 9 as Faith Lutheran church, Flora has applied to be moved from the Central Illinois District to the Southern Illinois District.

2020 has been a year of much trial and uncertainty for circuit 7 as it has been for every other congregational circuit around the country due to the anxieties in reaction to the Novel coronavirus. This has caused each congregation and pastor to change schedules of Divine Service, limit attendance, and become adept at online liturgies. This has continued for many of the congregations, whereas some have at this writing resumed their regular schedules of pre-Covid-19.

Bethlehem Lutheran Ferrin:

Bethlehem Lutheran has been served by Rev. Jonathan Jennings since July 8th 2018 when he was ordained and installed, after Rev. Scott Niermann had received and accepted a call to Wisconsin earlier in the year. Bethlehem continues to partner with the grade school at Trinity Lutheran Hoffman and Christ Our Rock Lutheran in Centralia.

Faith Lutheran Church, Mt. Vernon

After Rev. Joe Lecke's retirement in July of 2017 after a year of vacancy, Rev. Matthew Richardt was installed August 19, 2018.

Hope Lutheran Church, Mt. Carmel

Mt. Carmel borders Indiana separated only by the Wabash River. It is 100 to 115 miles to Carlyle (the same circuit!) depending on which roads you take. Hope continues to be served by Rev. Thomas Kramer. Rev. Tom Kramer continues to also serve as vacancy pastor at Our Savior Lutheran in Lawrenceville, a congregation of the Central Illinois District.

Messiah Lutheran Church, Carlyle

After the departure of Rev. Steve. Sommerer, the congregation called Rev. Scott Schilbe and he accepted having been installed December 30, 2018. Messiah continues to support Christ Our Rock Lutheran high school. During the summer of 2020, Messiah Lutheran called Rev. Timothy Scharr to serve as a part-time assistant pastor in addition to his current duties as District President. He accepted and was installed August 9, 2020

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Carmi.

The Carmi congregation which is located along the Little Wabash River in Southeast Illinois is approximately 99 miles southeast of Carlyle (again same circuit). Our Savior is faithfully served by Rev. Dean Spooner who serves them even as he works full time as a chemist.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Centralia

Trinity Lutheran is at this writing still vacant following the retirement of Rev. Mark Giardin. They are currently being served by Rev. Miguel Tornierre as vacancy pastor while they are in the calling process. During the vacancy they continue to support ongoing Lutheran education through their grade school and as they are also supporters of Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School which is on the other side of town.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Hoffman

Rev. Stephen Krenz accepted the call to serve St. Paul's in Columbia, IL in September 2018 and began serving in October of the same year. They were served as a vacancy pastor by Rev. Joe Lecke until Rev. Mark Hofferber received and accepted the call to serve as pastor having been installed November 17, 2019. They continue to support ongoing Lutheran education through their grade school and as they are also supporters of Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School in Centralia.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Iuka

Trinity Lutheran Church continues to be served by Rev. Aaron G. Kangas who has also been called to serve Faith Lutheran church in Flora, IL as their pastor and was installed at Flora, February 2018. The two congregations entered into a dual parish contract in 2017.

Submitted by Rev. Aaron G. Kangas, CV circuit 7

Report of Circuit 8

Circuit 8 is Great! – by the Grace of God

We are not great in and of ourselves, of course, but the Circuit is great because Christ Himself is present among us with His saving word and sacraments! Circuit 8 pastors ordinarily hold their circuit “Winckel” conferences together with Circuit 7; some still remember the days when the two formed one circuit. Before COVID-19 was an issue, joint services were typically held on Epiphany, Ascension Day, and in celebration of Reformation Day. A joint “Tre Ore” Good Friday service was done virtually in 2020. Several of the congregations are members of the Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School Association in Centralia. Except for St. Peter, New Memphis, all Circuit 8 congregations are located in Washington County. The reports from the individual congregations are given in geographic order from west to east:

St. Peter, New Memphis (Pastor Art Eichhorn)

New Memphis is a town of 250 in the southwest corner of Clinton County. The congregation draws its 35 members from New Baden, Trenton, Aviston, and Germantown. It is the only church in New Memphis and the only LCMS congregation in western Clinton County. It reaches out to members of the greater community who are hurting or in need. It is known for its annual Chili Supper on the first Sunday in October. St. Peter forms a dual parish with St. Salvator, Venedy.

St. Salvator, Venedy (Pastor Art Eichhorn)

Venedy is a town of 138. St. Salvator is the only circuit congregation close enough to St. Louis to participate in the Resident Field Education program of Concordia Seminary. Under the supervision of Rev. Dr. Art Eichhorn, seminary students get a taste of serving in a small town/rural setting. Even though the Congregation has a rich history, many of the members are young. The average age of a member is 35. Some of the children of the congregation attend Immanuel Lutheran School in Okawville, where Pastor Eichhorn also teaches music and Religion/Confirmation instruction. St. Salvator is well-known for its annual Chicken Dinner which is held every Father's Day, and for preparing 1,000 apple pies every October.

Immanuel, Okawville (Pastor Eric Wood)

Okawville is a community of about 1400 people. Immanuel operates a Lutheran Elementary School whose principal is Mrs. Pam Bierbaum. Enrollment (PreK–8) is 79. It also operates a preschool and Wee Care (day care). It has two parish nurses who serve the congregation and the community. The congregation is known for its annual music festival held every November, and every March the PTL hosts a breakfast which includes made-to-order omelets. Immanuel has the distinction of being the newest congregation in our circuit (at 112 years in 2020).

Olive Branch, rural Okawville (“Frogtown”) (Pastor Roger Drinnon)

Pastor Drinnon is called Pastor of Olive Branch Lutheran Church and lives in its parsonage with his lovely bride Katrina even as he pursues graduate courses at Concordia Seminary. Pastor Drinnon also served Christ the Vine Lutheran Mission in Aviston for more than a year. He also coordinates technology and takes a turn teaching Religion/Confirmation at Immanuel Lutheran School in Okawville, where several Olive Branch children attend. For many years Olive Branch has hosted a German Christmas service on a Sunday afternoon in Advent.

1
2 St. Luke's, Covington (Pastor Tim Mueller)

3 The community of Covington consists of a few homes clustered near the church. It is
4 one of the few communities where the church has outlasted the tavern! It has benefited from its
5 partnership with St. John's, New Minden, since 1970. Before the Coronavirus hit, worship
6 averaged 17. The Congregation has active outreach and mission committees and in recent
7 years has upgraded many things on the exterior and interior of the building.
8

9 Trinity, Nashville (Pastor James A. Miller)

10 Nashville, the county seat of Washington County, boasts a population of over 3000. The
11 community enjoys the solitude of farm fields, but is just an hour's drive from St. Louis. Pastor
12 Aaron Kotila accepted a call to Oklahoma in August, 2020, leaving Pastor Miller as the only
13 pastor. Across its 125+ year-history, Trinity has had periods of one pastor, no pastors, one full-
14 time and one part-time pastor, but the last three years have seen the first period of two full-time
15 pastors. Thus, the senior pastor vacancy with a full-time assistant pastor is a new experience for
16 Trinity. There are discussions about not calling another second pastor but perhaps branching
17 out and calling a DCE or a deaconess for the first time in their church's history. Trinity is also
18 home to Trinity-St. John Lutheran School, operated in partnership with St. John's, New Minden.
19 Mrs. Amy Kurtz serves as the first full-time principal the school has seen in its almost 50-year-
20 history. This allows Mrs. Kurtz to be more involved in the ministry of the teachers and be more
21 mission-minded, reaching out to the community to share Jesus. The school celebrates a PreK-8
22 enrollment this school year of 104, with all in-classroom learning, despite the difficulties the
23 pandemic has put on schools.
24

25 St. John's, New Minden (Pastor Tim Mueller)

26 New Minden is a village of just over 200, and St. John's is the only church in town. She
27 is a full partner with Trinity, Nashville, in operating Trinity-St. John Lutheran School, a
28 partnership that dates back to 1974, and has shared a pastor with St. Luke's, Covington for 50
29 years. St. John's hosts two work centers for Lutheran Braille Workers. Representatives from
30 area congregations pitch in and produce copies of the Book of Deuteronomy in English Braille
31 for use all over the world. Zinc plates are also produced and shipped to other Braille Work
32 Centers. St. John's has been blessed to donate thousands of pounds of fresh produce to area
33 food banks over the course of the last several years. The Board of Elders oversees more than
34 an acre of sweetcorn on the church property, and volunteers from St. John's and several other
35 congregations plant, water, weed, and harvest various other crops in what has come to be
36 known as "God's Garden." It has been a blessed and joyful multi-generational project. A
37 mission quilting group with participants from multiple congregations also began in the triennium.
38 During the COVID-19 shut-down St. John's began recording and broadcasting a half-hour Bible
39 study on local station WNSV 104.7 at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays. St. John's is a charter member of
40 the LCMS and, God willing, will celebrate its 175th anniversary in 2021.
41

42 Trinity, Hoyleton (Pastor Nate Wollenberg)

43 Trinity Lutheran School is the only school in the village of Hoyleton (population 531). Led
44 by principal Christopher J. Dehning, its enrollment (PreK-8) is 81. The school staff has gone
45 through a number of changes over the past triennium, but they are happy to report that each K-
46 8 classroom is now being served by a teacher who is on the LCMS roster. Several auxiliary
47 groups are active in the congregation, including Ladies' Aid, Youth Group, Senior Social

1 Ministry, and Parent Teacher League. Members from Trinity have also participated in disaster
2 relief efforts over the last few years, including a trip to Corpus Christi, TX to assist with
3 Hurricane Harvey relief as well as a more local trip to Grafton, IL to assist with the flooding that
4 took place in 2019. During the COVID-19 shut-down, Trinity began producing virtual worship
5 services to allow its members to worship remotely from home. After a generous donation,
6 equipment was recently purchased and installed to allow Trinity to live-stream its services for
7 the foreseeable future. This has opened up new opportunities for congregational service, such
8 as the implementation of "online greeters" who welcome worshipers from all over the country
9 each Sunday. School chapel services are also live-streamed on Wednesday mornings, and
10 several of the older students are being trained to run the new audiovisual equipment on their
11 own.

12
13 Respectfully submitted,
14 Pastor Tim Mueller, Circuit 8 Visitor
15
16

Report of Circuit 9

*Oh, may Thy soldiers faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old
And win with them the victor's crown of gold.
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Circuit 9 includes these congregations:

- **St. Peter Lutheran in Campbell Hill** and **Bethel Lutheran in Du Quoin**, served by Pastor Alan Kornacki.
- **St. John Lutheran in Chester**, served by Pastor Timothy Sims and Pastor Justin Massey.
- **Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Percy** (in a dual parish with St. Paul Lutheran in West Frankfort of Visitation Circuit 11), served by Pastor Al Janneke.
- **Zion Lutheran in Pinckneyville** and **Trinity Lutheran in Conant**, served by Pastor David Kollmeyer.
- **St. John Lutheran in Sparta**, served by Pastor Carl Miller.
- **Immanuel Lutheran in West Point (Campbell Hill)** and **St. Paul in Wine Hill (Steeleville)**, served by Pastor Sean Smith.
- **St. Mark Lutheran in Steeleville**, served by Pastor Mark Harriss.

The pastors of Circuit 9 meet with the pastors of Circuit 10 and Circuit 11 every month from September through May, with the exception of pastors conference months. Every meeting includes a pericope study for an upcoming week as well as a study of the Lutheran Confessions. We have also agreed to study Pastoral Ministry: Theology & Practice by Richard H Warneck during the next triennium.

The following pastors and congregations were welcomed during this triennium:

- St. Mark Lutheran Church in Steeleville was welcomed back as a member congregation of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Southern Illinois District.
- June 16, 2019: Pastor Carl Miller was Installed as Pastor of St. John Lutheran Church in Sparta.
- January 5, 2020: Pastor Mark Harriss was Installed as Pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church in Steeleville.

The following pastor departed during this triennium:

- Pastor Cory Marth to the Northern Illinois District.

Also, we celebrated the following notable events:

- In December of 2019, Immanuel Lutheran in West Point celebrated the 110th anniversary of the dedication of their sanctuary (December 13, 1908).
- On June 23, 2019, St. Paul Lutheran in Wine Hill celebrated their 160th anniversary (May 12, 1859).
- Pastor and Heather Smith celebrated the birth of two children during this triennium:
 - January 1, 2019: Johann Paul
 - July 6, 2020: Mollie Ruth
- Pastor Kornacki celebrated the 20th anniversary of his Ordination (June 18, 2000).

To God alone be the glory!

Respectfully Submitted in Christ,
Rev. Alan Kornacki

Report of Circuit 10

St. John Lutheran Church in Baldwin continues to serve the risen Savior, Jesus Christ through their support of the Ministry of teaching young students at Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School in Evansville. Rev. Raymond Holman continues to serve God's people through the Word and Sacrament.

The dual parish of St. John's Lutheran Church, Ruma (Evansville), IL and St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Evansville, IL are being served by Rev. Thomas Handerrick as their Called part-time pastor.

St. John's (Ruma) and St. Peter's (Evansville) are faithful in supporting their member children who attend an area LCMS parochial school and Christ our Savior Lutheran High School.

God has also blessed them with retired pastor, Rev. Ronald Jansen, who assists with worship services and in other areas of the ministry.

St. John's and St. Peter's are approaching significant anniversaries: St. John's 175th in 2023 and St. Peter's 150th in 2021 for which plans are underway to give thanks to God for His many blessings of these years of service to their communities. These congregations are strong in their spiritual health and vitality.

During the past triennium Trinity Lutheran, Darmstadt and St. Paul Lutheran, New Athens continued to faithfully preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and deliver His life-giving sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These last three years witnessed a major change in those congregations when their pastor of 41 years, Rev. John Lukomski retired in May 2019. However, the Lord continued to provide for them by sending them to Rev. Lyle Buettner who served as a delayed vicar for 2019 & 2020. As of June 2020, he has been ordained and installed as their new pastor.

Trinity Lutheran Church in Red Bud (Prairie) continues to serve the Lord and His people with His Word and His gifts and gives thanks to God for His continued blessing and provision. Rev. Scott Hojnacki has served as pastor since 2016. In addition to the ongoing WHCO radio broadcasts of the Sunday worship services, recordings of the services are now made available online for shut-ins, students, those deployed, and as a mission to friends and neighbors. The school, which currently provides Christian education to about thirty families and renewed its NLSA Accreditation in 2020. Mr. John Bione continues to serve as principal of the school. Trinity also supports the ministry of Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School.

-

Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School is supported by twelve area LCMS congregations. God has blessed the school with a fairly steady enrollment for the last few years. Enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year was 26 students, 21 students for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years. The enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year is currently at 19 students. The 2020-2021 school year began with all students present for in-person classes.

1 Matthew Foster is the current principal of Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School. God is richly
2 blessing this community of youth through the work of the gifted staff that He has Called to serve
3 Him at Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School.

4
5 St. John's in Red Bud continues to serve faithfully both the Lord and His people in Jesus' name
6 through the Word and sacraments. God has blessed St John's with 166 years of service to Him
7 and the community.

8 God has blessed St. John's with a steady enrollment in the daycare, preschool, and day school
9 ministry. Deitt Schneider serves as Principal of St. John's School. Mrs. Schneider has served
10 her Lord in the teaching ministry for 44 years.

11 There have been some personnel changes at St. John's during the triennium. After serving St.
12 John's Red Bud for more than 18 years, as well as other congregations during his 37 years in
13 the Pastoral Ministry, Rev. Russell Koen retired as of July 31, 2020. Rev. Clifford Adair,
14 recently retired from serving his Lord in Minnesota, is currently serving as the Assistant to Rev.
15 Mark Nebel. Mr. Bill Becker is currently serving as the DCE while he continues his education to
16 receive his certification in this area.

17 The Youth has been actively helping people in the community with health issues through their
18 BBQ fundraisers. St. John's provides financial assistance to member children who are
19 attending one of the Synodical colleges to prepare for full-time church work. The congregation
20 also helps to financially support their field workers.

21 During COVID-19, St. John's began an online worship ministry. Weekly Worship Services are
22 live-streamed over Facebook and uploaded to YouTube.

23 God has blessed St. John's with faithful people who are eager to serve Him in the ministry of the
24 Church at large and the local community.

25
26 Rev. Ralph Laufer received a Call and is currently serving as Pastor of Holy Cross in
27 Carondelet, Illinois.

28 Rev. Dr. Paul Schrieber (Emeritus) of Red Bud remains faithful in his service to our risen Savior
29 Jesus Christ, as he is able.

30 Respectfully submitted,
31 Rev. Russell Koen
32 Circuit Visitor
33
34

1 **Report of Circuit 11**

2
3 **Trinity Lutheran Church**, Anna - During the triennium the Rev. Tim Weiser accepted a call and
4 the congregation is currently vacant. The Rev. Mark Surburg is serving as vacancy pastor.

5
6 Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- 7 - Ministry at Choate Mental Health Center
- 8 - Ministry to Immigration and Customs detainees (most from Mexico) in Pulaski
- 9 County
- 10 - Freed in Christ program at United States Penitentiary Marion
- 11 - Prison ministry at Big Muddy, Shawnee and Vienna state prisons.
- 12 - Senior Moment Older Adult Vacation Bible School
- 13 - Participation in the Alliance of Churches Community outreach program

14
15 Goals for the next triennium:

- 16 - Establish a dual parish arrangement with St. Luke Lutheran Church, Olmsted,
- 17 IL.

18
19 Challenges that the Congregation is facing:

- 20 - Declining and aging membership.

21
22 **Our Savior Lutheran Church**, Carbondale – The Rev. Robert Gray serves as Senior Pastor
23 and the Rev. Jason S. Holden serves as Associate Pastor.

24
25 Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- 26 - Several young people baptized and confirmed
- 27 - Active American Campus Ministry
- 28 - Active International Student Ministry

29
30 Goals for the next triennium:

- 31 - Remain committed to being a congregation of Word and Sacrament

32
33 Challenges that the Congregation is facing:

- 34 - The COVID-19 pandemic required great adjustments. Changes will be
- 35 ongoing as the situation progresses.

36
37 **Our Redeemer Lutheran Church**, Golconda – During the triennium the Rev. David L Otten
38 received and accepted the call to Our Redeemer. Rev Otten still serves Faith Luther of
39 Eldorado. Faith is supported administratively by Our Redeemer and Faith's offerings are sent to
40 Our Redeemer as are her expenses. Rev Otten is now retired from the Navy.

41
42 Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- 43 - Continuing the prison ministry
- 44 - Confirmation class of one youth and one adult. .
- 45 - Continuing to reach out to delinquent members through mailer and personal
- 46 visits by Pastor Otten.
- 47 - Discover a new Lutheran family that was unknown to the
- 48 congregations and attached to Our Redeemer because of Rev. Otten's

49 newspaper

50 articles.

Goals for the next triennium:

- Find a way to evaluate the ministry and establish new ways to reach out with the Gospel.
- Establish as better awareness of her Gospel ministry to community and reach out through various community events.
- Continue to work in prison ministry at Vienna, (Dixon Springs has closed down.)
- Continue to make visits and contacts to those in fear of the Coronavirus.

Challenges that the Congregation is facing:

- Aging membership.
- Reputation for being separated for the community which needs to change though this has changed for the positive but still a ways to go..
- Community that is not growing and most likely shrinking
- COVID 19 We have three families that will not attend public worship.
- Rev. Otten was submitting a column to the paper in Golconda's newspaper but because of COVID 19 they no longer were able to accept it as their it cut into their budget.
- Located in a community that is considered part of the Bible Belt and thus non-Lutheran.

Faith Lutheran Church in Saline County, Eldorado – The Rev. David Otten serves as pastor.

Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- Successfully working with Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
- Faith twice was part of Town and Country Days of Eldorado. Her booth received over 100 visits and we gained a family through this visit.
- Support of the prison ministry in Harrisburg.
- 4Cs Food pantry with monthly donations and tract outreach
- Music ministry once a month at the local nursing home.
- Submits a weekly article to the local paper.

Goals for next triennium:

- Find a way to evaluate the ministry and establish new ways to reach out with the Gospel.
- Continue the ministries stated in part I.

Challenges that the Congregation is facing:

- Small and aging membership.
- Congregation does not have traditional looking church building and people have challenges locating it.
- Located in a community that is still suffering economic recession.
- Located in a community that is considered to be part of the Bible Belt and thus non-Lutheran.
- COVID 19 has kept two families from attending, though Rev Otten still makes Visits to them.
- Because of COVID 19 the ministry to the nursing home as ceased, we hope it

will open again, however, at a Villas of Holly Brook where Our Redeemer has a member I am doing music ministry there.

Christ Lutheran Church, Jacob –The Rev. Michael A. Kettner serves as pastor.

Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- Continuing to keep our school open with a declining student body.
- The church and school were founded in 1876 and the 2020-2021 school year will likely be the final one for the school. We are truly grateful to God for all of the students who have attended the school during the last 145 years.

Goal for next triennium:

- Remain faithful in the task of making disciples of all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all things Christ has taught us.

Challenges that the Congregation is facing:

- Following the 1993 flood the federal government declared our area a flood plain, and this prohibits the building of new homes and the rebuilding of homes destroyed by fire, flood or storms. Because of this the population, especially among young families with children, has declined dramatically and so has our membership, attendance, and school enrollment. For the first time in our church's history, we are looking at the probability of having no school to bring in new children and families.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Marion – The Rev. Mark P. Surburg serves as pastor.

Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- Strong commitment to learning in Sunday school/Bible class
- A member ordained as a LCMS pastor.
- A member studying to be a pastor at Concordia Theological Seminary.
- Support of Lutheran Theological College, Uganda.
- Support of Pregnancy Matters in its work on behalf of life.
- Congregation provides grocery store gift cards to area families in need of help.

Goals for next triennium:

- Continue to see members return to attending the Divine Service after COVID related disruptions.
- Continue to emphasize ongoing catechesis for all ages.
- Continue to share Christ in word and deed.

Challenge that the Congregation is facing:

- Sharing the faith in an area where Lutheranism is a foreign entity
- Young adults are tempted to follow the world in matters related to the Sixth Commandment.

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Murphysboro – During the triennium the Rev. Joseman (Joe) T. Hoem accepted a call and the congregation is currently vacant. The Rev. William Engfehr serves as vacancy pastor.

Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- The school now has over 90 students enrolled in PreK-8th grades.
- Despite the pandemic, our school is still flourishing. Due to smaller class sizes, we are able to have in-person instruction five days a week with increased sanitization procedures and social distancing.
- Due to a capital campaign and generous donations for our school's expansion, we were able to add three additional classrooms; two new bathrooms; and two office spaces. The church benefited from this addition, as the church and school office (as well as the pastor's office) were moved into the new space - allowing easier access to our parishioners and community members. We accomplished this without incurring any debt or loans.
- Held a dedication and ribbon-cutting service for the new addition, in which Synod President Harrison attended and presided over
- Despite the pandemic, we have been able to have church services broadcasted on the radio and YouTube channel. We have held a drive thru communion for those who listen on the radio; with an average of 90 communicant members each week.
- Our church continues to sponsor 2 seminary students.
- Continue to support LCMS Disaster Response with many team members deploying to assist across the Synod.

Goals for next triennium:

- Call a new pastor to lead Immanuel Lutheran Church & School (in process)
- Calling additional Lutheran teachers as positions become available
- Continue to grow our school population and encourage school families to attend Immanuel Lutheran Church
- Continue to support Disaster Relief teams and missionaries here and abroad

Challenge that the Congregation is facing:

- Finding new people to fill positions and roles within the church
- Youth ministry
- Getting members comfortable to come back in church once the pandemic is over

St. Luke Lutheran Church, Olmsted – St. Luke is a temporary non-calling congregation. The Rev. Paul Donner served as vacancy pastor until August 2020. There is now no vacancy pastor, and Circuit Visitor Mark Surburg is responsible for arranging a schedule of pastors who can conduct the Divine Service.

Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- Members have been faithful in supporting the congregation.

1 Goals for next triennium:

- 2 - Form a dual parish relationship with Trinity, Anna.

3
4 Challenge that the Congregation is facing:

- 5 - Aging congregation in an area that has few economic prospects

6
7 **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, West Frankfort – In retirement, The Rev. Dr. Alan Janneke serves
8 part-time as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran along with Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Percy.

9
10 Significant accomplishments of the congregation include:

- 11 - We continue to take advantage of Thrivent action grants to provide support of
12 food pantries in West Frankfort, Benton and Marion;
13 - Night's Shield children's service in West Frankfort;
14 - and Veterans.
15 - Quilting group contributes quilts to LCMS Disaster Relief, veterans' home,
16 nursing home and homebound friends.
17 - Host monthly Red Cross blood drives;
18 - Host weekly Alcoholic Anonymous meetings.
19 - We've accomplished several projects to continue to maintain our property and
20 buildings and make them attractive: replacing interior lighting with LED fixtures;
21 replacing heating/AC units; replacing the church roof with an attractive metal
22 roof; and replacing the narthex carpet with an epoxy mosaic floor

23
24 Goals for next triennium:

- 25 - Continue to provide weekly Word and Sacrament ministry and Bible Classes.
26 - Continue to welcome visitors and invite people into congregation as Holy Spirit
27 works through the Word

28
29 Challenges that the Congregation is facing:

- 30 aging membership; declining attendance, especially with Covid-19 virus
31 precautions.

R-12 Report of the Older Adult Advisory Committee

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Savior. I am happy to share with you some of the Older Adult Ministry accomplishments since our 2018 District Convention. May our loving God always be thanked for His many blessings. To Him be the glory forever!

Older Adult Ministry is a ministry of the Southern Illinois District. The volunteer members, who comprise the Older Adult Advisory Committee, meet quarterly to assess current activities and develop new areas for growth.

During the past triennium, quarterly meetings were held in 2018 and 2019, During 2020, the February 5 meeting was cancelled because of weather. The May 6 meeting was cancelled because the SID Office was closed due to the Pandemic.

The Older Adult Advisory Committee is chaired by Dan Roth, Bob Polansky is the secretary. Additional members include Rev. Randy Fischer, Ruth Houser, Mickey Roth, Frank & Carolyn Voelker, Robert List, Stephani Meyer, and Dawn Mueller who represents the SID Board of Congregational Support. Mr. Dan Roth also serves as the District Office Advisory Representative.

Two retreats ("Growing in Christ...A Lutheran Retreat for Older Adults") were planned during the last triennium. The Planning Committee is made up of volunteers from the Southern Illinois District, as well as volunteers from St. Louis who represent Lutheran Senior Services. Lutheran Senior Services of St. Louis has been a partner for these Retreats for the past ten years. For various reasons they have decided not to continue this partnership. We are happy to announce that the Missouri District, LCMS, is now our new partner. We look forward to working with them.

LOAR XVIII was held on May 1-2, 2019 at Pere Marquette State Park Lodge, Grafton, Illinois. Mrs. Jan Struck was the Keynote speaker. Rev. Mark Femmel was the Bible Study and Closing Devotion leader. The theme was "From Age To Age The Same" based on Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever." LOAR XIX was planned for October 14-15, 2020 with Dr. Rich Bimler as the Keynote Speaker and Rev. Dr. Jeff Gibbs being our Bible Class Leader. "2020 Perfect Cross-Eyed Vision" was established as the theme, based on John 12:21b "... we want to see Jesus." Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, LOAR XIX was postponed and is now scheduled for October 20-21, 2021. Plan to attend, the Senior Retreat will be an uplifting event.

Senior Trips – two senior trips were planned during the triennium. The first one was held on October 11, 2018, traveling to Springfield, Illinois. While in Springfield, twenty-four seniors toured the Lincoln Museum and Library, plus the Dana-Thomas (Frank Lloyd Wright) house. While on the bus, Bob Polansky led the seniors in Bible study and trivia questions. The second senior trip was held on October 16, 2019, traveling to St. Louis. Forty-eight seniors toured the Holocaust Museum and Learning Center, St. Raymond's Maronite Cathedral, and the Intersect Art Center at Holy Cross Lutheran Church.

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The Older Adult Advisory Committee had a booth at the SID Lutheran Women's Missionary League Convention on September 29, 2018 at Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School, Centralia. Because the LWML Convention scheduled for September 19, 2020, at Metro East Lutheran High School, Edwardsville was cancelled from an in-person, face-to-face convention to a virtual one, we did not have a booth but we will be present at our Southern Illinois District Convention, February 11-13, 2021.

A brief history and activities of the Southern Illinois District Older Adult Advisory Committee was featured in the May 2020 issue of the ALOA (Adult Lutherans Organized for Action) newsletter.

If you receive the Lutheran Witness, each month the Southern Illinois District section has an article relative to the Older Adult Ministry.

In the Older Adult Ministry, we challenge ourselves to be sensitive to the needs of older adults so that we can effectively minister to them-the older adults in our congregations as well as the older adults in our communities who do not know Christ as their Lord and Savior. "He makes the whole body fit together and unites it through the support of every joint with which it is supplied. As each and every part does its job, he makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love." (Ephesians 4:16)

Respectfully submitted
Older Adult Advisory Committee
Dan Roth, Chairman

R-13 Report of the Youth Advisory Committee

Greetings in Christ! Here are some updates regarding the Youth Advisory Committee since the last convention.

The Youth Advisory Committee is a ministry of the Southern Illinois District and is comprised of various volunteers within the SID who meet as needed in order to organize youth events.

The Committee is chaired by Rev. Merritt Demski. Other board members include Bob Polansky, Jeffrey Fick, Rev. Peter Ill, DCEs Eric Dunn, Kristen Wyzard, and Tom Westphal.

The YAC has been putting together Fall and Spring Jr High retreats hosted at Camp Wartburg. Since the attendance at those retreats has been declining the YAC has been attempting to gain insights from congregations within the district to better understand what is desired from the committee and how we can better be serving the district.

The result of those communications has led to a new website (sidlcmsyouth.org), a new Facebook Group (SIDLCMSYouth), and a new email hub via MailChimp. All of this was in response to feedback that indicated a need for better communication and that many youth leaders desired resources and help in how to faithfully care for youth in the congregation. Thus the Facebook Group is a place for leaders to communicate with one another for help and support, the website will act as a hub for events and other resources, and the mailing list will end up providing announcements if not turning into a mailing list with tips, suggestions, and so on.

God be praised through Christ that God's gifts continue to be shared with His people and people of every age continue to hear the whole counsel of God proclaimed to them.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Rev. Merritt Demski (Chairman)

R-14 Report of the Campus Ministry at Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville

The Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville (SIUE) is located on the southwest side of Edwardsville, about 4 miles from Trinity Lutheran Ministries and about 5 miles from St. James in Glen Carbon. We give thanks to our Lord for the ongoing support of the Board of Missions that our campus ministry is equipped in the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the funds to reach out to the over 12,000 students enrolled.

LCMS U at SIUE (formerly LCM, Lutheran Campus Ministries) continues to encourage students in being bold and faithful to God's Word. Our chapter of LCMS U, which is The Synod's new name for campus ministry initiatives, engages students on campus by Word and action. The ministry at SIUE has been blessed by wonderful motivated students eager to learn and grow in Christ.

Trinity Lutheran Ministries is directly involved in the ministry duties at SIUE. However, without the active participation of the local circuit pastors, and the district congregations as a whole, it would be impossible to identify students who may have otherwise been unaware of our LCMS U chapter at SIUE. Students are encouraged to continue their membership and worship practice within the SID. For those whose church is further away, they are encouraged to attend church at our local LCMS congregations nearby, including but not limited to Trinity Lutheran Ministries. The continued care and support of this ministry within the SID is welcomed and encouraged.

LCMS U was wonderfully served by Rev. Jared DeBlieck. Rev. DeBlieck led the SIUE campus ministry for 4 years. Under his leadership the ministry began hosting a yearly conference. This "Roots" conference was held for two years under Rev. DeBlieck and then again in 2019. Due to COVID restrictions and concerns, the conference has been postponed for the 2020 year. We look forward to another engaging conference in 2021.

Weekly, the students meet for Bible Study on campus at 5pm on Sunday nights, and there is also a virtual option to join in the study for 2020. Bible Study is held in Peck Hall and for the 2019 and 2020 years, these studies have been led by Jess Biermann, who is a MDiv graduate of Concordia St. Louis and is currently working on his STM. Jess has done a great job engaging the students in solid biblical theology, which is so needed for our students who are longing for the eternal truths of our Savior.

Here is a list of a few of our activities: Concordia Seminary's Lay Bible Institute, Christ on Campus at Indiana University, Eckert's Apple Picking, Pumpkin Carving, Annie's Frozen Custard Nights, Student outreach Cookout, Grizzlies baseball game, Christmas Ugly Sweater Party (at Pastor's home), Fall and Spring Festivals at SIUE, LCMS U Conferences, and a new annual "Roots" LCMS U St. Louis / Metro East regional conference is cooperatively being developed by Jared DeBlieck, Bruce Keseman (SID pastors), and other LCMS U campus ministry workers in St. Louis.

Our students are given opportunities and instruction in the appreciation of our Lutheran confession. Students from all backgrounds are welcome to learn what we believe, leading many to a stronger Biblical Christianity. Over the years, many students have been catechized into the Lutheran confession and have been confirmed in the faith. Other students continue to grow in their faith and in their fellowship within this group, so have taken on more leadership positions. Students have been presidents of their major and three of our students began the

1 first Students for Life chapter at SIUE – a group dedicated to promoting the value of the unborn
2 on campus. One former president is now a seminary student at Concordia Theological
3 Seminary, Fort Wayne IN. Their efforts, fortified by God's Word, have been extraordinary
4 blessings to behold! *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum!*

5 We ask the district for continued prayers; for the congregations and pastors whose
6 student-members attend SIUE, for the congregations and pastors who minister to SIUE
7 students as they are away from home, and for the proclamation of the Gospel to remain on
8 SIUE's campus.

9 Respectfully submitted,
10 Rev. John Shank
11 Senior Pastor
12 Trinity Lutheran Ministries, Edwardsville

R- 15 Report of the campus ministry at Southern Illinois University - Carbondale

Congregational, International Campus Ministry, and American Campus Ministry have all changed in the last few months. We started out in March videotaping our services and putting them on U-Tube. Our University closed down campus in March due to the virus. We began celebrating Holy Communion at the back door under an awning and with an altar set up from 9-12 am. We took communion to people's homes who were afraid to venture out of the house. Then we went to two services and now to one service. We do file by communion, offering plates in entryway, no friendship resisters, everything sanitized and everyone wears masks. We do not have choir but instead have quartets, and special music. Through a memorial gift we have installed live streaming.

American Campus Ministry is back on track with worship and table talk. We have five students who play musical instruments and 5 students have formed a choir to add to worship on Sundays. Two of our Lutheran students serve as custodians and live in the basement apartment. What a joy to have students back in person and serving their Lord with their gifts.

International students are very afraid of the virus. They are not meeting in person but are doing so through a Bible Study on Friday evenings through Zoom. Part of the time the pastors lead those Bible Studies. People from all around the world are participating in the studies.

Through all of this counseling students, faculty, and members are an important part of the ministry here.

We had two students who met here 25 years ago, got married, had a child, the child was baptized here, the child was married here and now their child was baptized here. That is exciting.

We have had several young people baptized and confirmed in the last 3 years and continue to encourage young people to enter into full time church work.

We remain committed to being a congregation of Word and Sacrament. We appreciate the prayers and support of the SID and LWML.

1 Report of the International Student Ministry at Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville

2
3 In September of 2017, an International Student Ministry program was begun supported by the
4 Southern Illinois District and Trinity Lutheran Church, Edwardsville. It is an extension of the
5 District's Campus Ministry work at SIU-E. The international student outreach is a friendship and
6 hospitality ministry that seeks to help the incoming students feel welcome and gives the District
7 congregations opportunities to show Christian love to these newcomers into our community and
8 to invite them to opportunities to learn about God's love for them. Many of the internationals
9 come from countries closed to Christian outreach and here we can develop friendships and
10 assist them in settling into a new country and most importantly introduce them to our Savior who
11 makes all things new.

12 Since the beginning of the program in 2017 we have developed relationships with the
13 International Student office, the SIU-E international Student Hospitality Program and worked
14 hard to become familiar with the approximately 480 international students and scholars on
15 campus. The District, Trinity and the congregations in the area have greatly assisted in the
16 outreach through financial gifts in support of the work, their donations of household items,
17 transportation of such items, and hosting of students in their homes and by their prayers.

18 The international students have many needs upon their arrival, the university assists with many,
19 but family members have additional needs that are often not met by the university. ISM helps
20 through English conversation classes to speed family members' language skills; provides social
21 events for developing friendships between other college students and church and community
22 members; gives tours to help students and family to learn more about Edwardsville and the
23 surrounding area; and provides needed household furniture and household items.

24 Through the many activities, friendships develop that provide opportunities to talk about God's
25 love for them and give us opportunities to invite the students to Bible study and to church
26 services. Many volunteers are needed to carry out the activities. We are thankful for the
27 students who have assisted, for the Trinity church members who have given of their time and for
28 the other congregations who have gathered household items and helped deliver them to
29 students.

30 We have English classes, Bible studies on campus and at the church. We have combined
31 activities with the LCMS U students so that relationships can develop among the students. Our
32 activities have included some of the following, Apple picking, Ice cream social, Pumpkin carving,
33 invitations to Christmas services, Lenten services and meals, Easter services. We have visited
34 many of the students and helped with many questions and needs facing those who are far from
35 family. It has been a great privilege to learn about their families and home countries and in turn
36 help them to learn about Jesus.

37 We thank you for your prayers and support for this work among those God is sending from other
38 countries. God is opening doors that often have been closed, by bringing them here. We pray
39 that these opportunities continue to be available and that we are faithful in meeting in love and
40 respect those opportunities.

41 In Christ,
42 Bessie Fick
43 International Student Ministry Coordinator
44 LCMS U and ISM, Trinity Lutheran Ministries, Edwardsville

R- 16 Report of the Prison Ministry Task Force

Summary

We in prison ministry continue turning to the gospel of Matthew for direction and encouragement:

³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,^a you did it to me.' – Matthew 25:36-40

That being said, this last triennium was a rollercoaster, with many highs, lows and twists. That being said, it was nothing that we did, It was all Christ working through those of us involved with this mission to reach those behind bars.

2018 PM Conference – This was a huge joy and accomplishment. It is great when we have the opportunity to get together and share. We built the conference around three tracks: beginner, coordinator, and continuing education. It was great to see people from 20 districts at the convention come together to hear presentations from VP Herb Mueller, Chaplain Tim Carter, Dr. Leo Sanchez from the St Louis Seminary and many others. We were blessed with a grant from the LWML to fund this conference.

Jump Start Grants – This grant program which has been funded by the synod and administered through the Southern IL District has provided funding for a variety of project across the synod, including support for reentry programming in the Minnesota-South district and development of a bible study for use in a jail setting in the Indiana district.

Freed-In-Christ – The reentry program continues to be available for use. During the last triennium, in addition to being used as a one-on-one reentry, it was also used in a more corporate reentry setting at the Marion Federal prison by Pr Tim Weiser for those about to be released. It was also used in the CNH (California-Nevada-Hawaii) district as a study for those who were incarcerated.

Sanctuary House – This has made little progress. Some has to do with the speed of processing government paperwork and some has to do with the coordination between the accountants and the lawyers. This is going to be a Near Term goal to finalize the 501C status of this initiative.

PM Workshop – We continue to gather regularly (until COVID). These are great opportunities for our volunteers to get together to share and continue training. We have moved these to New Minden and heartily thank the congregation there for the use of the facility. An additional joy for this is that Pr Ken Schurb, the Mission Executive and prison ministry coordinator for the Central Illinois District (CID) and some of those in that district have come down and participated.

1 **SID LWML** – The ladies of our district continue to support our prison ministry with grants for
2 use at our many prisons. They also regularly invite us to join them at convention as well as
3 invite volunteers to talk to the individual LWML chapters and zone rallies to hear about the
4 work that is going on.

5 **Congregational visits** – Many of the congregations have had one of the coordinators come out
6 for mission fests or swapped pulpits with one of our volunteers. We also are blessed that many
7 congregations collect bibles and portals for us as well. This is a great joy to come out and visit
8 with you.

9 **Synodical relationship** – This is an on-going strength. Don Sundene, the current prison ministry
10 coordinator for the synod. We are continuing to provide support to represent the prison
11 ministry as well as working to develop materials and websites.

12 **Sharing prison ministry outside the district** – This is a great joy again of the triennium. Getting
13 to share with others outside of the district is a double blessing because it gives us an
14 opportunity to share about what we are doing as well as finding out what others are doing
15 which can give us ideas for use in our district. In the last triennium, Pr. Rivett, Pr. Kollmeyer,
16 and Jon Hohgreffe have gone to the CID's LWML convention. In 2019, Pr. Rivett and Jon
17 Hohgreffe went to the National LWML convention at Mobile, AL.

18 **Loss of time slots due to lack of volunteers** (Graham Prison, Haller House) – One of the great
19 lows of the triennium is that we lost our slots at two of our facilities this year. At Graham, Pr
20 Rivett was driving up from south of Marion to Hillsboro to do this ministry until his health
21 wouldn't allow him to make the trip and we had no one else to go in. Haller House had a
22 volunteer that didn't show up several times and they couldn't hold the slot for us. We are
23 continuing to work at getting back into those facilities as well as filling the vacancies that we
24 have so that we don't lose any more.

25 **Loss of some of the stalwarts of prison ministry in our district** – This triennium saw the
26 sainting of three stalwarts of prison ministry in our district. Mrs Diana Karlin, Pr Jim Rivett and
27 Pres Em Herb Mueller. Diana was involved with our ministry at Pere Marquette who made sure
28 the kids each got a "grandma hug" each visit and they left with a small catechism. Pr Jim Rivett
29 served most of his ministry attached to a prison, either as a chaplain or a volunteer. President
30 Emeritus Herb Mueller was an incredible supporter of prison ministry both within our district as
31 well as at the Synod. He was instrumental in the formation of the Prison Ministry Task force
32 (along with Pr Jim Rivett) as well as speaking at our various prison ministry conventions over
33 the years, including delivering the Keynote at the 2018 prison ministry conference. We praise
34 God for their service and know that they did this as a response to the grace that they received
35 and not as works to be saved (Ephesians 2:8)

36
37 We would also like to thank those who have served and are no longer within the district

38 Pr Tim Weiser who took a call to Immanuel Lutheran in Rosebud, MO.

39 Mr Rich Johnston who moved to Alabama to be closer to his children.

1 Short Term goals for Prison Ministry

- 2 - Rezoning and updating for having just two coordinators
- 3 - Finding volunteers for facilities

5 Near Term goals

- 6 - Continue to build our relationship with the SPM office of the synod
- 7 - Rebuilding our relationships with the prisons/jails and adapt to the new rules as a result of
- 8 COVID
- 9 - 501c status for Sanctuary House

11 Long Term goals

- 12 - All facilities (jails and prisons) have an LCMS volunteer
- 13 - Halfway house established within the district

16 Conclusion, these goals are going to be difficult to meet without your help. Your prayers and
17 gifts are welcomed, but we are at a point where we need some volunteers. Looking at the
18 website, we have numerous vacancies currently. These can be filled by a pastor, a lay person,
19 or a team. The important thing is that this is something that everyone can do. I will admit that
20 it can be a scary idea, but those who are incarcerated are just like every single person here. We
21 are all poor miserable sinners who are saved by the blood of Christ.

23 Blessings on your day!

25 Respectfully submitted

27 Jonathan Hohgreffe

28 Chairman

29 SID Prison Ministry Task Force

R-17 Report of the Scholarship Committee

The purpose of the SID Scholarship Committee is to provide financial assistance for students from our Southern Illinois District congregations in their academic preparation for service as full-time church professionals. The financial assistance varies from year-to-year depending upon the number of applicants, funds available, individual needs, and year in school.

The SID Board of Directors placed \$16,000 in the 2018 operating budget to supplant some necessary funds for this purpose. The SID Student Aid Endowment has about \$240,000, but these funds are in interest bearing accounts and are not ready to be utilized on a yearly basis. Future funding of this program is uncertain and needs your continued prayers and support!

Here is a summary of the grants during the past four years:

| <u>Year</u> | <u># of Seminarians</u> | <u># of Concordia University Students</u> | <u>Total Dollars Allocated</u> |
|-------------|-------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 2018 | 10 | 6 | \$24,100 |
| 2019 | 6 | 6 | \$19,000 |
| 2020 | 7 | 4 | \$19,000 |
| 2021 | 9 | 3 | \$18,500 |

The Southern Illinois District is very appreciative of the funding received over the past years. The SID Student Endowment Fund was started several years ago to provide a future source of funding for the purpose of supporting our future full-time church work students. The main source of funds for the growth of this account is the annual Bob Streuter Golf Scramble and gifts from individuals and congregations of the district. The annual golf outing is held at the Roland Barkau Golf Course in Okawville. Special thanks to the "Golf Committee" members who have organized this annual event for the Student Aid Foundation these past years.

It is the responsibility of the SID Fund Advisory Committee to manage the Student Aid Endowment Fund (and other restricted SID accounts). The Fund Advisory Committee meets regularly throughout the year to monitor these investments.

Respectfully submitted,
SID Scholarship Committee
Rev. Brian Holle
Mr. Harold Ebke
Mr. Benjamin Eatherton
Mr. Jeffrey Fick

R-18 Report of Roster Changes for Ordained Ministers and Congregations

Entered the Southern Illinois District

| Pastor | Congregation | Date | Installer |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Schultz, David | St. Paul, Wood River | 05/25/2018 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Jennings, Jonathan | Bethlehem, Ferrin | 07/08/2018 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Richardt, Matthew | Faith, Mt. Vernon | 08/19/2018 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Handrick, Thomas | St. Peter, Evansville & St. John's, Ruma | 08/26/2018 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Wilshek, David | Trinity, Centralia (Vacancy Pastor) | 09/30/2018 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Monterastelli, Michael | Trinity, Worden & Zion, Carpenter | 12/13/2018 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Schilbe, Scott | Messiah, Carlyle | 12/30/2018 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Miller, Carl | St. John, Sparta | 06/16/2019 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Weedon, William | St. Paul, Hamel | 09/29/2019 | Rev. Dr. K. Clayton |
| Harriss, Mark | St. Mark's, Steeleville | 01/05/2020 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Larson, Brandon | St. Peter's, Prairetown | 03/15/2020 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Buettner, Lyle | St. Paul's, New Athens & Trinity, Darmstadt | 06/07/2020 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Nehring, Joseph | Trinity, Harvel | 07/16/2020 | Rev. B. Eickhoff |
| Collver III, Albert B. | St. Paul, Troy | 08/30/2020 | Rev. J. Shank |
| Wilshek, David | Hope, Jerseyville | 04/11/2021 | Rev. B Holle |
| Biermann, Jess | Trinity, Edwardsville | 06/13/2021 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| Nowak, Brian | St. John's, Baldwin St. John, Red Bud | 07/04/2021 07/11/2021 | Rev. M. Nebel Rev. M. Nebel |

| | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Benning, David | Trinity, Nashville | 08/15/2021 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| 2 | Weeks, Peter | Our Savior, Carbondale | 10/03/2021 | Rev. J. Holden |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | <u>Changes Within the District</u> | | | |
| 6 | | | | |
| 7 | Busacker, Scott | Hope, Highland | 04/29/2018 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| 8 | Krenz, Stephen | | St. Paul, Columbia | |
| 9 | 11/11/2018 | | Rev. M. Nebel | |
| 10 | Mueller, Aaron | St. James, Glen Carbon | 02/10/2019 | Rev. B. Ball |
| 11 | Laufer, Ralph | Holy Cross, East Carondelet | 06/30/2019 | Rev. T. Scharr |
| 12 | Demski, Merritt | Immanuel, Waterloo | 09/01/2019 | |
| 13 | | to Senior Pastor | | |
| 14 | Troup, Tony | Immanuel, Waterloo | 09/01/2019 | |
| 15 | | to Associate Pastor | | |
| 16 | Hofferber, Mark | Trinity, Hoffman | 11/17/2019 | Rev. M. Nebel |
| 17 | Scharr, Timothy | Messiah, Carlyle (Assistant) | 08/09/2020 | Rev. S. Schilbe |
| 18 | Hanson, Kale | Zion, Bethalto (Senior Pastor) | 11/22/2020 | Rev. T. Scharr |

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20 Transferred to Other Districts

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|----|------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 22 | Pastor | District | Date |
| 23 | | | |
| 24 | Clark, Stanley | Southern | 03/01/2018 |
| 25 | Heimgartner, G. Robert | Central Illinois | 03/25/2018 |
| 26 | Lee II, James A. | Northern Illinois | 08/07/2018 |

| | | | |
|----|------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | Reed, Jason | Indiana | 10/22/2018 |
| 2 | Marth, Cory | Northern Illinois | 10/22/2018 |
| 3 | Fletcher, David | New England | 11/09/2018 |
| 4 | Schuessler, Mitchel | Iowa West | 03/10/2019 |
| 5 | DeBlieck, Jared | Indiana | 05/20/2019 |
| 6 | Holt, Benjamin Tyler | Missouri | 06/02/2019 |
| 7 | Wilshek, David | Missouri | 05/13/2019 |
| 8 | Monterastelli, Michael | Oklahoma | 07/31/2019 |
| 9 | Thomas, Brad | North Wisconsin | 08/07/2019 |
| 10 | Weiser, Tim | Missouri | 02/10/2020 |
| 11 | Landskroener, Timothy | Central Illinois | 02/17/2020 |
| 12 | Hoem, Josemon | Indiana | 07/19/2020 |
| 13 | Speckhard, Daniel | Indiana | 07/30/2020 |
| 14 | Simek, Brett | South Wisconsin | 07/30/2020 |
| 15 | Kotila, Aaron | Oklahoma | 08/19/2020 |
| 16 | Lecke, Josepha | Florida-Georgia | 09/03/2020 |
| 17 | DiLiberto, Anthony | Pacific Southwest | 09/10/2020 |
| 18 | Kusch, Matthew | Northern Illinois | 09/23/2021 |
| 19 | Drinnon, Roger | Northern Illinois | 10/28/2020 |

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|----|------------------------|------------|
| 1 | <u>Called to Glory</u> | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | Pastor | Date |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | Schmidt, William | 07/31/2018 |
| 6 | Kollmann, Alvin | 09/07/2018 |
| 7 | Leidholt, James | 03/12/2019 |
| 8 | Campbell, Charles F. | 09/12/2019 |
| 9 | Rivett, E. James | 07/08/2020 |
| 10 | Eickhoff, Bert | 12/22/2020 |
| 11 | Laetsch, Leonard | 04/05/2021 |
| 12 | McKelvey, Donald | 06/13/2021 |

13

14 Changed to Candidate Status

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| | | |
|----|------------------------|------------|
| 16 | Pastor | Date |
| 17 | | |
| 18 | Thomas, Brad | 05/31/2019 |
| 19 | Monterastelli, Michael | 05/31/2019 |
| 20 | Hemler, Jonathan | 08/31/2020 |
| 21 | Holman, Raymond | 10/25/2020 |

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1 Changed to Emeritus Status

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3 Pastor Date

4

5 Alms, Maurice 04/01/2018

6 Girardin, Mark 07/31/2018

7 Skeesick, Dale 08/30/2018

8 Wilshek, David 05/31/2019

9 Lukomski, John 05/19/2019

10 Koen, Russell 07/01/2020

11 Handrick, Thomas 04/12/2021

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14 New Dual Parishes

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16 Our Redeemer, Carrollton and St. John, Kampsville 09/20/2020

17 Trinity, Anna and St. Luke, Olmsted 12/01/2020

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19 Removal of Congregations

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| 21 | Congregation | Place | Reason | Date |
|----|--------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| 22 | Concordia | Cottage Hills | Disbanded | 04/26/2020 |
| 23 | St. Paul | Hardin | Disbanded | 08/08/2020 |
| 24 | St. John | Maryville | Disbanded | 01/02/2022 |

25

R-19 Report of Changes in Commissioned Minister Roster Status

A. ENTERED SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Commissioned Minister – Congregation – Date- Installed By:

Laurie Anderson from Wyoming District – St. John, Chester, 9-16-18, Rev. Timothy Sims

Caleb Betts – Concordia Wisconsin (Placement) – Good Shepherd, Collinsville, 8-22-21, Rev. Michael Walther

Pamela Bierbaum, Candidate, Minnesota South – Immanuel, Okawville 3-14-2021

Benjamin Brakenhoff from Concordia, Nebraska (Placement) – Zion, Litchfield 8-11-19, Rev.

Fred Kraemer

Shelia Bremer from Northwest District – Trinity, Centralia, 8/9/20, Pastor Miguel Torneire

Heather Childress, Candidate, Minnesota South – Trinity, Hoffmann, Rev. Joseph Lecke, 1-13-19

Lydia Cook – Concordia Nebraska (Placement) – Zion, Litchfield, 8-8-21, Rev. Fred Kraemer

Kristi Cook – Concordia Chicago (Colloquy) to Zion, Staunton, 8-22-21, Rev. Kelly Mitteis

Jamie Crouch – Concordia Chicago (Colloquy) to Zion, Staunton, 8-22-21, Rev. Kelly Mitteis

Christopher Dehning from Minnesota South – Trinity Hoyleton, 7-29-18, Rev. Timothy Scharr

Paige Esser from Southeastern District – Zion, Belleville, 8-22-21, Rev. Brian Downs

Matthew Fick from Texas District – Trinity, Hoffman, 8-12-18, Rev. Stephen Krenz

Anna Gain – Concordia Wisconsin (Placement) – Good Shepherd, Collinsville, 8-22-21, Rev.

Michael Walther

Katie Gulley – Candidate to Zion, Litchfield 8-8-21, Rev. Fred Kraemer

Melissa Holman – Concordia Chicago (Colloquy) – Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School, Evansville, 10-6-19, Rev. Raymond Holman

Sarah Koch from Mid-South District – Zion, Bethalto, 6-9-19, Rev. Kale Hanson

Sarah Koch, Zion, Bethalto (Teacher to Principal) 8-15-21, Rev. Kale Hanson

Kenneth Krueger from Ohio District – Trinity, Edwardsville, 8-8-21, Rev. John Shank

Megan Langendorf – Concordia Chicago (Colloquy) to Trinity, Edwardsville 8-12-18, Rev. John Shank

Karen Lofink from Pacific Southwest – Zion, Litchfield, 8-15-20, Rev. Fred Kraemer

Mark Lofink from Pacific Southwest – Zion, Litchfield, 8-15-20, Rev. Fred Kraemer

Timothy Moore from Iowa West – Zion, Litchfield, 8-8-20, Rev. Fred Kraemer

Heather Pittmann – Concordia Nebraska (Placement) to Zion, Belleville 9-8-19, Rev. Brian Downs

Karl Rovey – Concordia Nebraska (Placement) to St. John, Chester 8-4-19, Rev. Timothy Sims

Holly Rupperecht – Concordia Chicago (Colloquy) to Zion, Bethalto, 8-15-21, Rev. Kale Hanson

Taylor Schmidt – Concordia Wisconsin (Placement) to St. Paul, Hamel 12-29-19, Rev. Benjamin Ball

Dawn Schnare – Concordia Nebraska (Colloquy) – St. Paul, Hamel 8-12-18, Rev. Benjamin Ball

Diane Schnare from Wyoming District – St. Paul, Hamel, 8-16-20, Rev. Benjamin Ball

Jenna Schultz from Indiana District – Candidate – 8-20-18

Jenna Schultz – Candidate to St. Paul, Wood River, 8-15-21, Rev. David Schultz

Stephanie Valleroy – Concordia Chicago (Colloquy) to St. John's, Red Bud, 8-18-19 Rev. Mark Nebel

1 Crystal Wagner – Concordia Chicago (Colloquy) - St. Paul, Hamel, 8-12-18, Rev. Benjamin Ball
 2 Andrew Wiggenhorn from South Dakota District – Candidate – 7-16-19
 3 Carolyn Winningham – Candidate, Southern Illinois to Zion, Litchfield, 8-11-19, Rev. Fred
 4 Kraemer
 5 Hannah Zernicke – Concordia Wisconsin (Placement) to Trinity, Hoyleton 7-26-2020, Rev.
 6 Nathan Wollenberg
 7

8 B. CHANGES WITHIN THE DISTRICT

9 Name – From – To – Date

10 Melinda Fischer – St. Paul, Troy to Zion Litchfield, 8-11-19

11 Joseph Gerth – St. Paul, Hamel (Teacher to Principal) 8-15-21, Rev. Benjamin Ball

12 Karen Gramenz – St. Mark, Steeleville to Immanuel, Murphysboro 8-15-21, Rev. William
 13 Engefehr

14 Sarah Koester- St. John, Chester to Trinity, Hoyleton, 7-29-18

15 Timothy Moore – Zion, Litchfield (Teacher to Principal), 8-8-21, Rev. Fred Kraemer

16 Rebecca Nobbe – St. John, Chester to Good Shepherd, Collinsville, 8-19-18

17 John Schaff – Candidate to Trinity, Hoyleton, 6-27-21

18 Traci Tiemann – Trinity, Centralia to Trinity, Hoyleton 7-29-18

19 James Zobel – Immanuel, Murphysboro (Principal to Teacher) 8-12-18
 20

21 C. TRANSFERRED TO OTHER DISTRICTS

| | | | |
|----|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 22 | Rose Adle | Indiana District (Candidate status) | 9-1-21 |
| 23 | John Baginski | Central Illinois | 1-2-19 |
| 24 | Mark Belli | Michigan | 7-1-18 |
| 25 | Pamela Bierbaum | North Wisconsin | 8-27-21 |
| 26 | Timothy Bierbaum | North Wisconsin | 7-7-21 |
| 27 | Zachary Brumbaugh | Texas | 7-31-18 |
| 28 | Christopher Dehning | Kansas | 6-30-21 |
| 29 | Lisa Foiles | Michigan (Candidate Status) | 2-7-20 |
| 30 | Anna Frazee | South Wisconsin | 7-3-19 |
| 31 | Caitlin Fuehne | Pacific Southwest | 7-9-18 |
| 32 | Nicholas Harding | Montana | 7-1-19 |
| 33 | Michelle Hines | Iowa East | 6-30-18 |

| | | | |
|----|--------------------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | Kristin Hoem | Indiana | 8-15-20 |
| 2 | Kathryn Holle | Pacific Southwest | 4-29-21 |
| 3 | Caroline Kober | Nebraska | 5-7-21 |
| 4 | Jessica Koch | South Wisconsin | 3-23-18 |
| 5 | Karen Lofink | Pacific Southwest | 8-3-21 |
| 6 | Dcs. Julie McPeak | Indiana | 6-1-18 |
| 7 | Paul Mueller | Northern Illinois (Candidate Status) | 4-1-21 |
| 8 | Timothy Muther | South Wisconsin | 7-31-21 |
| 9 | Sharon Philp | Michigan | 2-23-21 |
| 10 | Micah Pomerence | Missouri | 8-5-19 |
| 11 | Taylor Schmidt | Indiana | 7-13-20 |
| 12 | Catherine Streuter | Missouri | 6-1-21 |
| 13 | Kate Thoele | Texas | 6-1-21 |
| 14 | Joy Tschudy | Michigan | 3-27-18 |

15 D. CALLED TO GLORY

16 Larry Becker 11-9-20

17 Agnes Richter 4-29-20

18 William (Jim) Rohe 12-1-20

19 Lois Trampe 9-13-18

20 Dcs. Rosemary Williams 5-15-18

21 E. CHANGED TO CANDIDATE STATUS

22 Benjamin Brakenhoff – 8-1-20

23 Mary Bown – 9-1-20

24 Brett Jones – 6-30-18

25 Laureen Koen – 7-31-19

26 David Manning – 8-1-20

27 Paul Mueller – 8-1-20

28 Sharon Philp – 9-1-20

29 Annalisa Roggow – 7-31-18

30 John Schaff – 8-1-20

- 1 Dawn Schnare – 8-1-20
- 2 Zachariah Schnare – 7-22-20
- 3 Mark Von Soosten – 7-31-19
- 4 Carolyn Winningham – 8-22-19

5

6 F. CHANGED TO NON CANDIDATE STATUS

- 7 Dave Klein (Candidate to Active) Trinity, Centralia – 8-12-18, Rev. Dr. Timothy Dost
- 8 Karen Shimkus (Candidate to Active) Metro East Lutheran High School, Edwardsville,
9 9-13-20Rev. Kyle Wright

10

11 G. EMERITUS

- 12 Janice Arneson – 8-30-19
- 13 Janis Bourgeois – 5-31-18
- 14 Barbara Brackman – 7-31-20
- 15 Edward Cook – 6-30-19
- 16 Denise Daniels – 7-31-20
- 17 Karol DeWerff – 7-31-19
- 18 Fredrick Hasstedt – 5-31-19

19

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R-20 Report of Nominations

For the District President, the nominees are:

- Rev. Benjamin Ball, St Paul - Hamel
- Rev. Kirk Clayton, Zion - Mascoutah
- Rev. Mark Nebel, St John - Red Bud
- Rev. Timothy Scharr, Southern Illinois District
- Rev. Michael Walther, Good Shepherd, Collinsville

For District Secretary, the nominees are:

- Rev. Peter III, Trinity - Millstadt
- Rev. Antonin "Tony" Troup, Immanuel - Waterloo

For District Treasurer, the nominees are:

- Andrew Gerlach, St. Mark's - Steeleville
- Gary Hemmer, Zion - Belleville

For Lay members of the Board of directors (elect 8), the nominees are:

- Les Apps
- Larry Barringer
- Paul Bertels
- Matt Bierman
- Walter Blotevogel
- Virgil Gramenz
- Kevin Hartkemeyer
- Gordon Heuer
- Derek Johnson
- Kurt Johnson
- Duane Meyer
- James Munden
- Mark Nolte
- Anna Rowden
- Don Stallman
- Kevin Weidner

For Commissioned Ministers for the Board of Directors (elect 2), the nominations are:

- William Becker
- Joseph Gerth
- Jay Krause
- Zacheriah Schnare

For Ordained members of the Board of Missions (elect 3), the nominees are:

- 1 • Robert Gray
- 2 • Jeffery Hemmer
- 3 • David Kern
- 4 • Martin Schnare
- 5 • William Stallworth
- 6 • Timothy Wilcoxon

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8 For Commissioned members of the Board of Missions (elect 1), the nominees are:

- 9 • Paul Miller
- 10 • Sue Schwartz

11

12 For Lay members of the Board of Missions (elect 4), the nominees are:

- 13 • Larry Barringer
- 14 • Michael Burke
- 15 • David Dyson
- 16 • Sharon Holcomb
- 17 • Don Hutchison
- 18 • George Trammel
- 19 • Dwayne Schwartz
- 20 • Don Stallman
- 21 • Kevin Weber

22

23 For Ordained members of the Board for Congregational Support (elect 2), the nominees are:

- 24 • Alan Kornacki
- 25 • Timothy Sims
- 26 • Sean Smith
- 27 • Timothy Wilcoxon

28

29 For Commissioned members for the Board for Congregational Support (elect 2), the nominees
30 are:

- 31 • William Becker
- 32 • Karen Gramenz
- 33 • Melissa Holman
- 34 • Dawn Mueller

35

36 For Lay members for the Board of Congregational Support (elect 4), the nominees are:

- 37 • Frank Glaub
- 38 • Susan Holt
- 39 • Derek Johnson
- 40 • Brian Keller
- 41 • Don Stallman
- 42 • Zachary Stegman
- 43 • Kevin Weber

44

1 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 1, the nominees
2 are:

- 3 • Joseph Nehring
- 4 • Timothy Wilcoxon

5
6 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 2, the nominees
7 are:

- 8 • Mary Heeren
- 9 • Daryl Piering
- 10 • Charles Tedrick

11
12 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 3, the nominees
13 are:

- 14 • Benjamin Ball
- 15 • Heath Curtis

16
17 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 4, the nominees
18 are:

- 19 • Brian Keller
- 20 • Zachary Stegman

21
22 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 5, the nominees
23 are:

- 24 • Karl Gregory
- 25 • Chris Spelbring

26
27 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 6, the nominees
28 are:

- 29 • Peter Ill
- 30 • Bruce Keseman
- 31 • Stephen Krenz

32
33 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 7, the nominees
34 are:

- 35 • Robert Thouvenin
- 36 • NOMINATION PENDING

37
38 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 8, the nominees
39 are:

- 40 • Nate Wollenburg
- 41 • Eric Wood

42
43 For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 9, the nominees
44 are:

- Mardell Granger
- Michael McClure

For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 10, the nominees are:

- Lyle Buettner
- Mark Nebel

For Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention from Circuit 2, the nominees are:

- George Trammel
- NOMINATION PENDING

For Commissioned members for Nominations and Elections for the 2025 District Convention (elect 2), the nominees are:

- William Becker
- Matthew Foster
- Edith Laufer
- Kaela Powley

1 **Overtures for Floor Committee One - Witness**

2
3 **OVERTURE 1-01 To Direct an Equal Amount of Support for Campus Ministry**

4
5 WHEREAS, The Southern Illinois District (SID) supports Campus Ministry at Southern
6 Illinois University – Carbondale (SIUC) through Our Savior Lutheran Church, Carbondale and at
7 Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville (SIUE) through Trinity Lutheran Ministries,
8 Edwardsville and
9

10 WHEREAS, the 2020 SID budget for Campus Ministry was as follows:

11
12 Campus Ministries
13 103 Program Subsidies
14 SIU-E Campus Ministry \$3,000
15 SIUE International Campus Ministry-Salary \$10,000
16 SIUE International Campus Ministry-Supplies \$3,000
17 Campus Ministry Conference \$1,500
18 SIU-C Campus Ministry \$3,000
19 Our Savior Carbondale SIU-C \$50,000
20

21 and
22

23 WHEREAS, undergraduate enrollment for the 2018-19 academic year was 11,695 at
24 SIUC and 13,061 at SIUE, and
25

26 WHEREAS, SIUE has grown from only 54% of the size of SIUC in 2000 to having 12%
27 more students than SIUC in 2019, and
28

29 WHEREAS, Campus Ministry support has long been an integral mission endeavor of the
30 SID, and
31

32 WHEREAS, Trinity, Edwardsville has not received SID Program Subsidies for the Campus
33 Ministry at SIUE therefore let it be
34

35 Resolved, that the program subsidies for Campus Ministry be divided equally between
36 Trinity, Edwardsville and Our Savior, Carbondale, and let it be finally
37

38 Resolved, that the chaplain lead the convention in prayer for our Campus Ministries and
39 the students they serve.
40

41 Circuit 3
42

43
44 **OVERTURE 1-02 To reject Critical Race Theory and its world view in the Church**
45

46 Whereas, Critical race theory (CRT), according to Britannica online (accessed 9/27/2020) is “the
47 view that the law and legal institutions are inherently racist and that race itself, instead of being
48 biologically grounded and natural, is a socially constructed concept that is used by white people
49 to further their economic and political interests at the expense of people of color. According to

critical race theory (CRT), racial inequality emerges from the social, economic, and legal differences that white people create between “races” to maintain elite white interests in labor markets and politics, giving rise to poverty and criminality in many minority communities. The CRT movement officially organized itself in 1989, at the first annual Workshop on Critical Race Theory, though its intellectual origins go back much further, to the 1960s and ’70s. The launch of the CRT movement marked its separation from critical legal studies (CLS), an offshoot of critical theory that examined how the law and legal institutions function to perpetuate oppression and exploitation. However, instead of drawing theories of social organization and individual behavior from continental European thinkers such as G.W.F. Hegel, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud, as CLS and feminist jurisprudence had done, CRT was inspired by figures such as Martin Luther King, Jr., W.E.B. Du Bois, Malcolm X, the Black Panthers, and Frantz Fanon. Critical race theory advanced theoretical understandings of the law, politics, and American sociology that focused on the efforts of white people (Euro-Americans) to maintain their historical advantages over people of color. CRT has spread beyond the confines of legal studies to many other fields, notably women’s and gender studies, education, American studies, and sociology. CRT spin-off movements formed by Asian American, Latinx, and LGBTQ scholars have also taken hold.”

Whereas, the summary of this philosophical and sociological worldview can be restated as: the world is divided into two groups—the “oppressors” (white) and the “oppressed” (nonwhite). The “oppressors” are guilty of racism because of their whiteness, regardless of actual guilt of racist thoughts, words, and deeds; that this racism is woven into the fabric and belief systems of America (Ibrahim Kendi, “Stamped From the Beginning...”) and all its institutions, churches, language, societal structures; can only be healed by dismantling the systems and structures, that whites all repent of their collective and individual racism, and become activist “anti-racists” (Ibrahim Kendi);

WHEREAS, CRT believes racism is present in every aspect of life, every relationship, and every interaction and therefore has its advocates look for it everywhere, relies upon “interest convergence” (white people only give black people opportunities and freedoms when it is also in their own interests) and therefore doesn’t trust any attempt to make racism better. CRT believes that the oppressed are owed reparations of various kinds, yet there is no quantifiable amount that could ever satisfy its demands and often threatens force to achieve it; CRT is against free societies and wants to dismantle them and replace them with something its own advocates control; CRT believes science, reason, and evidence are a “white” way of knowing and that storytelling and lived experience is a “black” alternative, which hurts everyone, especially black people; CRT rejects all alternatives, like colorblindness, as forms of racism, CRT teaches that that anyone who disagrees with it must do so for racist and white supremacist reasons, even if those people are black, often referring to them as “Uncle Toms” and “Coons”;

Whereas CRT is a form of religion and belief system that demands total obedience and acceptance, and adopts and misuses Scriptural terminologies, for example, “Racism is America’s original sin”,

Whereas when CRT teaching enters the language of theology and church relations it confuses what is “original sin” and “actual sin”; furthermore it confuses civil righteousness, and righteousness before God. It confuses legal justice and perceived injustice. It does not find its solution in scriptural terminologies and mutual repentance and forgiveness, but rather, in terms of one way repentance and ongoing penance for being born with a particular color of skin,

1 Whereas CRT in its desire to destroy the systems and structures of government in the secular
2 realm and within the church is a breaking of the 4th commandment and rebellion against God; in
3 the sense that violence is often threatened and used against those who disagree, it is a
4 breaking of the 5th commandment; as it often calls out for reparations and is covetous of those
5 whom they believe are “privileged” it encourages the breaking of the 9th and 10th
6 commandments; as this rhetoric often does not condemn but rather could encourage looting, it
7 is a breaking of the 7th commandment; as it accuses all white people of racism, as it accuses all
8 police and governmental systems of systemic racism, and will and often does put the worst
9 construction on law enforcement, the justice system, governmental entities, individuals based
10 on their color, their vocation, and their economic situation; it encourages the breaking of the 8th
11 commandment; CRT ultimately makes race, identity, and humanism gods and activism worship
12 thereby breaking the 1-3 commandments,

13 Whereas the logical conclusion of CRT is black people cannot be affirmed nor be successful
14 without the abasement and activism of white people; and that white people will forever be racist
15 and that all non-white people will never become whole without vengeance upon white people,
16 showing that CRT is itself a racist world view (the notion that some races are inherently superior
17 to others)

18 WHEREAS, CRT creates division and magnifies it and its solutions do not come from Christ but
19 rather come from a spirit of anger, bitterness, and slander; and can only produce more of the
20 same,

21 Whereas, CRT has become taught as factual in schools of higher learning, high schools, grade
22 schools, and seminaries throughout the country,

23 Whereas CRT is one of the driving forces behind the Black Lives Matter, INC. message not only
24 of protest, but inciting of riots and destruction,

25 Whereas we still recognize that racism, misunderstanding, and strife are present in the world
26 and in the Church,

27 Whereas, the LCMS in convention has passed resolutions in past conventions repudiating all
28 racism, for example 1992 Res. 3-03, see also 2019 Res. 11-04A,

29 Whereas God has created all people, and all people are also blood related going back to our
30 mutual parents of both Noah and Adam, but now have been also equally redeemed by the blood
31 of Christ in order to be reconciled to God and to each other; therefore, be it:

32 *Resolved*, that the Southern Illinois District in Convention reaffirm the Synod’s repudiation of all
33 racism; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, that the Southern Illinois District in Convention reject the world view of CRT as being
35 contrary to Scripture and counterproductive to true racial conversation and reconciliation and
36 also reject all organizations, movements, petitions and all theological language that presents it
37 in a positive manner; and be it further

38 *Resolved*, that Southern Illinois District in Convention encourage its members to continue
39 speaking against the various sins that cause the troubles in society (such as sex outside of
40 Biblical marriage, alcoholism, drug use, physical and sexual abuse, abortion and the like),
41 fighting for both justice and mercy as we walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8), applying biblical

truth to all areas of life, opposing oppression when it's encountered and pointing people to Jesus, the ultimate unifier; and

Resolved that we as members of the Southern Illinois District, its pastors and lay leaders strive to clarify the language of sin and righteousness as we live out our vocations in society with our brothers and sisters in Christ of all ethnic backgrounds, and be it finally

Resolved that the Southern Illinois District send this resolution to the Synod as it gathers at its 2022 Convention to do similarly.

Circuit 7

OVERTURE 1-03 To Reject the Practice of "Internet Communion"

WHEREAS, The Sacrament of the Altar is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink (Small Catechism), and

WHEREAS, The Holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and St. Paul write: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." (Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25) and

WHEREAS, During the COVID-19 lockdowns, congregations of the LCMS began the practice of "Internet Communion" and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS initially issued an opinion titled "*Communion and COVID-19*" and then later released "*One Little Word Can Fell Him: Addendum to Communion and COVID-19*" (see appendices)

WHEREAS, the opinions of the CTCR, on the basis of God's Word, properly confess the true doctrine and practice of the Lord's Supper, and reject the practice of "Internet Communion" therefore let it be

Resolved, that the Southern Illinois District, on the basis of God's Word, reject the practice of "Internet Communion" as contrary to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions, and let it be further

Resolved, that the Southern Illinois District memorialize the 2022 LCMS convention to reject the practice of "Internet Communion" as contrary to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions and accept the CTCR opinions "*Communion and COVID-19*" and "*One Little Word Can Fell Him: Addendum to Communion and COVID-19*".

Circuit 3

Note: Appendices for this overture are printed at the conclusion of this workbook.

OVERTURE 1-04 To Defend the Christian Conscience and the Church's Daughters

Overview: On Thursday, September 23, 2021 the United States House of Representatives passed the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, which included language that would require women at the age of 18 to register for the military draft.

Overture:

WHEREAS, God has created both male and female in His image, yet made them individually to be complementary but not identical to one another, and

WHEREAS, God specifically commands husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the Church and laid down his life for her (Ephesians 5), and

WHEREAS, all of Scripture and the vast majority of human history testifies that men, not women, are to be required at times to enter combat and risk their lives in defense of their family and country, and

WHEREAS, The United States House of Representatives has passed, and – by the time of the SID convention – the United States Senate will have passed, and the United States President will have signed into law, the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, which requires 18-year old women to register for the military draft, and

WHEREAS, such entrance into the draft may mean that our wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters are forced to fight in defense of their husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers, and

WHEREAS, Christian consciences are right to be burdened by the thought of men requiring their daughters and wives to risk their lives in carrying out duties of war given to men to reflect Christ's love for His Church; therefore be it

RESOLVED That we as the Southern Illinois District object to the mandatory registration of women into the draft of the United States military, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we affirm a woman's right to willingly and voluntarily enter into the military, and we thank all military women and men for their service, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we as the Southern Illinois District call on our district president to communicate to Illinois' US Senators and congresspeople our intent to object on religious grounds to the involuntary service of women in the military, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we memorialize The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, in its 2023 convention, to publicly confess our conscientious objection, prepare appropriate letters of communication to our nation's leaders, and prepare template statements of conscientious/religious objection for all pastors and congregations to utilize in the event of a national military draft.

Respectfully submitted,

The pastors of SID Circuits 9, 10, and 11 - November 2, 2021

1
2 **OVERTURE 1-05 To Affirm the Church's Essential Nature and Duty to Call Upon**
3 **the Name of the Lord**

4 Overview: Throughout the months of the pandemic, the Church has been relegated to
5 secondary status under the rule of the government. The government has claimed
6 authority over the Church's worship and, misapplying the Fourth Commandment, the
7 Church has allowed the Government to dictate when and how the Church call upon the
8 name of the Lord. This must be addressed properly to rectify the past, lest an incorrect
9 precedent be set for the future.

10 Overture:

11 WHEREAS, God has designed His creation with three estates – the Family, the Church,
12 and Government, and

13 WHEREAS, these Three Estates remain (and continue their defining functions) until the
14 end of time, even during pandemic, famine, war, etc., and

15 WHEREAS, the government is given by God to reward good and punish evil, as defined
16 by God's holy will (Romans 13), and

17 WHEREAS, within the course of the Coronavirus pandemic, "good and evil" have not
18 been carefully defined in agreement with God's holy will, and various state governments
19 declared the Church's identifying and *central* function of gathering at the altar of God to
20 call upon the name of the Lord to be "non-essential," and

21 WHEREAS, the divinely called pastors and undershepherds of Christ are as essential to
22 the spiritual care of the individual as is a physician to the physical care of the individual,
23 and

24 WHEREAS, the Fourth Commandment may have been misapplied by the Church to
25 justify various state governments' claims (upheld by federal courts) that the government
26 could close the doors of the Church, require the omission of in-person worship, singing,
27 the giving of the Sacraments, and visitation, etc., and

28 WHEREAS, the true exposition of the Fourth Commandment requires it to be
29 interpreted in service of the First Commandment – that God alone is God and alone
30 governs the kingdom of the Right, not by the authority of government, but by the Word
31 and Sacraments; and the Fourth Commandment is to be interpreted in service of the
32 *entire* First Table of the Law, including the Second and Third commandments to call
33 upon the name of the Lord in the day of trouble and to not despise preaching and His
34 Word, and

35 WHEREAS, the Fourth Commandment also maintains the Family as an equal estate, as
36 our Confessions state,

1 “In this commandment belongs a further statement about all kinds of obedience to
2 persons in authority who have to command and to govern. For all authority flows and
3 is born from the authority of parents. So all whom we call ‘masters’ are in the place
4 of parents and must get their power and authority to govern from them” (LC I, 141-
5 142) and

6 WHEREAS, the misuse of AC XXVIII, 14 to say that the government has been given
7 absolute authority over the body negates both the role of father to raise up and protect
8 his household and the role of the pastor to provide Word and Sacrament not just to a
9 soul, but to ears, eyes and mouth, and

10 WHEREAS, in teaching of the End Times (which have been in effect since Christ’s
11 death, resurrection and ascension) and in prophesying wars, rumors of wars, famines,
12 plagues, and the like (Matthew 24, Luke 21), Christ never said the Church should – in
13 times of public danger – close its doors and forbid the Word and Sacrament to those
14 Christians who desire such life-giving gifts of God, therefore be it

17 RESOLVED That we affirm the Church’s essential nature, purpose, and ongoing
18 function in this world until Christ comes again in His glory, and be it further

19 RESOLVED That we affirm the Church’s and Family’s status, equal to the Government,
20 as having their God-given role in caring for both body and soul, and be it further

21 RESOLVED That, as the Church is essential, the pastor who serves her is also
22 essential as he is charged by God to be ‘steward of the mysteries’ in administering
23 Word and Sacrament, and be it further

24 RESOLVED That we confess before God and man that no federal, state, or local
25 government – even as a God-given estate to be honored by all and even in the name of
26 ‘public safety’ – has authority in the kingdom of the Right and, thus, no rightful, God-
27 given power over the Spirit’s gathering of the Father’s children in the Son’s divine
28 service to God’s people, and be it further

29 RESOLVED that we repent for not clearly and boldly confessing the Church to be a co-
30 equal estate to the Government and Family, both which continued their functions during
31 the pandemic, and be it further

32 RESOLVED, that we repent for justifying our actions in cases where we may have
33 misapplied the Fourth Commandment and Romans 13, and be it further

34 RESOLVED That we affirm that *individual* congregations may – in Christian freedom –
35 choose to close their doors in times of public crisis, while other congregations of the
36 Church, even in defiance of government orders, may choose to keep their doors open to

1 serve God's people without sinning against the Fourth Commandment and with the
2 support and defense of the church body and her leaders, and be it further
3 RESOLVED, that we exhort and encourage one another to confess boldly the essential
4 nature and function of the Church, especially in the event of and at the time of another
5 government-mandated closure of congregations, and, be it finally
6 RESOLVED, that this assembly stand and sing together LSB 585, "Lord Jesus Christ,
7 with Us Abide," stanzas 2, 5, 6:
8 In these last days of great distress
9 Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness
10 That we keep pure till life is spent
11 Your holy Word and Sacrament.
12
13 Restrain, O Lord, the human pride
14 That seeks to thrust Your truth aside
15 Or with some man-made thoughts or things
16 Would dim the words Your Spirit sings.
17
18 Stay with us, Lord, and keep us true;
19 Preserve our faith our whole life through--
20 Your Word alone our heart's defense,
21 The Church's glorious confidence.
22 Respectfully submitted,
23 The pastors of SID Circuits 9, 10, and 11
24

25 **OVERTURE 1-06 To Clarify the Synod's Teaching regarding the Soul**

26
27 WHEREAS, The Small Catechism teaches us to say, "I believe that God has made me and all
28 creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason
29 and all my senses, and still takes care of them" (First Article); and
30
31 WHEREAS, The Synod's first Explanation of the Small Catechism, the Dietrich Explanation,
32 explicitly affirms that the soul is immortal: "But why do you believe in the resurrection of the
33 body only? Because, properly speaking, only that shall rise which has perished; but the body
34 only has perished; therefore only the body shall rise again. The soul can literally neither die nor
35 rise again, because it is immortal. Matt. 10:28, Eccl. 12:7, Acts 7:59, 1 Pet. 3:19, Rev. 6:9, Wis.
36 3:1" (Qu. 312); and
37
38 WHEREAS, The Schwan Explanation (Qu. 205), the 1943 Explanation (Qu. 197), and the 1991
39 Explanation (Qu. 190) all implicitly affirm that the soul is immortal; and
40

1 WHEREAS, The 2017 Explanation breaks with the pattern of words established by the Schwan,
2 1943, and 1991 Explanations and does not appear to affirm that the soul is immortal (Qu. 223);
3 and
4

5 WHEREAS, *Confessing the Gospel* clearly states that Scripture denies the immortality of the
6 soul [Samuel H. Nafzger, ed., *Confessing the Gospel: A Lutheran Approach to Systematic*
7 *Theology* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 1:285, and see footnote 68]; and
8

9 WHEREAS, The 1969 Commission on Theology and Church Relations position paper “A
10 Statement on Death, Resurrection, and Immortality” categorically rejects the immortality of the
11 soul (III, 6, e); and
12

13 WHEREAS, We believe in the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body; therefore
14 be it
15

16 *Resolved*, That the Southern Illinois District in convention affirm the immortality of the soul; and
17 be it finally
18

19 *Resolved*, That we ask the CTCR to clarify: Does the Synod, in its teaching, affirm that man has
20 an immortal soul, deny this, or leave it as an open question?
21

22 Circuit 7 Forum
23

24 **OVERTURE 1-08 To Reject Critical Race Theory as Contrary to the Word of God**

25

26 Whereas, God has created all people and they are blood related going back to our mutual
27 fathers, Adam and Noah, and all are subject to the stain of original sin, but now also have been
28 equally redeemed by the blood of Christ in order to be reconciled to God and to each other;
29 (Genesis 1:26-28, Genesis 10, Romans 5:12-21, 1 Corinthians 15:20-23), and
30

31 Whereas, God desires that all people of every nation and ethnicity be baptized, believe in Him
32 and be saved (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:16-17, John 3:16-17, 1 Timothy 2:3-6), and
33

34 Whereas, God’s Word says, “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You
35 shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are
36 committing sin and are convicted by the law of the transgressors” (James 2:8-9), and
37

38 Whereas, Critical Race Theory (CRT) has become a common, multifaceted, and controversial
39 theory for discussion of contemporary race relations, therefore be it
40

41 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District confess that there is one human race, descended
42 from Adam and Noah, and that God’s desire is for all people to be saved and to come to the
43 knowledge of the truth, and be it further
44

45 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District call upon all her members to love their neighbors as
46 themselves and show no partiality to race, ethnicity, or nationality, and to seek to live in peace

1 and harmony with all people by proclaiming that Jesus is Lord, and bringing forth the fruits of
2 faith in serving the neighbor, and be it further

3
4 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District reject the world view of CRT, as it is contrary to
5 Scripture and counterproductive to true racial conversation and reconciliation, for it pursues
6 equality of outcome (“equity”) between racial groups, which requires treating individuals
7 unequally based on race, and be it further

8
9 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District reject all organizations, movements, petitions, and
10 theological language that support the world view of CRT in a positive manner, and be it further

11
12 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District reject any doctrine, such as that proposed by CRT,
13 that teaches that an individual is inherently racist, or oppressive, whether consciously or
14 unconsciously, because of his or her race, ancestry, or nationality; and be it finally

15
16 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District submit this resolution as an overture to the 2023
17 LCMS convention.

18
19 St. Paul, Hamel
20
21
22

1
2 **OVERTURE 1-09 To Reject Internet Communion as Contrary to the Word of God**
3

4 Whereas during the COVID-19 pandemic, congregations of our Synod started a novel practice -
5 “online” or “virtual” Communion, which is unknown to the Scriptures and had heretofore not been
6 practiced in the Synod, and
7

8 Whereas the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) and the systematic theology
9 departments of both seminaries issued opinions that unequivocally and unanimously argued against
10 the practice of online or virtual communion, and
11

12 Whereas the CTCR affirmed its 2006 opinion on DVD consecration and applied its rationale to online
13 or virtual communion, putting forward the arguments - among others - that this practice:
14

- 15 1. Severs the consecration of the sacrament through the words of institution from the distribution
16 and reception of the sacrament;
- 17 2. Potentially and unnecessarily sows doubt in the minds of communicants as to whether the
18 elements received are in fact the sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood;
- 19 3. Vitiates the instrumental role of pastoral care in the administration of the sacrament through
20 the lack of pastoral oversight, preparation of communicants, and admission to the table;
21 and
- 22 4. Detracts from the corporate assembly of God’s people around the Lord’s Supper as an
23 expression of the common confession of Christ and unity in the faith, and
24

25 Whereas the Lutheran Confessions (Formula of Concord, SD 7) indicate that the proper use of the
26 sacrament includes a unified consecration, distribution, and reception, none of which are to be
27 severed from the other, yet the practice of online or virtual communion would interject a spatial,
28 temporal, and technological gap between the consecration and the distribution and reception, and
29

30 Whereas the Sacrament of the Altar serves to strengthen faith against all doubts (Augsburg
31 Confession XIII) and is “given for a daily pasture and sustenance, that faith may refresh and
32 strengthen itself so as not to fall back in such a battle, but become ever stronger and stronger” (Large
33 Catechism 5.24, while it is incumbent on all faithful ministers of the Gospel to remove all obstacles
34 that create doubt regarding what Christ offers in this sacrament or detracts from it (Augsburg
35 Confession XXIV), and
36

37 Whereas the pastoral office is responsible for oversight of the administration of the sacrament in
38 accordance with the keys conferred upon the pastor by virtue of his call (Augsburg Confession XIV,
39 Walther’s Theses on the Ministry V and VII), and
40

41 Whereas no theological justification for the novel practice of online or virtual communion has existed
42 within the Synod or the Lutheran tradition nor has been advanced in the circles advocating for it on
43 the basis of the principally relevant texts (*sedes doctrinae*) of Holy Scripture or the Lutheran
44 Confessions, and
45

1 Whereas the Sacrament of the Altar has been established by our Lord according to his words of
2 institution, commanding literally “This keep on doing” (Luke 22:19, 1 Cor. 11:24-25) which indicates
3 that this use of the sacrament should be kept according to his institution and that “nothing is a
4 sacrament without the appointed use” as set forth by those same words of institution (FC 7.73) and
5

6 Whereas the uniformity in practice from the foundation of the Synod has long been considered
7 desirable (1847 Constitution, Art I.3, II.4, IV.5, V.14) and remains an endeavor toward which
8 congregations are encouraged to strive (Constitution Art. II.7); therefore be it
9

10 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District reject the practice of online or virtual communion as it is
11 contrary to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions, and let it be further
12

13 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District urge congregations practicing online or virtual communion
14 to cease this divisive practice, and be it further
15

16 Resolved that the Southern Illinois District submit this resolution as an overture to the 2023 LCMS
17 Convention.
18

19 St. Paul, Hamel
20

21 **OVERTURE 1-10 To Establish a Partnership with the Seminario Concordia El Reformador**

22
23 WHEREAS, our Lord Jesus Christ in the last chapter of Matthew says “Go therefore and make
24 disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
25 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20); and
26

27 WHEREAS, the Lord Jesus told His disciples at His ascension into heaven, “You will be My
28 witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8); and
29

30 WHEREAS, the Southern Illinois District of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod supports the work
31 of making disciples of all nations by beginning in the location of each congregation, and continuing
32 outward as circuits, district and Synod; and
33

34 WHEREAS, the Southern Illinois District enjoyed an eighteen year partnership with the Lutheran
35 Church in Southern Africa which concluded with the last District Convention; and
36

37 WHEREAS, Resolution 1-02 of the 58th Convention of the Southern Illinois District of The Lutheran
38 Church - Missouri Synod empowered the Mission Board to explore a new mission partnership with a
39 recommendation given to the 2021 SID Convention; and
40

41 WHEREAS, the work of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod is bearing fruit in Latin America and
42 the Dominican Republic; and
43

44 WHEREAS, the Seminary Concordia El Reformador has been established for the training of men for
45 the pastoral ministry and women for the deaconess ministry in Latin America. Students come from
46 the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Guatemala, Venezuela, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Spain and Panama;
47 and
48

49 WHEREAS, the overall emphasis of the residential pastoral formation program is to form pastors who
50 are evangelists and will return to their home countries to plant churches; and

1
2 WHEREAS, a partnership with the Seminario Concordia El Reformador will assist the training of men
3 who will establish congregations throughout Latin America; and
4

5 WHEREAS, a partnership in this hemisphere will make it easier for short-term mission trips and visits
6 to visit the Dominican Republic, the Seminary and its mission work; therefore, be it
7

8 RESOLVED, that the Southern Illinois District of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod establish a
9 partnership with the Seminario Concordia El Reformador in the Dominican Republic; and therefore be
10 it further
11

12 RESOLVED, that members, congregations and schools of the Southern Illinois District regularly pray
13 for this partnership, promote it within their ministry context and support it with their financial gifts
14 above and beyond their regular mission offerings; and therefore be it further resolved
15

16 RESOLVED, that the SID Mission Board seek people who will advocate for this partnership within our
17 District, maintain regular communication including reports with the seminary in the Dominican
18 Republic and keep this partnership alive and active for as long as the Lord wills it; and therefore be
19 it finally
20

21 RESOLVED, that a special offering be gathered by this convention and upon passage of this
22 resolution, the convention assembly will rise and sing the Common Doxology.
23

24
25 SID Mission Board

Respectfully Submitted

Overtures for Floor Committee Two - Mercy

OVERTURE 2-01 To Reject “Lutherans For Racial Justice” and All Organizations, Movements, and Petitions that Promote Critical Race Theory (CRT)

WHEREAS, ongoing racial problems still exist in our country; and

WHEREAS, Critical Race Theory (CRT) aims to resolve the ongoing racial problems by considering racism as America’s original sin and states that America was built on racism and whiteness which CRT calls systemic racism; in other words, racism is woven into the fabric of all Western governments, churches, and societal structures; and

WHEREAS, the organization Lutherans for Racial Justice (LFRJ) is an organization striving for “racial reconciliation and reform within the congregations and communities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” (<https://lutheransforracialjustice.com/about-us>, accessed September 25, 2020); and

WHEREAS, LFRJ encourages LCMS pastors and laity to emphasize social activism over Law and Gospel proclamation that finds reconciliation in Christ who has died for original sin and all actual sins; and

WHEREAS LFRJ relies heavily upon the 1966 movie “A Time for Burning,” a movie that embraces social justice theory coming not from a Biblically based understanding of race and reconciliation but from a worldly critical race theoretical basis; and

WHEREAS LFRJ promotes “Race + Justice Essentials,” a non-Lutheran resource that “makes for a great starter guide on everything from systemic racism to why race is a social construct” (<https://lutheransforracialjustice.com/church-resources>, accessed September 27, 2020); and

WHEREAS, LFRJ uses resources and language of CRT terminology, demonstrated, for example, in this August 28, 2020 Facebook post: “Dear Church, systemic racial injustice is real and - whether by our actions or our silence - we have been complicit. Let us repent, let us live in the forgiveness of Jesus, and let us faithfully pursue racial equality, racial justice, reconciliation, and healing.” <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=591875158151134&extid=T1zstrTVbr3x6qnh>, accessed September 25, 2020); therefore be it

Resolved, that the Southern Illinois District in Convention reaffirm the Synod’s repudiation of all racism; and be it further

Resolved, that the Southern Illinois District in Convention reject “Lutherans for Racial Justice” and all organizations, movements, and petitions that hold to Critical Race Theory (CRT) and all language that presents CRT in a positive manner; and

Resolved, that members, congregations, and schools of the Southern Illinois District endeavor as members of the body of Christ, regardless of our earthly races, sex, or vocation, to prayerfully strive to live together “eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” as St. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4; and finally be it,

Resolved, that the Southern Illinois District memorialize the Synod as it gathers at its 2022 Convention to do similarly.

OVERTURE 2-02 To Direct the Southern Illinois District Board of Directors to Pursue Legal Action

Whereas,

The 3rd Commandment is: “Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it Holy,” and

Whereas,

The Word of God says, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near,” (Hebrews 10:24-26) and

Whereas,

The Lord Jesus Christ instituted the Sacrament of the Altar, which is “the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink” (Small Catechism: The Sacrament of the Altar) and

Whereas,

The psalmist says, “a day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere,” (Psalm 84:10) and

Whereas,

The recent emergency stay at home orders by the Governor of the State of Illinois have contradicted the Scriptures, forbidding Christians from gathering according to the Word of God specifically to corporately hear the Word of God preached, receive the Sacrament of the Altar and to pray, praise and give thanks, and

Whereas,

St. Paul (Acts 25) and Sts. Peter and John (Acts 4) appeal to the governing authorities when such authorities act contrary to the Word of God or the laws of the state, either with respect to their own station or with respect to the stations of others, and

Whereas,

Through Legal representation and action thereof is the means by which citizens, individual or corporate, make an appeal to the governing authorities, and

Whereas,

It is the duty of the Southern Illinois District Board of Directors to “Engage legal counsel and other professional or technical personnel deemed necessary or advisable to carry out District policies or programs” (SID Bylaws G. The Board of Directors 2.47.g.) and

Whereas,

Some of the policies and programs of the Southern Illinois District are stated in the Constitution of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod such as, “Provide protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other church workers in the performance of their duties and the maintenance of their rights”, (LCMS Constitution, Article III:9), and

Whereas,

Civil disobedience should be the last option for the church (“We must obey God rather than men” Acts 5:29), therefore let it be

Resolved,

that the Southern Illinois District in convention direct the District Board of Directors to engage legal counsel on behalf of the congregations of the SID (with the consent of the LCMS Board of Directors) to take legal action so that congregations are free to worship in person (including the reception of Holy Communion) should they be forbidden from doing so by the federal, state or local governments.

1 Circuit 4

2
3
4 **OVERTURE 2-03 To Restate and Amend the Articles of Incorporation of the Southern Illinois**

5 **District**

6 **Rationale**

7 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in its 2016 convention passed Resolution 9-02A regarding the
8 Articles of Incorporation of the Districts of the LCMS, and also amended the Synod's Bylaws, adding
9 Bylaw 1.5.3.6, which says,

10 Notwithstanding anything in the Bylaws to the contrary, the Articles of Incorporation or other
11 governing documents of each agency shall provide:

12 (a) That all provisions of its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are subject to the provisions
13 of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the resolutions of the Synod in convention; and

14 (b) That in the event of dissolution other than by direction from the Synod in convention, the
15 assets of such agency, subject to its liabilities, shall be transferred, consistent with applicable
16 state and federal laws, as follows:

17 (1) In the case of a synodwide corporate entity, district, university, college, or seminary, to
18 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as may be more specifically described elsewhere
19 in these Bylaws^{SEP};

20 (2) In the case of a corporation formed by an agency (as defined in these Bylaws), to the
21 agency that formed the dissolving corporation, or if such forming agency is not then in
22 existence, to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod itself.

23 An agency may submit any concerns related to the inclusion of subsections (a) or (b) in its
24 governing documents to the Board of Directors of the Synod, and the Board of Directors
25 may determine to permit the removal or modification of these provisions for an affected
26 agency.

27
28 In order to comply with Bylaws of the LCMS, the Southern Illinois District restated its Articles of
29 Incorporation at its 2018 convention. The restated Articles of Incorporation are as follows:

30
31 **Article I Name, Duration, Registered Office, and Agent**

32 a. The name of this corporation shall be "The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, Southern
33 Illinois District".

34 b. The period of duration of the corporation is perpetual.

35 c. The address of the registered office of the corporation as of February 1982 is 2408
36 Lebanon Avenue, Belleville, Illinois 62221-2597.

37 d. The registered agent of the corporation is the District President.

38
39 **Article II Purposes**

40 The purposes of this corporation shall be:

41 a. To unify in a corporate body the congregations, pastors, and commissioned ministers who
42 are members of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod situated or residing within the
43 geographical bounds of the Southern Illinois District, and

44 b. To carry out with the resources of the Southern Illinois District the objectives of The
45 Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, as stated in the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, and

1 Bylaws of said Synod.

2 c. All provisions of these Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are subject to the provisions of
3 the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the resolutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

4
5 Article III Membership

6 The membership of this corporation is the congregations, and the ordained and
7 commissioned ministers of religion of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod situated within
8 the geographical bounds of the Southern Illinois District. The power of this corporation shall be
9 lodged with the accredited pastoral and lay delegates of those same congregations of The
10 Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod which are situated within the geographical bounds of the
11 Southern Illinois District.

12
13 Article IV Meetings

14 This corporation shall have general meetings in the years prescribed by the HANDBOOK of
15 Synod. Special meetings may be called in such manner as may be provided by the
16 constitution and bylaws of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

17
18 Article V Officers

19 a. The officers of this corporation shall consist of a President, Vice Presidents as specified by
20 the bylaws of this corporation, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

21 b. The Board of Directors of the corporation shall be comprised of the President, the Vice
22 Presidents, the Secretary, and the Treasurer of this corporation, and such additional directors
23 shall be elected from time to time in accordance with the bylaws of this corporation.

24 c. The officers and members of the Board of Directors shall be elected at the general
25 meetings of the corporation for such terms as shall be specified by the bylaws of this
26 corporation and shall serve until their successors are duly elected and have qualified.

27
28 Article VI Property

29 This corporation shall have power to acquire by gift, grants, demise, devise, bequest,
30 purchase, or otherwise, property of every kind and description, real, personal, or mixed; to hold
31 and use such property and deal with, or dispose of, any or all such property by sale, exchange,
32 or gift, when necessary or expedient to carry out the objectives and purposes of the
33 corporation; provided that all such property shall be acquired, dealt with, or disposed of in a
34 manner not in conflict with the laws of the State of Illinois or the laws of any State in which said
35 property is located.

36
37 Article VII Constitution and Bylaws

38 a. The constitution of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod shall govern this corporation.

39 b. The bylaws of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod shall be primarily the bylaws of this
40 corporation; and this corporation shall have and make such additional bylaws as may be
41 necessary to accomplish its purposes and shall have power to create such offices, committees,
42 and other subordinate bodies as may be necessary to accomplish its general and special
43 objectives.

Article VIII Dissolution

a. In the event this corporation is dissolved or its existence is otherwise terminated all of its assets minus liabilities shall be transferred to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

b. If, however, on the date of such proposed dissolution, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, a Missouri Corporation, or its successor, is no longer in existence, or shall not be operated for purposes specified in or shall not otherwise qualify under Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as the same may hereafter be amended and supplemented, then in such event the assets of this corporation, under its dissolution and liquidation shall be transferred, conveyed and distributed to such other nonprofit organization or organizations as may be provided by Illinois law, but in any event, each such distributee organization shall be organized and operated exclusively for purposes similar to those for which this corporation is organized, and shall further be exempt under the provisions of Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as the same may hereafter be amended or supplemented; it being understood that in no event shall the assets of this corporation upon its dissolution and liquidation be distributed for purposes and uses other than those set forth in Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as the same may hereafter be amended or supplemented.

Article IX Amendments

Amendments to these Articles of Incorporation may be made at any time at a regularly called meeting of this corporation by a majority of the voting delegates present at such meeting, provided such amendments are not inconsistent with the Constitution or the laws of the United States or the State of Illinois or the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, and with prior approval of the Commission on Constitutional Matters of said Synod.

These restated articles were adopted at a meeting of members entitled to vote on February 9, 2018 by the affirmative vote of the members having not less than the minimum number of votes necessary to adopt such amendment, as provided by 805 ILCS 105/110.20, the articles of incorporation, or the bylaws.

After adoption, these Articles of Incorporation were submitted to the Illinois Secretary of State's office. In May 2018, the Secretary of State returned these Articles of Incorporation without accepting them. The Secretary of State responded with several areas where the Articles did not conform to their expectations.

In order to comply with the expectations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Secretary of State of Illinois, the Southern Illinois District Commission on Bylaws has prepared new restated Articles of Incorporation that are in conformity with the expectations of the Secretary of State. These Articles of Incorporation have also been reviewed and approved by the Synod Commission on Constitutional Matters.

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the Southern Illinois District in convention replace its existing Articles of Incorporation with

Article I Name, Registered Office, and Agent

a. This corporation was originally incorporated as "The Southern Illinois District of the German

1 Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States” on January 17, 1917. This name
2 of this corporation was renamed to “The Southern Illinois District of the Evangelical Lutheran
3 Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other States” on June 26, 1938 and was further renamed to “The
4 Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, Southern Illinois District” on November 18, 1948.

5 b. The registered agent of the corporation is Rev. _____, the District President,
6 2408 Lebanon Avenue, Belleville, Illinois 62221-2597.

8 Article II Purposes

9 a. The purpose of this corporation shall be a religious not-for-profit corporation.

10 b. To unify in a corporate body the congregations, pastors, and commissioned ministers who are
11 members of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod situated or residing within the geographical
12 bounds of the Southern Illinois District, and

13 c. To carry out with the resources of the Southern Illinois District the objectives of The Lutheran
14 Church--Missouri Synod, as stated in the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, and Bylaws of
15 said Synod.

16 d. This corporation is not a condominium association under the Condominium Property Act, a
17 Cooperative Housing Corporation as defined in Section 216 of the Internal Revenue Code of
18 1954, or a Homeowner’s Association which administers a common-interest community as defined
19 in subsection (c) of Section 9-102 of the code of Civil Procedure.

21 Article III Membership and Directors

22 a. The membership of this corporation is the congregations, and the ordained and
23 commissioned ministers of religion of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod situated within the
24 geographical bounds of the Southern Illinois District. The power of this corporation shall be
25 lodged with the accredited pastoral and lay delegates of those same congregations of The
26 Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod which are situated within the geographical bounds of the
27 Southern Illinois District.

28 b. The Board of Directors of the corporation shall be comprised of the President, the Vice
29 Presidents, the Secretary, and the Treasurer of this corporation, and such additional directors
30 shall be elected from time to time in accordance with the Bylaws of this corporation.
31

32 Article IV Meetings

33 This corporation shall have general meetings in the years prescribed by the HANDBOOK of
34 Synod. Special meetings may be called in such manner as may be provided by the Constitution
35 and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

36 Article V Officers

37 a. The officers of this corporation shall consist of a President, Vice Presidents as specified by the
38 bylaws of this corporation, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

39 b. The officers and members of the Board of Directors shall be elected at the general meetings of
40 the corporation for such terms as shall be specified by the Bylaws of this corporation and shall
41 serve until their successors are duly elected and have qualified.

43 Article VI Property

44 This corporation shall have power to acquire by gift, grants, demise, devise, bequest, purchase,

1 or otherwise, property of every kind and description, real, personal, or mixed; to hold and use
2 such property and deal with, or dispose of, any or all such property by sale, exchange, or gift,
3 when necessary or expedient to carry out the objectives and purposes of the corporation;
4 provided that all such property shall be acquired, dealt with, or disposed of in a manner not in
5 conflict with the laws of the State of Illinois or the laws of any State in which said property is
6 located.

7 8 Article VII Constitution and Bylaws

- 9 a. The Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is also the Constitution of this
10 corporation.
11 b. The Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall primarily be the Bylaws of this
12 corporation. This corporation may adopt additional bylaws that are not in conflict with the
13 Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.
14 c. All provisions of these Articles of Incorporation and associated Bylaws are subject to the
15 provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the resolutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri
16 Synod in convention.
17

18 Article VIII Dissolution

- 19 a. In the event this corporation is dissolved or its existence otherwise terminates or is
20 terminated, all of its assets, minus its liabilities, shall be transferred to The Lutheran Church—
21 Missouri Synod.
22 b. If, however, on the date of such proposed dissolution, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod,
23 a Missouri Corporation, or its successor, is no longer in existence, the assets of the corporation
24 may be distributed to any other Section 501(c)(3) organization as designated by the Board of
25 Directors.
26

27 Article IX Amendments

28 Amendments to these Articles of Incorporation may be made at any time at a regularly called
29 meeting of this corporation by a majority of the voting delegates present at such meeting,
30 provided such amendments are not inconsistent with the Constitution or the laws of the United
31 States or the State of Illinois or the Constitution or Bylaws of The Lutheran Church--Missouri
32 Synod, and with prior approval of the Commission on Constitutional Matters of said Synod.
33

34 These restated Articles were adopted at a meeting of members entitled to vote on February __,
35 2021 by the affirmative vote of the members having not less than the minimum number of votes
36 necessary to adopt such amendment, as provided by 805 ILCS 105/110.20, the Articles of
37 Incorporation, or the Bylaws.
38

39 The Board of Directors, Southern Illinois District

40 41 **OVERTURE 2-04 Overture to the District Convention for Salary Guidelines Revisions**

42 WHEREAS, the extra duties asked of our called commissioned ministers in some of our
43 congregations may exceed in time and effort the extra compensation provided for them under our
44 current salary guidelines; and

1 WHEREAS, there currently is no provision in our salary guidelines encouraging congregations to
2 offer a paternity leave for our 12-month male workers; and

3 WHEREAS, there currently is no provision in our salary guidelines encouraging congregations to
4 provide a sabbatical leave for their pastors; therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, that the following addition be made to the Southern Illinois District Salary Guidelines
6 under "Adjustments to Salary from Basic Schedule" for Teachers/DCE/Deaconess on page 7: "These
7 percentages are to be the minimum additional compensation for these activities. Congregations
8 should consider increasing the percentage or provide appropriate release time during which these
9 extra duties can be addressed based upon the amount of additional work that is expected (e.g. the
10 number of sports teams supervised by the Athletic Director, the number of choirs led by the Music
11 Director, the amount of activities supervised by the Youth Director, etc.); and be it further

12 RESOLVED, that the following addition be made to the Southern Illinois District Salary Guidelines
13 under "Employee Benefits" (after "Vacations" on page 12) and entitled "Paternity Leave":

- 14 A. While maternity leaves fall under the Concordia Health Plan for female workers, it is
15 recommended that congregations should consider giving their male 12-month workers an
16 extra two weeks of paid time off after he and his wife have had a baby.
17 B. The above applies to 10-month workers only during their designated time of service; and that
18 it be finally

19 RESOLVED, that the following addition be made to the Southern Illinois District Salary Guidelines,
20 creating this new section for "Sabbatical Leave" under "Employee Benefits" (after Emergency Leave
21 and before Anniversary and Retirement on page 12).

22 I. Objective

23 To assist our veteran parish pastors with a time for personal refreshing, professional
24 study, academic travel, directed reading/writing, expanded experiences and prepared
25 planning for future ministry and to benefit our congregations with pastors who are
26 renewed in their zeal for continued parish ministry in their current pastorate.
27

28 II. Rationale

29 The word "sabbatical" is derived from the Biblical "Sabbath" rest (Genesis 2:1-4a;
30 Exodus 20:8-11). Sabbatical leaves include time for travel, rest, prayer, and the
31 experiencing of different cultures. Sabbaticals give both pastor and congregation new
32 appreciation and fresh energy for their covenant in ministry, with the goal of renewed
33 pastorates. Pastors that are personally and professionally healthy workers are better
34 able to serve congregations in a spiritually healthy way. A good sabbatical meets a
35 mutual need between pastor and people.
36

37 III. Qualifications

38 Congregations whose pastors have been in the parish ministry for at least 15 years
39 and who have served in their current parish for at least seven (7) years are eligible
40 and should be considered for up to a three (3)-month sabbatical leave.
41

1 IV. Requirements

- 2 A. A pastor who desires to take a sabbatical leave will prepare a proposal and submit
3 it for approval to both his congregation's leadership (e.g. Council, Elders, or Voters
4 Assembly) and the Southern Illinois District President.
- 5 B. While a goal of the sabbatical leave is rest and refreshment away from regular
6 parish responsibilities, it is not intended to be a "vacation." (Thus full vacation time
7 still should be granted to the pastor during the year of his sabbatical leave.)
- 8 C. The sabbatical leave should be used for personal improvement and/or professional
9 development. This could include the following: taking a short-term missionary trip;
10 finishing an advanced academic degree; writing a book; visiting church history
11 sites in Europe or biblical sites in the Middle East; planning worship, evangelism
12 and stewardship programs for the congregation's future; or visiting other
13 congregations and interviewing fellow pastors in similar ministry situations.
- 14 D. At the completion of the sabbatical leave, the pastor will give a written report of his
15 activities both to his congregation's leadership and to the Southern Illinois District
16 President showing he fulfilled the goals of his sabbatical leave proposal.

17
18 V. Funding

- 19 A. The pastor shall receive his regular salary and benefits (except auto allowance)
20 during the time of his sabbatical leave.
- 21 B. The cost to cover guest preaching and visitation in the congregation during the
22 pastor's sabbatical leave shall be paid by the congregation. This could be
23 accomplished:
- 24 1. Through the congregation's regular budget; or
- 25 2. By special gifts from members of the congregation to a designated Sabbatical
26 Fund; or
- 27 3. By applying for grants from professional agencies such as The Alban Institute
28 or the Lilly Foundation; or
- 29 4. By establishing an escrow account into which both the congregation and the
30 pastor regularly contribute money over the course of seven (7) years to be
31 used by the congregation to pay for pastoral care coverage during the pastor's
32 absence, and to be used by the pastor for his approved sabbatical expenses. If
33 the pastor leaves before or without taking a sabbatical, his portion of the
34 account would be returned to him, while the congregation could save its portion
35 for its next pastor eligible for a sabbatical leave.

36
37 SID Board of Directors

38
39 **OVERTURE 2-06 To Introduce Term Limits for Office of District President Beginning in 2024**

40
41 Whereas

42 The primary responsibility of our ordained ministers is to proclaim the Gospel and serve and equip
43 the members of the royal priesthood; and

Whereas

The district has already seen wisdom in limiting time in district office (including vice-presidents) according to District Bylaw 2.11.b: "All other elected or appointed District officers and members of District boards shall be ineligible for reelection or reappointment to the same board after serving a total of two complete successive terms," and

Whereas

The District President position should not be a de facto terminal position, and

Whereas

The current situation makes presidential transition awkward by either having a convention vote out an incumbent, or an incumbent working until retirement, and

Whereas

A term limit would lead to a more natural transition between presidents in many circumstances, therefore be it

Resolved

That the Southern Illinois District adopt a term limit to the office of District President, amending District Bylaw 2.11 as follows:

Present/Proposed Wording

2.11 Successive Terms

a. The number of successive terms in the office of President shall be a total of three terms.

~~a. b.~~ b. The number of successive terms in office of the President and the Schools and General Executive shall be without limitation.

~~b. c.~~ c. All other elected or appointed District officers and members of District boards shall be ineligible for reelection or reappointment to the same board after serving a total of two complete successive terms. They may become eligible again for election or appointment to the same office or board after an interval of three or more years.

And be it

Resolved

That this change take effect beginning with the next District Convention process (which is scheduled to meet in 2024).

Circuit 4

OVERTURE 2-07 To Disband the Board of Congregational Support

Whereas

the advance of technology has made District communication with congregations and schools much easier (email, video conferencing, etc), and

Whereas

the Schools and General executive, as well as other boards already in existence help with many of the purposes laid out for the Board of Congregational Support, and

Whereas

Synod's Office of National Mission and Concordia Publishing House provide materials on many subjects for all congregations to use, and

Whereas

filling the various boards of district with willing people is already difficult, and disbanding the Board for Congregational Support would free these men and women for other service, and

Whereas

the few items the Board has been tasked with over the past several years (see report) could be done by the Board of Spiritual Care, Board of Directors, or ad hoc committees, therefore be it

Resolved

That the Southern Illinois District in Convention give thanks for the many dedicated men and women who have served on the Board for Congregational Support in the past, and be it

Resolved

That the Southern Illinois District disband the Board of Congregational Support, and be it

Resolved

That the Southern Illinois District Bylaws be amended as follows:

Present/Proposed Wording

G. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2.41 Membership

The voting membership of the Board of Directors shall be constituted as follows: The President of the District, the Vice Presidents of the District, the Secretary of the District, the Treasurer of the District, eight laymen, the chairman of the Board of Missions, ~~the chairman of the Board of Congregational Support~~, one Circuit Visitor, and ~~two~~ three commissioned ministers. (Therefore, the Board of Directors is composed of nine lay members and nine-professional church worker members.) The Schools and General Executive of the District shall serve as an advisory member. Other staff shall serve as advisory members as determined by the Board of Directors.

and

~~VII. THE BOARD OF CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT~~

~~7.01 Membership~~

~~————The Board of Congregational Support shall consist of eight members. Two members of the board shall be ordained ministers, two members of the board shall be commissioned ministers, and four members of the board shall be laity. One of the two commissioned ministers shall be elected chairman by the District Convention, who, as chairman, shall be a member of the Board of Directors. The Schools and General Executive will be an advisory member of this Board.~~

~~7.03 Purpose~~

~~————a. The purpose of this board shall be to work in support of congregations as it provides services to the congregations, helping equip them meet the various needs expressed. The areas identified in which these services may fall include: Administration, Education, Evangelism, Family Life, Human Care, Stewardship, and Youth.~~

~~————b. This board will also assist the Schools and General Executive in providing support for congregations, school boards, and principals in the promotion, operation, and expansion of Christian day schools, pre-schools, and high schools. This might include areas such as: legal matters, educational resources, accreditation, funding, starting a new school, leadership training, etc.~~

~~c. To accomplish its purpose the board may adopt any goals, policies, procedures, and guidelines it deems necessary. These are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.~~
~~d. Should it desire to do so, the board may also form various sub-committees, task forces to focus on specific areas or issues, or assign specific members of the board to concentrate on a designated area.~~
~~e. The board shall develop and submit its annual budget request at the time designated by the finance committee of the Board of Directors.~~

7.05 Meetings

~~The Board will meet at least four times a year.~~

Circuit 3

Overture 2-08 To appoint a Task Force to evaluate the current parameters for qualifying as an electoral circuit at conventions of the Synod.

Rationale:

The Principle of Franchise in the Synod

The basic principle of franchise in the Synod at the time of its formation in 1847 involved two essential components. The first essential component was that the Synod consisted of equal (*Pfarrgemeinde*),[1] (pastor-congregation) no matter their numerical size, and it was these *Pfarrgemeinde* (pastor-congregations) that held the franchise. The second essential component was the maintaining of a “balance of power” in the conventions of the Synod between the clergy and the laity. To accomplish this principle of franchise, the 1847 Constitution of the Synod assigned the franchise to each member *Pfarrgemeinde* of the Synod, with each *Pfarrgemeinde* to receive two votes, one to be cast by its pastor and the other, by the lay delegate accredited by the congregation.

In 1924, when the Constitution was translated into English from German, the term “parish” was used in reference to situations in which a pastor served more than one individual congregation and the term “congregation” was used to reference situations in which a pastor served only one congregation. Thus, each congregation or parish (in this specific limited sense) was entitled to two votes, one by its pastor, and the other by its accredited lay delegate. Today the term “parish” has been replaced with “multi-congregation parish”, Article XII 10 a.

The Historic Practice of Franchise at the Conventions of the Synod

1 At the time of its inception every congregation or parish was entitled to send its pastor and a lay
2 delegate to the conventions of the Synod. When the Synod divided into districts this did not change.
3 Each congregation or parish sent two delegates to both the conventions of the Synod and the District.
4 The entire Synod would meet in convention every three years and the districts would meet in
5 convention annually.

7 Originally conventions were held in one of the congregations of the synod. As a result of the growth
8 of the synod, it was becoming difficult to find host congregations large enough to provide the
9 necessary housing for all the delegates. Therefore, it was proposed to the 1864 convention to begin
10 to hold delegate conventions. However, the congregations in Fort Wayne and St. Louis assured the
11 convention that they would have no problem serving as hosts, so no changes were adopted.
12 [*Proceedings*, 1864, p. 3] However, by 1869 this assurance proved to be unrealistic, and C.F.W.
13 Walther suggested establishing delegate conventions. Professor George Schick was given the
14 responsibility to develop a plan. This tentative plan was for two or more congregations to select one
15 pastor and one lay delegate. When the plan was adopted in 1872 it was specified that the pastor and
16 lay delegate should be selected from between two to seven congregations. [*Proceedings*, 1872, pp.
17 96-97] Presumably, small congregations would form large groupings and large congregations would
18 form small groupings. While the convention was originally scheduled for 1875, the first delegate
19 convention was convened a year earlier in 1874.

21 The suggestion for a delegate convention, proposed in 1869, was actually the second grouping of
22 congregations within the Synod. Prior to this formation of electoral circuits, visitation circuits had
23 been established by the Synod at its 1866 convention. While the two existed side by side, they were
24 created for completely different purposes. Electoral circuits functioned only for the purpose of
25 selecting delegates to conventions of the Synod. However, the concept behind the establishment of
26 visitation circuits was to address a concern considered crucial from the very beginning of the Synod,
27 which was to ensure and retain the unity of doctrine and commitment to the Scriptures and
28 Confessions within the Synod.

30 At the founding of the Synod in 1847 the responsibility for visitation to ensure unity and faithfulness to
31 the Scriptures and Confessions was assigned to the President of the Synod. When the Synod
32 divided into districts in 1854, one of the major concerns was maintaining this unity within the Synod,
33 and it was resolved by giving the responsibility of visitation not only to the president of each district of
34 the Synod, but also to the President of the Synod as well. However, with the rapid growth of the
35 number of congregations in the Synod, it became impossible for the President of the Synod to carry
36 out this duty of visitation. Therefore, the 1864 the convention removed the duties of visitation from
37 the general President and essentially entrusted all duties of visitation of the congregations and
38 individual members of the Synod to the district president. The one exception specified was that if the
39 President of the Synod was convinced that a district president had erred in his dealing with a
40 congregation or individual member, the President of the Synod himself was authorized to investigate
41 personally. [*Proceedings*, 1864, p. 4; 1873 *Handbook*, p. 89.]

1

2 Again, due to the growth of the Synod, these visitation responsibilities quickly proved to be too great
3 for a district president alone to carry out. Therefore, the 1866 convention adopted a resolution
4 establishing visitation circuits of two to seven congregations in order to help the district presidents
5 carry out their visitation responsibilities. [*Proceedings*, 1866, p. 85]

6

7 When the decision to have delegate conventions was adopted at the 1872 convention, while the
8 guidelines were also set at two to seven congregations being given one pastor and one lay delegate,
9 which was the same numbers as used for visitation circuits, there does not seem to have been any
10 effort to have these two types of circuits coincide, or even an indication that they should. In both
11 cases, districts were free to group them as they pleased.

12

13 In the ensuing years a significant variation in the size of electoral circuits developed among
14 the various districts, with many districts having electoral circuits of two or three congregations. In an
15 effort to reduce the number of delegates at synodical conventions the 1893 Synodical convention
16 adopted a resolution calling for circuits to number between five to seven congregations.
17 [*Proceedings*, 1893, p. 125] However, there was no change in Article III "Membership" as the 1899
18 edition of the *Synodical Handbook* does not reflect this continuing to read: "The power of this
19 corporation shall be lodged with the accredited clerical and lay delegates of the congregations in
20 actual membership with this synod. Not less than two and not more than seven congregations being
21 entitled to one clerical and one lay representative in this organization at the option of said
22 congregations, and only such delegates shall be entitled to a vote at the meetings of this Synod."
23 [1899 *Handbook*, Fourth Edition, page 54]

24

25 Synodical President Dr. Ludwig Fuerbringer reported to 1908 convention of the Synod that 77 of the
26 245 electoral circuits did not conform to this rule adopted by the 1899 convention, and he
27 recommended enlarging electoral circuits to at least ten congregations. However, no action was
28 taken until the 1917 convention, which would then become effective with the 1920 convention. This
29 convention also adopted a resolution indicating that visitation and electoral circuits should coincide as
30 much as possible. [1917 *Proceedings* pp. 108-109] The following resolution is noteworthy as it
31 explains the reasoning for the change.

32

33 Reducing Number of Delegates

34

35 On the past scale of representation in the Delegate Convention, Synod has
36 become too large a body, both for effective dispatch of business and even more so with
37 respect to the quartering of delegates. After considering various propositions, Synod
38

1 *Resolved*, 1. That henceforth from five to ten congregations shall combine to
2 form an electoral circuit, with the understanding that the relative size of congregations
3 shall determine how many shall constitute a circuit, provided, however, that no circuit
4 comprise less than five nor more than ten congregations; each circuit, as heretofore, to
5 be represented by a clerical and a lay delegate. [*Proceedings*, 1917 - English, p. 52]

6
7 These parameters remained in effect until the 1944 convention when a change was made,
8 again prompted by the perception that the conventions were becoming too large. Note the reasons
9 specified in the resolution adopted:

10
11 Whereas, The number of delegates to synodical conventions is steadily growing
12 larger; and

13 Whereas, This causes great difficulty in providing proper housing; and

14 Whereas, An equal reduction of delegates will not infringe upon the
15 representation rights of any congregation; therefore be it

16 *Resolved*, That Art. IV, A, page 19 of the *Synodical Handbook* be revised to
17 read: "Every ten to fifteen member congregations shall form an electoral circuit, which
18 shall elect one pastor and one layman and their alternates to represent them at the
19 conventions of Synod".

20 [*Proceedings*, 1944, p. 207]

21
22 The Synodical Survey Commission Report, written by Dr. August Suelflow in 1959 indicated
23 that in nine of the districts, the electoral and visitation circuits were usually identical. The other two
24 thirds of the districts used a system which treated the two types of circuits independently in one
25 degree or another. The report concluded that it is legitimate to question the degree to which the
26 districts followed the encouragement of the 1917 resolution. Note the following from the 1960
27 *Handbook*, which sets the parameters, but makes no specific connection between electoral and
28 visitation circuits.

29
30 1.51 An electoral circuit shall comprise from 10 to 15 member congregations.
31 Each electoral circuit shall be represented by one pastor and one layman. Large
32 congregations shall form small circuits, and small congregations shall form large
33 circuits. A fractional portion remaining after the circuits have been formed shall
34 be entitled to the same representation as a complete circuit.

35
36 The 1967 convention proposed a manner of electing delegates to conventions in a way which
37 would ensure that there was some kind of an ongoing relationship between the congregations
38 involved in the electoral circuits. It did this by both changing the parameters of an electoral circuit

1 and tying visitation circuits to electoral circuits. It also proposed a means by which an electoral
2 circuit, which did not meet the parameters, could request an exemption from the office of the
3 president. Note the following sections from the overture proposed in the 1967 *Convention Workbook*:

4
5 Considerable confusion and dissatisfaction exist with reference to the election of
6 delegates to the convention of the Synod and their accountability. For example:

7
8 1. *Electoral Circuits* (1.51). These have often been artificially created entities,
9 with little cohesiveness, hindering effective postconvention action in implementing
10 resolutions and even in transmitting information. We propose that representation be on
11 the basis of the regular, permanent *visitation circuits*.

12
13 2. *Number of Congregations* (1.51). Present requirement: from 10-15 member
14 congregations shall form an electoral circuit. Some visitation circuits have fewer than
15 10 congregations. If two visitation circuits are combined (we are proposing that
16 provision be made for that possibility), the electoral circuit may well number more than
17 15 congregations. Furthermore, many have felt that representation should be based not
18 on the number of congregations but on the number of communicant members involved.
19 We propose a method based on *both* number of congregations and number of
20 communicants, with a wide enough spread between minimum and maximum
21 requirements in each category to take care of most situations and with a prescribed
22 procedure which permits the President of the Synod to deal with those cases which still
23 prove to be exceptional.

24
25 4. *Functions of the Delegate*. What does the delegate do? Presumably he
26 attends the convention, studies, listens, dialogs, makes judgments, votes. And then,
27 according to the present paragraph 1.55, he reports to the circuit the action of the
28 Synod. And this is all? This delegate has just had the experience of a lifetime. He has
29 been caught up in a great cause. He has gained fresh insights. He has grown
30 tremendously in the faith. A fresh love for his Synod and for his Savior lives in his heart.
31 And then he goes home. To what? We are of the opinion that the Synod should dignify
32 this position and therefore recommend that the delegate be elected for a 2-year term, to
33 serve until the next convention of the Synod. What a source of power this man can be
34 for the mission of the church!

35
36 Proposed Wording 1.51:

37
38 Voting delegates shall consist of one pastor and one layman from each electoral
39 circuit. An electoral circuit shall consist either of one or of two adjacent visitation
40 circuits, as shall be determined by each District, on the basis of the following
41 requirements: each pair of delegates shall represent from 7 to 20 member
42 congregations, involving an aggregate communicant membership ranging from 1,500 to
43 10,000. Exceptions to these requirements and limitations can be made only by the

President of the synod upon the request of a district Board of Directors. Voting delegates shall serve a 2-year term, beginning with the convention; after the convention they shall function as resource persons in their circuit and assist in the dissemination and implementation of the synodical resolutions in their area. [*Convention Workbook*, 1967, 124-125]

The convention adopted the proposed wording for electoral circuits. *Proceedings*, 1967 pp. 121-122. The 2019 Handbook retains essentially the same wording with a slight change in structure and wording. Bylaw 3.1.2 (a)-(d).

Current Trends

Due to demographic changes over the past several convention cycles, it has become necessary for more and more visitation circuits either to request an exemption from the President of the Synod or to be combined in order to qualify to meet the parameters for an electoral circuit. The result has been a gradual decrease in the number of electoral circuits within the Synod and the number of delegates attending conventions.

The following table is compiled on the basis of the *Proceedings* from the various convention years and *The Lutheran Annual*. (Note the figures for 1967, 1969, and 1986 included the three Canadian Districts and the Argentina / Brazil District*, which have since formed their own church body.) The 1967 convention was held prior to the adoption of the current parameters. The percentage in parenthesis for 1986, 2007, 2016, and 2019 states the percentage of visitation circuits which were also electoral circuits. The number of exemptions is unknown.

| Year | Electoral Circuits | Delegates | Visitation Circuits | Congregations |
|------|--------------------|-----------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1967 | 424 (441)* | 882 | ? | 5904 |
| 1969 | 478 (503)* | 1006 | ? | 5765 |
| 1986 | 558 (580)* (89%) | 1160 | 624 | 5933 (6150)* |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------|-----|-------|------|-----|------|
| 1 | | | | | | |
| 2 | 2007 | 639 | (99%) | 1278 | 643 | 6168 |
| 3 | | | | | | |
| 4 | 2016 | 568 | (89%) | 1136 | 633 | 5968 |
| 5 | | | | | | |
| 6 | 2019 | 551 | (86%) | 1102 | 636 | 5875 |
| 7 | | | | | | |
| 8 | 2023 | ? | | ? | 625 | 5777 |

9

10 The current estimate for the 2023 convention is that approximately 20% of the visitation circuits
11 currently do not qualify as electoral circuits, which would be about 125 of the 625 visitation circuits.
12 This in turn would mean that if no exemptions to the parameters were granted by the President of the
13 Synod, there would be about 500 electoral circuits sending delegates to the 2023 Synod convention
14 and about 1000 voting delegates.

15

16 What is unknown in the above table is the number of exceptions granted for each convention to
17 visitation circuits that did not qualify as an electoral circuit and the number of visitation circuits that
18 were joined together to form an electoral circuit.

19

20 These numbers indicate that a growing number of visitation circuits, because of demographic
21 reasons, no longer qualify as electoral circuits. In addition, the current Bylaws provide no guidelines
22 to the President of the Synod for determining whether or not to grant an exception, or the basis on
23 which exemptions are to be considered. This ambiguity could result in questions being raised
24 regarding why one visitation circuit is granted an exception while another is not. Another
25 complicating factor involving circuits and voting, not covered by the Bylaws, is the fact that there are
26 currently 13 multi-congregation parishes which cross district lines, as well as an additional 50 multi-
27 congregation parishes within districts which are in different visitation circuits. This generates
28 confusion in these situations regarding voting for a circuit visitor, eligibility to represent an electoral
29 circuit, and voting at district conventions.

30

31 All of this points to the advisability for the Synod, due to demographic changes, to again consider the
32 parameters for the electoral circuits which select delegates to conventions of the Synod to determine
33 if they are adequate as they are or should be changed. In addition, it would be helpful for the Synod

1 to clarify some of the ambiguity in the Bylaws regarding multi-congregation parishes which cross
2 district or circuit lines.

3
4 Therefore, be it resolved:

5
6 That the Synod in convention establish a task force to consider the parameters for electoral circuits,
7 and to clarify any ambiguities in the Bylaws regarding exceptions to the electoral circuit parameters
8 and to address situations of multi-congregation parishes which cross district and circuit lines.

9
10
11
12 [1] The German term used was *Pfarrgemeinde*, and it was defined in a footnote to the 1847
13 Constitution as “either one single congregation or the sum of the individual congregations which the
14 pastor serves [*bedient*], as, in Germany, the territory in which he serves is called *Kirchspiel* or
15 *Kirchensprengel*. The pastor may serve 3 or 4 or more congregations, locally separated; they are in
16 relation to him essentially only one congregation.”

17 Southern Illinois District Commission on Constitutional Matters

18 **Overture 2-09 To Amend District Bylaw 2.97**

19 **Rationale**

20 As needs for communication throughout the Southern Illinois District changes, delegating district wide
21 communication to four individuals may be overwhelming and taxing to volunteers, allowing the
22 Commission on Communication certain flexibility in its make-up will allow for a more flexible and
23 manageable oversight of district communications.

24 Therefore be it

25 *Resolved*, That District Bylaw 2.97 be amended as follows:

26 **PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING**

27 ***2.97 Membership***

28 The Commission of Communications shall consist of at least four members appointed by the
29 Board of Directors. ~~One shall be an ordained minister, one shall be a commissioned minister, and~~
30 ~~two shall be laity.~~ There shall be at least one ordained minister, at least one commissioned minister,
31 and at least two lay members on the Commission. The commission will elect its own chairman, and is
32 responsible to the Board of Directors

Overtures for Floor Committee Three - Life Together

Overture 3-01 TO ENCOURAGE CONGREGATIONS TO ENHANCE THEIR OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES

WHEREAS: The Church of God is made up of people of all ages, all of whom receive God's grace, mercy, and peace, AND

WHEREAS: according to congregations' statistics from LCMS Research Services, through 2020 in the Southern Illinois District, there are more than 8,073 Christians over the age of 65 in need of pastoral care, AND

WHEREAS: there are almost 6,391 additional Christians between the ages of 50-64 in our congregations, making up a total of 44% of the baptized membership in our district that is over the age of 50, AND

WHEREAS: older adults possess gifts, talents, and wisdom that can be used for the ministry of the congregations; AND

WHEREAS: spiritual growth is an integral part of the aging process; THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED: that the Southern Illinois District Older Adult Advisory Committee be encouraged to help congregations promote and plan a ministry of, to, for, and with older adults; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: that congregations encourage ministries that bless older adults and encourage them to be a vibrant faith response in service to Jesus Christ, all the way through life, AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: that congregations be encouraged and equip leaders to see the value of older adults in their ongoing ministries and as a critical opportunity for outreach into the community as the number of older adults continues to grow, AND BE IT FINALLY

RESOLVED, that congregational leaders be encouraged to appoint an Older Adult Coordinator (staff or lay volunteer) to distribute materials and news to intentionally embrace, enhance, and enlarge an older adult ministry, in their congregations.

SID Board of Directors

OVERTURE 3-02 "To Thank God for the Ministry of the Rev. John Lukomski"

WHEREAS the Lord of the Church called the Rev. John Lukomski to serve in the Office of the Holy Ministry at the dual parish of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, New Athens and Trinity Lutheran Church, Darmstadt in the Southern IL District in 1978, and

1 WHEREAS Rev. Lukomski served his entire pastoral career at the dual parish of St. Paul's Lutheran
2 Church, New Athens and Trinity Lutheran Church, Darmstadt in the Southern IL District from 1978
3 until his retirement in 2019, and
4

5 WHEREAS Rev. Lukomski served the Southern IL District in a variety of capacities throughout his
6 career including serving as Circuit Counselor, 1st Vice President, Chair for the Board of Missions,
7 Chair for District Youth Gatherings, and member of the Board of Spiritual Life, and
8

9 WHEREAS Rev. Lukomski served the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod at large throughout his
10 career including hosting the KFUE radio show “Wrestling with the Basics” and including writing
11 various materials for Concordia Publishing House.
12

13 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Southern IL District in its 2021 convention give thanks to
14 the Lord of the Church for Rev. Lukomski's faithful and continual service to St. Paul's and Trinity, and
15 be it further
16

17 RESOLVED that the Southern IL District in its 2021 convention give thanks to the Lord of the Church
18 for Rev. Lukomski's faithful and continual service to the Southern IL District, and be it further
19

20 RESOLVED that the Southern IL District in its 2021 convention give thanks to the Lord of the Church
21 for Rev. Lukomski's faithful and continual service to the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod at large,
22 and Be it finally
23

24 RESOLVED the Southern IL District in its 2021 convention rise and sing the common doxology giving
25 thanks to the Lord of the Church for Rev. Lukomski's service to the Church.
26

27 Respectfully Submitted,
28 St. Paul's Lutheran Church, New Athens; Adopted by Voters on Aug 2, 2020
29 Trinity Lutheran Church, Darmstadt; Adopted by Voters on Aug 23, 2020
30
31

32 33 **OVERTURE 3-03 “To Extol the Blessing of Retired Pastors by Upholding our Beloved** 34 **Confessions”**

35 Overview: Our church body is blessed with many retired pastors who still have the gift of
36 proper division of Law and Gospel and the wisdom of many years of experience. For those
37 retired men who still have strength and desire to serve, the church body ought wisely and
38 faithfully utilize them in the good order Christ established for His Church, as confessed in
39 Augsburg Confession XIV.

40 Overture:

41 WHEREAS, A pastor may retire according to civil law (IRS definitions) and still retain his
42 divine Call from a congregation to serve the people of God, and

43 WHEREAS, Many pastors, upon retirement, also choose to resign their Call to the
44 congregation they have served, and

45 WHEREAS, Many retired pastors nevertheless retain the strength and desire to serve the
46 church in pulpit supply, vacancy situations, communion of the hospitalized, etc., and

1 WHEREAS, Our Lutheran Confessions rightly confess that “no one is to preach and teach
2 without a rightly ordered call” (AC XIV), and

3 WHEREAS, The notions of “once called, always called” are not Lutheran in their theology,
4 but more similar to the Roman Catholic notion of “indelible character” and thus, ought to be
5 repudiated, and

6 WHEREAS, A rightly ordered Call is a divine reality between God, congregation, and pastor
7 and need not be limited by worldly, financial matters (1 Thessalonians 2:8-9, Philippians
8 4:10-20, 2 Corinthians 6:3, 2 Corinthians 12:16); therefore be it

9 RESOLVED That the Southern Illinois District president establish a plan to ensure the
10 retired pastor who has resigned his former call but still seeks to serve the Church after
11 having retired to a new congregation receive a divine Call from that local congregation for the
12 purpose of serving that congregation, or that he receive a divine Call from the local circuit for
13 the purpose of benefiting that circuit or district sister-congregations with his availability as
14 “circuit rider”, and be it further

15 RESOLVED that the Southern Illinois District president be directed to encourage The
16 Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to advocate and adopt such a plan throughout our
17 districts that, in harmony and good order, our beloved church body may wisely and faithfully
18 utilize retired pastors in the good order Christ established for His Church.

19
20 Respectfully submitted,
21 The pastors of SID Circuits 9, 10, and 11
22
23
24

1 **OVERTURE 3-04 To Promote and Commend the Leadership of Pastors in Parish School**
2 **Worship**

3
4 WHEREAS, our Lord Himself desires children to come to Him (Matt. 19:13-15, Mark 10:14-16) and
5 sternly warns those who teach the faith to children how serious this task is (Matt. 18:6, Mark 9:42,
6 Luke 17:2); and

7 WHEREAS, God holds pastors accountable for the souls placed under their care (Heb. 13:17, Ezek.
8 33:7-9); and

9 WHEREAS, Lutheran schools are not entities unto themselves but assist the pastor in his duty of
10 instructing the young in the faith; and

11 WHEREAS, Martin Luther in his Preface to the *Small Catechism* pleads with pastors, "Therefore, I
12 beg you all for God's sake, my dear sirs and brethren, who are pastors or preachers, to devote
13 yourselves heartily to your office (1 Timothy 4:13). Have pity on the people who are entrusted to you
14 (Acts 20:28) and help us teach the catechism to the people, and especially to the young."
15 (Enchiridion SC Preface, par. 6); and

16 WHEREAS, in describing the salutary ceremonies which Lutherans observe, the Confessors state:
17 "The children sing psalms in order that they may learn. . . . Among us the pastors and ministers of the
18 churches are encouraged publicly to instruct and hear the youth. This ceremony produces the best
19 fruit" (Ap. AC XV, par. 40-4); and

20 WHEREAS, the Lutheran Confessions state: "Our churches teach that no one should publicly teach
21 in the Church . . . without a rightly ordered call." (AC XIV); and

22 WHEREAS, the Synodical Constitution assumes the leadership of pastor in school as well as church,
23 as when it prescribes as a condition of membership the "Exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda,
24 hymn books, and catechisms in church **and school**" (Article VI); and

25 WHEREAS, the Synod in convention has encouraged all Lutheran schools to strengthen their
26 Lutheran ethos, including through:

27 "A pastor who supports a school by eagerly serving the school as its spiritual leader, faithfully
28 ministering with faculty, students, and their families," and

29 "A joyful affirmation and use of the historic, liturgical orders of the church in the worship life of
30 students at school and at home" (Res. 8-01A, 2016); and

31 WHEREAS, the Lutheran day school setting provides a rich environment for integrating devotional
32 times led by those other than the pastor (e.g. special mission speakers, object lessons, teacher-led
33 devotionals) throughout the week in classrooms and school assemblies without the unnecessary
34 confusion of incorporating these activities into the school's regular communal worship services
35 (chapel); therefore be it

36 RESOLVED, that the Southern Illinois District in convention commend its pastors eagerly to take up
37 their duties as spiritual leaders within our Lutheran schools as well as congregations; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, that the Southern Illinois District in convention commend the principals and
2 administrators of its schools to seek out the exclusive spiritual leadership of pastors for chapel
3 services; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, that the Southern Illinois District in convention encourage its schools to welcome
5 pastors as the God-given leaders for worship and to use their designated chapel times for worship
6 services that will instruct our children in the liturgy and regular worship life of the Christian Church;
7 and be it further

8 RESOLVED, that the Southern Illinois District in convention give thanks to God for faithful Lutheran
9 school teachers who support the work of pastors by extending the catechesis of school worship into
10 their classrooms; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, that the Southern Illinois District actively promote pastoral leadership in school worship
12 through the visitation and work of the District Educational Executive; and be it finally

13 RESOLVED, that the Southern Illinois District in convention memorialize the Synod in Convention to
14 promote and commend the leadership of pastors in parish school worship throughout all the schools
15 of our Synod.

16
17 Respectfully submitted,
18 The pastors of SID Circuits 9, 10, and 11

19
20 **OVERTURE 3-05 To Strengthen Oversight of the Specific Ministry Pastor Program**

21
22 WHEREAS, The Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Program was established by 2007 Resolution
23 5-01B; and

24
25 WHEREAS, Specific ministry pastors serve the Church under supervision because their
26 theological education has been formed in part by and for a specific ministry context (Bylaw 2.13.1(b));
27 and

28
29 WHEREAS, This supervision is essential for the ministry as well as the confidence of those
30 served and the Church at large that the ministry is conducted in a manner consistent with the Holy
31 Scriptures and the pastor's unconditional subscription to the Lutheran Confessions; and

32
33 WHEREAS, This supervision is not a perfunctory task, but one requiring close attention to the
34 needs of the specific ministry and the conduct of that ministry; and

35
36 WHEREAS, Any change in ministry context is by its nature inconsistent with the purpose of the
37 SMP Program and the theological education of the specific ministry pastor and therefore should be
38 considered only in extreme circumstances; and

39
40 WHEREAS, It is essential that a student beginning his theological education in a specific
41 ministry context be known by the people he serves; and

42
43 WHEREAS, The Bylaws of the LCMS are vague as to acceptable rationale for allowing a
44 specific ministry pastor to be offered or accept a call for which he has not been trained; and

1
2 WHEREAS, Confidence in the SMP Program will be raised by more clarity regarding the
3 oversight and supervision of the program; therefore be it
4

5 *Resolved*, An “SMP Program Oversight Committee” be established; and be it further
6

7 *Resolved*, The SMP Program Oversight Committee shall consist of the First Vice-President of
8 the Synod as chairman, the Secretary of the Synod, a district president appointed by the Council of
9 Presidents, a representative of each Seminary, and an at-large member, selected by the committee,
10 who is an ordained minister (who currently serves as a supervisor for an SMP Pastor); and be it
11 further
12

13 *Resolved*, That prior to acceptance by the Seminaries into the SMP program and initial
14 placement as SMP vicars, the SMP Oversight Committee shall approve the placement of all vicars
15 enrolling in the SMP Program as well as all calls, whether first or subsequent, to ensure that the
16 ministry context is consistent with the purposes of the program and the specific education and
17 training of the specific ministry pastor; and be it further
18

19 *Resolved*, If a district president determines that a specific ministry pastor may be offered a
20 call to a context in any way distinct from the ministry to which he is currently called then this action
21 must be pre-approved by the SMP Program Oversight Committee before such a call is issued; and
22 be it further
23

24 *Resolved*, Every vicar enrolled in the SMP Program shall serve in the congregation in which
25 he is a member and has been a member for at least three years; and be it further
26

27 *Resolved*, When a specific ministry pastor serves within a parish which is also served by an
28 ordained minister who is not a specific ministry pastor, then that specific ministry pastor shall be
29 supervised by a pastor of that parish; and be it further
30

31 *Resolved*, When a specific ministry pastor serves in a parish which is not served by an
32 ordained minister who is not a specific ministry pastor then the specific ministry pastor shall be
33 supervised by an ordained minister who resides within the circuit containing the parish or within
34 similar physical proximity; and be it further
35

36 *Resolved*, Excepting the required supervision of the district president, no ordained minister
37 shall be the supervisor of more than one specific ministry pastor; and be it further
38

39 *Resolved*, The ministers of religion—ordained records maintained by district presidents as
40 well as the official membership roster of the Synod shall include the ordained minister under whose
41 supervision a specific ministry pastor serves; and be it further
42

43 *Resolved*, The Commission on Handbook update the Bylaws of the LCMS to reflect these
44 resolutions; and be it finally,
45

46 *Resolved*, That the Southern Illinois District submit this resolution to the 2022 LCMS
47 Convention.
48

49 Circuit 3
50
51
52

1
2

1 **Proposed Convention Schedule**

3 **Thursday, February 3, 2022**

5 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Registration (In the lobby of the Regency
6 Conference Center)

8 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. The Divine Service [Separate Worship Book will be provided.]

9 Preacher – Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison

10 Host Pastor – Rev. Kirk Clayton

11 Host congregation – Zion, Mascoutah

13 7:30 – 8:00 p.m. Fellowship/Break

15 8:00 p.m. *Floor Committee Four - Convention*
16 *Arrangements and Registration*

17 Call to Order – Rev. Timothy J. Scharr

18 8:05 p.m. Adoption of Standing Rules

19 8:10 p.m. President's Address – Rev. Timothy J.
20 Scharr

22 8:25 p.m. *Committee Five – Nominations and*
23 *Elections**

24 (Balloting for President-
25 preceded with prayer by Chaplain)

26 (1st Balloting for Vice-
27 Presidents)

29 8:45 p.m. Closing Devotions

30 9:00 p.m. *Caucus of Circuit 5 Voting Delegates regarding Circuit*
31 *Visitor*

33 **Friday, February 4, 2022**

34 Breakfast on your own

1 8:00 a.m. Morning Devotion

2

3 8:20 a.m. *Floor Committee Four - Convention Arrangements and Registration*

4 Call to Order – President Timothy J. Scharr

5

6 8:25 a.m. Business

7 *Committee Five – Nominations and Elections**

8 *(Balloting for Vice Presidents cont’d)*

9

10 8:45 a.m. Synodical Report – Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, President of The

11 Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

12

13 9:30 a.m. Business*

14

15 *Committee One – Witness and Theology*

16 *Committee Two – Mercy and Administration*

17

18 10:00 a.m. Break

19

20 10:15 a.m. **Advisory Delegates (Pastoral and Commissioned) Caucus**

21 To select delegates to the 2023 Synod Convention in Milwaukee

22 10:30 a.m. Welcome New Members of Synod

23 Theological Essay – Rev. Dr. Ken Schurb

24

25 11:30 a.m. Synodical Report Q & A with the Rev. Dr. Matthew

26 Harrison, President of

27 The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

28

29 11:50 a.m. Prison Ministry Special Recognition

1
2 11:55 a.m. Noonday Prayer
3
4 12:00 noon Lunch (Meal #1 -- you MUST have a #1 on your name tag to be served)
5
6 1:00 p.m. Convention Resumes with Responsive Prayer I
7

8 **Friday, February 4, 2022 – Continued**

9
10 1:15 p.m. Lutheran Church Extension Fund – Rev. Bart Day, Mr. Paul Reeves
11
12 1:25 p.m. Business
13 *Committee One – Witness and Theology*
14 *International Mission Partnership Dominican Republic – Rev. Joel*
15 *Fritsche*
16 *Southern Illinois District Advocates 4 Life – Mrs. Monica Shannon*
17 *Lansdowne Community Initiative – Rev. Dr. Willie Stallworth*
18
19 2:00 p.m. Business*
20
21 *Committee Five– Nominations and Elections (with prayer for guidance by the*
22 *Chaplain)*
23 2:20 p.m. Business*
24
25 *Committee Two – Mercy and Administration*
26 *Committee Three – Life Together and Covid Response*
27
28 2:55 p.m. Greetings from the Auxiliaries (LWML, LHM)
29 3:00 p.m. Break
30 3:15 p.m. Reports*
31 Report from Concordia Publishing House

1 Report of the Schools and General Executive
2 Report of the Treasurer
3 Report of the Mission Board
4 Report of the LCMS Foundation
5
6 4:00 p.m. Business*
7 *Committee One – Witness and Theology*
8 *Committee Five – Nominations and Elections*
9
10 5:30 p.m. Greetings from seminaries and universities
11 6:15 p.m. Closing Devotions
12 6:30p.m. Evening Meal/Fellowship (Meal #2 -- you MUST have a #2 on your name tag to
13 be served.)
14 **Saturday, February 5, 2022**
15 Breakfast on your own
16 8:00 a.m. Morning Devotions
17
18 8:10 a.m. Floor Committee Four - Convention Arrangements and Registration
19 Call to Order – President Timothy J. Scharr
20
21 Theological Essay – Part II – Rev. Dr. Ken Schurb
22
23 9:00 a.m. Business
24 *Committee Five – Nominations and Elections*
25

1 9:10 a.m. Business* (The President will call up Floor Committees as
2 needed)
3 *Committee One – Witness and Theology*
4 *Committee Two – Mercy and Administration*
5 *Committee Three – Life Together and Covid Response*
6
7 10:00 a.m. Break
8
9 10:15 a.m. Business* (The President will call up Floor Committees as needed
10 to complete business before the close of the convention.)
11 *Committee One – Witness and Theology*
12 *Committee Two – Mercy and Administration*
13 *Committee Three – Life Together and Covid Response*
14
15 11:30 a.m. Closing Service
16 Installation of Officers and Board Members
17
18 12:30 p.m. – Homeward Bound -- May God protect and keep us all!
19
20 See you at our next District Convention tentatively set for February 23-25, 2025
21

1 Floor Committee Members

2

3 Committee One - Witness and Theology

4 Ordained Congregation

5 Rev. Scott Adle, Chair Good Shepherd, Collinsville

6 Rev. Heath Curtis Zion Carpenter & Trinity, Worden

7 Rev. Mark Surburg Good Shepherd, Marion

8 Commissioned

9 Mr. Bill Becker St. John, Red Bud

10 Lay

11 Mr. Dennis Shannon Christ Our Savior, Freeburg

12 Mr. Dale Kranawetter Christ, Jacob

13 Mr. Kurt Johnson St. Paul, Hamel

14 Advisory

15 2nd VP Rev. Dr. Kirk Clayton Zion, Mascoutah

16

17 Committee Two – Mercy and Administration

18 Ordained Congregation

19 Rev. Chris Prumm, Chair St. Paul, Nokomis

20 Rev. Chris Spelbring Zion, Belleville

21 Rev. Jonathan Jennings Bethlehem, Ferrin

22 Commissioned

23 Mr. John Schaff Trinity, Hoyleton

24 Lay

25 Mr. Frank Glaub Good Shepherd, Marion

26 Mr. Kevin Harthemeyer Hope, Highland

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Mr. Karl Zilm | Faith, Godfrey |
| 2 | <u>Advisory</u> | |
| 3 | District Secretary, Rev. Peter III | Trinity, Millstadt |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | <u>Committee Three – Life Together & Covid Response</u> | |
| 6 | <u>Ordained</u> | <u>Congregation</u> |
| 7 | Rev. Tony Troup, Chair | Immanuel, Waterloo |
| 8 | Rev. Stephen Krenz | St. Paul, Columbia |
| 9 | Rev. Alan Kornacki | St. Peter, Campbell Hill and Bethel, Duquoin |
| 10 | <u>Commissioned</u> | |
| 11 | Mr. Eric Dunn | Trinity, Edwardsville |
| 12 | <u>Lay</u> | |
| 13 | Mr. Bob Thouvenin | Messiah, Carlyle |
| 14 | Mr. Alan Stumpf | Immanuel, Waterloo |
| 15 | Mr. Brian Keller | Jerusalem, Collinsville |
| 16 | <u>Advisory</u> | |
| 17 | 1 st VP Rev. Mark Nebel | St. John, Red Bud |
| 18 | | |
| 19 | | |
| 20 | | |
| 21 | | |

3 One little *word* can fell him

4 Addendum to “Communion and Covid-19”

5 Ten reasons to question whether “online Communion” is “truly good, right and 6 salutary”

7 **O**n March 20, 2020, the CTCR unanimously endorsed “Communion and Covid-19” (CC19), an opinion on
8 certain Holy Communion practices during the coronavirus pandemic. The opinion was drafted by the staff, in
9 concurrence with the chairman of the Commission, at the request of the Synod president. While the opinion in its
10 entirety met with widespread expressions of gratitude and agreement, some have also questioned it — particularly
11 its recommendation against online, streaming services of Communion in which households consecrate with the
12 pastor and then commune together alone.¹

13 ¹ The CTCR first objected to a proposed practice in which congregations would hold online or streaming services wherein the words of
14 institution are spoken by the pastor in a video while individuals in their homes receive bread and wine or grape juice from their own tables (or
15 altars). This CTCR position was consistent with a 2006 CTCR opinion on “DVD Communion” regarding a similar approach using a recorded DVD
16 rather than streaming or online videos (files.lcms.org/wl/?id=7ZiqCqGn3FiMMtQcbrCFQuPjfn9AoMQ). The central objection raised in both CTCR
17 opinions is that such practices would inevitably result in “doubts or uncertainty about the Sacrament” since they depart significantly from the
18 pattern and practice of the New Testament. The CTCR also stated that it could not endorse the practice of having the pastor consecrate elements
19 for elders to distribute.

20 An anonymous document has been circulated within the Synod titled “Communion in Homes During Times of
21 Crisis: Scriptural and Confessional Principles” (CIH).²

22 ² At this time neither the authors of the document nor its place nor the date of its publication are known. It is evidently written and/or
23 endorsed by pastors who are now advocating and practicing online home Communion services in their
24 congregations and who intend to continue the practice. The authors offer it “in the spirit of fraternal discussion and
25 edification,” and in it they “share some of the Scriptural and Confessional principles that guided our decision-
26 making.”³

27 ³ CIH, 2.

28 CIH offers three statements or assertions to support the practice of online family Communion:

29 First, we believe that it is appropriate to celebrate the Lord’s Supper, even while faithful participants may be in
30 different physical locations, because the gifts offered in Christ’s body and blood are not based on our locations,
31 but in wherever Christ has promised to be present.⁴

32 ⁴ CIH, 2.

33 Second, we believe that it is appropriate for both pastor and people to speak the Words of Institution in the
34 celebration of Communion because the words and gifts of Christ are given to the whole Church.⁵

35 ⁵ CIH, 3.

36 Third, we believe that the promise and certainty of the Lord’s Supper is not found in the mere recitation of a
37 certain set of words. Nor is it found in the physical space in which a set of words is spoken. The promise and
38 certainty of the Lord’s Supper is found *in Christ and Christ’s Word alone*.⁶

39 ⁶ CIH, 5.

40 We appreciate the aforementioned purpose of the document, to engage in “fraternal discussion and edification.” In
41 that same spirit, what follows are 10 reasons in support of the CTCR conclusion given in CC19, that Lutheran
42 churches should refrain from online Communion services as described therein.

43 1. God’s *Word* alone gives us everything we need for faith, life and salvation.

1 **I**t should be cause for thanksgiving that disagreement over this particular practice does not preclude agreement
2 in important truths. First, both those who oppose and those who approve of the practice believe, teach and confess
3 that the Sacrament of the Altar is the gift of Christ's very body and blood, "in and under the bread and wine, which
4 we Christians are commanded by Christ's word to eat and drink" (LC Fifth Part, §8, KW 467).⁷
5 ⁷References to the Lutheran Confessions are from Robert Kolb and Timothy Wenger, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical*
6 *Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), with the specific confession abbreviated, the section(s) indicated by § and the page in the volume
7 following the abbreviation KW. Second, both parties fully hold to the teaching that the forgiveness of sins is conveyed to
8 those who commune in faith, believing Christ's words that the Sacrament is "'given for you' and 'shed for you **ONE**
9 **LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD 2

for the forgiveness of sins” (SC Sacrament of the Altar, §5–6 and 9–10, KW 362–63). Third, and most importantly, both parties can join in the song and sentiment of “A Mighty Fortress” with its triumphant cry that, in the face of Satan and all his evil ways, “one little word can fell him” (*LSB* 656:3).

We rejoice that *all* of us can agree that God’s Word *alone* (Holy Scripture) gives us the wisdom to address difficult and vexing theological problems, that God’s Word *alone* (the Gospel) is the one thing needful (Luke 10:42) and “the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16),⁸

⁸Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. and that God’s Word *alone* (Jesus) is “the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). We praise God for this. For this very reason, we endeavor here to “speak the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15) to and with brothers and sisters in Christ. This means at times speaking forthrightly, but always in a spirit of fraternal and collegial prayer, hope, and desire that God would grant us a spirit of unity on this and all other issues that threaten to divide us as a church body, and thereby hinder our witness to Christ.

Underlying the teachings about the Lord’s Supper noted in the first paragraph is the confessional insistence on the trustworthiness and power of the Word of God. In the Small Catechism the reality of the bodily presence of Christ in the Sacrament’s elements is substantiated by the *written Word of God*: “the holy evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and St. Paul write thus,” says Luther before giving the Words of Institution. Then he adds that the benefits of the Lord’s Supper are “the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation,” which he again buttresses with the Word: “Eating and drinking certainly do not do it, but rather the words that are recorded” (SC Sacrament of the Altar, §4–8, KW 362–63). This is true also of Baptism. There, too, the power lies not in the element, but in the Word of God which is always trustworthy. It, too, forgives and saves “as the words and promise of God declare” (SC Sacrament of Holy Baptism, §5–6, KW 359). Water cannot do this, “but the Word of God, which is with and alongside the water, and faith, which trusts this Word of God in the water” can indeed do what it promises (SC Sacrament of Holy Baptism, §9–10, KW 359). And, what is true of both Baptism and the Lord’s Supper is also true of the Office of the Keys. Our Synod catechism reminds us that Christ gives His church power “to forgive the sins of repentant sinners” by showing that very promise from *the Word of God*:

This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” (John 20:22–23)⁹

⁹*Luther’s Small Catechism* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1986) as it appears in *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2017), 27, 314. Abbreviated as LSCE.

All of this, of course, is simply a reminder of the Lutheran understanding of the Means of Grace, that is, the means that God uses to bestow His gracious gift of forgiveness and, with it, life and salvation. He does so by His Word. The Word is the foundational Means of Grace: “Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17). The Spirit works through the word of Christ to create faith. This truth is the foundation of the Lutheran doctrine of justification and our understanding of salvation. The Word does it all! We confess with Luther:

Therefore everything in this Christian community is so ordered that everyone may daily obtain full forgiveness of sins through the Word and signs appointed to comfort and encourage our consciences as long as we live on earth.¹⁰

¹⁰LC Creed, §54–55, KW 438.

The Word here is the Gospel, the promise that Christ Jesus is Lord, that we are justified by grace through faith in Christ, that in Him all sin is atoned and forgiveness is freely given. The Gospel empowers the “signs” — Baptism, the Supper and Absolution. All this is

because God is extravagantly rich in his grace: first, through the spoken word, in which the forgiveness of sins is preached to the whole world (which is the proper function of the gospel); second, through baptism; third, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar; fourth, through the power of the keys and also through the mutual conversation and consolation of brothers and sisters. Matthew 18[:20]: “Where two or three are gathered ...”¹¹

¹¹SA III [4:], KW 319.

Note first the reference to God’s “extravagantly rich” grace. How grateful we are that the Gospel comes to us by various means. We have its voice even in these perilous times of quarantine. Its extravagance applies both to its full and total declaration that *all sins* are forgiven for **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD 3

1 Jesus' sake and God's gracious variety of forms by 51
 2 which it can be both heard and enacted — in baptismal 52
 3 washing, in the gathered meal of Christ's body and 53
 4 blood, in the declarations of grace and absolution, in the 54
 5 quiet reminders given by members of the royal 55
 6 priesthood to one another. Extravagant grace indeed! 56
 7 Note also Luther's reference in the foregoing quo- 57
 8 tation to the preaching of forgiveness as "the proper 58
 9 function of the gospel." Scripture's Word spoken is 59
 10 the foundation for every other means by which 60
 11 forgiveness is delivered to believers. The Word alone 61
 12 makes the "signs" efficacious and salvific. And the 62
 13 practices of Baptism, Communion, the power of the 63
 14 keys, and the words of "mutual conversation and 64
 15 consolation" of fellow believers with one another all 65
 16 have the common foundation of the Gospel and with 66
 17 it, the central benefit of the forgiveness of sins. For 67
 18 this reason, as highly as the Lutheran church has 68
 19 valued these sacred acts, we have also acknowledged 69
 20 that one who is unable to receive them, but does not 70
 21 scorn them, does not forego the precious gifts of 71
 22 forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Even Baptism, 72
 23 which Lutherans have always performed in 73
 24 emergency circumstances, is not to be viewed legal- 74
 25 istically as a requirement to be fulfilled to gain one's 75
 26 salvation.¹² 76
 27 ¹² LSCE question # 312, 295. Similarly, we do not doubt 77
 28 the salvation of our baptized infants and little 78
 29 children or prospective members who are yet to be 79
 30 catechized, even though they do not yet commune. 80
 31 Why? Because the Gospel Word, which is the power 81
 32 of God for salvation (Rom. 1:16) and gives us everything 82
 33 we need for faith, life and salvation, has been heard 83
 34 and believed. 84
 35 CIH does not deny the power of the Word at work 85
 36 in the Lord's Supper. Rather, it says "we believe that 86
 37 the promise and certainty of the Lord's Supper is not 87
 38 found in the mere recitation of a certain set of words 88
 39 Nor is it found in the physical space in which a set of 89
 40 words is spoken. The promise and certainty of the 90
 41 Lord's Supper is found in *Christ and Christ's Word* 91
 42 *alone.*" For this we give thanks. However, we do
 43 question some of the conclusions drawn from this
 44 valid assertion in CIH, as the following will show.

Our Lord Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when
 He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had
 given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the
 disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body,
 which is given for you. This do in remembrance of
 Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper,
 and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them,
 saying, "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new
 testament in My blood, which is shed for you for
 the forgiveness of sins. This do as often as you
 drink it, in remembrance of Me."¹³

¹³ LSCE 28, 322.

In these words, He calls us (His disciples) to repeat His holy
 meal (Do *this*) in His remembrance. He tells us what to do
 (taking bread and the cup of wine), what we are eating and
 drinking (His body and blood) and what we receive with it
 (forgiveness). The synoptic Gospels reinforce one another
 in these essential facts while St. Paul's first epistle to the
 Corinthians corroborates them in the earliest church,
 showing both how they may be wrongly and rightly
 enacted.

Our confessions take care to show not merely that
 Lutheran churches have a semblance of the sacraments,
 but also the right use of them: "through God's grace our
 churches are now enlightened and supplied with the
 pure Word *and right use* of the sacraments" (SA Preface
 of Martin Luther §10, KW 299; emphasis added). This
 was especially true regarding the Sacrament of the Altar.
 Early in the Reformation a chief point of controversy
 was the private Mass. In the Smalcald Articles Luther
 calls it a human invention, an unnecessary thing that
 can be omitted without sin or danger, something that
 distracts from reception in a "better and more blessed
 way ... according to Christ's institution," a practice
 that has led to abuses, and a work by which
 individuals think they are reconciled to God, acquire
 forgiveness and merit grace, thereby distracting from
 the Lamb of God who alone takes away our sin.¹⁴

¹⁴ See SA II, 2, §2-7, KW 302. **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE
 LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD 4

45 2. It is the *Lord's Supper*, not our supper.

46 **T**he Sacrament of the Altar is not ours to do
 47 with it as we please. It is the Lord's Supper and He is
 48 the true "officiant" since it is He who acts in the
 49 Words of Institution — and who instructs us
 50 regarding the proper *use* of His Supper.

1 Luther then meets the final objection to His view 53
2 — that the private Mass is a form of devotion: 54
3 If some want to justify their position by saying 55
4 that they want to commune themselves for the 56
5 sake of their own devotion, they cannot be taken 57
6 seriously. For if they seriously desire to commune 58
7 then they do so *with certainty* and *in the best way* 59
8 by using the sacrament administered according to 60
9 Christ's institution.¹⁵ 61

10 ¹⁵ SA II, 2, §8–9, KW 302. Emphasis added. 62

11 None of the above material is focused on the 63
12 efficacy of the private Mass. "It is not a question of 64
13 *can* one communion alone; rather, it is a question of 65
14 *should* one commune alone."¹⁶ 66

15 ¹⁶ We are indebted to an unpublished paper written by Pr. 67
16 Trevor Sutton (LCMS) for this quotation and the preceding line of 68
17 thought. His paper is "Making Sense of Online Communion: A 69
18 Certain and Best Celebration of the Lord's Supper," dated January 70
19 17, 2020, available from the author. Similarly, the CTCR's 71
20 primary concern with online Communion is whether 72
21 one can do it with certainty — whether it is *a right* 73
22 *use* ("truly good, right and salutary") of the 74
23 Sacrament "according to Christ's institution." 75

24 Concern over right use is clearly evident in the 76
25 Formula of Concord. CIH quotes from the Formula's 77
26 Epitome (VII, §8 and 9) to emphasize the necessity of 78
27 the Words of Institution and that it is Christ's own 79
28 words, not the minister's recitation, that effect the 80
29 presence of Christ's body and blood in the elements. 81
30 ¹⁷ CIH, 6. It states its agreement with the CTCR's 82
31 CC19 in this, but then objects to the Commission's 83
32 concern over "where these words must be spoken" as 84
33 representing the CTCR's endorsement of an 85
34 incantation: "We have difficulty understanding how 86
35 an insistence that a certain set of words be spoken by 87
36 a certain person in a certain space can be conceived 88
37 of as anything other than the very definition of an 89
38 incantation."¹⁸ 90

39 ¹⁸ CIH, 6–7. We object to this claim on the basis of the 91
40 Formula of Concord itself. Lutherans have been 92
41 concerned precisely with such things as who speaks 93
42 the words of institution and the place of the speaking 94
43 To say otherwise would be to suggest, for example, 95
44 that one could record the words of institution and 96
45 play them (say, on one's cell phone) anywhere and 97
46 anytime at all and still be fully confident that the 98
47 Sacrament is being consecrated — after all, God's 99
48 Word is always and everywhere powerful and 100
49 efficacious! Such a view of the power of God's Word 101
50 "wherever and however it is spoken" (CIH, 7), with 102
51 specific reference to the words of institution (CIH, 7),
52 is detached from careful and serious attention to the

scriptural *context* of the Lord's institution of His
Supper and its grounding in a specific identifiable and
locatable set of actions that, as our Lutheran
Confessions teach, constitute "right use." The Epitome
certainly addresses this, saying, "God has and knows
various ways to be present *at a certain place*" (FC Ep
VII, §14, KW 505, emphasis added), including a spe-
cific and unique way to be present in the body and
blood of Christ at specific places and times when the
Supper is used and practiced according to Christ's
institution. These are matters of *right use* — the *usus*
or *actio* that the Formula of Concord Solid Declaration
discusses:

In order to preserve this true Christian teaching on
the Holy Supper and to avoid and eliminate many
kinds of idolatrous abuses and perversions of this
testament, this useful rule and guide is taken from
the Words of Institution: nothing has the character
of a sacrament apart from the use [*usus*] instituted
by Christ or the divinely instituted action [*actio*].
(That is, when Christ's institution is not observed
as he established it, there is no sacrament.) This
rule dare not be rejected in any way, but it can and
should be followed and preserved in the church of
God with great benefit. The *usus* or *actio* (that is,
the practice or administration) does not refer
primarily to faith or to the oral partaking, but to
the entire external, visible administration of the
Supper, as Christ established the administration of
the Supper: the consecration, or Words of
Institution, and the distribution and reception or
oral partaking of the consecrated bread and wine,
Christ's body and blood. Apart from this practice it
is not to be regarded as a sacrament — for
example, when in the papistic Mass the bread is
not distributed but is made into a sacrifice, or
enclosed [in a tabernacle], or carried about in a
procession, or displayed for adoration.¹⁹

¹⁹ FC SD VII, §85–87, KW 607–8.

This is very much pertinent to this conversation
about online Communion. The "useful rule and guide"
offered here is that "when Christ's institution is not
observed as he established it, there is no sacrament."
It has to do with "the entire external, visible
administration of the Supper" and includes
consecration, distribution and reception according to
Christ's institution. CC19 is concerned with the
"external, visible administration of the Supper" and
nothing less. **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE LUTHERAN
CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD 5

3. Holy Communion is to be celebrated in community with God's gathered people.

We earlier noted that CIH does not deny the power of the Word at work in the Lord's Supper. We also hope that the authors of CIH would not deny that the Sacrament of the Altar is intended by Christ for the gathered community — the congregation. Rather, CIH's central disagreements with CC19 seem to be due to its apparent understanding that (1) the CTCR opinion may be falsely asserting that the Sacrament is "bound" to a particular time and place²⁰ CIH does not say this expressly but offering such a thesis in their rebuttal of CTCR's CC19 seems to imply or suggest it. In its introductory paragraph it indicates that the Sacrament can be provided in a home by quoting Luther and the institution of the Passover in Exodus 12. Luther is quoted from *The German Mass and Order of Service*, in Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, eds. *Luther's Works*. Vol. 53. *Liturgy and Hymns*. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1965), 63–64. Future references to *Luther's Works* will be abbreviate as LW with volume number and page (e.g., LW 53:63–64). and (2) that the CTCR is wrong to question the propriety of online Communion which is jointly consecrated by the pastor and the household (or a designated worship leader in the household), and administered, presumably, by parents.²¹ CIH 3–5 defends its practice against CTCR objections to it, asserting that the words of institution are portrayed in Scripture as a blessing spoken by the whole people of God (p. 4), quoting Luther from *Concerning the Ministry* (LW 40:34–35), and arguing that the pastors engaged in the practice do so after inviting congregants to consecrate "with him" (p. 5) and to administer the Supper only to those who are properly prepared (pp. 5–6). We are less clear about whether CIH holds that the CTCR is itself denying the power of the Word of God, but that may be implied. This same implication may underlie CIH's references to the ongoing LCMS use of electronic means to proclaim the Gospel:

The history of our own Synod shows that we have made use of nearly every imaginable technological resource available to us — from radio to television to, now, online streaming — to share Christ's Word with our world. A faithful permutation of Christ's Word — whether this be in the form of a translation of the Scriptures, or in the form of an interpretation of these same Scriptures in a sermon, or in the form of an electronic proclamation of the Scriptures — does not blunt the force of Christ's Word. His Word is powerful and carries with it all of God's promises wherever and however it is spoken or, for that matter, written.²²

²² CIH, 7. We should note that previous efforts of the sort mentioned here did not produce division in the Synod. We are unaware of anyone

Let us simply state that we do not disagree in any way with CIH's position in this paragraph. The CTCR opinion certainly does *not* question the power of God's Word. Nor does it deny the validity of sharing the Word by electronic means, for such means are all perfectly consistent with the nature of the Word itself as a unique and foundational means of grace.

Indeed, the CTCR's opinion is grounded in its conviction about the power of the Gospel — as we have already indicated in reason one above. Our concern is with the right understanding and use of God's Word — specifically with reference to the Lord's Supper. Our questions flow from that and only that. On the one hand, is CIH unwittingly diminishing the power of the foundational means of grace — the Word of the Gospel — in its attempt to emphasize the importance of another means of grace, the Lord's Supper? On the other hand, is CIH fully engaging with what Scripture — the Word of God — teaches about the Lord's Supper and how it is conducted? We are largely in agreement with CIH's first assertion, that the Sacrament is not bound to a particular time and place and are not suggesting that one could not celebrate the Sacrament in any place but a church building. However, the arguments in CIH to defend the time and place they are advocating — communion in member family homes with the consecration and guidance of an online pastor — are unconvincing.

In the introductory portion of the CIH, the document quotes Luther and Exodus 12 as support for their invitation to their members to commune in their homes. The quotation of a single paragraph from Luther's *The German Mass and Order of Service*, stating that "a truly evangelical order" for "earnest" Christians who meet privately in a home, in no way supports the practice of online family Communion. Luther is envisioning (literally, imagining) an elite group of Christians under an ideal set of circumstances (certainly not an "emergency") whose meeting in a house is purely incidental. It is relevant to the pristine situation he is imagining only because a home is private and it is *not* open to others. This is not in any sense a prescription for family-by-family home Communion. Moreover, Luther never developed this idea, repeated it or implemented it ("as yet I neither can nor desire to begin such a congregation or assembly or to make rules for it," says Luther²³

invalid. who held that when the Gospel was preached via radio it was perhaps). Nor was it endorsed by

²³ LW 53:64. **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD 6

1 confessional Lutherans.²⁴ Next, to quote the
2 practice of the Passover, which was indeed a family
3 meal, is not a convincing argument for the novel idea
4 that the “new covenant” in our Lord’s blood is also to
5 be celebrated as a Sacrament by individuals and
6 families at home.²⁵

24 Why? It is, in truth, a bad idea in which a hierarchy of “earnest” Christians purposefully excludes “all sorts of people” not only from the Sacrament, but from the whole of the means of grace. One might question even this rather strange notion of “private” vs. “public” congregational worship — frankly, it is hard to know exactly what Luther had in mind here. (Even Luther could have had ideas on occasion!) Both the Last Supper and Corinthian practice show that the New Testament does not allow Old Testament Passover customs to dictate the practice of the Lord’s Supper. Later CIH adds an additional Luther quote from *Concerning the Ministry* to suggest that Luther advocates home celebrations. After the first of its three assertions, CIH suggests additional biblical, historical and confessional references for online family Communion. Under closer examination, they too fail to support CIH’s contention. Neither Matthew 18:20 nor 28:20, nor their contexts, provide any support for any particular Communion practice, including family Communion. The Marburg debate and, for that matter, the later Calvinist view that Christ’s body is only in heaven, also simply do not apply to this discussion. (The CTCR does not in any way deny the teachings of Article VIII of the Formula.) And, finally, CIH’s quotation (on pages 2 and 3) from the Large Catechism, in which Luther says the “new Passover” is “bound to no place or appointed time,” provides no more support for online Communion than did the earlier references in this section of CIH. An examination of the context shows that Luther’s concern at this point of the Large Catechism is to urge people not to despise the Sacrament, but to commune more frequently and not to think of the Supper as “bound to a special time like the Passover” of the Old Testament.²⁶

²⁵ See the next paragraph that shows that Luther actually condemns such a practice in the fifth part of the Large Catechism. A type of home Communion to celebrate Passover was the background for the CTCR’s opinion on DVD consecration. See “Texas District President Request concerning ‘DVD Consecration’” at files.lcms.org/wl/?id=7ZiqCqGn3FiMMtQcbrCFQuPjffn9AoMQ.

The CTCR *does* have concerns about time and place, but they have to do exclusively with the matter of *appropriate* times and places — of “right use.”²⁷

²⁶ LC Sacrament of the Altar, §39–48, KW 470–72. He accuses the pope of having turned the Lord’s Supper “back into a Jewish feast.” Any building, including a house, *could* be the right place for the Sacrament. Any place — an outdoor park or cemetery (common settings for many Easter sunrise services) — *could* be the proper setting for celebrating the Sacrament. Any time, including 3 a.m. on a Tuesday *could* be the right time for the Sacrament. It is our common practice in the church to schedule services on the Lord’s Day and on other occasions at *set times*. We schedule our celebrations at *set places* — places where the congregation can gather most easily. We do these things not because we believe the Sacrament is bound to be given *only* then and in those places, but because those times and places are the best times available for

God’s people to “assemble themselves together” for public worship (see Heb. 10:25).

The sole questions that concern us are how one can commune *with certainty* and *in the best way*.²⁸

²⁷ SA, Preface of Martin Luther §10, KW 299. Lutheran practice has never used its doctrinal assertion against Zwingli — that Christ is not bound by time and place but is able to be present bodily in many places — including in the Sacrament, when and where it is properly administered (FC SD VII, §9–15, KW 594–95; §88–103, KW 608–11; §119, KW 614; FC SD VIII, §92, KW 633–34) — as an argument for family Communion at home. Luther’s occasional statements about offering the Lord’s Supper in homes do not have “family communion” in view and are not reflective of Luther’s more common view, nor of Lutheran practice. More significantly, they do not reflect or represent the positions of the Lutheran Confessions.

Therefore, it remains our opinion that the practice advocated in CIH is problematic in many ways. The Scripture speaks of the whole church (congregation) coming together. The Lord’s own Communion with His disciples at the Last Supper was a gathering of the church, not a family. It was conducted in a borrowed room where all could gather. It was not a family meal at home. In Acts and the epistles, we read about breaking of bread together in homes (Acts 2:46) and about churches meeting in a member’s house (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Phm. 1:2). But the mention of breaking bread in Acts 2:46 is connected with sharing food with thanksgiving, so it is by no means conclusive that it refers to Communion. But, even if this is Communion, the third person plural pronoun used both for temple gatherings and home gatherings implies that this is part of congregational, not familial, activity. Similarly, the many references to churches meeting in homes indicates that the homes in question were where congregations gathered, together with the apostles and/or those appointed

²⁸ SA, Second Article, §8–9, KW 302. **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD 7

to the task of “preaching the word of God” (Acts 6:2) and devoted to “prayer and the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4). The fact that Communion occurred in these houses is evidence only of the vitality and adaptability of the church as assembly. It needs no dedicated structures, as much as that may be convenient and beneficial. It is a welcoming community of believers, marked less by earthly family ties than by the common confession of children of God from diverse backgrounds bound together by faith.

Finally, in 1 Corinthians, the apostle Paul writes specifically about the importance of the church’s gatherings for the Sacrament (see 1 Cor. 10–14). In 1 Corinthians 11:20 and 33, Paul insists that the Corinthians reform their practice of the Lord’s Supper, with part of that reform being that they not neglect the whole congregation by excluding some members of the body of Christ (in that case, the poor). Paul adds that the home is the place not for the church’s Sacrament, but for eating (1 Cor. 11:34). Paul’s approach in 1 Corinthians is thoroughly centered in the principle that the Sacrament is for the whole of the local congregation as it gathers.

4. Emergency Baptism? Yes. Emergency Communion? No.

As we have noted, both Baptism and the Lord’s Supper have much in common. Both are instituted by Christ and depend entirely on the Gospel Word that empowers them and that defines their benefit — that both bestow forgiveness, life and salvation.

Yet, the different Means of Grace are also unique. The written Word can be disseminated in a variety of forms, while always retaining its character of divine inspiration and truth and offering throughout its pages the Gospel of salvation (e.g., John 5:39; Acts 17:1–2, 10–11; Rom. 1:1–3; 2 Tim. 3:16). The spoken Word of the Gospel, proclaimed individually by countless members of the royal priesthood and preached from pulpits as well as scattered abroad (“broadcast”) as far and wide as sound can be carried and without any restrictions on who would hear it, always retaining its character as the power of God for salvation (e.g., Matt. 13:3–9; Rom. 10:17; Luke 24:34). Baptism, administered always with water and always to a particular

individual (even if thousands are baptized on the same day), retains its individual character as a means by which we receive discipleship, adoption, the Holy Spirit and new birth. And, in an emergency, any Christian baptizes (e.g., Matt. 3:11; 28:19; John 1:33; Acts 2:38–41; Rom. 6:3–4; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21).

So also, then, we receive the Lord’s Supper as a unique means of grace. It is not received by meditative reading alone, like the written Word. It is not scattered abroad, like the spoken Word. Unlike Baptism, it is not administered to the isolated individual except for when the pastor, who is called by the assembled church, carries the Sacrament on behalf of the assembly to the sick member. We value the Sacrament highly, but we restrict its administration rather than sharing it freely, having those with doubts and questions, visitors from other confessions and even our own children wait until they can share our confession (1 Cor. 1:10), examine themselves and rightly discern Christ’s body and blood. This is especially true in view of the sobering fact that the apostle’s instructions for the right use of the Supper contain a unique warning that its misuse can actually be harmful to the uninstructed and unprepared communicant both physically and spiritually (1 Cor. 11:27–32; see below under #5). Each of the Means of Grace is rightly used in a manner appropriate to it.

The LCMS at its 2019 convention vigorously affirmed the importance of the royal priesthood and the high calling of royal priests at all times to share the Word in their vocations and to forgive sins in their relationships, as well as to baptize in emergencies. The Synod also strongly affirmed the complementary nature of the royal priesthood and the office of public ministry. The CTCR opinion is informed by these biblical views. However, as noted above, the Lord’s Supper’s uniqueness leads to its administration by one who is called and appointed publicly to exercise the kind of pastoral care that enables the communicant to be rightly prepared for the Sacrament and certain of the gift received therein. So, we again reaffirm that the Lutheran church has not viewed the Sacrament of the Altar as an “emergency sacrament,” unlike Baptism or something any member of the royal priesthood can or should do, like proclaiming “the excellencies of him” who has called us “out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

Luther, for example, vigorously defended the propriety of the laity’s engagement with the Word of God devotionally, the need for families to gather for the Word and prayer, for the royal priest’s vocational proclamation and for Baptism in emergency situations. Indeed, he preferred a vigorous devotional life in the home over the acceptance of an unfaithful pastor. He addressed just such a problem — just such an emergency — in his letter to the Bohemians,

Concerning the Ministry. Although for **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD 8

1 Luther, “emergency knows no rule,” he offered
2 careful counsel to the Christians in Bohemia with
3 these words:
4 For it would be safer and more wholesome for the
5 father of the household to read the gospel and,
6 since the universal custom and use allows it to the
7 laity, to baptize those who are born in his home,
8 and so to govern himself and his according to the
9 doctrine of Christ, even if throughout life they did
10 not dare or could not receive the Eucharist. For
11 the Eucharist is not so necessary that salvation
12 depends on it. The gospel and baptism are
13 sufficient, since faith alone justifies and love alone
14 lives rightly.²⁹
15 One can hardly accuse Luther of neglecting the
16 importance of the Sacrament of the Altar, yet he
17 rightly reminds us that it “is not so necessary that
18 salvation depends on it.” Unlike Baptism, the Lord’s
19 Supper is not an “emergency sacrament.”³⁰
20 ²⁹ *Concerning the Ministry*, LW 40:9.
21 But what of the quote from Luther on page 4 in
22 CIH?
23 There is no other Word of God than that which is
24 given all Christians to proclaim. There is no other
25 baptism than the one which any Christian can be-
26 stow. **There is no other remembrance of the**
27 **Lord’s Supper than that which any Christian**
28 **can observe and which Christ has instituted.**
29 (AE 40 34–35) [Emphasis in CIH.]
30 This, too, must be read in context. Luther is
31 establishing the fact that the keys belong to the whole
32 church and that, when no recognized (ordained)
33 minister is to be found, the church may establish the
34 ministry on its own, even without the approval of
35 bishops, which was the situation in Bohemia.³¹
36 ³⁰ At no point does CIH refer to the Lord’s Supper as an
37 emergency sacrament. At the same time, however, the apparent
38 rationale for offering the Lord’s Supper in an online family setting
39 is that “our current situation,” that is, the Covid-19 crisis is leaving
40 Christ’s people “without the blessing of the Lord’s Supper” (CIH, 1b).
41 We can only understand this to mean that the availability of the
42 Lord’s Supper is essential in the present medical emergency —
43 that the emergency requires this innovative administration of the
44 Eucharist.
45 Lastly, we should remember that the frequency of the
46 Lord’s Supper has always been an adiaphoron. In
47 many congregations of the LCMS the Sacrament is
48 offered on a weekly basis. In times past it has been
49 offered monthly or even quarterly in Missouri Synod
50 congregations, while preaching and baptisms
51 continued weekly. While that is not by any means
52 ideal, it indicates that the Sacrament of the Altar has
53 and ought to be viewed from its own proper
54 perspective, and that orthodox Lutherans have never
55 viewed weekly access to the Lord’s Supper as a *iure*
56 *divino* command or practice or as essential to the
57 survival of the church.

5. Responsible pastoral care is *essential* for the proper scriptural and confessional administration of the Lord’s Supper.

First Corinthians not only emphasizes the gathered community, but it also shows that wrong practices may invalidate the Lord’s Supper and that it may be received not as a means of grace but as a means of judgment. Note Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 11, where he says of the practice in Corinth, “It is not the Lord’s Supper that you eat” (v. 20) and warns about the possibility of eating and drinking to one’s judgment (v. 29). The potential for such judgment is directly related to the question of responsible pastoral care. Responsible pastoral care is required for right use of the Lord’s Supper. There can be no proper scriptural and confessional administration of the Lord’s Supper without it. CIH recognizes this and states as much:

In the Divine Services that have been celebrated online among our Synodical congregations, a rightly called minister of the Gospel has presided over the Sacrament, inviting his congregants to speak the Words of Institution *with* him — not *instead* of him. Careful pastoral care and responsible pastoral oversight has been exercised as our pastors have called upon their people to follow the apostle Paul’s guidance and heed his warning to the Corinthians:

Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. (1 Corinthians 11:28–29)

³¹ CIH might have added quotations of Lutheran fathers from C. F. W. Walther’s *Church and Office*. Walther provides the same Luther quote from *Concerning the Ministry*. He follows it with quotes from Johann Gallus, Tilemann Heshusius, and Johann Müller, to say that at times “ordinary Christians ... may proclaim the Gospel, remit sins, baptize, and administer the Lord’s Supper.” That might seem to cement CIH’s position, but the elision in the preceding sentence leaves out the all-important qualification “in such cases when no upright minister of the Church is to be had.” Examples provided are groups of Christians stranded or imprisoned, who therefore appoint the most well-prepared man from among them to be their pastor. C. F. W. Walther, *The Church & the Office of the Ministry*: Kirche und Amt: *The Voice of Our Church on the Question of Church and Office*, J. T. Mueller, trans., Matthew

quotation is from Heshusius on 277.C. Harrison, ed. (St. Louis: Concordia, 2012), 271, 275–77, 282. The **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD 9

1 If a person has not been properly prepared to
2 receive Christ's body and blood through
3 repentance, discernment, and faith, or if they have
4 been reluctant to receive the Sacrament in their
5 home, they have been invited to receive a blessing
6 instead.
7 Pastors who have led their congregants in the
8 reception of Communion in their homes have
9 taken extensive measures to be responsible to
10 their vocations as "stewards of the mysteries of
11 God" (1 Corinthians 4:1) by exercising faithful pastoral
12 care. We do not see any reason, therefore, why a
13 congregation cannot join in saying Christ's words,
14 which He has given to His whole Church, with its
15 pastor.³²
16 We commend the authors of CIH for the desire to
17 offer pastoral care. As commendable as these efforts
18 are, however, it seems to us, first of all, that this
19 important matter is not treated adequately. The
20 exercise of "careful pastoral care and responsive
21 pastoral oversight" is difficult and challenging under
22 normal circumstances — indeed, it is one of the most
23 difficult and challenging tasks entrusted to
24 undershepherds of the Good Shepherd. The
25 possibility of exercising such "careful pastoral care
26 and responsible pastoral oversight" seems
27 questionable given the many different circumstances
28 that would inevitably arise (many likely unknown to
29 the pastor) in communion services held in scores or
30 hundreds of homes. Secondly, the very nature of the
31 pastoral care that is described and envisioned in the
32 document is inadequate. Indeed, we believe it is
33 impossible to carry out pastoral care in a *responsible*
34 way in the online home/family Communion endorsed
35 by CIH. In the description as provided, the pastor
36 delegates much of Communion practice to the
37 household. Since the household provides the
38 elements, what will they use if there is no bread or
39 wine?³³ Who is consecrating in this scenario in which
40 everyone speaks together "with the pastor"? Is the
41 pastor consecrating from afar? Or, is the family
42 consecrating for themselves? Or, is this some sort of
43 "co-consecration?" (As discussed above, the issue of
44 proper consecration is no small matter to the
45 Confessors.) And what of single individuals who live
46 alone? Who consecrates in their setting? Are they to
47 commune themselves, or should they refrain from
48 the Sacrament?
49 Is the whole of pastoral oversight in such cases simply the
50 verbal or written instruction from the pastor that whoever is
51 leading the family communion service at home (assuming
52 there is such a leader) should follow Paul's instructions in 1
53 Corinthians 11:28–29? In the case of blessing those who have
54 "not been properly prepared," who is to determine what makes
55 one unprepared? Those who are not instructed and prepared
56 *should* be excluded, out of Christian love and concern. Will
57 uncatechized children or family members be asked to refrain
58 from the Sacrament — or will (unknown) "exceptions" be

regularly granted? Will those who do not share the Synod's
beliefs be excluded since they are not in agreement with the
confession of this church? Are moms and dads at home to be
expected (unfairly and unreasonably burdened) with "being the
pastor" in these situations, which even for ordained and
experienced pastors are some of the most difficult and sensitive
pastoral care decisions to make? Who is presiding over all of
this?
If this is a congregational Communion by virtue of the
pastor's online presence, then what about nonmembers
who log in to the service? Does this practice include
those guests who should be welcomed to commune?
Worthy and well-prepared guests should always be (and
feel) welcome at a sister congregation. Is that done? Can
it be done?
Lastly, in this case many worthy and well-prepared individuals,
visitors as well as members, would be excluded by reason of
conscience. CIH itself indicates this on page 5, which speaks of
blessing those who are "reluctant to receive the sacrament in
their home." Here CIH seems to recognize that their practice
does create uncertainty and doubts — so much so that some
will be reluctant to commune. Does that reluctance on the part
of congregational members and others from the Synod trouble
the pastors who endorse this practice? Isn't it problematic that
many (most?) from their own church body — with whom they
are in fellowship — could not conscientiously participate with
them because this practice makes them uncertain that they
would receive Christ's body and blood by these means? Is that
truly responsible pastoral care? These are important and trou-
bling questions.
We repeat the issue raised in CC19 — is there "any
uncertainty being created regarding what is being
received?" Some evidently believe there would be
none,

³² CIH, 4–5.

³³ Descriptions of online Communion in several congregations
indicated that grape juice was commended as an alternative to
wine. Actual reports from participants in Lutheran online services
indicated that in certain cases other beverages in place of wine and
other foods in place of bread have been employed. While the
authors and supporters of CIH would hopefully frown on such an
aberration, this demonstrates the difficulty of exercising pastoral
oversight when there is no single meal but many individual meals in
private homes. **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE LUTHERAN
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1 but we strongly and respectfully disagree. Many
2 could not participate in this practice in good
3 conscience precisely because they are uncertain
4 about the validity of the Sacrament when the witness
5 of the Word of God about sacramental practice is
6 seemingly ignored.

7 **6. “I Want It All and I Want It Now”: Discerning**
8 **the influence of culture on our theology and**
9 **practice.**

10 **P**astors, both those who are part of the CTCR
11 and others, are grateful for the level of supportive
12 self-sacrifice among those they serve. Most of their
13 members have graciously adjusted to the challenges
14 we are facing in this time of Covid-19. Members have
15 been more than understanding that pastoral care
16 must be different temporarily — that there can be no
17 visits to nursing homes or hospitals, that sermons
18 and services must be offered online, that their family
19 or individual times of Scripture and prayer have
20 never been more important, that each member of the
21 royal priesthood has both an opportunity and an
22 obligation to reach out to other members by phone,
23 email or notes.

24 Nearly everyone we serve recognizes that part of
25 the adjustment we must temporarily make is that the
26 Lord’s Supper cannot be offered at all or that it can be
27 given only in a highly restrictive manner.³⁴ Here and
28 there, however, pastors have had individuals strongly
29 object to the suspension of public worship and to the
30 “denial” of the Sacrament. It seems evident that CIH
31 was not in any way motivated by objections to
32 suspending public worship. We do wonder, however,
33 if there is not some sense that without the Lord’s
34 Supper the church cannot survive. The authors
35 declare: “Out of an abundance of concern for God’s
36 people, who *should not be* left bereft of this sacred
37 gift, some pastors in our Synod have invited their
38 congregants to partake of the Lord’s Supper in their
39 homes.”³⁵ The underlying concern here — the desire
40 for God’s people to receive His precious gifts — is
41 highly commendable and we share it. But the phrase
42 “who should not be left bereft of this sacred gift” used
43 in reference to the Lord’s Supper gives us pause. To
44 be without the Sacrament is a harsh burden for a
45 believer. To be bereft of it is to be without a treasure
46 our Lord intends for the church. Yet, it is not a
47 treasure that is to be treated lightly. It is also not a
48 treasure to be demanded.

49 “I Want It All and I Want It Now,” Queen’s classic rock song, is
50 reflective of much of American culture. We are all, at our worst,
51 a demanding people who believe we deserve (or at least need)

52 all that we want. When we lack something, we often share the
53 sentiment, if not the words, “I want it all, and I want it now.”
54 This is not the attitude for a Lutheran communicant. St. Paul
55 soberly instructs us to examine ourselves before we eat of the
56 bread and drink of the cup (1 Cor. 11:28). We ask, in all sincerity
57 and Christian charity, whether one worthy question for self-
58 examination in this context might be the following: is it possible
59 that our God-pleasing *desire* for the Sacrament can become a
60 less-than-God-pleasing *demand* for the Sacrament that is
61 informed more by the spirit of our culture than by the Holy
62 Spirit and His fruits of self-control, self-discipline, self-denial
63 and self-sacrifice?

64 Think, for example, of the times when Judah and Israel were
65 deprived of the presence of Yahweh at the temple. They
66 longed for the courts of the Lord (Ps. 84), but God’s own
67 judgment meant that they could not rejoice in God’s
68 dwelling place or witness the atoning sacrifices offered
69 there until God Himself relented and brought them back (see
70 2 Chron. 6:36–39). Still more trying was the fall of Jerusalem
71 and the destruction of the temple (see Ps. 137). These
72 judgments were harsh and the loss of the comfort of the
73 temple a great burden, but God was working repentance
74 and faith. His grace — the Word — was sufficient for His
75 suffering people. It was in that very time that Israel was
76 given the Word through the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel,
77 Micah and others. The exile led to a new appreciation and
78 reliance on the Word, the Scriptures and their teachings (see
79 Ezra8).

80 Our circumstances are different from Israel’s, but not
81 entirely dissimilar. We seek no earthly temple (John
82 4:21–21) and the sacrifices of Israel have been fulfilled
83 in the atoning sacrifice of our Lord on Good Friday (1
84 John 2:1–2). But we should not deny that this deadly
85 pestilence is a call to repentance (Luke 13:1–5) and a call
86 to return to the Lord (Joel2:13). We look to no hills (Ps.
87 121; John 4:20–21) and demand nothing from God, but we
88 flee for refuge to His mercy (Ps. 30:10; Matt. 15:22; Luke
89 18:13).

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³⁴For example, in a few congregations Communion is offered by
having separate families or individuals come on a set schedule to
receive. This practice has not been considered by the CTCR. We
should note, however, that it invites a disparity between those who
are fearful or too vulnerable to come for the Sacrament and those
that feel more confident about the practice. It potentially risks
disease transmission from the pastor to communicants while it
places the pastor (and therefore his spouse or family if he is
married) at an even more significant risk of exposure.

³⁵ CIH, 1, emphasis added. **ONE LITTLE WORD CAN FELL HIM** | THE
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1 Christians throughout history have suffered similar
 2 times during which the Means of Grace were limited. The
 3 church in China survived Maoist oppression meeting in
 4 homes for five decades, often without a Bible, on the power
 5 of remembered words of Scripture. Our great-grandparents
 6 in the Missouri Synod survived the three-year trial of the
 7 influenza epidemic from 1917–1919, often going months
 8 without any public worship (including the Sacrament).
 9 As we await His mercy on us, our country and our
 10 world at this time, we may all be bereft of the
 11 Sacrament for a time, but we will not lack God's
 12 Word. It will not be bound. Its Gospel is proclaimed
 13 and it will sustain us. And through it all, by God's
 14 grace, may our appreciation of and longing for the
 15 precious Sacrament of the Altar grow.

16 7. "Online Communion" has questionable roots.

17 **T**he practice of Communion via online means
 18 did not arise with Covid-19. Trevor Sutton points out
 19 that it has been practiced for some time by evan-
 20 gelical churches. Its purpose in those circles has been
 21 to offer a way to gather wider audiences than
 22 Communion within even very large sanctuaries
 23 would allow. It is part of what Tim Hutchings calls
 24 *Creating Church Online*.³⁶ By having online
 25 Communion, the megachurch — or any church for
 26 that matter — is able to claim more members —
 27 members who can get anything a local church would
 28 offer.

29 The notion of an "online church" may have some
 30 immediate appeal, especially during this time. Some
 31 might say that is what every church with services or
 32 sermons available online is doing. We do not believe
 33 that is accurate. The many steps congregations are
 34 taking to proclaim the Word are often adapting to
 35 this emergency alone. Others have been using the
 36 internet as a regular part of their ministry. Electronic
 37 means of communication are a worthy and time-
 38 tested aspect of a church's ministry — but they are
 39 not an adequate approach to "creating church."³⁷ The
 40 church is the *body* of Christ. It is physical people who
 41 hold to Christ in faith. The church is both catholic —
 42 scattered throughout the world — and local, and
 43 locatable, gathered physically in particular places. As
 44 AC VII says, is a gathering of believers, meeting
 45 together, assembling, congregating for the preaching
 46 of the Word and the administration of the
 47 Sacraments. It does all these things in conformity
 48 with the Word.
 49 The evangelical churches that have pioneered online
 50 "church" and online Communion have done so with

51 different understandings of the church and, even
 52 more, of the Sacraments, than those of the Lutheran
 53 church. There is no question that Lutherans can learn
 54 and benefit from some of the work that the Lord is
 55 doing through evangelical brothers and sisters in
 56 Christ. At the same time, however, we have to test the
 57 spirits. We can understand quite well why a common
 58 evangelical understanding of the Lord's Supper — one
 59 that views it merely as a symbolic expression of
 60 welcome and openness to one another without any
 61 actual presence of the body and blood of Christ — can
 62 be content with online Communion. We are concerned
 63 that when Lutheran churches employ this evangelical
 64 innovation it may also encourage an evangelical
 65 perspective on the Sacrament.

66 8. Novel practices often establish dangerous 67 precedents.

Some congregations practicing online Communion
 have indicated that this is only a temporary, "emergency"
 measure, implying that they will cease the practice when the
 Covid-19 crisis is over. Nevertheless, the precedent of online
 home Communion troubles us. What happens after this
 crisis is over remains to be seen. If this is endorsed now as
 something that is truly "good, right, and salutary," why
 would it necessarily be questioned or discarded later —
 especially if an essential part of the argument for this
 practice is that it is simply another wonderful, creative,
 innovative means of sharing God's Gospel gifts? Is there any
 reason why congregations should not at any future point
 treat online family Communion as an acceptable alternative
 method of Communion? Why would we not?
 Should we now, because of the challenging (but
 temporary and ever-changing) Covid-19 situation,
 change our longstanding teaching and practice and
 conclude that Luther and Lutheran teachers were
 wrong to hold that only Baptism is an emergency
 sacrament? Should their view that while Baptism *is* to
 be conducted in an emergency, but the Lord's Supper
is not to be administered as an emergency Sacrament,
 now be acknowledged as a doctrinal error? And, if the
 Lord's Supper is required in a time of emergency,
 when is it

³⁶ We are again indebted to Sutton, who documents these sources.
 Tim Hutchings, *Creating Church Online: Ritual, Community, and New
 Media* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

³⁷ The CTCR addressed the topic of social media, a significant form
 of electronic communication, *A Snapshot of Trending Tools* (2019),
files.lcms.org/wl/?id=ntp6kcgZ6krg44AtLFGHaRY7SfoWJp2L.
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1 not required? Should every service be a 47
2 Communion service? Have we substituted “Luther’s 48
3 emergency knows no rule” with “Emergency 49
4 establishes the rules?” Further, since technology is so 50
5 decisive in this practice, are we saying now that past 51
6 teachers and positions no longer hold simply because 52
7 technology and the desire for innovation supersedes 53
8 them? 54

9 **9. Walking Together: Does it even matter** 56
10 **anymore?** 57

11 **B**ecause “the Synod is not an ecclesiastical 58
12 government exercising legislative or coercive powers 59
13 and with respect to the individual congregation’s 60
14 right of self-government it is but an advisory body” 61
15 (LCMS Constitution Article VII), congregations are not 62
16 bound by anything but the Word of God and need not 63
17 follow even a convention resolution that is “inexpedi- 64
18 ent.” We realize (and emphasize) that this does not 65
19 apply to a doctrinal resolution based on God’s Word 66
20 (Bylaw 1.6.2.a), but at question in this case is a CTCR 67
21 opinion, not a resolution of Synod, doctrinal or 68
22 otherwise. 69

23 Some have asked whether CC19’s opinion is 70
24 binding on congregations or districts. It is not. The 71
25 next question is no doubt this: If not, then is there any 72
26 reason why congregations are not able to exercise 73
27 their Christian freedom and make use of such means 74
28 as streaming home Communion services with a clear 75
29 conscience? Clearly, some will do so. That is explicitly 76
30 stated in CIH: 77

31 We are left with a choice. On the one hand, we can 78
32 cease celebrating the Lord’s Supper during this 79
33 pandemic because our Synod’s Commission on 80
34 Theology and Church Relations has issued an 81
35 opinion that celebrating the Supper in homes 82
36 while a pastor speaks Christ’s words over an 83
37 online stream while his congregation joins in is 84
38 inappropriate — a practice that, in our own 85
39 opinion, is nowhere forbidden by Scripture or the 86
40 Confessions. On the other hand, while respectfully 87
41 engaging with and listening to those who disagree 88
42 with our position, we can continue celebrating the 89
43 Lord’s Supper so that God’s people may receive 90
44 with joy all that this meal promises and delivers, 91
45 heeding Christ’s clear command: 92

46 *Do this in remembrance of Me.* (Luke 22:19) 93

For these reasons, after thoughtful contemplation and prayerful consideration, we humbly, confidently, and faithfully intend to continue to obey Christ’s command to celebrate His Supper.

It is indeed true that the CTCR opinion in this matter is not binding. It is also true that during these trying times we ought to be especially generous toward one another and with those with whom we disagree. For these reasons, we want to repeat that our concern is offered in a desire to foster discussion and prayerful consideration. We are members together in the Synod and on that basis are prayerfully asking that those who read and contemplate this document not take a step that is already dividing us simply by being proposed. It will divide us even more if it is implemented and no doubt provoke dissension and controversy that will reach beyond this present health crisis. We ask that all concerned act in a way that reflects the concerns we have raised in love for LCMS pastors and church workers and for all of Christ’s holy people in our Synod.

10. A final word: The *purpose* of this precious Sacrament is to create *faith*, not raise *doubts*.

We recognize in the authors of CIH the deep desire, expressed so clearly, to minister faithfully to their flocks. We appreciate and share the high value they place on the Lord’s Supper. We rejoice in our fellowship together in the LCMS. It grieves us to write these pages. We do not offer these thoughts to fellow pastors as their “ecclesiastical supervisors” for that is not the calling of the CTCR or its staff. Our intention is to speak to one another as peers. We speak as representatives of both seminaries, fellow ministers and brothers and sisters in Christ in the royal priesthood. We speak out of deep, conscientious concern over a practice that we cannot endorse and that we fear may produce division (and, sadly, already has). We speak on behalf of the many in our Synod who could not participate in good conscience in this practice — as pastors, congregations or communicants. Their participation would be impossible because they could not commune in good faith. Rather than such Communion strengthening their faith, it would do the opposite and raise doubts.

We are not able to say with certainty that this would be an invalid Sacrament, but that is precisely the problem: we cannot be confident of it either. We would instead be troubled with the question whether this manner of communing is according to Christ’s institution, as these 10 reasons attest. We seriously and sincerely wonder whether (in the language of the Formula) “the entire external, visible administration of the Supper” is

1 indeed "as Christ established the administration of the Supper" (FC SD VII, §86, KW 608). With such serious doubts we ourselves
2 would be unprepared to commune worthily in this manner, just as, evidently, are those other individuals who are "reluctant to
3 receive the Sacrament in their home" (CIH, 5).

4 *God's Word forever shall abide,*
5 *No thanks to foes, who fear it;*
6 *For God Himself fights by our side*
7 *With weapons of the Spirit.*
8 *Were they to take our house,*
9 *Goods, honor, child, or spouse,*
10 *Though life be wrenched away,*
11 *They cannot win the day.*
12 *The Kingdom's ours forever!*
13 *(LSB 657:4)*
14

The Commission on Theology and Church Relations

15 Holy Week 2020

Summary of "One little word can fell him"

Ten reasons to question whether "online Communion" is "truly good, right and salutary"

T

he CTCR document, "Communion and Covid-19" (CC19), offers an opinion on Holy Communion practices during the coronavirus pandemic. Reactions have been both positive and negative. An anonymous reaction, "Communion in Homes During Times of Crisis: Scriptural and Confessional Principles" (CIH), has circulated within the Synod. CIH offers three reasons supporting the practice of online family Communion: (1) The validity of the Lord's Supper is not based on our location, but wherever Christ promises to be present; (2) It is appropriate for both pastor and people to speak the Words of Institution Holy Communion since the gifts of Christ are given to the whole Church; (3) The certainty of the Lord's Supper is not found in mere recitation of Christ's words or in the location where the words are spoken, but in *Christ and Christ's Word alone*. The authors of CIH wish to engage in "fraternal discussion." In that same spirit, we are offering 10 reasons in the accompanying opinion to support the conclusion of CC19, that LCMS churches should refrain from online home Communion. This summary identifies points of agreement and apparent disagreement on the practice of online home Communion. The full document gives the rationale for the CTCR's concerns.

1. God's Word alone gives us everything we need for faith, life and salvation.

- We are agreed that the Lord's Supper is Christ's body and blood and conveys forgiveness of sins together with life and salvation, and that the Word of Christ alone ensures the Sacrament's validity, not the particular time or place where it is offered.

- We disagree with certain conclusions drawn from this valid assertion by the author(s) of CIH (see 2–10 below).

2. It is the Lord's Supper, not our supper.

- We are agreed that the Lord's Supper is given by our Lord Jesus Christ and that we "do this" according to His command and promise.

- The question that divides us is whether online family Communion is a right *use* of the Sacrament according to Christ's institution, and (therefore) whether it can be done with certainty and full assurance of our Lord's own approval and blessing.

3. Holy Communion is to be celebrated in community with God's gathered people.

- We agree that the gifts offered in and through Christ's body and blood are intended for all members of His church and that Holy Communion is not bound to any set time or place.

- The matter that divides us is the significance of the New Testament's portrayal of the Sacrament as a gathering of the church community, not a family group, and (therefore) whether it is a proper and acceptable practice for individuals and/or families to observe Holy Communion by means of a streaming video (as CIH advocates and encourages) rather than in a congregational (communal and churchly) setting.

4. Emergency Baptism? Yes. Emergency Communion? No.

- We are agreed that Baptism is to be administered even in an emergency, whether or not a pastor is present to baptize the person in need.

- We are divided over the question of whether the kind of situation we are facing in this epidemic means that the Lord's Supper can and should be offered as an "emergency sacrament" by means of the unprecedented practice of online family Communion.

5. Responsible pastoral care is essential for the proper scriptural and confessional administration of the Lord's Supper.

- We agree that responsible pastoral care is necessary for right use of the Lord's Supper.

- We disagree whether such oversight is actually and/or fully possible in the varied circumstances that inevitably exist in online family Communion, many of which would almost certainly be unknown to the pastor. We ask: How can one oversee what one cannot see?

1 **6. “I Want It All and I Want It Now”: Discerning the influence of culture on our theology and**
2 **practice**

3 • We think that all would agree that American culture can influence theology and practice both positively and
4 negatively, and that Americans often assume that — if at all possible — their desires and perceived needs
5 should be met according to their own timing.

6 • The CTCR is concerned with the possibility that our God-pleasing *desire* for the Sacrament can become a
7 less-than-God-pleasing *demand* for it, which may stem from or result in an unwillingness to bear a temporary
8 cross of deprivation and self-denial (as Israel suffered during its exile from the temple and previous genera-
9 tions suffered when they could not receive the Sacrament — in some cases, for an extended period of time).

10 **7. “Online Communion” has questionable roots.**

11 • We are agreed that creative and innovative methods of delivering God’s Gospel gifts (when in conformity
12 with God’s Word and will) can be and often are good, right and salutary.

13 • We disagree on the question of whether this particular practice is an appropriate and beneficial innovation
14 and are concerned that it is more informed by the theology and practice of evangelicalism (where the practice
15 first originated) than by Lutheran theology and practice.

16 **8. Novel practices often establish dangerous precedents.**

17 • We agree that exceptional practices should not become the rule, as evidenced by the fact that many practi-
18 tioners of online family Communion have indicated that this is an “emergency” measure and should be
19 discontinued after the Covid crisis is over.

20 • The CTCR is concerned that since “online family Communion” has been endorsed as an appropriate
21 Communion practice now, it may be accepted and employed in the future (even in non-emergency situations)
22 as an alternate method of Communion — especially since many of the reasons given to justify it pertain to
23 more than just “emergency” situations.

24 **9. Walking Together: Does it even matter anymore?**

25 • We acknowledge that the Synod has not addressed this matter in a doctrinal resolution in convention and
26 that the CTCR opinion on online communion (CC19) is not binding in any formal or official sense.

27 • We disagree on the necessity or importance of seeking consensus as a Synod before introducing and
28 engaging in a novel and potentially divisive practice such as this.

29 **10. A final word: The purpose of this precious Sacrament is to create faith, not raise doubts.**

30 • We are agreed that the Lord’s Supper is given to strengthen faith.

31 • We disagree whether the unprecedented and extraordinary practice of online family Communion can be
32 done with certainty and (therefore) whether it serves the primary purpose for which Christ instituted His
33 Supper: to strengthen faith, not create doubt.

1 **Communion and Covid-19**

2 The current crisis caused by the coronavirus or Covid-19 pandemic is disrupting every facet of
3 life for our entire continent and for most of the world. Increasing restrictions on social ties and
4 connections—“social distancing”—while endorsed by most medical authorities are now also
5 being mandated increasingly by governing authorities. Among the practices of social distancing
6 is the avoidance of group settings—settings such as Christian worship.

7 A growing number of LCMS churches are suspending services temporarily because of Covid-19.
8 This presents significant challenges for Christian life and the church’s well-being. Christians
9 treasure His Word and Sacraments and so we treasure regular corporate worship. Colossians 3:16
10 says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...” Similarly, we treasure fellowship with one
11 another and know that the Word tells us not to forsake meeting together so that we can continue
12 to encourage each other (Heb. 10:25).

13 The Small Catechism summarizes the Lutheran understanding of the importance of public
14 worship in its teaching on the third commandment: “We should fear and love God so that we do
15 not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.” As a
16 consequence, we hold services each Lord’s Day and at other times, and encourage all members
17 to attend regularly in order to receive the gifts of Christ in Word and Sacrament. At the same
18 time we have not made a law of Sunday worship. We know that our services are not something
19 we are doing to earn a place with God. Jesus tells us that “The Sabbath was made for man, not
20 man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27). There are times when the obligations of Christian love may
21 lead individuals *not* to worship with a congregation. A church member with a bad cold, flu, or
22 another contagious disease will generally refrain from attending services lest he or she infect
23 others. Congregations have canceled services entirely in order to protect their members during
24 inclement weather. Understandably then in the current circumstance, many LCMS congregations
25 have again determined that they should suspend services for a time out of love for those who
26 might contract the deadly Covid-19 virus.

27 Such churches are able to find various ways to help members to hear the Word of Christ richly.
28 From telephone calls to emails to website messaging to instant messaging to sermon streaming,
29 the Word is being heard and received in the midst of the coronavirus. But what of the Sacrament
30 of the Altar? The forgiveness of sins is not prevented when one cannot commune, for it is
31 delivered by the Gospel as it is read and preached and spoken by the royal priesthood and also in
32 the sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper as well as in Absolution. But it is only in the
33 Lord’s Supper that we eat and drink Christ’s very body and blood. It thereby offers a special
34 assurance that is proper only to it, just as Baptism has its own assurances. The inability to
35 commune is therefore no small matter, but a true hardship!

36 We know, however, that the church has known this hardship at other times and not only in our
37 own time. During the early years of colonial America, Lutherans often went weeks or months
38 without the Supper. Congregations without a pastor are often unable to receive the Lord’s Supper
39 in their services because supply pastors are unavailable—sometimes for lengthy time periods.
40 And, in the early 20th century during the great influenza epidemic of 1918–1919, many Missouri
41 Synod churches were not able to meet for any services during a period of time. We are not in
42 uncharted territory.

43 Some unsatisfactory solutions to the unavailability of the Sacrament have been suggested at the
44 present time. One is that a pastor speak the words of institution from the church during a
45 streaming service while everyone communes at home. Another is to have the pastor consecrate
46 elements in the presence of elders or deacons who would in turn administer them to members.

1 While the hunger and thirst for the Lord's Supper that leads to such measures is both
2 understandable and commendable, the solutions are nevertheless faulty.
3 A video streaming "consecration" with words spoken by the pastor remotely and communion
4 elements in member homes is almost identical to an approach that the CTCR addressed in 2006¹
5 in which the Commission said:

6 1. The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus with words and actions spoken and carried out
7 by him in the direct presence of his disciples (Matt. 26:26-28). Throughout history, the
8 church has sought to be faithful to Christ's practice in this regard. Pastors speak the
9 words of institution in the presence of the assembled congregation, thereby giving
10 assurance that we are "doing this" as our Lord has instructed us to do (Luke 22:19).

11 Whenever the actual words and actions of the celebrant in consecrating the elements are
12 intentionally separated (by time, distance, or technological means) from the distribution
13 and reception, no assurance can be given that our Lord's instructions are being heeded
14 and that the body and blood of Christ are actually being given and received for the
15 forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of faith (cf. fn. 15 of the CTCR's 1983 report
16 Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper [TPLS]).

17 Moreover, this approach turns the words spoken by the pastor from a proclamation into an
18 incantation of sorts. This, too, was addressed by the CTCR:

19 2. This practice lends itself to the unscriptural notion that the body and blood of Christ in
20 the Lord's Supper are present by virtue of the "incantation" of the pastor in some way,
21 shape or form, rather than by the gracious power of Christ and his Word. "Concerning the
22 consecration," says the Formula of Concord, "we believe, teach, and confess that no
23 man's work nor the recitation of the minister effect this presence of the body and blood of
24 Christ in the Holy Supper, but it is to be ascribed solely and alone to the almighty power

25 ¹ The CTCR responded to a question about DVD consecration. While there certainly are some dissimilarities
26 between the question at that time and the present question about a video streaming consecration, the similarities are
27 so strong that we are referencing the 2006 opinion extensively here. See CTCR, "Opinion on DVD Consecration
28 (2006) at <https://files.lcms.org/wl/?id=7ZiqCqGn3FiMMtQcbrCFQuPjfn9AoMQ>.

29 of our Lord Jesus Christ" (FC Ep VII, 8; quoted in TPLS, 15). While it is true that "the
30 regularly called and ordained pastors of the church are to officiate at the administration of
31 Holy Communion" (TPLS, 17-18), it is only "through Christ's word and its power"—not
32 through the mere "sound" or "recording" of the voice of the pastor—"that Christ's body
33 and blood are present in the bread and wine" (TPLS, 14).

34 Novelties such as these in the practice of the Lord's Supper will inevitably lead *away* from the
35 Sacrament itself as instituted by Christ to humanly-instituted *techniques* by which the Sacrament
36 is purportedly being given. Note the third point raised by the CTCR in 2006:

37 3. As emphasized above, the focus in our celebration of the Lord's Supper must always be
38 on the gracious word of Christ—the word that gives assurance to hearts weighed down by
39 guilt, doubt and fear that the great gifts promised here are truly given and received. The
40 Commission says: "To...insert some personal idiosyncrasy into the consecration is to
41 detract the people's attention from the Sacrament. The congregation's focus is to be on
42 Christ's word and invitation. The celebrant is a servant to sharpen that focus" (TPLS, 15).
43 The Lord's Supper is intended to strengthen faith in God's forgiving grace, a faith which counts
44 on the Word of Christ's promise that the bread and wine are His body and blood. To introduce
45 doubts or uncertainty about the Sacrament negates this purpose. We can be thankful that God in
46 His mercy has not given the Lord's Supper as the only "means of grace." Instead, he showers us
47 with His grace. The Gospel is not silenced, forgiveness is proclaimed, Baptism will be

administered even in emergencies, and Baptism is lived out daily by means of repentance and the new life that God's Spirit enables us to live in any and all circumstances.

We also cannot support the suggestion that a pastor may consecrate elements with the elders or deacons, who would then administer them to members. The CTCR counseled against this practice on theological grounds in *Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper*, pages 26–27 (see also page 13 which opposes distribution without the *Verba*).² Moreover, given the clear guidance of medical and governing authorities regarding behavior that best minimizes the spread of infection, we note that this suggested practice introduces two potential opportunities for the transmission of Covid-19. The first is the interaction between the pastor and the elders/deacons. The second is the interaction of the individual elder or deacon with the communicant(s) in the home.

As great as the hardship is when we cannot receive Christ's body and blood, the hardship ought not be "resolved" in ways that promise an uncertain "sacrament" without the absolute assurance that Christ intends. It is better humbly and repentantly to ask the Lord for the regular administration of the Sacrament of the Altar to be restored to us, together with an end to the

² CTCR (1983), <http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=421>.

"deadly pestilence" that is killing thousands of souls who are precious to God, their Creator (see Ps. 91; Jonah 4:11).

In this uncertain time, let us encourage every baptized child of God to be fervent in seeking opportunities to hear the Word of God as it goes forth from written sermons, letters, websites, emails, streaming videos, and other means, to read the Word in their homes, to implore God to end this plague and preserve His church, and—as His royal priesthood—to "proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

In closing, we wish to echo the CTCR from 2006.

Finally, it is important to note that this response of the Commission is in no way intended to pass judgment on the motives of those involved. . . . The sole purpose of this response is to promote and encourage the proper practice of the Lord's Supper in faithfulness to the teaching and example of Christ, so that doubts and questions may be replaced by faith in Christ's gracious word, promise, and presence.

Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Rast, Jr., Chairman of the CTCR

Rev. Dr. Joel D. Lehenbauer, Executive Director of the CTCR

Rev. Larry M. Vogel, Associate Executive Director of the CTCR

Endorsed by the CTCR (unanimously) on March 20, 2020

CTCR resources for further study:

"Opinion on DVD Consecration" (2006) at

<https://files.lcms.org/wl/?id=7ZiqCqGn3FiMMtQcbrCFQuPjjfn9AoMQ>

The Royal Priesthood: Identity and Mission (2018) at

<https://files.lcms.org/wl/?id=sKchZQIivrVVAJ6JqTkyqmW2FUx9NQZo>

Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper (1983) at

<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=421>