



Today's Business

Of the 60th Southern Illinois District Convention
Friday Issue February 21, 2025

CHANGES FROM THE WORKBOOK

Page 102 Commissioned Minister Roster Changes; Edward Bower rostered into the Southern Illinois District. He accepted a Call at Immanuel, Okawville

OPENING SERVICE

On Thursday evening, fellow heirs of eternal life throughout the Southern Illinois District gathered together around Word and Sacrament to begin the District's 60th Regular Convention. The Divine Service was hosted by Zion Lutheran Church in Belleville (Rev. Christ Spelbring and Rev. Joshua Kintz, pastors) and included choir members and musicians from Zion/Belleville, Zion/Mascoutah, Trinity/Millstadt, and Good Shepherd/Collinsville, as well as organist Mrs. Nancy Peterson, all under the direction of Mrs. Dawn Tayon, Zion's Minister of Music. Set within *Lutheran Service Book* Divine Service 2, Rev. Peter Lange, First Vice-President of the LCMS, preached the sermon based on the Convention theme, "Heirs of Eternal Life" (Titus 3:7).



In the sermon Rev. Lange related that most of us have limited experience inheriting, being an heir. But for most of us, we haven't and won't inherit the money that someone like Paris Hilton has inherited. Nor will we inherit a royal position like Prince William will. But we will inherit eternal life. And in fact, we have already inherited eternal life, even though we are still sinners who need forgiveness daily. Jesus's life, death and resurrection have made us heirs through Baptism. Most of us don't remember being an unregenerate sinner. Yet deep inside us, we were. But through Baptism, Jesus's death and resurrection, we are God's children, fed and nourished through the Lord's Supper. In the Lord's Supper, our sins are forgiven and we are strengthened for the challenges we face day to day. Today, we are God's heirs who await being with God for all eternity. The sermon, hymns, and musical leadership introduced the Convention's theme. Friday's theological study will elaborate upon this theme.

THURSDAY'S BUSINESS REPORT



At 8p.m. sharp, President Timothy Scharr called the meeting to order in the Triune name of our God.

After the schedule was approved as amended and the standing rules adopted unanimously, Rev. Ben Ball led the assembly in testing the voting “thingies,” as these devices might now forever be known.

Parliamentarians were hard at work, clearing up a discrepancy between the number of voting delegates present, and the number of voting devices originally distributed. To solve this issue, voting devices were all collected and re-distributed, delegate by delegate, to ensure due process.

Rev. Dr. Art Eichhorn took to the organ to accompany the device redistribution. It was quite appropriate that we were correcting what went wrong while singing of the Savior who came to correct what went horribly wrong in the garden.

When the 112 voting devices were diligently given to each of the 112 voting delegates present, the meeting continued.

After Rev. Scharr's powerful message from God's Word (see that feature article), convention chaplain Rev. Dr. Tony Troup led a prayer and asked God to bless the selection of our leaders.

The election of the servant of God who would lead us as District President in the years immediately ahead was the first vote of the evening. Candidates on the ballot included Rev. Heath Curtis, Rev. Stephen Krenz, Rev. Christen Prumm, and Rev. Timothy Scharr. After three rounds of voting, each removing the candidate with the fewest votes, Rev. Heath Curtis was elected as the next District President of the SID.

Rev. Ben Ball borrowed a touching moment from the assembly to thank President Scharr for his years of dedicated service. A grateful assembly echoed his thanks with a standing ovation. In return, Rev. Scharr thanked the beloved members of the district for a blessed tenure as district president and congratulated Reverend Curtis, offering him his full support and a smooth transition.

Rev. Ball sent floor committee three into the assembly with paper ballots to elect the vice presidents. The committee collected these ballots, the results of which will be announced Friday morning.

Chaplain Tony Troup closed the evening in devotion, centering us around the timeless truths of God's work in making us “Heirs of Eternal Life” through Christ.

ADDRESS FROM PRESIDENT SCHARR

In his faithful and gentle fashion, President Timothy Scharr clearly “determined not to know anything among [the convention] save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” as he wove together abundant quotations and themes from Scripture as he emboldening delegates to remember that Christ has qualified them for service in the Kingdom, Christ has prepared our eternal inheritance, and Christ bids us to unsheathe the sword of His Word.



Scharr noted that church leaders often feel unqualified, especially because of our sins, but Jesus qualifies us to be his saints and this is a gift from God.

Scharr directed delegates to focus on verse 8 “The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.” Scharr continued “We may be discouraged, but we should not be. We are about God’s Work. We have the message of salvation. We have no reason to fear. Our inheritance is assured. We have the sword of the Spirit – the Word of God. We are to be in the Scriptures that we might be bold witnesses as we serve the all-powerful and almighty God.” God’s Word makes us wise for salvation. We know the day of judgement is coming when we will be revealed as heirs of eternal life. We are

not to be conformed to the world. Yet the world sneaks in. We leave conflicts instead of working through our differences.

Scharr continued, “We don’t heed God’s words to do as God insists but instead love those who hate us. We tend to go negative about one another, feeding the misconceptions of those outside the church. Instead, we should bear with one another, forgive one another. People notice the difference. And so, we love one another. We are a city on the hill and a light to the world. We are to be the light into our communities, churches, families, and friends.”

Scharr’s address culminated with encouragement to be about the Father’s Work, share Jesus with those around us, and look forward to rest in the promise of all eternity with Jesus.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS – CURTIS ELECTED TO FIRST TERM

The Convention's first order of business was to elect the District President. On the ballot were

Rev. Heath Curtis (Trinity, Worden and Zion, Carpenter), Rev. Steven Krenz (St. Paul's, Columbia), Rev. Christian Prumm (Trinity, Nokomis), and Rev. Timothy Scarr (incumbent). Of the 112 verified voters, Rev. Curtis won on the third ballot, 55 votes (Rev. Scharr) to 57 votes (Rev. Curtis). The convention thanked Rev. Scharr for his years of faithful service to our District. Congratulations to Rev. Curtis. We pray for Rev. Scharr, Rev. Curtis, Trinity and Zion congregations, and for the Scharr and Curtis families.

Following the District President election, balloting began for District Vice Presidents. The ballot final slate of candidates will be presented to delegates on Friday.



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT ELECT REV. HEATH CURTIS

Beloved in the Lord,

Every pastor is acutely aware of his unworthiness to serve in the Lord's Kingdom. We all know that we are here by grace alone. I am humbled that you have placed me into the office of District president, another role in the Kingdom which I can only take on by the Lord's grace. I want to thank President Scharr not only for his kind words but also for his example of a faithful Lutheran theologian leading through listening, patience, and steadfast kindness. I look forward to working with him during the time of transition.

The District exists to serve the churches and schools of Southern Illinois and the pastors, teachers, and church workers who serve them. The District president's task is to help each church and school be a healthy, thriving outpost of the Kingdom of Christ on earth. To do this effectively, I need to get to know all of you better.

- Between the end of the convention and our next general pastor's conference, I would like to chat with each pastor serving a parish on the phone to hear about your congregation and the joys and challenges in ministry where you serve. Please be sure that the District office (siddpaa@gmail.com) has your current cell number.

- In the first 18 months of the triennium I would like to visit each congregation and school on a weekday to continue that conversation and get a “boots on the ground” understanding of your ministry.
- In the first triennium, I would like to worship with each congregation on a Sunday morning and both get to know you better and make a presentation to the Bible Class along the lines of the presentations I’ve been making for the Synod regarding the four challenges I see facing our churches today.

In all of this, most of all, I want to listen and learn so that I can help each congregation and school apply the Word of God to the challenges of ministry today. Undoubtedly, I will need to ask for your grace and forgiveness as I learn this new role on the job. Please pray for me, my family, and the dear saints in Carpenter and Worden as we make this transition as well.

In Christ,

Rev. Heath R. Curtis

President Elect – SID

BALLOT FOR VICE PRESIDENT

At the time of printing this Today’s Business, the slate of Vice Presidents has not yet been finalized.



**PLEASE REMEMBER TO STOP BY
OUR AMAZING EXHIBIT TABLES TODAY!**