



## President's Report Fall Pastors' Conference, October 14-18, 2024 Mid-South District–LCMS

### MID-SOUTH DISTRICT ACTIVITY

#### I. CHURCH PLANTING:

We continue in varying degrees of support for 8 church plants in the Mid-South District:

- **GracePoint Lutheran \*** - Munford, TN (Rev. Dan Hawkins, planter)
- **Mekane Yesus \*** - Nashville/Franklin, TN (Rev. Teshome Alebachu, planter)
- **Smith's Grove**, KY with Holy Trinity Lutheran, Bowling Green, KY (Rev. Dr. Mark Press, planter)
- **Beautiful Savior Lutheran \*** - Olive Branch, MS (Rev. Sawyer Meyers)
- **Hohenwald, TN** with Faith Lutheran, Thompson Station, TN (Rev. Douglas DeWitt, planter)
- **Mid-South District Black Ministry \*** - Rev. Russell Belisle, leading (Memphis and Little Rock developments)
- **Our Savior Lutheran**, Nashville, TN \*– (Rev. Mark Bushuiakovish)  
Spring Hill Church Plant – Currently operational
- **Haywood County, TN** – Church plant potential with the development of the new Ford Motor Company Electric Vehicles Parts Plant. We will work with Concordia Lutheran Church in Jackson, TN to determine if a partnership can be arranged.

\* The District provides financial support.

The Church Plant headed by Our Savior Lutheran Church, is focusing on the Spring Hill Community. They began services there in March. Prior to this, Rev. Lane Reuter and Rev. Mark Bushuiakovish met with the Mission and Ministry Committee and Rev. Curt Hoover (Faith, Thompson Station) to discuss the program. They will continue to meet with the joint Circuits in Murfreesboro to discuss updated plans with the circuit pastors.

We will continue to identify potential church planting “hotspots” in the states of Arkansas and Tennessee. The Missions & Ministry Committee will develop opportunities to hold one-time weekend regional information sessions to share *Churches Planting Churches* training for pastors and interested laity. These regional meetings will be scheduled in the near future.

A number of Hispanic immigrants who would benefit from such a Hispanic ministry are concentrated more in Cordova and the areas around Immanuel Lutheran Church in Memphis. There are small groups of Hispanic immigrants who are attending in other locations but not as much at Trinity in the downtown Memphis area. Trinity has an afternoon Sunday service with a range of 20 to 35 people in attendance. Grace Celebration has a Hispanic ministry meeting in their facilities but are not Lutheran or affiliated with Grace Celebration at this time.

The Synod's grant from the *New-to-Us Foundation* is moving ahead. We have met with Rev. Dr. Mark Wood, Managing Director of Church Planting, Renewal and Support, Office of National Missions) at our May Board of Directors Meeting. The Mission and Ministry Sub-Committee of the Board has approved the church planting methodology and will apply it to the next group of church plants.

**It is important to note that Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Olive Branch; Grace Point Lutheran Church, Munford; and Cross of Calvary Lutheran Church, Memphis have entered into new contracts. Support for these plants will cease within 3 years.**

## II. MISSION & MINISTRY

The Synod Resolutions from the 2023 Synodical Convention have pointed to a greater focus on professional Church Worker Health and Wellness – both in physical and emotional health standards. The Fall Pastors' Conference will totally focus on Church Worker Health and Wellness. The Mid-South District has engaged the services of Deaconess-Intern, Robin Moyer to begin the task of developing an inventory of services that can be made available to the workers in our congregations and schools. She will also be meeting with each of the circuits in their Winkel conferences to introduce the information and solicit ways to connect with those who may need access to these services.

The Mid-South District and Missouri District have resumed meetings on the possibilities of something similar to the "Circuit Riders" concept or other arrangements between the Mid-South and the Missouri District in 2024. President Lee Hagan and I will be requesting grant dollars to support this as a possibility for all Districts. We will host the next meeting sometime in the near future.

At the present time, we are focusing on Northwest Arkansas with the small congregations in the Southwest portion of Missouri and Northeast Arkansas congregations in relation with the Missouri District congregations in the Bootheel of Missouri.

## III. CHURCH WORKER AND CONGREGATIONAL CHANGES:

### Calls accepted or declined – Ordained

**Rev. Sean Smith** accepted the Call to serve as Senior Pastor for Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN. Installation took place August 18, 2024.

**Rev. Steve Teske** accepted the Call to serve as Pastor for Immanuel Lutheran Church, Alexander, AR. Installation took place August 11, 2024.

**Rev. Todd Bunge** accepted the Call to serve as Pastor for Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN. Installation took place July 7, 2024.

**Rev. Jonathan Petering** accepted the Call to serve as Senior Pastor for Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN. Installation took place June 15, 2024.

**Rev. Koh Yamamoto**, Graduate CTSFW, accepted the Call to serve as Pastor for Christ Lutheran Church, Paris, TN. Ordination and Installation took place June 23, 2024.

**Rev. Matthew Lynch**, Graduate Concordia STL, accepted the Call to serve as Associate Pastor for Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN. Ordination took place June 23, 2024; Installation took place June 30, 2024.

**Rev. Patrick Cox II**, Graduate CTSFW, accepted the Call to serve as Pastor for Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN. Ordination and Installation took place

**Rev. James Martin**, Graduate CTSFW, accepted the Call to serve as Associate Pastor for Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN.

**Rev. Amos Gray** accepted the Call to serve as Pastor for High Impact Ministries, Little Rock, AR, that is an RSO of the LCMS. Installation date is pending.

**Rev. Jacob LeBorious** declined the Call to Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Hermitage.

#### **Retirements and Removals from Roster**

**Rev. Kent Schaaf** resigned his Call to Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR.

**Rev. Charles Neugebauer** retired August 31, 2024.

#### **Calls accepted or declined - Commissioned**

**Amy Waltz** accepted the Call to be the Director of Our Savior Lutheran Church & Academy, Nashville, TN. Commissioning and Installation took place August 11, 2024.

**Christina Childers** (Deaconess-Intern, Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN) accepted the Call to serve as Deaconess to Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN. Commissioning and Installation took place August 11, 2024.

**Brittany Webb** (Colloquy Certified) accepted the Call to serve as a teacher to Belvoir Christian Academy of First Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN. Commissioning and Installation took place August 11, 2024.

**Teresa Young** (Colloquy Certified) accepted the Call to serve as a teacher to Immanuel Lutheran School, Memphis, TN. Commissioning and Installation took place August 4, 2024.

**Nathan LeBorious** (Graduate, Concordia University Chicago) accepted the Call to serve as a teacher for Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN. Commissioning and Installation took place August 4, 2024.

**Andra Gates** (Candidate) accepted the Call to serve as Deaconess to Redeemer Lutheran Church, Mountain Home, AR. Installation took place September 1, 2024.

**Amy Kurtz** accepted the Call to serve as principal to Immanuel Lutheran School, Memphis, TN. Installation will take place in January 2025.

**Kelly Dressler** accepted the Call to serve as a teacher to First Lutheran School, Fort Smith, AR. Installation took place August 4, 2024.

**Katie Baumann**, DCE, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN returned the Call to serve as DCE to Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, North Fort Myers, FL.

**Jonah Kaufman**, DCE, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Bowling Green, KY accepted the Call to serve as DCE to Community of Christ-St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Federal Way, WA.

#### **IV. INTERVIEWS FOR ADMISSION TO PASTORAL MINISTRY**

- Jason Hancock seeking admission to Concordia Seminary, St Louis, SMP
- Timothy Benecke seeking admission to Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, MDiv.
- Matthew Laird seeking admission to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MDiv
- Charles Miller seeking admission to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MDiv
- Benjamin Kuefner seeking admission to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO

#### **V. VACANT CONGREGATIONS**

##### **Tennessee/Kentucky/Virginia**

**\*Hawkins County Lutheran Worship Community Now Rogersville Lutheran** – Is an official auxiliary congregation of Concordia Lutheran Church in Kingsport, TN; being served by Johnson City Circuit pastors – Rev. John Freitag.

**\*Hope, Smyrna** (Rev. Eric Phillips, Vacancy Pastor)

**Emmanuel Lutheran, Hermitage** (Rev. Timothy Hunze serving as Associate & Senior Pastor)

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church & School, Bowling Green**, Rev. Dr. Mark Press, Vacancy Pastor

##### **Arkansas/Mississippi**

**\*First, Blytheville** (Served by the Circuit – principally, Rev. Joshua Leigeber)

**First, Harrison** (Pulpit Supply from Rev. Gerald Hemmingson and Circuit Pastors)

**\*Faith, Magnolia** (Rev. Don White, Vacancy Pastor)

**\*Our Savior, El Dorado** (Rev. Don White, Vacancy Pastor)

**Our Savior, Cabot** (Rev. David Vandercook, Vacancy Pastor)

**St. Luke, DeWitt/St. Paul, Gillett** (Rev. Don White, Vacancy Pastor)

**\*St. Luke, Malvern** (Rev. Emil Woerner, Vacancy Pastor)



\***St. John, Fayetteville**, (Rev. JD Zischke, Vacancy Pastor)

**Shepherd of the Hills, Horseshoe Bend** (Rev. Joshua Leigeber, Vacancy Pastor)

\***Faith, Forrest City** (Served by Deacon Earl Burghart, President Paavola, Vacancy Pastor)

\* Non-Calling Congregations or served by deacons.

## VI. VACANT COMMISSIONED MINISTRIES

Assistant Director – Grace Lutheran Church Early Childhood Center, Little Rock, AR

Part-time Teachers – ECC/After Care Program - Our Savior Lutheran Academy, Nashville, TN

## VII. FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, BENTON

First Lutheran Church, Benton, AR, started a school attached as a ministry of the church. Pastor Jim Burns has 15 students registered for Fall 2024 with the first day of class scheduled for August 19, 2024. Michelle Fischer will be visiting the school that now has an LCEF loan on a temporary building on the campus of First Lutheran Church. Several of the teachers from Avilla Christian Academy were assigned to First Lutheran School.

## VIII. COMPASS and C.A.R.:

We have completed 88 **C.A.R.** reports, at the current time. We have at least two more requests for **COMPASS** visits. There have been 4 new **C.A.R.** assignments.

## IX. CONGREGATION PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

The Jonesboro Circuit will be meeting with me on a rearrangement of their parish partnerships. The congregations that are “in play” include Blytheville, Corning, Waldenburg, Batesville, Horseshoe Bend, Harrison, Lafe, Paragould, and Jonesboro. With a third pastor now available out of Jonesboro, the coverage of those small congregations will be more easily managed.

In addition, First Lutheran in Harrison, Arkansas has been notified that Rev. Robert Herring will re-retire and discontinue servicing the congregation on September 8, 2024. There was a meeting with the Circuit Visitor, Rev. Joshua Leigeber, my office, and other congregations to discuss continued coverage for First Lutheran.

## X. GROW GRANTS

The Mid-South District **GROW** Grants are a one-time financial outlay of up to \$15,000 for an innovative ministry or program that will be on-going and self-sustaining after its initial launch phase. The committee has awarded \$91,469 in **GROW** Grants thus far. The committee for **GROW** Grant selections include Katie McEntire, Rev. Adam Woldt, President Paavola (Advisory) and Angela Fowler (Advisory). This program will continue into 2025. Thus far this quarter, there have been no new applications.

**XI. STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The MDS Strategic Planning Committee, at their April retreat, took the five *Foundations of Faith* initiatives:

- Recruiting & Retaining Professional Church Workers
- Planting New Church & School Ministries
- Strengthening Generational Faith Through the Family Altar
- Providing Pastoral Coverage for Rural Ministries Through Circuit Riders
- Equipping Congregations for Ministry to Human Trafficking Victims

and compiled a list of priorities under each initiative which will comprise the strategic plan for the Mid-South District moving forward. We met as an Executive Staff to assign responsibilities for each of the priorities. We will present the Strategic Initiatives for the 2025 calendar year at our 2024 December BOD meeting.

**XII. CONSTITUTIONS REVIEW**

The Mid-South District continues the process of evaluating the current position of all Constitutions and Bylaws on file at the District office. Of the 120 congregations in our judicatory supervision, there are some that date back as far as the 1980's and 38 (32%) that either have no date or have no approved Constitution on file. (See Appendix A).

**XIII. PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH – OXFORD, MS**

The congregation of Peace Lutheran Church – as of August, 2024 – in Oxford Mississippi has resubmitted its petition to the Southern District requesting to join the Mid-South District. The Southern District and their Board of Directors originally denied the petition. In the latest development, one of the pastors from the Southern District notified the Southern District and the MDS that he and several others will be submitting an overture to the conventions of both Districts in 2025 to investigate the possibility of merging the two districts into one.

**XIV. DISASTER RELIEF**

As a result of the many tornados, floods, and ice storms we have suffered in the last few years, our Disaster relief efforts have increase exponentially. We have received a grant from LCMS Disaster Relief in two significant ways. Recently, our DR team worked in Northwest Arkansas for the tornado that hit the Rogers, Arkansas area. We deployed teams from outside of the MDS and were reimbursed for their work from LCMS-DR in the amount of \$7,846. Later, after we submitted a request to LCMS-DR, we received \$20,000 for the purchase of a Ford F-350 diesel truck to haul workers and pull our skid loader to different locations.

In addition, Jan Simko, who has served as the Disaster Relief Coordinator for the Mid-South District, resigned effective August 31 in order to be closer to family in Michigan. We have appointed two coordinators to serve in that capacity for the MDS: Rev. Trae Fistler, who has been certified as a LERT trainer, LERT-chainsaw trainer, and national lift operator, has been appointed as the Field Operator for Disaster Relief.

Kurt Ludwig has been appointed as Disaster Relief Coordinator to work with local law enforcement, first responders, city and county officials to coordinate disaster relief efforts and awarding of grant dollars.





THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Missouri Synod

**SYNODICAL BUSINESS:**

**XV. PASTORAL MINISTRY PROSPECTS AND VACANCIES**

This year is likely to be the least number of on-campus graduates in the modern history of our two Synodical seminaries. Placement for seminary graduates for the 2023-2024 academic year included:

	<b>Concordia Seminary St Louis</b>	<b>Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne</b>
MDiv	55	36
AR	1	1
SMP to MDiv	0	0
St Catherines	0	1
Delayed	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>38</b>
Deaconess	5	0

There is a slight increase in the number of students from Fort Wayne's incoming Freshman class this coming academic year. They have 54 MDiv candidates and an even larger number for the academic year beginning in the Fall of 2025. The situation in St Louis shows a much larger incoming freshmen for their 2024-25 academic year. The prospects for the Fall of 2025 have a much larger number of students, roughly adding 25 more resident students in our combined numbers for the 2024-25 academic year.

This year, there were 172 requests for candidate Calls from all the LCMS Districts. The number of vicarages assigned were 78 out of the 131 applications from congregations of the LCMS.

**XVI. SOUTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT**

With the passing of District President, Rev. Dr. John Wille, the First Vice-President, Rev. Eric Skovgaard will fill the unexpired term until the 2025 District Convention.

**XVII. CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, FORT WAYNE**

The installation of the new CTSFW President, Rev. Dr. John Bruss, took place September 8, 2024. As one of the Electors, I participated in the installation.

It was also announced the CTSFW has received two accreditation notices for ten years. The two accrediting bodies are the Higher Learning Commission and the Association of Seminary Education.

**XVIII. VACANCY REPORT – LCMS**

From the Council of Presidents, Clergy Call and Rosters Committee: The number of vacancies in the LCMS is as follows:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
<b>Sole Pastors</b>	413	354	344	377	314	312
<b>Senior Pastors</b>	54	66	62	67	44	47
<b><u>Associate Pastors</u></b>	63	41	60	67	55	75
<b>Total:</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>434</b>
<b>Part Time Pastors</b>	630	443	436	413	465	357
<b>Congregation starts</b>	10	4	7	5	20	12
<b>Congregations closed</b>	31	7	6	12	8	10

**The Mid-South District’s Data:** Calling Sole Pastors – 1  
 Calling Senior Pastors – 2  
 Congregations Served Part Time – 8  
 Congregations Closed – 2  
 Congregations Started – 0  
 Synod Vacancy Rate – 8.98%  
 District’s Vacancy Rate – 3%

**XIX. CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

After the retirement of Rev. Dr. Dean Wenthe as Chairman of the CUS, Rev. Dr. Jameson Hardy was elected to become the new chairman of the Concordia University System. He was installed at the International Center of the LCMS. He is being replaced as President of the English District-LCMS, by Rev. Jeffery Miskus, the First Vice-President who serves in Ontario, Canada. He was a classmate of mine at the seminary in St Catharines.

In addition, Rev. Dr. Paul Philp has accepted the Call to the Concordia University Education Network as its Executive Director. Formerly, Dr. Philp served as the director of Institutional Research and Integrity for the CUS. (Appendix B)

Recruitment of interested men and women for positions in church-worker ministries continues to be a major topic of work for the Synod and our MDS “Set Apart to Serve” committee. The results at our CUS universities is beginning to show signs that the effort is producing some positive results. (See Appendix C)



**XX. PALS**

PALS (*Post-Seminary Applied Learning & Support*) is a program through Synod in each District to coordinate work with the new graduates from our seminaries. For several years, the Mid-South District has relied solely on Rev. Barry Hildebrandt to be the PALS Coordinator. Pastor Hildebrandt is located in Chattanooga, TN, and has retired from active ministry. I have received permission for training of three new coordinators in the Mid-South District who would be more geographically situated. Rev. Jonathan Manor will meet with the Circuit Visitors during their upcoming meeting to assist in the transition and get our younger pastors involved in the program. I will ask the Circuit Visitors for nominations for three or four PALS Coordinators.

**XXI. BLACK CLERGY CAUCUS**

The Black Clergy Caucus of the Lutheran Church, Inc. is an autonomous organization of ordained black clergy in the LCMS. The BCC will have its semi-annual meeting in Memphis, Tennessee. They will meet at the Embassy Suites from October 22-24, 2024.

**XXII. LUTHER CLASSICAL COLLEGE – WYOMING**

The Luther Classical College in Wyoming has named Rev. Dr. Harold Ristau as its President and Dr. Christian Preus as the Chairman of the Board of Regents. They are working toward accreditation this Fall, so the addition of Dr. Ristau will be a major step in that direction. Dr. Ristau is a graduate of Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary in St Catherines, Ontario and McGill University with a doctorate in Religious Studies. His installation took place on September 15, 2024, in Casper, WY. (See Appendix D)

**XXIII. LCMS 2026 SYNOD CONVENTION**

We have begun to receive information about the 2026 LCMS Synod Convention. Under the new ruling from the 2023 Resolutions, the Committee for Convention Nominations will begin soliciting names for nominations to the various agencies of the LCMS. (See Appendix E for the 2025 District Convention lineup.)

**XXIV. CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY-ANN ARBOR**

In recent months, Concordia University – Ann Arbor has been in the news regarding a situation that has developed over the past several years. There have been monumental changes that the Board of Regents have had to implement as a result of the continuing large financial dilemma facing the university.

CU-AA and Concordia University-Wisconsin have had a joint working relationship for over two decades when CU-AA was not able to meet its budgetary needs. The joint arrangement has come under some scrutiny in recent years because the financial situation at CU-AA has worsened substantially and caused financial shortfalls at CU-W.

The Board of Regents, over the course of a few months, decided to discontinue some of the athletic programs and other non-essential programs that were the largest contributors to the fiscal deficit. The Michigan District-LCMS became involved in the situation, wanting to raise sufficient funds to narrow the financial deficit. In addition, the Michigan District and its President, Rev. David Davis proposed that the District would take over the university as an independent Lutheran University that would no longer be under the CUS system.

The response of the Board of Regents is attached in [Appendix F](#), and the report from President Davis [Appendix G](#).

**XXV. CONCORDIA PLANS – STATE OF THE PLANS**

The state of CPS continues to move in positive ways to provide healthcare, pension, disability, and wellness services to the professional and non-rostered workers in the LCMS. The healthcare plan is doing as best it can with the rising costs of healthcare coverages and increasing premiums. The increase in premiums over the last four years through the Concordia Health Plan has been smaller than the commercial insurance plans.

The Concordia Retirement Plan has not avoided the struggle of other investment-based plans that other similar retirement plans have had to deal with over the last 2 to 3 years. However, the advisors to CPS for investments, and a work plan that increases the contribution levels of those on the retirement plan have made the CRP stand solidly in support of the workers in our ministries.

The Concordia Retirement Supplementary Plan (CRSP) has enjoyed a substantial recovery as the “roller-coaster” of plans that rely heavily on investment income from the contributions made by the workers and their employers. A full report of the CPS's most recent year's performance is attached in [Appendix H](#).

# Appendix A

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Constitution Review



CONSTITUTIONS OF THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT

#	Cong ID	Name	Address	City	ST	Zipcode	Constitution Y or N	Signed Y or N	Date Signed	Dissolution Clause	Who Gets Church Property
		Arkansas									
1	41	Immanuel Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 119	Alexander	AR	720020119	Yes	Y	08.29.99	Yes	
2	42	Zion Lutheran Church of Avilla	300 Avilla East	Alexander	AR	720028876	Yes	Y	07.09.12	Yes	
3	33	Zion Lutheran Church	93 Augsburg Road	Augsburg	AR	72847	Yes	Y	05.05.08	Yes	
4	86	Hope Lutheran Church	2415 E. Main St.	Batesville	AR	725019409	Yes	Y			
5	502	Bella Vista Lutheran Church	1990 Forest Hills Boulevard	Bella Vista	AR	727152989	Yes	Y	05.22.12	Yes	
6	43	First Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 1249	Benton	AR	720181249	Yes	Y	12.26.10	Yes	
7	109	Faith Lutheran Church	1602 N.W. 12th Street	Bentonville	AR	727124113	Yes	N (C)/(B)	4.28.24 (B)	Yes	
8	87	First Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 573	Blytheville	AR	723163326	Yes	Y	04.08.08	Yes	
9	3	Our Savior Lutheran Church	11995 Highway 49	Brykley	AR	720219248	No	N		No	
10	7149	Friends in Christ Lutheran Church	4305 Highway 5 N.	Bryant	AR	720229027	Yes	N		Yes	
11	121	Our Savior Lutheran Church	301 South Pine	Cabot	AR	72023	Yes	Y	12.05.10	Yes	
12	89	Peace Lutheran Church	41 Iroquois Dr.	Cherokee Village	AR	725297430	Yes	N		Yes	
13	119	Peace Lutheran Church	800 S. Donaghey Avenue	Conway	AR	72034	Yes	Y	11.21.10	Yes	
14	6748	St. Matthew Lutheran Church	900 Farris Road	Conway	AR	72034	Yes	N		Yes	
15	88	St. Matthew Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 399	Corning	AR	724220248	Yes	N		Yes	
16	5	St. John Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 581	Crossett	AR	71635	Yes	N		Yes	
17	6	St. Luke Lutheran Church	903 East 2nd Street	DeWitt	AR	72042	Yes	Y	No date	Yes	Congregation Closed
18	7	Our Savior Lutheran Church	900 West Faulkner	El Dorado	AR	71730	Yes	N		Yes	
19	44	Faith Lutheran Church	310 Sneed	Fairfield Bay	AR	720883906	Yes	Y	11.30.08	Yes	
20	0	Restoration Lutheran Church	3526 Foxtail Lily Lane	Fayetteville	AR	72704	Yes	Y	06.24.2021	Yes	
21	111	St. John Lutheran Church	2730 E. Township Road	Fayetteville	AR	727094362	Yes	Y	03.04.04	Yes	
22	95	Faith Lutheran Church	4525 N. Washington St.	Forrest City	AR	723357639	File Empty	N		No	
23	35	Bethel Lutheran Church	5400 Euper Lane	Fort Smith	AR	729033232	Yes	Y	06.23.10	Yes	
24	36	First Lutheran Church	1115 North D Street	Fort Smith	AR	72901	Yes	Y	03.20.08	Yes	
25	37	Our Redeemer Lutheran Church	2100 Cavanaugh Road	Fort Smith	AR	729087844	Yes	Y	08.14.05	Yes	
26	8	St. Paul Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 419	Gillett	AR	72055	Yes	Y	05.05.08	Yes	
27	4685	Grace Lutheran Church	18218 U.S. Hwy. 71 South	Greenwood	AR	72936	Yes	N		Yes	
28	112	First Lutheran Church	515 South Locust Street	Harrison	AR	72601	Yes	Y	11.08.04	Yes	
29	113	Grace Lutheran Church	179 Holiday Island Drive	Holiday Island	AR	726314821	Yes	Y	02.24.08	Yes	
30	90	Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church	508 Profession Drive	Horseshoe Bend	AR	725123733	Yes	Y	03.12.08	Yes	
31	46	First Lutheran Church	105 Village Road	Hot Springs	AR	719136715	Yes	N		Yes	
32	713	LakePointe Lutheran Church	1303 Albert Pike	Hot Springs	AR	71913	No	N		No	
33	47	Faith Lutheran Church	1196 DeSoro Blvd.	Hot Springs Village	AR	719097403	Yes	Y	01.19.20	Yes	
34	48	Hope Lutheran Church	1904 McArthur Drive	Jacksonville	AR	720763728	Yes	Y	2/18/2024	Yes	





CONSTITUTIONS OF THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT

#	Cong ID	Name	Address	City	ST	Zipcode	Constitution Y or N	Signed Y or N	Date Signed	Dissolution Clause	Who Gets Church Property
		Tennessee/MS									
67	821	Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church	7630 Davidson Road	Olive Branch	MS	38654	Yes	Y	10.29.17	Yes	
68	66	Athens Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 841	Athens	TN	373710841	Yes	Y	08.19.13	Yes	
69	6272	St. John Lutheran Church	3200 Highway 96	Burns	TN	370296273	Yes	Y	11.15.15	Yes	
70	67	Cross of Christ Lutheran Church	3204 Hixson Pike	Chattanooga	TN	374155424	Yes	Y	09.11.22	Yes	
71	68	First Lutheran Church	2800 McCallie Avenue	Chattanooga	TN	374043916	Yes	Y	No date	Yes	
72	69	Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	822 Belvoir Avenue	Chattanooga	TN	37412	Yes	Y	08.19.13	Yes	
73	6410	Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church	8705 E. Brainerd Road	Chattanooga	TN	37421	Yes	Y	12.19.04	Yes	
74	71	St. Philip Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 23304	Chattanooga	TN	37422	Yes	N			
75	62	Grace Lutheran Church	2041 Madison Street	Clarksville	TN	370435058	Yes	Y	2/11/2024	Yes	
76	72	First Lutheran Church	195 McIntire Ave., N.E.	Cleveland	TN	373125450	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
77	97	Faith Lutheran Church	507 Faith Lutheran Road	Collinsville	TN	380173750	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
78	74	Trinity Lutheran Church	5001 Trotwood	Columbia	TN	38401	Yes	Y	12.10.2023	Yes	
79	75	Heavenly Host Lutheran Church	777 S. Willow Avenue	Cookeville	TN	38501	Yes	Y	10.06.13	Yes	
80	5470	Grace Celebration Lutheran Church	8601 Trinity Road	Cordova	TN	38018	Yes	Y	10.2005	Yes	
81	22	Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church	1461 Sparta Highway	Crossville	TN	38572	Yes	Y	09.17.23	Yes	
82	73	Prince of Peace Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 195	Dayton	TN	373210105	Yes	Y	6.21.2014	Yes	Congregation Closed
83	63	Trinity Lutheran Church	1500 Hwy. 51, Bypass North	Dyersburg	TN	38024	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
84	17	Redeemer Lutheran Church	234 West "F" Street	Elizabethton	TN	376433110	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
85	76	Trinity Lutheran Church	720 Lock Four Road	Gallatin	TN	370663435	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
86	23	Redeemer Lutheran Church	1658 Roane State Highway	Harriman	TN	377488303	Yes	Y	09.26.23	Yes	
87	24	Christ of the Cumberland Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 4069	Harrigate	TN	377524069	Yes	Y	06.06.94	Yes	
88	77	Emmanuel Lutheran Church	1003 Hickory Hill Lane	Herritage	TN	370761906	Yes	Y	06.01.08	Yes	
89	98	Concordia Lutheran Church	637 Wallace Road	Jackson	TN	385054299	Yes	Y	09.28.14	Yes	
90	19	Bethlehem Lutheran Church	201 E. Watauga Avenue	Johnson City	TN	376014629	Yes	N		Yes	
91	20	Concordia Lutheran Church	725 Trouton Drive	Kingsport	TN	376605603	Yes	Y	05.12.06	Yes	
92	27	Christus Victor Lutheran Church	4110 Central Avenue Pike	Knoxville	TN	379120312	Yes	Y	12.17.06	Yes	
93	25	First Lutheran Church	1207 N. Broadway	Knoxville	TN	379176530	Yes	Y	04.14.24	Yes	
94	26	Grace Lutheran Church	9076 Middlebrook Pike	Knoxville	TN	379231557	Yes	Y	06.21.02	Yes	
95	520	The Point Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 10626	Knoxville	TN	37939	Yes	N		No	
96	6475	Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church	260 Wade Road, West	Loudon	TN	37743412	Yes	Y	05.28.14	Yes	
97	78	Ascension Lutheran Church	610 W. Old Hickory Blvd.	Madison	TN	371155580	Yes	Y	02.19.19	Yes	
98	7152	Praise Lutheran Church	1850 Big Springs Road	Manville	TN	378018207	Yes	N		Yes	
99	79	Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church	4083 Yager Road	McMinnville	TN	371106745	Yes	Y	03.11.10	Yes	

CONSTITUTIONS OF THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT

#	Cong ID	Name	Address	City	ST	Zipcode	Constitution Y or N	Signed Y or N	Date Signed	Dissolution Clause	Who Gets Church Property
100	571	Christ the King Lutheran Church	5296 Park Avenue	Memphis	TN	381193506	Yes	Y	10.08.09	Yes	
101	101	Cross of Calvary Lutheran Church	4327 Elvis Presley Blvd.	Memphis	TN	382166405	Yes	Y	08.14.24	Yes	
102	105	Immanuel Lutheran Church	6325 Raleigh-LaGrange Road	Memphis	TN	381346907	Yes	Y	05.20.10	Yes	
103	107	Messiah Lutheran Church	3743 Austin Peay Hwy.	Memphis	TN	381283721	Yes	Y	05.02.24	Yes	
104	108	Trinity Lutheran Church	210 Washington Avenue	Memphis	TN	381091910	Yes	N		Yes	
105	21	Our Savior Lutheran Church	2717 Buffalo Trail	Morristown	TN	378145907	Yes	Y	09.16.07	Yes	
106	126	GracePoint Lutheran Church	133 Munford Avenue	Munford	TN	38058	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
107	80	Grace Lutheran Church	811 East Clark Blvd.	Murfreesboro	TN	37130	Yes	Y	01.16.23	Yes	
108	81	Concordia Lutheran Church	3501 Central	Nashville	TN	372052341	Yes	Y	05.01.09	Yes	
109	82	Our Savior Lutheran Church	5110 Franklin Pike	Nashville	TN	372201814	Yes	Y	07.17.22	Yes	
110	83	Redeemer Lutheran Church	800 Bellevue Road	Nashville	TN	37221	Yes	Y	08.19.13	No	
111	30	Faith Lutheran Church	1300 Oak Ridge Turnpike	Oak Ridge	TN	378307867	Yes	Y	12.21.22	Yes	
112	919	Holy Spirit Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 571	Oakland	TN	38060	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
113	64	Christ Lutheran Church	3235 Highway 79S	Paris	TN	382422407	Yes	Y	6.2012	Yes	
114	1319	Hawkins County Lutheran Worship Community	374 Hidden Valley Road	Rogersville	TN	378576918					
115	6075	St. Paul Lutheran Church	1610 Pullen Road	Sevierville	TN	37862	Yes	Y	02.19.08	Yes	
116	31	Celebration Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 1550	Seymour	TN	378651550	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
117	521	Chapel of the Good Shepherd	P.O. Box 35	Sharps Chapel	TN	37866	Yes	Y	8.16.16	Yes	
118	1015	Hope Lutheran Church	1450 Sam Davis Rd. Suite 130	Smyrna	TN	37167	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
119	3266	Faith Lutheran Church	2640 Buckner Road	Thompson's Station	TN	37179	Yes	Y	01.17.09	Yes	
120	85	Faith Lutheran Church	101 Bragg Circle	Tullahoma	TN	373882975	Yes	Y	02.25.08	Yes	
121	65	Faith Lutheran Church	2012 E. Reeffoot Ave.	Union City	TN	38261	Yes	Y	10.11.08	Yes	
122	32	St. Paul Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 67	Wartburg	TN	378870067	Yes	Y	01.06.23	Yes	
123	7005	Prince of Peace Lutheran Church	P.O. Box 1528	White House	TN	37188	Yes	N	No date	Yes	
124	16	Grace Lutheran Church	338 Lowland Street	Abingdon	VA	24210	No				Congregation Closed
125		Trinity Lutheran Church	2000 S. Kerr Blvd.	Sallisaw	OK	74955	Yes	Y			*Needs review due to change

# Appendix B

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Rev. Dr. Paul Philip – CUENet





1333 S. Kirkwood Road  
St. Louis, MO  
63122-7295

**Phone:**  
800-248-1930

Ext. 1252

**Website:**  
[www.cus.edu](http://www.cus.edu)

**Email:**  
[cus.info@cus.edu](mailto:cus.info@cus.edu)

July 29, 2024

The Concordia University System (CUS) is pleased to announce that the Rev. Dr. Paul Philp has accepted a divine call to serve as the next Concordia University Education Network (CUEnet) executive director.

Dr. Philp has been serving as the director of Institutional Research and Integrity for the CUS since May 2014.

In his letter of acceptance, Philp shared, "For the past ten years, I have been privileged to serve the Lord of [the] Church in my current position with the Concordia University System. This service has been a distinct honor and a great joy. I am grateful for the many opportunities that it has afforded me to work with many in the Synod. While my tenure of service is changing with this new call, my service to the Synod and the CUS is not. This new call will continue to afford me the wonderful opportunity to serve the Church and the CUS in many and various ways."

CUEnet is part of the Concordia University System and falls under the governance of each university in the CUS. The organization provides distance education in theology to teachers, church workers, pre-seminary students and others on behalf of the universities of the CUS. Its primary focus is on the LCMS Teacher Colloquy Program. In addition, CUEnet produces curricular and artistic work to further the theological education of persons in communities, churches, and schools associated with or impacted by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. CUEnet is a self-funded organization, supported through grants, donations, and tuition dollars.

Philp's start date in this new role is Sept. 1, with a formal installation to follow.

# Appendix C

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Set Apart to Serve



# SET APART TO SERVE

LCMS CHURCH WORK RECRUITMENT



## Report to the Synod President

and over 600 significant collaborators and stakeholders

*The Office of LCMS Pastoral Education – Rev. Dr. James A. Baneck*

June/July 2024

### Key points for this month:

1. Building a Culture
2. *SAS* and Mission Advancement
3. A Summer of Connecting with Youth
4. Several *SAS* Pilot Projects
5. Ongoing Research
6. *SAS* Collaborates with PALS
7. *SAS* on KFUEO Coffee Hour Program
8. Second-Career Journey Mapping

### Building a Culture

Since at least 1920 (when Synod began holding convention proceedings in English), the LCMS has built a culture of forming and recruiting church workers in our LCMS congregations and schools. The topic of formation and encouraging people to pursue church work vocations shows up in practically every convention held in the last century.

Since the 67th Regular Convention of the LCMS in 2019, the focus of *Set Apart to Serve (SAS)* has been to:

- Encourage **primary influencers** to form, identify and encourage youth to consider full-time church work. These primary influencers are pastors, teachers, commissioned church workers, parents and laity.
- Encourage **district presidents** to establish a district church worker recruitment committee to provide resources and encouragement to church workers, congregations and schools to intentionally identify and recruit boys and girls for full-time church work.
- Encourage **circuit visitors** to help church workers, congregations and schools to intentionally recruit boys and girls for full-time church work.
- Encourage **seminaries** and **Concordia universities** to have an aggressive church work recruitment plan and to execute it throughout the Synod.
- Encourage **Synod** (everyone involved in the LCMS) to provide human and financial resources to produce recruitment strategies, resources and expertise to church workers, congregations and schools.

Several efforts for Synodwide church work recruitment were begun during the last century. Building on the work of previous saints, *Set Apart to Serve (SAS)* is now poised, with the collaboration of every major

entity in Synod, to aggressively lead this charge to extend for generations to come. **Everyone** has a role to play, and **no one** can sit out.

*SAS* is preparing a white paper that chronicles the church work recruitment effort in Synod throughout the last century and casts a vision for years to come. “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Matt. 9:37–38).

### SAS and Mission Advancement

*SAS* is no small endeavor and requires funding to secure manpower, resources, marketing and communications expertise, collaboration, research, travel and more. In its initial stages, *SAS* was generously funded by the Schwan Foundation and the LCMS Board of Directors. In recent years, *SAS* has been working with LCMS Mission Advancement to obtain continued funding to sustain this initiative. Donors with a passion for church work recruitment have begun to generously give to *SAS*. Yet, there continues to be a great need for ongoing funding to sustain this initiative’s long-term success toward building a culture of church work formation and recruitment in every LCMS congregation, home, school and entity. If you or someone you know has a passion for church work recruitment, please go to [lcms.org/givenow/set-apart-to-serve](https://lcms.org/givenow/set-apart-to-serve), call 888-930-4438, or email [Mission.Advancement@lcms.org](mailto:Mission.Advancement@lcms.org).

### A Summer of Connecting with Youth and Those Who Influence Them

The primary focus of *SAS* is to provide resources for pastors, commissioned church workers, parents, laity, youth, and district and circuit personnel to form and recruit LCMS church workers. Much of the initial formation and recruitment happens at the local level of our LCMS congregations, schools and entities. However, as these young people reach young adulthood, major gatherings of youth and those who influence them are critical for reaching youth directly and building a community of like-minded young people.

This summer, *SAS* has connected with:

- **Lutheran Women’s Missionary League’s (LWML) Missouri District:** LWML actively participates in the *SAS* initiative through prayers and financial support, and serve as influential advocates of forming and recruiting youth for full-time church work. *SAS* had great conversations with the LWML Missouri District on June 7–8 as our partnership continues.
- **Higher Things (HT)** at Concordia Wisconsin (June 25–28), University of the Ozarks in Arkansas (July 16–19), and Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon (July 23–26): This year, we worked with HT to enlist the services of *SAS* Youth Adult Representatives. These representatives are Concordia university students currently in a church work program. They led breakout sessions, interacted with youth throughout the conference and had great conversations with youth about full-time church work at the *SAS* display table.
- **Youth National and YouthLead** (July 21–24), and preparations for the 2025 Youth Gathering: *SAS* presented at a breakout session with the youth attending YouthLead, as well as at an all-participant plenary. One participant shared, “I heard about *SAS*, but was a little skeptical. Now that I know more about it, I think it’s great. We all have to get involved!”

### Several SAS Pilot Programs

Pilot programs help *SAS* test and refine its messages, strategies and resources. There are several pilot programs currently in progress.

- **Circuit Visitors Pilot Program:** This program is developing messaging and resources for circuit visitors to use as they share *SAS* with circuit pastors, church workers, congregations and schools. Participating districts include the LCMS English District, the LCMS Florida-Georgia District, the



LCMS Indiana District, the LCMS Minnesota North District, the LCMS Ohio District and the Pacific Southwest District. The next meeting is August 5.

- **Youth Pilot Re-engagement:** Several of the participants from the original youth pilot program, where representatives from all 35 districts collaborated to help develop online *SAS* resources, are continuing to help us with the development of new resources, best practices, making *SAS* more widely known and used throughout the Synod, and identifying circuit/district youth events where *SAS* can be featured. The next meeting is August 5.
- **District Working Groups:** *SAS* is working with the LCMS Mid-South District, the LCMS Minnesota South District, the LCMS Missouri District, the LCMS Montana District, the LCMS Nebraska District and the LCMS Northern Illinois District to develop a template for a district *SAS* committee/focus to share with congregations across all 35 districts.
- **Second-Career Teacher Ads:** *SAS* is partnering with the LCMS Minnesota South District and the LCMS South Wisconsin District to develop and run ads to recruit second-career Lutheran school teachers.

### Ongoing Research

*SAS* is very thankful to everyone who completes our ongoing surveys, which enables *SAS* to continue to build a Synodwide culture of church work formation and recruitment for generations to come. We are currently running three surveys per year in order to continue developing excellent resources and to build out a reporting dashboard. The survey audiences include congregations and youth in the spring and influential adults in the fall.

Results from the congregations survey indicate the following:

- Awareness of *SAS* is growing throughout Synod, especially among church workers, but also significantly among lay people.
- Many people feel more prepared to talk to others about church work vocations, and the results show that conversations continue to increase over time.
- Only a third of lay people can recall hearing from their church that they have an important role in encouraging future church workers, and when lay people do not hear this, they are even less likely to talk to others about church work vocations.
- There was a significant number of respondents (particularly from lay adults) saying they do not interact or have close relationships with the young people in their congregations. While they brought this up in the context of not talking about church work, it indicates a broader need for emphasizing inter-generational fellowship within congregations.

### *SAS* collaborates with PALS

Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS) is a Synodwide program run out of the Office of Pastoral Education under the leadership of the Rev. Jonathan Manor. The program, which has been in operation since 1989, helps pastors and their wives in their transition from seminary through the first three years of the pastor's ministry. PALS groups are facilitated by veteran pastors and their wives who are chosen by the district president. PALS groups meet six days a year for worship, study, casuistry and fellowship. The PALS facilitators met for their annual training conference in St. Louis on June 25–26. I personally updated the facilitators on *SAS*, emphasizing that they were influencers in their own congregation in the formation and recruitment of future church workers. I also encouraged them to be *SAS* advocates with their PALS pastors and wives, encouraging *them* to be influencers in their congregations and schools. *SAS* conversations continued with the facilitators at the evening meal.

## SAS on KFYO Coffee Hour Program

Go to [kfyo.org/tag/set-apart-to-serve](https://kfyo.org/tag/set-apart-to-serve) to hear these great SAS programs:

- June 7 – Ross and Jenni George talk about moving to Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., to pursue pastoral ministry as a second career.
- June 14 – Elizabeth Crawford pursues Lutheran teacher education at Concordia University, Nebraska, Seward, Neb.
- June 21 – Erin Rodgers shares her joy of serving as a Lutheran elementary school teacher.
- June 28 – Joe Cox shares his joy of serving as a Lutheran high school teacher.
- July 5 – Anna Bloomfield shares her joy of serving as a Lutheran Visual Arts high school teacher.
- July 12 – Debbie Armbruster, retired Lutheran teacher, shares her joys of building relationships with students, families and colleagues.
- July 19 – Jacob Roggow, director of parish music, shares about his vocation and how he takes care of his mental and physical health as a church worker.

## Second-Career Journey Mapping

The goal of the second-career journey mapping sessions is to identify the barriers that someone considering a second career in church work might encounter, and find ways to help them view second-career church work as a real opportunity. Ultimately, these journey maps will help more people pursue a change in vocation and become second-career pastors and Lutheran school teachers. Journey mapping sessions are completed or scheduled.

- Second-career pastoral formation: May 14
- Public-to-private teacher formation | Part 1: July 22
- Public-to-private teacher formation | Part 2: August 6
- Pastoral formation of current second-career seminarians and their wives | Meetings will occur in-person at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis – TBD
- Colloquy process – TBD

When the journey mapping sessions are completed, SAS will create messaging and solutions and update existing messaging/materials to outline the misconceptions/misunderstandings and barriers that may prevent a person from starting on a second-career pastoral journey, teach at an LCMS school or go through the colloquy process.

Rev. Dr. James Baneck  
Executive Director, LCMS Pastoral Education  
[James.Baneck@lcms.org](mailto:James.Baneck@lcms.org)



# SET APART TO SERVE

LCMS CHURCH WORK RECRUITMENT



## Report to the Synod President

and 400+ significant collaborators and stakeholders

*The Office of LCMS Pastoral Education – Rev. Dr. James A. Baneck*

August 2023

### Key points for this month:

1. Upcoming town hall for *SAS* Synodwide launch
2. *SAS* at the LCMS convention
3. Church Worker Appreciation Month — Year of the Lutheran school teacher
4. Second Career Research
5. August *SAS* KFUE Coffee Hour programs
6. A great *SAS* resource — *The Lutheran Witness*

### Upcoming town hall for *SAS* Synodwide launch

The *SAS* team is excited to announce a Synodwide virtual town hall on Wednesday, Sept. 27, 1–2 p.m. CDT to make the resource hub available to the entire Synod.

- Through the pilot sites in every LCMS district, *SAS* has been developing a major body of resources for church work formation and recruitment to be used in congregations, Lutheran schools and other LCMS entities.
- These resources will be available at <https://www.lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve>. To register for the town hall, click on [lcms.org/SAS-townhall-registration](https://www.lcms.org/SAS-townhall-registration).
- At the town hall, we will also provide a brief overview of *SAS*, share pilot program findings, and provide next steps on implementing *SAS* in your congregation.

### *SAS* at the LCMS convention

*SAS* was highlighted in many ways at the Synod convention.

- Resolution 6-01, “To Affirm and Strengthen *Set apart to Serve* in Word and Action” was approved unanimously by the delegates.
- Five *SAS* videos were presented while the convention was in session. These videos drew the applause of our delegates.

#### [SAS Pastors](#)

*Set Apart to Serve*: Becoming a pastor

Current and future LCMS pastors share why they decided to enter the pastoral ministry.

#### [SAS Deaconesses](#)

*Set Apart to Serve*: Becoming a deaconess

Two LCMS deaconesses share what they love about serving as deaconesses.

### SAS Teachers

*Set Apart to Serve:* Becoming a Lutheran school teacher

Current and future LCMS school teachers share what they love about teaching.

### SAS DCEs

*Set Apart to Serve:* Becoming a director of Christian education

DCE students share why they decided to become church workers.

### SAS Second Career

*Set Apart to Serve:* Church work as a second career

The Rev. Jonathan Manor reflects on his decision to enter the pastoral ministry as a second career.

- *SAS*, the LCMS seminaries and the Concordia universities were intentionally positioned next to one another in the exhibition hall, all connected by *SAS* and focused on church worker recruitment. All three entities celebrated the success of this collaboration.
- Nick Sargent, vice-president of Standing Partnership, the marketing and communications firm working with *SAS*, attended the entire convention and proceedings. Nick will use the knowledge and insights gained as Standing Partnership continues to be a major asset to *SAS* and the LCMS.

## Church Worker Appreciation Month in October

*SAS* is developing resources leading up to Church Worker Appreciation Month in October. While *SAS* is encouraging the appreciation of all church workers, this year's focus will be on **the Lutheran school teacher**. These resources include:

- A letter to district presidents and education executives announcing and describing Church Worker Appreciation Month in October;
- A letter to LCMS principals and teachers thanking them for their dedication and faithfulness;
- A Church Worker Appreciation Month bulletin insert for use in LCMS congregations and schools;
- A KFUE *Coffee Hour* show hosting Dr. Al Freeman, director of LCMS School Ministry, thanking our teachers for their service;
- A *Lutheran Witness* article thanking church workers, especially Lutheran school teachers; and
- Social media posts concerning church worker appreciation.

## Second Career Research

*SAS* completed the initial research for our second career phase. The purpose of this research is to understand the mindset, drivers, trends and barriers for second-career pastors and teachers. These insights will be used to develop effective messaging and a strategic plan to improve awareness of second-career opportunities and foster a culture of second-career pastor and teacher recruitment. Insights gained include:

### *Second-career pastors*

- Those who most influenced men to consider a second career in the pastoral ministry were a mentoring pastor and spouse.
- Key drivers that led a man to a second career as a pastor were a sense of calling, affirmation from family and friends, encouragement from the pastor and personal experience as a lay leader.
- Main barriers for a man to consider a second career as a pastor were cost, relocation, leaving a full-time job and time commitment.
- Considering a second career as pastor starts with spiritual formation and requires encouragement from the pastor and spouse.
- It generally takes years rather than months for a second-career man to finally make the decision to become a pastor.



- For a man considering pastoral ministry as his second career, helpful tools include serving in a leadership role in the congregation; information about health care, retirement and housing benefits; testimonials from those who went through the process of pursuing a second career; Bible study; and information from the Concordia universities and seminaries about all the steps and requirements necessary for this new vocation.
- The reasons for making the decision to becoming a pastor as a second career include love for God’s Word, opportunity to preach and administer the Sacraments, and the joy of serving and loving God’s people with the Gospel.

#### *Second-career Lutheran school teachers*

- For those who became a Lutheran school teacher as their second career, the greatest influence in the decision was that they could teach where their children attend school. Influencers include teachers currently teaching at a Lutheran school, other church workers, family and friends.
- Key drivers that led a person to become a Lutheran school teacher include a need for an environment supportive to their faith and responding to the need within the community for more teachers at Lutheran schools.
- Main barriers for a person to consider a second career as a Lutheran school teacher were lower salary (on average 30% less than public school teachers), work-life balance (more is expected of a teacher in a Lutheran school) and the need for additional education or certification.
- Considering a second career as a Lutheran school teacher starts with a desire for belonging, helping others, being close to their children and working in a safe and respectful environment. This consideration requires the family’s support and full knowledge of economic implications.
- Helpful tools to a person considering teaching in a Lutheran school as a second career include information about health care, retirement and housing benefits, clear, upfront communication about education requirements, knowledge of what it means to be a rostered teacher and explanation of expectations of service beyond the classroom.
- The reasons for making the decision to become a Lutheran school teacher were not just practical; the decision was also motivated by faith and the commitment to a vocation (second-career pastors articulated the same).

#### **August SAS KFUCO Coffee Hour programs**

To listen to these **NEW** programs, go to <https://www.kfuo.org/tag/set-apart-to-serve>.

- Aug. 4 – Navy Chaplain Gregory Todd and Navy Chaplain James Hopkins talk about their paths to becoming chaplains.
- Aug. 11 – Rev. Doug Griebenaw talks about his journey to pastoral ministry.
- Aug. 18 – Dr. Thaddeus Warren, DCE, and Maria Devenport, DCE, talk about their journeys to serving as directors of Christian education.
- Aug. 25 – Rev. Juan Zamora talks about the National Hispanic Convention, church work formation and recruitment in a Hispanic context.

#### **A great SAS Resource — *The Lutheran Witness***

Throughout 2023, *SAS* has a monthly column in *The Lutheran Witness*. If you have access to print copies, this is a great resource for personal reading, district and congregational meetings, youth groups and more.

- January – “Pray the Lord of the Harvest”  
This article discusses the purpose of ordained and commissioned church workers.
- February – “Sacred and Joyful Vocations”



This article describes the pastoral office and the seven commissioned church work vocations in the LCMS.

- March – “Who’s Influencing our Children?”  
This article discusses how parents, pastors, church workers and congregation members influence the faith and life of our children.
- April – “What Can We Do to Get More Church Workers?”  
This article suggests six things all Lutherans can do to get more church workers.
- May – “Our Residential Seminaries”  
This article discusses the rich benefits of residential pastoral formation.
- June/July – “The Cost of Supplying Church Workers”  
This article discusses what church work students and families have done through the years to afford church work education.
- August – “Who Follows in His Train?”  
This article discusses church workers serving under the theology of the cross.

Rev. Dr. James Baneck  
Executive Director, LCMS Pastoral Education  
[James.baneck@lcms.org](mailto:James.baneck@lcms.org)

# Appendix D

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Luther Classical College – Wyoming



It is with great pleasure and thankfulness to our gracious Lord that we write you today with a wonderful announcement:

Rev. Dr. Harold Ristau has officially accepted the call to serve as President of Luther Classical College. "The Board could not be happier," writes Dr. Christian Preus, Chairman of the Board of Regents. "God has blessed us tremendously in sending Dr. Ristau to lead Luther Classical College. His record as faithful pastor, professor, administrator, and Lutheran confessor will serve LCC for years to come."

Dr. Ristau has served the Church faithfully for over 20 years. A native Canadian, Dr. Ristau earned his MDiv. at Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (CLTS) in St. Catherine's, ON, in 2000. He holds an MA in Political Science from the University of Waterloo (1996) and a PhD in Religious Studies from McGill University (2007).

From serving as a parish pastor at an inner-city, multi-ethnic LCMS congregation in Montreal, including prison chaplaincy and ministry to refugees, and from the mission field with Chinese and Muslims in Canada to the mission field with Lutherans in Africa, Dr. Ristau has committed his life to proclaiming the gospel to the lost and using his unique gifts to serve the Church in challenging positions all over the globe. Dr. John Stephenson, retired professor at CLTS and former colleague of Dr. Ristau writes, "His confessional commitment, wide range of academic interests, challenging pastorates... and strong record as an educational administrator... equip him to discharge the daunting task of being spiritual, academic, and administrative head of Luther Classical College."

In addition to his extensive service for Lutheran Church Canada (LC-C) and LC-MS ministries, Dr. Ristau also served honorably as a chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces in both English and French Canada for eleven years with the Air Force, Infantry, and paratroopers. Deployed to the Middle East on several occasions, soldiering alongside the U.S. Army and functioning as a first responder and crisis intervener, Dr. Ristau has been honored by the Canadian government and Chief of National Defense with one of their highest commendations for his work in Afghanistan.

# Appendix E

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24-Month Notice RE:

2026 Synod Convention Nominations

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2025 District Convention Listing



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** July 18, 2024  
**TO:** Officers and Agencies of the Synod without Position Descriptions to Review  
**RE:** 24-Month Notice of Solicitation of 2026 Synod Convention Nominations

### *Via email*

Dear Officer, Executive Director, or Chairman:

Bylaw 3.12.3.4 requires the Secretary of the Synod to “handle the preliminary work for the **Committee for Convention Nominations**” (CCN), whose members will be elected by 2025 district conventions. It is now time to begin the formal preliminary work outlined by Bylaw 3.12.3.4 as follows:

- 3.12.3.4 The Secretary of the Synod shall handle the preliminary work for the Committee for Convention Nominations.
- (a) He shall begin to solicit names of nominees from the agencies and officers of the Synod at least 24 months prior to the convention.
  - (b) Approximately 24 months before a regular meeting of the Synod in convention, he shall solicit from those agencies with positions to be filled descriptions of criteria for qualified candidates to serve in those positions.
  - (c) With such criteria in view, the Secretary shall issue the first call for nominations through a publication of the Synod and on the Synod Website 18 months before the convention, soliciting names from the agencies and officers of the Synod and the congregational and individual members of the Synod, along with lay persons of the congregations of the Synod.
  - (d) All incumbents eligible for reelection shall be considered to be nominees.
  - (e) The qualifications of each nominee shall be submitted together with the names on forms made available on the Synod’s Website.
  - (f) All suggested names and information for consideration by the Committee for Convention Nominations shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Synod no later than nine months prior to the convention of the Synod.
  - (g) The Secretary shall present the names and information gathered to the Committee for Convention Nominations at its first meeting.

This memorandum serves to accomplish the purpose underlined above (Bylaw 3.12.3.4 [a]) by providing notice that we are making preparations to begin receiving nominations for Secretary and for various board and commission positions, **using a new electronic system under development for this purpose, on January 18, 2025**, 18 months prior to the opening of the 2026 Synod convention. We will be gathering substantially the same information as on the familiar paper forms, but in a manner that will make our handling of the information, on behalf of the CCN, more efficient. You may expect further updates and examples of the electronic nomination system before the 18-month window opens in January. I think you will find it an exciting development.

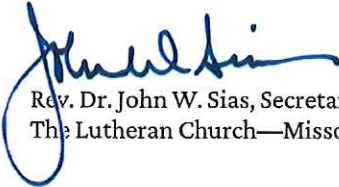
Please begin thinking—and encourage others to begin thinking—about possible candidates for 2026, gathering their contact information and any information regarding their special qualifications. These names should be ready for submission **as soon as possible after January 18, 2025, and no later than October 18, 2025**. Please note that all incumbents eligible for re-election are automatically considered to be nominees, and their names need not be resubmitted.

The position descriptions and rosters of elected incumbents in the attached are being prepared for inclusion in the 18-month mailing, which will, at the time of the first call for nominations, be sent to all agencies and officers, congregational and individual members of the Synod, with the call open even to all members of member congregations. We had increased interest, after some years of decline, in submission of nominations for the 2023 convention and we hope to build on this success in the new electronic system. Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

I want again to stress that the opportunity to submit nominations is something to be taken up with earnest zeal. The effective and efficient service of the Synod for and on behalf of the congregations (Bylaw 1.1.1) and the furtherance of their objectives (Const. Art. III), for and on behalf of those congregations (Bylaw 1.1.1), depends in large measure on

the theological integrity, the mission zeal, the churchly leadership, the faithful and sacrificial service, the skill and experience—in all manner of areas germane to the various boards and commissions—of those nominated through this process and ultimately, upon the basis of the good biographical and evaluative information collected through this process, commended to the convention of the Synod for election. We need all such capable hands on deck. Please give careful consideration to those who could be excellent candidates, and take the time (when the window opens) to provide us their names and information. This effort is not in vain. May the Lord establish the work of many hands in this regard, and so bring about His good will in the governance of our work together.

Yours in Christ Jesus,



Rev. Dr. John W. Sias, Secretary  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Enclosures: 24-Month Committee for Convention Nominations Mailing: “Officer, Board, and Commission Positions to Be Filled by Election by the 2026 Synod Convention”



## **OFFICER, BOARD, AND COMMISSION POSITIONS TO BE FILLED BY ELECTION BY THE 2026 SYNOD CONVENTION**

*This document supplements the official call for nominations extended by the Office of the Secretary on behalf of the Committee for Convention Nominations. For instructions on who can nominate and how, see the call memorandum.*

All nominees for officer, board, and commission positions are to be fully committed to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions; to honoring and upholding the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod; and to supporting the mission and ministry of the Synod. Such commitment should already be demonstrated by participation and leadership in the nominees' local congregations. They should also possess the ability and willingness to work with others.

References are made to the 2023 *Handbook* of the Synod ([www.lcms.org/handbook](http://www.lcms.org/handbook)) for information regarding the responsibilities of the positions to be filled. A complete list of current officers and board and commission members may be found in the 2025 *Lutheran Annual*, which became available in December 2024; an updated list will be published in the 2026 *Lutheran Annual* a year hence.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS**

The following is important information when considering an individual for an elective position in the Synod:

#### **Membership in a Member Congregation of the Synod**

- All nominees must be members of member congregations of the Synod (*Const. Art. X B 3; Bylaw 1.5.1*).

#### **Terms of Office**

- Terms of office for the Secretary of the Synod are three years without limitation of terms (*Bylaws 3.2.4, 3.2.4.1*). Terms of office for elected board and commission members are six years, limited to two successive six-year terms (*Bylaw 3.2.4.2*), except for college and university boards of regents, which are three years and limited to three consecutive terms (*Bylaw 3.10.6.2 [6]*), and for the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod, which are three years and limited to four terms (*Bylaw 3.6.4.3*).
- Incumbents who are eligible for reelection are considered to be nominees for a successive term and will automatically be reviewed for candidacy in the nominations process. Their names need not be resubmitted (*Bylaw 3.12.3.4 [d]*).

#### **Holding of Multiple Offices / Employees of the Synod and its Agencies**

- Persons already holding offices or board or commission positions in the Synod and/or district may be nominated, but if elected, such persons will be required to choose between offices and/or board or commission positions if more than one is elective, or if more than two are held, whether elective or appointive (*Bylaw 1.5.1.2*). Elective offices/positions are those filled through election by a national or district convention, even though a vacancy in such an office may be filled by appointment (*Bylaw 1.5.1.2 [a]*).
- Unless otherwise specified or permitted by the Bylaws, chief executives and executive directors, faculty and staff, and all other employees on either the national or district level shall not be members of the board of the agency under which they serve, nor shall any such executives or staff be members of the board of any other agency of the Synod. See the bylaw for a more specific definition of *staff* (*Bylaw 1.5.1.1*).
- Persons already holding an office/position may be nominated for an office/position when one is directly responsible for the work done by the other, but if elected, such persons will be required to choose between offices or positions (*Bylaw 1.5.1.2*).



## Conflict of Interest

Bylaw 1.5.2 requires the disclosure of any conflicts of interest. If elected, a nominee will be required to sign “Conflict of Interest” statement form acknowledging the following:

- Nominees should have no gainful business contacts or relationships with the national Synod, a district, or any board or commission on which they would serve if elected. Those elected will be required to receive, understand, acknowledge, and abide by the Synod’s conflict of interest policy (*Bylaw 1.5.2*).
- Ordained ministers are all those who are rostered by the Synod, except that specific ministry pastors are not eligible to occupy elected positions assigned by the Bylaws to a *pastor* or *ordained minister* (*Bylaw 2.13.1 [b][2]*). A recent list of ordained ministers is provided in the *2025 Lutheran Annual* under *ministers of religion—ordained*. Board positions may call specifically for a *parish pastor* (e.g., *Bylaw 3.9.5.1 [1]*).
- Commissioned ministers are all who are rostered by the Synod. A recent list is provided in the *2025 Lutheran Annual* under *ministers of religion—commissioned*. Commissioned ministers include eligible teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, deaconesses, parish assistants, and directors of church ministries (formerly, certified lay ministers) (*Bylaw 2.6.1.1*). Certain positions may call specifically for one subcategory of commissioned minister, such as a *parish teacher* (e.g., *Bylaw 3.9.5.1 [2]*).

## Ethical Requirements

Bylaw 1.5.1.3 poses a more general but nonetheless important ethical requirement for all officeholders:

Every board or commission member, officer, and all staff of corporate Synod and every agency of the Synod shall be sensitive in their activities to taking or giving offense, giving the appearance of impropriety, causing confusion in the Synod, or creating potential liability.

## Common Qualifications

All candidates for officer, board, and commission positions are expected to be fully committed to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions; to the honoring and upholding of the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod; and to the mission of the Synod as demonstrated by participation and leadership in that mission in their local congregations. Candidates should possess the ability to carry out the responsibilities of office as provided in the *Handbook* of the Synod, accompanied by a willingness to work with others.

## SYNOD OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED BY THE 2026 SYNOD CONVENTION

### *Common Qualifications*

The elected officers of the Synod are its President, First Vice-President, five regional vice-presidents in line of succession, and Secretary. Because the nominations processes for the election of the President and vice-presidents are *not the responsibility of the Committee for Convention Nominations*, specific information regarding the desired qualifications of candidates for these offices is provided elsewhere. Desired qualifications for election to the office of Secretary are as follow:

#### Secretary:

##### **One (1) Minister of Religion—Ordained**

**O:** John Wollenburg Sias (26)

***Duties:*** Three-year term. A full-time position, the Secretary is an officer of the Synod and serves as secretary of the LCMS Board of Directors and the Commission on Constitutional Matters; he supervises the maintenance of rosters, administers the Synod's dispute resolution and expulsion processes, edits the *Lutheran Annual*, and has extensive convention responsibilities. (2023 *Handbook*, pp. 16, 116–17; convention duties, 17, 20, 34, 102, 103, 105, 107, 114–15)

***Desired Qualifications:*** The Secretary must be an ordained minister with the skills necessary to perform the customary duties of a corporate secretary; to carry out the required responsibilities relating to conventions of the Synod; to perform such other work as pertains to his office by bylaw or by assignment by conventions, the President, or the Board of Directors; and to provide counsel from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod to the members of the Synod on a daily basis. Administrative responsibilities include administration of the Synod's dispute resolution and expulsion processes and supervision of the official rosters of the Synod. Membership on numerous boards, commissions, and committees includes service as secretary of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and of the Board of Directors. A high degree of integrity is essential, and a range of prior experience in the Synod will be helpful.

## SYNOD BOARD AND COMMISSION MEMBERS TO BE ELECTED BY THE 2026 SYNOD CONVENTION

### *Common Qualifications*

Desired qualifications of members of individual boards and commissions are noted below. More information regarding specific board or commission responsibilities may be found in the corresponding sections of the 2023 *Handbook* ([www.lcms.org/handbook](http://www.lcms.org/handbook)).

***Regional positions:*** All members of the **Board for National Mission** and the **Board for International Mission** and five lay members of the **Synod Board of Directors** are elected according to the geographical regions in which they reside. See region map at: [www.lcms.org/convention/districts-map](http://www.lcms.org/convention/districts-map). While a nomination for such a position may come from any region, each nominee must be a resident in the region of the position for which he or she is nominated and remain so throughout the period of service.

Details for each board/commission are listed as follows: the positions *for election in 2026*, a brief description of the responsibilities and desired qualifications, and the names of convention-elected incumbents by position, indicated as “O”=Ordained, “C”=Commissioned, and “L”=Layperson. *All incumbents* are listed with the years (in parentheses) their terms expire; an asterisk (\*) indicates the individual is *not* eligible for reelection.

**Board of Directors (LCMS):**

**At Large:**           **One (1) Layperson**  
                              **One (1) Minister of Religion—Commissioned**

**O:** Roger B. Gallup (29) NI; Josemon T. Hoem (29\*) IN **C:** Jan W. Lohmeyer (26) SO **L:** Christian A. Preus (26\*) MNS, K. Allan Voss (29) SW

**Regional:**           **One (1) Layperson from each of the following regions:**

- **Central Region**
- **West-Southwest Region**

**L:** Andrew N. Grams (26) MDS (*Central Region*); Larry W. Harrington (29\*) WY (*Great Plains Region*); Leo S. Mackay, Jr. (29) EN (*East-Southeast Region*); Rick H. Stathakis (29) MI (*Great Lakes Region*); Jesse L. Yow (26) CNH (*West-Southwest Region*).

**Duties:** Six-year term. Meetings of two or more days at least four times a year. The Board serves as the legal representative of the Synod, is custodian of the Synod’s properties, and is responsible for the management and supervision of all business affairs of the Synod. (2023 *Handbook*, pp. 14, 16, 117–21, 216)

**Desired Qualifications:** The Board of Directors is responsible for the legal, property, and financial affairs of the Synod, as outlined in Bylaws 3.3.4.2-3.3.4.10.1. The Board is responsible for the plans and operating budgets as well as the human resources, financial, and other policies of corporate national Synod, and has certain oversight responsibilities regarding the synodwide corporations and other agencies. Board members should be able to see the “big picture,” both nationally and internationally. Experience on district or national boards is desirable, particularly for the ordained and commissioned members. Experience in large organization management, leadership, and oversight is always helpful. In addition, representation by laypersons who are active in the parish with a record of service in the Synod is valuable as well. Commitment to committee work and availability for occasional special meetings between regular quarterly meetings is also expected.

**Additional Regulations:** With the exception of the President and the Secretary of the Synod, no more than one voting member from any category (lay, ordained, commissioned) and no more than two voting members total may be elected from any one district (*Bylaw 3.3.4.1*). Those elected to regional positions must hold residence within the respective region; should they subsequently take residence outside the region for which elected, they may continue in the present term but would not be eligible for a new term without resuming said residence. (As to these regional positions, see Bylaws 3.12.1 and 3.12.2.8.)

**Board for National Mission:**

**Regional:**           **One (1) Individual Member (Minister of Religion—Ordained/Commissioned)**  
                              **from each of the following regions:**

- **Central Region**
- **Great Lakes Region**
- **West-Southwest Region**

**One (1) Layperson from each of the following regions:**

- **East-Southeast Region**
- **Great Plains Region**



**O/C:** Peter C. Bender (26) SW (*Great Lakes Region*); Timothy J. Droegemueller (29\*) FG (*East-Southeast Region*); Alfonso O. Espinosa (26) PSW (*West-Southwest Region*); Craig K. Niemeier (29) NEB (*Great Plains Region*); VACANT (26) (*Central Region*) **L:** Carol A. Hack Broome (29\*) CNH (*West-Southwest Region*); Carla M. Claussen (26\*) MNS (*Great Plains Region*); Janis McDaniels (26) SE (*East-Southeast Region*); Crysten Sanchez (29\*) IE (*Great Lakes Region*); Stephen Weller (29) KS (*Central Region*)

**Duties:** Six-year term. Two-day meetings three times a year in St. Louis. The board is charged with developing and determining policies for the coordination of and in support of district ministries that support congregations and schools, assisting in identification of specific goals for the Office of National Mission (ONM), and exercising oversight of the ONM's implementation of the board's policies. In its work, the board embraces and applies the mission and ministry emphases adopted by the Synod national convention. It serves as the calling agency for institutional and agency chaplains and other non-foreign specialized ministers after consultation with the appropriate district president. (2023 *Handbook*, pp. 23, 103–4, 123, 142–44)

**Desired Qualifications:** Nominees for election to the Board for National Mission should possess familiarity with and express strong leadership and support for LCMS mission and ministry activities, particularly in contexts within the United States. Experience and expertise in one or more of the following areas is especially desirable: ministry and theology; extended church work on or interaction with one or more domestic mission fields or focused ministry areas; prior service on national or district boards of the Synod; policy writing; administration of complex organizations; business, law, finance, or human resources; donor relations; witness and outreach; human care; education; or stewardship. Board members are expected to work collaboratively under individual and committee assignments, actively speak and listen to one another in board and staff interactions, faithfully review and evaluate board-related working materials offered by other board members and Synod staff, provide constructive comments, honor confidentiality, and maintain a spirit of mutual encouragement.

**Additional Regulations:** Board members occupy regional positions and must hold residence within the respective region to be eligible for election. Should they subsequently take residence outside of the region for which elected, they may continue in the present term but would not be eligible for a new term without resuming said residence. (As to these regional positions, see Bylaws 3.12.1 and 3.12.2.8.)

#### **LCMS Board for International Mission:**

**Regional:** One (1) Layperson from each of the following regions:

- Central Region
- Great Lakes Region
- West-Southwest Region

One (1) Individual Member (Minister of Religion—Ordained/Commissioned) from each of the following regions:

- East-Southeast Region
- Great Plains Region

**O/C:** Terrence Chan (29) CNH (*West-Southwest Region*); James A. Douthwaite (26) SELC (*East-Southeast Region*); James D. Gier, Jr. (29) IN (*Central Region*); Daniel O. S. Preus (26) MNN (*Great Plains Region*); Scott Yakimow (29) MI (*Great Lakes Region*) **L:** John W. Edson (29) MNS (*Great Plains Region*); Michael Hawk (26) IN (*Central Region*); Terrence Lung (26) CNH (*West-Southwest Region*); John L. Powers (26) SW (*Great Lakes Region*); James S. Wolf (29\*) EN (*East-Southeast Region*)

**Duties:** Six-year term. Two-day meetings three times a year in St. Louis. The board is charged with developing and determining policies in support of mission and ministry in foreign countries and assists in identifying specific goals for the Office of International Mission. In its work, the board embraces and applies the mission and ministry emphases adopted by the Synod national convention. It serves as the only sending agency through which workers and funds are sent to the foreign mission areas of the Synod, including the calling, appointing, assigning, withdrawing, and releasing of missionaries and other workers for ministries in foreign areas. (2023 *Handbook*, pp. 23, 103–5, 123, 144–46)

\* Ineligible for reelection.

**Desired Qualifications:** Nominees for election to the Board for International Mission should possess familiarity with and express strong leadership and support for LCMS mission and ministry activities, particularly in contexts outside the United States. Experience and expertise in one or more of the following areas is especially desirable: ministry and theology; extended church work on or interaction with one or more foreign mission fields; mercy work and human care; international relations; business, law, or finance; prior service on national or district boards of the Synod; policy writing; administration of complex organizations; education; stewardship and donor relations; or human resources. Board members are expected to work collaboratively under individual and committee assignments, actively speak and listen to one another in board and staff interactions, faithfully review and evaluate board-related working materials offered by other board members and Synod staff, provide constructive comments, honor confidentiality, and maintain a spirit of mutual encouragement.

**Additional Regulations:** Board members occupy regional positions and must hold residence within the respective region to be eligible for election. Should they subsequently take residence outside of the region for which elected, they may continue in the present term but would not be eligible for a new term without resuming said residence. (As to these regional positions, see Bylaws 3.12.1 and 3.12.2.8.)

### **Commission on Theology and Church Relations:**

**One (1) Minister of Religion—Ordained (parish pastor)**  
**One (1) Layperson**

**O:** (both parish pastors) Robert A. Dargatz (26\*) PSW; David Petersen (29) EN **C:** (parish teacher) Joseph Gerth (29) SI **L:** Jack D. Kilcrease, III (29\*) MI; Andrea Pitkus (26\*) SW

**Duties:** Six-year term. Three-day meetings four times a year in St. Louis. The commission assists the President in his constitutional responsibilities; provides guidance to the Synod in matters of theology and church relations; and serves as a clearing house for materials relating to membership in societies, lodges, cults, or any organizations of an unchristian or anti-Christian character. (2023 Handbook, pp. 151–55)

**Desired Qualifications:** The Commission on Theology and Church Relations “exists to assist congregations in achieving the objectives of Article III 1 and 6 of the Constitution of the Synod, and to assist the President of the Synod in matters of church relationships” (Bylaw 3.9.5). Article III 1 speaks of conserving and promoting “the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10)” and Article III 6 speaks of “providing a variety of resources and opportunities” to congregations “for recognizing, promoting, expressing, conserving, and defending their confessional unity in the true faith.” Nominees for election to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations should therefore be well grounded in their knowledge of and commitment to the Holy Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions and the doctrinal position of the Synod. They should have a good understanding of the internal workings of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Above all, they should have a Christ-centered concern for the pure teaching of the Gospel, the right administration of the Sacraments, and God-pleasing relationships with all members of the Body of Christ. Must be available for quarterly meetings of three days each.

### **Concordia Historical Institute Board of Governors:**

**Two (2) Ministers of Religion—Ordained**  
**One (1) Minister of Religion—Commissioned / Layperson**

**O:** Rodney A. Benkendorf (26) MO; Robert V. Roethemeyer (26) IN **C/L:** Mary Kathleen Graumann (26) TX

**Duties:** Six-year term. One-day meetings four times a year. Concordia Historical Institute serves as the Department of Archives and History of the Synod, collects and preserves articles of historical value, promotes interest in the history of Lutheranism, stimulates historical research, and promotes retention of historical documents throughout the Synod. (2023 Handbook, pp. 127–28)

**Desired Qualifications:** The Board of Governors of the Concordia Historical Institute sets policies and oversees the operations of the institute, a separately incorporated organization that serves as the Department of Archives and History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It is responsible for developing long- and short-range plans, operating budgets, and policies to enable the institute to gather, preserve, and make available for use historical resources on the history of Lutheranism in America, especially of the LCMS. Board members should have an appreciation for and interest in history. Experience and/or training in archives and library work and historical research is especially desirable. Also helpful are skills and interest in developing sources of financial support for the institute and representing the institute to the church. Must be available for quarterly meetings of one day each.

**Concordia Publishing House Board of Directors:**

**Four (4) Laypersons**

**O:** Mark Birkholz (29) NI **C:** Pamela J. Nielsen (29) MO **L:** Heidi K. Abegg (26) EN; Kurt A. Battles (29) MNN; Stephanie A. Egger (26\*) IW; Elaine Graff (29\*) RM; Thomas R. Halvorson (26) MT; Jill Johnson (29) NEB; Joseph L. Olson (26\*) SW

**Duties:** Six-year term. One- to two-day meetings, four times a year in St. Louis. The board conducts the business affairs of Concordia Publishing House. (2023 Handbook, pp. 128–29)

**Desired Qualifications:** Concordia Publishing House is the publishing arm of the Synod, conducts market research to determine what is to be published, arranges for the writing and editing of materials, manages publication, and sells the product directly to users or to distribution outlets. CPH annual sales are approximately \$35 million. The members of its Board of Directors must be committed to producing resources faithful to God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions; committed to bringing the distinct witness of the Lutheran church to all whom the publishing house serves; and committed to what the LCMS believes, teaches, confesses, and practices. Board members should understand business management, as CPH is a self-sustaining corporation. Senior management experience in a corporation of significant size, with experience in publishing, e-delivery, law, finance, human resources, or marketing, would be helpful. Must exhibit openness to purchasing and using CPH materials and a commitment and willingness to influence others to use CPH materials. Must be available for quarterly meetings of up to two days each.

**Lutheran Church Extension Fund Board of Directors:**

**One (1) Minister of Religion—Ordained/Commissioned**

**Two (2) Laypersons**

**O/C:** Jason M. Braaten (26) CI **L:** Julie Johnson (26) SI; Jonathan H. Kramer (26) MO

**Duties:** Three-year term. Two-day meetings four times a year. The board oversees the use of LCEF’s assets to provide financial resources and services for ministry, witness, and outreach to the LCMS and to offer demographic, planning, and architectural services. All directors must have an understanding of the church extension program and/or demonstrate an expertise in fields or areas closely related to church extension activities, such as knowledge of real estate, management, and financial planning. (2023 Handbook, pp. 129–31)

**Desired Qualifications:** Board members should have a broad range of experience in one or more of the following: financial services, investments, loans and real estate, legal, banking, administration, and marketing. Prior experience on other LCMS boards is also desirable. Board members are expected to:

- Attend meetings regularly, not missing two consecutive meetings:
- The board meets on a quarterly basis, and these meetings are held throughout the United States. Committee meetings are held via video conference prior to the start of the regular meeting. Board meetings are usually a day and a half in length, with the exception of the first meeting of the calendar year, for which an incremental planning day is required.



- Board members attend the Annual Meeting typically held each November, the weekend prior to Thanksgiving, at different locations throughout the United States.
- Submit to FBI criminal background checks (required for mortgage lender licenses in certain states). Certain states require that board members of licensed lenders do not have any conviction as a result of a criminal matter involving dishonesty or breach of trust or fraud.

**LCMS Foundation Board of Trustees:**

**One (1) Minister of Religion—Ordained/Commissioned  
One (1) Layperson**

**O:** Todd C. Riordan (26) **IN L:** Gregory J. Miller (26\*) MO

**Duties:** Two-day meetings four times a year. The board oversees a synod-wide program of deferred giving for the advancement, promotion, endowment, and maintenance of the Synod and its agencies. (2023 *Handbook*, pp. 131–33)

**Desired Qualifications:** The Board of Trustees is responsible for the business, financial, property, personnel, and legal affairs of the LCMS Foundation. Board members should be experienced in financial, investment, or marketing matters. The Foundation’s goal is to link more and more Christians with giving opportunities as an expression of biblical stewardship; therefore, members of the board must be committed to managing life and all of life’s resources to fulfill God’s purposes by being linked with and supportive of the mission and ministry of the LCMS and organizations associated with it. As a synod-wide corporate entity of the Synod, the Foundation provides current and deferred giving instruments for individual use and investment management services for legacies, bequests, endowments, annuity gifts, and other trust funds available under the law. In addition to serving individual stewards, the Foundation serves the Synod, its agencies, congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, and others under bylaws and policies.

**Concordia University System Board of Directors:**

**One (1) Minister of Religion—Ordained**

**O:** Mark P. Braden (29) EN; Raymond L. Hartwig (26) SD **C:** Jonathon Giordano (29\*) **SI L:** Ellen R. Lange (29\*) PSW; Gary R. Thompson (29) SW

**Duties:** Six-year term. Two-day meetings at least three times a year. Concordia University System facilitates ecclesiastical visitation and affirmation of the Synod’s colleges and universities and assists with their cooperation and coordination in preparing commissioned ministers for service in the Synod and pre-seminary students for study at a Synod seminary; raising up of Lutheran laypersons for lifelong, faithful service to Christ and the neighbor; and robust, intentional engagement of all students with the faith taught and practices, with applications to their vocations in family, church, and state. (2023 *Handbook*, pp. 133–40)

**Desired Qualifications:** The Concordia University System Board of Directors defines and adopts the *Lutheran Identity and Mission Outcome Standards*, carries out visitation and affirmation of Synod colleges and universities on their basis, and provides for presidential and theological faculty prior approval and other functions related to the Synod’s colleges and universities. Board members should have demonstrated familiarity and support of the institutions, *shall strongly and demonstrably articulate and support the confession and the doctrinal positions of the Synod, and shall have demonstrated a high degree to two or more of the following qualifications or background experiences:* theological acumen, an advanced degree, experience in higher education administration, higher education accreditation, professional church worker education, administration of or legal counsel to complex organizations, religious nonprofit law, higher education law, or the strengthening of the mission of the Synod’s congregations and schools (*Bylaw 3.6.6.2.1*). [The required qualifications must be *clearly* specified on the biographical form submitted by nominees, as it provides the basis for their verification.] Board members should be acquainted with current trends in education and should have a heart and passion for Lutheran education that includes preparation

for a variety of professions, especially leadership roles that serve parish life in local communities; that offers opportunities for an increasing number of the church's youth to select a Concordia as a preferred place for higher education experiences; and that promotes the educational system as a mission outreach of the LCMS as a significant feature. Must be available for three meetings per year of two days each.

**Additional Regulations:** No more than two (2) voting members elected by the Synod can be from the same district and no regent, executive, faculty member, or staff member (as defined in Bylaw 1.5.1.1) of a Synod college or university may serve on the board as a voting member. The President of the Synod (or a designee) and the Secretary of the Synod (or a designee) shall review and verify that nominees are qualified to serve as stated in Bylaw 3.6.6.2.1.

**Synod University Boards of Regents:**

**For Each (6):**   **One (1) Minister of Religion—Ordained**  
                          **One (1) Minister of Religion—Commissioned**  
                          **Two (2) Laypersons**

**Concordia University Chicago (River Forest, Ill.)** — **O:** Eric R. Andrae (26) EN **C:** Jennifer Siukola (26) EN **L:** John Thaelke (26) TX; Alison C. Witte (26) OH

**Concordia University, Irvine (Irvine, Calif.)** — **O:** Scott C. Klemsz (26\*) CNH **C:** Jeffrey Scott Beavers (26\*) PSW **L:** Laura G. (Davis) Hemminger (26) NOW; Michael C. McThrow (26) CNH

**Concordia University, Nebraska (Seward, Neb.)** — **O:** Brad E. Birtell (26) NEB **C:** Craig A. Ernstmeyer (26) MO **L:** Timothy Hu (29\*) WY; Douglas Tewes (26) NEB

**Concordia University, St. Paul (St. Paul, Minn.)** — **O:** Donald J. Fondow (26) MNS **C:** Mark Justin L'Heureux (26\*) NEB **L:** Karl Abbott (26) SE; Paul C. Hinz (26) TX

**Concordia University Texas (Austin, Texas)** — **O:** Nathaniel Wade Hill (26) TX **C:** Miguel A. Ruiz (26) TX **L:** William (Bill) Brandt (26) TX; Bob Ssekyanzi (26) TX (all elected by the 2023 Synod convention but not seated by the university)

**Concordia University Wisconsin (Mequon, Wis., and Ann Arbor, Mich.)** — **O:** David C. Fleming (26\*) MI **C:** Jennifer L. Knox (26) SW **L:** David Lambert (26) EN; Stephen Saunders (26) SW

**Duties:** Three-year terms. Meetings four times a year at the respective school. The board of regents governs the institution, its president and faculty, consistent with the institution's mission, including its commitment to conduct all its affairs according to the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod and policies of the Synod's board of directors. It serves as governing body corporate, governing the institution comprehensively, advancing its spiritual, business, and legal welfare—for example, appointing and supervising a president and faculty, setting policy, approving campus plans, programs, and budgets—all with consistent attention to its Synodical confession, mission, and fundamental purpose of inculcating the faith. (2023 Handbook, pp. 171–78)

**Desired Qualifications:** A board of regents of a college or university of the Synod is responsible for the spiritual, academic, and financial health of the institution. It makes decisions regarding the resources and strategic vision that are needed to provide church workers and Christian leaders for the church and the world. It develops detailed policies and procedures for governance of the institution and an institutional master plan and reviews and approves academic programs. Its members must assure themselves that the work of the institution is carried out effectively and managed in a business-like manner within an annually established budget. The board is also responsible for the general welfare of faculty, staff, and students. Its members should be acquainted with current trends in education and should have a strong commitment to Christian education at all levels, with special interest in the preparation of church workers. Committee work and other commitments may be requested between meetings. Regents may expect to be asked to support the institution financially as part of their personal stewardship commitments.

Persons elected or appointed to a board of regents should be knowledgeable regarding the institution and the region in which it is located and shall demonstrate familiarity and support for the doctrinal positions of the Synod. *They shall possess two or more of the following qualifications or background experiences:* theological acumen, an advanced academic degree, higher education administration, administration of complex organizations, finance, law, investments, technology, human resources, facilities management, fund development, or a specific instructional or operational domain designated by the college or university (e.g., “health care” or “marketing”). Qualifications are reviewed and verified by Concordia University System (Bylaw 3.10.6.2.1 [a,c]). [The required qualifications must be *clearly* specified on the biographical form submitted by nominees, as it provides the basis for their verification.] Demonstrated familiarity with and willingness to advocate for and financially support the institution are desired qualities.

Nominees will be asked to review and confirm their willingness to accept a summary of the demands and expectations of service as a college or university regent, as prepared by the Concordia University System. They will also be required to undergo training within one year after the Synod convention at which elected, or their position will be declared vacant. (Bylaw 3.10.6.2.2 [d, f])

***Additional Regulations:*** No more than two elective members of a college, university, or seminary board of regents may be members of the same congregation (Bylaw 3.10.6.2 [7]).

### ***Synod Seminary Boards of Regents:***

***For Each (2):*** Two (2) Minister of Religion—Ordained  
One (1) Commissioned  
One (1) Layperson

***Concordia Seminary (St. Louis, Mo.)*** — O: Joel A. Brondos (26) CI; Bruce E. Keseman (26) SI; Adam C. Koontz (29) RM C: Michael S. Staub (26) TX L: Paul P. Edmon (29\*) NE; Matthew R. Kenitzer (29) IE; Mark O. Stern (26) NI

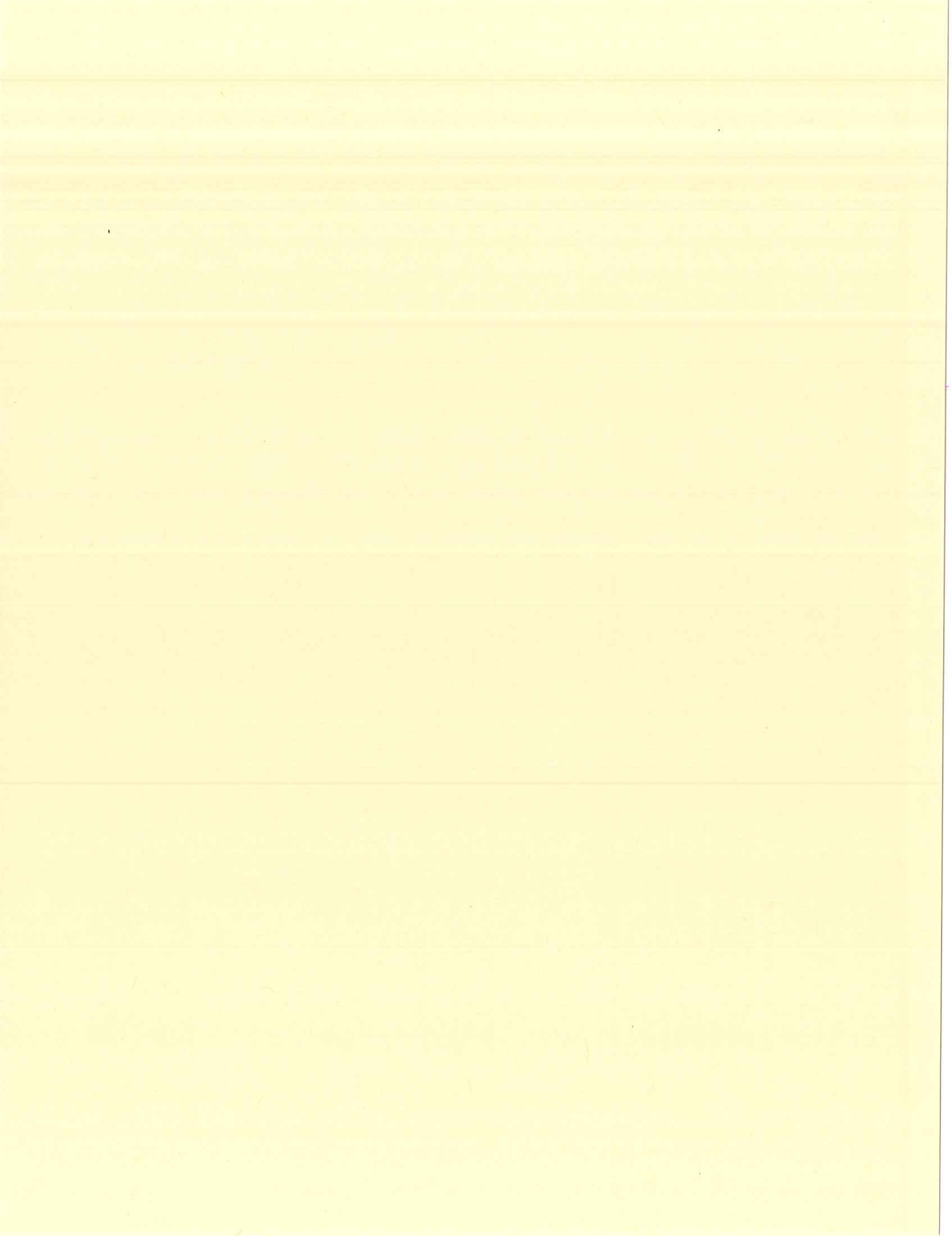
***Concordia Theological Seminary (Fort Wayne, Ind.)*** — O: William M. Cwirla (26\*) PSW; Korey D. Maas (26) MI Matthew W. Rueger (29) IE C: Mark W. Meehl (26) NEB L: David L. Daniels (26\*) SE; Kaibo Feng (29) NE; Beverly Yahnke (29\*) SW

***Duties:*** Two-day meetings four times a year. The board’s duties include the defining and fulfilling of the mission of the seminary, operating and managing it as an agent of the Synod, serving as its governing body, establishing and reviewing policies, promoting public relations, approving budgets, and in every way promoting the well-being of the seminary. (2023 *Handbook*, pp. 158–71)

***Desired Qualifications:*** A seminary board of regents is responsible for the spiritual, academic, and financial health of the institution. It makes decisions regarding the resources and strategic vision that are needed to provide Christian pastors (and deaconesses) for the church and the world. It oversees the work of the president and creates appropriate policies to guide administrative activities. A board of regents is responsible for the educational program of its institution. Its members must assure themselves that the work of the institution is carried on effectively and managed in a business-like manner within an annually established budget. They are also responsible for the general welfare of faculty, staff, and students. Board members should be acquainted with current trends in education and should have a strong commitment to Christian education at all levels, with special interest in the objectives of preparing church workers. It is desirable to have had experience on a governing board of an elementary or secondary school, or on the board of regents or faculty of a college or university. Experience in finance, personnel, general corporate administration, corporate planning, or facility management is always helpful. The time requirements for meetings vary with the institution. Committee work and other commitments may be requested between meetings. Regents may expect to be asked to support the institution financially as part of their personal stewardship commitments.

***Additional Regulations:*** No more than two elective members of a college, university, or seminary board of regents may be members of the same congregation (Bylaw 3.10.5.2 [1]).





## 2025 District Conventions

**FINAL**

ALPHABETICAL

2025 DATES	District	Convention Location	NOTES
7/10–12, 2025	Atlantic	Our Savior's Lutheran Church Colonie, NY	<i>New dates as of 6/11/24</i>
5/15–17, 2025	California/Nevada/Hawaii	Hilton Sacramento Arden West Sacramento, CA	
7/13–15, 2025	Central Illinois	Crowne Plaza Springfield, IL	
6/20–21, 2025	Eastern	First Trinity Lutheran Church Tonawanda, NY	
6/26–28, 2025	English	Concordia University Ann Arbor, MI	
6/5–7, 2025	Florida–Georgia	Embassy Suites Lake Buena Vista South; Kissimmee, FL	
6/19–20, 2025	Indiana	Grand Wayne Convention Center, Fort Wayne, IN	
6/27–28, 2025	Iowa District East	Radisson Cedar Rapids, IA	
6/8–10, 2025	Iowa District West	Camp Okoboji Milford, IA	
6/5–6, 2025	Kansas	Tony's Pizza Event Center, Salina, KS	
6/22–24, 2025	Michigan	Concordia University Ann Arbor, MI	
6/12–14, 2025	Mid–South	Hilton Hotel Memphis, TN	
2/23–25, 2025	Minnesota North	Timberlake Lodge Grand Rapids, MN	
6/12–14, 2025	Minnesota South	Concordia University St. Paul, MN	
6/22–24, 2025	Missouri	Holiday Inn Executive Center Columbia, MO	
6/9–12, 2025	Montana	Billings Hotel & Convention Center Billings, MT	
6/20–21, 2025	Nebraska	Younes Conference Center South; Kearney, NE	
6/12–14, 2025	New England	Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel, Springfield, MA	
6/12–14, 2025	New Jersey	Crowne Plaza Edison Edison, NJ	

## 2025 District Conventions

**FINAL**

ALPHABETICAL

2025 DATES	District	Convention Location	NOTES
1/19–22, 2025	North Dakota	The Grand Hotel Minot, ND	
6/1–2, 2025	North Wisconsin	Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center Rothschild, WI	
3/7–8, 2025	Northern Illinois	Concordia University Chicago River Forest, IL	
6/19–21, 2025	Northwest	Spokane Convention Center Spokane, WA	
6/22–24, 2025	Ohio	St. John Lutheran Church Dublin, OH	
6/13–14, 2025	Oklahoma	Hilton Garden Inn and Conference Center Edmond, OK	
6/25–27, 2025	Pacific Southwest	La Quinta Resort La Quinta, CA	
5/29–30, 2025	Rocky Mountain	Marriott South Park Meadows Lone Tree, CO	
1/16–19, 2025	SELC	Holy Cross Lutheran Church Lake Mary, FL	
2/16–18, 2025	South Dakota	Sioux Falls Convention Center Sioux Falls, SD	
6/8–10, 2025	South Wisconsin	Concordia University Mequon, WI	
5/8–9, 2025	Southeastern	Hilton Double Tree Midlothian, VA	
3/24–25, 2025	Southern	The Harbor Center Slidell, LA	
2/20–22, 2025	Southern Illinois	Regency Convention Center O'Fallon, IL	
6/5–7, 2025	Texas	Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Houston, TX	
5/1–3, 2025	Wyoming	Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center Casper, WY	



# Appendix F

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Concordia University – Ann Arbor

# Gottesdienst

The Journal of Lutheran Liturgy  
(1)

*About*  
*Gottesblog (/gottesblog)*  
*Podcast (/podcast)*  
*Events (/events)*  
*Support*  
*Shop*  
*Videos (/videos)*  
*Resources*

## A LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF CUWAA BY ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Larry Beane (/gottesblog?author=59a72a0c8dd041ec3b7936ff) · June 28, 2024

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[t](https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gottesdienst.org%2Fgottesblog%2F2024%2F6%2F28%2F3pssp1hmxfweyige90oozq&qqgucjy&te) <https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gottesdienst.org%2Fgottesblog%2F2024%2F6%2F28%2F3pssp1hmxfweyige90oozq&qqgucjy&te>  
[in](https://www.linkedin.com/shareArticle?mini=true&source=Gottesdienst&summary=The+Executive+Committee+of+the+CUWAA+Board+of+Regents+has) <https://www.linkedin.com/shareArticle?mini=true&source=Gottesdienst&summary=The+Executive+Committee+of+the+CUWAA+Board+of+Regents+has>  
[t](https://www.tumblr.com/share/link?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gottesdienst.org%2Fgottesblog%2F2024%2F6%2F28%2F3pssp1hmxfweyige90oozq&qqgucjy) <https://www.tumblr.com/share/link?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gottesdienst.org%2Fgottesblog%2F2024%2F6%2F28%2F3pssp1hmxfweyige90oozq&qqgucjy>  
[P](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/create/link/?description=The+Executive+Committee+of+the+CUWAA+Board+of+Regents+has+prepared+a+letter+in+res) <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/create/link/?description=The+Executive+Committee+of+the+CUWAA+Board+of+Regents+has+prepared+a+letter+in+res>  
♥



The Executive Committee of the CUWAA Board of Regents has prepared a letter in response to last week's letter from the Michigan District (<https://swd.lcms.org/cuw/2024%2006%2021%20MI%20District%20Letter.pdf>) and asked that it be shared with the South Wisconsin District and other stakeholders.

28 June 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Michigan and the South Wisconsin Districts and Other Stakeholders,

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (Galatians 1:3-5 ESV)

In a recent letter to the members of the Michigan District, Pastor Davis, President of the Michigan District, and Dr. Boergert, Chair of the Michigan District Board of Directors, expressed strong disagreement with the actions the Concordia University Board of Regents is taking to address the financial challenges the Ann Arbor campus is facing. Their letter to the Michigan District is attached for your consideration (<https://swd.lcms.org/cuw/2024%2006%2021%20MI%20District%20Letter.pdf>).

It is no surprise that Christians deeply disagree over how to handle challenging situations, even as Paul and Barnabas disagreed over Mark. We realize that the changes that are being made may be unsettling and painful to many students, their parents, alumni, supporters, and our dear faculty and staff. Please know we do not take these matters lightly. But changes must be made. Our Lord

delivers certain comfort in the midst of all our uncertainties, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8 ESV).

The leaders from Michigan use their letter to question the integrity of the University's Board and Administration. The Regents feel it is necessary to take this opportunity to share essential responses to the claims the Michigan District has publicly presented to its members.

(1) The Michigan leaders reference a "Roadmap to Autonomy" that was developed by a group of volunteers and submitted to the University Board of Regents, who reviewed it thoroughly prior to their June meeting. We must note that the Michigan District has neither released the "Roadmap" to the Church, nor revealed who comprised the group that developed their plan, but has instead asserted the Regents refused to collaborate with these unknown individuals. Alternatively, the Regents and Administration have prioritized transparency and released more data and information than universities in a similar position usually provide. They created a Task Force, whose members are identified by name in their report. The Regents have also published the results of the Task Force's work on the University web page. In this spirit of transparency, along with this letter, we are now publishing the Michigan District "Roadmap." We are also attaching appropriate analysis and commentary of the "Roadmap" to demonstrate that the Regents reviewed it thoroughly. We invite readers to place the Task Force report, the "Roadmap," and the analysis of the "Roadmap" side by side and review them for their merits.

(2) The Michigan leaders assert that the District and its Church Extension Fund have "demonstrated great capacity, especially in difficult times to support the ministry of CUAA." While we recognize and appreciate the generosity the Michigan District and Church Extension Fund have shown to the Ann Arbor campus over time, the financial needs of the Ann Arbor campus far exceed these good intentions. Over the past sixty years, the Michigan District and Church Extension Fund have not been able to bring forward the finances necessary to make the Ann Arbor campus sustainable. Over the past ten years, Concordia University Wisconsin has committed ~\$90 million to the Ann Arbor campus. Concurrently, the Ann Arbor campus is unable to generate auxiliary revenue that is sufficient to meet its needs. 25% of the money that should be earmarked for teaching and learning covers escalating athletic costs. The Ann Arbor campus experiences annual average operational shortfalls of \$4-5 million. Today, the Ann Arbor campus is essentially in the same place of financial difficulty that it found itself in twenty years ago and ten years ago. Simply put, the Wisconsin campus can no longer cover those operational shortfalls.

(3) The Michigan leaders state they recognize that the University Regents retain fiduciary responsibility for the Ann Arbor campus. They simultaneously claim the Michigan District's input has not been welcome throughout this process. In fact, the Michigan District, with an anonymous group operating outside the governance structure of the University, developed a "Roadmap" and presented it to the Regents, who, in turn, received it and thoughtfully reviewed it. The Regents clearly have considered Michigan's input into the process.

(4) The Michigan leaders express confusion about the role Lutheran identity is playing in this process of change for the Ann Arbor campus. In contrast, we are grateful for our partnership with the Concordia University System. It has played a crucial role in carrying out the work our Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by-laws define as well as strengthening our University's alignment with the Church. To be clear: We will do everything we can to ensure our educational efforts at the Ann Arbor campus reflect both our commitment to following Lutheran doctrine and practice and welcoming all whom our Lord brings to our campus.

(5) Along with the Michigan District, we affirm evangelization as an essential component of the work of the Church. At the same time we recognize that CUWAA is first and foremost a university of the Church. We are "a Lutheran higher educational community" that is "committed to helping students develop in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world." As a Lutheran higher educational community, we are of the Church and we serve a focused educational mission in the world. We welcome opportunities for evangelism within this mission without displacing the missional focus on a Christ-centered education.

(6) The Michigan leaders suggest that: "We will be bound together in Christian love. We will not be bound together by tertiary authorities, e.g. human traditions, ancient theologians, or Lutheran writers. That in and of itself is 'un-Lutheran' and borders on heresy." As Lutherans, we understand the Confessions to be drawn from the Word of God and a true, binding exposition of Holy Scripture. Since all members of Synod subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions, they serve to bind us together in a common confession of faith and are authoritative in our work as a Lutheran university. We reject any implication that this view of the Lutheran Confessions "borders on heresy." Furthermore, we recognize that the Synod has set expectations for the Concordias in the newly revised Lutheran Identity and Mission Outcome Standards (LIMOS). The LIMOS serve as a concrete framework for documenting our university's theological commitments. As an institution of the Synod, we are striving to strengthen how we live out our mission in accord with the LIMOS.



(7) Finally, the Michigan leaders express concern about donations to help the Ann Arbor campus and the possible impact changes to the campus may bring to the District. We appreciate these concerns, but there are three relevant points to consider. First, we are grateful that by the Lord's blessings we were able in a time of dire need to acquire the Ann Arbor campus and support its operation for ten years, accomplishing much good. Second, the Ann Arbor campus is not equal structurally or financially to the Wisconsin campus. Its revenue constitutes 20% of the university's work. The Ann Arbor campus, by legal definition, is a branch campus of the Wisconsin campus and under the supervision of the South Wisconsin District. Third, finances are the primary driver for necessary change at the University. [1]

Please be assured that we, as Regents of Concordia University, value your support of the Church and this University. We are carrying out work that ensures that our university remains a strong member of the Concordia University System.

We will continue to delineate our efforts to do everything we can to remain physically present in Michigan as we deliver high-quality, mission-aligned academic programming in a model that is financially sustainable over time. We want to provide the best possible Lutheran higher education to our students at our Wisconsin campus, at our Ann Arbor campus, and online. These efforts are an expression of our commitment to be faithful to our calling and true to our mission. Updates will continue to be provided on the CUAA Future website (<https://www.cuaa.edu/about/future/index.html>) as they are available.

[1] As this article indicates, a university's fiscal health is defined today--as much as anything--by its cash position, and we must do everything we can to protect our finances going forward: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ryanraig/2024/06/21/higher-education-financial-responsibility-is-broken/> (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ryanraig/2024/06/21/higher-education-financial-responsibility-is-broken/>).

These changes will take patience, time, and the support of the broader Church. Please continue to keep our University, its leaders, faculty, staff, and students in your prayers. We trust that the Lord of the Church will bless our efforts at this university.

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:58 ESV) In Christ,

The Board of Regents of CUWAA by its Executive Committee

Rev. John M. Berg  
Rev. David C. Fleming  
Mr. Robert Denkert

12800 North Lake Shore Drive – Mequon, WI 53097-2402 | p 262.243.5700 | f 262.243.4351 | [cuw.edu](http://cuw.edu) 4090 Geddes Road – Ann Arbor, MI 48105-2750 | p 734.995.7300 | f 734.995.7506 | [cuaa.edu](http://cuaa.edu)

*Previous*  
SHELBY FOOTE ON PREACHING?  
([/gottesblog/2024/6/28/shelby-foote-on-preaching](https://gottesblog/2024/6/28/shelby-foote-on-preaching))

*Next*  
A COMMUNICATION FROM THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT BOD AND PRESIDENT  
([/gottesblog/2024/6/24/a-communication-from-the-michigan-district-bod-and-president](https://gottesblog/2024/6/24/a-communication-from-the-michigan-district-bod-and-president))

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# Appendix G

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Michigan District President Statement



A Communication from the Michigan District Board of Directors and the Michigan District President in regard to Concordia University Ann Arbor:

June 24, 2024

Greetings from the Michigan District as, together, we fix our eyes on Jesus.

The Board of Directors of the Michigan District (BoDMI) and President Davis regret the recent actions of the Board of Regents (BoR) and Administration of Concordia University Wisconsin/Ann Arbor (CUWAA) relative to the Ann Arbor campus (CUAA). We also heartily disagree with the [new direction](#) for what will be a dramatically diminished ministry.

**...it looked like CUAA was going to become an ever-stronger partner for the Church generally and the Michigan District specifically.**

We (BoDMI) had hoped that the new administration at CUWAA would be dedicated to continuing the growth and development that CUAA had seen over the last many years and work with stakeholders to make it financially sustainable. When the merger between CUW and CUAA first took place, leaders at the Concordia University System targeted a population of 1,100 students for a school to be sustainable. Having now met and exceeded that population, having new programs begin to hit their stride, and having an exciting master plan premiered in November, it looked like CUAA was going to become an ever-stronger partner for the Church generally and the Michigan District specifically.

While some things are unclear, what is clear is that the leadership of CUWAA is intent on dramatically diminishing the scope and therefore impact of CUAA. The leadership is focusing on fewer but “more Lutheran” students at the school.

It is unclear to the BoDMI how long the reimagined CUAA has been in the works. Our hope is that when President Ankerberg met with our President and the CEO of our Church Extension Fund in December to outline three options for CUAA that the micro-campus—the one option our leaders vehemently opposed—was not already either in process or the foregone conclusion. Subsequent events have caused this fact to be questioned. Our District worked hard to raise funds so that the District could be part of a solution in providing time for the school’s leadership to make strategic adjustments that kept the trajectory of the school materially the same. President Davis, as requested by CUWAA leadership, along

with some volunteers worked to provide ideas and alternatives that became a Roadmap for Autonomy. We are concerned that the die was already cast.

**The work that our network of volunteers did on the Roadmap to Autonomy was met with no collaboration, but rather suspicion and criticism for having been offered.**

It is unclear to the BoDMI why greater effort was not given to working with stakeholders and other supporters of CUAA to arrive at a different outcome than what now appears certain. The Michigan District and our Church Extension Fund have demonstrated great capacity, especially in difficult times, to support the ministry of CUAA. The work that our network of volunteers did on the Roadmap to Autonomy was met with no collaboration, but rather suspicion and criticism for having been offered. A number of times President Davis has been reminded that the BoR, not the Michigan District, holds fiduciary responsibility for CUAA and that the District's input was not welcome.

It is unclear to the BoDMI how exactly Lutheran identity has become such an issue. We know that criticism has been leveled at CUAA because of liturgical practices, people baptized without being part of a particular congregation, and a "paucity of Lutheran decorations on campus." (See [CUAA Task Force Report](#), May 31, 2024) Our understanding is that both biblically and confessionally a latitude in liturgical practice is permitted and that no one approach is commanded. We understand that Baptism is a gift and not contingent on being a member of any one congregation. The examples of people baptized outside of a congregational setting in the Bible are numerous. With such an accent on Lutheran decorations and other demonstrations of being "truly" Lutheran, we are concerned that idolatry of "Lutheranism" may be close to the door. The most disturbing issue relative to Lutheran Identity was this statement in the BoR's committee's report: "The weakness is a shallow understanding of Lutheran mission and identity that equates evangelization with Lutheran mission and identity." While we want to put the best construction on this, at the very least it is unfortunate that the language puts evangelization at odds with mission, which of course is odd.

Given where we are and the decisions that have been made regarding CUAA, how will we in the Michigan District work going forward?



**... we will do all we can to help  
those negatively impacted by  
the recent actions at CUAA**

**First**, we will do all we can to concentrate on Jesus' mission of seeking and saving the lost through the proclamation of His Gospel. Our accent is always what God is doing in and through Christians and their congregations. We are "people of hope vigorously making known the love of Jesus." We follow Jesus who was sent to seek and save the lost. We follow Jesus who tells the Church to go and make disciples.

**Second**, we will remain steadfastly biblical and confessional. We will be bound together in Christian love. We will not be bound together by tertiary authorities, e.g. human traditions, ancient theologians, or Lutheran writers. That in and of itself is "un-Lutheran" and borders on heresy.

**Third**, we will do all we can to help those negatively impacted by the recent actions at CUAA. The BoDMI will meet in August and determine how best to steward the gifts given to the District through the recent fund drive. We will ensure that the monies donated will be used as people intended them to be used as per the commitment form. We will also see how we can continue to support remaining students, faculty, and staff.

**... we will continue to  
work together within  
The Lutheran Church—  
Missouri Synod ...  
We want to be part of  
a Psalm 133  
community.**

**Fourth**, we will have to assess what impact the changes surrounding CUAA will have on District finances and what we can support financially going forward. For example, an early estimate is that, if we have to move next summer's Convention, the cost to the District may be approximately \$200,000. The BoDMI will carefully steward the congregational contributions to the District consistent with the intentions of our congregations and directives they may have.

**Fifth**, even at this late date we will be open to the will and power of God to provide a different outcome to what now seems inevitable.



**Sixth**, we will continue to work together within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to accomplish the objectives of the Synod to the glory of God, the good of His people and the increase of His Kingdom. We want to be part of a Psalm 133 community.

We are grateful for the people of the Michigan District. As your Board of Directors, we seek to serve you in this tender time. Please pray for all involved, that God's wisdom and mercy would lead us through these days.

**Rev. David A. Davis**

President  
Michigan District, LCMS

**Dr. Stephen R. Boergert**

Chairman  
Michigan District Board of Directors

Office of the  
*President*



In this video, President David A. Davis shares an update on the Concordia University Wisconsin Ann Arbor Board of Regents June 6 decision. He notes that the Board determined, by vote, that there is no path forward to pursue autonomy for Concordia University Ann Arbor

as an independent university. The Board will take a different direction for the Ann Arbor campus moving forward in the 2025–26 academic year. For more information, you can read a blog on the [Concordia University Wisconsin](#) and a statement from the Board Chair on the [Concordia University Ann Arbor](#).

President Davis extends his gratitude to those who, since 1962, have established a Christian Lutheran Center of Higher Education in Michigan. He asks to keep the students, prospective students, parents, faculty, and staff in your prayers.

**Michigan District, LCMS**

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# Appendix H

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CPS – State of the Plans

20  
24

## STATE OF THE CONCORDIA PLANS

*Supporting LCMS ministries in a changing world*

*Your workers, serving confidently — knowing their financial and physical health are taken care of today and for their lifetime*



# LCMS MINISTRIES THRIVING IN A CHANGING WORLD

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**The world is very different than it was a few years ago.** We continuously monitor the factors that impact the Concordia Plans and adjust to help ensure the sustainability of the Plans and—most importantly—support you so your ministry thrives and your workers live well.

## 2025 Concordia Plans Adjustments

**CRP:** The rate for the Traditional Option will increase by 1% of compensation each year for the next three years (2025, 2026 and 2027).

**CHP:** Millions of dollars saved from renegotiated contracts and consolidated health plan options will equate to the **average** CHP 2025 rate **decreasing** 3%.

These changes are to keep your workers well as they serve today and keep the CRP healthy for when they retire.

**In this report we detail the “why” behind the 2025 changes,** the factors impacting the Concordia Plans today and how our team is navigating them to sustain our Plans for everyone we serve. Thank you for partnering with us to care for your workers as they spread His word.



## THE STATE OF THE CONCORDIA RETIREMENT PLAN PENSION (CRP)

### Considerations as we continue to provide benefits to current and future retirees

The CRP risk management framework is rooted in actuarial and pension plan management experience supported by best-in-class actuarial, investment and legal resources. We continuously monitor and adjust our quantitative modeling to project the CRP's funding status for decades into the future. **Key factors for which we are monitoring and adjusting today:**

#### ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY

**The world today** is different than it was just a few years ago. Our investments - global and diversified - are impacted directly and indirectly by the times within which we live. The economic crisis of 2020, inflation and geo-political issues, including multiple ongoing military conflicts, have impacted the investment outlook of our pension. As such, there has been a decline in the expected rate of return from the market. We have adjusted the CRP's expected rate of return calculations accordingly.

**\$30M** ↓

The CRP's expected rate of return has decreased by .75%, which equates to \$30 million annually.

#### CASH FLOW

**As a mature pension plan**, the CRP has more retirees than active workers. As a result, investment income is the primary driver to fulfill retirement benefit promises (the ratio of workers to retirees is expected to decrease for the next 10 years and then level out). As benefit payments increase more than contributions, cash flow decreases.

**Another factor impacting cash flow** is the dynamic LCMS demographics. As some ministries contract, LCMS schools are growing. The CRP had more members in 2023 than in 2022. However, new members were increasingly lay school workers with more moderate salaries. Lower salaries equate to lower CRP contributions than the rostered workers who are retiring and beginning to draw their pension benefits.

**Decreased cash flow increases vulnerability in a volatile market because investments have to be sold in a down market to cover benefit payments.**



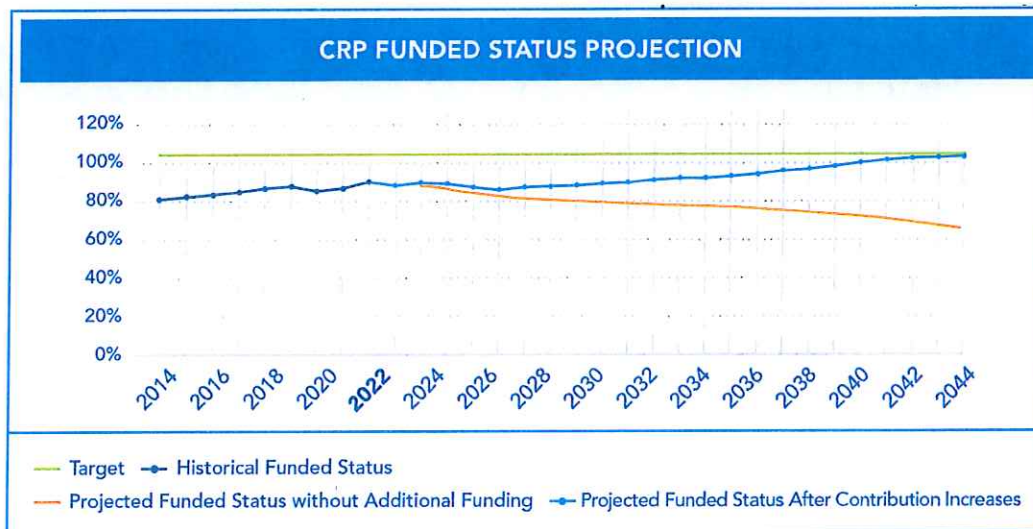
## Potential solutions to stabilize CRP funding status

It is important not to be overly reactive, so we continuously monitor and adjust our modeling to project the CRP's funding status decades into the future. **Our actuarial consultants are advising us to increase CRP funding to account for lower expected returns on investments and decreased cash flow.** Possible solutions to increase funding are:

- ✘ **Take on more investment risk:** Given the economic uncertainty discussed above, this is not a time to take on more risk.
- ✘ **Spend more time monitoring:** Given the cash flow considerations above, this is not a time to wait - but a time to take moderate action.
- ✘ **Cut back benefits:** We are not pursuing this option as we honor service to the Church and so would only pursue this as a last resort.
- ✔ **Increase contributions:** This is the best solution to maintain promised benefits to retirees today and in the future.

### 2025 CRP Rate Adjustment

**To account for lower future returns on investments and decreased cash flow, the CRP rate must be adjusted.** The CRP rate for the Traditional Option\* will increase by 1% of compensation each year for the next three years (2025, 2026 and 2027) to increase funding for retirement benefits to current and future retirees. The increase is spread over three years to help minimize the impact on your budget.



*Funded status is the actuarial value of assets divided by the accrued liability.*

We will continue accounting for all external and internal factors, monitoring, adjusting and sustaining the CRP to care for your workers and your ministry.

*\* For the Account Option the rate increase is .2%, .2% and .1% of salary in 2025, 2026 and 2027 respectively.*

## The CRP remains the right fit for LCMS ministries

**The best way to help workers prepare for their financial futures remains a comprehensive retirement solution including a pension, 403(b) or 401(k) and Social Security.** In fact, many companies are looking to reestablish pension plans as workers have become dissatisfied with retirement plans as their pensions were eliminated decades ago. The value of a pension is undeniable:

- *Effective recruitment and retention tool to attract workers who value its stability and their ability to keep it growing as they move to different LCMS ministries that offer the CRP. It also appeals to teachers who are accustomed to public school pensions.*
- *Investment risk does not lie with the individual worker but is managed by investment experts.*
- *Monthly retirement income doesn't run out for retirees and surviving spouses.*

Combined with the Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP) 403(b) and Social Security, your workers in the CRP will be on course to have financial security in retirement.

## THE STATE OF THE CONCORDIA HEALTH PLAN (CHP)

### Designed to drive better health outcomes, meet members' needs and lower rates

The cost of health insurance in the United States is at crisis level, leaving many businesses with few options to provide adequate coverage. This makes it even more remarkable that the ministries in the CHP – **by pooling resources and risk to care for their workers – improve their workers' health outcomes, which results in millions of dollars saved in the CHP.** These savings drive down ministries' annual rate increases.

### The CHP difference: We're all in this together

The economies of scale – or cost advantage in purchasing as a group – that LCMS ministries have in the CHP is multiplied through our relationships with the organizations in the Church Benefits Association. Together, we negotiate better rates and access.

With the CHP you have access to health plan options not available to any single employer in the marketplace and with controlled costs. This is possible in part because, as a non-profit entity of the Synod, we do not build in any profits. Additionally, we help drive positive member health outcomes by directing members to the best providers and programs through CHP health and wellness resources.

CHP rates are set based on recent claims from CHP members (the expenses required to cover care) and projections of healthcare needs for our population. So, when claims are lower, rate increases are lower, too.

**Unlike plans in the marketplace, we maintain health coverage for our members and their dependents regardless of their health challenges. We are all in this together.**



**DID YOU KNOW?** CHP wellness resources, such as Vitality (incentive-based wellness program) and Virta (diabetes reversal program), drive down costs. **When members use these solutions, they are improving their health outcomes and driving down premium costs and rates.**



**48%**

In 2023, 48% of members in Virta diabetes reversal program **eliminated the need of expensive medications such as insulin.** This equated to **saving \$9,800 annually per participating member.**

We work with best-in-class consultants to continuously monitor and adjust our CHP designs to drive positive health outcomes for members and drive down costs for ministries. In 2024, we introduced health plan administrators AmeriBen and Allegiance as well as healthcare navigation with Quantum Health, positively impacting the Plans in the short-term and as a multiplier through improved long-term health outcomes.

## 2025 CHP Adjustments

Each year, strategic administrative adjustments are made to the CHP. In 2025, the Plan will benefit from renegotiated contracts and consolidated health plan options. This will equate **to millions of dollars saved and the average CHP 2025 rate decreasing 3%.**

Rates at ministries vary as they are driven by many factors, including location, carrier and changes to the CHP. While the majority of CHP options have a rate decrease for 2025, some, such as our HMOs in California, have experienced a number of significant factors, negatively impacting the rates CHP pays for member care and driving up the rates in those plan options.

Ministries' rates will be shared via mailed rate renewal letter by mid-July.



## Normalizing mental health care to improve wellness for workers

When the 2023 Synodical Convention prioritized addressing the state of mental health, we established a mental health advisory council to keep an even stronger pulse on the state of mental health in the LCMS. Since then, CPS has:

- *Built an in-network directory of Lutheran and Christian counselors.*
- *Delivered communication to help normalize using mental health care - this concerted effort encouraged our members to use their Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which they used twice as often as the national average.*
- *Enhanced our EAP with Evernorth Confide Behavioral Health Navigator, so that when a member is in need, they can find the right support quickly.*

## THE STATE OF THE CONCORDIA DISABILITY & SURVIVOR PLAN (CDSP)

### Meaningful flexibility to provide needed support to ministries and members

When workers need to access disability benefits, the situation can be challenging for the ministry and the worker. We monitor state and national changes, broad trends and those specific to our own members to adjust our CDSP options to best meet your needs.

**In 2025, we will have increased flexibility in short-term and long-term disability benefits and basic life insurance coverage to support ministries with evolving needs.** One example is ministries in states with mandated short-term disability plans will now be able to care for their workers without over-insuring or overpaying. More information on these options will be shared directly with ministries.

## LCMS MINISTRIES THRIVING IN A CHANGING WORLD

While the world is different today, our dedication to help your workers be well and ministries thrive is more resolute than ever. We continuously monitor and adjust the Plans so your ministry can sustain and workers can serve confidently – knowing their financial, physical and mental health are taken care of today and for their lifetime. Please reach out to your CPS Account Manager if you have any questions.



Learn more about how we monitor and adjust the Plans to support LCMS ministries in a changing world in our **2024 Stewardship Report**.





## CONCORDIA PLANS

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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