

THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD



THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

As an alliance of congregations and schools, the Mid-South District provides leadership, resources, and encouragement in reaching the lost for Christ's Kingdom and in equipping the found for service in our churches, communities and the world.

THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT VISION STATEMENT

We see every ministry reaching the lost and discipling the found.

**21st Regular Convention
Workbook**

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SECTION A

CONVENTION INFORMATION AND AGENDA

INFORMATION TO ASSIST CONVENTION DELEGATES

SERVANTS OF CHRIST

Your election as a voting Convention delegate indicates the high regard your fellow members have for you as their representative. We pray for God's blessing on you and all delegates, so your leadership glorifies Him, serves His Church and gives you joy. Officially, your delegate role from your congregation continues for four years until the next Convention in 2025, due to the Synod's extension of the current convention cycle! Our 2021 Mid-South District Convention will have a strong mission tone that places before us the urgency and opportunity for bold witness in our world to Christ's death and resurrection. ***"Declare His Marvelous Works"*** based on 1 Chronicles 16:24 will serve as our theme throughout the Convention.

CONVENTION PURPOSE

The thirty-five Districts of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod hold Conventions every three years according to the *Handbook* of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. This 21st Convention in our Mid-South District's history of 55 years will bring together delegates from Arkansas, Tennessee, southern Kentucky, northern Mississippi, western Virginia, and guests from our District and beyond. Convention sessions provide opportunities for member congregations, through their delegates, to receive important information, conduct District business and provide direction on behalf of and in service to the congregations. You will return to your congregation with an expanded picture of how we serve as partners in the Gospel in the Mid-South District and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. We are grateful for all who used their gifts and invested significant time and energy in planning this gathering!

Convention Goals

- ☐ Rejoice in and praise God for the gift of our salvation through Jesus Christ
- ☐ Tell the stories of Jesus and His love, of God at work in and through us
- ☐ Conduct elections and business to move the Mid-South District forward
- ☐ Establish and grow in Christian fellowship with Convention delegates and guests
- ☐ Hear from our Synodical President about Mid-South District/LCMS partnership in the Gospel
- ☐ Give and receive encouragement for bold witness in reaching the lost for Christ's Kingdom
- ☐ Provide delegates with information and helpful resources for their congregations

LOCATION AND DETAILS

Our Convention site is the **Hilton Hotel** (939 Ridgelake Blvd). **Registration will be on Thursday, July 1, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** Late registration will also take place from 6:30-8:00 a.m. on Friday, July 2. Floor Committees' open hearings will occur Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in designated rooms. Delegates are invited to the open hearings to express views on various Convention overtures. When you register, look for the meeting places for the Floor Committees.

In the presence and with the blessing of the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the first session will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoon. The Convention Communion Service will be held on Thursday, 7:30 p.m., at **Christ the King Lutheran Church in Memphis, Tennessee**. Transportation arrangements and a map will be provided when you register. *The Reverend Dr. Matthew Harrison*, President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, will be the preacher for the opening service. The offerings, including those from District Sunday that will be brought on behalf of all congregations by their lay delegate, have been designated by the Board of Directors for the Scholarship Fund for Pastors and Commissioned Church Workers burdened with significant educational debt.

DELEGATES, CIRCUIT CAUCUSES, AND CONVENTION SESSIONS

Voting Delegates: A member congregation is entitled to two voting delegates, one pastoral and one lay, unless there is more than one congregation being served by one called pastor. In that case, together they will elect one lay delegate to represent them, with the alternate lay delegate often coming from the congregation other than the one providing the voting lay delegate. Throughout the Convention, voting delegates wear identifying badges issued to them when they present their credentials to the Convention Registration Committee. Seating for voting delegates will be in a particular area to facilitate voting in elections and on resolutions. During sessions, only voting delegates should be in the seating area designated for them.

Advisory Delegates: Advisory delegates will also have a special seating area. Advisory delegates may participate in floor debate but are not permitted to vote or to introduce motions.

Circuit Caucuses: At 4:20 p.m. on Friday, July 2, all Electoral Circuits who have not yet elected Synod delegates will choose their pastoral and lay delegates and alternate delegates to the 2023 Synodical Convention in St. Louis. *The alternate delegate from dual parishes does have voting rights in these circuit caucuses.* Your Circuit Visitor is prepared to lead the elections, with directions from the District President. Please contact him if you have questions about the election procedures.

In all Visitation Circuits, a ballot will also be necessary to determine the selection of Circuit Visitors.

Sessions: A proposed agenda is included with this Workbook to give delegates an overview of how the sessions will be arranged and when different individuals will be making presentations.

Reports and Overtures

Your Workbook pages provide reports from a variety of servant-leaders who are accountable to the District as they fulfill their responsibilities. The reports represent service to our Lord and His Church for which we are grateful! To facilitate the best use of our Convention time, most reports are provided in written form. By reading the material before sessions, you are preparing to be an informed delegate who will participate with greater confidence and knowledge.

Overtures to the Convention are also included in the Workbook. Overtures express an action desired on the part of the Convention. Each Overture has been assigned to the appropriate Floor Committee, with representation from Convention delegates, appointed by the District President. After consideration of the overtures, the Floor Committee may bring the overture as a resolution in original form to the Convention, modify or amend it, or decline to offer it for proper reasons.

ELECTIONS

During the Convention, delegates elect the District President, four Regional Vice Presidents, the District Secretary, the Board of Directors, a Nominations Committee, a lay member to the Synod's Committee for Convention Nominations when in the rotation in the Synod, and ratify the slate of Circuit Visitors, which shall constitute their election. Nominations for District President and Vice Presidents were generated from congregations through a process guided by the District Secretary. The Nominations Committee will provide nominees for all other elected positions, except Circuit Visitors, who are nominated by the circuit congregations. Voting delegates may nominate from the floor with the prior written consent of and written pertinent information about the nominees, with the exception of the election of Vice Presidents and Circuit Visitors. Included in this Workbook is a slate of candidates developed by the District Secretary and the Nominations Committee and biographical data.

HAVE A PRODUCTIVE, ENJOYABLE CONVENTION!

Approximately 300 people, including delegates, advisors, officers and guests are anticipated. Often, a number of guests and family members will also be in attendance on a part-time basis. Convention sessions are open to guests who are seated in a designated section on the Convention floor. Guest badges will be available at the registration table.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE AS A DELEGATE

1. Pray that the Lord's will be done among us and through us!
2. Be faithful in attendance at all sessions.
3. Observe the agenda's schedule and be prompt at your seat for beginning times.
4. Print out a copy of the Convention Workbook from the flash drive and bring it to all sessions. Keep summary handouts and good notes for reporting to your home congregation.
5. Wear your badge at all times as a voting or advisory delegate.
6. Use the floor microphone closest to your seat when addressing the Chair or the Convention.
7. Be attentive, courteous and prepared to contribute to and receive from your brothers and sisters in Christ.
8. Make the Chairman, a District officer or staff member, the Convention Committee, or a page, aware of any special concerns or needs (transportation, personal, etc.) that you may have during the Convention.
9. Browse through the display areas and speak with representatives. Pick up available materials that interest you.

10. Take the initiative to establish new acquaintances and renew existing ones with fellow delegates and guests. You will be moved to thank God for the gifts, trust and spirit of Gospel partnership represented among those present.
11. When the Convention is in session, please turn off cell phones and all other communication devices. Please do not use them inside the convention hall.
12. If voting or advisory delegates are unable to be present at all or a portion of the Convention due to unusual circumstances, please submit a written excuse to:

**Convention Registration Committee
Mid-South District Convention
1675 Wynne Road
Cordova, Tennessee 38016
Email: rpaavola@mid-southlcms.com**

CONVENTION SPECIAL STANDING RULES

1. Each member of the Convention, when recognized by the Chair, shall state his/her name. He/she shall also state the name and location of the congregation he/she represents.
2. The two-minute rule shall apply for all who speak from the floor.
3. While any voting delegate may call the question at any time, after every 15 minutes of debate on any one motion, there shall be an automatic call of the question by the Chair.
4. All main motions, substitute motions, and amendments made from the floor must be submitted to the Chair of the Convention and Secretary in writing and signed by the Delegate making the motion, including the name and location of the congregation he/she represents.
5. Only *substantive* amendments (those impacting its purpose or effect) or substitute resolutions shall be offered from the floor and be submitted to the convention office for publication. Any editorial corrections or *non-substantive* changes to introduced resolutions should instead be shared in writing with the Secretary and the Chair of the Convention. Until a resolution is presented to the delegates, any such changes should be suggested directly to the floor committee chair before or during Open Hearings.
6. If a substitute resolution is offered, the Convention shall first decide by majority vote whether or not to consider the substitute. If the decision is in the affirmative and the substitute resolution is adopted, the original resolution fails. If the substitute resolution does not receive favorable action either to consider or to adopt, the original resolution is again before the house. (This is the so-called "Behnken Rule" for dealing with substitute resolutions.)
7. Questions of privilege shall be addressed in writing to the Chair, or his appointee, instead of consuming Convention time.
8. Resolutions prepared by the Floor Committees, which are not acted upon by the Convention before adjournment, die. The subject matter may be reintroduced at the next Convention by means of an Overture.
9. The preface, preambles, and the whereas section shall be considered an integral part of the Resolution, Overture, and/or Memorial, and as such, subject to the same serious consideration and adoption in all its parts as the main motion itself.
10. Before the final slate for an office is adopted, if there is only one nominee on the ballot due to no other nominations made or those nominated have previously declined, the chair shall call for nominations from the floor, where allowed by the bylaws, before the slate is adopted for election. If no further nominations are made from the floor, then the election will be declared by acclamation.

11. LCMS Bylaw 1.5.1.2 limits an individual to serve, at any one time, in no more than one elective position and no more than two positions, whether elective or appointive, or in one position directly responsible to another, counting both district and Synod positions but neither Synod nor district nominating committees. Individuals may be nominated for additional positions, but if elected must determine in which position(s) to serve, subject to the limit. Upon election to each position, individuals with names on subsequent ballots will be asked whether they should be removed. When individuals are elected to offices that cannot be served simultaneously, the district elections committee shall immediately attempt to contact them, to decide in which office(s) they choose to serve. Should a district election be vacated as a result, if the convention remains open, the convention shall conduct a new election from the position, using the remaining slate of candidates; otherwise, the vacancy shall be filled after the installation of elected officers and board members, according to the applicable bylaw.
12. Cellular phones shall be off. No communication devices shall be used in the convention hall during voting.
13. Unless covered by these standing rules of the Convention, parliamentary procedure shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*.

**THE 21st REGULAR CONVENTION OF
THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH--MISSOURI SYNOD
JULY 1-3, 2021**

THE CONVENTION THEME
“Declare His Marvelous Works”



1 Chronicles 16: 23-24

**THE CONVENTION
PROGRAM**

Synodical Representatives: *The Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison*
President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

The Reverend Peter K. Lange
First Vice-President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

The Reverend Benjamin T. Ball
Sixth Vice-President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Opening Service of Holy Communion:
 Thursday, July 1, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.
 Christ the King Lutheran Church
 Memphis, Tennessee
 The Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, Preacher

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | Floor Committee Meetings |
| 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. | REGISTRATION – Atrium |
| 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | Open Hearings by Floor Committees <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Church & Doctrine – Promenade 1● Church Missions & Evangelism – Promenade 2● Church & Social Concerns – Tennessee D |
| 11:00 a.m. | Exhibits Open (Tennessee Grand Foyer) |

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Declare His Marvelous Works”</i> THURSDAY, JULY 1, 2021 FIRST CONVENTION SESSION</p>
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Chaplain for the Day: *The Reverend Craig G. Muehler*

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 2:50 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | Seating and Singing – <i>Mr. Charles Russell</i> |
| 3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. | Opening Devotion - <i>The Reverend Craig G. Muehler</i> |
| 3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | Welcome and Introductions
<i>The Reverend Dr. Roger Paavola, President</i> |
| 3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. | Greetings from Ministry Partners |
| 3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Greetings from District Presidents Emeriti |
| 4:00 p.m. – 4:55 p.m. | District President’s Report
<i>The Reverend Dr. Roger Paavola</i> |
| 4:55 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. | Lutheran Church Extension Fund Greetings
<i>The Reverend Bart Day</i>
LCEF President |
| 5:15 p.m. – 5:20 p.m. | Announcements – <i>Mrs. Angela Fowler</i> |
| | Closing Prayer – <i>The Reverend Craig G. Muehler</i> |
| 5:45 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. | Dinner at Christ the King, Memphis provided by LCEF
(Bus Transportation to Christ the King will be provided) |
| 7:30 p.m. | Opening Service – <i>Christ the King Lutheran Church</i>
<i>5296 Park Avenue, Memphis, TN</i>
Sermon: <i>The Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison</i> |

“Declare His Marvelous Works”
FRIDAY, JULY 2, 2021
SECOND CONVENTION SESSION

Chaplain for the Day: *The Reverend Dr. Leroy H. Leach*

Friday, July 2, 2021

6:30 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.	Breakfast (Southeast Ballroom)
6:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	Registration Continues
7:45 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	Seating and Singing – <i>Mr. Charles Russell</i>
8:00 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.	Opening Devotion – <i>The Reverend Dr. Leroy H. Leach</i>
8:20 a.m. – 8:40 a.m.	Orientation Report of Credentials and Registration Announcement of New Congregations Received into Synodical Membership Reception of Ordained and Commissioned Ministers
8:40 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Candidates for District President <i>Rev. Robert Portier, Chair</i> <i>Elections Committee</i>
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Elections
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Floor Committee Business
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.	Seating and Singing – <i>Mr. Charles Russell</i>
10:20 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.	LCMS President’s Report (and video) <i>The Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison</i>
11:20 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	Q&A with <i>President Matthew Harrison</i>
11:50 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.	Announcements Special Greetings Meal Prayer
11:55 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch – Southeast Ballroom Current Board of Directors’ Luncheon – Directors 6 Pastor’s Wives Luncheon – Directors 3

“Declare His Marvelous Works”
FRIDAY, JULY 2, 2021
THIRD CONVENTION SESSION

Friday, July 2, 2021 *(Continued)*

1:00 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.	Seating and Singing – <i>Mr. Charles Russell</i>
1:10 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	<i>Bishop Emmanuel Makala (video presentation)</i> Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese, Tanzania
1:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Floor Committee Business
3:15 p.m. – 3:35 p.m.	Break
3:35 p.m. – 3:40 p.m.	Seating and Singing – <i>Mr. Charles Russell</i>
3:40 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.	Floor Committee Business
4:10 p.m. – 4:20 p.m.	Announcements – <i>Mrs. Angela Fowler</i> Closing Prayer – <i>The Reverend Dr. Leroy H. Leach</i>
4:20 p.m.	<i>Orientation and Dismissal to Circuit Caucuses</i> <i>District President Roger Paavola</i>
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	President’s Reception (Southeast Ballroom) Dinner on your own

“Declare His Marvelous Works”
SATURDAY, JULY 3, 2021
FOURTH CONVENTION SESSION

Chaplain for the Day: *The Reverend Russell S. Belisle*

Saturday, July 3, 2021

6:30 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.	Breakfast
7:45 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	Seating and Singing <i>Mr. Charles Russell</i>
8:00 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.	Opening Devotion – <i>The Reverend Russell S. Belisle</i>
8:20 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Elections Continue
8:45 a.m. – 9:05 a.m.	<i>Reverend Joseph Randrianasolo (video presentation)</i> LIME Institute, Malagasy Lutheran Church, Madagascar
9:05 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Floor Committee Business

“Declare His Marvelous Works”
SATURDAY, JULY 3, 2021
FIFTH CONVENTION SESSION

Saturday, July 3, 2021 *(Continued)*

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Announcements – <i>Mrs. Angela Fowler</i> Lunch Prayer – <i>The Reverend Russell S. Belisle</i>
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. - 1:10 p.m.	Seating and Singing – <i>Mr. Charles Russell</i>
1:10 p.m. - 2:10 p.m.	Floor Committee Business
2:10 p.m. – 2:40 p.m.	Installation of Newly Elected Officers – <i>LCMS President Matthew C. Harrison</i> Closing Devotion – <i>The Reverend Russell S. Belisle</i>
2:40 p.m.	Adjournment
2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Photos of Newly Elected Groups and Individuals
3:00 p.m.	Board of Directors Meeting (Incoming Members)

**THE REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
TO THE 2021 MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION**

MEET OUR PRESIDENT



*A Brief Biography of
Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison*

The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison is the 13th man to serve as President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod since its founding in 1847. He was elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2013, 2016 and 2019.

Harrison is the church's chief ecclesiastical officer, and his duties include:

- Supervising the doctrine taught and practiced by its nearly 9,000 ordained ministers;
- Representing the LCMS with its partner church bodies throughout the world; and
- Overseeing all officers, executives and agencies of the LCMS.

In 2001, Harrison became executive director of the LCMS' former World Relief and Human Care ministry. Based at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis, Harrison:

- Oversaw the church's multimillion-dollar responses to epic disasters, including Hurricane Katrina, the Asia tsunami and the Haiti earthquake;
- Managed relationships with some 120 LCMS Recognized Service Organizations and other inter-Lutheran social ministry organizations;
- Worked in consultation with LCMS partner/sister churches to build capacity during mercy outreach efforts; and
- Managed the church's global pro-life efforts.

Pastoral Ministry

Harrison served as a pastor at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Westgate, Iowa (1991-95) and Zion Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Ind. (1995-2001). In Fort Wayne, his parish embarked on the St. Peter/Zion Project for Neighborhood Renewal, a now nationally recognized neighborhood revitalization effort.

Owing to the success of this effort, Harrison later founded Lutheran Housing Support Corporation, a faith-based housing organization headquartered at the LCMS International Center that helps revitalize communities and renew neighborhoods across the country.

Education and Service

Harrison graduated with a bachelor's degree in religious studies from Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa, in 1984. Following his graduation, he and his wife, Kathy, spent a year as missionaries in a remote Canadian Cree Indian village with the Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots.

Harrison earned a Master of Divinity in 1989 and a Master of Sacred Theology in 1991, both from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. He has pursued additional graduate study at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. In 2011, he received two honorary doctorates: a Doctor of Laws from Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich., and a Doctor of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.

Before being elected President, Harrison served on numerous boards for church and community organizations.

Literary Work

Harrison is a prolific writer whose books include *A Little Book on Joy*, a devotional-style book about finding delight in living a Christ-centered life in today's society, and *Christ Have Mercy: How to Put Your Faith in Action*, a book urging Christians to consider the innumerable opportunities they have to show mercy to fellow Christians and to anyone God places in their path.

He compiled and translated *At Home in the House of My Fathers*, a collection of works by several of the church's founders, and edited *The Lonely Way: Selected Essays and Letters* by Hermann Sasse, a prominent confessional Lutheran theologian in the German ecumenical movement of the early 20th century.

Most recently, Harrison revised and edited a new edition of C.F.W. Walther's *The Church and the Office of the Ministry*, a seminal writing by the first President of the LCMS, and translated Letters to Lutheran Pastors — *Volume 1*, *Volume 2* and *Volume 3* — an edition of Sasse's correspondence with Lutheran pastors around the world.

Family

Harrison and his wife live in Ballwin, Mo., and are members of Village Lutheran Church in Ladue, Mo., where Harrison also serves as assistant pastor. They have two sons. Harrison is an avid banjo player and instrumentalist who makes guitars, banjos and mandolins.

**THE REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
TO THE 2021 MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION**

MEET OUR FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT



***A Brief Biography of
Reverend Peter K. Lange***

As first Vice-President and a member of the Praesidium of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), the Rev. Peter K. Lange assists the President in carrying out his responsibilities and oversees the colloquy program for both ordained and commissioned ministers. Lange was elected to this position in 2019. He also serves as an *ex officio* member of the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations and the LCMS Board of Directors, and he is the Synod President's representative on the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Board of Regents.

Previously, Lange served as president of the LCMS Kansas District (2015–2019). Prior to that, he served as senior pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church, Topeka, Kan. (1999–2015), and associate pastor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Concordia, Mo. (1990–1999).

Born in Houston, Texas, Lange graduated from Concordia University, River Forest, in 1984 and from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., with a Master of Divinity in 1988. Lange also earned a Master of Sacred Theology degree in 1998 from Concordia Theological Seminary.

Lange has also served the church as secretary of the Council of Presidents (2018–2019), a member of the 2016 Resolution 13-01A Task Force "To Extol and Equip the Blessed Partnership between the Royal Priesthood and the Office of the Public Ministry," a chairman for Synod floor committees in 2016 and 2019, and a member of numerous boards and committees for the Missouri and Kansas districts from 1992–2015. Lange has also participated in short-term mission trips to England, Czech Republic, Germany, and South Africa.

Lange and his wife, Marcia, live in St. Louis. They have four daughters.

**THE REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
TO THE 2021 MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION**

MEET OUR SIXTH VICE-PRESIDENT



***A Brief Biography of
Reverend Benjamin T. Ball***

The Rev. Benjamin T. Ball is sixth Vice-President and a member of the Praesidium of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). He was elected in 2019 and represents the church's Central Region.

Ball is the senior pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Hamel, Ill., where he was called in 2012. He previously served St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Dedham, Mass. (1999–2004), and St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School, Brookfield, Ill. (2004–2012).

He is currently the chairman of the Synod's Committee for Convention Nominations. He served as the second vice-president of the LCMS Southern Illinois District (2018–2019), and he served several terms as a circuit visitor in both the Northern Illinois and Southern Illinois districts.

Ball has been a member of the Board of Directors of Metro-East Lutheran High School of Edwardsville, Ill. (2017–2019), and he is an editor of *Gottesdienst—The Journal of Lutheran Liturgy* (2016–present). Ball has been a frequent presenter at conferences discussing preaching, liturgy, the fraternal bonds of pastors, and the pastoral task in the Lutheran school.

Originally from Richmond, Mich., he is a product of LCMS schools since kindergarten. He received a B.A. from Concordia University, River Forest, Ill., in 1995, and in 1999 was granted the M.Div. from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

An avid outdoorsman, he resides in the church parsonage with his wife, Serena, and their four children.

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD**

1675 Wynne Road
Cordova, Tennessee 38016
901-373-1343 or 866-373-1343
901-373-4826 (Fax)

THE OFFICERS AND STAFF OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT

District President
Vice President – Region 3, First Vice President
Vice President – Region 4, Second Vice President
Vice President – Region 1, Third Vice President
Vice President – Region 2, Fourth Vice President
District Secretary
Treasurer

Reverend Dr. Roger Paavola
Reverend Charles Neugebauer
Reverend Gilbert Pingel
Reverend Paul Hass
Reverend Kevin Conger
Reverend John Gierke
Mr. Larry Vickers

Executive Director for Business and Finance
Executive Director for Schools and Early Childhood
Lutheran Church Extension Fund Vice President and
Executive Director for Development
LCEF Communications and Marketing Specialist

Mrs. Angela Fowler
Mr. Allen Piepenbrink

Mr. Paul Reaves
Mrs. Renae McElwain

Executive Administrative Assistant
Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Missy Washburn
Mrs. Julie Tyler

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Reverend Charles Neugebauer
Reverend Gilbert Pingel
Reverend Paul Hass
Reverend Kevin Conger
Reverend John Gierke
Mrs. Tessa Brasher
Dr. Fred Guengerich
Mr. Marc Higgins
Mrs. Shirley Piepenbrink
Mr. Jeff Pittman
Mr. Larry Vickers
Mr. Larry Zehnder

THE CIRCUIT VISITORS

Chattanooga Circuit
Fayetteville Circuit
Fort Smith Circuit
Johnson City Circuit
Jonesboro Circuit
Knoxville Circuit
Little Rock – North Circuit
Little Rock – South Circuit
Memphis Circuit
Middle Tennessee
Nashville
Paducah Circuit
Stuttgart Circuit

Reverend Mark Rhoads
Reverend Robert Herring
Reverend Joshua Willadsen
Reverend Steven Harmon
Reverend Joel Krogen
Reverend Robert Portier
Reverend David Vandercook
Reverend Kent Schaaf
Reverend Mark Goble
Reverend Gerald Meyer
Reverend Kenneth Shaw
Reverend Larry Peters
Reverend M. Chad Philipp

<p style="text-align: center;">2021 MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION FLOOR COMMITTEES</p>

Floor Committee 1 – Church & Doctrine

Reverend Kevin Conger (Chairman)

Reverend David Vandercook (Vice-Chairman)

Ministers of Religion – Ordained

Reverend Kevin Conger, Hope Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, AR

Reverend Nathan Jansen, St. John Lutheran Church, Burns, TN

Reverend David Vandercook, Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church, Maumelle, AR and Trinity Lutheran Church, North Little Rock, AR

Reverend Donald Welmer, First Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN

Minister of Religion – Commissioned

Lindsey Hofman, First Lutheran Church & School, Knoxville, TN

Lay Members

Dr. Fred Guengerich, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN

Pete Duncanson, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN

Kenneth Watkins, Cross of Calvary Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN

Floor Committee 2 – Missions & Evangelism

Reverend Gilbert Pingel (Chairman)

Reverend Robert Herring (Vice-Chairman)

Ministers of Religion – Ordained

Reverend Joel Krogen, Hope Lutheran Church, Batesville, AR and Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waldenburg, AR

Reverend Robert Herring, Grace Lutheran Church, Holiday Island, AR

Reverend Sawyer Meyers, Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Olive Branch, MS

Reverend Gilbert Pingel, Emeritus, Chattanooga, TN

Minister of Religion – Commissioned

Michelle Fischer, Immanuel Lutheran Church & School, Memphis, TN

Lay Members

Keith Brummett, Faith Lutheran Church, Bentonville, AR

Dan Jacobs, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN

Charles Poziombka, First Lutheran Church, Harrison, AR

Advisory

Angela Fowler, Mid-South District, Cordova, TN

Larry Vickers, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN

Floor Committee 3 – Church & Social Concerns

Reverend Clayton Sellers (Chairman)

Reverend David McMinn (Vice-Chairman)

Ministers of Religion – Ordained

Reverend Russell Belisle, Cross of Calvary Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN

Reverend David McMinn, Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, McMinnville, TN

Reverend Clayton Sellers, Faith Lutheran Church, Collierville, TN

Reverend Daniel Ulrich, Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN

Minister of Religion – Commissioned

Deaconess Eileen Esget, Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR

Lay Members

Timothy Luckenbach, Hope Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, AR

Jeff Pittman, Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Jonesboro, AR

Tom Tiesler, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN

Floor Committee 4 – Elections
Reverend Robert Portier (Chairman)
Reverend Jonathan Beyer (Vice-Chairman)

Ministers of Religion – Ordained

Reverend Jonathan Beyer, First Lutheran Church, Hot Springs, AR

Reverend Robert Portier, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sevierville, TN

Minister of Religion – Commissioned

Samuel Fishburn, First Lutheran Church & School, Fort Smith, AR

Jessica Irwin, First Lutheran Church & School, Knoxville, TN

Lay Member

Robert Morris, Peace Lutheran Church, Conway, AR

John Hofman, First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN

2021 MID-SOUTH DISTRICT NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE
--

Reverend Robert Portier (Chairman)

Mrs. Jessica Irwin (Secretary)

Ministers of Religion – Ordained

Reverend Jonathan Beyer, First Lutheran Church, Hot Springs, AR

Reverend Robert Portier, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sevierville, TN

Ministers of Religion – Commissioned

Samuel Fishburn, First Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR

Jessica Irwin, First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN

Lay Members

Charlie Gemeinhardt, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN

Jeff Roper, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Conway, AR

<p>2021 MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION COMMITTEES</p>

Convention Planning Committee

Reverend Dr. Roger Paavola (Chairman)

District President

Reverend John Gierke

District Secretary

Mrs. Angela Fowler
Mrs. Missy Washburn

Mrs. Nancy Lee
Mrs. Renae McElwain

Convention Publicity Committee

Mrs. Renae McElwain (Chairman)

Mrs. Judy Otto
Ethan Washburn, Photographer

Mrs. Rhonda Anderson
Mrs. Genie Swan

Convention Office Staff

Mrs. Missy Washburn (Convention Office Manager)

Mrs. Julie Tyler
Mrs. Gwen Wenck

Ms. Diane Reimold

Convention Staff

Mr. Cooper Washburn
Mr. Allen Piepenbrink

Mrs. Nancy Lee
Mr. Paul Reaves

Convention Musician

Mr. Charles Russell

Opening Service of Holy Communion

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, Tennessee

Reverend Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, Proclaimer

Reverend Charles Neugebauer, Officiant

SECTION B

ATTENDANCE ROSTERS, OFFICIAL ACTS ANNIVERSARIES

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 CHATTANOOGA CIRCUIT-Region 4</p>
--

The Reverend Mark Rhoads, Circuit Visitor

<u>TENNESSEE</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Athens Athens Lutheran	Rev. Donald Coulter	(D) Mark Raulie
Chattanooga Cross of Christ	Rev. Barry Hildebrandt	(D) Larry Zehnder
Chattanooga First	Rev. Donald Welmer	(D) Troy Tallant
Chattanooga Good Shepherd	Rev. H. Christopher Sheets (A) Rev. Ed Rosser	(D) Dan Jacobs
Chattanooga Spirit of Joy	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Chattanooga St. Philip		(D)
Cleveland First		(D)
Dayton Prince of Peace		(D)
Loudon Christ Our Savior	Rev. Mark Rhoads (A) Rev. Brian Truog	(D) LJ Blinn (A) Robert Traum

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 FAYETTEVILLE CIRCUIT - Region 1</p>

The Reverend Robert Herring, Circuit Visitor

<u>ARKANSAS</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Bella Vista Bella Vista	Rev. Paul Hass (A) Rev. Chris Gorshe	(D) Ronald Burkett
Bentonville Faith	Rev. David Schmidt	(D) Keith Brummett
Fayetteville St. John	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Holiday Island Grace	Rev. Robert Herring	(D) Terri Herman (A) Don Koch
Lowell Living Savior	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Pea Ridge Messiah		(D)
Rogers Holy Trinity	Rev. Eric Longman	(D) Bob Jennings (A) Duane Wright
Siloam Springs Christ	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Springdale Salem	Rev. Brandon Martin	(D)

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 FORT SMITH CIRCUIT- Region 1</p>
--

The Reverend Joshua Willadsen, Circuit Visitor

<u>ARKANSAS</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Fort Smith Bethel	Rev. Joshua Willadsen	(D) Mat Pitsch
Fort Smith First	Rev. John Merrill	(D)
Fort Smith Our Redeemer	Rev. Richard Davenport	(D) Kathleen Thompson
Greenwood Grace	Rev. Jason Zirbel	(D) Glenn Fleer
Lamar River Valley Grace	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D) Leo Knoernschild (A) Jerry Holman
London (Augsburg) Zion	Rev. Joshua Ralston	(D) Susan Colles
Mena Trinity	Rev. Timothy Henning	(D) Paul Krehmeyer
Russellville St. John	Rev. William Ringer	(D) Rick Jackson (A) Brooks Morton

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 JOHNSON CITY CIRCUIT - Region 4</p>

The Reverend Steven Harmon, Circuit Visitor

<u>TENNESSEE</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Elizabethton Redeemer	Rev. Mark Kophamer	(D) Phil Hyer
Johnson City Bethlehem	Rev. Steven Harmon	(D) Adam DeMello
Kingsport Concordia	Rev. Paul F. Becker	(D) Mary Becker
Morristown Our Savior <i>(Dual Parish with Christ of the Cumberlands, Harrogate)</i>	Rev. Gordon L. Smith	(D) Thomas Ketner
<u>VIRGINIA</u>		
Abingdon, VA Grace	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 JONESBORO CIRCUIT - Region 1</p>
--

The Reverend Joel Krogen, Circuit Visitor

<u>ARKANSAS</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Batesville Hope (Dual Parish with Zion, Waldenburg)	Rev. Joel Krogen	(D) David Hardin
Blytheville First		(D)
Cherokee Village Peace	Rev. Brian Pummill	(D) Darlene Karvelius
Corning St. Matthew		(D)
Forrest City Faith	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Harrison First	Rev. William Zwick	(D) Charles Poziombka (A) Brent Nelson
Horseshoe Bend Shepherd of the Hills	Rev. Bradley Heinecke	(D)
Jonesboro Pilgrim	Rev. Joshua Leigeber (A) Rev. Andrew Lehman	(D) Aaron Russell
Lafe St. John		(D)
Mountain Home Redeemer	Rev. Kevin McReynolds	(D) David Reinert
Mountain View Grace	Rev. Kenneth Taglauer	(D) Kathryn Dobie (A) Shari Francisco
Paragould Redeemer		(D)
Waldenburg Zion (Dual Parish with Hope, Batesville)		(A)
West Memphis St. Paul		(D)

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION – 2021 KNOXVILLE CIRCUIT - Region 4</p>
--

The Reverend Robert Portier, Circuit Visitor

<u>TENNESSEE</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Harriman Redeemer	Rev. Michael Miller	(D) Jennifer Miller
Harrogate Christ of the Cumberland <i>(Dual Parish with Our Savior, Morristown)</i>		(A)
Knoxville Christus Victor		(D)
Knoxville First	Rev. Edward Maanum	(D) John Hofman (A) Charles Kandt
Knoxville Grace	Rev. Richard Elseroad (A) Rev. Danny Anderson	(D) David Larson
Knoxville The Point		(D)
Maryville Praise	Rev. Derek Roberts	(D) Tom Wittkopp (A) Paul Ruble
Oak Ridge Faith	Rev. Kirk Abatelli	(D)
Sevierville St. Paul	Rev. Robert Portier	(D) Gerda Portier
Seymour Celebration	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Sharps Chapel Chapel of the Good Shepherd	Rev. Paul Kritsch	(D) Jim Wonsey
Wartburg St. Paul	Rev. David Graves	(D) Dustin Heidel (A) David Hamby

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 LITTLE ROCK-NORTH CIRCUIT - Region 2</p>
--

The Reverend David Vandercook, Circuit Visitor

<u>ARKANSAS</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Cabot Our Savior		(D)
Conway Peace	Rev. John Gierke (A) Rev. Mark D. Tooley	(D) Robert Morris (A) Danny Slay
Conway St. Matthew	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D) Scott Roper (A) Linda Young
Fairfield Bay Faith		(D)
Jacksonville Hope	Rev. Kevin Conger	(D) Timothy Luckenbach (A) Michael Payer
Little Rock Christ	Rev. John Mathis	(D) Dave Walter
Little Rock First	Rev. Ronald Bacic	(D)
Maumelle Shepherd of Peace (Dual Parish with Trinity, NLR)	Rev. David Vandercook	(D) Daniel Moreth
North Little Rock Trinity (Dual Parish with Shepherd of Peace, Maumelle)		(A) Laura Vandercook
Searcy Our Shepherd		(D)

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 LITTLE ROCK-SOUTH CIRCUIT - Region 2</p>
--

The Reverend Kent Schaaf, Circuit Visitor

<u>ARKANSAS</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Alexander Immanuel	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Alexander Zion of Avilla	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D) Keith D'Atrio
Benton First	Rev. James Burns	(D)
Bryant Friends in Christ	Rev. Emil Woerner	(D) Jon Pingel
Hot Springs First	Rev. Jonathan Beyer	(D) Rob Swartz
Hot Springs LakePointe		(D)
Hot Springs Village Faith	Rev. Robert Benke	(D) Keith Keck
Little Rock Community of Faith	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Little Rock Grace	Rev. Kent Schaaf	(D) John Lindemann
Malvern St. Luke		(D)

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 MEMPHIS CIRCUIT - Region 3</p>
--

The Reverend Mark Goble, Circuit Visitor

MISSISSIPPI

Olive Branch	(D) David Ogdon
Beautiful Savior	(A) Steve Tyler

TENNESSEE

Collierville	Rev. Rob Harbin	(D) Ron Shaw
Faith	(A) Rev. Clayton Sellers	

Cordova	Rev. Terry Tieman	(D) Ann Sands
Grace Celebration		

Dyersburg		(D)
Trinity		

Jackson	Rev. Eric Rudsenske	(D) Carl Stoppenhagen
Concordia		(A) Rick Ribble

Memphis	Rev. Mark Goble	(D) Kim Welch
Christ the King	(A) Rev. Charles Neugebauer	(A) Glenn Maclin

Memphis	Rev. Russell Belisle	(D) Kenneth Watkins
Cross of Calvary		(A) Barbara Sullivan

Memphis	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D) Pete Duncanson
Immanuel		(A) Peter Johnson

Memphis	Rev. Don Schmidt	(D) Sam Robinson
Messiah		

Memphis	Rev. Michael Croom	(D) Nicole McCormack
Trinity	(A) Rev. Ricardo Granado	(A) Mike Grant

<p align="center"> ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 MEMPHIS CIRCUIT - Region 3 <i>(continued)</i> </p>

The Reverend Mark Goble, Circuit Visitor

<u>TENNESSEE</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Munford GracePoint		(D) Hudson Hopkins
Oakland Holy Spirit	Rev. Jerry Stobaugh	(D) Leona Stobaugh

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 MIDDLE TENNESSEE - Region 3</p>

The Reverend Gerald Meyer, Circuit Visitor

<u>TENNESSEE</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Columbia Trinity	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Cookeville Heavenly Host	Rev. Andrew Smith	(D) Lee Smith
Crossville Shepherd of the Hills	Rev. John L. Beabout	(D) Nancy Burns
McMinnville Shepherd of the Hills	Rev. David McMinn	(D)
Murfreesboro Grace	Rev. Carl Wenck (A) Rev. Alan Thoe	(D) Tammy McAbee
Smyrna Hope	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Thompson's Station Faith	Rev. Alebachew Teshome (A) Rev. Curt Hoover	(D) Robert Rahe (A) Craig Chovan
Tullahoma Faith		(D) Tom Smith

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 NASHVILLE CIRCUIT - Region 3</p>
--

The Reverend Ken Shaw, Circuit Visitor

<u>TENNESSEE</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Burns St. John	Rev. Nathan Jansen	(D) Susan Ficken
Gallatin Trinity	Rev. Ken Shaw	(D) Doug Howard (A) Tom Riesterer
Hermitage Emmanuel	Rev. Keith Enko (A) Rev. Tim Hunze	(D) Mark Gudlin
Madison Ascension	Rev. Gregory Bauch	(D) Dave Brown (A) Tim Hanusa
Nashville Concordia	Rev. Eric G. Phillips	(D) Roger Sisson
Nashville Our Savior	Rev. Lane Reuter (A) Rev. Tracy Nelson	(D) Doug Werth (A) Doug Scott
Nashville Redeemer	Rev. Philip Young	(D) Tom Tiesler
White House Prince of Peace	Rev. Randy Sakach	(D) Robert Allen

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 PADUCAH CIRCUIT - Region 3</p>
--

The Reverend Larry Peters, Circuit Visitor

<u>KENTUCKY</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Bowling Green Holy Trinity	Rev. Andrew Toopes	(D) Heather Rathert
Hopkinsville Faith		(D)
Murray Immanuel		(D)
Paducah St. Paul	Rev. David R. Appold	(D) Ben Kirchner
<u>TENNESSEE</u>		
Clarksville Grace	Rev. Daniel Ulrich (A) Rev. Larry Peters	(D) Benjamin Werner (A) Nick Shasserre
Paris Christ	Rev. Luther Hasz	(D)
Union City Faith	Rev. Paul Leigeber	(D) Kara Leigeber

<p align="center">ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND CONGREGATIONAL ROSTER THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION - 2021 STUTTGART CIRCUIT - Region 2</p>
--

The Reverend M. Chad Philipp, Circuit Visitor

<u>ARKANSAS</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE & ALTERNATE</u>
Brinkley Our Savior <i>(Dual Parish with Zion, Ulm)</i>		(A)
Ulm Zion <i>(Dual Parish with Our Savior, Brinkley)</i>		(D) Dennis Davenport
Crossett St. John	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
DeWitt St. Luke <i>(Dual Parish with St. Paul, Gillett)</i>	Rev. M. Chad Philipp	(D) Joni Philipp
Gillett St. Paul <i>(Dual Parish with St. Luke, DeWitt)</i>		(A)
El Dorado Our Savior	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Magnolia Faith	Pastoral Office Vacant	(D)
Pine Bluff Trinity	Rev. Stewart Marshall	(D) Donna Marshall
Stuttgart St. John's	Rev. Don White	(D) Ray Vester

**ATTENDANCE REGISTER OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT ADVISORY DELEGATES
REGISTERED TO ATTEND THE 2021 DISTRICT CONVENTION**

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Reverend Danny Anderson, Knoxville, TN
Reverend Thomas Bartzsch EM, Lamar, AR
Reverend Jim Belles, Cordova, TN
Reverend Edward Fehskens EM, Kingsport, TN
Reverend Chris Gorshe, Bella Vista, AR
Reverend Jesus Granado, Memphis, TN
Reverend Dan Hawkins, Atoka, TN
Reverend Gary Heckmann EM, Cookeville, TN
Reverend Clifford Herd EM, Chattanooga, TN
Reverend Timothy Hunze, Hermitage, TN
Reverend Darrell Kobs EM, Russellville, AR
Reverend David Lampman, Crossville, TN
Reverend Dr. Leroy Leach EM, Conway, AR
Reverend Clarence Martin EM, Memphis, TN
Reverend Gerald Meyer EM, Crossville, TN
Reverend Sawyer Meyers, Olive Branch, MS
Reverend Dr. Paul Muench EM, Knoxville, TN
Reverend Clayton Sellers, Collierville, TN
Reverend Roger Sterle EM, Bella Vista, AR
Reverend Mark Tooley, Conway, AR
Reverend JohnDavid Zischke, Fayetteville, AR

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Mrs. Frances Bacic, Little Rock, AR
Ms. Katie Baumann, Chattanooga, TN
Deaconess Eileen Esget, Hot Springs Village, AR
Mrs. Michelle Fischer, Memphis, TN
Mr. Samuel Fishburn, Fort Smith, AR
Mrs. Connie SoSo Goines, Greenwood, AR
Ms. Kara Harbin, Collierville, TN
Mrs. Barbara Hasz, Paris, TN
Ms. Lindsey Hofman, Knoxville, TN
Ms. Jessie Irwin, Knoxville, TN
Mrs. Ann Laury, Memphis, TN
Ms. Natalie Martin, Memphis, TN
Mr. Allen Piepenbrink, Cordova, TN
Mrs. Kris Pudwell, Memphis, TN
Ms. Karen Teal, Memphis, TN

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Fred Guengerich, Nashville, TN
Reverend Charles Neugebauer, Memphis, TN
Mrs. Shirley Piepenbrink, Cordova, TN
Reverend Gilbert Pingel EM, Chattanooga, TN
Mr. Jeffrey Pittman, Jonesboro, AR
Mr. Larry Vickers, Nashville, TN
Mr. Larry Zehnder, Chattanooga, TN

**THE ROSTER OF EMERITUS, CANDIDATE,
OTHER PASTORS AND OTHER WORKERS OF
THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT
AS OF APRIL 15, 2021**

ORDAINED MINISTERS EMERITI

Reverend Richard Ames, Hot Springs Village, AR
 Reverend Arthur Avery, Harrogate, TN
 Reverend Thomas Bartzsch, Hot Springs Village, AR*
 Reverend Paul Baumann, Jonesboro, AR
 Reverend John Beabout, Crossville, TN*
 Reverend Henry Behling, Hot Springs Village, AR
 Reverend Hubert Bernthal, Bella Vista, AR
 Reverend Brian Bibler, Bella Vista, AR
 Reverend Roy Bingenheimer, Concordia, MO
 Reverend Phil Bohlken, Knoxville, TN
 Reverend David Callies, Brentwood, TN
 Reverend Dean Clausing, Benton, AR
 Reverend William Couch, Knoxville, TN
 Reverend Linsey Dettmer, Sevierville, TN
 Reverend Douglas DeWitt, Hohenwald, TN
 Reverend Richard Dockery, Maryville, TN
 Reverend Paul Donner, Paducah, KY
 Reverend John Easterling, Mountain Home, AR
 Reverend Albert Eichelberger, Knoxville, TN
 Reverend Dan Elkins, Olive Branch, MS
 Reverend James Evers, Oak Ridge, TN
 Reverend Edward Fehskens, Bristol, TN
 Reverend John Freitag, Rogersville, TN
 Reverend David Gadbow, Mountain Home, AR
 Reverend Norman Groteluschen, Germantown, TN
 Reverend Fred Hagemeister, Lakeview, AR
 Reverend Kenneth Haydon, Eureka Springs, AR
 Reverend Gary Heckmann, Cookeville, TN
 Reverend Donald Hefta, Hot Springs Village, AR
 Reverend Steven Heilmann, Gallatin, TN
 Reverend Clarence Helmich, Oviedo, FL
 Reverend Gene Henke, Murfreesboro, TN
 Reverend Clifford Herd, Chattanooga, TN
 Reverend Donley Hesse, Mena, AR
 Reverend David Hudak, Bella Vista, AR*
 Reverend Stanley Jones, Bella Vista, AR
 Reverend Arthur Kaufmann, Bristol, TN
 Reverend Robert Kellerman, Casa Grande, AZ
 Reverend Darrell Kobs, Russellville, AR
 Reverend David Krause, Bella Vista, AR
 Reverend Thom Lakso, Knoxville, TN
 Reverend Dr. LeRoy Leach, Conway, AR*
 Reverend John Lindner, Bella Vista, AR
 Reverend Erwin Lueker, Elizabethton, TN
 Reverend Robert Mader, Clarksville, TN
 Reverend Larry Marhenke, Hot Springs Village, AR
 Reverend Clarence Martin, Bartlett, TN
 Reverend Gerald Meyer, Crossville, TN
 Reverend David Moore, Knoxville, TN
 Reverend Dr. Paul Muench, Knoxville, TN
 Reverend Jan Munch, Athens, TN
 Reverend Donald Neiswender, Paducah, KY
 Reverend Hiram Nunez, Granbury, TX
 Reverend Daniel Otto, Nashville, TN
 Reverend Marvin Otto, Kingsport, TN

ORDAINED MINISTERS EMERITI

Reverend Robert Pfaff, Spring City, TN
 Reverend Gilbert Pingel, Chattanooga, TN
 Reverend Albert Quoss, Bella Vista, AR*
 Reverend Roger Reckling, Knoxville, TN
 Reverend Thomas Sayre, Fairfield Bay, AR
 Reverend John P. Schulz, Knoxville, TN
 Reverend Larry Seiferth, North Little Rock, AR
 Reverend Russell Shewmaker, Gravette, AR
 Reverend Stephen Skov, Rockwood, TN
 Reverend Lynn Spencer, Bentonville, AR
 Reverend Roger Sterle, Bella Vista, AR
 Reverend William Stevenson, Dyersburg, TN
 Reverend Kenneth Taglauer, Mountain View, AR*
 Reverend David Tews, Horseshoe Bend, AR
 Reverend Dr. Wesley Toncre, Conway, AR*
 Reverend Louis Trebus, Sevierville, TN
 Reverend John Treude, Fort Smith, AR
 Reverend William Wagner, Jr. Thompson's Station, TN
 Reverend James Watson, Ooltewah, TN
 Reverend Frank Zirbel, Harrison, AR

ORDAINED MINISTERS – CANDIDATES

Reverend Duncan Cox, Pea Ridge, AR*
 Reverend Mark Hass, Fort Smith, AR
 Reverend Jeffrey King, Jonesboro, AR
 Reverend Q.L. Mark Louderback, Arlington, TN
 Reverend Gregory Prauner, Bartlett, TN
 Reverend Steven Teske, North Little Rock, AR*

ORDAINED MINISTERS – SPECIAL MINISTRIES

Chaplain Shawn Found, Little Rock, AR
 LCMS Office of International Missions
 Chaplain Richard Graves, Colorado Springs, CO
 LCMS Office of International Missions

VICARS

Spring 2018

Vicar John C. Carpenter
 Faith Lutheran Church, Tullahoma, TN
 Vicar William F. Zwick
 Faith Lutheran Church, Harrison, AR

Fall 2018

Vicar Daniel Bodemann
 Christ Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR

Spring 2019

Vicar Neely Owen
 Faith Lutheran Church, Hopkinsville, KY

Winter 2020

Vicar Wesley Keene
 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, East Ridge, TN
 Vicar Nicholas Whitney
 Faith Lutheran Church, Tullahoma, TN

**CERTIFIED PARISH ASSISTANT SERVING
IN MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONGREGATIONS**

Mrs. Frauke Darnell
 Concordia Lutheran Church, Kingsport, TN

*** Currently Serving a Congregation**

SYNODICALLY ROSTERED
DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH, AND OTHER
MINISTERS OF RELIGION-COMMISSIONED
OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT AS OF APRIL 15, 2021

Baumann, Katie

Director of Christian Education
 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Chattanooga,
 TN

Brasher, Tessa

Director of Christian Education
 St. John's Lutheran Church, Lapeer, AR

Brown, Logan

Youth Minister
 Christ Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR

Cooper, Jennifer

Director of Christian Education & Youth
 Faith Lutheran Church, Oak Ridge, TN

Easterday, Paul

Director of Christian Education
 Our Savior Lutheran Church, Cabot, AR

Esget, Eileen

Deaconess
 Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR

Fischer, Matthew

Director of Family Life Ministry
 Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN

Goines, Connie Soso

Deaconess-At-Large
 Fort Smith, AR Circuit

Leising, Emily

Director of Christian Education
 Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN

Merriman, Charles

Family Life Minister
 Bella Vista Lutheran Church, Bella Vista, AR

Miller, Christopher

Youth Minister
 Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN

Myers, Ashley

Director of Christian Education
 Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN

Pullman, Cameron

Director of Christian Education
 Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Rogers, AR

Russell, Charles

Director of Parish Music
 Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR

Stooksbury, Emilie

Director of Christian Education
 The Point Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN

Thomack, Jo-Ann

Director of Christian Education (PT)
 Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN

Walkowicz, Celia

Director of Children and Youth Ministries
 Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN

Weyhrich, Richard

Director of Music (PT)
 Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Crossville,
 TN

Whitely, Jennifer

Director of Parish Music
 Faith Lutheran Church, Collierville, TN

PROFESSIONAL WORKERS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, HIGH SCHOOL, PRESCHOOLS OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT AS OF April 15, 2021

*Roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

ARKANSAS

Avilla Christian Academy

Alexander, AR (PS, K-8, 9-12)

Vacant Principal

Bacic, Frances*

Barnard, Anne *

Cagle, Stephanie

Calaway, Olivia

Fullerton, Suzanne

Greenwell, Jennifer

Jones, Hope

Kelly, Lesley

White, Alesha

Woerner, Rev. Emil*

Woolery, Mary

Chaloner, Maggie (Adm. Asst.)

McNeil, Debby (Admin Asst.)

First Lutheran School

Fort Smith, AR (PS, K-6)

Fishburn, Samuel* Principal

Ballard, Kimberly

Cooper, Ana

Davis, Kathleen

Kimes, Kara

Merrill, Rachel

Nieting, Kathy*

Nix, Debra

Paulus, Heather

Guillory, Sonja (Adm. Asst.)

Christ Lutheran School

Little Rock, AR (PS, K-8)

Steely, Cara Principal

Bettis, Ashley

Boyd, Pam

Brown, Ashley

Dahlem, Cindy

Ellis, Nicole

Hutson, Hallie

Olson, Shawn

Peak, Melanie

Wierciak, Anna

Witte, Megan*

McKnight, Catherine (Adm. Asst.)

St. John's Lutheran School

Stuttgart, AR (PS, K-6)

Dabbs, Kristian Principal

Brown, Averie

Burns, Kim

Erstine, Amy

Feilke, Sally

Hayes, Ashlee

Helms, Meredith

Hillman, Karlyn

Hoskyn, Elizabeth

Koenig, Kimberly

McEntire, Katie

Jones, Becky

Rodgers, April

Stovesand, Mary Brooks

White, Bonnie

George, Melissa (Sec.)

KENTUCKY

Holy Trinity Lutheran School

Bowling Green, KY (PS, K-6)

Hiskey, William R.* Principal

Bedo, Cara

Hancock, Madison

King, Marty

Markel, Beth

McGanney, Bonny

Merkle, Jennifer

Mitchell, Melissa

Parsley, Michael

Perkins, Vicky

Reddick, Brandalyn

Rigsby, Kali

Smith, Rachel

Toopes, Rev. Andrew*

Walters, Amy

Willis, Jill

Whittamore, Jennifer (Adm. Asst.)

TENNESSEE

Belvoir Christian Academy

Chattanooga, TN (PS, K-8)

Topp, David* Principal

Bolden, Ann

McCall, Erin*

Ware, Sidney

Webb, Brittany

Williams, Katie

Slaten, Pam (Office Mgr.)

Heavenly Host Lutheran School

Cookeville, TN (PS, K-12)

Murphy, Dr. Zachary Principal

Buckley, J'zsamika

Hempel, Alison

Laliberte, Karen

Lamb, Courtney

Murphy, Trichi

Pauli, Cindy

Robinson, Victoria

Stout, Rebecca

Underwood, Amy

Mackie, Carrissa (Adm. Asst.)

First Lutheran School

Knoxville, TN (PS, K-8)

Irwin, Jessie* Principal

Hofman, Lindsey*

Irwin, Kay*

Newall, Jamie

Rodgers, Erin*

Wiberley, Lori

Hillard, Amanda (Adm. Asst.)

Christ the King Lutheran School

Memphis, TN (PS, K-8)

Laury, Ann* Principal

Albertini, Debbie

Calhoun, Felicia

Cardwell, Melanie

Clark, Julie

Craft, Rachel

Harbin, Kara

Legge, Jean*

Martin, Natalie*

Mudry, Gary

Novy, Michella

Teal, Karen*

VanCanneyt, Brooke

Welch, Cissy

Kosman, Kitty (School Fin. Sec.)

Immanuel Lutheran School

Memphis, TN (PS, K-8)

Fischer, Michelle* Principal

Barnes, Richard*

Collins, Marianne*

Fryman, Sharon*

Glanzer, Stephanie*

Henry, Shawn

Herron, Judy

Jones, April*

Love, Winston

McLellan, Jennifer

Medlin, Heather

Mell, Lori

Pitcher, Bessie

Pollan, Rebecca*

Pudwell, Kris*

Swanson, Jenny

Bobbitt, Julie (Adm. Asst.)

**PROFESSIONAL WORKERS OF THE PRESCHOOLS OF
THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT AS OF April 15, 2021**

**PRESCHOOLS / DAY CARE CENTERS /
DIRECTORS (Free Standing **)**

ARKANSAS

Alexander, AR

Avilla Christian Academy Preschool
Director: Fox, Lauren

Fayetteville, AR **

St. John Lutheran Child Care Center
Director: Layne, Michelle

Fort Smith, AR

First Lutheran Preschool
Director: Dufresne, Gretchen

Gillett, AR **

St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool
Director: Philipp, Joni

Little Rock, AR

Christ Lutheran Preschool
Director: Noe, Jennifer

Little Rock, AR **

Grace Lutheran Early Childhood
Development Center
Director: Moorman, Colleen*

Springdale, AR

Salem Lutheran Educational Center
Director: Busch, Kris

Stuttgart, AR

St. John's Lutheran Preschool
Director: Ellis, Laura

KENTUCKY

Bowling Green, KY

Holy Trinity Lutheran Preschool
Director: Bugsch, Gretchen

TENNESSEE

Chattanooga, TN

Belvoir Christian Academy Preschool
Director: Seay, JoAnn

Clarksville, TN **

Grace Lutheran Preschool
Director: Cribbs, Linda
(Temporarily Closed: Due to COVID-19)

TENNESSEE (continued)

Collierville, TN **

Faith Lutheran Preschool
Director: Foshee, Dina*

Columbia, TN **

TLC Childcare Ministry
Director: Hannah, Jennifer

Cookeville, TN

Heavenly Host Lutheran Preschool
Director: Blyly, Terri

Crossville, TN **

Shepherd's Little Flock Lutheran
Preschool
Director: Gunderson, Sabrina

Hermitage, TN **

Emmanuel Lutheran Church Learning Center
Director: Tew, Crystal
(Temporarily Closed: Due to COVID-19)

Knoxville, TN

First Lutheran Preschool
Director: Eimmerman, Shirley

Memphis, TN

Christ the King Early Childhood
Director: Beaudry, Lorene

Memphis, TN

Immanuel Lutheran Preschool
Director: Fischer, Michelle

Nashville, TN**

Our Savior Lutheran Academy
Director: Waltz, Amy

Tullahoma, TN **

Faith Lutheran Childcare
Director: Brewer, Diana

Wartburg, TN **

St. Paul Lutheran Preschool
Director: Turner, Wanda
(BOD Liaison)
(Temporarily Closed: Due to COVID-19)

***Roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**

**COMMISSIONED WORKERS – CANDIDATES, EMERITI,
SCHOOLS OPENED, SCHOOLS CLOSED
OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT AS OF APRIL 15, 2021**

CANDIDATES

Chiles, Jill	Hickory, NC
Duclos, Rebecca	Nolensville, TN
Freeberg, Lindsay	Menomonee Falls, WI
Freese, Samantha	Spring Hill, TN
Fritz, Katie	Russellville, KY
Froiland, Amy	Boiling Springs, SC
Fryman, Sharon	Bartlett, TN
Goolsby, Halli	Little Rock, AR
Kleimola, David	Bowling Green, KY
Klotz, Debra	Rogers, AR
Klotz, Lance	Rogers, AR
Needler, Melinda	Little Rock, AR
Olson, Tanner	Nashville, TN
Schroeder, Julie	Almo, KY
Tilla, Katherine	Murfreesboro, TN
Tooley, Katherine	Conway, AR
Wilkerson, Jessica	Nashville, TN
Wilschetz, Susan	Nashville, TN
Wudtke, Sarah	Nashville, TN

EMERITI

Bailey, Bonnie	Crossville, TN
Behmer, Arlene	Little Rock, AR
Breite, Mary	Little Rock, AR
Choate, Carolyn	North Little Rock, AR
Cholcher, Norma	Fort Smith, AR
Collet, Bruce	Rockwood, TN
Duderstadt, Lorna J.	Chattanooga, TN
Gable, Donna	Bartlett, TN
Gehrs, Pauline A.	Oak Ridge, TN
Haberhern, Dennis	Crossville, TN
Haberhern, Jean	Crossville, TN
Hasz, Barbara	Jackson, TN
Hauer, Raymond	Spring Hill, TN
Karvelius, Victor	Cherokee Village, AR
Knapp, Ronald	Fayetteville, AR
Kogelmann, Gerald	Ocheyedan, IA
Krohe, Lois	Monroe, MI
Leibig, Rebecca	Stuttgart, AR
McKinney, Elaine	Springdale, AR
McNabb, Sally	Little Rock, AR
Meyer, Susan E.	Crossville, TN
Mietzner, Rebecca	Ooltewah, TN
Parscale, Brenda	Little Rock, AR
Piepenbrink, Shirley	Cordova, TN
Rogalski, Sue	Memphis, TN
Schmand, Mary Ann	Bartlett, TN
Schmidt, James	Mountain Home, AR
Schroeder, Linda	Chattanooga, TN

EMERITI (continued)

Shane, Toni	Bella Vista, AR
Skov, Fredricka A.	Rockwood, TN
Stein, Mary Kathryn	North Little Rock, AR
Steinbach, Arlon J.	Mountain Home, AR
Steinbach, Carol	Mountain Home, AR
Timm, Eunice	Chattanooga, TN
Von Der Ahe, Jeanne	Little Rock, AR
Walter, Brenda	Little Rock, AR
Weidler, Peggy	Fort Smith, AR
Wendt, Susan	Fort Smith, AR
Winter, Catherine	Memphis, TN
Winter, Ellis	Memphis, TN

SCHOOLS OPENED AND SCHOOLS CLOSED

OPENED

Heavenly Host Lutheran School
(Added Grades 9-12: 7-24-20)
Cookeville, TN

CLOSED

Concordia Christian Academy
(Closed 6-10-19)
Jonesboro, AR

Grace Celebration Child Development Center
(Closed: 3-11-19)
Cordova, TN

TLC (Trinity Childcare)
(Closed: 1-01-18)
Gallatin, TN

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

ENTERED THE DISTRICT - ORDAINED MINISTERS

From District:

ANDERSON, ROBERT DANIEL	Texas	Installed as Associate Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, September 22, 2019.
BARTZSCH, THOMAS W.	Michigan	Entered as an Emeritus, January 1, 2019.
BEABOUT, JOHN	Indiana	Entered as emeritus with a call to serve as Associate Pastor at Shepherd of the Hills, Crossville, TN, May 31, 2020.
BELLES, JAMES E.	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and installed as SMP Pastor at Grace Celebration Lutheran Church, Cordova, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, March 18, 2018.
DAVENPORT, RICHARD A.	Ohio	Installed as Pastor at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, February 24, 2021.
DEWITT, DOUGLAS A.	Ohio	Entered as an Emeritus, November 14, 2019.
DOCKERY, RICHARD K.	Northwest	Entered as an Emeritus, August 31, 2020.
ELKINS, DAN D.	Southern	Entered as an Emeritus, January 7, 2020.
FEHSKENS, EDWARD	Eastern	Entered as an Emeritus, August 5, 2019.
FIEBERGER, CRAIG	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and installed as SMP Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, Thompson's Station, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, January 12, 2019.
GLOWINSKI, JAMES D.	Indiana	Entered as a Candidate, July 8, 2019.
GORSHE, CHRISTOPHER L.	Iowa East	Installed as Pastor at Bella Vista Lutheran Church, Bella Vista, AR, by Rev. Robert Herring, February 24, 2019.
HASS, MARK C.	Missouri	Entered as a Candidate, July 1, 2018.
HEFTA, DONALD R.	Oklahoma	Entered as an Emeritus, November 5, 2018.
HEILMANN, STEVEN J.	South Dakota	Entered as an Emeritus, January 22, 2020.
HEINECKE, BRADLEY D.	Florida/Georgia	Installed as Sole Pastor at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Horseshoe Bend, AR, by Rev. Joel Krogen, November 3, 2019.
HUNZE, TIMOTHY R.	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Hermitage, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, May 26, 2018.
KING, JEFFREY W.	Texas	Entered as a Candidate, January 15, 2020.
KRIEG, RAYMOND	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at Celebration Lutheran Church, Seymour, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, February 2, 2019.
LAMPMAN, DAVID P.	Eastern	Entered as a Candidate, December 15, 2020.
LEACH, LEROY H.	Atlantic	Entered as an Emeritus, July 12, 2018.

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

LEIGEBER, JOSHUA P.	Southern	Installed as Pastor at Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Jonesboro, AR, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, August 9, 2020.
LEIGEBER, PAUL A.	Southern	Entered with a dual call as Pastor to Faith, Union City & Trinity, Dyersburg TN. Installed by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, July 26, 2020.
LIZARDO, JESUS RICARDO GRANADO	Luth. Church Venezuela	Installed as Associate Pastor for Hispanic Ministries at Trinity Lutheran Church, Memphis TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, November 29, 2020. Transferred from Lutheran Church of Venezuela (partner church).
LONGMAN, ERIC A.	Missouri	Installed as Sole Pastor at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Rogers, AR, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, July 28, 2019.
MAANUM, EDWARD	Rocky Mountain	Entered with a call to First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN on May 1, 2020.
MATHIS, JOHN W.	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at Christ Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR, by Rev. James Walter, January 13, 2019.
MCDONALD, JEREMY T.	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, July 15, 2018.
MCREYNOLDS, KEVIN	Nebraska	Installed as Pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Mountain Home, AR by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, September 20, 2020.
MEYERS, SAWYER	M. Div., Ft. Wayne	Ordained and installed as Missionary at Large, assigned to Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Olive Branch, MS, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, July 25, 2020.
MOORE, DAVID	CNH	Entered as Emeritus, October 7, 2020.
MOORE, WILLIAM THOMAS	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church West Memphis, AR, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, March 3, 2019.
MUENCH, PAUL E.	Texas	Entered as Emeritus, August 28, 2018.
NEUGEBAUER, KIRK C.	Northern Illinois	Installed as Associate Pastor, St. John's Lutheran Church, Lapeer, MI, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, November 10, 2019.
OWEN, RICHARD NEELY	Alt Route, CTSFW	Ordained and installed at Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN as Pastor for Faith Lutheran Church, Hopkinsville, KY, by Rev. Larry Peters, March 22, 2020.
RALSTON, JOSHUA A.	M.Div., Ft. Wayne	Ordained at Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR on August 18, 2019 and installed as Sole Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church, London, AR by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, August 25, 2019.
RECKLING, ROGER C.	Southeastern	Entered as Emeritus, January 5, 2019.
RINGER, WILLIAM N.	New England	Installed as Sole Pastor, St. John's Lutheran Church, Russellville, AR, by Rev. Joshua Willadsen on June 16, 2019.
ROCKEMANN, LARRY W.	Michigan	Entered as Emeritus, January 1, 2020

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

SAKACH, RANDY K.	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, White House, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, October 20, 2018.
SCHAFF, KENT	South Wisconsin	Installed as Senior Pastor to Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, on July 19, 2020.
SCHMIDT, DAVID P.	Michigan	Installed as Sole Pastor, Faith Lutheran Church, Bentonville, AR, by Rev. Robert Herring, July 14, 2019.
SCHUTTE, WILLIAM B.	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at Peace Lutheran Church, Mountain Home, AR, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, October 27, 2018.
SMALL, TERRY S.	Rocky Mountain	Entered as Emeritus, February 25, 2019.
SMITH, GEORGE	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, Oak Ridge, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, August 25, 2018.
SPENCER, LYNN E.	Kansas	Entered as Emeritus, January 29, 2019.
STERLE, ROGER D.	Wyoming	Entered as Emeritus, May 14, 2020.
THOMPSON, HENRY	SMP, Colloquy	Ordained and Installed as SMP Pastor at St. Luke Lutheran Church, Malvern, AR, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, March 10, 2019.
WATSON, JAMES C.	FL/GA	Entered as Emeritus, February 15, 2019.
WELMER, DONALD N.	Texas	Installed as Senior Pastor at First Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, on October 4, 2020.
ZWICK, WILLIAM F.	Alt Route, Ft. Wayne	Ordained and Installed as Sole Pastor at First Lutheran Church, Harrison, AR by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, June 29, 2019.

CHANGES WITHIN THE DISTRICT - ORDAINED MINISTERS

BEABOUT, JOHN L.	Installed as Associate Pastor at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Crossville, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola on March 7, 2021.
CROOM, MICHAEL	Installed as Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, on February 10, 2019.
CROOM, MICHAEL	Installed as Senior Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, November 29, 2020.
DEWITT, DOUGLAS A.	Installed as Associate Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, Thompsons Station, TN by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola on August 15, 2020.
KOPHAMER, MARK A.	Installed as Sole Pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Elizabethton, TN by Rev. Gilbert Pingel on August 11, 2019.

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

LEIGEBER, PAUL A.	Installed as Pastor at Faith, Union City & Trinity, Dyersburg, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, July 26, 2020.
MAANUM, EDWARD	Installed as Pastor, First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, May 31, 2020.
PRAUNER, GREGORY J.	Installed as Sole Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, on August 4, 2019.
PRESS, MARK G.	Installed as Associate Pastor at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, by Rev. Andrew Toopes, June 25, 2017.
TIEMAN, TERRY D.	Installed as Pastor at Grace Celebration Lutheran Church, Cordova, TN, by Rev. Chuck Neugebauer, November 27, 2019.

INACTIVE, CANDIDATE OR EMERITUS - ORDAINED MINISTERS

BAUMANN, PAUL G.	From Active to Emeritus Status	Oct.	1,	2019
BESEL, GORDON W.	From Active to Emeritus Status	Oct.	22,	2018
EASTERLING, JOHN D.	From Active to Emeritus Status	April	12,	2020
FICKEN, DAVID W.	From Active to Candidate Status	Aug.	5,	2018
LAMPMAN, DAVID P.	From Active to Candidate Status	Jan.	01,	2018
LAMPMAN, DAVID P.	From Active to Emeritus Status	Mar.	31,	2021
PRAUNER, GREGORY J.	From Active to Candidate Status	Feb.	11,	2021
SCHMIDT, EDWARD H.	From Active to Candidate Status	June	18,	2018
STEVENSON, WILLIAM E.	From Active to Emeritus Status	July	16,	2018
SHEWMAKER, RUSSELL L.	From Active to Emeritus Status	May	31,	2020
SWANSON, HERBERT C.	From Active to Emeritus Status	Oct.	20,	2020
TIEMAN, TERRY D.	From Active to Candidate Status	Oct.	31,	2018
TREUDE, JOHN M.	From Active to Emeritus Status	Mar.	22,	2021
WAGNER, WILLIAM B.	From Active to Emeritus Status	Aug.	30,	2020
WALTER, JAMES C.	From Active to Emeritus Status	May	31,	2020

TRANSFERRED TO OTHER DISTRICTS - ORDAINED MINISTERS

BAISCH, ARTHUR H.	to Ohio	Jan.	11,	2019
BESEL, GORDON W.	to Texas	Aug.	12,	2019

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

CHRISTENSEN, ERIK M.	to Nebraska	Feb.	16,	2020
FERGUSON, TRAVIS W.	to Pacific Southwest	Dec.	10,	2018
FICKEN, DAVID	to Texas	June	7,	2019
GLOWINSKI, JAMES D.	to Northwest	Aug.	19,	2020
HAUSER, DANIEL L.	to Indiana	Oct.	19,	2020
JOHNSON, CHARLES	to Northern Illinois	Oct.	28,	2019
KALUGENDO, JASSON M.	to Florida/Georgia	Nov.	27,	2020
LAMPMAN, DAVID P.	to Eastern	Mar.	3,	2019
MILLER, WILLIAM D.	to Nebraska	Dec.	1,	2018
PRESLEY, THOMAS T.	to Kansas	Oct.	1,	2019
SCHLEIDER, MICHAEL	to South Wisconsin	Jan.	4,	2021
SCHMIDT, EDWARD H.	to Rocky Mountain	June	18,	2018
SHOAF, REED T.	to Southeastern	Dec.	30,	2018
SMALL, TERRY S.	to Iowa East	April	1,	2019
VANDEBUSH, NEIL S.	to Missouri	Jan.	5,	2019
WIEGERT, PAUL H.	to Florida/Georgia	Jan.	1,	2019
WOLLENBURG, DAVID J.	to Southern Illinois	May	14,	2018

DECEASED - ORDAINED MINISTERS

BRONDOS, ANDREW D.	Oct.	23,	2018
HUNZE, SHAWN D.	Aug.	7,	2019
JACOB, ROY A.	Dec.	29,	2019
JILG, PAUL H.	Aug.	18,	2019
MISKIMEN, ROBERT I.	Mar.	10,	2019
POWELL, H. CHRISTOPHER	Dec.	21,	2019
RUBKE, DAVID A.	Oct.	17,	2020
SEPMEYER, MERLIN W.	Sept.	14,	2020
WALTER, JAMES C.	Dec.	2,	2020

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

REMOVED FROM ROSTER - ORDAINED MINISTERS

BUSHUR, PAUL J.	May 16, 2019
MOHR, DAVID W.	Dec. 9, 2019
SMITHEY, FLOYD P.	Jan. 15, 2020

ENTERED THE DISTRICT - COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

From District:

BAILEY, BONNIE J.	Michigan	Entered as an Emeritus, February 28, 2020.
BAUMANN, KATIE ANN	Grad CU Irvine	Commissioned and installed as Director of Christian Education at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN by Rev. Mark Rhoads, February 16, 2020.
COLLET, BRUCE G.	Texas	Entered as an Emeritus, October 20, 2020.
ESGET, EILEEN	Grad CTSFW	Commissioned and installed as Deaconess at Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR by Rev. Chris Esget, March 21, 2021.
FISHBURN, SAMUEL P.	Missouri	Accepted a call to be Principal at First Lutheran Church and School, Fort Smith, AR, installed by Rev. John Merrill on August 5, 2018.
FISCHER, MATTHEW P.A.	Pacific Southwest	Installed as Director of Family Life Ministries at Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN, by Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola on August 23, 2020.
FISCHER, MICHELLE D.	Missouri	Installed as Principal at Immanuel Lutheran Church & School by Rev. Greg Prauner on August 9, 2020.
FREESE, SAMANTHA A.	South Wisconsin	Entered as a Candidate, November 19, 2019.
GOOLSBY, HALLI M.	South Wisconsin	Entered as a Candidate, September 25, 2019.
HARBIN, KARA C.	Grad CU TX	Commissioned and installed as Teacher at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN by Rev. Charles Neugebauer, August 4, 2019.
IRWIN, JESSICA M.	Colloquy, CU MI	Commissioned and installed as Principal at First Lutheran Church and School, Knoxville, TN by Rev. Larry Rockemann, May 6, 2019.
KARVELIUS, VICTOR W.	Northern Illinois	Entered as Emeritus, October 16, 2019.
LEISING, EMILY J.	North Dakota	Installed as DCE at Heavenly Host Lutheran Church by Rev. Gerald Meyer on August 25, 2019.

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

MYERS, ASHLEY P.	Grad CU TX	Commissioned and Installed as DCE at Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN by Rev. Richard Elseroad, June 23, 2019.
OLSON, TANNER J.	Texas	Entered as Candidate, August 15, 2019.
SHUDY, AMY L.	Pacific Southwest	Installed as Teacher at Christ Lutheran Church and School in Little Rock, AR, by Rev. Daniel Hauser on August 12, 2018.
TOPP, DAVID W.	Texas	Installed as Principal at Belvoir Christian Academy, Chattanooga, TN by Rev. Paul Bushur on July 15, 2018.
VON DER AHE, JEANNE M.	Oklahoma	Entered as Emeritus, November 11, 2019.
WALKOWICZ, CELIA G.	Grad, CU, Ann Arbor	Commissioned and Installed as Director of Children & Youth Ministries at Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN, by Rev. Lane Reuter on October 4, 2020.
WILSCHETZ, SUSAN M.	Pacific Southwest	Entered as Candidate, January 11, 2021.
WUDTKE, SARAH E.	Iowa West	Entered as Candidate, July 31, 2020.

CHANGES WITHIN THE DISTRICT - COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

INACTIVE, CANDIDATE OR EMERITUS - COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

FREEBERG, LINDSAY	Teacher, Active to Candidate status	June 30, 2019
MIETZNER, REBECCA A.	Teacher, Active to Emeritus	June 01, 2020
TOOLEY, KATHERINE A.	DPM, Active to Candidate Status	Jan. 31, 2019
WEIDLER, PEGGY L.	Teacher, Active to Emeritus Status	May 31, 2020

TRANSFERRED TO OTHER DISTRICTS - COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

BAISCH, EVELYN J.	to Ohio District	Jan. 11, 2019
BARINGER, BROOKE A.	to Texas	May 31, 2018
BARINGER, TODD R.	to Texas	May 31, 2018
BARTHEL, WILLIAM L.	to Southeastern	Dec. 12, 2018
JERRY, HEIDI L.	to Texas	July 1, 2019
KOCH, SARAH E.	to Southern Illinois	May 25, 2019

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

KOSINSKY, JOHN P.	to Southeastern	April	1,	2019
PELAYO, EMILIE M.	to Northwest	Aug.	1,	2018
RHODEN, REBECCA A.	to Ohio	June	4,	2018
SCHMIDT, MARY J.	to Rocky Mountain	June	1,	2018
SCOTT, RENEE L.	to Texas	July	1,	2019
STUCKWISCH, DAVID A.	to North Wisconsin	Sept.	2,	2018
VEGA, AARON J.	to Texas	Feb.	9,	2020
WALKER, SARA R.	to Missouri	July	1,	2019
WHITE, SARAH G.	to Texas	July	1,	2018
WILLIAMSON, JUNE C.	to Pacific Southwest	June	1,	2020

DECEASED - COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

KIESCHNICK, OSCAR L.	Aug.	11,	2017
PITSCH, LELAND A.	Aug.	1,	2020

REMOVED FROM THE ROSTER - COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

KIESCHNICK, DONNA L.	May.	3,	2018
SCHLAK, STEPHANIE M.	Nov.	1,	2018
SCHOENBECK, JENNIFER A.	May	3,	2018
SYVERSON, SARAH J.	May	3,	2018
WILDHIRT, PHILLIP A.	Feb.	21,	2020
WINTER, JEREMY H.	May	3,	2018

ACTIVITY AMONG CONGREGATIONS AND CIRCUITS

CONGREGATIONS:

ARKANSAS: St. John's Lutheran Church, Lafa, AR and Redeemer Lutheran Church, Paragould, AR voted to establish a formal dual parish arrangement, August 24, 2019.

TENNESSEE: None

KENTUCKY: None

MISSISSIPPI: None

VIRGINIA: None

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

CIRCUITS:

JONESBORO CIRCUIT	St. Paul Lutheran Church, West Memphis, AR and Faith Lutheran Church, Forrest City, AR moved from Memphis Electoral Circuit to Jonesboro Electoral Circuit by the MDS Board of Directors, August 26-27, 2018; Res. 3.2
	First Lutheran Church, Harrison, AR moved from Fayetteville Electoral Circuit to Jonesboro Electoral Circuit by the MDS Board of Directors, August 26-27, 2018, Res. 3.2
LITTLE ROCK NORTH CIRCUIT	Circuit Visitor Change: Rev. Kevin Conger (vacancy election to BOD) replaced by Rev. David Vandercook on December 22, 2020
LITTLE ROCK SOUTH CIRCUIT	Circuit Visitor Change: Rev. Michael Schleider (transferred to SWD) replaced by Rev. Kent Schaaf on December 18, 2020
MEMPHIS TO PADUCAH CIRCUIT:	Trinity Lutheran Church, Dyersburg, TN moved from Memphis Visitation and Electoral Circuit to the Paducah Visitation and Electoral Circuit approved by the Board of Directors, on May 6, 2019, Res. 02.02.02
STUTTGART CIRCUIT	Circuit Visitor Change: Rev. Donald White replaced by Rev. M. Chad Philipp on June 3, 2020

NEW CHURCH START

Fayetteville, AR	Restoration Lutheran Church	June 17, 2017
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CONGREGATIONS ACCEPTED INTO SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

CONGREGATIONS DISBANDED - REMOVED FROM MEMBERSHIP

NASHVILLE, TN	Rhythm City Church,	August 5, 2018
PRAIRIE GROVE, AR	Peace Lutheran Church,	March 10, 2019

SCHOOLS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS - CLOSED

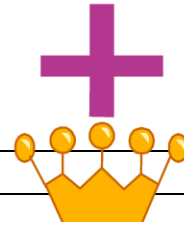
JONESBORO, AR	Concordia Christian Academy	June 10, 2019
CORDOVA, TN	Grace Celebration Child Development Center	March 11, 2019

**THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
OFFICIAL ACTS FOR April 16, 2018 TO April 15, 2021**

CONSTITUTION REVISIONS APPROVED

CONWAY, AR	PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, January 25, 2021
HARRISON, AR	FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH - In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, August 27, 2018
HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE, AR	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, November 11, 2019
LITTLE ROCK, AR	CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, January 25, 2021
LITTLE ROCK, AR	FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH - In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, January 28, 2018
MOUNTAIN HOME, AR	REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH - In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, January 25, 2021
RUSSELLVILLE, AR	ST. JOHN’S LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, January 27, 2020
SILAM SPRINGS, AR	CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, November 11, 2019
OLIVE BRANCH, MS	BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, November 2, 2020
BURNS, TN	ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, November 2, 2020
CHATTANOOGA, TN	GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, January 28, 2019
CORDOVA, TN	GRACE CELEBRATION LUTHERAN CHURCH - In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, May 7, 2018
DYERSBURG, TN	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, May 6, 2019
MADISON, TN	ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, May 6, 2019
OAK RIDGE, TN	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, May 6, 2019
SEVIERVILLE, TN	ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH – In a Board of Directors’ Meeting, May 6, 2019

THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH--MISSOURI SYNOD



Ordained Ministers Celebrating Anniversaries in 2019

70 Years

Rev. Norman Groteluschen (EM)
Germantown, TN

60 Years

Rev. Roy Bingenheimer (EM)
Concordia, MO

Rev. Stanley Jones (EM)
Bella Vista, AR

55 Years

Rev. Marvin Otto (EM)
Kingsport, TN

50 Years

Rev. Clifford Herd (EM)
Chattanooga, TN

Rev. Robert Mader (EM)
Clarksville, TN

Rev. Herbert Swanson
River Valley Grace Lutheran Church, Lamar, AR

Rev. Louis Trebus (EM)
Sevierville, TN

45 Years

Rev. Albert Quoss (EM)
Bella Vista, AR

40 Years

Rev. Richard Elseroad
Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN

Rev. Martin Nutter
Faith Lutheran Church, Tullahoma, TN

35 Years

Rev. Duncan Cox
St. John Lutheran Church, Fayetteville, AR

Rev. James Dunn
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Murray, KY

Rev. Donald Hefta (EM)
Hot Springs, AR

Rev. Robert Kellerman (EM)
Casa Grande, AZ

Rev. David Rubke (EM)
Tullahoma, TN

30 Years

Rev. Richard Graves
Naval Air Station, Signollea, Sicily

Rev. Mark Kophamer
Redeemer Lutheran Church, Elizabethton, TN

30 Years

Rev. Dr. Leroy Leach (EM)
Conway, AR

Rev. Michael Miller
Redeemer Lutheran Church, Harriman, TN

Rev. Brian Pummill
Peace Lutheran Church, Cherokee Village, AR

25 Years

Rev. Daniel Hawkins
GracePoint Lutheran Church, Munford, TN

Rev. Nathan Jansen
St. John Lutheran Church, Burns, TN

Rev. David Krause (EM)
Bella Vista, AR

20 Years

Rev. Fasil Alemayehu
Faith Lutheran Church, Thompsons Station, TN
Hope Lutheran Church, Smyrna, TN

Rev. Timothy Henning
Trinity Lutheran Church, Mena, AR

Rev. Hiram Nunez (EM)
Granbury, TX

15 Years

Rev. Joshua Willadsen
Bethel Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR

10 Years

Rev. Ronald Bacic
First Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR

Rev. John Easterling
Redeemer Lutheran Church, Mountain Home, AR

Rev. James Glowinski
Pottsville, AR

Rev. Timothy Matthew
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Dayton, TN

Rev. John Merrill
First Lutheran Church, Ft. Smith, AR

Rev. Edward Rosser
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN

Rev. Emil Woerner
Friends in Christ Lutheran Church, Bryant, AR

5 Years

Rev. David Appold
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Paducah, KY

Rev. Eric Phillips
Concordia Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN

Well done good and faithful servants!

THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH--MISSOURI SYNOD



Ordained Ministers Celebrating Anniversaries in 2020

60 Years

Rev. Arthur Avery (EM)

Harrogate, TN

Rev. Albert Eichelberger (EM)

Knoxville, TN

Rev. Clarence Helmich (EM)

Oviedo, FL

Rev. Frank Zirbel (EM)

Harrison, AR

55 Years

Rev. David Callies (EM)

Brentwood, TN

Rev. Larry Marhenke (EM)

Hot Springs Village, AR

Rev. Donald Neiswender (EM)

Paducah, KY

Rev. Gilbert Pingel (EM)

Chattanooga, TN

50 Years

Rev. Linsey Dettmer (EM)

Sevierville, TN

Rev. John Freitag (EM)

Rogersville, TN

Rev. Roger Reckling (EM)

Oak Ridge, TN

Rev. Kenneth Taglauer (EM)

Grace Lutheran Church, Mountain View, AR

45 Years

Rev. Darrell Kobs (EM)

Russellville, AR

40 Years

Rev. Dean Clausing (EM)

Benton, AR

Rev. Larry Peters

Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN

35 Years

Rev. Robert Benke

Faith Lutheran Church, Hot Springs Village, AR

Rev. Jonathan Beyer

First Lutheran Church, Hot Springs, AR

Rev. Gerald Meyer (EM)

Crossville, TN

Rev. John Treude

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR

30 Years

Rev. James Burns

First Lutheran Church, Benton, AR

15 Years

Rev. Greg Bearss

LakePointe Lutheran Church, Hot Springs, AR

Rev. Jasson Kalugendo, (Candidate)

Nashville, TN

Rev. Joel Krogen

Hope Lutheran Church, Batesville, AR and

Zion Evan. Lutheran Church, Waldenburg, AR

Rev. David Schmidt

Faith Lutheran Church, Bentonville, AR

10 Years

Rev. Michael Croom

Trinity Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN

Rev. David Witte

Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR

5 Years

Rev. Eric Longman

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Rogers, AR

Rev. Mark Tooley

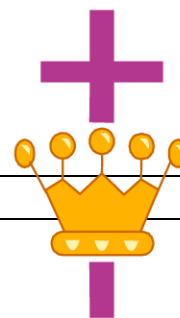
Peace Lutheran Church, Conway, AR

Rev. Daniel Ulrich

Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN

Well done good and faithful servants!

THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH--MISSOURI SYNOD



Ordained Ministers Celebrating Anniversaries in 2021

60 Years

Rev. Daniel Otto (EM)
Murfreesboro, TN

55 Years

Rev. Luther Hasz
Christ Lutheran Church, Paris, TN

50 Years

Rev. Bruce Hanson
First Lutheran Church, Blytheville, AR
Rev. Erwin Lueker, Jr. (EM)
Elizabethton, TN

45 Years

Rev. David Hudak (EM)
Bella Vista, AR
Rev. Roger Sterle (EM)
Bella Vista, AR

40 Years

Rev. Edward Fehskens (EM)
Bristol, TN
Rev. John Lindner (EM)
Bella Vista, AR
Rev. Daniel McDougall
Our Savior Lutheran Church, Cabot, AR
Rev. Lynn Spencer (EM)
Bentonville, AR
Rev. James Watson (EM)
Ooltewah, TN
Rev. Carl Wenck
Grace Lutheran Church, Murfreesboro, TN

35 Years

Rev. Paul Becker
Concordia Lutheran Church, Kingsport, TN
Rev. Brian Bibler (EM)
Bella Vista, AR
Rev. Thomas Sayre (EM)
St. John's, FL

30 Years

Rev. David Gadbow (EM)
Mountain Home, AR
Rev. Donald White
St. John's Lutheran Church, Stuttgart, AR

25 Years

Rev. John Gierke
Peace Lutheran Church, Conway, AR
Rev. Mark Hass (Candidate)
Fort Smith, AR
Rev. Lane Reuter
Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN

20 Years

Rev. Kevin Conger
Hope Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, AR
Rev. Alebachew Teshome
Faith Lutheran Church, Thompsons Station, TN

15 Years

Rev. Kirk Abatelli
Faith Lutheran Church, Oak Ridge, TN
Rev. Curt Hoover
Faith Lutheran Church, Thompson's Station, TN
Rev. Derek Roberts
Praise Lutheran Church, Maryville, TN

10 Years

Rev. Thomas Bartzsch (EM)
Hot Springs Village, AR
Rev. Joshua Leigeber
Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Jonesboro, AR
Rev. William Ondracka
Christus Victor Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN

5 Years

Rev. Gregory Bauch
Ascension Lutheran Church, Madison, TN
Rev. Kirk Neugebauer
St. John's Lutheran Church, Lafe, AR

Well done good and faithful servants!

SECTION C

REPORTS

THE REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

During the triennium of 2018-2021, the Board of Directors of the LCMS Mid-South District met regularly to perform the duties given to them in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod and District. The Board of Directors for the Mid-South District consists of thirteen members: The District President; four (4) Regional Vice Presidents (one ordained Minister from each electoral region); the District Secretary (an ordained minister); the Treasurer (a layperson appointed by the Board); two Ministers of Religion—Commissioned (one from Regions 1 and 2 combined, and one from Regions 3 and 4 combined); and four lay representatives (one from each region).

The Board of Directors is “...responsible for establishing and overseeing policies by which it governs itself, the district officers, staff, and the overall organization, consistent with the district mission in fulfilling the Lord’s work.” It is also “accountable to the District Convention, and the staff of all organizational agencies of the district shall be accountable to the board of directors through the office of the District President.” Part of that accountability to the Convention is this written report to the Convention.

The Board of Directors meets regularly, four times per year, and at other times as necessary via electronic mediums. The board’s internal advisory committees also meet and prepare items for consideration between meetings. Usual items of business for the Board of Directors include: reviewing reports by the District President and the District’s executive staff; review and approval of the District’s annual budget; receiving the annual audit report from outside auditors (LCMS Internal Audit Department); reviewing reports from mission plants; approval of congregations’ constitutions and bylaws upon recommendation from the District’s Constitution Committee and the District President; submit nominations to the Synod’s Board of Directors for their consideration in filling vacancies in various elected and appointed positions in the Synod; receipt and review of approvals by the Finance Committee of loans made through the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) in the amounts of one million dollars or below, and consideration of LCEF loans that are over one million dollars. In addition, the Board of Directors annually sets the base salaries used in the Mid-South District Compensation Guidelines, the salary of the District President, and the percentage range of salary increases of the executive and support staff. The Board of Directors is also responsible and has the privilege to extend calls to workers to do work on behalf of the entire District, such as church planters and rostered executive staff.

Among the significant items of business conducted by the Board of Directors during this triennium are the following:

- Gave thanks to God for the mission and ministry carried out over the years by the following congregations, which disbanded during this triennium: Rhythm City Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN in 2018; and Peace Lutheran Church, Prairie Grove, AR in 2019.
- Established the working budgets of the District for years 2019, 2020, and 2021, thanking God for the generosity of the congregations and their members.
- Filed the *Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation* adopted by the 2018 District Convention with the Secretary of State of Tennessee, fulfilling 2018 Convention Resolution 04-01-18.
- Adopted the proceedings of the 2018 District Convention
- Directed that the total funds received in the amount of \$7,126 for District Sunday 2018 to *MinistryFocus* and applied to the relief fund for Ordained and Commissioned Workers in the Mid-South District with educational debt.
- Moved St. Paul, West Memphis, AR; Faith, Forrest City, AR; and First, Harrison, AR to the Jonesboro Circuit according to MDS Bylaw 4.3.2 (l); and Trinity, Dyersburg, TN be moved from the Memphis Visitation and Electoral Circuit to the Paducah Visitation and Electoral Circuit, according to MDS Bylaw 4.3.2 (l)-(m).
- Requested the Council of Presidents to approve the continuation of the following ministries by exception

to Synod Resolution 13-02A:

- Faith Lutheran Church, Forrest City, AR
- Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN
- Grace Lutheran Church, Abingdon, VA
- Hawkins County Lutheran Fellowship, Rogersville, TN
- Community of Faith Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR
- Amended the District Bylaws to comply with 2019 LCMS Convention Bylaw amendments, under the authority granted in Bylaw 1.1.3, after receiving approval of the proposed amendments from the CCM in Opinion 20-2933 (See Board of Directors – Appendix A)
- The Board of Directors finalized discussion and unanimously voted to place various properties owned by the District for sale. These are: the Rockhouse property on the campus of the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; and the Prairie Grove property formerly belonging to Peace Lutheran Church, Prairie Grove, AR. The Rockhouse property was purchased by the University of Arkansas, and the proceeds designated for *IMPACT* to be used for District Mission and Ministry.
- Worked with Concordia Plan Services for a calculating tool on their website to assist congregations Synod-wide in setting salaries for their called workers.
- Further developed the C.A.R. (Congregational Assessment Resource) Tool for congregational assessment of operations, with an expansion in process for education ministries.
- Reviewed the trends of attendance and membership within the congregations and their schools of the Mid-South District.
- Continued implementation of the COMPASS Program to assist in the strategic direction and revitalization of congregations and schools within our District.
- Completed the review of the governance policies of the Board of Directors with the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Synod, adopting them for use by the Board of Directors.
- Continued the education and leadership programs for pastors, teachers, principals, ECC directors, and the licensed deacon program/lay ministry associates of the Mid-South District.
- The Executive Committee, with input from the Vice-Presidents, conducted various interviews for the Executive Director for Mission and Ministries. While the interviews were put on hold by the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021 the Executive Committee resumed work with President Paavola to select nominees and interview them. As of this writing, the process is ongoing.
- Received funds from the Estate of Ralph Weiser and placed them in a Board Designated Fund to be used at the discretion of the Board of Directors for Mission and Ministry.
- Applied for and received a forgivable Federal PPP loan for assisting the District with its payroll needs, etc. in 2020.
- Continued reviewing and addressing physical plant needs for Community of Faith, Little Rock, as the District is the owner of the property from prior congregational transitions.
- Ratified the appointments of Mr. Samuel Fishburn, Ms. Jessica Irwin, Mr. Jeff Roper, and Mr. Charlie Gemeinhardt to the District Nominations Committee, to fill the vacancies on the committee
- Ratified the appointment of Mr. Keith Brummett as a District Reconciler
- Proposed overtures to the 2021 District Convention
- Established June 13, 2021 as District Sunday for member congregations, and designated the Convention Offering for the Scholarship Fund for Pastors and Commissioned Church Workers burdened with significant educational debt.
- Adopted 2021 District Convention Theme - *Declare His Marvelous Works* based on 1 Chronicles 16:23-24
- Elected the Reverend Kevin Conger to fill the unexpired term of the Reverend Jim Walther as Vice-President for Region 2, who was called to Glory in December 2020.
- Thanked Rev. Chuck Neugebauer, Rev. Paul Hass and Mr. Larry Zehnder for their three terms of service on the Board of Directors as they will reach term limits at the end of this triennium.
- The Board of Directors also gives thanks and glory to God for the gift of the Reverend Jim Walter, whom God called Home to the Church Triumphant, for his many years of service on the Board of Directors, as a Regional Vice-President, Circuit Visitor, and a dedicated Pastor and *Seelsorger* (caretaker of souls) in the Mid-South District and at Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR.

Ralph Weiser Excellence in Ministry Award (2018-2020)

- 2018 - John Hall
- 2019 - Virginia and Robert Prince
- 2020 - Michael MacDowell

In closing, I wish to thank President Roger Paavola, Board of Directors Chairman, Rev. Chuck Neugebauer, the executive and support staff of the Mid-South District Office, and the members of the Board of Directors for the privilege of serving alongside them as Secretary of the District. The dedication and commitment of these individuals, and the use of their God-given spiritual gifts, have been a blessing in our partnership in the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the sake of the harvest.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. John P. Gierke
Mid-South District Secretary

Members of the LCMS Mid-South District Board of Directors 2018-2021

The Reverend Dr. Roger Paavola, President, Bartlett, TN
The Reverend Charles Neugebauer, Chairman and First Vice-President, Region 3
(Senior Pastor, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN)
The Reverend James Walter, Second Vice-President, Region 2 (through December 2020)
(Senior Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR)
The Reverend Gilbert Pingel, Third/Second Vice-President, Region 4
(Emeritus, Chattanooga, TN)
The Reverend Paul Hass, Fourth/Third Vice-President, Region 1
(Senior Pastor, Bella Vista Lutheran Church, Bella Vista, AR)
The Reverend Kevin Conger, Fourth Vice-President, Region 2 - January 2021
(Pastor, Hope Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, AR)
Mr. Larry Vickers, Treasurer, Nashville, TN (Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN)
Mrs. Tessa Brasher, Commissioned Representative, Regions 1 & 2
(DCE, St. John Lutheran Church, Lapeer, MI)
Mrs. Shirley Piepenbrink, Commissioned Representative, Regions 3 & 4
(Retired Teacher, Memphis, TN)
Mr. Jeff Pittman, Lay Representative, Region 1
(Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Jonesboro, AR)
Mr. Marc Higgins, Lay Representative, Region 2
(Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church, Maumelle, AR)
Dr. Fred Guengerich, Lay Representative, Region 3
(Redeemer Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN)
Mr. Larry Zehnder, Lay Representative, Region 4
(Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN)
The Reverend John Gierke, Secretary
(Senior Pastor, Peace Lutheran Church, Conway, AR)

Subcommittees of the Board of Directors

Business and Finance: Larry Vickers (*Chair*); Marc Higgins; Larry Zehnder; Rev. Jim Walter; Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola (*Advisory*); Angela Fowler (*Advisory*)

Missions and Ministries: Rev. Paul Hass (*Chair*); Rev. Gilbert Pingel; Rev. Chuck Neugebauer; Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola (*Advisory*)

Governance: Rev. John Gierke (*Chair*); Jeff Pittman; Dr. Fred Guengerich; Larry Vickers (*Advisory*); Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola (*Advisory*); Rev. Chuck Neugebauer (*Advisory*)

Youth and Family: Tessa Brasher (*Chair*); Shirley Piepenbrink; Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola (*Advisory*); Allen Piepenbrink (*Advisory*)

2018 District Convention Resolutions Sent to Synod

- 1) To Request Synod to Move Ordination Upon Completion of SMP Four-Year Program (*submitted by the MDS District Convention*)
- 2) To Encourage Scriptural Teaching Concerning Creation (*submitted by the MDS District Convention*)
- 3) To Recommend Mission and Ministry Emphases for the Synod's Next Triennium (*selected and voted upon by the MDS District Convention, and submitted in overture form by the Board of Directors on behalf of the convention*)



THE REPORT OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT PRESIDENT

Our Convention theme for this, the Twenty First Regular Convention of the Mid-South District comes to us from I Chronicles 16:23-24, *“Sing to the LORD, all the earth! Tell of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples!”* People sometimes say that they see the marvelous works of God in numerous places in nature like a beach sunset, on a mountain top panorama, the gently flowing water of a forest stream, or in the face of a newborn baby. It is more difficult, however, to see God in history. Not only is it difficult to see Him, we often hear others wondering if God is involved in world affairs and influences the course of history. “Where is God in the death of a loved one?” “Why doesn’t God intervene when children are abducted?” “Why hasn’t God brought a peaceful end to wars around the world?”

The subliminal subject in these questions ultimately avoids the obvious: We live in a world much unlike the world that God intended us to have. Since Adam and Eve, every child born in this world is born in sin. Our gracious and merciful God promised deliverance from our tragic estate by sending His Son, Jesus Christ to rescue, redeem, and return God’s people to live with Him in an everlasting and glorious peace. That is what this convention is all about: Declaring the Marvelous Works of God.

We live as people of faith today. Our reflections turn to King David’s prayer found in the book of First Chronicles. David was nearing the end of his reign as king - the golden age of Israel. David was also nearing the end of his life. His prayer reflects on what God has done in the history of his people and in his life.

David lived a blessed life - a true-rags-to-riches story. He started as a mere shepherd boy, perhaps the lowest occupation in Israelite society. But, God chose David to become king of Israel. David experienced the riches, but also experienced many a hardship. One of his sons died an infant. Another son led a rebellion against David and almost dethroned him. His son, Absalom was killed in his rebellion against his father, David. From mountain tops to the valleys of despair, David knew God was always present with him. God was not only a part of the things in nature, for King David, God was central in history.

As Lutherans, we are confronted with the challenge of responding to the fact that God has been present in our history and active in our current events. Though we may have difficulty seeing Him through the spoils of evil, it does not negate the fact that God is present and active for the sake of His creation and people. Along with King David, we can then praise God in our assembly. David led by example. He praised God much as we are still allowed to praise God as He is living and active in our world today.

However, God has brought in an even more significant blessing. He gave us His Means of Grace in His Holy Christian Church. God’s providence and blessings are not limited to beautiful scenery, timely rain showers, and loving families. God offers us His true presence in our worship, where He serves us with His Word and Sacraments. Therefore, we are led to cultivate an attitude of gratitude. Scripture points out that we, as Christians, are challenged by the chances and changes of this world.

Because we are His Church, we are challenged to take what He has given us so that we can share it with others - our wealth with missions that touch lives here and around the world; ministries that meet the needs of people here and abroad; and sharing the Good News of the forgiveness of sins and promise of life everlasting with God. But, because of that, we have a stewardship of all of God’s blessings. The most important of these gifts God entrusted to our care and keeping is the message of the Gospel He desires we bring beyond our walls as we partner with all of our Mid-South Congregations for missions, ministry support, professional worker support, and strengthening our ministries to “Declare His Marvelous Works” to all people.

Since our last Mid-South District Convention, we have been privileged to partner with our member congregations in serving Christ’s Kingdom, celebrating in His divine grace, and seeking His fatherly guidance. The Board of Directors,

the District staff, the dedicated church workers, and the supporting congregations of the Mid-South District are to be commended for their work on behalf of the missions and ministries we partner with in our District.

But, as a result of living in an ever-changing world, we took our plans for making great strides toward increasing membership and church attendance to a dramatic turn in 2020. The events surrounding COVID-19 had a huge impact on our member congregations, our professional church workers, and mission development. Yet, the Mid-South District stands as a leader in the work of the Great Commission despite the pandemic. As a result, we continue to seek new opportunities God places in front of us to partner with our congregations, schools, and workers for the ministry and mission entrusted to us by our gracious Lord, Jesus Christ.

For the last nine years, the Mid-South District has focused on six specific areas for our impact on ministry:

- I. Assisting congregations, schools and ECC's to retain solid doctrinal administration of Word and Sacraments
- II. Resourcing, equipping, and strengthening existing congregations, schools, and ECC's for Kingdom effectiveness and efficiency
- III. Recruiting, supporting, and mentoring professional church workers
- IV. Planting churches
- V. Achieving financial stability and long-range fiscal accountability
- VI. Staffing for effective ministry support by developing effective marketing and public relations

I. Assisting Congregations, Schools, and ECC's

One of the most difficult tasks as a District President is to hear the members of a congregation say they are planning to disband and close the congregation. Peace Lutheran, Prairie Grove, AR decided to close its doors after six decades of worship and serving. No one could have anticipated what the pandemic did to our worship activities and member financial support. After a banner year where the Mid-South District became one of the first LCMS districts to record an increase in membership, 2020 brought a sharp downturn in membership that went beyond the closing of one congregation.

Despite the addition of Restoration Lutheran Church – a church plant in Northwest Arkansas; a growing congregation in Munford, TN; and a growing congregation in Sharps Chapel, TN; the district's communicant membership dropped from 21,924 at the end of 2018 to 21,480 at the end of 2019. There were no presentations of *Each-1 Reach-1* due to the pandemic. Efforts to re-establish individual congregation workshops on outreach and evangelism will resume as travel and meeting restrictions are lifted or modified.

However, this convention of the Mid-South District will hope to have the privilege of welcoming Restoration Lutheran Church as a chartered member congregation of the Mid-South District and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Additionally, Hawkins County Lutheran will become an auxiliary of Concordia Lutheran Church, Kingsport, TN. Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church in Munford, TN changed its name to Grace Point Lutheran Church and has re-established its ministry in Atoka, TN where its worship facilities will house several supporting businesses in the strip mall building they purchased when they ran out of room in the tiny church building donated to them in 2012.

The Mid-South District's mission activities, however, are not limited to our own geographic territory. Accordingly, the Mid-South District budgets 104% of the commitments dollars that come from our partner churches on missions! In addition to our annual support of the National and International Missions with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, specific international missions that directly receive support from the District and our supporting member congregations include the South of Lake Victoria Diocese Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Africa, with our partner,

Bishop Emmanuel Makala. Our support there has gone on to teach dozens of native Tanzanians to become Lutheran pastors, and train seminary professors at our Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne.

In the last six years the Mid-South District has supported the Malagasy Lutheran Church as it works toward Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. They received provisional approval for Altar and Pulpit Fellowship this past year. The Malagasy Lutherans are one of the fastest growing Lutheran bodies in the world despite the dangerous opposition by militant Moslem sects. They have opened a college (the Luther Institute of Managerial Entrepreneurship (LIME) to train young people in basic business and professional skills, who then can compete for limited jobs in Madagascar. The Malagasy Lutheran Church has managed to grow by the thousands, outnumbering our own Synod by millions. Our support has been for specific new church plants; pastoral training, and support for the LIME Institute.

II. Resourcing, Equipping, and Strengthening existing Congregations, ECC's, and Schools for Kingdom Effectiveness and Efficiency

Much, if not most of the daily activities of the Mid-South District staff focuses on resourcing, equipping, and strengthening our member congregations and organizations. In addition to offering *Each1-Reach1 (R1-R1)* workshops to our congregations and circuits, the continuation of the Congregational Assessment Resource (**C.A.R.**) tool has provided vital information to participating congregations on their comparative data on operations, facilities, finances, organization, membership, and education ministries. **C.A.R.** was expanded to include comprehensive information about education ministries in order to gain comparative information that could improve effectiveness and efficiency in the individual locations. The number of congregations that have participated in the **C.A.R.** tool has eclipsed 66 in total.

COMPASS became increasingly more in demand as congregations began to hear about the turn around that happened in several of the congregations who participated and completed the recommendations cited in the **COMPASS** visits. **COMPASS** is a program also developed by the Mid-South District where a team of four or more surveyors visit a congregation (by its invitation) to speak with the leadership, the pastor(s), members, community, and others about the mission and ministry opportunities presented to the congregation.

The results of the visit along with a comprehensive report that can be used to assist a congregation in its strategic planning, demographic data to help in mission and outreach activities. A “Navigator” is assigned to each congregation after the **COMPASS** visit to help where needed in the congregation. The report is not a prescription, but a description of what the members and community already think of mission and ministry. Because it is a ministry partnership of the District, there is no cost for the **COMPASS** visit for the participating congregations. Other districts and congregations outside of the Mid-South District have requested using the **C.A.R.** and **COMPASS** activities with significantly improved results.

The District launched an initiative called, *Each1-Reach1* in 2015. With the support of the Mid-South District LWML and President Diane Reimold, *Each1-Reach1* covered every region of the LWML and some local congregations. It explains the details attached to the Synod's initiative – “Everyone His Witness.” We will continue to partner with the Mid-South District LWML to Equip, Enable, Encourage, and Empower our membership to become the “salt and light” to a dark world.

The congregations of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Paragould, and St John's Lutheran of Lafa Arkansas joined in a dual parish arrangement this triennium. In order to serve their area more effectively, they joined their resources together and called an assisting pastor out of the St John's Lutheran congregation. Pastor A. J. Neugebauer is the senior pastor and his brother, Rev. Kirk Neugebauer is the associate pastor who is serving the Paragould congregation. The congregations of El Dorado and Magnolia, Arkansas have moved toward a dual parish option but are now being served on an itinerant basis from pastors in the Stuttgart circuit and Southern District.

After the 2015 District Convention, and the subsequent 2016 Synod Convention, the Mid-South District took affirmative action to bring the dedicated men and women of our District into compliance with the Lutheran Confessions (Augsburg Confession XIV and Apology XIV) on the administration of Word and Sacrament ministry.

For years, these dedicated people worked as the only ones who could serve many of our remote and small congregations. Through the efforts of the Synod, our Concordia University System, and our two seminaries, men who were serving in regular Word and Sacrament ministry were given a one-week intensive class on Lutheran theology, and the ability to apply for colloquy to become ordained pastors.

Congregations that had licensed lay deacons exclusively in worship leadership were notified that they had until December 31, 2017, to come into compliance with the Synod's new guidelines. Congregations that do not comply by that time were visited and given the options of applying to Synod for exception. There are currently three congregations in the Mid-South District that were unable to complete the SMP Colloquy track. They have all received annual exceptions since July, 2018.

We offer our thanks to God for His gracious direction and guidance for bringing vital pastoral services to the congregations of the Mid-South District. The men who were ordained into the pastoral ministry under the SMP Colloquy include:

Rev. Randy Sakach	Rev. William Schutte	Rev. Thomas Moore
Rev. Craig Fiebiger	Rev. Henry Thompson	Rev. James Belles
Rev. Raymond Krieg	Rev. Jerry Stobaugh	Rev. Jeremy McDonald
Rev. Timothy Hunze	Rev. George Smith	

III. Recruiting, Supporting, and Mentoring Professional Church Workers

Recruitment of professional church workers continues to be an increasingly more difficult task facing every district and our Synod. The requests for placement from our Synod's seminaries continues to rise while the supply of new graduates from our seminaries continues to decline. The number of candidates available for placement in 2021 from both seminaries is less than the number of graduates from either seminary ten years ago! The chart below indicates the trend from 2014 to 2021 graduating classes.

Number of Seminary Resident Graduates – Concordia Seminary St Louis and Fort Wayne

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
St. Louis	47	42	40	41	59	78	63	53
Fort Wayne	32	34	40	40	43	58	32	44
Total:	79	76	80	81	102	136	95	97

The preliminary information from both seminaries is that the graduating class for the 2020 Spring Placement service had nearly 80 students out of both seminaries. This is approximately half of the number of students coming from the seminaries ten years ago. The Mid-South District requested vicars; but received none. The Call services and Commencement Exercises were done remotely, without any crowd assembling for the ceremonies. Both seminaries indicated that their first-year classes are substantially larger than this year's graduating classes, so a better trend for filling vacancies seems to have an improved prospect.

In addition, the projections for retirements from the current roster of pastors and teachers exceed 30% of our professional church workers over the next 5 to 7 years. That would leave a deficit of filled Calls to more than 1500 pastors within seven years! However, the Mid-South District continues to produce students for our undergraduate and graduate education of professional church workers. Through the last six years, the Mid-South District has sent students to our Concordia University system with 15 teachers, 4 Directors of Christian Education, and 34 resident seminary students.

Through the efforts of our Synod's SMP (Specific Ministry Pastor) options, and with aggressive recruiting with our young high school students, the Mid-South District will pledge every God-given resource to fill vacancies as quickly as possible. We will support SMP and traditional seminary tracks as an incentive for young men and second career men to consider work toward ministry. We will partner with our congregations with education ministries to assist teachers to become rostered church workers through the teacher colloquy option available through the Synod.

At this writing, the Mid-South District has four vacancies pending Calls into the pastoral ministry. That is a 3.25% vacancy rate, compared to the Synod average of 9.8%. Our vacancy rate is approximately twice the rate we had in the last triennium. The table below indicates another trend beyond vacant pastoral positions. The number of congregations seeking part-time pastors is increasing at a remarkable rate. Through comprehensive searches for the best qualified candidates to fill vacant pastorates, the Mid-South District has become a place of ministry opportunities.

<u>ANNUAL VACANCIES IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD</u>							
	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Sole Pastors	410	355	380	352	302	329	359
Senior Pastors	56	56	71	44	37	47	54
Part Time Pastors	483	443	428	432	360	324	288

Over the past three years, the Mid-South District, through its partnering congregations and members, continues to provide significant financial support for men and women going through the Concordia University System for professional church work and attending our seminaries. Each year, the District's Scholarship Committee awards over \$80,000 in direct financial aid to students from the Mid-South District. This last year 15 students in the Concordia University system and our Seminaries have received \$81,000 of scholarship support from the Mid-South District and its partners.

President Paavola serves on the Board of Directors for *MinistryFocus* – a program, recognized by Synod as an RSO (Recognized Service Organization) – that provides debt relief for professional church workers experiencing significant debt burdens. The applicants are selected by the Application Review Committee of Ministry Focus to receive scholarships to help reduce their outstanding student debts. The District has set aside unassigned scholarship dollars to be awarded to our Mid-South District professional church workers.

IV. Planting Churches

The Mid-South District, from its beginning over 50 years ago, continues to be committed to the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations. Planting Churches has been a hallmark of the District and will continue into our next triennium and beyond. In years past, the placement of third- or fourth-year vicars from our Seminaries of the Synod to our Training Centers demonstrated to our leadership that our investments into these young men seldom resulted in achieving a placement into a district church plant. Furthermore, the Mission and Ministry Committee of the Mid-South District Board of Directors found that church planting not largely sponsored by a “mothering” church or group of churches were unsuccessful.

That committee under the chairmanship of Rev. Paul Hass (Region 1 Vice President) noticed that our “batting average” needed to be improved in bringing successful church plants into our District. As faithful stewards of the commitments made by partnering congregation members of the District and our supporting members, the necessity of working with local congregations or circuits would be a necessary ingredient in church planting efforts of the District.

The Mid-South District supports eight (8) efforts of varying levels of church plant development. Those include:

- 1) Northwest Arkansas plant;* Restoration Lutheran Church, Rev. JD Zischke, planter, Fayetteville);

- 2) GracePoint Lutheran*, Munford, TN (Rev. Dan Hawkins, Planter);
- 3) Mekane Yesus Ethiopian Ministry*, (Rev. Alebachew Teshome, Planter).
- 4) African American churches*, Memphis and Little Rock (Rev. Russell Belisle, Mentor);
- 5) Smith Grove Kentucky, (Holy Trinity, Bowling Green, Rev. Mark Press, Planter);
- 6) Hohenwald, TN, (Faith Lutheran, Thompson Station, Rev. Doug DeWitt, Planter)
- 7) Central Tennessee Auxiliary Church Plant* +, Our Savior Lutheran Church; and
- 8) Hispanic Ministries, Trinity Lutheran, Memphis, (Rev. Jesús Granado, Planter)

** Church plants with Mid-South District partner support*

+ Planned auxiliary campus of Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville (Call pending)

A planning session on mission development and church planting efforts of the Mid-South District was held at Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, where Rev. Paul Hass, Chairman of the Mission and Ministry (M&M) Subcommittee, Rev. JD Zischke, Rev. Dr. Peter Meier, and President Paavola reviewed the options for missions and church planting.

We identified potential church planting “hotspots” in the state of Arkansas that include Northwest Arkansas (in addition to the work in Fayetteville), Fort Smith, Little Rock, Stuttgart, Alexander, Hot Springs, and Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, Tennessee. These are areas in Arkansas in which there are a significant number of Lutherans and strong Lutheran congregations with the potential to work together in order to launch new congregations to reach new people with the Gospel.

The arrangement under the Mission and Ministry Sub-Committee plans will be to have an ongoing online cohort that meets to discuss training and site demographics, accomplishing the same goal but at a more reasonable amount, saving the cost of unsuccessful sites. The M&M Subcommittee will guide which is the best approach to encouraging and equipping congregations to plant more churches. It can no longer be initiated by the District without the substantial support from local congregations and/or circuits. Since the pandemic, we have not had a chance to gather congregations in our first two evaluation sites. We plan on having those after the first of September.

V. Achieving financial Stability and long-range fiscal accountability

The statement from three years ago bears repeating: The stronger fiscal stewardship of the members of our congregations become, the stronger the congregation will be in stewardship, missions, and ministry. The stronger the congregations become, the stronger the District will be in stewardship, ministry, and missions. The stronger the District becomes, the stronger the Synod and world-wide Lutheran Church will be in stewardship, missions and ministry.

Nearly every congregation has the difficulty of dealing with the fiscal balancing of maintenance, mortgage, mission, and ministry, especially during a worldwide pandemic as we experienced in 2020 and beyond. However, to be consistent with biblical stewardship planning, the Mid-South District continues to sponsor a program in any congregation (and members or interested friends of the congregation) that may wish to have a field-tested program for their people in biblical stewardship. At the end of successfully completing the Financial Peace University (FPU) course, the Mid-South District will continue to rebate the entire cost of the program materials to every participant who purchased and completed the FPU course.

The District is not exempt from fiscal concerns. As you will read the report from Mr. Larry Vickers, the District Treasurer and Angela Fowler, Executive Director for Business and Finance, you will note that the ability of the District to rely on congregational commitments for operations is down to 55% of our operating budget. Last year, the Mid-South District spent 112% of congregational commitments from our partner churches for world and national

missions. The dollars we received from congregation commitments is the same amount of actual dollars we received in 1990.

The services of the District's operations, however, have continued to increase in those thirty (30) years. Nine years ago, we faced the same struggle to pay operating expenses and were forced to use reserve dollars to cover operations. But, with the hard work of the staff and Board of Directors the District has increased our efficiency, expanded our effectiveness, and sought other sources of funding to supplement what would, otherwise, have been a deficit.

I am honored to state that the Mid-South District is in a position that is fiscally sound, mission and ministry focused, and compliant with sound biblical principles of operational stewardship. Through the elimination of the mortgage on the District office (thanks to a large private grant), restructuring of staff, and establishing "Means Testing" for all future fiscal ventures, the District is strong.

"Funding the Ministry" is a Development effort that raised over \$2 million for those participating congregations to expand their missions and ministries or make improvements to their existing ministries. More than 90% of those dollars raised remain with the congregations that have used the program.

"Leaving A Legacy" is a Development program that earmarks future dollars from members who can benefit from a current donation designation, rather than delaying their financial advantage through or after their estate. At this time, over a dozen congregations have hosted the program highlights that could be of interest to willing and dedicated donors in their estate planning.

Districts have reported a downturn in commitment payments coming from their congregations. The District partnered with the Synod's Soldiers of the Cross program to distribute funds to our church workers. The Synod gave \$47,120 to the cause, with the District adding \$11,780 to provide assistance for our District's church workers – commissioned, ordained, and lay.

VI. Trends in American Christianity

Dealing with the trends of American Christianity, the Mid-South District and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are not immune to the decline in membership affecting every mainline denomination in America. The decline can be identified as resulting from the major changes that reflect a changing demographic of cultures in the United States. Not only are fewer people identifying with church membership in the last 25 – 50 years, but traditional family units have become smaller and more concentrated away from the farm and nearer to the cities.

Families are no longer the core nuclear family of the 1950's and 1960's. There are more single-parent households in some of our cities than there are two-parent households. The Supreme Court of the United States has also made it possible for non-traditional families where two men, two women, or multiple parties are involved in parenting. Court enforced allowance of adoption into non-traditional family settings will present a greater challenge to the church bodies of the United States than ever before.

The Mid-South District has been required to change the ways in which we deliver the support and resources to our congregations, schools, and professional church workers. The needs for support and services have increased while an understandable and changing commitment from congregations has declined, creating a larger demand on creative financial support.

Regionalization that captures the skills and resources of existing staff that are deployed throughout the District has enabled the District to respond positively to the congregations' needs and reduce the travel time required in a large geographic District. We have relied on the resources of the Synod in areas of Small and Rural Congregations, Outreach, and Evangelism.

The importance of the role of each congregation and each member of the congregations is stressed by the fact that, without the individual support, the District could not operate in its role as an extension of the Synod in this place. The emergence of essential services and strategic development will require created structures and utilization of the skills and gifts of our workers throughout the entire District.

The marketing and public relations functions of the District have offered information about the essential services of the District that will respond to the needs of the people we serve. The Mid-South District website is designed to offer in-depth information and an ease of access for anyone interested in, or in need of the services available through the District. Our staff members have been selected to represent the Synod in vital services for congregations and workers, indicating that what the Mid-South District offers goes beyond the borders of our enclave and have moved the District's capabilities to other Districts. The Mid-South District personnel serve at a Synodical level in international missions; business and financial leadership; worker pensions, disability, and healthcare; and educational development areas.

Beta-Study for Youth and Family Ministries has gone through the process to find the interested congregations for the Generation-to-Generation program (G2G). Leaders from our District have worked to bring about an assessment and re-evaluation of the committee's objectives to strengthen Family Ministry and Faith Formation. As a result of the 2019 Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Mid-South District became the “test site” for a Synod-wide program to address the issues of faith formation and declining participation of whole generations in active church membership.

Professor Ben Freudenberg from Concordia University-Ann Arbor helped formulate the studies that will offer metrics to determine what elements of family-based biblical instruction and faith sharing. Currently, there are nine congregations that have agreed to be part of the Beta-study. The results of their participation will be used as an overture to the next convention of the Synod and help identify key factors that will “bring the young people back to church.”

Our Generation-to-Generation project received overwhelming support as a study model for the rest of Synod. We will submit a report on the findings and methodologies we have developed to evaluate ways Synod and other Districts can work to keep our young adults active in the church, and ways to have families become more deeply involved in faith formation for future generations.

VII. The Outlook for the Future of The Mid-South District

The membership trends of each circuit and the Mid-South District overall draws our attention to the needs of each community, and especially the places where we currently have a Lutheran “footprint.” The table below indicates the changes that have taken place in each circuit over the last few years.

<u>Congregations</u>	<u>Confirmed Members</u>	<u>Baptized Members</u>	<u>Weekly Attendance</u>
2017 125	21,773	26,134	12,842
2019 122	21,484	25,342	11,612
Net -3	-289	-792	-1,230

The current breakdown of circuit memberships includes:

<u>Circuit</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Congregations</u>	<u>Confirmed Members</u>	<u>Baptized Members</u>
Chattanooga	9		1513	1830
Fayetteville	9		1650	2065
Fort Smith*	8		1029	1191
Jonesboro	15		1545	1770
Knoxville	12		2598	3072
Little Rock North	10		1642	1862
Little Rock South	10		2647	2904
Memphis	11		2595	3119
Nashville	8		1753	2213
Middle Tennessee	8		1671	1909
Paducah	8		658	2126
Stuttgart*	9		776	850
Johnson City	5		407	431
	122		21,484	25,342

The membership trends of the overall District demonstrates that the “high-water” mark of membership was achieved in 1996; of member congregations in 2011; and of commitments in 2003.

**MID-SOUTH DISTRICT
TRENDS OF MEMBERSHIP
CONGREGATIONS and CONTRIBUTIONS**

Year	Total District Membersh	Total Number of Congregations	Total Congregation Commitments
1966	11,813	80	\$332,640
1967	18,103	84	\$337,354
1968	18,478	86	\$404,745
1969	19,089	89	\$429,314
1970	19,784	89	\$458,517
1971	20,321	90	\$467,870
1972	21,294	91	\$496,517
1973	21,892	95	\$526,258
1974	22,458	96	\$574,494
1975	22,953	95	\$624,695
1976	23,410	96	\$629,882
1977	24,043	97	\$663,448
1978	24,270	100	\$735,218
1979	25,153	99	\$797,536
1980	25,301	103	\$889,671
1981	25,857	102	\$955,436
1982	26,617	102	\$1,026,825
1983	27,122	105	\$1,074,009
1984	27,054	105	\$1,118,841
1985	27,550	109	\$1,216,500
1986	28,877	109	\$1,248,640
1987	28,447	111	\$1,297,348
1988	29,019	112	\$1,383,089
1989	29,343	114	\$1,497,768
1990	29,569	117	\$1,552,167
1991	29,751	115	\$1,565,729
1992	29,791	116	\$1,521,939
1993	29,700	115	\$1,509,514
1994	30,760	115	\$1,544,948

1995	34,035	118	\$1,601,208
1996	35,195	121	\$1,624,681
1997	34,702	123	\$1,668,866
1998	32,784	129	\$1,699,548
1999	33,318	130	\$1,705,900
2000	32,860	131	\$1,733,194
2001	30,887	129	\$1,779,485
2002	29,852	123	\$1,837,414
2003	29,971	124	\$1,864,168
2004	30,390	129	\$1,773,409
2005	30,912	131	\$1,759,495
2006	30,641	127	\$1,775,270
2007	30,388	128	\$1,817,584
2008	29,258	128	\$1,840,832
2009	28,505	131	\$1,644,018
2010	27,989	134	\$1,573,043
2011	23,934	135	\$1,671,704
2012	23,375	131	\$1,696,333
2013	22,449	130	\$1,618,707
2014	21,793	129	\$1,629,888
2015	21,711	125	\$1,676,926
2016	21,791	126	\$1,607,924
2017	22,232	125	\$1,558,963
2018	21,924	124	\$1,542,151
2019	21,480	123	\$1,532,274
2020	TBD	123	\$1,538,970

We must forge a team effort with the Mid-South District LWML to engage, equip, encourage, and enable each member of our District – all 24,000 of the saints in the District – to become the ambassadors of the Gospel of Christ. We will establish a task force for Reaching the Lost by Arming the Saints in personal evangelism, consistent with the Synodical Resolution calling for us all as - “Everyone His Witness” and our own ***Each-1 Reach-1***.

Additionally, consistent with the Synodical Resolution, we will establish a Lutheran Identity Task Force that will develop materials and information to members that can share our Lutheran heritage with confidence and boldness. Along with the personal relation aspect of outreach, we will work with local communities on the best ways to bring programs such as The Lutheran Hour, Main Street Living, and similar Lutheran-based programming to the communities of the Mid-South District. Live streaming of worship services was enabled with District assistance during the pandemic. Using those capabilities, the Mid-South District’s Lutheran Identity Task Force will develop ways to increase viewership and bring the message of the Gospel into the homes in our vast geographic area.

We will expand Tuesday Sermon Studies to provide assistance and discussion for pastors and interested members to a deeper understanding of the God's Word. It will ideally include study of the original languages that demonstrate God's overflowing, pure grace and love for His people.

We will continue every possible effort to move the dedicated men who have served in Word and Sacrament ministry as deacons to become ordained pastors, consistent with Synodical Resolution 13-02A, and from the Book of Concord's Augsburg Confession (AC XIV) and Apology to the Augsburg Confession (AP XIV). Through the Residence options, SMP options (Specific Ministry Pastors), financial assistance to the educational tracks in our seminaries will be made available. Further training for laity to be supports of the pastoral ministry will be offered through the Mid-South District as it provides every possible opportunity to meet the needs of each congregation in our District.

We will continue to expand Town Hall Meetings where we will offer information about the resources offered by the District, and, through Essential Services Surveys solicit questions, concerns, and advice from members on what the District needs to do and be to best serve our constituencies.

We will expand the resources and content of our small and rural ministry support by offering "Best Practices Forums" that highlight and offer helpful information on what other successful ministries in the RSTM can share with other congregations and schools.

We will continue to expand and promote the Mid-South District's strategic planning instrument, **COMPASS**, along with the revised **C.A.R.** – Congregational Assessment Resource, that offers intricate detailed information on the current operations of every congregation's ministry, missions and educational resources, compared to the other congregations in the **C.A.R.** pool. The **COMPASS** and **C.A.R.** tools offer observation of the thoughts and recommendations acquired from current congregational activities, members, congregation leadership, demographics, and the community.

We will increase our activity to Identify Future Church Workers from within the congregations of the District – either from graduating high school students or second-career men and women who show aptitude and skills to serve in the Church. Providing additional Student Scholarships and assistance in Education Debt Relief will help remove much of the financial deterrent facing potential servants of the church.

Because of the ever-changing demographics of our communities and cities, the Mid-South District will seek information and response to the multicultural ethnic groups moving into our District to identify additional opportunities to Expand Ethnic Ministries in partnership with our local congregations. African American, Middle Eastern, African, Asian, and Hispanic opportunities will provide abundant ministry possibilities in most, if not all, of the areas within the Mid-South District.

We will refine and assess the matrix of Church Planting in order to maximize the potential for successful planting opportunities in accordance with the Will of God. The demographics of a changing geography will be stressed along with means testing that will minimize the risk of extended plantings that do/will not result in a chartered congregation. We will include long-range efforts for the successful church plants to be "mothering" congregations to plant additional congregations, stemming from the matrix of the church plant's experience and demographics.

We will establish a special panel of experienced church planters and administrative people to bring a more robust focus on potential church planting locations, the metrics of accountabilities, and operational expectations that will be presented to the overall administration of the Mid-South District and its governing body.

We will partner with congregations, schools, and ECC's where there is excess and unused capacity of their facilities to explore the possibilities of Planting Schools and Early Childhood Centers. Most of our congregations open their doors for only a few hours during a week. Where it is possible for Virtual Schools (which could include virtual high schools) to exist as an alternative to the risks that exist in the minds of parents with children in large public and parochial schools, and social interaction that can be accomplished as an alternative to homeschooling, our

congregations may consider either virtual schools or congregation-sponsored schools that will serve as an outreach link to the community and a safe environment with a ministry wrap-around. Designated and restricted funds can be deployed in significant ways to plant ministries that will bring the Lutheran message to a larger community.

We will establish an Education Ministry “Think Tank” for Best Practices and innovations in education ministries for our District and its member congregations. They will explore the best practices of the elements that make Lutheran Christian education a meaningful and successful venture. They will make recommendations to existing and potential sites for educational ministries throughout the District.

We will expand the offering of Biblical Stewardship training for the members of our member congregations. Through Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University, the Mid-South District is finding ways to strengthen the local congregation in its stewardship education, thereby making the congregation, the District, and the Synod able to continue to provide essential services for our Church and the workers who serve Christ’s people.

We will continue to Support Lutheran International Missions and Ministries for those developing missions around the world. Our support for the SELVD (Tanzania) and Malagasy Evangelical Lutheran Church will continue with the generous and dedicated support of the partnering members of our Mid-South District congregations. The support will include continued contributions to the ministry education of the workers in those countries, and seminary education in our LCMS Seminaries for future professorial workers that enables those ministries to gain local and indigenous support.

We will work with local congregations that express an interest in providing Housing for the Elderly and Condominium Development (The over-65 population is becoming the fastest growing segment of the American population.) Availability of housing, the Mid-South’s moderate climate, the Mid-South’s friendly tax environment, and creative financing mechanisms mean a way in which congregations can create their own worshiping community and improve their fiscal soundness at the same time.

Conclusion

It is a great honor to have served as President of the Mid-South District since 2012. I pray that God would continue to lead and guide us together in a partnership where the “talents” given to our members and leadership can be about the work of the Great Commission. I would be remiss if I did not give full credit to the outstanding leadership of the members of the Board of Directors for the Mid-South District. Through their dedicated efforts, we have created a working environment that is second-to-none! Every member brings special skills and talents that God has seen fit to provide for this great organization. But, what is more, the dedicated and hard-working staff of the District has made it possible for us to offer greater efficiencies and effectiveness for the good of our member congregations and professional church workers.

When I hear about what is happening in other Districts, what concerns they have, and the many distractions they face, I must thank our staff, the Board of Directors, and the supportive and dedicated people in our membership, that, I believe, we have the best District for this time, and in this place with which God has blessed us. It’s an honor to serve our great Mid-South District!

Respectfully submitted,

**Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, President
Mid-South District, LCMS**



REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR REGION ONE

The Fayetteville, Fort Smith and Jonesboro Circuits make up Region One of our Mid-South District. These three circuits cover most of the northern portion of Arkansas. The Lord has blessed our region with three faithful and dedicated Circuit Visitors:

Rev. Robert Herring, Fayetteville Circuit,
Rev. Joshua Willadsen, Fort Smith Circuit,
Rev. Joel Krogen, Jonesboro Circuit.

There are 32 congregations in Region One with a combined communicant membership of approximately 4,084. There are two elementary schools and three early childhood programs.

These congregations are involved in the vital ministry of Word and Sacraments as they seek through the power of the Holy Spirit to grow inwardly and reach outwardly to their communities and to the end of the earth. Each congregation faces its own unique set of challenges and opportunities in sharing the Gospel. Yet each congregation and every called worker in these congregations finds strength in the Lord of the Church who has promised to be with us to the end of the age. In the following synopses you can get a brief overview of what the Lord is doing in and through the congregations in Region One.

Fayetteville Circuit:

The Fayetteville Circuit joins together 10 congregations with 1,510 communicant members serving Washington, Benton and Carroll counties of Northwest Arkansas and the surrounding areas. St. John, Fayetteville and Salem, Springdale support early childhood education ministries within their congregations.

Bella Vista, Bella Vista continues to see their ministries change as their community moves from a retirement development to a multi-generational structure and a place where the love of Jesus is shared in a vibrant way. Rev. Paul Hass serves as Senior Pastor, and in February of 2019 BVLC welcomed the addition of Rev. Christopher Gorshe as the congregation's first Associate Pastor. This congregation is also served by Mr. Charles (Chuck) Merriman, their Family Life Minister.

Faith, Bentonville is striving to serve the Bentonville community with a ministry that addresses the needs of a rapidly growing population. Rev. David Schmidt is their pastor.

St. John, Fayetteville and **Living Savior, Lowell** are vacant congregations being served by Rev. Duncan Cox. St. John provides a preschool to the community and Living Savior is in the process of relocating.

Restoration, Fayetteville hopes to be chartered as a congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at this convention. Rev. JD Zischke serves as their pastor and he also continues our outreach to the University of Arkansas campus.

Grace, Holiday Island provides Word and Sacrament ministry to their community and surrounding area. Rev. Robert Herring serves as the pastor.

Messiah, Pea Ridge is a growing part of a fast-growing community. The congregation recently purchased another tract of land adjacent to their current property in preparation for expansion. Rev. Richard Mayer is their pastor.

Holy Trinity, Rogers is served by Rev. Eric Longman and Mr. Cameron Pullman (Director of Youth and Education) and the congregation continues to address the needs of the people in their area.

Christ, Siloam Springs is a vacant congregation and is served by several retired pastors.

Salem, Springdale continues in their multi-faceted ministry of outreach to Anglos and Hispanics and their early childhood center. Rev. Mark Krause and Rev. Brandon Martin serve in this ministry.

In 2019, **Peace, Prairie Grove** disbanded as a congregation and **First, Harrison** was transferred to the Jonesboro circuit.

Throughout the pandemic of 2020-21, the congregations of the Fayetteville circuit continued to share the Word of the Lord and celebrate His Body and Blood. Only a few Sundays saw a complete shutdown of gathering. Every church found some way to continue the proclamation of God's grace and forgiveness. For that we are extremely grateful for their continued dedication to serving their Lord!

Fort Smith Circuit:

There are eight congregations in the Fort Smith Circuit confessing Christ Jesus through the ministry of Word and Sacrament to their members and to their communities. The Fort Smith Circuit has a combined communicant membership of approximately 1,029 in western Arkansas. Among the parishes in the circuit there is one elementary school and one early childhood program. Each congregation is engaged in a variety of service events and outreach opportunities. The Fort Smith Circuit meets monthly (except in the summer) at one of the congregations in the circuit.

Bethel Lutheran Church, Fort Smith – is served by the Rev. Joshua Willadsen. The Divine Service is celebrated every Lord's Day. Wednesday services continue year-round but have moved to 11:15am (evening services are also held during Advent and Lent). Bible class and Sunday School are held every Lord's Day prior to service, with an additional Bible Study on Wednesday's.

First Lutheran Church & School, Fort Smith – is served by Rev. John Merrill, Pastor & Mr. Samuel Fishburn, Principal. The Divine Service is celebrated every Lord's Day at two services. Wednesday evening services are held during Advent and Lent. Bible class and Sunday School are held every Lord's Day, with additional times during the week for Bible Study. Recently the congregation voted to expand the school up to the eighth grade.

Grace Lutheran Church, Greenwood – is served by the Rev. Jason Zirbel. The Divine Service is celebrated every Lord's Day. Wednesday evening services are held during Advent and Lent. Bible class and Sunday School are held every Lord's Day, with additional times during the week for Bible Study.

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Smith – is now served by the Rev. Dr. Richard Davenport (installed February 28, 2021). The Rev. John Treude, retired at the end of December 2020, having served Our Redeemer for fifteen years. He served as the vacancy pastor. Since Pastor Davenport's installation, the Divine Service is celebrated every Lord's Day. Bible class and Sunday School are held every Lord's Day, with additional times during the week for Bible Study.

River Valley Grace Lutheran Church, Lamar – is currently in a vacancy and is being served by the Rev. Tom Bartzsch. The Rev. Herbert Swanson's last service at River Valley Grace was Sunday October 15, 2020. The Divine Service is celebrated the first and third Lord's Days of the month (the Service of the Word conducted the other Lord's Days). Wednesday evening services are held during Advent and Lent. Bible class and Sunday School are held every Lord's Day, with additional times during the week for Bible Study.

Saint John's Lutheran Church, Russellville – is served by the Rev. William Ringer. Pastor Ringer was installed on June 16, 2019. The Divine Service is celebrated every Lord's Day. Wednesday evening services are held

during Advent and Lent. Bible class and Sunday School are held every Lord's Day, with additional times during the week for Bible Study.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Mena – is served by the Rev. Timothy Henning. The Divine Service is celebrated the first and third Lord's Days of the month (the Service of the Word conducted the other Lord's Days). Trinity celebrated 120 years as a congregation in 2020, though not exactly as they had planned due to Covid-19. October 11, 2020 ended the congregation's yearlong celebration of "120 Years of Grace In This Place." Bible class and Sunday School are held every Lord's Day.

Zion Lutheran Church, Augsburg – is served by the Rev. Joshua Ralston. A graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Joshua was ordained at Grace Lutheran Church in Little Rock on August 18, 2019 and installed as Pastor of Zion, Augsburg, on August 25, 2019. The Divine Service is celebrated every Lord's Day. Wednesday evening services are held during Advent and Lent. Bible class and Sunday School are held every Lord's Day, with additional times during the week for Bible Study.

The Jonesboro Circuit:

The Jonesboro Circuit: There are 15 congregations in the Jonesboro Circuit with a combined communicant membership of approximately 1,545.

Hope Lutheran Church, Batesville, is served by Rev. Joel Krogen. A Community Christian school operates at their facility. Rev. Krogen does chapel services for them, and there is opportunity for interaction with many families in the area. Hope is in a dual parish relationship with Zion, Waldenburg.

First Lutheran Church, Blytheville, is served by part-time pastor, Rev. Bruce Hanson, as they seek to reach out with the Gospel in far eastern Arkansas in a community still struggling with economic challenges.

Peace Lutheran Church, Cherokee Village, is served by Rev. Brian Pummill. Members at Peace continue to explore new and more effective ways to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to a changing community.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Corning, is served by Rev. Jonathan Bischof. They are striving to provide solid Word and Sacrament ministry of hope to a rural area facing the challenges of changing times.

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Horseshoe Bend, is served by Rev. Brad Heinecke. The congregation brings Word and Sacrament faithfully to a largely retirement-based community, and has enhanced its shut-in ministry, involving many of the congregation's members.

Redeemer Lutheran Church, Paragould is in a dual parish situation with St. John's, Lapeer and is served by Rev. Aaron Neugebauer and Rev. Kirk Neugebauer. They continue to wrestle with the changing nature of Paragould's rapid population growth, seeking to find effective ways to bring Christ to their community.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Jonesboro, served by Rev. Josh Leigeber, continues their community outreach efforts. The school had closed for various reasons, but the congregation plans to reopen it as a classical Lutheran school.

St. John Lutheran Church, Lapeer, is in a dual parish situation with Redeemer, Paragould and is served by Rev. Aaron Neugebauer and Rev. Kirk Neugebauer. They continue their community outreach with their spacious and well-equipped Family Life Center that is being used for a wide range of need-based ministries, as well as sponsoring an off-site Bible class for young adults in Paragould. The congregation is also assisted by DCE Tessa Brasher.

Redeemer Lutheran Church, Mountain Home, is served by Rev. Kevin McReynolds. Redeemer is a local leader in coordinating care ministries in the Mountain Home area to meet the spiritual and temporal needs of their neighbors.

Peace Lutheran Church, Mountain Home, is led by Rev. Bill Schutte. The congregation will close its doors after Easter.

Grace Lutheran Church, Mountain View, is served by part-time pastor Rev. Kenneth Taglauer (Emeritus) of Mountain Home, with a special emphasis on care for vacationers coming into the area.

Zion Lutheran Church, Waldenburg, is served by Rev. Joel Krogen. Zion is in a dual parish relationship with Hope, Batesville, and has provided Word and Sacrament ministry in its rural setting now for over 130 years.

There have been many changes in the congregations of Region One since our 2018 Convention. Several new missions and ministries were started within Region One congregations, and we also have had the challenges of a pandemic that has changed not only lives, but ministries, in each of these congregations. While the changes effected by the pandemic continue to be felt, amidst all those changes, one thing did not change. Our Lord Jesus Christ and the message of His Cross remain unchanging. We have a changeless Christ and changeless Message for a changing world and culture.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Paul Hass
Mid-South District Vice President Region One



REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR REGION TWO

The congregations of Region Two of the Mid-South District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, have been blessed by the Lord of the Church in many and various ways. While some of those blessings are obvious to see, others come in more unusual ways. In either case, these congregations continue to “Declare His Marvelous Works.”

Region Two of the Mid-South District is located in central and southeast Arkansas. It is composed of the Stuttgart Circuit, the Little Rock-South Circuit and the Little Rock-North Circuit. This numbers approximately 29 congregations which vary in size, age and location.

The Stuttgart Circuit

The Reverend Chad Philipp, serves the dual parish of **St. Paul Lutheran Church, Gillett** and **St. Luke Lutheran Church, Dewitt**. Reverend Philipp also serves as the Circuit Visitor for the Stuttgart Circuit. He was appointed to that position to replace The Reverend Don White, **St. John, Stuttgart**, who served as Circuit Visitor from 2016-2020.

St. Paul Lutheran – Gillett (1893) and **St. Luke Lutheran – Dewitt** (1945) have been served by Reverend Chad Philipp for the last nineteen years. During the coronavirus shutdown, St. Paul went to a Facebook Live-stream worship service for 3 weeks. After that, the congregation offered a drive-in service for two weeks before getting back to in-person services on Sunday, May 10th, 2020. St. Paul has continued in-person services ever since and has also continued their Facebook Live-stream. They also began a Zoom Bible Study on Tuesday evenings. The St. Paul Dorcas Quilters got back to work in the fall making blankets for Lutheran World Relief. The preschool returned to their classes in the fall after having to close down in the spring due to coronavirus.

St. Luke Lutheran – Dewitt (1945) After a few weeks off due to the coronavirus, St. Luke began in-person services on May 10th, 2020. St. Luke has continued in-person services ever since. Wednesday evening Bible Study got back to normal meeting times in September, 2020. St. Luke celebrated their 60th Annual Spaghetti Supper in January, 2021. Due to the coronavirus, the Spaghetti Supper was drive-through only.

St. John Lutheran Church, Crossett (1964) St. John is currently vacant and served by Reverend Stewart Marshall (Trinity, Pine Bluff), Reverend Don White (St. John Stuttgart) and Reverend Chad Philipp (St. Paul, Gillett and St. Luke, DeWitt). The arrangement has been in place since the fall of 2019. While a small congregation, they faithfully gather to hear the Word and receive the Sacraments.

Faith Lutheran Church, Magnolia (1960) Faith is currently vacant, however, there are discussions to re-establish a dual-parish agreement with Our Savior, El Dorado, with the hope of calling a part-time, retired pastor. On Sundays the members gather to hear a Live-stream service and on occasion travel to Our Savior, El Dorado for service and communion.

Our Savior Lutheran Church, El Dorado (1931) Our Savior is currently vacant. However, it is being served by retired Pastor Sig Kunz (Bossier City, LA). Reverend Kunz travels to Our Savior on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month to officiate the Divine Service and teach Sunday School. Currently, Our Savior is working to re-establish a dual-parish agreement with Faith, Magnolia.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Pine Bluff (1894) Trinity has been served by The Reverend Stewart Marshall since August 2016. Over the last triennium Trinity has had a lot to celebrate and a lot to deal with. The celebration

portion was their 125th anniversary in 2019. The church was established in 1894 with its first building on Florida and 8th Street. Since that time, it changed locations to Pine Street, until the congregation moved to its current location on Old Warren Road in 1975. The 125th celebration included a dinner and special presentations.

2020 brought with it the coronavirus. After first shutting down in person services at the end of March, they started bringing the congregation back for services in July and worshiped in the fellowship hall where social distancing could easily take place. Despite the virus, the congregation celebrated with a takeout Oktoberfest meal in October and a takeout Thanksgiving dinner in November.

Trinity is still limiting the number of members for in person worship, but looks forward to a more traditional setting in the coming months.

St. John's Lutheran Church, Stuttgart (1882) St. John's has been served by The Reverend Don White for the last nine years. Over the course of the last three years, not much has changed in or with the mission and ministry of St. John's. They continue to preach Christ crucified and rejoice in God's gift of Word and Sacrament ministry. They have celebrated births, baptisms of both young and old along with confirmations. They have held the promise of life and resurrection before the eyes of those who have buried their loved ones. They continue to reach out through personal invitation and over the radio and internet.

The only "major" change that has found its way into the life and ministry of St. John's is moving from two services down to one as a result of the pandemic. While they continue to broadcast their services, they have also introduced an improvised screen to better allow those at home to worship right along with those who have continued to gather in the sanctuary.

St. John's annual Easter sunrise drive-in service, which is held in the parking lot of Mack's Prairie Wings, will continue this year as it has for many decades.

St. John's continues to offer the community a Lutheran focused, Christian based education in their school. Their ECE runs from ages 6 weeks through 4 years, with the elementary school offering classes from Kindergarten through sixth grade. Their children compete in archery and basketball and participate in the Little Rock Marathon each year.

St. John's continues to serve their community in many ways, as Pastor White said, "We are simply blessed to live, work, play, celebrate and serve together in Christ."

Zion, Ulm (1881) and **Our Savior Brinkley** (1951) are a dual parish served by the Rev. Johnny Graham since 2006. The Ulm community's population is less than 200 people today. The farming communities have declined in population and so has the church's membership roll. Zion has been studying the Lutheran Confessions over the last 12 years and have developed a new eagerness for continued learning and re-learning of our Lutheran doctrine. Currently Zion has a communicant membership of 33.

The Little Rock - North Circuit

The Reverend David Vandercook, **Shepherd of Peace, Maumelle, and Trinity, North Little Rock**, serves as Circuit Visitor for the Little Rock - North Circuit. He was appointed to that position replacing The Reverend Kevin Conger, who was appointed to finish the vice-presidential term of The Reverend Jim Walter, who was called to his heavenly home in December of 2020. The Little Rock - North Circuit consists of larger urban congregations in and around Little Rock as well as smaller rural congregations that extend as far north as Fairfield Bay.

Hope Lutheran Church, Jacksonville (1969) Reverend Conger has served Hope, Jacksonville for the last 20 years. On May 18 and 19, 2019, Hope celebrated 50 years as a congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The celebration included food, games for the little ones, and plenty of fellowship. On Sunday, May 19,

2019, District President Roger Paavola preached at the Divine Service. Over the last 50 years Hope has continued to grow in faith and the grace of God. 2020 has been no exception.

Even while Covid-19 has changed many things, it has also brought new opportunities. As a result, Hope has added live-streaming of our Sunday morning service. This comes as a result of Covid-19 yet, this is a new way to bring the Gospel and Lutheran teaching to the Jacksonville community and beyond. Hope Lutheran looks forward to the next 50 years proclaiming Christ and him crucified.

First Lutheran Church, Little Rock (1868) The Reverend Ron Bacic has served First since 2009. The congregation is located at the corner of Eighth and Rock in the historical Quapaw Quarter District of Little Rock. Many of the other Lutheran churches in the area were begun as missions of First Lutheran. The current church building was constructed in 1888 and provides a beautiful setting for worship. The congregation, under the Lord's blessing, is in the process of new growth and development.

Even in the midst of the pandemic, First Lutheran has been able to hold services at church and livestream them on You Tube (search for "FLCLR1868") and continues to hold Bible classes by way of Zoom. First Care Outreach, the ministry to the blind and visually impaired continues to thrive as they meet each month for Bible study, a special program, and a meal. If there is anything the people at First Lutheran Church, Little Rock have learned during this long season of change and Covid fears is that the Lord has not forsaken His people. Thanks be to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit for His blessings of Word and Sacrament.

Faith, Fairfield Bay, (1972) The Reverend Peter Ave-Lallemant has served Faith for the past 4 years. Faith has been holding services regularly with only a brief time last summer when they did not meet as a result of Covid. They practice social distancing and wear masks. Recently, they have confirmed two adults and are currently conducting another new member class for three people. These classes are conducted in the homes of their guests, which seems to work very well for everyone. The congregation is healthy, despite the advanced age of 90% of their members. They will resume after-service fellowship starting Easter Sunday this year.

Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church, Maumelle (1991) and **Trinity Lutheran Church, North Little Rock** (1943) These congregations are served by The Reverend David Vandercook with confessional, liturgical word and sacrament ministry. Both congregations now pray the office of Matins and provide scheduled opportunities for private confession and absolution throughout the week to complement the Sunday Divine Service. The saints of both serve faithfully in their God-given vocations in the home, at work and at church as they love and serve their neighbors here and support the work of the Church abroad. While the COVID – 19 pandemic has put a dent in attendance over the past year, both congregations are thankful for God's many blessings in preserving the spiritual and physical health of his saints.

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Cabot (2003) has been served by The Reverend Daniel McDougall for the past 11 years. However, Pastor McDougall has decided to retire after 40 years in the ministry. The congregation gives thanks to God for all of the many blessings that they have received over the years through the faithful service of their pastor. While the pandemic had its impact on the congregation, they remain strong in spirit and in the service to the Lord.

Peace Lutheran Church, Conway (1964) The Reverend John Gierke, who also serves as Mid-South District Secretary, has served Peace for nineteen years of his twenty-five years in the ministry. The Reverend Mark Tooley, rostered as a Specific Ministry Pastor since 2015, serves as Assistant Pastor and leads the congregation's campus ministry to the multiple college and university campuses in Conway. In the last triennium, the congregation has taken part in the District's pilot program of Generation 2 Generation family ministry. The congregation is looking forward to constructing future facilities to assist its mission and ministry as "A Family Gathered Around Christ to Eternally Influence Our Community." The congregation has also been faithfully giving towards their "inside-out" capital campaign, which they initiated in partnership with LCEF's Capital Funding Services. During the pandemic, Peace began live-streaming its worship services, which have been viewed not only locally, but also in various places around our world-wide community. Praise the Lord! Since the pandemic

began in 2020, Peace and St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Conway, have also shared the online worship services and participated together in drive-up communion at Peace.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Conway (1998) The congregation has been in a pastoral vacancy since September 2019, and The Reverend John Gierke has been serving as vacancy pastor for St. Matthew since then. Even though challenged by a vacancy and the pandemic, the congregation is tight-knit and strong-in-heart as they look forward to the next steps in their mission and ministry of “Reaching the Lost and Feeding the Found through God’s Word.” While the pandemic curtailed a planned “Journey to the Manger” devotional walk-through of St. Matthew’s facility in 2020, the congregation hopes to offer a pandemic-free devotional walk to Bethlehem on their campus in 2021, inviting members and community members alike to “worship the newborn King!” Various St. Matthew members also joined some of Peace’s members in a special Christmas Eve 2020 video broadcast on YouTube by the two congregations.

Christ, Little Rock (1980) The congregation gives praise and thanks to God for the life and ministry of The Reverend Dan Hauser who served Christ Little Rock for the last 8 years. Reverend Hauser accepted a call from Holy Cross Lutheran, Indianapolis, Indiana, Indiana District in November 2020. The congregation is currently calling to fill the position of Lead Pastor. Even so, they are presently being served by The Reverend Dr. Leroy Leach, The Reverend John Mathis and Daniel Bodemann, DPM.

Our Shepherd, Searcy (1981) has been served by The Reverend Neil Vanderbush since late 2019. The congregation remains strong in the Lord as they focus on Word and Sacrament ministry and growing in discipleship. In addition, they are focusing their efforts to reestablish a strong children’s ministry along with a robust and complementary music ministry.

The Little Rock - South Circuit

The Reverend Kent Schaaf, **Grace Lutheran Church-Little Rock**, serves as the Circuit Visitor for the Little Rock - South Circuit. He was appointed to that position after Reverend Michael Schleider took a call to Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, South Wisconsin District. The Little Rock - South Circuit takes in the smaller communities of Malvern and Alexander as well as the retirement communities of Hot Springs and Hot Springs Village. In addition, the larger urban areas of Little Rock complete this circuit.

Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock (1941) has been served by The Reverend Kent Schaaf since July of 2020. Grace has seen some major changes especially within the last 2 years. In 2020 their long-time pastor, The Reverend Jim Walter, retired on May 3 after serving the congregation for 25 years. Grace called a new pastor, The Reverend Kent Schaaf who came in July 2020 after serving as Administrative Pastor at Mount Olive Lutheran Church and Christian Day School in Milwaukee, WI. Sadly, later in 2020 Pastor Walter became ill and was hospitalized for a lengthy time. He passed away on December 2, 2020 and entered into the eternal rest in Christ Jesus. This loss has made things difficult for Grace especially during this pandemic and not being able to give Pastor Walter a proper farewell. However, they move forward in the hope of the resurrection of all flesh and we will all see Pastor Walter again on the last day. Grace is currently putting together a church remodel project that was a long-time dream of Pastor Walter’s and they anticipate this happening in 2021. In February of 2021 the long-time secretary, Pat Funk retired after 17 years of service. Grace created a new position of “Church Administrator” and hired Monica Whitfield as the new administrator. She will begin to streamline and digitize the church office and communications. She is a tremendous addition to their staff. Grace continues to move forward with its varied ministries to the Little Rock community. The early childhood center has withstood the brunt of Covid-19 and has been able to remain open to serve the little children. The early childhood numbers have been down, but we are starting to see a gradual increase. In addition, Grace has called its first ever deaconess to serve part-time. Dcns. Eileen Esget comes to us from Hot Springs Village, AR and is a recent graduate of CTSEFW. She brings an expansion of ministry opportunities that will be based on both in-reach and outreach. Primarily she will be working with women’s ministries which includes Bible study, visitation, the establishment of a Grief Support Group and a new coalition working side by side with the Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Grace has expanded its Bible classes from 2 per week to 6 and is looking for new opportunities for mercy and outreach in the greater Little Rock area.

First Lutheran Church, Benton (1960) has been served by The Reverend Jim Burns since 2002. Over the last year, First has continued to meet for in-person worship while simultaneously developing a robust online streaming capability to care for those who, due to COVID, were unable to attend. They began live streaming with smart phones and cellular service, which was better than nothing. But once it became clear how many were following their services, they upgraded to a more adequate high speed internet connection, with cameras and other video equipment. Money was spent to do this, and a lot of time and energy as well. As in all congregations, attendance dipped when the virus first hit, then it began to return to more normal numbers toward the end of 2020 as COVID restrictions loosened. First Lutheran gained members over the last year and haven't lost any. According to Pastor Burns, the offerings have been very good – better, in fact, than they were before the virus hit! All in all, First has grown a substantial online community that regularly follows the worship and teaching in the congregation, including many who are not members, and some who don't even live in the state. All services are now live streamed along with Bible classes to Facebook and then archived to Facebook and YouTube.

Friends in Christ Lutheran Church, Bryant (1999) is served by The Reverend Emil Woerner. Reverend Woerner has been at Friends in Christ since his installation in 2009. The ministries continue to grow. The Kids Closet community outreach is a blessing to needy children. It has been expanded, in fact, tripled in size, to accommodate more clothing, some household items, and now some baby clothes and necessities. Approximately 500 children a year benefit from this ministry by receiving free clothing and necessities. Friends in Christ has also started a sewing ministry, "Squares with Prayers," which meets weekly to sew quilts and blankets, which are given to nursing homes, hospice, and the Kids Closet and others as needed. Due to the pandemic, Friends in Christ was able to start two Facebook livestream worship services, which have a good viewership. The ladies Christmas Candlelight Dinner assembles 50 blessings bags each year to distribute to hospice and the Kids Closet. Their youth attended the Nation Youth Gathering in Minneapolis in 2019, and regularly attends retreats at Camp Trinity on Petit Jean mountain. They also continue to host, "Toy Troopers," and hold an Oktoberfest each year.

St. Luke Lutheran Church, Malvern (1965) has been served by The Reverend Henry Thompson for the last 3 years since his ordination (2018) and for the previous 10 years as their Deacon. The people of St. Luke continue to serve their community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ even as they gather around Word and Sacrament each week for their life and strength in the Lord.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Avilla (1881) is currently being served by The Reverend Dr. Wes Toncre. After the loss of their 125-year-old sanctuary and office to a fire in 2017, the congregation was able to rebuild and dedicate a new office, food pantry, clothes closet, quilting room, and much needed storage through the grace of the Lord. They have continued with multiple local outreach programs, and even expanded their outreach traveling to a Lutheran seminary in Kenya, Africa. Through this mission effort, roads were built, the seminary library was organized and the students received formal instruction on Lutheran doctrine from The Reverend Michael Schleider who took a call to Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, South Wisconsin District. During the pandemic Zion continued to worship every Sunday even as they were able to reach the homebound through live streaming of their services. Zion continues to add new members to their congregation and new students to their school.

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Alexander (1880) has remained vacant. However, The Reverend Steve Teske has assisted them with their services over the past several years. While the congregation is small, they are strong in the Lord and a place of hope and comfort for the community.

Community of Faith, Little Rock (1997) is being served by Randall Lewis. Randall has been going through the SMP program and is expected to be ordained later this year. With his installation soon to come, Community of Faith will be a strong Lutheran voice in the community and surrounding area.

First Lutheran Church, Hot Springs (1917) The Reverend Jonathan Beyer has served for 27 of his 36 years in the ministry at First Lutheran. With the blessings that they receive through the means of grace, they return those blessings to the community in Hot Springs. Through worship online and in person the Gospel is proclaimed.

Through their different avenues of outreach, they approach others with love, peace, patients and kindness which offers the love of God in Christ Jesus.

LakePointe City Church, Hot Springs (2005) has been served since its beginning by its mission planter The Reverend Greg Bearss. They continue to reach out to the community in various ways while seeking the lost in mission to Christ.

Faith Lutheran Church, Hot Springs Village (1986) is served by The Reverend Robert Benke who has served in the ministry for over 43 years. Faith is a very active congregation with a strong LWML. They are faithful in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the community that they serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Kevin Conger
Mid-South District Vice President, Region Two



REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR REGION THREE

Since I am termed out this convention, let me just say that it has been a tremendous blessing and privilege to have worked with many congregations in Region Three within the Mid-South District for the past nine years. Serving as Board of Directors Chairman with President Roger Paavola during that time has been a joyful and meaningful experience as we have sought the very best for God's Kingdom and His people through our shared ministries in the Mid-South. Below you will find just a few examples of the powerful ministry of congregations in Region Three. Though I asked to hear from everyone, I include below only the ones who must have had too much time on their hands and actually responded! May God continue to bless our efforts led by His Spirit, and may the Gospel be shared in winsome ways to both those who love Him and to those who are lost without Him. Rev. Charles Neugebauer

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis TN

CTK has had a remarkable three years since our last convention made exciting and challenging by last year's Covid pandemic and by our very large and dynamic ministry administration building project that took over our entire CTK Church and School campus. Thanks to many CTK faithful servants of Jesus we have been able to carefully continue to worship and serve our community very well and without interruption. Our great CTK teachers and kids have also met the challenge and have been able to attend school in person throughout this past year thanks to various protocols put into place by our fearless Principal. CTK's future is in God's hands and He is ready to ROCK!

Beautiful Savior, Olive Branch, MS

- On July 25, 2020, Rev. Sawyer Meyers was ordained and installed at Beautiful Savior. He is called as missionary-at-large for the Mid-South District and is serving BSLC as pastor in a partnership with the district to revitalize BSLC.
- BSLC has worked hard with the COMPASS team at the district to resolve any issues revealed during their visit.
- In the last year, BSLC has worked diligently to improve its worship space and experience by returning to its roots in traditional Lutheran worship. They returned the sanctuary to its original design and seating arrangement. They now celebrate a weekly Divine Service according to The Lutheran Service Book and its rubrics. A member also graciously made a credence table to assist in these efforts. BSLC is thrilled to return to her roots and to offer a uniquely Lutheran experience in an otherwise non-Lutheran community. Word and Sacrament ministry abound at BSLC.
- A core group of members has faithfully gathered for a weeknight Bible Study and attendance at Sunday morning Bible Study has also grown. In the last year, BSLC has studied the Catechism, the Liturgy, Lutheran Evangelism, and Bible History Basics.
- In the last year, Christ has blessed BSLC with two baptisms and three new members.
- BSLC is looking forward to all of its opportunities for growth and new ministries in the coming months and years.

Cross of Calvary Lutheran, Memphis, TN

Since the onset of the Covid-19 Virus, Cross of Calvary Lutheran Church of Memphis has been meeting virtually. The Sunday service is recorded in advance and uploaded on both Facebook and YouTube Saturday afternoon. Our Sunday Bible study is conducted via Zoom every Sunday at 9:00am. During the fair weather, we conduct an outdoor communion worship once a month. During inclement weather, communion is by appointment one Saturday a month. We continue to maintain contact with telephone calls, and Small group gatherings. Currently, we are discussing ways to better connect with our greater Memphis community. Pastor Belisle will encourage the congregation to help with a community needs assessment. Once the assessment is in progress, it is our hope that we will identify families and individuals with whom we can develop long term relationships and share the gospel

of Jesus Christ in word and in deed. Once we are able to gather again, we hope to play a greater role in community events. One growth area for us is youth work in the face of the current pandemic. We are currently examining different ideas and models.

Grace Lutheran, Murfreesboro, TN

Contrary to the news, COVID-19 has not shut mission and ministry down. Yes, we are worshipping groups at 50% capacity. God is still at work through the Word and His people. We continue to have visitors on Sundays. For 2020, God has blessed us with an income higher than the adopted budget. Yes, we spent less than projected and ended up with \$39,000 to the good. God's work can be budget friendly. People sharing and caring because of Jesus.

Redeemer Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN

In thanksgiving for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, the saints of God at Redeemer raised funds for a sanctuary and narthex renovation. This renovation was completed in October 2018, one year after the 500th Anniversary. Highlights of the project include a five-foot, carved corpus added to the large cross on the back of the chancel wall; two sixteen-foot, stained glass windows added to the chancel with images explaining the second article of the Creed and the name of the church (Redeemer); new altar rail; decorative ceiling beams; chancel and nave flooring; pendant lighting; speakers; raised narthex ceiling; narthex flooring. Architect and artist recommendations are available from Pastor Young. The saints at Redeemer continue to delight in observing the historic liturgy, and they continue to support missions that proclaim the Gospel.

Holy Trinity Lutheran, Bowling Green, KY

Holy Trinity has been blessed beyond measure during these difficult times. Our school has had record growth and continues to grow for the coming school year. Our school has now operated in the black for over five years in a row. On the church front we are expanding our staff to include DCE Intern, Jonah Kaufmann. Jonah has been with us for the past year and we are very excited to add him to the staff. The international ministry continues to grow with both the Burmese and the African congregations growing. We are very thankful that so much good has come out of these days of Covid.

GracePoint Lutheran, Munford, TN

The winter quarter of 2020/2021 has been strong. Although we continue to experience our share of pandemic-related challenges, our gracious God continues to bring blessing and our numbers continue to move in the right direction. We have gained several new members and we are experiencing a strong increase in general offering for 2021. We had a strong turnout for our first children's Christmas program at our new location. We received our latest new member class of 9 people into membership on 1/10/21. We are scheduled to baptize 3 people on 2/14/21.

Grace Celebration, Cordova, TN

Grace Celebration has been "Moving Forward" by God's grace and power these past 3 years. A new partnership with the YMCA has resulted in a full Preschool & Daycare ministry with over 85 children enrolled. A new Senior Pastor, Rev. Dr. Terry Tieman, has led the congregation into a new Outreach & Discipleship process that has been blessed with growth in worship attendance, membership, and Discovery Bible Studies started in and beyond Shelby County. In addition, Grace has started several other new ministries, including a monthly Super Saturday worship service, a Food Pantry, sponsorship of Riverwood Elementary School, and an annual Discipleship Conference in partnership with Transforming Churches Network (TCN).

Ascension Lutheran, Madison, TN

Despite limitations during the pandemic, the Spirit has drawn 16 new members (10% of membership) to Ascension, Madison over the past year. In addition, a partnership with The Edison School for children with learning differences has filled a 10-year vacant facility, while opening an opportunity for the church to share the gospel with families in the Nashville area. God is good!

St. John Lutheran Church, Burns, TN

Rev. Nathan Jansen reports that St. John Lutheran Church has made it a priority to be a viable gospel-presence in their community during and coming out of the pandemic days. We have finished the addition of our family life center, so we look forward to how it can be used in furthering our ministry. We continue to have a relationship with the American Red Cross and the YMCA. Recently we developed a relationship with Tennessee Baby Safe Court of Dickson County providing needed space for families to meet. Also, we began to be active with the new middle school in Burns as we provided lunch sacks for the boys and girls basketball teams on their away games. The restrictions of the pandemic slowed this down but we are looking forward to renewing this relationship next season. This summer we are beginning a summer reading program for elementary students who have fallen behind in their reading skills. The Discipleship board of St. John has been active in exploring more opportunities to share and grow the outreach ministry of St. John.

Grace Lutheran, Clarksville, TN

Grace was one to the very few congregations that did not shut down or suspend services in 2020 even though this often required as many as 12-14 services a Sunday – running simultaneously in the Chapel and main Sanctuary to accommodate size limitations. With one pastor in each location, our Cantor ran back and forth so that each could sing at least a hymn. We also found a way to have Vacation Bible School in August, the annual Yard Sale, the Church Picnic, and our Concert series – safe but open and welcoming all who attended. In February of 2021, we welcomed nearly 30 new members – a sign that the work of the Kingdom continues to go on!

Trinity Lutheran Church, Gallatin, TN

Trinity continues to faithfully serve the Lord and His people with God's unchanging Word and Sacraments. We rejoice and give thanks that the Lord of the Harvest continues to enlarge His flock each year as He calls, gathers, and enlightens by His means of grace. Trinity has been blessed to continue renovations to its building, parking lot, and church signage and are moving forward with upgrading lighting, audio, and video equipment to improve its online presence for those who are unable to attend in person.

Our Savior Lutheran, Nashville, TN

Last year we Called a Director of Family Life Ministries, Matthew Fischer. We also Called a Director of Children and Youth Ministries, Celia Walkowicz. We also recently adopted a new 3-5 year plan for the congregation that will include the Calling of an Associate Pastor and the start of a third worship service onsite and an auxiliary campus at a location to be determined.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Rev. Charles Neugebauer
Mid-South District Vice President, Region Three**



REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR REGION FOUR

I have had the privilege of serving as Vice President of Region 4. The Region is blessed to have Mark Rhoads as Circuit Visitor of the Chattanooga Circuit; Robert Portier as Circuit Visitor of the Knoxville Circuit; and Steve Harmon as Circuit Visitor of the Tri-Cities Circuit.

First Lutheran in Chattanooga welcomed new Pastor Donald Welmer in October 2020. Mr. David Topp was installed as Principal of Belvoir Christian Academy and has guided the school into new areas. In June 2021 First bid a gracious and thankful farewell to retiring teachers, Frank and Randi Streufert who faithfully served for 33 years at First.

Cross of Christ Lutheran is served by Pastor Barry Hildebrandt. Like many of our congregations they turned to online services and have welcomed 8 new members as a result of that experience. The 12th son of the congregation in the last 26 years is a student at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Good Shepherd Lutheran in Chattanooga began a Saturday evening outreach service naming it “Grace Place,” and called Pastor Ed Rosser to serve that ministry. They installed Katie Baumann as DCE for education and youth ministry as well as teaching religion class at Belvoir Christian Academy. Wes Keane entered the SMP program and serves in vicarage status under the mentorship of Pastor Chris Sheets. They began a new ministry to the homeless working with the Chattanooga Community Kitchen.

St. Philip Lutheran is served by Pastor Joe Jacks. COVID-19 challenged them to continue serving the congregation.

Bridge City Community continues to serve people in the Alton Park area of Chattanooga under the leadership of Pastor Josh Woodrow. They have their own facility now and reopened for in person worship on Easter Sunday.

First Lutheran in Cleveland is served by Pastor Robert Seaton. COVID-19 has kept them from in-person worship.

Athens Lutheran is served by Pastor Don Coulter. They have had visitors from the Episcopal congregation and will welcome a family of ten into membership on Easter. Two years ago, they began doing devotions at two local nursing homes reaching about 60 people every two weeks with the Gospel. They are sponsoring The Lutheran Hour on a local radio station.

Prince of Peace Lutheran in Dayton is served by Pastor Tim Matthews. In the summers of 2018 and 2019 they did a door-to-door canvassing effort named “Joybells”, and contacted 1087 homes making contacts and offering prayer. COVID-19 stopped that in 2020. In 2020 they began a Christian Apologetics class to prepare and equip youth and members to share their faith.

Christ our Savior Lutheran in Loudon is served by Pastor Brian Truog and Pastor Mark Rhoads. They enhanced their online presence allowing members and the community to join their worship. They installed stained glass over the cross windows in the sanctuary proclaiming the crucified Christ as the Vine that offers new life to all.

Redeemer Lutheran in Harriman is served by Pastor Michael Miller. This small but healthy congregation suspended in-person worship for two months which led the congregation to have a Sunday morning presence on Facebook that continues today.

Our Savior Lutheran in Morristown and Christ of the Cumberland in Harrogate are served by Pastor Gordon Smith. The pandemic moved Our Savior to begin recording services for shut-ins, and that led to livestreaming the services.

Grace Lutheran in Knoxville is served by Pastor Rich Elseroad. In 2019 DCE Ashley Myers was installed. In 2019 Pastor Danny Anderson was installed. COVID-19 caused adjustments, and they became an online church. In June they were back in church, attendance grew to 60% of pre-pandemic attendance, and offerings remained very well in support of the Lord's work.

First Lutheran in Knoxville welcomed new Pastor Ed Maanum in May of 2020. In May 2019 Jessie Irwin was installed as their called principal. They celebrated 10 years of service for four of their teachers. During the Reformation Service in 2019 they celebrated the 150th anniversary of the congregation.

Christus Victor Lutheran in Knoxville is served by Pastor Bill Ondracka.

The Point Lutheran in Knoxville pastored by Adam Woldt faced a new challenge when theaters were closed due to COVID-19. The Lord has since blessed them with a facility from which to continue their ministry.

Praise Lutheran in Maryville shepherded by Pastor Derek Roberts is moving forward with plans for a new campus with a new sanctuary seating 300, space for choir and instruments, narthex, nursery, classrooms, and offices, new use of the current facility as a social hall, parking lot, covered drop-off, and tower pointing to heaven. LCEF is working with them as they look to proclaim Christ the Lord and Savior from their location.

Faith Lutheran in Oak Ridge is served by Pastor Kirk Abatelli. They continue in outreach ministry in their community.

St. Paul Lutheran in Sevierville is served by Pastor Robert Portier. They continue to reach out in the tourist area where they are located and were a model of how to conduct in-person worship during the pandemic.

Celebration Lutheran in Seymour is served by Pastor Ray Krieg. The congregation moved from a modified residence to an office building which they adapted to be their worship center. This congregation consists mostly of retirees. It is faithful in gathering around Word and Sacraments.

Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Sharps Chapel is served by Pastor Paul Kritsch. In April of this year they dedicated their new Sanctuary and support areas. They continue with their community services and outreach.

St. Paul Lutheran in Wartburg is served by Pastor David Graves. Since the last convention in 2018 St. Paul Lutheran Church continues to see growth and involvement in the community. From 2018 to 2019 the congregation added more members via conversion mostly from disaffected independent Baptist backgrounds. In 2019 the congregation partnered with Childhood Advocacy of the 9th Judicial Circuit to provide a space on our campus for forensic interviews for minors who have been abused. St. Paul Lutheran was chosen because of its reputation as being a safe place for children because of its 40+ year preschool still thriving today.

Grace Lutheran in Abingdon, VA is served by Deacon Steve Meier. They never closed for COVID-19, held worship with celebration of the Lord's Supper weekly, served a local food pantry, and put a new roof on the fellowship hall, and maintained the facility.

Redeemer Lutheran in Elizabethton is served by Pastor Mark Kophamer. They continued with in person worship all year and have focused on outreach in the community making door to door visits, and seeing visitors come in. They are working to get brochures to every house in Elizabethton by this fall.

Concordia Lutheran in Kingsport served by Pastor Paul Becker celebrated their 60th anniversary in October of 2019 as well as the 25th anniversary of their pastor's service to the congregation. They have had several young couples join the congregation, kept the doors open throughout 2020, and reached a wider audience via live streaming.

Bethlehem Lutheran in Johnson City is served by Pastor Steve Harmon. They used the blessing of gifted members to enable live-streaming, and to connect via social media with the community. They purchased additional property next to the church to provide additional parking and space for a new office facility. They also established an endowment fund to provide support to future ministries.

The ministry in Hawkins County mourned the death of Deacon Thomas Kyner who was called by the Lord to Himself. Pastor John Frietag reports they are getting wonderful pulpit help from local circuit pastors and Word and sacramental worship continues weekly.

There are a number of retired pastors in both of these Circuits who have been ready and willing to assist when needed. We are thankful to the Lord for their services.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Gilbert H. Pingel

Mid-South District Vice-President, Region Four



REPORT OF THE DISTRICT SECRETARY ON NOMINATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT PRESIDENT

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, member congregations of the District received the official notices and ballots for nominations for the Office of District President before January 1, 2021, “six months prior to the opening date of the convention.” [Bylaw 8.3.1 (b)] Each member congregation was “entitled to nominate from the clergy roster of the Synod two ministers of religion—ordained as candidates for president of the district.” [Bylaw 8.3.1 (a)].

Twenty (20) congregations in the district nominated candidates and mailed them by or on the published postmark deadline of March 1, 2021, “four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.” [Bylaw 8.3.1(b)]. One (1) additional congregation submitted a nomination postmarked on March 8, 2021, which was ruled invalid due to the stated deadline. The nominee was already on the list of nominees, so the congregation can be assured that their nominee listed was duly nominated. There were seven (7) rostered clergy who received at least one nomination for the Office of District President for the 2021-2025 term of office. **[Normally, the term of office would be a three-year term. However, due to the impact of the Coronavirus-19 pandemic and its challenges for gathering in districts nationwide, the vote of the Synod’s congregations finalized early in 2021 prolonged the districts’ and Synod’s convention cycle into 2022/2023, respectively.]** Thus, the official tally [Bylaw 8.3.1 (c)] is reported alphabetically as:

The Reverend Kevin R. Conger, Jacksonville, AR (1)
The Reverend Richard M. Elseroad, Knoxville, TN (1)
The Reverend John P. Gierke, Conway, AR (1)
The Reverend Paul E. Hass, Bella Vista, AR (1)
The Reverend Roger C. Paavola, Bartlett, TN (17)
The Reverend Lane B. Reuter, Thompsons Station, TN (1)
The Reverend William B. Wagner, Jr., Thompsons Station, TN (1)

Note: The number in the parenthesis is the number of official nominations each individual received.

According to District Bylaw 8.3.1 (d), the candidates for the Office of District President “shall be the five (5) ministers of religion—ordained receiving the highest number of votes on the nominating ballots of the congregations. The secretary of the district shall notify each of their nomination.” Also, “In the event of a tie for the fifth (5th) position among the candidates, all names involved in the tie shall be included as candidates.” (Bylaw 8.3.1 (g))

As a result of a tie from the second through fifth position of the top nominees, the top seven (7) nominees were then contacted and requested to return written approval, within ten (10) days of notification, of their willingness to have their name included on the convention ballot. [Bylaw 8.3.1 (e)]

Written response was received by all of the nominees within their respective ten-day notification period of time. Of these seven nominees, **Reverend Paavola** and **Reverend Reuter** consented to having their names on the convention ballot as candidates for the Office of District President for the 2021-2025 term of office. **Reverend Conger, Reverend Elseroad, Reverend Gierke, Reverend Hass, and Reverend Wagner** respectfully declined having their names included on the ballot as candidates for the Office of District President for the 2021-2025 term of office.

According to Bylaw 8.3.1 (f), “In the event of death, declination, or unavailability of any candidate, the nominee having the next highest number of votes shall be a candidate, upon his approval in writing.” As

there were no more nominees to notify after the aforementioned declinations, there was no need to contact further nominees to fill out the top five ballot positions.

Therefore, at the Mid-South District Convention scheduled for July 1-3, 2021 in Memphis, TN, there will be two ordained candidates listed on the ballot for election for the Office of District President. The official candidates for the Office of District President of the Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod during the four-year term of 2021-2025 are:

The Reverend Dr. Roger C. Paavola, Bartlett, TN
The Reverend Lane B. Reuter, Thompsons Station, TN

A brief biographical synopsis follows for each of the two candidates with the greatest number of votes in nomination and who have given their consent to serve if elected to the Office of District President of the Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. [Bylaw 8.3.1 (h)]

Finally, Bylaw 8.3.1 (i) states: “The convention shall have the right to alter the slate with floor nominations as provided in the bylaws.” (*referring to Bylaw 8.1.4: “The district, assembled in convention, shall have the right to alter the slates of nominees, and voting delegates may make additional nominations from the floor with the prior consent of the nominee(s) and pertinent information about the nominee(s) provided in writing.”*)

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. John P. Gierke
District Secretary



REPORT OF THE DISTRICT SECRETARY BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT PRESIDENT

THE REVEREND DR. ROGER C. PAAVOLA

Address: 6062 Daybreak Drive
Bartlett, TN 38135

Educational Background: BA, Public Administration, University of Minnesota—Duluth (1969); MBA, Healthcare Administration, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (1977); MDIV, Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catherines, Ontario, Canada (1997); DMIN, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana (2009)

Member of Synod Congregations: 73 years

Home Congregation: Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN

Synod Experience: Council of Presidents (COP)/District President (2012-present); Concordia Plan Services Board (2010-present); Board of Regents, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN (CTSFW); Synod Convention Floor Committee (conventions, 3; chair, 2)

District Experience: District President (2012-present); Secretary/2nd Vice-President (2009-2012); Small and Rural Congregation Committee & Mission Action Council—chairs

Congregational Experience: Pastor, Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN (2000-2012); Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Beausejour, Manitoba, Canada (1997-2000).

Community and Other Experience: Hospital CEO (1971-1992); Adjunct Faculty, Bemidji State University; served on numerous civic boards and councils: Regional Health Agency, hospital association legislative council, board for the Communications Services to the Deaf, chairman for a state safety council; Habitat for Humanity; American Cancer Society; American Red Cross; lecturer on business, management, and Small Church Forums; Boy Scouts (1969-1983); published four books and several articles with two more books in process: *Administration in the Parish* for CTSFW and Concordia Publishing House; and *The Jerusalem Temple* for Concordia Theological Seminary, Ontario. He established C.A.R, COMPASS and *IMPACT* and will lead the Family Seminar at the Lutheran Retreat Center in New Hampshire scheduled for this year.

Brief Personal Statement: Partnering with our congregations and schools, the Mid-South District will continue to seek the lost, establish strengthening of all congregations, recruit and support professional church workers, and offer essential support services to our partner congregations, professional church workers and communities. Our partnership will embrace the sacred doctrine of the Church and work together to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to encourage personal witnessing and grow new ministries as we work together in the Kingdom of Christ Jesus.

THE REVEREND LANE B. REUTER

Address: 2810 Kaye Drive
Thompsons Station, TN 37179

Educational Background: BA, History, University of Alabama—Birmingham, (1991); MDIV, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (1996)

Member of Synod Congregations: 52 years

Home Congregation: Our Savior Lutheran Church & Academy, Nashville, TN

Synod Experience: Convention Delegate (2013)

District Experience: District Secretary, MDS Board of Directors (2012-2015); Elections Committee, Southern District (1996)

Congregational Experience: Senior Pastor, Our Savior Lutheran Church & Academy (2014-present); Senior Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN (2007-2014); Associate Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN (2000-2007); Pastor, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS (1998-2000); Assistant Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Destin, FL (1996-1998)

Community and Other Experience: Police & Fire Outreach; Room In the Inn Homeless Ministry; Trinity/HOPE Outreach; Mission trips to Columbia, Mexico, Peru, Haiti, Guatemala, Bangladesh.

Brief Personal Statement: I want to see our church body and District continue to be the leader in faithfulness to the Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions. This means everything we do as a missional and confessional church is about Jesus Christ crucified and risen, and sharing that message in our communities and world. I would like to see our District be the leader in outreach, evangelism, revitalization of existing congregations and planting of new ones. In addition, I would emphasize the recruitment of pastors to our District that would help further that vision.

REPORT OF THE DISTRICT SECRETARY ON NOMINATIONS FOR THE OFFICES OF REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, member congregations of the District received the official notices and ballots for nominations for the Office of Regional Vice-President before January 1, 2021, “six months prior to the opening date of the convention.” [Bylaw 8.3.2.1 (b)]. Each member congregation was “given opportunity to nominate two ministers of religion—ordained from the clergy roster of the district with membership in a congregation in its designated region as candidates for regional vice-president.” [Bylaw 8.3.2.1 (a)].

Eighteen (18) congregations from the four electoral regions submitted nominations of at least one candidate and mailed them by or on the published postmark deadline of March 1, 2021, “four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.” [Bylaw 8.3.2.1 (b)]

The nominees by electoral region are listed below. Those who accepted nomination and will appear on the initial ballot for each region are in bold type.

Region 1 - Fayetteville, Fort Smith and Jonesboro Circuits

Total Number of Nominating Ballots Submitted: 4

<u>Nominee:</u>	<u>Number of Nominations</u>	<u>Acceptance/Declination</u>
The Reverend Eric A. Longman	1	Accepted
The Reverend Joshua J. Willadsen	2	Accepted
<i>The Reverend Jason P. Zirbel</i>	1	Respectfully Declined
The Reverend William F. Zwick	2	Accepted

Region 2 – Little Rock-North, Little Rock-South, and Stuttgart Circuits

Total Number of Nominating Ballots Submitted: 7

<u>Nominee:</u>	<u>Number of Nominations</u>	<u>Acceptance/Declination</u>
* The Reverend Kevin R. Conger	7	Accepted

Region 3 – Memphis, Mid-Tennessee, Nashville, and Paducah Circuits

Total Number of Nominating Ballots Submitted: 4

<u>Nominee:</u>	<u>Number of Nominations</u>	<u>Acceptance/Declination</u>
<i>The Reverend Mark D. Goble</i>	1	Respectfully Declined
The Reverend Larry A. Peters	1	Accepted
The Reverend Lane B. Reuter	2	Accepted
The Reverend Kenneth B. Shaw	1	Accepted

Region 4 – Chattanooga, Johnson City, and Knoxville Circuits

Total Number of Nominating Ballots Submitted: 3

<u>Nominee:</u>	<u>Number of Nominations</u>	<u>Acceptance/Declination</u>
<i>The Reverend David W. Graves</i>	1	Respectfully Declined
The Reverend Michael M. Miller	1	Accepted
The Reverend Robert M. Portier	1	Accepted
The Reverend Brian M. Truog	2	Accepted

According to Bylaw 8.3.2.1(d), the names of the five ministers of religion—ordained residing within the boundaries of each geographic region who receive the most nominating votes, and who give their consent to serve if elected, shall form the slate from which the district convention shall select by majority vote each regional vice-president. In the event of a tie for the final candidate position, all names involved in the tie shall be included as candidates. For the regional vice-presidential ballots, according to Bylaw 8.3.2.1(f), *“no opportunity shall be provided for additional nominations from the floor of the convention.”*

Upon the election of the regional vice-presidents, a final election will take place ranking the vice-presidents by separate ballots with a simple majority of voting delegates determining the first, second, third, and fourth vice-presidents in line of succession. [Bylaw 8.3.2.1(h)]

The Elections Committee will present these final ballots at the convention.

The biographical synopses submitted by the candidates are on the following pages, by region and in alphabetical order.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. John P. Gierke
District Secretary



BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICES OF REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT

REGION 1

REV. ERIC A. LONGMAN

Address: 6508 W. Coat Brg
Rogers, AR 72758

Educational Background: BA, Political Science, Georgia State University (1992); MDIV, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (2015)

Member of Synod Congregations: 20 years

Home Congregation: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Rogers, AR

District Experience: Floor Committee for Constitutional Restructuring, Missouri District (2018)

Congregational Experience: Pastor, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Rogers, AR (2019 – present); Associate Pastor of “Building” (Outreach) St. Paul Lutheran Church, Jackson, MO (2015-2019); Vicar, Immanuel Lutheran Church, St. Charles, MO (2013-2014); Field Worker, Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO (2011-2013); Elder/Head Elder, Rivercliff Lutheran Church, Sandy Springs, GA (2004-2011); Elder, Loving Shepherd Lutheran Church, Dallas, GA (1999-2003)

Community and Other Experience: Jackson Community Outreach Board, Jackson, MO (2015-2019); Founding Member, MinistryFocus (a charity that helps called workers with debt) (2012-present)

Brief Personal Statement: I am humbled and honored by the opportunity to serve in the position of Regional Vice-President. As a second-career pastor who spent over twenty years in the business world, I am able to bring a variety of useful experiences and talents to bear as an advisor and assistant to our District President. I am excited about all of the amazing things the Holy Spirit is doing in the Mid-South District and look forward to “mutually encouraging each other’s faith.” (Rom. 1:12) in our work and worship.

REV. JOSHUA J. WILLADSEN

Address: 8012 Williamsburg Road
Fort Smith, AR 72903

Educational Background: BA, University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire, WI; MDIV, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (2004)

Member of Synod Congregations: 44 years

Home Congregation: Bethel Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR

Synod Experience: Circuit Visitor, Fort Smith Circuit (2018-present); Convention Delegate (2010, 2016); Floor Committee 11 Member – Structure & Administration (2016)

District Experience: Pastoral Counselor for Mid-South LWML District (2014-2016)

Congregational Experience: Pastor, Bethel Lutheran Church, Ft. Smith, AR (2013-present); Pastor/Founding Pastor, Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, Oakland, TN (2004-2013)

Community and Other Experience: Volunteer Reynolds Cancer Support House (2014-present); President, Oakland Regional Chamber of Commerce (2010); Board of Directors, Oakland Regional Chamber of Commerce (2009-2011)

Brief Personal Statement: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, Amen!

REV. WILLIAM F. ZWICK

Address: 512 S. Chestnut St.
Harrison, AR 72601

Educational Background: BA (1994), JD (1999), Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN; MDIV, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN (MAPS) (2019)

Member of Synod Congregations: 49 years

Home Congregation: First Lutheran Church, Harrison, AR

Synod Experience: LCMS Board for International Mission (2020-present); Convention delegate (2016)

District Experience: COMPASS Team (2020-present); Indiana District Convention delegate (2011)

Congregational Experience: Pastor, First Lutheran Church, Harrison, AR (2019-present; Vicar, 2018-2019); Elder chairman (2013-2016); Elder (2006-2013); President (2011); Vice-President (2010) – Christ Lutheran Church, Noblesville, IN

Community and Other Experience: Licensed Indiana Attorney (1999-present; inactive since 2016); Noblesville Rotary (Youth Exchange Officer, 2015-2016; Board of Directors 2014-2016); Full or part-time prosecutor (1999-2007); Adams County, IN, GOP Chairman (2003-2005); Congressman Mark Souder (1995-1996)

Brief Personal Statement: The Church is not owned by us, but Christ is the head of His Church. (Eph. 1:22-23) The Church is where *Christ’s* Word and Sacraments are rightly taught and administered as *Christ* instructs. The District and Synod exist

to help its members fulfill that Christian purpose. As a District officer, it would be my duty to help congregations and pastors to that end. That is especially important in this time where fear needs to be countered with the true eternal Hope only Christ's Word and Sacraments can provide.

REGION 2

REV. KEVIN R. CONGER

Address: 1204 Hill Street
Jacksonville, AR 72076

Educational Background: MDIV, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN (2001)

Member of Synod Congregations: 63 years

Home Congregation: Hope Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, AR

Synod Experience: Circuit Visitor (2012-January 2021); Convention Delegate (2013)

District Experience: Region 2 Vice-President (January 2021-present); Rural & Small Town Ministry Committee (RSTM) Chairman (2015-present); Mission Floor Committee Chair (2018)

Congregational Experience: Pastor, Hope Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, AR (2001-present)

Community and Other Experience: Community Action Board (C.A.B); Working with Veterans - Member of Mental Health Clinician Community Clergy Collaboration Intervention Pilot Study (2018)

Brief Personal Statement: I am humbled to serve the Church in whatever capacity I am able.

REGION 3

REV. LARRY A. PETERS

Address: 203 Rachel Ct
Clarksville, TN 37043

Educational Background: AA St. John's Winfield, KS (1974); BA Concordia Senior College, Ft. Wayne, IN (1976); MDIV, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN (1980)

Member of Synod Congregations: 66 years

Home Congregation: Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN

Synod Experience: Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) (2013-present); Circuit Visitor, Paducah Circuit (2015-present); Circuit Visitor, Atlantic District (1986-1992)

Congregational Experience: Senior Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN (1993-present); Pastor, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Cairo, NY (1980-1992)

Community and Other Experience: Chair Insight (Community Pastoral Counseling Service) (1995-2017)

Brief Personal Statement: Our District has a great history yet these are challenging times—renewing smaller parishes, planting new congregations, funding the mission, and finding ways to serve our people with God's Word and Sacraments call us to bold faithfulness, confident trust, courage to serve sacrificially, and encourage one another with the Gospel that is eternal and for all people.

REV. LANE B. REUTER

Address: 2810 Kaye Drive
Thompsons Station, TN 37179

Educational Background: BA, History, University of Alabama—Birmingham, (1991); MDIV, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (1996)

Member of Synod Congregations: 52 years

Home Congregation: Our Savior Lutheran Church & Academy, Nashville, TN

Synod Experience: Convention Delegate (2013)

District Experience: District Secretary, MDS Board of Directors (2012-2015); Elections Committee, Southern District (1996)

Congregational Experience: Senior Pastor, Our Savior Lutheran Church & Academy (2014-present); Senior Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN (2007-2014); Associate Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN (2000-2007); Pastor, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS (1998-2000); Assistant Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Destin, FL (1996-1998)

Community and Other Experience: Police & Fire Outreach; Room In the Inn Homeless Ministry; Trinity/HOPE Outreach; Mission trips to Columbia, Mexico, Peru, Haiti, Guatemala, Bangladesh.

Brief Personal Statement: I want to see our church body and District continue to be the leader in faithfulness to the Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions. This means everything we do as a missional and confessional church is about Jesus

Christ crucified and risen, and sharing that message in our communities and world. I would like to see our District be the leader in outreach, evangelism, revitalization of existing congregations and planting of new ones. In addition, I would emphasize the recruitment of pastors to our District that would help further that vision.

REV. KENNETH B. SHAW

Address: 1117 Pinnacle Way
Castalian Springs, TN 37031

Educational Background: BA, Management & Communications, Concordia University, Mequon, WI (2000); MDIV, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN (2002)

Member of Synod Congregations: 55 years

Home Congregation: Trinity Lutheran Church, Gallatin, TN

Synod Experience: LCMS Missionary to Lutheran Church in Guatemala (2001-2005); Circuit Visitor, Nashville Circuit (2015-present); Convention Delegate (2013)

District Experience: Disaster Response Committee (2006-2010); Rural & Small Town Ministry Committee (2016-2020)

Congregational Experience: Elder (1996-1999); Superintendent, Sunday School (1997-1999) – Faith Lutheran Church, Greenfield, IN

Community and Other Experience: Interim President (2012-2014), Vice-President (2008-2012) – Sumner County Long Term Recovery Committee

Brief Personal Statement: It's an honor to be nominated as a candidate for Region 3 Vice-President. I rejoice and give thanks that the Lord of the Harvest continues to work by Word and Sacrament to enlarge His flock; calling, gathering, and enlightening those living in darkness. But His Church faces tremendous pressure from the devil and the world to compromise its teachings. Thus, it would be a great privilege to help and support the District President in his task of encouraging District congregations to remain faithful and steadfast as they cling to Christ and His Word and reflect His eternal light as they share the Good News of salvation.

REGION 4

REV. MICHAEL M. MILLER

Address: 324 Sunset Lane
Harriman, TN 37748

Educational Background: BS Elementary Education, Concordia Teachers College/University, Nebraska (1982); MDIV Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (1987); DMIN Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (1995)

Member of Synod Congregations: 60 years

Home Congregation: Redeemer Lutheran Church, Harriman, TN

Synod Experience: Synod Convention Delegate (2004); Circuit Visitor, Knoxville Circuit (2009-2018)

Congregational Experience: Pastor, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Harriman, TN (1989-present)

Community and Other Experience: Co-Founder of Roane County Cooperative Ministries; Co-Founder and Board Member, Hands of Mercy Food Pantry (2003-present)

Brief Personal Statement: I have been blessed to serve in the Mid-South District and in the same congregation for more than thirty years. I am both honored and humbled to be nominated and, with the Lord's help, I will serve to the best of my ability if elected.

REV. ROBERT M. PORTIER

Address: 2070 James Road
Sevierville, TN 37876

Educational Background: Bachelor of Business Administration, National University, San Diego, CA (1988); MDIV, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN (2007)

Member of Synod Congregations: 49 years

Home Congregation: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sevierville, TN

Synod Experience: Circuit Visitor, Knoxville Circuit (2018-present); Convention Delegate (2013)

District Experience: Ministry Floor Committee Chair (2018); Administration and Finance Floor Committee Member (2012)

Congregational Experience: Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sevierville, TN (2007-present); Lay Minister, Grace Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, FL (2000-2002); Trustee (1994-1995), School Board Chair (1995-1997), Congregation President (1997) – Messiah Lutheran, Ewa Beach, HI; Evangelism Chair, San Diego, CA (1986-1988)

Community and Other Experience: Sevier County Right to Life (2006-2014); Women's Care Center Board of Directors (2012-2017), Chair (2020); United States Navy (20 years)

Brief Personal Statement: If it be the will of God I will gladly serve in whatever role I am asked, to the best of my ability.

REV. BRIAN M. TRUOG

Address: 263 Ootsima Way
Loudon, TN 37774

Educational Background: BS, Concordia, Seward, NE (1977); MDIV, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (1982); STM, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO (1983)

Member of Synod Congregations: 64 years

Home Congregation: Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, Loudon, TN

Synod Experience: Convention Delegate (1983, 2016)

District Experience: Northern Illinois District: Pastor's Conference Program Committee; Circuit Counselor

Congregational Experience: Senior Pastor, Christ Our Savior, Loudon, TN (2011-present); Senior Pastor, Cross Lutheran Church, Yorkville, IL (2002-2011); Co-Pastor, Cross Lutheran Church, Yorkville, IL (1987-2005); Pastor, Hope Lutheran Aurora, IL (1983-1987)

Community and Other Experience: Treasurer (2020), President (2018) – Loudon County Health Improvement Council (2015-present); Chamber of Commerce Ambassador (2015); Fire Department Chaplain (1987-2011)

Brief Personal Statement: None submitted

THE REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Nominations committee held one meeting on March 5, 2021.

The following slate was adopted for election at the 2021 Convention by the nominations Committee, subject to change by nominations from the floor. (* denotes incumbent)

THE NOMINEES FOR SECRETARY OF THE DISTRICT

1. ***Rev. John Gierke** (current incumbent with 9 Nominations) - Senior Pastor at Peace, Conway, AR (2002-present), Rev. Gierke is currently serving as District Secretary and Reconciler and on COMPASS teams. He has also been 2nd Vice-President, Circuit Counselor/Visitor, Convention Administration/Finance Floor Committee Chair, Constitution Committee Chair, LWML District Counselor, LLL TN District Advisor. Additionally, he has been President and Secretary of Conway Rotary Club, and has been a member of the Dickson High Noon Rotary and Board of Directors, where he also served as Rotary District 6760 Chaplain. He also served on the Conway Regional Medical Center Ethics Committee. He has also been a Trinity/HOPE Haiti mission team member. From Rev. Gierke: "It has been my privilege to serve the Mid-South District and the Synod in various roles, and as the District Secretary these previous two trienniums. The structure of the Synod and the District are to serve and help foster the mission of the Church to make disciples of all nations, and if entrusted again with this great privilege, I would continue to strive to serve with patience, humility, and integrity so trust is fostered and built with one another, walking together in Christ's bond of peace and our partnership in the Gospel."
2. **Rev. Joel Krogen** - Pastor at Hope Lutheran Church, Batesville and Zion Lutheran Church, Waldenburg, AR (2005-present). Pastoral delegate to 2019 LCMS Convention; Circuit Visitor (2015-present); Senior Surveyor for COMPASS, District LWML Junior Counselor (2020-present); LWML Zone Counselor.

THE REGIONAL NOMINEES FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DISTRICT

Commissioned Ministers of Religion

(Vote for 1 in Regions 1 & 2, and one in Regions 3 & 4)

REGIONS 1 and 2

1. ***Tessa Brasher** (current incumbent with 2 nominations) – Serving as Director of Christian Education at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lapeer, AR, Ms. Brasher has worked in multiple capacities to aid her congregation, the Mid-South District, and the Synod in improving youth, children's, and multigenerational ministry. Active in the LWML in her congregation and at the district level, she has also served as a Sunday School and VBS teacher in addition to working as a public and Lutheran school teacher in Arkansas.
2. **Samuel Fishburn** – Mr. Fishburn currently serves as Principal and Early Childhood Director at First Lutheran School in Fort Smith, AR (July 2018-present). He has also served on the Mid-South District Nominations Committee, on National Lutheran School Accreditation validation teams, and as a Sectional Presenter Missouri District Teacher Conference. From Mr. Fishburn: "I have enjoyed becoming more familiar with the Mid-South District over the past 3 years. I would consider it an honor to further serve the district in this role. I believe that our district's schools are all going through a critical

make or break period, with many current success stories, and they have a great potential for shaping the future of our district and the LCMS presence in the areas they serve. I would be honored to also be an additional voice for our schools, in addition to the entire work of the district, on the district level.”

3. **Charles Russell** (5 nominations) – Mr. Russell serves as Director of Parish Music at Grace Lutheran Church in Little Rock, AR from 2017 to the present. He is also the Director of Central Arkansas Kantorei (2018-present) and served on the Executive Committee of the Central Arkansas Chapter of the American Guild of Organists (2019-2020). From Mr. Russell: “It is incredibly humbling to be considered to serve our Mid-South District in this way. As a parish musician, I consider the gathering of God's people in worship to receive His gifts of Word and Sacrament and to respond with "shouts of thanksgiving" to be important to us as Christians. God's Word is at the center, and we joyfully share this Word in response to His undeserved love and through the Holy Spirit. It is a gift to share this news in our congregations and in our communities, recalling that we love the people whom we have been called to serve!”

REGIONS 3 and 4

1. ***Shirley Piepenbrink** (current incumbent) - A retired Lutheran School teacher and member of Immanuel Lutheran in Memphis, TN, Mrs. Piepenbrink has served on the Board of Directors from 2017 to present. She was also the LWML Mid-South District 4th Vice President. At her church she has been LWML Fellowship Chair, bell and voice choir, greeter and reader for services, teacher for Children's Church, committee member for Senior Ministry, member of WOW ministry. From Mrs. Piepenbrink: “The Mid-South District has accomplished so much work in the Lord's kingdom. As a member of the Board of Directors I can be a very small part of the future growth of our district.”

THE REGIONAL NOMINEES FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DISTRICT

Lay Persons

(Vote for 1 in each Region)

REGION 1

1. **Leo Knoernschild** – A retired Arkansas Game and Fish Wildlife biologist, Mr. Knoernschild is a member of River Valley Grace Lutheran Church in Lamar, AR. He has served his congregation as a LCEF and Tracky representative since 1975, as chairman of the Elders since 2013, as congregation president, as treasurer, and on the board of finance. He has worked in the community as a member and treasurer of the Rural Fire Department, as a member the Johnson Co. Fair (1988-2013), as a charter member of Pope & Johnson Co., and organizing the NWTF fundraising banquet (1998-2011). A lifelong Lutheran, Mr. Knoernschild is the grandchild of Charter members of St. Paul's in Lutherville established in 1882, two siblings are Lutheran School teachers, and another is a Lutheran Pastor in Canada.
2. ***Jeff Pittman** (current incumbent) – A Professor of Business Law at Arkansas State University, Mr. Pittman is a member of Pilgrim Lutheran Church in Jonesboro, AR where he has served in numerous lay positions. From Mr. Pittman: “I believe the Mid-South District is one of the finest districts in the LCMS. My vision for the next four years includes improvements in communicating the good work God is accomplishing through the district office.”

REGION 2

1. **Karilyn Brown** - A member of Hope Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, AR, Mrs. Brown has served as the congregation's Financial Secretary, a School Board member, and Building Committee Chair. Since 2015, she has been a Representative in the Arkansas House of Representatives, and she was a Justice of the Peace from 2013-2014. From Mrs. Brown: "As a lifelong Lutheran, LCMS, it would be an honor to serve the Mid-South District. I would like to see us step boldly into the future by engaging more in our communities while maintaining the integrity of our beliefs and values. People are in great spiritual need--we must reach out with a message of hope and redemption. The more people are made to feel like victims, the more they will look to government rather than to God and the abilities they are blessed with."
2. ***Marc Higgins** (current incumbent with 2 nominations) – A member of Shepherd of Peace in Maumelle, AR, Mr. Higgins has served as an elder in the congregation since 2001 and is now serving as the Chairman of the Board of Directors. He has been a Lay Member of the Mid-South Board of Directors since 2015. He volunteers with Immerse AR, a program which aids youth that have aged out of the foster care system, and The Call, that is an adoption and foster care program which requires Biblical principles in the adoption process. From Mr. Higgins: "I would like to serve this term to continue the focus and trajectory that the Mid-South District has taken over the last years. The needs of our Churches, Pastors, other professional church workers, and our laity has always been the Christ-focused mission."
3. **Jeff Roper** - A member of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Conway, AR, Mr. Roper is the owner of a medical billing company. He has served his current church as congregation president and as a treasurer and vice president of a previous congregation. He is also a member of the 2021 Mid-South District Nominations Committee.

REGION 3

1. **Doug Werth** – A retired finance professional, Mr. Werth is a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Nashville, TN. He has served as a Board member of Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation (2005 to present), and on the board of Directors of Mission of Christ Network (2015 to present). He also served on his congregation board of directors as chairman and vice chair. From Mr. Werth: "God blessed me with life experiences and training to share the Gospel around the world. I enjoy traveling, meeting new people, and sharing the Gospel."
2. ***Dr. Fred Guengerich** (current incumbent) – A professor of biochemistry at Vanderbilt University, Dr. Guengerich is a member of Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church in Nashville, TN where he has served as Church Council President and is currently Head of the Board of Elders. He has worked as part of the LCMS Commission on Theology & Church Relations (2019 to Present), the Mid-South District Board of Directors (2015- present), and the Mid-South District Constitution Committee (2012 to Present). From Dr. Guengerich: "As indicated I have served on the Board of Directors for the Past three years and understand both the blessings we have in the District and the challenges we face. I am personally committed to confessional Lutheranism in the District and Synod. If elected again, I will work to strengthen our congregations and to share the Gospel with more people."

REGION 4

1. **David Larson** – A member of Grace Lutheran in Knoxville, TN, Mr. Larson was the Founder and Leader of the Guys in the Garage men's group (2002-2018) and has served as the congregation's

Executive Director (2010-2012), as Missions Director (2012-2016), and on the Executive Board (2019-Present).

2. **Robert P. Nerger Jr** – A retired electrical engineer, Mr. Nerger is a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Wartburg, TN. He has served as East Region Board Member for the District Youth Board (1988 - 1997) and as Elder, President, Vice President, Sunday School Teacher, Youth Board Chairman at various times from 1976 to 2016. He also served as Treasurer of the Wartburg Castle & Chapel Inc. from 1999 until present.

NOMINEES OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

ORDAINED MINISTER

(Vote for one in Regions 1 and 2, and one in Regions 3 and 4)

REGIONS 1 and 2

1. **Rev. Ron Bacic** – Pastor of First Lutheran Church in Little Rock, AR since 2009, Rev. Bacic has also served on the District Nominations Committee and has been a member of Toastmasters since 2014. From Rev. Bacic: “I would consider it an honor to serve on this committee as I did at the last convention. Regardless of whether I am on the committee or not, I pray that the Lord would use me as one of his chosen instruments here in the Mid-South.”
2. ***Rev. Jon Beyer** (current incumbent) – Serving as Pastor at First Lutheran Church in Hot Springs, AR, Rev. Beyer has also been the District Vice President and Circuit Visitor. Additionally, he has been a Board Member and Chair of Hot Springs Family YMCA (2000-2014) and Board Member and Chair of Behavioral Health and Wellness (2001 to present).
3. **Rev. JohnDavid Zischke** – Serving as Pastor/Planter at Restoration Lutheran Church in Fayetteville, AR from 2017 to Present, Rev. Zischke has also been an Advisory Delegate for The Mid-South District at the 2019 Synodical Convention. He has also been on the Floor Committee at the 2018 Mid-South District Convention; served as Campus Ministry Pastor at University of Arkansas (LCMS U) (2018 – Present), and as a Center 4 US Missions Representative (2017-Present).
4. **Rev. David Vandercook** – Serving as Pastor at Shepherd of Peace and Trinity Lutheran Churches in Maumelle and North Little Rock, AR (2016-present), Rev. Vandercook also served as Assistant Pastor, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Houston, TX (2013-2016); Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Sealy, TX (2009-2012); and Pastor, Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Raymondville, TX (2007-2009). He also works as the LWML Mid-Arkansas Zone Counselor (2017-present) and was Sealy Lions Club President (2010-2011).

REGIONS 3 and 4

1. ***Rev. Robert Portier** (current incumbent) - Serving as Pastor at Saint Paul Lutheran Church in Sevierville, TN since 2017, Rev. Portier served as the 2013 Synod Convention Circuit Representative, 2012 Floor Committee, 2018 Floor Committee Chair, and 2018-2021 Circuit Visitor. He has also been a committee member of Sevier County Right to Life (2006-2014) and served on the Woman's Care Center of Sevier County Board of Directors (2012-2018) and as the 2021 Board Chair. From Pastor Portier: “By the grace of God, I am gladly willing to serve Him and His church in any capacity to the best of my ability with God’s help.”

COMMISSIONED MINISTER

(Vote for one in Regions 1 and 2, and one in Regions 3 and 4)

REGIONS 1 and 2

1. **Samuel Fishburn** (current incumbent with 2 nominations) – Mr. Fishburn currently serves as Principal and Early Childhood Director at First Lutheran School in Fort Smith, AR (July 2018-present). He has also served on the Mid-South District Nominations Committee, on National Lutheran School Accreditation validation teams, and as a Sectional Presenter Missouri District Teacher Conference. From Mr. Fishburn: “I have enjoyed becoming more familiar with the Mid-South District over the past 3 years. I would consider it an honor to further serve the district in this role. I believe that our district's schools are all going through a critical make or break period, with many current success stories, and they have a great potential for shaping the future of our district and the LCMS presence in the areas they serve. I would be honored to also be an additional voice for our schools, in addition to the entire work of the district, on the district level.”

REGIONS 3 and 4

1. ***Jess Irwin** (current incumbent) – Ms. Irwin has served as Principal at First Lutheran School in Knoxville, TN since 2018 and completed her colloquy the same year. A graduate of First Lutheran, she has also been a middle school teacher there since 2013 after working there as a secretary and in the Early Childhood program. She has presented at the Lutheran Educators Association national convocation. From Ms. Irwin: “Our schools are an essential aspect of the mission of the Lutheran Church spreading the Gospel to the students and families who are enrolled. God has called me to use my passion for Lutheran Schools to aid the schools and their staff in surviving and thriving.”

LAY PERSONS

(Vote for one in Regions 1 and 2, and one in Regions 3 and 4)

REGIONS 1 and 2

1. **Kenneth Barnes** – A former professor of history at Concordia Chicago, Kenneth Barnes is a member of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Conway, AR. He has served as Lay Delegate to the District Convention. Over the years and at his various congregations, Mr. Barnes has served as elder, school board member, lay minister, congregation president, and church organist.
2. **Jeff Roper** – A member of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Conway, AR, Mr. Roper is the owner of a medical billing company. He has served his current church as congregation president and as a treasurer and vice president of a previous congregation. He is also a member of the 2021 Mid-South District Nominations Committee.

REGIONS 3 and 4

1. **Charlie Gemeinhardt** (current incumbent) – A member of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Memphis, TN, Mr. Gemeinhardt produced the 500th Anniversary Mid-South District Reformation Concert. He has also served as Congregation President of Grace Celebration Lutheran Church in Memphis and as a Member of the Board of Elders, former member of Church Council as Director of Christian Education, and Congregation Vice President of Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis. He was also elected to McNairy County Board of Education (1988-94), served as Vice Chairman, President Selmer Rotary Club. He was a Paul Harris Fellow, District Chairman; Boy Scouts, Cub Scout Pack Leader, President Selmer Elementary School PTO; Current President of the 65th Infantry Division Association; and a number of other civic, educational, and political leadership positions.

NOTE: All positions where there is currently only one candidate due to declinations, the nominations committee encourages delegates to consider floor nominations and seek the approval of their intended candidate prior to the convention, using a form that will be included in the Convention Workbook. They welcome floor nominations for all positions, as allowed by the bylaws, with the exception of Regional Vice-Presidents and Circuit Visitors.



REPORT OF THE DISTRICT TREASURER

The District Treasurer is appointed triennially by the Board of Directors and is responsible for overseeing the finances of the District and assisting the Board of Directors in its responsibility for managing the business affairs of the District.

Financial Position

God has continued to bless the Mid-South District during the past three years and our financial position has remained strong. Assets of the District have increased from \$5.5 million at the end of 2017 to \$7.4 million at the end of 2020. Individuals and families faithful to our mission have continued to provide significant gifts to support the District. These gifts are generally restricted and designated for specific local and world missions and are additionally restricted as to the amount that can be used in any given year. Restricted assets have increased from \$3.8 million at the end of 2017 to \$5.0 million at the end of 2020. As restricted funds are utilized, it is necessary that these be replenished through congregational support, direct gifts, and other programs conducted by the District's Development Officer. The major unrestricted asset category, property of \$1.7 million, reflects the investment in District Office, land, building, equipment, and other properties. This increase of approximately \$600 thousand since 12/31 17 is largely due to a church that closed and returned property to the District. The remaining \$605 thousand in unrestricted assets represents the operating funds for the District and a few miscellaneous assets such as prepaids, receivables, etc. Current liabilities of approximately \$115 thousand includes current accounts payable and various accrued expenses. The mortgage on the District Office was retired in 2016. Unrestricted net assets at 12/31/20 were approximately \$2.3 million. The District President and staff have continued to strengthen the financial position of the District through controlled spending and implementation of development programs such as *IMPACT* and *Funding the Ministry*. During the past three years, the Board has continued to maintain the operating and depreciation reserves to avoid future cash flow issues in unrestricted funds. These reserves have been funded through the controls addressed above and are included in the total restricted fund balance. Additionally, the Board of Directors has implemented policies and practices to project availability of reserves and restricted funds to ensure the District can operate effectively for a reasonable period should circumstances temporarily reduce cash flow. These actions taken by the board were very helpful as we experienced the beginning of the pandemic and the uncertain times that followed. The Board has also implemented an investment policy to maximize earnings on restricted funds without placing assets at unreasonable risk. During the past three years portions of the restricted funds have been invested with the LCMS Foundation. These investments with the Foundation have substantially increased the earnings on investments with little increased restrictions on availability of funds if needed.

The current financial position of the District is strong. By working together with our congregations, and with prudent management, the District can continue to address mission opportunities that God may put before us.

Annual Funding and Spending Budget

The charts shown on the following pages display the funding sources as well as the allocation of funds to the various ministries of the District for the year ended 12/31/20. As displayed on the sources chart, congregational support remains the largest source of revenue for funding the vision, goals, and missions of the Mid-South District. For 2020 congregational support funded 62.6% of total District receipts. Approximately 55.5% of the Mid-South District budget of \$2.57 million for 2021 is projected to be funded through congregational support. Another 22.8% to be funded through investment earnings and

release of restricted funds, 5.8% from efforts of the District's Development Officer, and the remaining 15.9% is projected to be funded through conference fees, tuitions, subscriptions, and other pass-through expenses.

The District's Business Manager has worked along with our auditors from the Synod Office to organize and recategorize expenses in a manner that more accurately reflects areas of the budget being affected by the expense. Both the *Ministry Allocations* chart, on the following pages, and the *Statement of Functional Expenses* which is included in the audit report (*Appendix C*) display these categories. These displays reveal that in the year ended 12/31/2020, 78.5% of fund allocations were used towards World & National Missions and Mid-South Congregational Services. This allocation to World & National Missions and Mid-South Congregational Services was 112% of congregational support receipts for 2020.

The long-term trend has been that the budget relies more and more on the District's Development Officer and his ability to develop new funding programs and to locate those individuals and families that God has raised up who are supportive of and faithful to the mission of the District. To date, individual donors who have made direct gifts to the District, long-time Lutherans who name the District in their wills, and funding through other development programs have filled the gap. By utilizing available funds from these restricted gifts and the revenue projected from development programs, the District 2021 Work Program is fully funded. The need for effective church planting and assistance in restoring health to many of our congregations in the Mid-South District is great. Please pray for our church plants, for revitalization of our churches, for continued success of the District's development programs and that God will continue to raise up those individual donors who support the work of the District. We have a very capable and dedicated President and Executive Staff in the District Office. With God's help we will continue to fund the visions, goals, and strategies developed and adopted by the District President and Board of Directors.

Annual Audit

The financial statements are audited annually, and the District continues to receive an unqualified opinion as to the fair presentation of its financial statements. All recommendations made by the auditors are addressed by management in the District Office. A copy of the audited financial statements for the year ending 12/31/2020 is included in Appendix C.

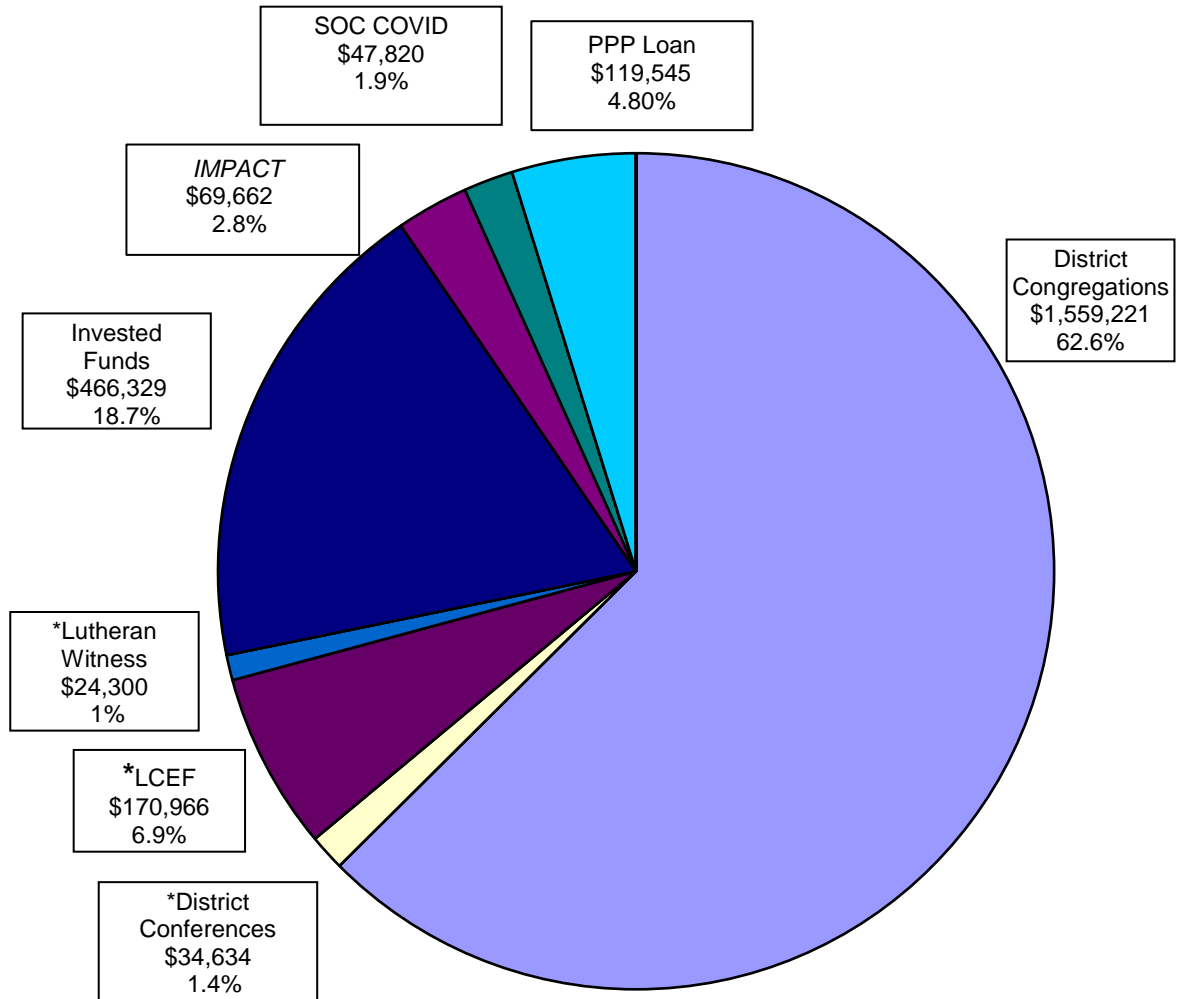
Respectfully submitted,

Larry E. Vickers
District Treasurer



2020 Mid-South District LCMS Funding Sources

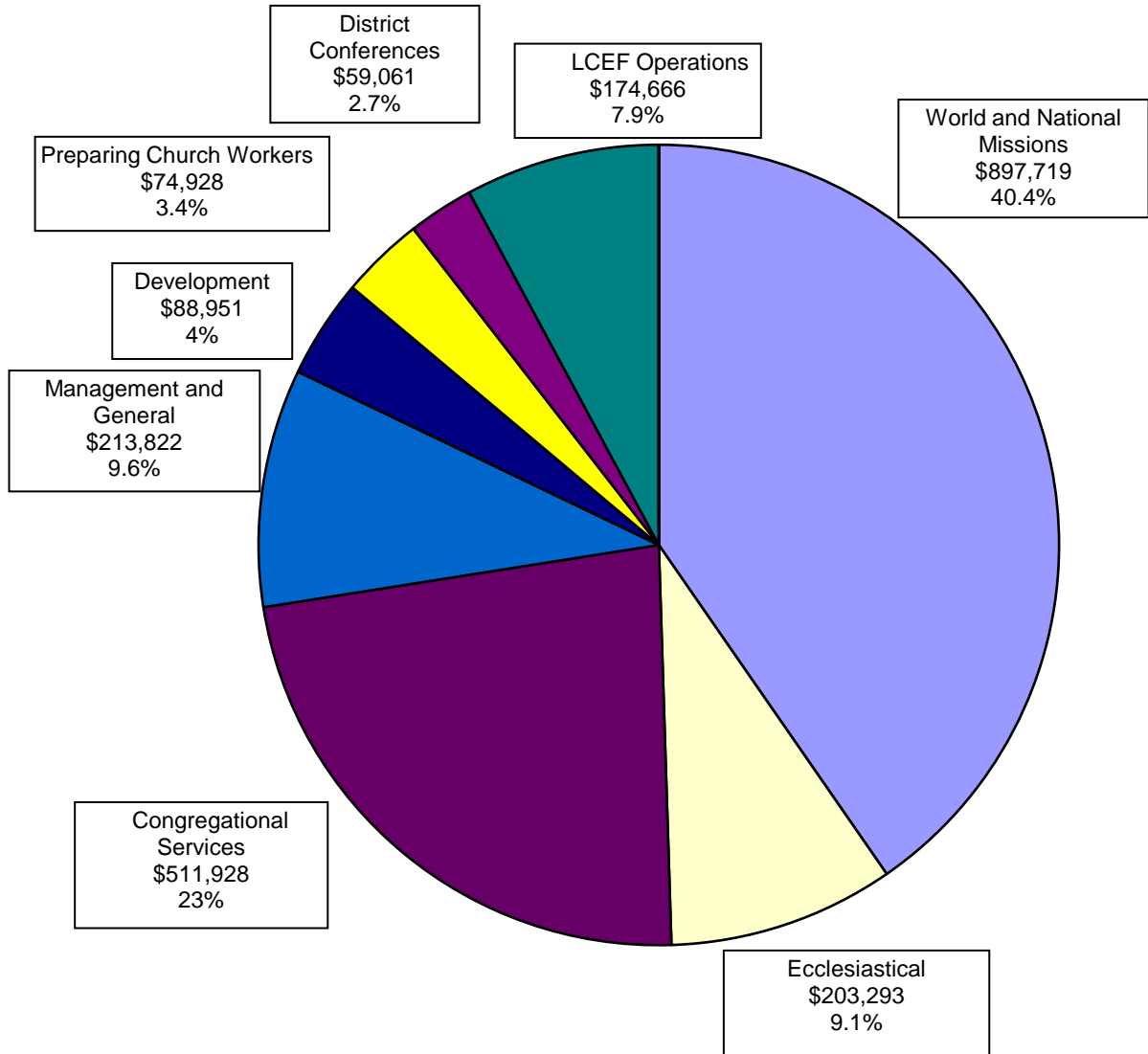
\$2,492,477



* Some of these revenues are services paid for by the District but reimbursed by other organizations. Accounting policy requires that Expenses and Revenues be recognized accordingly.

2020 Mid-South District LCMS Ministry Allocations

\$2,224,368



REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR BUSINESS AND FINANCE

The Mid-South District continues to be blessed by the faithful congregations throughout Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky, Abingdon, VA and Olive Branch, MS. Even with a worldwide pandemic, our never changing God remains loving and gracious in so many wonderful and faithful ways. The Gospel continues to be proclaimed boldly not only in our region, but throughout the world. This is possible because of you and your generous participation in evangelism, prayers, volunteer efforts and financial commitments for our beloved Synod. In the spirit of the Convention theme, we shall, “Declare His Marvelous Works” by sharing what the Mid-South District has accomplished over the last three years.

Congregational mission dollars received for District and Synod increased from \$1,542,151 in 2018 to \$1,576,515 in 2019 and decreased to \$1,559,221 in 2020. Had it not been for the virus outbreak, the amount for 2020 might have even surpassed 2019. Despite not being able to worship in person for months, our steadfast parishioners continued to support the mission and ministry of their congregations as well as the LCMS at large. Thanks be to God!

The Mid-South District was blessed to be able to partner with *Soldiers of the Cross* and offer assistance to many in our District that suddenly found themselves out of work or struggling to make ends meet. Over \$58,000 was awarded in the form of grants to all who applied for assistance. For those affected by tornadoes, over \$74,000 was raised through generous donations from brothers and sisters throughout our District. Grants of over \$16,000 were awarded to all who applied for assistance, leaving a healthy balance in the Disaster Relief fund for future needs.

The District continues to be a strong supporter of World Missions not only through mission dollars sent to Synod in the amount of \$1,326,367 for the last triennium, but also through budget dollars of \$50,000 for our Mission partners in Tanzania and Madagascar. In addition, with the assistance of our World Missions Executive, Bob Allen, the Mid-South District has raised over \$125,692 for Tanzania and \$15,950 for Madagascar. What a tremendous blessing we receive when we witness the loving kindness of our congregations through their demonstration of sharing God’s gifts to them with others.

Going on our 6th year, we continue to offer financial stewardship education in the form of rebates for Financial Peace University (FPU). To date, more than 2.5 million families have been impacted by FPU, nationwide, with the average family paying off \$5,300 in debt and saving \$2,700 in the first 90 days. We believe that FPU provides practical tools that allow individuals and families to take control of their money and put them on the road to long-term financial success. We pray that more congregations will take advantage of this opportunity to help their members as well as reach out to those in their communities that are interested in financial planning.

The Mid-South District remains committed to providing financial support to students from our congregations who attend Synodical universities and seminaries. Over the past three years, financial aid in the amount of \$241,000 has been provided to fifty-one students; this averages out to \$4,725 per student per year. Special thanks goes to the Mid-South District LWML for the faithful support of this program through significant annual grants.

The District continues to be audited annually and receive unqualified audit opinions. A copy of the Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2020 is included in Appendix C. Contained in the report is the *Statement of Functional Expenses*; we continue to operate below the non-profit industry standard for all support services. Program services consist of resources, conferences, and programs specifically for church workers and congregations. As you can see, we strive to operate at maximum efficiency and efficacy.

We understand and appreciate the trust and confidence that you have in the Mid-South District staff and strive to practice continued good stewardship by investing your mission dollars wisely so that church planting and revitalization will continue long into the future. We pray that as the Lord presents new opportunities to share His saving message; we stand ready and willing to proclaim the love of Christ to those who need a personal relationship with Him so that we can continue to Declare His Marvelous Works throughout the Mid-South District and beyond.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Fowler
Executive Director for Business and Finance



REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT

In 2013, the Mid-South District launched *IMPACT*, a strategic plan focused on the following five critical initiatives:

1. Assisting congregations, unable to retain an ordained minister, in Word and Sacrament ministry.
2. Resourcing, equipping and strengthening existing churches and schools for Kingdom effectiveness.
3. Recruiting, supporting and mentoring professional church workers.
4. Creating an online Congregational Assessment Resource (C.A.R.) for ministry self-assessment.
5. Planting new churches.

By God's grace and the generosity of the people of the Mid-South District, I am pleased to share these Development highlights which have been instrumental in helping support the District's strategic plan:

- A formal development plan was initiated to support the District's strategic plan (*IMPACT*).
- A donor database was established to ensure proper tracking of donors and their gifts.
- *IMPACT* awareness events have been held around the District to increase visibility of the District's work.
- There has been an increase of over 40% of current giving donors.
- Over the eight-year period since the *IMPACT* strategic plan was initiated, \$2,384,500 has been committed and over \$2,431,300 received for ministry in the Mid-South District.
- In addition, fourteen "Funding the Ministry" campaigns have been conducted in congregations resulting in nearly \$3 million being committed for ministry in the church.

Through faithful stewards, over \$5 million dollars has been committed for ministry since 2013. These dollars are over and above the tithes and offerings to the local congregations. Praise God for His people in the Mid-South District!

My prayer is that this tremendous support will continue. While we are making great strides in some communities, there is ample opportunity to share the Gospel. In order to do this, the continued support of our current donors, coupled with finding new donors, is imperative.

I am confident as new opportunities arise to share His Good News, the people in the Mid-South District will respond as they always have in the past. Thank you for your support and for your partnership in the Gospel!

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Reaves
Executive Director for Development



**REPORT OF
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FOR SCHOOLS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Mid-South District LCMS – June 2021

2 high schools - 10 elementary schools - 19 early childhood centers
(Current number of students / capacity)

Circuits

Chattanooga

Belvoir Christian Academy & Preschool – Chattanooga, TN – Infants – 8th grade (199 / 315)

Fayetteville

Salem Lutheran School – Springdale, AR – Ages 2 – 5 (72 / 75)

St. John Lutheran Child Care Center – Fayetteville, AR – 15mo. – 72mo. (37 / 53)

Fort Smith

First Lutheran School and Preschool – Fort Smith, AR – Age 2.5 – 6th grade (87 / 152)

Johnson City

Jonesboro

Pilgrim Lutheran Church – Jonesboro, AR - will begin a classical school this fall

Knoxville

First Lutheran School – Knoxville, TN – Age 1 – 8th grade (143 / 262)

St. Paul Lutheran Preschool – Wartburg, TN – Temporarily closed

Little Rock – South

Grace Lutheran Early Childhood Dev. Center – Little Rock, AR – 6 weeks – PK4 (47 / 70)

Avilla Christian Academy – Alexander, AR – PK 3 – 12th grade (100 / 150)

Little Rock - North

Christ Lutheran School and Preschool – Little Rock, AR – 6 weeks – 8th grade (153 / 260)

Memphis

Faith Lutheran Preschool – Collierville, TN – 18 mo. – age 5 (224 / 284)

Christ the King Lutheran School – Memphis, TN – 18 mo. – 8th grade (161 / 210)

Immanuel Lutheran School – Memphis, TN – PK 3 – 8th grade (111 / 220)

Middle Tennessee

Faith Lutheran Preschool – Tullahoma, TN – Ages 3 – 5 (24 / 22)

Shepherd's Little Flock Preschool – Crossville, TN – 8 weeks – age 5 (61 / 70)

TLC Childcare Ministry – Columbia, TN – PK 2.5 – 5 years with K-4 after care (44 / 61)

Heavenly Host Lutheran School – Cookeville, TN – Infant – 12th grade (152 / 175)

Nashville

Our Savior Academy Preschool – Nashville, TN – 12 weeks – age 5 (97 / 99)

Emmanuel Lutheran Church Learning Center – Hermitage, TN - Temporarily closed

Paducah

Holy Trinity Lutheran School – Bowling Green, KY – Age 2 – Grade 6 (154 / 200)

Grace Lutheran Church Preschool – Clarksville, TN – Temporarily closed

Stuttgart

St. John's Lutheran School – Stuttgart, AR – 6 weeks – 6th grade (181 / 210)

St. Paul Lutheran Preschool – Gillett, AR – PK 3-4 (6 / 18)



2020 Mid-South District Lutheran School Statistics

All ten elementary schools were able to be open face-to-face during the COVID-19 pandemic. Three of the early childhood centers had to temporarily close due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of the 19 remaining early childhood centers, several have had to reduce the number of students in the classroom due to restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic. 101 students were turned away.

There were 21 baptisms associated with the schools during 2020. The average non-member tuition rate for the elementary schools is \$6,754.94. Of the elementary schools' students: 191 are Lutheran; 571 are non-Lutheran; and 273 have no church. Our District will host the Mid-South / Southern District teachers' conference on November 21 – 23, 2021. Several early childhood conferences are planned for 2021 throughout the district. Pilgrim Lutheran Church in Jonesboro, AR will be starting a classical school this fall. Ascension Lutheran Church in Madison, TN has begun a relationship with The Edison School to serve children with learning differences and support families in need.

Mid-South District National Lutheran School Accreditation

Elementary Schools	Location	Year of Accreditation	Year of Re-Accreditation
St. John Lutheran School	Stuttgart, AR		
Concordia Christian Academy	Jonesboro, AR	New	
First Lutheran School	Knoxville, TN	2017	2022
Immanuel Lutheran School	Memphis, TN	2016	2022
Avilla Christian Academy	Alexander, AR	2018	2023
Holy Trinity Lutheran School	Bowling Green, KY	2018 (KY)	2023 (NP)
Belvoir Christian Academy	Chattanooga, TN	2019	2024
Christ Lutheran School	Little Rock, AR	2019	2024
First Lutheran School	Fort Smith, AR	2021	2026
Heavenly Host Lutheran School	Cookeville, TN	2021	2026
Christ the King Lutheran School	Memphis, TN	2021	2026
Early Childhood Centers			
Faith Lutheran Preschool	Collierville, TN	2018	2023

Preschools with elementary schools
are also accredited

Respectfully submitted,

Allen Piepenbrink
Executive Director for Schools and Early Childhood



REPORT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

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

Organization Overview

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is an organization that empowers ministry. Incorporated in 1978, LCEF continues a long history of extension fund service to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and its individual and corporate members. Through the dollars invested by thousands of individuals, congregations, schools, organizations and businesses, LCEF assists ministries with custom loans and ministry support services. Together, these partnerships have grown total assets to \$2 billion.

There are many ways to become a part of the LCEF ministry, collectively doing the work God has planned for us. Historically, church extension operations have centered on loans made possible through investments and gifts from dedicated church members and supporters. Today, LCEF has expanded its offerings to include resources that help put ministry in motion. Ministry Clarity, Capital Funding Services (CFS) and Consecrated Stewards are examples of services offered to enhance and support ministries.

Rev. Bart Day serves as president/CEO and reports to a 12-member Board of Directors. LCEF employs some 110 people located in St. Louis and more than 50 employees in 31 member districts throughout the United States. The organization also counts on the service of hundreds of volunteers and LCEF Advocates to fulfill its mission.

In the national office, the investment processing area cares for nearly 60,000 LCEF investors, including individuals, LCMS ministries and entities, Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs), businesses and partner churches. LCEF's loan department serves LCMS ministries and Rostered Church Workers (RCW), providing customized loans including mortgages, construction loans and lines of credit. LCMS ministries connect to LCEF through their District Vice President (DVP), who works through the district office—they are a part of the Lutheran communities in which they serve. District Vice Presidents are supported by their district support staff as well as the national office staff in St. Louis.

LCEF Highlights in the Mid-South District During the Last Triennium

The Lord continues to bless the work of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund in the Mid-South District. Total investments in LCEF in the District have grown to more than \$66 million and total assets in the program now exceed \$71 million. Through these funds, LCEF has the ability to offer low-cost loans for ministry expansion. The projects which have been funded in the last three years in the Mid- South District include:

- FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH (Harrison, AR) - Loan to relocate the church
- CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH (Little Rock, AR) - Loan to improve lighting in the church & school
- SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS (Crossville, TN) - Loan for facility improvements
- FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH (Knoxville, TN) - Loan for a facilities evaluation & capital campaign
- GRACEPOINT LUTHERAN CHURCH (Munford, TN) - Loan to purchase a church facility
- IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH (Memphis, TN) - Loan to assist Pastor with Home purchase

- MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH (Pea Ridge, AR) - Loan to purchase additional land
- CHAPEL OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD (Sharps Chapel, TN) - Loan for Sanctuary and Educational Space
- ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH (Burns, TN) - Loan for a Family Life Center
- FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH (Hopkinsville, KY) - Loan for the purchase of an organ

Thank you to all who support the ministry of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund. With your help and with God's amazing grace, LCEF continues to make a profound difference in the ministries we serve!

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Reaves

LCEF Vice President, Mid-South District



REPORT OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT ARCHIVES

“Remember the days of old; consider the generations” Deuteronomy 32:7

The District Archivist is a voluntary position, appointed by the District President and approved by the Board of Directors. Including the current Co-Archivists, six appointees have served in this capacity since the formulation of the District in 1966.

After a period of uncertainty since the last convention, we are excited about being back to work, and have made good progress in scrutinizing and organizing some of the many boxes of documents sent to the District Office for preservation.

Contributions from District congregations are welcomed and are a vital part of the significant milestones celebrated at your church. Photographs, documents, letters, audio recordings, videos are all forms of records that can be preserved. The materials received are carefully examined and arranged so that they can be easily accessed in the future, if needed.

Congregations’ records are *unique* in that the preservation of historical information of each one contains *their* church records, photographs, celebrations, dedications, etc. The information preserved by the Archivist can be helpful to the church when planning anniversary celebrations or other special events.

Serving as the District Co-Archivists is very rewarding, and we are grateful for this opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Boysen

Nancy Lee

Mid-South District Co-Archivists



REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

The Constitution Committee is tasked with the review of new or amended constitutions and/or bylaws of congregations of the Mid-South District. The committee looks for items which may not conform with doctrine or policy of the Synod or be contrary to civil laws. However, what we mostly find are items which may be stated poorly, incompletely or confusingly. We will look at spellings and grammar and will make suggestions which may improve the piece. This committee was Rev. Kenneth Haydon (chairman), Mr. Andy Grams, Dr. Fred Guengerich, Mrs. Connie Soso-Goines, and Rev. James Walter. During this past year, the Lord has called Rev. James Walter Home.

This past year has provided some extra tensions for getting all things finished, however, since the report for the 2018 convention, we have received and reviewed constitutions and/or bylaws for:

Grace Celebration; Cordova, TN
Faith Lutheran; Oak Ridge, TN
St. Paul Lutheran; Sevierville TN
Emmanuel Lutheran; Hermitage TN
Faith Lutheran; Hot Springs Village AR
St. John Lutheran; Burns, TN
Christ Lutheran; Little Rock, AR
Redeemer Lutheran; Mt. Home, AR

First Lutheran; Harrison, AR
Trinity Lutheran; Dyersburg, TN
Ascension Lutheran; Madison TN
Christ Lutheran; Siloam Springs AR
St. John's Lutheran; Russellville AR
Beautiful Savior Lutheran; Olive Branch, MS
Peace Lutheran; Conway, AR

When reviews are completed, approval with changes – as may be needed – the document(s) is recommended to the Board of Directors which gives final approval and may ask for further clarifications. For best results, electronic copies of material should be submitted – preferably in WORD format – for easier marking and reporting as needed. The committee requests that if you are amending or changing parts of an existing document, both the constitution and bylaws need to be submitted, with deletions and additions be indicated (such as: cross out deletions and put additions in color). Synod requires that, for legal reasons, any references in the Constitution and Bylaws of congregations use the full, legal name of the Synod: **The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**. Also when listing the confessions within the Book of Concord, even though the “Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope” is historically associated with the “Smalcald Articles” and is not separately named in the Synod’s Constitution, congregations are strongly encouraged to include the Treatise in the list, as part of our official confessional standard. When developing or revising your constitution and/or bylaws, please check these items.

I would like to thank and commend the committee members for their diligent important work in reviewing these documents. We pray God’s blessings for all our District’s congregations.

Respectfully submitted
Rev. Kenneth C. Haydon
Mid-South District Constitution Committee



REPORT OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT RECONCILER TEAM

“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” 2 Corinthians 5:20

Serving the Mid-South District and our Synod as reconcilers is far more a lifestyle than procedural steps. God in Christ has reconciled us unto Himself and through the forgiveness we have received we have forgiveness to give to others. Conflict among God’s people hinders His saints from working together. Each of the district reconcilers have received training in order to assist brothers and sisters in Christ to be reconciled to one another.

To be a reconciler, each person has been trained in the following:

- a. Informal Mediation
- b. Formal Mediation
- c. Arbitration (to serve on a Dispute Resolution Panel)

Some of the reconcilers have continued their education and training:

- a. Coaching People in Conflict
- b. Intervening in Church Conflict
- c. Serving an Intentional Peacemakers Interim
- d. Teaching a Reconciliation Seminar
- e. Bible study on Recognizing and Addressing Bitterness
- f. Questions for Coaching People in Conflict
- g. Conflict Resolution Verses Reconciliation
- h. Masked: ways issues are hidden
- i. Reason for Hope
- j. Built On The Rock

On behalf of the four reconcilers, I share a report on our activities within the district and for our Synod.

Dispute Resolution Panel: None

Conflict Coaching: 7

Informal Mediation: 1

Formal Mediation: None

Your District Reconcilers are: Keith Brummett (layman, Benton, AR); Bill Baessler (Commissioned, Cookeville, TN), Rev. John Gierke (Conway, AR) and Rev. Carl Wenck (Murfreesboro, TN).

We encourage you to look at resources available through Ambassadors of Reconciliation, Billings, MT, especially, ***Built on the Rock: The Healthy Congregation.***

Respectfully submitted,

**The Reverend Carl Wenck
Mid-South District Reconciler Team**



REPORT OF THE RURAL AND SMALL TOWN MINISTRY (RSTM)

“Sing to the Lord, all the earth! Tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!” (1 Chron. 16: 23-24) This is what has been happening throughout the congregations of the Mid-South District. Whether they are urban or rural, whether they have 700 or 7 in worship, the Word of God has continued to go out and touch the lives of those within the communities that they serve. This is the strength of our Synod and of the Mid-South District, even as our congregations have faced the challenges of the 2020 pandemic and its aftermath. Through the Means of Grace our gracious and loving God calls, gathers, and enlightens us for the continued work in his kingdom even as we go out and “Declare His Marvelous Works,” for today, tomorrow and always.

The work of RSTM (Rural and Small Town Ministries) is to encourage, connect and partner with all member churches of our district with a special emphasis on the smaller or rural congregations. Over the last few years, since the previous convention, there have been many innovations and many new ideas discussed and implemented that have had a great impact upon our district. While the Mid-South has partnered in the past with our Synodical RSTM and used “Engaging Your Community” for information and direction, it has been the congregations themselves that have found new ways to bring the Gospel to those in and around their communities. RSTM is truly more than a district ministry, and it is more than an informational library. It is a partnership between the congregation and the district that uses different resources for each unique circumstance. Therefore, RSTM is not a one size fits all, but instead it looks to find that which may have been overlooked. It seeks to point out the great resources that God has provided each congregation.

Over the past years our partnership with the Synodical RSTM has been extremely helpful. For the last 7 years, and probably more, a representative of the Mid-South District has attended the National Conference. These conferences have provided ways to examine our own district structure and map out our goals for the coming years. Rev. Todd Kollbaum, the Synodical director of RSTM, has been on point to give advice and encouragement for all of our local efforts. In fact, the district has regularly sent out information on Webinars that are available for viewing. These Webinars cover topics such as, “*The Mission Field Outside Your Door*,” “*Leadership Through Conflict*,” and “*Compassion Fatigue and Burnout*.” These are just a few of the resources that can be accessed through the national RSTM. The district’s partnership with the synodical RSTM has truly been a great blessing for us all.

2018 brought ideas of all kinds that were a great benefit to many through the national convention of RSTM and the more local events. 2019 brought similar encouragement for continued opportunities of outreach and growth as congregations put into place new activities designed for their communities. Then, 2020 brought us COVID-19 and all of a sudden everything changed. You knew this had to be part of the report. 2020 has changed everything, from the gatherings at the national conferences, to the simple and small community events. Nothing has remained the same. Except, one thing, the Word of the Lord and our congregations’ desires to declare His marvelous works. Strangely enough COVID has encouraged a great deal of “Thinking outside the Box.” It has shown the light of possibilities upon all congregations and has offered ways to find the mission field outside our doors. COVID has emptied the pews but it has not emptied the Church!

Here is where the district is not just RSTM. The district is RSTM (P) (Rural and Small Town Ministry Partnership). With everything that 2020 has brought us, many may have developed the impression that from late Feb. 2020, to even now not much has gone on. Yet, that couldn’t be further from the truth. Throughout this pandemic what has been required of, or needed by the smaller congregations as well as the larger ones, has been carefully attended to.

Early on, Zoom meetings were used to bring together pastors and teachers from all over the district to encourage church workers that they are not alone. While the RSTM (P) looks to the small or more rural congregation the district seeks to engage every congregation in ways that build up the body of Christ. Through different means the work of RSTM (P) and the district continued on. It may not have looked like 2018 or 2019 but 2020 will always be remembered as the year an unseen visitor came to do battle with the Church, and the Church won.

RSTM has had, and still has a great many individuals desiring to reach out to those congregations that seem small, look small and maybe are small among the larger congregations of the district. However, in the year of COVID don't we all look like a smaller congregation? Haven't we all seen the pews empty and the numbers drop? Haven't we all questioned what will we do? Haven't we asked, "How will we deal with this pandemic and bring our members back and secure them into the habit of weekly worship?" To be sure, we have all asked such questions, we have all thought these things and we have all struggled with these vexing issues. However, what we need to do is not look back and hope for the better days of 2018 or 2019. Instead, we need to find our strength in the Lord, for He is the Lord of the Church and this Church will stand against the gates of hell and it will endure forever.

The work of the RSTM is to build that partnership with all congregations. In order to do this, each congregation needs to know that the district is ready and willing to come and walk alongside each member church. The district has the resources needed to assist the small, the rural, the large and the urban congregations. Together, 2020 can be put far into the rearview mirror even as we look forward to the work that still lies before us.

As the chairman of RSTM (P) I would ask for your prayers upon our district and our district leadership. I would ask that you pray for the pastors of our churches and teachers of our schools who may have "fatigue burnout." Finally, I would ask that you pray for all of our members who may have been afflicted with COVID-19.

As we are now well into 2021, please take advantage of all that the district has to offer whether you are a small congregation or not. There is so much we can all do together as we "Declare His Marvelous Works."

My thanks to all who have contributed to new ideas, new thoughts of reaching out and new ways to approach Rural and Small Town Ministry Partnership.

May our crucified and risen Savior Jesus Christ bless and preserve you all.

Respectfully submitted,

Reverend Kevin Conger
Chairman, RSTM, Mid-South District



REPORT OF MID-SOUTH DISTRICT WORLD MISSIONS

The Mid-South District has been a partner and supporter of the Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese (SELVD) of the Lutheran Church of Tanzania since its establishment in 2013. Mission teams from the Mid-South District have been going into the area near Lake Victoria in Tanzania since 2002. We have worked in partnership first, with the East of Lake Victoria Diocese, mother diocese of the SELVD, going into many areas where the gospel message had never been heard.

The SELVD is located in an arid region, approximately half the size of the state of Tennessee, southeast of Lake Victoria with a population of 2,805,000.

The SELVD has experienced tremendous growth since its establishment. In 2013 the diocese had 3 districts with 34 parishes (mother churches) and 113 worship centers with 49,000 members served by 17 pastors. Today the Diocese has 10 districts with 62 parishes and 177 worship centers served by 81 pastors and the number of baptized members has grown by close to 20%.

The primary focus of the partnership of the Mid-South District with the SELVD has been to train pastors and deaconesses. This training has been done since 2013 in partnership with the LCMS and with Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW) whose faculty comes to Tanzania and teaches in the two-year training-center program in Negezi. The training consists of 16 quarterly courses in two-week residential sessions. The training is held in the Negezi Training center located in a rural area outside the city of Shinyanga. Since the establishment of the Pastor Training, 42 pastors were ordained and 19 deaconesses were commissioned in three training cohorts.

The second focus of the District support has been to train SELVD Pastors at one of our LCMS seminaries. Since its establishment, 2 SELVD pastors have received their Doctor of Ministry degrees from CTSFW and two pastors have completed their M.Div. and one is completing his Doctorate at CTSFW.

Funding for these training programs have been possible by the support of the Mid-South District, CTSFW and by grants from the LCMS Global Seminary Initiative. Unfortunately funding from Synod for the Global Seminary initiative has been cut back because of financial issues making our support even more important for the survival of this educational process.

The District has been faithful in sending mission teams from Mid-South District to the SELVD. Since 2004, yearly mission trips have been made by district members who have witnessed the baptisms of thousands of men, women and children. They have gone into homes, churches, villages, schools, hospitals, orphanages and governmental offices to share the Word of the Lord.

As a result of these trips since the founding of the SELVD in 2013, mission teams from the Mid-South have been involved with and/or witnessed close to 20,000 baptisms. Many of these baptisms were in areas that had no church before the mission trip and as a result, many new congregations were formed and churches built to serve these new Christians.

Humanitarian efforts supported by donations from Mid-South District members have resulted in long lasting friendships, we have supplied food to those in need, and have provided eyeglass clinics in remote villages and helped support the building of a medical center at the Mwadui Lutheran Secondary School.

Transportation has been provided to pastors and evangelists in the form of motorbikes and bicycles. Thousands of Swahili Bibles, Small Catechisms and hymnals have been given. Wells have been dug; hundreds of mosquito nets have been distributed to help prevent malaria. Clothing has been made and

distributed to the needy. Altar paraments have been given to new congregations. Robes and stoles have been given to pastors who cannot afford them. Dollars and material donations have also helped to build and supply hospitals, roofed churches, and dormitories constructed in Christian schools. Another ministry to help was to start a system of providing micro loans for widows to establish small businesses to support their families. They signed contracts to repay the loan to help others in need. They learned how to start and maintain a small business and accountability to repay their loan to help others.

Teachers from the District have gone to teach English as a second language in the Lutheran secondary schools. Pastors have gone to teach at the Pastoral and evangelist training centers

This partnership was formed with the idea of assisting the SELVD through training and the development of pastors and lay people, to do what they are best at – sharing the Gospel with the Sukuma people in their own villages and throughout the Diocese. This partnership has been truly instrumental in members of the District being involved in Witness and Mercy ministry. The gospel message has been shared to the Sukuma people; pastors, deaconesses and lay leaders have been trained; churches have been planted.

Come join us on a mission trip and see for yourself what God can do.

Joyfully in Christ

**Bob Allen, Director
Mid- South District World Missions**



REPORT OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT FAMILY AND YOUTH MINISTRY

The Mid-South District Family and Youth Subcommittee focuses on ministry development in the areas of families, youth and children. President Paavola outlined the following goals:

1. Researches, develops and secures resources for Commissioned and volunteer youth leaders.
2. Develops resources to support and equip Family Ministries, enabling a sharing of faith
3. Considers meaningful service projects to be coordinated throughout the District
4. Establishes resources to encourage full participation of young families in life-long ministry

Our team of ordained, commissioned and volunteer leaders strive continuously to equip the district, congregations, and families with tools to help minister to this generation and the next. Our continued prayer is that we are able to continue the paradigm shift, educating pastors, youth leaders, teachers, parents and youth.

Family Ministry:

Generation to Generation: The Mid-South District began a partnership with Concordia Center for the Family-Family Friendly Partner Network under the direction of Dr. Ben Freudenburg in 2017, to create a district-wide pilot family ministry initiative known as Generation to Generation (G2G). Seven congregations over two regional networks have completed the seven module requirements. Modules include 1) Orientation, 2) Paradigm Shift, 3) Survey, 4) Survey Reveal, 5) Marriage, 6) Parenting, and 7) Faith Formation. While training congregations, district G2G team members partnered in presenting with Ben Freudenburg in the East Network for certification, allowing sustainability of networks and G2G training within the Mid-South District.

Generation to Generation is designed to sound the alarm in congregations for the need to pass faith to our families and create a paradigm shift from church centered/home supported to home centered/church supported. Teams are given tools to help families understand the paradigm shift, and the need to equip adults to be faith leaders in the home. Bible studies, PowerPoint models, scripts and data were given to help leaders begin conversations within their congregation, preparing for application of modules 5, 6, and 7 (marriage, parenting, faith formation).

The West Network completed training in February 2020 before the COVID-19 shut down, while the East Network finished in November of 2020. Certificates received: West: Bella Vista Lutheran Church, Bella Vista, AR; Peace Lutheran Church, Conway, AR; Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Jonesboro, AR; Salem Lutheran Church, Springdale, AR; St. John's Lutheran Church, Lapeer, MI. East: Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Hermitage, TN; Faith Lutheran Church, Thompson's Station, TN. Certified CCFF-FFPN Trainers: Rev. Mark Tooley; Tessa Brasher.

The Mid-South District is now recruiting congregations for 2021-2022. For more information, please contact Allen Piepenbrink at the Mid-South District Office.

Faith in the Home: Faith in the Home Forum events scheduled for Spring of 2020 were cancelled due to COVID-19. Through Zoom meetings, our team is developing digital resources to encourage and equip parents to practice faith in the home. Phase 1 will be a video series of Faith in the Home speakers addressing child psychology, fatherlessness, parents as primary faith leaders, changing the paradigm and resources. The first of these videos will be Dr. Kim Marxhausen. Videos will be under 7 minutes and posted via Facebook "Faith in the Home" Forum where event publicity was posted in 2019. These videos will be encouraging, informative and shareable. We encourage pastors and church leaders to share on their church page for the congregation to better understand the "what" and "why" of a paradigm shift.

Phase 2 includes “5 Calls to Action,” tools to support parents in the area of prayer, conversation, service, devotions, and worship. Videos will be 5 minutes with an example. PDFs will be available to print via the Mid-South District website.

Phase 3 will be reviewing resources, encouragement and directing to opportunities to take family ministry to the next level as a group or a congregation by a G2G Representative visit to your area to hear more.

Youth Ministry

The Mid-South District Family and Youth Team, regional leadership teams, and local congregations worked to bring youth and youth leaders together throughout the past three years. Listed below are the wonderful ways our district came together to worship, gather, equip, plan, learn and serve:

2018

- National Youth Workers Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota on July 9-11, 2018.
- Mid-South District Servant Event to Camp Restore in New Orleans, Louisiana - July 22-25, 2018
Forty-nine high school students from six congregations took part in outreach projects to help New Orleans residents still struggling to recover from Hurricane Katrina devastation.
- ROOTS Youth Leader Forum, Standing Together, Murfreesboro, TN September 14-15, 2018
“Standing Together in Youth Ministry” was a time of reflection, support, encouragement, building community, worship, Bible Study, resource sharing and “hot topic” discussion.
- Jr. High West Region Mid-Winter Retreat, October 19-21, 2018; Theme: “UNKNOWN”
- Visits to several Tennessee congregations to promote Generation to Generation initiative.

2019

- Sr. High LinkT West Region Mid-Winter Retreat – February 15-17, 2019; Theme: “UNKNOWN”
- Promoting Youth and Family at Regional Pastors Conferences – May, 2019
- Mid-South District Family and Youth Team Planning Meeting – May 23-24, 2019
- Lutheran Youth Retreat 2019 – more cost effective, study oriented than NYG – in Florence, Alabama from June 4th-8th at the University of North Alabama, Florence.
- The 2019 LCMS National Youth Gathering “Real. Present. God” was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota July 11-15th.
- Mid-South District NYG Party in the Park - July 12, 2019 at Minnehaha Falls in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Faith in the Home planning meeting – Memphis, September 19-20, 2019
- Updating on Youth and Family at Fall Pastors Conference – Little Rock, October 7-8, 2019
- Jr. High LinkT West Region Mid-Winter Retreat – October 18-20, 2019; Theme: “JOURNEY”
- Visit to Arkansas congregations to promote G2G and Faith in the Home Forum

2020-2021

COVID-19 restrictions prohibited Little Rock and Nashville Faith in the Home Forums. G2G team began working on ways to encourage parents during a time of chaos. Created plan to implement materials, videos, etc., via social media and online that are shareable and ongoing.

- Sr. High LinkT West Region Mid-Winter Retreat – February 14-16, 2020; Theme: “JOURNEY”
- Faith in the Home Forum: March 21 at Our Savior, Nashville (cancelled)
- Faith in the Home Forum: April 25, 2020 at Christ, Little Rock (cancelled)
- Appointed Christina Jones of Murfreesboro, TN as Mid-South District Coordinator for the 2022 National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas. She has been attending numerous Zoom meetings to prepare for NYG, bring information to our congregations, and organize a district event for those who attend.
- Updates posted on Mid-South Youth Ministry Facebook page including link to budget tools, planning timeline, fundraising ideas, community and more for NYG2022

- Sponsored virtual Youth Mental Health First Aid Training for youth workers in the Mid-South District on April 16, 2021. Participants learned to recognize the signs and symptoms that suggest potential mental health challenges, how to listen non-judgmentally, and how to refer a youth to appropriate professional support and services.
- 2021 National Lutheran Youth Workers Conference is scheduled for July 11-14, 2021 at the Hyatt Regency in Houston, TX

In His Service,

Tessa Brasher – DCE
Youth and Family Advisory Subcommittee Chairman



SECTION D
OVERTURES



SUBJECT: To Memorialize the Next Synodical Convention to Mark the 50th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade with More Fervent Teaching, Proclamation, and Efforts to Promote God's Gift of Life

- WHEREAS,** On January 22, 1973, the United States Supreme Court issued a 7-2 decision granting a fundamental right for a woman to have an abortion; and
- WHEREAS,** Abortion is murder, the killing of an innocent living human being, regardless of the stage of human development beginning at conception, and transgresses God's law in the 5th Commandment which teaches that we are "not to hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need" (SC Expl. to 5th Comm.); and
- WHEREAS,** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has identified abortion as sin and against the Word of God in printed Small Catechism Explanations, most recently the 2017 edition from Concordia Publishing House; and
- WHEREAS,** A true Christian witness demands fear of God not man (Matt. 10:28) and not adding to or taking away from God's Word (Rev. 22:18-19); and
- WHEREAS,** Since the Roe v. Wade decision, over 61 million abortions have tragically been performed in the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** The 50th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision will occur during the next triennium of the Synod, on January 22, 2023; and
- WHEREAS,** Two generations of citizens in the United States have grown up and lived only knowing legal abortion; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Synod in convention mark the 50th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade by reaffirming its opposition to the destructive sin of abortion; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Synod in convention encourage prayer and good works to overturn, not just curb, the Roe v. Wade decision and to end legal abortion in our nation and throughout the world; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Synod offer additional youth resources which catalogue the 50-year struggle of faithful Christians standing for life; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Synod encourage all congregations to take up a special thank offering in 2023 to be given to Lutherans For Life, a crisis pregnancy center, or other life ministry; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Synod leadership encourage congregational involvement with life ministry in ways such as: forming a life team, participating in sidewalk counseling, and contacting legislators; and be it finally

RESOLVED,

That the Synod encourage all pastors and congregations to mark the 50th anniversary of Roe v. Wade by teaching and proclaiming human life as sacred and by holding out forgiveness and life to the full in Jesus Christ our Savior (Jn. 10:10).

Respectfully submitted,

**Middle Tennessee Circuit
By unanimous vote on April 18, 2021
Rev. Gerald Meyer, Circuit Visitor
Rev. Andrew Smith, Circuit Forum Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Memorialize the Next Synodical Convention to Mark the 50th Anniversary of the 1974 Concordia Seminary “Walkout” With Thorough Teaching About the Controversy and Renewed Emphasis on the Pure Doctrine

- WHEREAS,** On February 19, 1974, the majority of the faculty and students “walked out” of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in protest of an investigation into the teaching at the institution, and in order to form “Seminex,” a seminary in exile; and
- WHEREAS,** The investigation was an attempt to determine if there was false teaching, specifically the historical-critical method by which the clear words of Scripture are doubted or treated as myth, legend, or analogy; and
- WHEREAS,** For years prior to the fact finding inquiry and the “walkout,” pastors and members of Synod congregations were hearing disturbing accounts of Concordia professors allowing for interpretations of the Bible that did not uphold the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21); and
- WHEREAS,** The Fact Finding Committee found that some professors “held or permitted”:
1. A confusion on the doctrine of Scripture, especially its verbal inspiration and the inerrancy, as well as disagreement on the relationship between the formal and material principles of Scripture.
 2. A commitment to the use of the historical-critical method as a valid and preferred method for the interpretation of the Bible.
 3. A possibility that many of the Old and New Testament stories are not really historical.
 4. An acceptance that words attributed to Jesus in the Gospels were in fact never spoken by Him, but were later additions or interpretations made by the Christian community after the death of Jesus.
 5. A reluctance to attribute Old Testament prophecies as pointing directly to Jesus Christ; that is, the minimization of predictive prophecy in the Old Testament.
 6. An insistence that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch, Isaiah did not pen his entire book, and Paul may not have written all the books attributed to him in the New Testament (“Summary of the Findings,” Report of the Synodical President, pp. 21-25, cited in *Exodus From Concordia – A Report on the 1974 Walkout*, Board of Control Concordia Seminary, 1977, p. 35); and
- WHEREAS,** An example of the teaching which met objection is found in the comments made by Concordia Seminary professor Dr. Walter Bartling at a Louisiana Pastoral Conference, April 17-20, 1972:

I can’t answer the question, “Do you believe in the historicity of Adam and Eve?” Historicity and facticity are not even in my dictionary.

One thing they caught most of us on is, were Adam and Eve historical persons? I don't know. I don't think so. It is not important

I believe that many of my Christian brothers have problems with the virgin birth of Christ.

Don't ask me, "Do you believe in a 6 day creation?". I have problems with the virgin birth, real presence, bodily resurrection. . . . I can't bear the burden of Scriptural infallibility (*Exodus From Concordia – A Report on the 1974 Walkout*, Board of Control Concordia Seminary, 1977, p. 56); and

- WHEREAS,** The walkout had a devastating impact on Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), pitting allegiances, the unity of congregations, and even family ties against sound hermeneutical principles, the Lutheran Confessions, and accepted synodical statements of belief; and
- WHEREAS,** Seminex and its supporters eventually folded in with the church bodies that produced the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) which does not insist on the inerrancy of Scripture or unconditional subscription to the Lutheran Confessions; and
- WHEREAS,** The uncompromising response of the LCMS leadership to the walkout is a rare instance in which the all-too-common slide of church bodies to the way of the world was checked and resisted; and
- WHEREAS,** The grassroots movement in LCMS congregations in the late 1960s and early 1970s was key to calling for doctrinal integrity at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; and
- WHEREAS,** The 50th Anniversary of the 1974 walkout will be observed in the next triennium of the Synod, on February 19, 2024; and
- WHEREAS,** Two generations of LCMS members have been born since the walkout and may know little or nothing about this time period and the story of God graciously rescuing our Synod from capitulating to the culture; and
- WHEREAS,** The cultural pressure to compromise on Scriptural inerrancy is just as great on the present generation with evolution, abortion, same-sex "marriage," and universalism as part of the accepted civil religion; and
- WHEREAS,** On the 40th Anniversary of the walkout, Dr. Karl Barth, the last living member of the Fact Finding Committee at the time, and President Emeritus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, was asked by Rev. Todd Wilken on an Issues Etc. program, "Why should a young Lutheran who is listening to us care about the 'Battle of the Bible' in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod back in the 1970s?", to which Dr. Barth replied:

Well, he [they] should be thankful that the Church, though it was plagued at that time with things that were not pleasant, returned to a solid basis, so that when they hear the sermons preached today they know they are coming from a man who is firmly convinced that the will of God for the salvation of the world and for the rule of the Church is clearly stated in the Bible; and that it is imperative for a church body and the pastors and the people to have that trust that the Jesus whom they are worshipping is indeed the Jesus that is portrayed for us in holy Scripture

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therefore be it

- RESOLVED,*** That the Synod mark the 50th anniversary of the walkout through its publications; and be it further
- RESOLVED,*** That the Synod re-release, via free streaming, any videos and documentaries which recount the tumultuous events of the walkout; and be it further
- RESOLVED,*** That all members of LCMS congregations be encouraged to utilize these resources; and be it further
- RESOLVED,*** That all pastors be encouraged to teach their congregations about the walkout and address with Scripture the theological errors of our age, as our faithful forefathers have done since the time of Martin Luther; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,*** That all glory be given to our Lord God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who saved The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod from going the way of the world.

Respectfully submitted,

**Middle Tennessee Circuit
By unanimous vote on April 18, 2021
Rev. Gerald Meyer, Circuit Visitor
Rev. Andrew Smith, Circuit Forum Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Memorialize the Next Synodical Convention to Mark the 50th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade with More Fervent Teaching, Proclamation, and Efforts to Promote God’s Gift of Life

- WHEREAS,** On January 22, 1973, the United States Supreme Court issued a 7-2 decision granting a fundamental right for a woman to have an abortion; and
- WHEREAS,** Abortion is murder, the killing of an innocent living human being, regardless of the stage of human development beginning at conception, and transgresses God’s law in the 5th Commandment which teaches that we are “not to hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need” (SC Expl. to 5th Comm.); and
- WHEREAS,** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has identified abortion as sin and against the Word of God in printed Small Catechism Explanations, most recently the 2017 edition from Concordia Publishing House; and
- WHEREAS,** A true Christian witness demands fear of God not man (Matt. 10:28) and not adding to or taking away from God’s Word (Rev. 22:18-19); and
- WHEREAS,** Since the Roe v. Wade decision, over 61 million abortions have tragically been performed in the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** The 50th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision will occur during the next triennium of the Synod, on January 22, 2023; and
- WHEREAS,** Two generations of citizens in the United States have grown up and lived only knowing legal abortion; therefore be it
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- RESOLVED,** That the Synod in convention encourage prayer and good works to overturn, not just curb, the Roe v. Wade decision and to end legal abortion in our nation and throughout the world; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Synod offer additional youth resources which catalogue the 50-year struggle of faithful Christians standing for life; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Synod encourage all congregations to take up a special thank offering in 2023 to be given to Lutherans For Life, a crisis pregnancy center, or other life ministry; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Synod leadership encourage congregational involvement with life ministry in ways such as: forming a life team, participating in sidewalk counseling, and contacting legislators; and be it finally

RESOLVED,

That the Synod encourage all pastors and congregations to mark the 50th anniversary of Roe v. Wade by teaching and proclaiming human life as sacred and by holding out forgiveness and life to the full in Jesus Christ our Savior (Jn. 10:10).

Respectfully submitted,

**Nashville Circuit
By unanimous vote on April 18, 2021
Rev. Ken Shaw, Circuit Visitor**



SUBJECT: To Memorialize the Next Synodical Convention to Mark the 50th Anniversary of the 1974 Concordia Seminary “Walkout” With Thorough Teaching About the Controversy and Renewed Emphasis on the Pure Doctrine

- WHEREAS,** On February 19, 1974, the majority of the faculty and students “walked out” of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in protest of an investigation into the teaching at the institution, and in order to form “Seminex,” a seminary in exile; and
- WHEREAS,** The investigation was an attempt to determine if there was false teaching, specifically the historical-critical method by which the clear words of Scripture are doubted or treated as myth, legend, or analogy; and
- WHEREAS,** For years prior to the fact finding inquiry and the “walkout,” pastors and members of Synod congregations were hearing disturbing accounts of Concordia professors allowing for interpretations of the Bible that did not uphold the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21); and
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1. A confusion on the doctrine of Scripture, especially its verbal inspiration and the inerrancy, as well as disagreement on the relationship between the formal and material principles of Scripture.
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 6. An insistence that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch, Isaiah did not pen his entire book, and Paul may not have written all the books attributed to him in the New Testament (“Summary of the Findings,” Report of the Synodical President, pp. 21-25, cited in *Exodus From Concordia – A Report on the 1974 Walkout*, Board of Control Concordia Seminary, 1977, p. 35); and
- WHEREAS,** An example of the teaching which met objection is found in the comments made by Concordia Seminary professor Dr. Walter Bartling at a Louisiana Pastoral Conference, April 17-20, 1972:

I can't answer the question, "Do you believe in the historicity of Adam and Eve?" Historicity and facticity are not even in my dictionary.

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WHEREAS, Seminex and its supporters eventually folded in with the church bodies that produced the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) which does not insist on the inerrancy of Scripture or unconditional subscription to the Lutheran Confessions; and

WHEREAS, The uncompromising response of the LCMS leadership to the walkout is a rare instance in which the all-too-common slide of church bodies to the way of the world was checked and resisted; and

WHEREAS, The grassroots movement in LCMS congregations in the late 1960s and early 1970s was key to calling for doctrinal integrity at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; and

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whom they are worshipping is indeed the Jesus that is portrayed for us in holy Scripture.

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- RESOLVED,*** That all members of LCMS congregations be encouraged to utilize these resources; and be it further
- RESOLVED,*** That all pastors be encouraged to teach their congregations about the walkout and address with Scripture the theological errors of our age, as our faithful forefathers have done since the time of Martin Luther; and be it finally
- RESOLVED*** That all glory be given to our Lord God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who saved The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod from going the way of the world.

Respectfully submitted,

**Nashville Circuit
By unanimous vote on April 18, 2021
Rev. Ken Shaw, Circuit Visitor**



SUBJECT: To Encourage Further Consideration of Successful Completion of SMP Coursework Before Ordination and Placement on Ordained Roster

- WHEREAS,** The 2018 Mid-South District Convention memorialized the 2019 Synod Convention “To Request Synod to Move Ordination Upon Completion of SMP Four-Year Program” (2019 Ov. 6-07); and
- WHEREAS,** The 2019 Synod Convention considered this overture together with similar overtures from other districts and congregations; and
- WHEREAS,** The 2019 Synod Convention adopted Resolution 6-03A, referring this matter to the Pastoral Formation Committee to “work to enhance the curriculum and standards of the SMP program between the two seminaries...” and to “review the SMP program regarding the optimal timing for vicarage and ordination and report its recommendation to the joint boards of regents at its 2020 meeting, as well as to the Synod at large;” and
- WHEREAS,** Res. 6-03A further resolved “That the joint board(s) (sic) of regents prepare an overture to the Synod on the timing of vicarage and ordination for the SMP program for consideration in convention in 2022;” and
- WHEREAS,** The 2022 (2023*) Synod Convention will consider the recommendations of the Pastoral Formation Committee and the joint boards of regents of the seminaries which are forthcoming; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention reaffirms the importance of the Pastoral Formation Committee, the joint boards of regents, and the Synod’s consideration of the issues regarding the timing of ordination in the SMP program; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention encourage the Pastoral Formation Committee, the joint boards of regents of the seminaries, and the Synod in convention to consider moving ordination and placement on the minister of religion—ordained roster of the Synod from after the completion of the first two years of the SMP program to after the completion of all SMP education and academic requirements; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention submit to the 2022 (2023*) LCMS Convention an overture with the above stated WHEREAS and RESOLVED statements.

Respectfully submitted,

**The Mid-South Board of Directors
Rev. Charles Neugebauer, Chairman
Rev. John Gierke, Secretary**

**Subject to affirmative vote of LCMS congregations*



SUBJECT: To Implement a Process Enabling a District President to Protect a Called Worker or to Enact an Emergency Restriction or Suspension Status when Warranted

- WHEREAS,** The Church is the Bride of Christ [Revelation 21:9; Apology VII/VIII, 9 (Triglotta-German/English)], and her servants are called to serve as Christ loved the Church [Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:23-32; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Bylaw 1.10.1.6]; and
- WHEREAS,** Satan seeks to attack the shepherd and scatter the sheep [Zechariah 13:7]; and
- WHEREAS,** There are times when a pastor or other church worker's sinful actions and/or lifestyle are detrimental and dangerous to the flock and their physical, spiritual, and emotional health, which directly affect the life and work of the congregation; and
- WHEREAS,** There are also times when serious conflict arises between a congregation and its called servant(s); and
- WHEREAS,** The Synod is to provide protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other church workers in the performance of their duties and the maintenance of their rights [Constitution Art. III, 9; Bylaws 1.10.1-1.10.1.1]; and
- WHEREAS,** When a congregation or a faction of its membership may pose an immediate threat to the health and welfare of a church worker, the District President has avenues for caring for the church worker, and always has the right to advise, admonish and reprove a congregation that is not abiding by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod that its own membership in the Synod may be endangered [Constitution Art. XI, B.3; Art. XII, 6,7,8; Art. XIII; Bylaw 1.10.9]; and
- WHEREAS,** A District President already has the constitutional and bylaw authority, as the ecclesiastical supervisor of the congregations and individual members of Synod in the District [Bylaw 1.2.1(j); Bylaw 2.12.1; Bylaw 4.4.5-4.4.6], to impose restricted status [Bylaw 2.13.2-2.13.2.4] and suspended status upon an individual member of Synod while investigations and reconciliation procedures are in process [Bylaw 2.13.4-2.13.4.1]; and
- WHEREAS,** When a church worker is under restricted or suspended status and is prohibited from carrying out certain functions of ministry outside the congregation in the Synod, the worker may still perform the duties of office within the congregation to which he or she has been called [Bylaw 2.13.2.2(a-b); Bylaw 2.13.4.2-2.13.4.3], and may further inflict great danger and harm in the congregation and its mission and ministry; and
- WHEREAS,** A District President, entrusted with the responsibility of ecclesiastical supervision of the workers and congregations [Bylaw 2.12.1; Bylaw 4.4.5-4.4.6], at times is made aware of irrefutable evidence of endangerment to a congregation by a church worker, or to a church worker by members of the congregation; and
- WHEREAS,** If such irrefutable evidence emerges in the course of a District President's investigation into a matter [Constitution Art. XII, 7; Bylaw 4.4.6] which would

substantiate a perceived necessity for a separation from service in the congregation until the full process of an investigation and any appeal process can be concluded or exhausted, in order to protect the congregation and/or the rostered worker, the congregation always retains the right to hold the church worker accountable and could rescind the Call to the worker [Constitution Art. VI, 3; Art. VII, 1; Art. XIII, 3] while also seeking the advice and counsel of the District President [Bylaw 4.4.5; and

WHEREAS,

This avenue of redress may take a lengthy period of time; and

WHEREAS,

Health care facilities (i.e. hospitals) and health care licensing entities in various States have the authority and processes in place to restrict the privilege to practice or suspend a license without prior notice of a hearing in order to protect the public when there are allegations, irrefutable evidence, or both that continuation of practice will create an immediate hazard to the public; and

WHEREAS,

Such an emergency restriction or suspension to practice could be of great benefit when such irrefutable evidence and a grave situation arises; therefore be it

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District, meeting in convention, request that the Synod authorize the Commission on Handbook and the Council of Presidents to study this issue and provide a reasonable bylaw process to be considered for adoption by the 2026 Synod Convention to enable a District President to either provide additional protections for a called worker in an extremely conflicted situation, or when presented with irrefutable evidence warranting an emergency restriction or suspension prohibiting practice by the called church worker in the congregation during a timely and thorough investigation and/or appeals process, to do so; and be it further

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District submit this memorial to the next convention of the Synod in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

**Mid-South District West Region Pastoral Conference
Meeting at DeGray Lake State Park, Bismarck, Arkansas, May 3-5, 2021
By unanimous vote on May 5, 2021
Rev. Joshua Willadsen, Conference Chairman
Rev. Kevin Conger, Conference Secretary**

**SUBJECT: To Provide Clarity Upon Removal or Resignation from the Synod Roster of Ordained Clergy**

- WHEREAS,** Ordination in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is conferred by the LCMS when a pastoral candidate has received a call according to approved LCMS procedures and has accepted that call; and
- WHEREAS,** Ordination then places the ordained individual into the Public Office of Holy Ministry with its responsibilities to proclaim the Word, rightly administer the sacraments, and provide pastoral care, and acknowledges the use of terms of address such as Pastor or Reverend; and
- WHEREAS,** An ordained pastor can return his status as ordained by resigning both from his call and from the ministerium of the Synod to the LCMS, or have it officially withdrawn or revoked by the LCMS for recognized conditions and approved bylaw procedures [Bylaw 2.14]; and
- WHEREAS,** In the Spring of 1533 Luther is recorded as saying in “Table Talk” conversation, *No. 512: Authority of Minister Resides in Office, Not Person*:
- “From the passage, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive,’ etc. [John 20:22, 23], some conclude that therefore only those who personally have the Holy Spirit are able to forgive sins. *But this isn’t the meaning, for Christ gives the Spirit to the public office and not to a private person, as he had just said, ‘As the Father has sent me, even so I send you’* [John 20:21]. Consequently he was speaking about those who had been called and who had the authority to preach, administer the sacraments, etc. When somebody has the authority to preach he also has the authority to administer the sacraments, for we hold that the sacrament is less important than preaching. On this account, under the papacy none was admitted to the degree of bachelor of theology except priests, and they already had the right to administer sacraments.”¹; and
- WHEREAS,** Dr. Luther also said, “Because we are all in like manner priests, no one must put himself forward and undertake, without our consent and election, to do what is in the power of all of us. For what is common to all, no one dare take upon himself without the will and the command of the community; and should it happen that one chosen for such an office were deposed for malfeasance, he would be just what he was before he held office. Therefore a priest in Christendom is nothing else than an office holder. While he is in office, he has precedence; when deposed, he is a peasant or a townsman like the rest.”²

¹Luther, M. (1999, c1967). *Luther's Works*, vol. 54: *Table Talk* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (54:90). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

² *An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility*. W.A., 6, 408; quoted in Munding, Carl S., *Government in the Missouri Synod*, Concordia Publishing House, 1947, pp. 8-9

Additional Sources: Book of Concord, Kolb – Wengert; 2019 LCMS Handbook; Walther’s Pastoral Theology; Pieper’s Christian Dogmatics, Vol. 3; The Ministry Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature, CTCR, 1981; Theology and Practice of “the Divine Call”, CTCR 2003

WHEREAS,

On occasion, after such a resignation or revocation, individuals or LCMS congregations have asked for pastoral services (worship leadership, preaching, administration of sacraments, conduct of weddings and funerals in the community, etc.) and this may cause confusion in a community and for the local congregation rather than harmony and peace for the spread of the Gospel; and

WHEREAS,

It would be helpful to alleviate any confusion in a community and a local congregation when a pastor returns his ordination by resignation from the ministerium of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), or the LCMS withdraws the ordination once conferred by the LCMS that the following or a similar official announcement be made in the official organs of the Synod:

Mr. John Doe has resigned from the ministerium of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod [or] had his ordination withdrawn by The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, is no longer eligible for a call, and congregations will not permit and individuals will not request public office of ministry services from this layman unless and until he has requested and been granted reinstatement to the roster of the Synod by its stated procedures.

Therefore be it

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District, meeting in convention, memorialize the 2023 Synod Convention to task the Commission on Theology and Church Relations and the Council of Presidents to study this issue further in depth as it relates to the Scriptural and Confessional practice of the rite of ordination and what procedures and protocols are proper when an individual is no longer recognized as ordained by the Synod, and provide either a policy for the Council of Presidents to adopt during the following triennium for use by the Council of Presidents and the Secretary of Synod as they see fit, and/or to provide an official CTCR document to be commended to the Synod for study and use; and be it further

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District submit this memorial to the next convention of the Synod in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

**Mid-South District East Region Pastoral Conference
Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, May 10-12, 2021
By unanimous vote May 11, 2021
Rev. Mark Rhoads, Conference Chairman
Rev. Robert Portier, Conference Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Implement a Process Enabling a District President to Protect a Called Worker or to Enact an Emergency Restriction or Suspension when Warranted

- WHEREAS,** The Church is the Bride of Christ [Revelation 21:9; Apology VII/VIII, 9 (*Triglotta*-German/English)], and her servants are called to serve as Christ loved the Church [Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:23-32; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Bylaw 1.10.1.6]; and
- WHEREAS,** Satan seeks to attack the shepherd and scatter the sheep [Zechariah 13:7]; and
- WHEREAS,** There are times when a pastor or other church worker's sinful actions and/or lifestyle are detrimental and dangerous to the flock and their physical, spiritual, and emotional health, which directly affect the life and work of the congregation; and
- WHEREAS,** There are also times when serious conflict arises between a congregation and its called servant(s); and
- WHEREAS,** The Synod is to provide protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other church workers in the performance of their duties and the maintenance of their rights [Constitution Art. III, 9; Bylaws 1.10.1-1.10.1.1]; and
- WHEREAS,** When a congregation or a faction of its membership may pose an immediate threat to the health and welfare of a church worker, the District President has avenues for caring for the church worker, and always has the right to advise, admonish and reprove a congregation that is not abiding by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod that its own membership in the Synod may be endangered [Constitution Art. XI, B.3; Art. XII, 6,7,8; Art. XIII; Bylaw 1.10.9]; and
- WHEREAS,** A District President already has the constitutional and bylaw authority, as the ecclesiastical supervisor of the congregations and individual members of Synod in the District [Bylaw 1.2.1(j); Bylaw 2.12.1; Bylaw 4.4.5-4.4.6], to impose restricted status [Bylaw 2.13.2-2.13.2.4] and suspended status upon an individual member of Synod while investigations and reconciliation procedures are in process [Bylaw 2.13.4-2.13.4.1]; and
- WHEREAS,** When a church worker is under restricted or suspended status and is prohibited from carrying out certain functions of ministry outside the congregation in the Synod, the worker may still perform the duties of office within the congregation to which he or she has been called [Bylaw 2.13.2.2(a-b); Bylaw 2.13.4.2-2.13.4.3], and may further inflict great danger and harm in the congregation and its mission and ministry; and
- WHEREAS,** A District President, entrusted with the responsibility of ecclesiastical supervision of the workers and congregations [Bylaw 2.12.1; Bylaw 4.4.5-4.4.6], at times is made aware of irrefutable evidence of endangerment to a congregation by a church worker, or to a church worker by members of the congregation; and
- WHEREAS,** If such irrefutable evidence emerges in the course of a District President's investigation into a matter [Constitution Art. XII, 7; Bylaw 4.4.6] which would

substantiate a perceived necessity for a separation from service in the congregation until the full process of an investigation and any appeal process can be concluded or exhausted, in order to protect the congregation and/or the rostered worker, the congregation always retains the right to hold the church worker accountable and could rescind the Call to the worker [Constitution Art. VI, 3; Art. VII, 1; Art. XIII, 3] while also seeking the advice and counsel of the District President [Bylaw 4.4.5]; and

WHEREAS,

This avenue of redress may take a lengthy period of time; and

WHEREAS,

Health care facilities (i.e. hospitals) and health care licensing entities in various States have the authority and processes in place to restrict the privilege to practice or suspend a license without prior notice of a hearing in order to protect the public when there are allegations, irrefutable evidence, or both that continuation of practice will create an immediate hazard to the public; and

WHEREAS,

Such an emergency restriction or suspension to practice could be of great benefit to a congregation and the Synod when such irrefutable evidence and a grave situation arises; therefore be it

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District, meeting in convention, request that the Synod authorize the Commission on Handbook and the Council of Presidents, in consultation with the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, to study this issue and provide a reasonable bylaw process to be considered for adoption by the 2026 Synod Convention to enable a District President to either provide additional protections for a called worker in an extremely conflicted situation, or when presented with irrefutable evidence warranting an emergency restriction or suspension prohibiting practice by the called church worker in the congregation during a timely and thorough investigation and/or appeals process, to do so; and be it further

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District submit this memorial to the next convention of the Synod in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

**Mid-South District East Region Pastoral Conference
Meeting at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, May 10-12, 2021**

By majority vote on May 12, 2021

Rev. Mark Rhoads, Conference Chairman

Rev. Robert Portier, Conference Secretary



SUBJECT: To Encourage Financial Support for Professional Church Workers

WHEREAS,

The Synod in Convention in 2016 passed Res. 18-03A which stated

“Whereas, the Synod continues to pray that our Lord would send faithful laborers into the harvest fields (Luke 10:2); and

Whereas, Student indebtedness can be a deterrent for potential professional church workers; and

Whereas, The Synod takes seriously the Lord’s command that, ‘the worker is worthy of his wage,’ (1 Tim. 5:18); and

Whereas, The cost of higher education has increased at a substantially higher rate than anticipated potential income; and

Whereas, The typical salaries for professional church workers may make it difficult to sustain a household and also repay the incurred debt; and

Whereas, Student indebtedness can discourage healthy stewardship; and

Whereas, One of the Synod’s foundational objectives is, ‘to recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth’ (Constitution, Art. III 3); and

Whereas, Research done by the LCMS seminaries has shown that undergraduate debt and personal finance management contribute significantly to subsequent educational loan debt; and

Whereas, Student indebtedness is a well-documented burden; and

Whereas, In order to qualify for federal loan programs, our seminaries and universities are being forced to accommodate federal Department of Education policies that may be in conflict with our shared beliefs and practices in the Synod; and

Whereas, In order to become a certified professional church worker in the LCMS, students are required to attend a Concordia University System school or an LCMS seminary; and

Whereas, Attending a Concordia University System school also well equips men for subsequent seminary training; and

Whereas, The seminaries are pursuing making financial counseling available to all students; therefore be it

Resolved, That the leadership of our Concordia seminaries and universities/colleges explore alternate funding sources apart from federal loans; and be it further

Resolved, That schools in the Concordia University System provide financial counseling to church worker students throughout their academic careers; and be it further

Resolved, That the congregations and ministries of the Synod identify and raise up the next generation of leaders for the ministry of the church and support them financially in obtaining their training; and be it finally

Resolved, That districts of the Synod be encouraged to develop means by which they may financially assist students preparing for church work careers and current church workers. ’’ (Res. 18-03, Proceedings, 262-263); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District evaluate and develop a financial assistance program to assist students attending Concordia University System schools and seminaries; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District continue to fund designated contributions to *MinistryFocus* for District professional church workers; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District establish additional funding, allocated from the 2021 District Sunday and Designated Convention Offerings for Scholarship Fund for Pastors and Commissioned Church Workers burdened with significant educational debt.

Respectfully Submitted,

**The Mid-South Board of Directors
Rev. Charles Neugebauer, Chairman
Rev. John Gierke, Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Encourage Workers In Personal Evangelism

- WHEREAS,** Jesus sent his disciples into the world to be his witnesses; and
- WHEREAS,** Jesus declared to his followers “⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” *Acts 1:8* (ESV); and
- WHEREAS,** St. Paul reminds us that we cannot believe in Christ of whom we have not heard. We cannot hear unless someone is sent out to proclaim. ¹⁴ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” ¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. *Romans 10:14-17* (ESV); and
- WHEREAS,** “The Synod in convention has repeatedly encouraged congregations to make witnessing and evangelism a top priority in their ministry efforts. (1995 Res. 1-08, “To Affirm That the Mission of the Church is Urgent and to Raise Mission Awareness” *Proceedings*, 107-8; 2001 Res. 1-01, “To ‘Tell The Good News About Jesus’”, Res. 1-02, “To Be Passionate for the Great Commission,” and Res. 1-03A, “To Intensify Mission Effort, *Proceedings*, 119-120; 2004 Res. 1-01A, “To Affirm Mission 21st Century Response To Great Commission, and Res. 1-02, To Promote “Mission Outpost” Attitude, *Proceedings*, 119-120; 2013 Res. 1-05A, “To Encourage the Congregations and People of the LCMS for the Joy of Evangelization and the Making of New Disciples,” *Proceedings*, 101);” 2019 Res. 1-01A, *Proceedings*, 115; and
- WHEREAS,** Our Synod in its 2019 Convention adopted language that encourages all congregation members and church workers to support witnessing of the Gospel, *Resolved, That because of the hope that fills God’s people (1 Peter 1:3-9, 3:15), they be prepared to share this life-giving message of the Gospel with others; and Resolved, That congregations and workers be encouraged to bear witness to Christ in their daily vocations in their communities (Res. 1-01A); and*
- WHEREAS,** The 2019 Synod convention adopted a Resolution, stating,
Resolved, That the Synod in convention establish Making Disciples for Life as its mission and ministry emphasis for the 2019-2022 triennium to do the following:
- *evangelize and disciple the lost;*
 - *retain the faithful;*
 - *strengthen congregations and schools;*
 - *plant new congregations and schools wherever possible, especially in urban and multi-cultural communities; and*
 - *engage in international mission in partnership with the Office of International Mission; and*

- WHEREAS,** Called workers set an example for personal witnessing; and
- WHEREAS,** Congregations often experience an increase in guests to their worship services when the pastor, staff, and members consistently spend time each week cultivating relationships and sharing the faith in the community; and
- WHEREAS,** Pastors and called workers are often limited in their opportunity for personal witnessing by finances and time constraints due to expectations of their ministry; and
- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District has conducted workshops throughout the District, using “*Everyone His Witness*” materials produced by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and
- WHEREAS,** The 2016 Convention of Synod stated, *Resolved, That districts be directed and congregations be encouraged to develop specific outreach plans to share the Gospel with their Muslim neighbors*; and
- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District has partnered with the Mid-South District LWML to bring witnessing and outreach into each congregation of the District; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention reaffirms the importance of personal witnessing for the salvation of the Lost and the health of the local congregation; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District seek a continued partnership with the Mid-South District LWML to provide training and resources to assist called workers and lay leaders in personal witnessing and the promotion of personal witnessing among the members of each of our District’s congregations; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That congregations demonstrate personal witnessing as a priority of their church by encouraging their workers to spend time on a weekly basis in the community, and by assisting the workers in their current responsibilities so as to not add further to their workload; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,** That congregations be encouraged to include funds to be used at the discretion of the pastor, and when possible, all called workers to support their efforts for personal witnessing in the community.

Respectfully submitted,

**The Mid-South Board of Directors
Rev. Charles Neugebauer, Chairman
Rev. John Gierke, Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Encourage the Evaluation, Study, and Use of Biblically-based Stewardship Resources

- WHEREAS,** Many congregations continue to struggle with a decline in attendance, the lack of willing workers, and insufficient financial resources to meet the mission and ministry needs of the congregation; and
- WHEREAS,** One of the reasons for these and other challenges congregations face is a lack of ongoing, intentional, and systematic Biblical stewardship education; and
- WHEREAS,** Biblical stewardship education for all members throughout the Mid-South District is fundamental for addressing the challenges referenced above; and
- WHEREAS,** The LCMS Office of Stewardship Ministry has published biblically-based resources; and
- WHEREAS,** Several other biblically-based programs of stewardship are available designed to help steward leaders present the aspect of Christian Stewardship; and
- WHEREAS,** Every Mid-South congregation should offer an encouragement to their members; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District promote the study and use of stewardship education resources in the 2021-202 triennium to raise awareness of the Biblical stewardship lifestyle in all District congregations; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That each congregation of the Mid-South District be encouraged to complete at least one additional program on Stewardship during the next three years; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District be encouraged to use appropriate avenues to conduct stewardship education conferences or events that reach the “people in the pews” and include all church leaders (ordained, commissioned, and lay).

Respectfully submitted,

**The Mid-South Board of Directors
Rev. Charles Neugebauer, Chairman
Rev. John Gierke, Secretary**

**SUBJECT: To Reaffirm Church Planting**

- WHEREAS,** Jesus commands the church to go and make disciples by baptizing, teaching (*Matthew 28:18*) and seeking the lost as our foremost priority (*Luke 19:10*); and
- WHEREAS,** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod noted in 2019 Res. 1-02, that *“From its inception The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has been a church planting body. Church planting arises out of God’s desire that ‘all people be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth’ (1 Tim. 2:4). It rests on the promise that God will accomplish His will through His people as He empowers and strengthens them through His gifts of Word and Sacrament.”* 2019 *Proceedings*, 116; and
- WHEREAS,** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod noted in 2019 Res. 4-03A, that one of the seven mission priorities previously affirmed at the 2016 Synod convention is to “plant, sustain, and revitalize Lutheran churches;” and
- WHEREAS,** 2019 Resolution 4-03A also established *“Making Disciples for Life* as its mission and ministry emphasis for the 2019-2022 triennium” and directed the Office of National Mission...to resource congregations, schools, circuits and districts to do the following:
- evangelize and disciple the lost;
 - retain the faithful;
 - strengthen congregations and schools;
 - plant new congregations and schools wherever possible, especially in urban and multi-cultural communities; and
 - engage in international mission in partnership with the Office of International Mission; and be it finally
- Resolved,* That the Synod encourage all LCMS districts, congregations and schools to make use of the Making Disciples for Life resources and tools as these become available; and
- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District has a rich history of starting new ministries which focus on reaching the lost; and
- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District has started many ministries which boldly share the Good News of Jesus while maintaining doctrinal and theological integrity; and
- WHEREAS,** Recent church planting initiatives have had many people reached with the Gospel who previously had little or no connection to the church; and
- WHEREAS,** The most recent self-sustaining church plants have come as a result of circuit and/or “mothering congregation” formats, therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention affirms the initiatives of the District’s Church Planting effort, and the congregations and pastors actively involved in new church planting activities that focus on reaching the lost; and be it further

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District establish partnerships with circuits and congregations who are willing to initiate and support ongoing church planting efforts that will “stand firm and hold to the traditions that [we] were taught” (2 Thess. 2:15) in the Holy Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and our Lutheran identity and heritage, while affirming the “right, authority, and power [for each church plant] to change, reduce, or increase ceremonies according to its circumstances, as long as it does so without frivolity and offense but in an orderly and appropriate way” (SD Art. X, 9); and be it further

RESOLVED,

That Mid-South District circuits, congregations and schools be encouraged to utilize resources from the Office of National Mission and *Making Disciples for Life* in their church planting and evangelism efforts, and be it finally

RESOLVED,

That we give thanks to God for the congregations, workers, and members involved in planting new congregations which boldly share the Gospel of Jesus in their respective communities.

Respectfully submitted,

**The Mid-South Board of Directors
Rev. Charles Neugebauer, Chairman
Rev. John Gierke, Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Continue a Relationship with the Confessional Malagasy Lutheran Church in Madagascar

- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District has a growing relationship with the Malagasy Lutheran Church, working in consultation with and encouraged by the office of the Synod President, Synod Board for Mission Services/Board for International Missions; and
- WHEREAS,** The Malagasy Lutheran Church in convention has made an overture to partner with a Confessional Lutheran Church Body and will have its request be formally considered for altar and pulpit relationship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) at its next Synodical Convention; and
- WHEREAS,** Mid-South District leaders, in consultation with the President’s Office of the LCMS, and in conjunction with Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne, have provided solid confessional Lutheran education and training for pastors and leaders in the Malagasy Lutheran Church; and
- WHEREAS,** There continue to be great humanitarian needs in the country of Madagascar; and
- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District has supported opportunities for students in Madagascar to attend the Malagasy Lutheran Church’s “Lutheran Institute of Managerial Enterprise (LIME University)”; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District continues working with the Malagasy Lutheran Church to encourage them to work diligently in their Confessional Lutheran identity; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District encourage and support the Malagasy Lutheran Church to seek official relations with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That in this relationship, the Mid-South District focus its funding of \$25,000 on specific education and training held in Madagascar for pastors and lay evangelists of the Malagasy Lutheran Church whereby LCMS instructors provide theological instruction in the area of Pastoral Ministry; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That a portion of the \$25,000 funding be used for support of ministries and mission of the Malagasy Lutheran Church, including LIME; and be it finally

RESOLVED,

That congregations and schools in the Mid-South District be encouraged to continue supporting humanitarian efforts to assist the people living in Madagascar through short term mission trips in coordination with the Office of International Mission, and the Mid-South District Missions.

Respectfully submitted,

**The Mid-South Board of Directors
Rev. Charles Neugebauer, Chairman
Rev. John Gierke, Secretary**



Overture 02-06-21. Floor Committee 2 – Church Missions & Evangelism

SUBJECT: To Continue a Relationship with the Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania

- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District has had a long relationship with the East of Lake Victoria and Southeast of Lake Victoria diocese, working in consultation with and encouraged by the office of the Synod President, Synod Board for Mission Services/Board for International Mission; and
- WHEREAS,** The Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese (SELVD) in convention has made a conscious effort to partner with a Confessional Lutheran Church Body and has strengthened the relationship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS); and
- WHEREAS,** Mid-South District leaders, in consultation with the President’s office of the LCMS and in conjunction with Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne, have sought ways to provide solid confessional Lutheran education and training for pastors and leaders in the SELVD; and
- WHEREAS,** There continue to be great humanitarian needs in the country of Tanzania and in the regions of Shinyanga and Mwanza; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District continues working with the SELVD to encourage them to work diligently in their Confessional Lutheran identity; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That in this relationship, the Mid-South District focus its funding of \$12,500 on specific education and training held in Tanzania for pastors and lay evangelists of the SELVD in which LCMS instructors provide theological instruction in the area of Pastoral Ministry; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That in this relationship, the Mid-South District work with leaders of the LCMS Synod and its seminaries in providing \$12,500 for scholarships for SELVD pastoral candidates to study for higher degrees in our LCMS seminaries; and be finally
- RESOLVED,** That congregations and schools in the Mid-South District be encouraged to continue supporting humanitarian efforts to assist the people living in Tanzania through short term mission trips in coordination with the Office of International Mission, and the Mid-South District Missions.

Respectfully submitted,

**The Mid-South Board of Directors
Rev. Charles Neugebauer, Chairman
Rev. John Gierke, Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Commend and Support the Work of Trinity HOPE in Haiti

- WHEREAS,** Christ instructed us in Matthew 28:19 to “go and make disciples of all nations” and commends those who have fed “the least of these brothers of mine” in Matthew 25:31; and
- WHEREAS,** Trinity HOPE has demonstrated that providing a noon meal for the hungry children in our Lutheran and other Christian schools in Haiti is a powerful witness used by the Holy Spirit to discredit the Voodoo teaching that God is unapproachable and non-responsive to Haitians; and
- WHEREAS,** There are huge and effective efforts by Lutheran Missouri Synod Churches and other Christian denominations to build the body of Christ in Haiti and bring the Good News of Jesus to those who do not know Him; and
- WHEREAS,** One of the most successful ways of doing this is through Christian schools affiliated with local churches and to provide a hot nutritious meal to the children who are often too hungry to learn; and
- WHEREAS,** Trinity HOPE is effectively and economically providing over 42,000 meals daily at a cost of about \$0.25 each for the teachers and children in over 200 of these schools, and
- WHEREAS,** Children in our schools in Haiti are coming to faith in response to the Word and its witness faster than any other population segment and often later are instruments in bringing their whole families to the knowledge of Jesus Christ; and
- WHEREAS,** Convicted to reach the children in all Lutheran and other Christian Schools in Haiti with the Word of the Lord by filling their empty stomachs with a hot lunch enables them to be better nourished, increase their attention span and enhance their ability to learn and see the food as a powerful witness of Christ’s love provided; and
- WHEREAS,** The Lutheran and other Christian Churches of Haiti see the work of Trinity HOPE as one of their most effective outreach tools; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in Conventions commends Trinity HOPE and its supporters for their work and encourages the district’s members and others in support of this work, which blesses children by supplying an opportunity for them to be fed both physically and spiritually.

Respectfully submitted,

**Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Hermitage, Tennessee
Jay Marriner, Congregational President
Trish Braunschweig, Congregational Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Address the Use of Technology in the Life of the Church and the Ministry of Congregations

- WHEREAS,** The Global Corona Virus Pandemic suddenly interrupted our lives, to include our worship and ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Districts of the Synod, and every congregation of the Synod; and
- WHEREAS,** The use of technology in various formats (i.e., Facebook Live; Recorded Videos; On-line Bible Studies; Etc.) has been a great help in keeping congregations united through the hearing of God’s Word and also has served the Church with the passing along and sharing of important information and having meetings, etc.; and
- WHEREAS,** Many individuals outside the congregations of the Synod have been touched to be a part of the ministry provided through technology; and
- WHEREAS,** The use of technology also has its negative aspects, such as not being together in person and unable to celebrate communion; and not being physically present for various meetings to vote; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention ask the Synod to prepare and make available resources that address the use of technology with its pros and cons in the life of the Church at large and within the framework of the congregations of the Synod; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention ask the Synod to direct the CTCR to study and provide a document pertaining to The Use of Technology in The Church and Congregations; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention ask the Secretary of the Synod for guidance considering changing Constitutions and Bylaws of congregations, to address the participation of individuals in voting at Congregational Meetings through Facebook Live, FaceTime, and other opportunities provided through the use of technology; during such times as a Global Pandemic; and for that guidance to be shared with all congregations, schools and organizations throughout the Mid-South District and the Synod; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention submit this memorial to the next convention of the Synod.

Respectfully submitted,

**Trinity Lutheran Church
Mena, Arkansas
Ronnie D. Petty, Congregational President
Rebecca H. Petty, Congregational Secretary**



Overture 02-09-21. Floor Committee 2 – Church Missions & Evangelism

SUBJECT: To Give Thanks to God for His Work in Tanzania

- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District and the South-East of Lake Victoria Dioceses (SELVD) has been in partnership since 2004 and has been dynamic and fruitful; and
- WHEREAS,** The Mid-South District's support of the Mission Training Centers, by way of Bibles, motorbikes, and seminary tuition assistance, has been the main source of training lay people and potential pastors to meet the challenges of the mission opportunities; and
- WHEREAS,** Many ministries from our District have provided much needed humanitarian assistance to the people of Tanzania by providing wells, roofs for churches, food and assisting with medical clinics; and
- WHEREAS,** Numerous individuals from congregations in the Mid-South District have supported the Gospel proclamation through annual mission trips; and
- WHEREAS,** By God's grace, our partnership with SELVD over this seventeen year period has produced much fruit for God's Kingdom, including:
Growth in the number of churches
Increase in the number of Pastors and Deaconesses
Growth in the number of baptized Members;
- therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That we thank God for the opportunity to participate in this partnership that has seen the Word of God shared with tens of thousands members of the Sukuma Tribe.

Respectfully submitted,

**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
White House, Tennessee
Robert Conner, Congregational President
Cheri McQuire, Congregational Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Continue a Limited Partnership with the Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese

WHEREAS,

That the Mid-South District will provide funding and instructors supporting theological instructor for potential Pastors, Deaconesses and lay evangelists; and

WHEREAS,

That while funding has already been provided, we continue our support of Pastoral education at one of the Synod seminaries, for SELVD Pastors seeking advanced degrees; therefore be it

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District continue to support humanitarian efforts in Tanzania; and be it finally

RESOLVED,

That we continue sending mission teams from the Mid-South District, to maintain a positive impact on the Pastors and Evangelists in the Diocese and the team members from the district participating in the mission opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
White House, Tennessee
Robert Conner, Congregational President
Cheri McQuire, Congregational Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Propose *LCMS Men's Ministry*

- WHEREAS,** Christian men face increasing hostility from a culture that speaks of “toxic masculinity” and mocks their faith in God; and
- WHEREAS,** Christ warns us that in the last days “Because of the multiplication of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold (Matthew 24:12) and “when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (Luke 18:8); and
- WHEREAS,** Just as athletes and soldiers have a better chance of success when working together, Scripture teaches: “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” (Proverbs 27:17); and
- WHEREAS,** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) would reap inestimable benefits from a Christ-centered, Bible-based Men’s Ministry; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That we encourage all congregations to become part of LCMS Men’s Ministry to provide opportunities for all Christian men to:
- Encourage their LCMS brothers in spiritual growth by regular Bible study, prayer, and gatherings on the Circuit, District and Synod level;
 - Build strong families as faithful sons, brothers, husbands, fathers and grandfathers;
 - Confess the Faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3);
 - Provide for and Protect the Church and her Pastors
 - Visit orphans and widows in their affliction (James 1:27)

Respectfully submitted,

Concordia Lutheran Church

Kingsport, TN

Approved February 21, 2021

Marty Miller, Congregational President

Joyce McEntire, Congregational Secretary



SUBJECT: To Reject “Lutherans For Racial Justice” and All Organizations, Movements, and Petitions that Promote Critical Race Theory

- WHEREAS,** Ongoing racial problems exist in our country; and
- WHEREAS,** Critical Race Theory (CRT) aims to resolve these ongoing racial problems by considering racism as America’s original sin and states that America was built on racism and what CRT calls systemic racism; in other words, racism is woven into the fabric of all Western governments, churches, and societal structures; and
- WHEREAS,** The organization Lutherans for Racial Justice (LFRJ) is an organization striving for “racial reconciliation and reform within the congregations and communities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod”³; and
- WHEREAS,** LFRJ encourages LCMS pastors and laity to emphasize social activism over the Law and Gospel proclamation that finds reconciliation in Christ who has died for original sin and all actual sins; and
- WHEREAS,** LFRJ promotes “Race + Justice Essentials,” a non-Lutheran resource that “makes for a great starter guide on everything from systemic racism to why race is a social construct”⁴; and LFRJ uses resources and language of CRT terminology, demonstrated, for example, in this August 28, 2020 Facebook post: “Dear Church, systemic racial injustice is real and - whether by our actions or our silence - we have been complicit. Let us repent, let us live in the forgiveness of Jesus, and let us faithfully pursue racial equality, racial justice, reconciliation, and healing.”⁵ accessed September 25, 2020); therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid South District in Convention reaffirm the Synod’s repudiation of all racism; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid South District in Convention reject “Lutherans for Racial Justice” and all organizations, movements, and petitions that hold to Critical Race Theory (CRT) and all language that presents CRT in a positive manner; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That members, congregations, and schools of the Mid-South District endeavor as members of the body of Christ, regardless of our earthly ethnicity, sex, or vocation, to prayerfully strive to live together “eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” as St. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4; and be it finally

³ <https://lutheransforracialjustice.com/about-us>, accessed September 25, 2020

⁴ <https://lutheransforracialjustice.com/church-resources>, accessed September 27, 2020

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=591875158151134&extid=T1zstrTVbr3x6gnh>, accessed September 25, 2020

RESOLVED,

That the Mid South District send this resolution to the Synod as it gathers at its 2023 Convention to do similarly.

Respectfully submitted,

**Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
McMinnville, TN
Michael Twitty, Congregational President
Marcia Scott, Congregational Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Reject “Lutherans For Racial Justice” and All Organizations, Movements, and Petitions that Promote Critical Race Theory

- WHEREAS,** Ongoing racial problems exist in our country; and
- WHEREAS,** Critical Race Theory (CRT) aims to resolve these ongoing racial problems by considering racism as America’s original sin and states that America was built on racism and what CRT calls systemic racism; in other words, racism is woven into the fabric of all Western governments, churches, and societal structures; and
- WHEREAS,** The organization Lutherans for Racial Justice (LFRJ) is an organization striving for “racial reconciliation and reform within the congregations and communities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod”⁶; and
- WHEREAS,** LFRJ encourages LCMS pastors and laity to emphasize social activism over the Law and Gospel proclamation that finds reconciliation in Christ who has died for original sin and all actual sins; and
- WHEREAS,** LFRJ promotes “Race + Justice Essentials,” a non-Lutheran resource that “makes for a great starter guide on everything from systemic racism to why race is a social construct”⁷; and LFRJ uses resources and language of CRT terminology, demonstrated, for example, in this August 28, 2020 Facebook post: “Dear Church, systemic racial injustice is real and - whether by our actions or our silence - we have been complicit. Let us repent, let us live in the forgiveness of Jesus, and let us faithfully pursue racial equality, racial justice, reconciliation, and healing.”⁸ accessed September 25, 2020); therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid South District in Convention reaffirm the Synod’s repudiation of all racism; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid South District in Convention reject “Lutherans for Racial Justice” and all organizations, movements, and petitions that hold to Critical Race Theory (CRT) and all language that presents CRT in a positive manner; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That members, congregations, and schools of the Mid-South District endeavor as members of the body of Christ, regardless of our earthly ethnicity, sex, or vocation, to prayerfully strive to live together “eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” as St. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4; and be it finally

⁶ <https://lutheransforracialjustice.com/about-us>, accessed September 25, 2020

⁷ <https://lutheransforracialjustice.com/church-resources>, accessed September 27, 2020

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=591875158151134&extid=T1zstrTVbr3x6gnh>, accessed September 25, 2020

RESOLVED,

That the Mid South District send this resolution to the Synod as it gathers at its 2023 Convention to do similarly.

Respectfully submitted,

**Middle Tennessee Circuit
By unanimous vote on April 18, 2021
Rev. Gerald Meyer, Circuit Visitor
Rev. Andrew Abraham, Circuit Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Increase the Awareness of Human Trafficking to the Congregations of the Mid-South District and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

- WHEREAS,** Human Trafficking has become the third-largest criminal enterprise with over 20 million people classified as missing due to human trafficking around the world (The United Nations); and
- WHEREAS,** Between 14,000-17,000 people are trafficked into the United States annually (The U.S. Department of Justice); and
- WHEREAS,** The Office of National Mission has made available to the Church the documents:
1. Human Trafficking; and
 2. Identify, Understand and Intervene – Human Trafficking (lcms.org/social issues); and
- WHEREAS,** Lutherans For Life has recently held a ‘Human Trafficking ZOOM Event’ (March 2, 2021); and
- WHEREAS,** Many people in LCMS congregations are unaware of the magnitude of this deplorable act against humanity; and
- WHEREAS,** God created all life and sent His Son Jesus to redeem all life, and He desires that all lives come to the knowledge of Him and be saved (I Timothy 2:4), and has commanded us to love our neighbor as yourself (Matthew 19:19, Mark 12:31, Luke 10:29); therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention establish a Human Trafficking Task Force, as soon as possible, to study this inhumane activity within the boundaries of the Mid-South District, and to provide a report back to the next District Convention; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District Task Force on Human Trafficking make readily and widely available to the congregations of the Mid-South District documents and resources to increase the awareness of Human Trafficking, to include directives to follow should Human Trafficking situations be observed; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention memorialize the Synod in Convention to update the resources provided; and to also direct the CTCR to produce a document addressing Human Trafficking; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in convention rise to pray that Almighty God would by His power bless and direct all law enforcement agencies in their fight against Human Trafficking and that He would through His Church and other relief organizations provide healing, support and ministry to the victims of Human Trafficking; and that He would bring an end to this deplorable act.

Respectfully submitted,

**Trinity Lutheran Church
Mena, Arkansas
Ronnie D. Petty, Congregational President
Rebecca H. Petty, Congregational Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Reject Critical Race Theory and Its World View in the Church

- WHEREAS,** God’s Word says, “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (James 2:8,9)”; and
- WHEREAS,** racism (the sinful notion that some races are inherently superior to others), misunderstanding, and strife are present in the world and in the Church; and
- WHEREAS,** Critical Race Theory (CRT) is “the view that the law and legal institutions are inherently racist.” (Britannica online, accessed September 27, 2020); and
- WHEREAS,** CRT, as seen in the *New York Times* #1 Bestseller *How to Be An Antiracist*, divides all people into two groups based on skin color – the “oppressors” (white) and the “oppressed” (nonwhite) – and asserts: (1) that all oppressors are guilty of racism because of their whiteness, regardless of actual guilt of racist thoughts, words, and deeds; (2) that this racism is woven into the very fabric and belief systems of America, its institutions, churches, language, societal structures; and (3), that this can only be healed by dismantling the systems and structures, that all whites repent of their collective and individual racism, and become activist “antiracists”; and
- WHEREAS,** CRT believes that the oppressed are owed reparations of various kinds; that force may be not only threatened but used to achieve its goals; and
- WHEREAS,** The logical conclusion of CRT is that black people cannot be affirmed nor be successful without the abasement and activism of white people; and that white people will forever be racist and that all non-white people can never be racist, showing that CRT is itself a racist world view; and
- WHEREAS,** When CRT enters the language of theology and church life it confuses: (1) “original sin” and “actual sin”; (2) civil righteousness and righteousness before God; (3) legal justice and perceived injustice. It does not find its solution in scriptural terminologies and mutual repentance and forgiveness, but rather, in terms of one-way repentance and ongoing penance for being born with a particular color of skin, thereby granting no sense of absolution; and
- WHEREAS,** CRT in its desire to destroy the systems and structures of government is a breaking of the 4th Commandment and rebellion against God; in its threats and advocacy of violence against those who disagree is a breaking of the 5th Commandment; in its calls for reparations stokes covetousness of those who are believed to be “privileged” encourages the breaking of the 9th and 10th Commandments; in its rhetoric that often does not condemn but rather encourages looting it is a breaking of the 7th Commandment; as it accuses all white people of racism, as it accuses all police and governmental systems of systemic racism, and will and often does put the worst construction on law enforcement, the justice system, governmental entities, and

individuals based on their color, vocation, and economic situation it encourages the breaking of the 8th Commandment; CRT ultimately makes race, identity, and humanism gods and activism worship thereby breaking the commandments of the First Table of the Law; and

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

WHEREAS, CRT has become taught as factual in schools of higher learning, high schools, grade schools, and seminaries throughout the country; and is one of the driving forces behind the Black Lives Matter, Inc., message of not only protest, but inciting of riots and destruction; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS in convention has passed resolutions in past conventions repudiating all racism, (see 1992 Res. 3-03 and 2019 Res. 11-04A); and

WHEREAS, God has created all people and they are blood related going back to our mutual parents of both Noah and Adam, and all subject to the stain of original sin, but now have also been equally redeemed by the blood of Christ in order to be reconciled to God and to each other; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District in Convention reaffirm the Synod's repudiation of all racism; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District in Convention reject the world view of CRT as being contrary to Scripture and counterproductive to true racial conversation and reconciliation, and also reject all organizations, movements, petitions, and theological language that present CRT in a positive manner; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District in Convention encourage its members to continue to speak against the various sins that cause the troubles in society, fight for justice and mercy as we walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8), apply biblical truth to all areas of life, oppose oppression when it's encountered, and point people to Jesus, the ultimate Reconciler; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we as members of the Mid-South District, its pastors and lay leaders, strive to clarify the language of sin and righteousness as we live out our vocations in society with our brothers and sisters in Christ of all ethnic backgrounds; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District send this resolution to the Synod as it gathers at its 2023 Convention to do similarly.

Respectfully submitted,

**Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
McMinnville, TN
Michael Twitty, Congregational President
Marcia Scott, Congregational Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Give Thanks to God for Sustaining His Church Through the Global Coronavirus Pandemic

WHEREAS,

The Global Coronavirus Pandemic has affected all areas of life, including the life of the Church, to include periods of shut-down, small groups of worshippers in services, the use of technology to have services on line in various formats, etc; and

WHEREAS,

God has promised that nothing in all creation can separate us from His love in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:39); and that not even the gates of hell will prevail against His Church (Matthew 16:18); and

WHEREAS,

Pastors, Church Workers, and Laity in the Mid-South District remained faithful in keeping their congregations connected to God's Word and Sacraments, navigating the safety guidelines provided by the Center for Disease and Control (CDC) and their respective states; therefore be it

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District in convention continue to encourage congregations and Pastors, Church Workers and Laity to continue being faithful, while also seeking new opportunities to connect to the unchurched by sharing the love of Christ with them; and be it finally

RESOLVED,

That the Mid-South District in convention rise in thanks and praise to God for sustaining His Church with the singing of Hymn 644 (LSB), *The Church's One Foundation*.

Respectfully submitted,

**Trinity Lutheran Church
Mena, Arkansas**

**Ronnie D. Petty, Congregational President
Rebecca H. Petty, Congregational Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Reject Critical Race Theory and Its World View in the Church

- WHEREAS,** God’s Word says, “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (James 2:8,9)”; and
- WHEREAS,** Racism (the sinful notion that some races are inherently superior to others), misunderstanding, and strife are present in the world and in the Church; and
- WHEREAS,** Critical Race Theory (CRT) is “the view that the law and legal institutions are inherently racist.” (Britannica online, accessed September 27, 2020); and
- WHEREAS,** CRT, as seen in the *New York Times* #1 Bestseller *How to Be An Antiracist*, divides all people into two groups based on skin color – the “oppressors” (white) and the “oppressed” (nonwhite) – and asserts: (1) that all oppressors are guilty of racism because of their whiteness, regardless of actual guilt of racist thoughts, words, and deeds; (2) that this racism is woven into the very fabric and belief systems of America, its institutions, churches, language, societal structures; and (3), that this can only be healed by dismantling the systems and structures, that all whites repent of their collective and individual racism, and become activist “antiracists”; and
- WHEREAS,** CRT believes that the oppressed are owed reparations of various kinds; that force may be not only threatened but used to achieve its goals; and
- WHEREAS,** The logical conclusion of CRT is that black people cannot be affirmed nor be successful without the abasement and activism of white people; and that white people will forever be racist and that all non-white people can never be racist, showing that CRT is itself a racist world view; and
- WHEREAS,** When CRT enters the language of theology and church life it confuses: (1) “original sin” and “actual sin”; (2) civil righteousness and righteousness before God; (3) legal justice and perceived injustice. It does not find its solution in scriptural terminologies and mutual repentance and forgiveness, but rather, in terms of one-way repentance and ongoing penance for being born with a particular color of skin, thereby granting no sense of absolution; and
- WHEREAS,** CRT in its desire to destroy the systems and structures of government is a breaking of the 4th Commandment and rebellion against God; in its threats and advocacy of violence against those who disagree is a breaking of the 5th Commandment; in its calls for reparations stokes covetousness of those who are believed to be “privileged” encourages the breaking of the 9th and 10th Commandments; in its rhetoric that often does not condemn but rather encourages looting it is a breaking of the 7th Commandment; as it accuses all white people of racism, as it accuses all police and governmental systems of systemic racism, and will and often does put the worst construction on law enforcement, the justice system, governmental entities, and individuals based on their color, vocation, and economic situation it encourages the breaking of the 8th Commandment; CRT ultimately makes race, identity, and

humanism gods and activism worship thereby breaking the commandments of the First Table of the Law; and

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

WHEREAS, CRT has become taught as factual in schools of higher learning, high schools, grade schools, and seminaries throughout the country; and is one of the driving forces behind the Black Lives Matter, Inc., message of not only protest, but inciting of riots and destruction; and

WHEREAS, The LCMS in convention has passed resolutions in past conventions repudiating all racism, (see 1992 Res. 3-03 and 2019 Res. 11-04A); and

WHEREAS, God has created all people and they are blood related going back to our mutual parents of both Noah and Adam, and all subject to the stain of original sin, but now have also been equally redeemed by the blood of Christ in order to be reconciled to God and to each other; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District in Convention reaffirm the Synod's repudiation of all racism; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District in Convention reject the world view of CRT as being contrary to Scripture and counterproductive to true racial conversation and reconciliation, and also reject all organizations, movements, petitions, and theological language that present CRT in a positive manner; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District in Convention encourage its members to continue to speak against the various sins that cause the troubles in society, fight for justice and mercy as we walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8), apply biblical truth to all areas of life, oppose oppression when it's encountered, and point people to Jesus, the ultimate Reconciler; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we as members of the Mid-South District, its pastors and lay leaders, strive to clarify the language of sin and righteousness as we live out our vocations in society with our brothers and sisters in Christ of all ethnic backgrounds; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Mid-South District send this resolution to the Synod as it gathers at its 2023 Convention to do similarly.

Respectfully submitted,

**Nashville Circuit
By unanimous vote on April 18, 2021
Rev. Ken Shaw, Circuit Visitor**



SUBJECT: To Reject Critical Race Theory and Its World View in the Church

- WHEREAS,** God’s Word says, “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (James 2:8,9)”; and
- WHEREAS,** Racism (the sinful notion that some races are inherently superior to others), misunderstanding, and strife are present in the world and in the Church; and
- WHEREAS,** Critical Race Theory (CRT) is “the view that the law and legal institutions are inherently racist.” (Britannica online, accessed September 27, 2020); and
- WHEREAS,** CRT, as seen in the *New York Times* #1 Bestseller *How to Be An Antiracist*, divides all people into two groups based on skin color – the “oppressors” (white) and the “oppressed” (nonwhite) – and asserts: (1) that all oppressors are guilty of racism because of their whiteness, regardless of actual guilt of racist thoughts, words, and deeds; (2) that this racism is woven into the very fabric and belief systems of America, its institutions, churches, language, societal structures; and (3), that this can only be healed by dismantling the systems and structures, that all whites repent of their collective and individual racism, and become activist “antiracists”; and
- WHEREAS,** CRT believes that the oppressed are owed reparations of various kinds; that force may be not only threatened but used to achieve its goals; and
- WHEREAS,** The logical conclusion of CRT is that black people cannot be affirmed nor be successful without the abasement and activism of white people; and that white people will forever be racist and that all non-white people can never be racist, showing that CRT is itself a racist world view; and
- WHEREAS,** When CRT enters the language of theology and church life it confuses: (1) “original sin” and “actual sin”; (2) civil righteousness and righteousness before God; (3) legal justice and perceived injustice. It does not find its solution in scriptural terminologies and mutual repentance and forgiveness, but rather, in terms of one-way repentance and ongoing penance for being born with a particular color of skin, thereby granting no sense of absolution; and
- WHEREAS,** CRT in its desire to destroy the systems and structures of government is a breaking of the 4th Commandment and rebellion against God; in its threats and advocacy of violence against those who disagree is a breaking of the 5th Commandment; in its calls for reparations stokes covetousness of those who are believed to be “privileged” encourages the breaking of the 9th and 10th Commandments; in its rhetoric that often does not condemn but rather encourages looting it is a breaking of the 7th Commandment; as it accuses all white people of racism, as it accuses all police and governmental systems of systemic racism, and will and often does put the worst construction on law enforcement, the justice system, governmental entities, and individuals based on their color, vocation, and economic situation it encourages the breaking of the 8th Commandment; CRT ultimately makes race, identity, and

- humanism gods and activism worship thereby breaking the commandments of the First Table of the Law; and
- WHEREAS,** CRT creates division and magnifies it and its solutions do not come from Christ but rather come from a spirit of anger, bitterness, and slander; and can only produce more of the same; and
- WHEREAS,** CRT has become taught as factual in schools of higher learning, high schools, grade schools, and seminaries throughout the country; and is one of the driving forces behind the Black Lives Matter, Inc., message of not only protest, but inciting of riots and destruction; and
- WHEREAS,** The LCMS in convention has passed resolutions in past conventions repudiating all racism, (see 1992 Res. 3-03 and 2019 Res. 11-04A); and
- WHEREAS,** God has created all people and they are blood related going back to our mutual parents of both Noah and Adam, and all subject to the stain of original sin, but now have also been equally redeemed by the blood of Christ in order to be reconciled to God and to each other; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in Convention reaffirm the Synod's repudiation of all racism; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in Convention reject the world view of CRT as being contrary to Scripture and counterproductive to true racial conversation and reconciliation, and also reject all organizations, movements, petitions, and theological language that present CRT in a positive manner; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District in Convention encourage its members to continue to speak against the various sins that cause the troubles in society, fight for justice and mercy as we walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8), apply biblical truth to all areas of life, oppose oppression when it's encountered, and point people to Jesus, the ultimate Reconciler; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That we as members of the Mid-South District, its pastors and lay leaders, strive to clarify the language of sin and righteousness as we live out our vocations in society with our brothers and sisters in Christ of all ethnic backgrounds; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District send this resolution to the Synod as it gathers at its 2023 Convention to do similarly.

Respectfully submitted,

**Middle Tennessee Circuit
By unanimously vote on April 18, 2021
Rev. Gerald Meyer, Circuit Visitor
Rev. Andrew Abraham, Circuit Secretary**



SUBJECT: To Protect Christian Consciences

- WHEREAS,** Christians are called to “render to God what is God’s” (Luke 20:25) and to “obey God rather than man” (Acts 5:29); and
- WHEREAS,** Christians are called to “obey their magistrates save when they are commanded to sin” (Ap XVI: 6-7); and
- WHEREAS,** The Holy Scriptures teach that man is not free to bind the conscience of another to a merely human commandment (Galatians 5:1-6; Romans 14); and
- WHEREAS,** There is increased pressure from the media and the government for Christians to participate in things which may violate their conscience including, but not limited to homosexual or transgender weddings, transgender bathroom access, vaccines using aborted fetal cell lines or that cause fertility concerns, denying oneself Christian worship opportunities due to government mandates, the teaching of Critical Race Theory; and
- WHEREAS,** This is clearly evidenced not only anecdotally, but also concretely, for instance, by the recent Equality Act in the U.S. Congress which would mandate transgender bathroom access; and
- WHEREAS,** This violation of conscience is a violation of one’s Christian freedom and Christian wisdom and may result in sin; and
- WHEREAS,** There is historic success in claiming religious exemption from violations of conscience on the basis of Religious Freedom in America (e.g. Meyer v. Nebraska, (1923) or Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod v. Federal Communications Commission (1988)); therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District, LCMS, congregations and their members abstain from every teaching of men that violates their Christian conscience bound to God’s Word alone in every sphere of life; and be it finally
- RESOLVED,** That the Mid-South District, LCMS, give its full support and assistance of every kind to any congregation of the District or member of a District congregation in securing religious exemption from teachings and practices contrary to God’s Word.

Respectfully submitted,

**Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church
Olive Branch, Mississippi
David W. Ogdon, Congregational President
Kaye O’Hearn, Congregational Secretary**

SECTION E

APPENDICES

Approved Amended Bylaws due to 2019 Synod Convention Constitution and Bylaw amendments
Resolution 2.2.5.1

To Amend District Bylaws to Harmonize with 2019 Synod Convention Constitution and Bylaw Amendments and to Communicate Adoption to the District

Rationale

The 67th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in 2019 adopted Res. 9-05, “To Amend the Constitution to Address Individual Membership and Advisory Representation”, which was subsequently submitted to the congregations of the Synod for ratification by a 2/3 affirmative vote, which was declared by the Secretary of Synod on March 23, 2020 as having been attained. Thus, these changes to the Synod’s Constitution necessitate the amendment of corresponding Mid-South District Bylaws.

The 67th Regular Convention of the Synod also adopted various amendments to the Bylaws of the Synod, which also necessitated the amendment of corresponding Mid-South District Bylaws.

The 19th Regular Convention of the Mid-South District in 2015 enabled the district board of directors, after a favorable review by the Synod’s Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM), to amend the bylaws in response to resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod before the next district convention (District Bylaw 1.1.3 - 1.1.3(a)-(c).

The corresponding bylaw amendments were drafted by the secretary of the district, according to bylaw 1.1.3 (b), and were submitted to the Commission on Constitutional Matters [CCM] of the Synod for their examination and approval. The CCM reviewed the proposed bylaw changes on June 16, 2020 and gave a favorable opinion (20-2933) for the board of directors to proceed with adoption.

Accompanying this resolution is a copy of the proposed Mid-South District Bylaws, with the proposed changes noted. A synopsis of the Synod Constitution and Bylaw amendments and the corresponding Mid-South District Bylaw amendments (or current corresponding bylaws) is as follows:

- 1) *Amendment to the Constitution Articles V, VI, IX, XII 9-10, and XIII* [Addressed by amendments to **MDS Bylaws 2.1.1; 3.2.3.4**]
- 2) *Definition of staff* [Addressed by replacing “staff” when it followed executive by replacing it with executive director(s) where appropriate to ensure that when staff is mentioned separately, it corresponds to the Synod’s usage of *staff* in the LCMS *Handbook*, and also by adding a separate reference to the district president (as chief executive of the district) in certain cases where appropriate when the district president was included in the meaning behind executive staff.] Bylaw amendments addressing this item are in: **MDS Bylaws 1.3.3; 2.2.5; 4.3.1; 4.3.2 (f); 5.1.1; 5.2.2; 5.2.6; 5.2.7; 7.1.1; and 8.5.5.**
- 3) *Multi-congregation parishes, district convention and circuit forum representation, and assisting capacity calls* [Addressed by references to LCMS Bylaws in **MDS Bylaw 2.1.1**]
- 4) *Election of advisory delegates to the Synod conventions / attendance at district conventions* [Addressed by reference of LCMS Bylaw 2 3.1.3 - 3.1.3.1 in **MDS Bylaw 2.1.1** and amendment / revision of format to **MDS Bylaw 3.2.3.4**. While new bylaws could have been added to MDS Bylaw Section 2.2 to spell out the attendance requirements and allowance for excused absence notification, it seemed better to include the Synod provisions in the general 2.1.1 references, rather than call them out by specific bylaws. In order to fulfill these bylaws, the registration/credentialing cards that the advisory delegates will receive can include a notice for registering an excused absence for appropriate reasons to notify the district president. These provisions can also be shared with the commissioned and ordained members at their respective professional conferences.]
- 5) *Region membership at district level based on congregational membership* [Addressed by amendments to **MDS Bylaws 8.3.2.1 (a), (d); 8.3.4.1 (a); and 8.3.4.2 (a).**]

6) *District conferences meeting in up to five major sectionals can now submit overtures* [Addressed already by current LCMS Bylaw 4.8 reference in MDS Bylaw 2.1.1. According to this amended LCMS Bylaw, MDS currently uses east and west for conference sectionals, but could expand to five geographic sections among the four regions if so desired in the future.]

Therefore be it

Resolved, That the Mid-South District Board of Directors amend the district's bylaws, as notated, and proposed according to the provisions in Bylaw 1.1.3, to comply with the 2019 Synod Convention Constitution and Bylaw amendments; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Directors communicate to the district via the Mid-South Minute, Encourager, the Lutheran Witness District Supplement, and the board's report to the 2021 district convention that the amended bylaws, adopted by the board of directors, are effective, having the approval of the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Synod. [District Bylaw 1.1.3 (c)].

Rev. Gierke moved adoption, which was seconded by Dr. Fred Guengerich. Following a brief discussion, the chair called the question, indicating a raising of hands to help note that a 2/3 required majority had been achieved.

The motion approved by the Board of Directors by a unanimous vote by raising hands on Zoom. This fulfilled the 2/3 majority vote requirement.

The Bylaws

The Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Cordova, Tennessee

Approved: (By the Mid-South District in Convention)

A Formative Plan was enacted at the beginning of the Mid-South District in 1966; the 1968 Convention voted to continue with the Formative Plan until Bylaws could be adopted.

Adopted: (By the Mid-South District in Convention)

June 7-10, 1970

Amended: (By the Mid-South District Conventions)

June 12-15, 1991

June 12-15, 1994

June 13-16, 1997

June 02-05, 2000

July 11-14, 2003

June 09-12, 2006

June 22-24, 2012

June 26-28, 2015, finalized with the Board of Directors' formal adoption of 1.1.3 (a)-(b) November 2, 2015 per convention resolution

December 23, 2017, amended by the Board of Directors to harmonize with 2016 LCMS Convention resolutions

June 28-30, 2018

August 24, 2020, amended by the Board of Directors to harmonize with 2019 LCMS Convention resolutions

THE BYLAWS OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

1. ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Constitution and Bylaws

- 1.1.1 The Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, including the confessional position and the mission objectives as stated therein, shall be the constitution and bylaws of the Mid-South District. They shall be supplemented by the bylaws of the Mid-South District as needed for the district's administration and the work of the Synod.
- 1.1.2 Changes and amendments to the bylaws of the Mid-South District may be made by a majority vote of any properly called convention of the Mid-South District, provided that the proposed changes were submitted in writing to the district president, who shall submit them to the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Synod in advance of the convention for review and approval. Any subsequent changes by the convention shall become effective only after approval by the commission. [Synod Bylaws 3.9.2.2.3 (a-b), 4.1.1.2 (b)]
- 1.1.3 In exceptional circumstances and upon the express direction of a convention of the district or Synod, or in response to resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod, amendments may be made by a two-thirds majority of the board of directors of the Mid-South District.
 - (a) Such amendments to the bylaws shall be necessary to implement resolutions or bylaw amendments adopted by a convention of the Synod or the district before the next district convention.
 - (b) Such amendments shall be drafted by the secretary of the district, to be examined and approved by the Synod's Commission on Constitutional Matters before their adoption. No amendment shall take effect until it has been approved by the commission.
 - (c) The board of directors shall notify the district of the adopted amendment(s) in a way deemed most expedient, in addition to its report to the next district convention.

1.2 Basic Principles of District Administration

- 1.2.1 The district president shall be the chief executive of the district.
- 1.2.2 The district president shall be assisted in the administration of his office, including the visitation of congregations of the district, by the circuit visitors and the regional vice-presidents, individually or collectively.
- 1.2.3 The district president, together with the board of directors, shall supervise and administer the financial mission and ministry program of the district.
- 1.2.4 Within the framework of their regular operating procedures, the district president and board of directors shall be governed and bound by the principles and respective duties and prohibitions expressed in the board of directors' policy manual.
- 1.2.5 The district board of directors, ministry teams, task forces, committees, and other entities of the district organization shall make reports and, if needed, recommendations to each convention of the district.
- 1.2.6 All district officers and organizational entities shall be ultimately responsible to the district convention.

1.3 Officers and Board of Directors

- 1.3.1 The officers of the district shall be a president, four regional vice-presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, and the circuit visitors.
- 1.3.2 The board of directors shall be composed of the following voting members:
1. The president of the district
 2. Four (4) vice-presidents of the district, one (1) elected by the convention from each electoral region
 3. The secretary of the district
 4. The treasurer of the district, who shall be a layperson (appointed)
 5. Two (2) ministers of religion—commissioned: one (1) elected by the convention from regions 1 and 2; and one (1) elected by the convention from regions 3 and 4
 6. Four (4) laypersons, one (1) elected by the convention from each electoral region
 7. Up to three (3) at-large laypersons appointed by the elected members of the board of directors to obtain needed additional skill sets (legal, finance, investment, administration, etc.) [Synod Bylaw 4.5.1]
- With the exception of the district president, secretary, and treasurer, no more than two voting members of the board shall be members of the same congregation.
- 1.3.3 The executive directors under the district president shall be advisory members of the board.

2. DISTRICT CONVENTIONS AND CONFERENCES

2.1 General Provisions

- 2.1.1 District conventions, conferences for professional church workers, circuit forums, and convocations shall regularly take place according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod, insofar as these may be applicable. [Synod Bylaws 3.1.3 – 3.1.3.1, 4.2, 4.8, 4.9, 5.3, 5.4]

2.2 District Conventions

- 2.2.1 The district president shall be responsible for the organization of the district convention.
- 2.2.2 Reports and overtures shall be submitted in writing to the district president not later than twelve (12) weeks prior to the opening date of the convention. The convention workbook shall be published and distributed by a means of electronic communication not later than six (6) weeks prior to the opening date of the convention to each district congregation, delegate and alternate, all officers of the district, ministry teams, task forces, committees, and other entities of the district. A printed copy shall be provided to any designated recipient upon request.
- 2.2.3 The district president shall appoint convention floor committees and name the chairpersons, and shall assign overtures to the appropriate convention floor committees with their designated meeting times and places.
- 2.2.4 One of the floor committees appointed by the district president shall be the elections committee. This committee shall be composed of at least two (2) ministers of religion—ordained, one (1) minister of religion—commissioned and two (2) laypersons to conduct and supervise all elections.
- 2.2.4.1 The committee shall be empowered to adopt procedures and methods that will insure efficiency and accuracy, including the use of mechanical, electronic, or other methods of casting, recording, or tabulating votes.

- 2.2.5 The chairperson of each convention floor committee shall appoint a secretary, consult with the chairperson of the appropriate ministry team, task force, committee, or district organizational entity, including district executive directors, and shall report the recommendations of the floor committee to the convention.
- 2.2.6 Floor committees shall consult with the finance office of the district as guided generally in the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaw 3.1.7(g)]
- 2.2.7 Convention proceedings shall be published and distributed by a means of electronic communication to each district congregation, delegate and alternate, all officers of the district, ministry teams, task forces, committees, and other entities of the district. A printed copy shall be provided to any designated recipient upon request.

3. DIRECTIVES FOR OFFICERS

3.1 General Directives

- 3.1.1 All officers shall be elected or appointed as provided in the *Handbook* of the Synod and the district bylaws.
- 3.1.2 All officers shall fulfill the duties assigned to them in the *Handbook* of the Synod, the district bylaws, and by the board of directors.
- 3.1.3 All officers shall be governed and bound by the principles and respective duties and prohibitions expressed in the board of directors' policy manual.
- 3.1.4 Any officer, with the exception of the district president, may be removed from office for cause following the provisions and procedures set forth in the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 1.5.8-1.5.8.1]

3.2 Officers

The President

- 3.2.1.1 The president shall be an ex-officio member without vote of all ministry teams, task forces, committees, and organizational entities of the district.
- 3.2.1.2 He shall serve as a voting member of the board of directors and shall serve as chairman of the circuit visitors' conference.

The Vice-Presidents

- 3.2.2.1 The vice-presidents shall be advisors to the district president, and shall function as his representatives or assistants in service to the district.
- 3.2.2.2 They may serve as designated representatives of the board of directors, on ministry teams, task forces, and committees, and as advisors on other organizational entities of the district.

The Secretary

- 3.2.3.1 The secretary shall be an advisory member of the constitution committee.
- 3.2.3.2 He shall carry out responsibilities for the nomination and election of the district president, vice-presidents, circuit visitors, and the board of directors according to the provisions set forth in the *Handbook* of the Synod and the bylaws of the district.
- 3.2.3.3 He shall carry out responsibilities for the certification of delegates attending district conventions. [Synod Bylaw 4.2.2. (a)]
- 3.2.3.4 He shall carry out the following responsibilities regarding delegates and representatives from the district attending the conventions of the Synod, according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod and in directives from the Secretary of the Synod:

- (a) Administer the certification of the circuit voting pastoral and lay delegates and alternates elected by the circuit forums. [Synod Bylaw 3.1.2.1 (i)]
 - (b) Administer the selection process and certification of advisory delegates and alternates for the commissioned ministers and those ordained ministers not eligible to be elected by congregations as voting representatives, who are members of the Synod within the district. [Synod Bylaw 3.1.3.1 – 3.1.3.1 (c)]
 - (c) Administer the certification of all other district representatives. [Synod Bylaw 3.1.3.2-3.1.3.2 (b)]
- 3.2.3.5 He shall carry out responsibilities for conflict resolution within the district according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 1.10.10.2 and 1.10.11.2]
- 3.2.4 ***The Treasurer***
- 3.2.4.1 The treasurer shall have oversight of all funds and securities of the district and shall provide regular reports of financial status to the board of directors.
- 3.2.4.2 He/she shall evaluate the financial implications of all reports, recommendations, and proposals made to the board of directors.
- 3.2.4.3 He/she shall guide the board of directors in its responsibility in the selection of external auditors and ensure that the board of directors is represented in the annual audit closing conference with the external auditors.
- 3.2.4.4 He/she shall guide the board of directors in its review and approval of the annual operating and capital budgets.
- 3.2.4.5 He/she shall chair the finance committee of the board of directors.
- 3.2.5 ***The Circuit Visitors***
- 3.2.5.1 The circuit visitors and the district president shall constitute the circuit visitors' conference, which shall meet at the call of the district president in the interest of the work and welfare of the district and the Synod, as provided in the *Handbook* of the Synod. The vice-presidents may be requested to attend.
- 3.2.5.2 Within their respective circuits, the circuit visitors shall: foster evangelical and edifying communication and relationships among the congregations, schools, specialized ministries and the professional church workers; assist the district president, as requested, in promoting and obtaining unanimous participation by congregations in the submission of annual statistical reports; and positively encourage mission outreach through visits, circuit forums, circuit convocations, and circuit pastors' conferences as provided in the *Handbook* of the Synod and the district bylaws.

4. DIRECTIVES FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

4.1 General Provisions

- 4.1.1 The board of directors shall be responsible for setting policies and managing the business and legal affairs of the district. It shall have the full legal status and responsibility ascribed to it by and implied in the Articles of Incorporation of the Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
- 4.1.2 The board shall be governed and bound by the principles and respective duties and prohibitions expressed in Synod Bylaw 4.5.1 and the board of directors' policy manual.
- 4.1.3 Any member of the board, who is not an officer of the district, may be removed from office for cause following the process outlined in the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 1.5.7-1.5.7.1]

4.2 Administration

- 4.2.1 By the end of the first meeting of the board following the district convention, the board of directors shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among the board of directors' members to serve a three-year term. The district president is not eligible to serve as chairman or vice-chairman.
- 4.2.2 The board of directors shall appoint a recording secretary (nonvoting) who shall record the official minutes of the meetings of the board of directors.
- 4.2.3 The board of directors shall appoint the district treasurer, who shall be a layperson, after each regular convention of the district.
- 4.2.4 The board of directors shall meet at least quarterly within each year.
- 4.2.5 Special meetings may be called by the chairman or upon the request of three (3) board members.
- 4.2.6 A majority of the voting members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum.
- 4.2.7 The chairman shall conduct the meetings and be responsible for the agenda of each meeting.
- 4.2.8 Task forces or committees may be appointed within the board at its discretion.

4.3 Duties

- 4.3.1 On behalf of and in service to the congregations of the district, the board of directors shall be responsible for establishing and overseeing policies by which it governs itself, the district officers, executive directors under the district president, staff, and the overall organization, consistent with the district mission in fulfilling the Lord's work. The board of directors shall be accountable to the district convention, and the executive directors, staff, and all organizational entities of the district shall be accountable to the board of directors through the office of the district president.
- 4.3.2 The board of directors shall:
 - (a) have authority to acquire, lease, mortgage, pledge, sell, convey, or otherwise dispose of property, real or personal, tangible and intangible on behalf of the district;
 - (b) have power to borrow money and to issue, sell or pledge district obligations and evidence of indebtedness, and to mortgage and pledge district property to secure payment thereof, whosoever situate;
 - (c) establish the annual income and spending budget of the district;
 - (d) administer the functions of the Mid-South District, as a Participating District of Lutheran Church Extension Fund-Missouri Synod (LCEF), as described in LCEF's bylaws and in accordance with its policies and procedures;
 - (e) supervise the administration of all endowment and special funds of the district;
 - (f) fill all executive positions, except that of district president, created by the convention of the district;
 - (g) be the legal representative and custodian of all properties and documents of the district and keep on file an accurate inventory of all district properties, legacies and valuable records and documents;
 - (h) engage a certified public accountant to audit the financial records of the district at least annually or as often and at any time as it deems advisable;
 - (i) provide the bonding of all persons handling district monies;

- (j) in the name of the district, rent and regulate access to the necessary safe deposit space for the safekeeping of all valuable district records and documents;
- (k) provide for implementation within the district of the resolutions of the Synod and district conventions, and assign responsibilities and duties in harmony with the district's fiscal policy;
- (l) establish, or realign, visitation circuits according to geographical criteria [Synod Bylaw 5.1.2], after consultation and mutual concurrence with the congregations of the respective circuit(s);
- (m) determine the composition of its electoral circuits prior to each Synod convention [Synod Bylaw section 3.1.2 (a)];
- (n) establish policies by which all organizational entities of the district and officers shall function according to the spirit of the bylaws;
- (o) ratify and/or fill all appointed district positions of service after each regular district convention;
- (p) ratify all appointments to fill vacancies occurring in any ministry team, task force, committee, or district organizational entity;
- (q) conduct, supervise, and manage all affairs of the district not otherwise assigned;
- (r) report regularly to the convention of the Mid-South District.

5. DIRECTIVES FOR MINISTRY TEAMS, TASK FORCES, AND COMMITTEES

5.1 General Directives

- 5.1.1 Ministry teams, task forces, and committees are appointed persons of the district for advising and assisting the district president and the executive directors under the president in providing leadership, resources and encouragement for district mission and ministry.
- 5.1.2 Ministry teams, task forces, and committees shall be responsible to the board of directors through the office of the district president.

5.2 Administration

- 5.2.1 Ministry teams, task forces, and committees may be formed as needs and opportunities arise in the district.
- 5.2.2 The president of the district shall appoint the members of the ministry teams, task forces, and committees, in consultation with the appropriate executive director(s) under the president, regional vice-presidents, and circuit visitors. These appointments shall be ratified by the district board of directors.
- 5.2.3 The ministry teams, task forces, and committees shall determine frequency of meetings.
- 5.2.4 A majority of members shall constitute a quorum.
- 5.2.5 The chairman shall conduct the meetings and be responsible for the agenda at each meeting.
- 5.2.6 Each ministry team, task force, and committee shall keep the board of directors informed about its mission and ministry through the office of the district president or one of the executive directors under the president.
- 5.2.7 Each ministry team, task force, and committee shall annually prepare requests for funds for its mission and ministry, and shall submit the requests to the responsible executive director under the president.
- 5.2.8 Each ministry team, task force, and committee shall regularly report to the district convention.

6. ELECTED AND APPOINTED POSITIONS

6.1 Elected by the District Convention

6.1.1 *The Nominations Committee*

Membership

6.1.1.1 The nominations committee shall consist of a total of six (6) members, as follows:

1. Two (2) ministers of religion—ordained
2. Two (2) ministers of religion—commissioned
3. Two (2) laypersons

One of each category shall be from electoral regions 1 and 2 combined, and one of each category shall be from electoral regions 3 and 4 combined.

Duties

6.1.1.2 The nominations committee shall:

- (a) solicit names from the rostered congregations and individual members of the Synod in the district;
- (b) prepare, according to provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod and the bylaws of the district, slates of candidates and alternates for the offices or positions to be voted upon by the district convention, except for the offices of district president, regional vice-presidents, and circuit visitors;
- (c) obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to select as candidates; and
- (d) publish the names and qualifications of the nominees in the convention workbook.

6.2 Appointed by the Board of Directors upon Recommendation of the District President

6.2.1 *The Constitution Committee*

Membership

6.2.1.1 The constitution committee shall consist of at least two (2) ministers of religion—ordained and one (1) layperson. The secretary of the district shall be an advisory member.

Duties

6.2.1.2 The constitution committee shall review new and revised constitutions and bylaws of member and applicant congregations according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 2.2.1-2.4.2]

6.3 *The District Reconcilers*

Membership

6.3.1 District reconcilers shall be appointed according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 1.10.10-1.10.10.1]

Informal Efforts toward Reconciliation; Consultation

6.3.2 The district reconcilers may assist in informal efforts (not formally requested by a member of the Synod) according to the procedures of Bylaw 1.10.5 in the *Handbook* of the Synod toward reconciliation before disputes reach the formal level. He/she may also be called upon by the district president to serve in efforts at the informal level toward reconciliation.

Formal Efforts toward Reconciliation

- 6.3.3 At the formal level (formally requested by a member of the Synod) according to the procedures of Bylaw 1.10 in the *Handbook* of the Synod, the reconciler shall serve in the following situations arising in the district:
- (a) Procedural questions involved in excommunication cases
 - (b) Cases in which a member of the Synod shall have been removed from the position that such member holds in a congregation that is a member of the Synod
 - (c) Cases in which a person, whether or not a member of the Synod, is removed from the position which the person holds in the district
 - (d) Cases involving differences between congregations within the same district or between a congregation and its district [Synod Bylaw 1.10.10.2(a)-(d)]
- 6.3.4 District reconcilers may also be called upon to serve in the various capacities of a reconciler at the Synod level according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaw 1.10]

6.4 Stewardship Promotion

- 6.4.1 The district shall have an appointed ministry team, ad hoc committee, or individual dedicated to, and responsible for, the promotion of stewardship in the district.
- 6.4.2 After each district convention, the board of directors shall determine what structure and format of a stewardship promotion ministry, with the resources available, will best serve the district and its strategic plan to foster cheerful stewardship of God's gifts and resources in and among the congregations of the district.
- 6.4.3 The board of directors will then formalize the process and appoint an appropriate ministry team, committee, or individual for the promotion of stewardship in the district.
- 6.4.4 This ministry team, committee, or individual shall operate according to the provisions of Synod Bylaw section 4.6 and district bylaw chapter 5.

7. THE FINANCIAL MISSION AND MINISTRY PROGRAM

7.1 Preparation and Appropriation

- 7.1.1 The preparation of the financial mission and ministry program of the district shall be coordinated by the finance office in consultation with the district president and executive directors. The program shall take into account district responsibilities toward the financial mission and ministry program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The financial mission and ministry program shall be submitted to the board of directors for its evaluation and approval.
- 7.1.2 Simultaneous to the preparation of the mission and ministry program of the district, the finance office shall inform, inspire, and challenge the congregations of the district to assume responsibility for their fair share of this program by way of their projected mission commitments. The congregations, in a timely manner, shall inform the finance office of their intended mission commitments. The total of these commitments shall be reported to the board of directors.
- 7.1.3 The finance office shall then establish the district spending budget for final approval by the board of directors. This spending budget shall be commensurate with the intended mission commitments of the congregation and other anticipated receipts. Expenditures authorized by the district convention shall be subject to scheduling and appropriation by the board of directors.

8. ELECTION AND VACANCY PROCEDURES

8.1 General Provisions

- 8.1.1 Procedures for the election of all officers, board, and committee members shall follow the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod and the bylaws of the district.
- 8.1.2 The following officers and members shall be elected by the convention at each regular convention of the district:
1. The president
 2. The vice-presidents in line of succession, one (1) from each electoral region
 3. The secretary
 4. Two (2) ministers of religion—commissioned to the board of directors, one (1) from regions 1 and 2; and one (1) from regions 3 and 4
 5. Four (4) laypersons to the board of directors, one (1) from each electoral region
 6. The circuit visitors
 7. The nominations committee [District Bylaw 6.1.1.1]
- 8.1.3 Except for the offices of district president, the regional vice-presidents, and the circuit visitors, the nominations committee shall place in nomination at least two (2) candidates, and select at least one alternate, for each elective office or committee position in the district prescribed by the Synod and district bylaws. These include, but may not be limited to:
1. The secretary [Synod Bylaw 4.3.1, District Bylaw 3.2.3]
 2. The regional positions for the board of directors (commissioned and lay) [Synod Bylaw 3.12.3, District Bylaw 1.3.2 - 5,6]
 3. The nominations committee [Synod Bylaw 3.12.3; District Bylaw 6.1.1.1]
 4. Synod Committee for Convention Nominations [Synod Bylaws 3.12.3-3.12.3.3]
- 8.1.4 The district, assembled in convention, shall have the right to alter the slates of nominees, and voting delegates may make additional nominations from the floor with the prior consent of the nominee(s) and pertinent information about the nominee(s) provided in writing.
- 8.1.5 Except for the office of circuit visitor, the election of all offices shall be by individuals and not by slate.
- 8.1.6 The board of directors shall fill all appointive offices after each regular convention of the district.
- 8.1.7 The electoral regions of the district shall be four (4):
- Region 1:* The congregations in the Fayetteville, Fort Smith, and Jonesboro visitation circuits
- Region 2:* The congregations in the Little Rock-North, Little Rock-South, and Stuttgart visitation circuits
- Region 3:* The congregations in the Memphis, Nashville, Middle Tennessee, and Paducah visitation circuits
- Region 4:* The congregations in the Chattanooga, Johnson City, and Knoxville visitation circuits

8.2 Convention Elections

- 8.2.1 The elections committee shall have the privilege of the floor at the discretion of the convention chairman.
- 8.2.1.1 The order of elections following that of district president shall be:
- 1) regional vice-presidents, in line of succession
 - 2) secretary of the district
 - 3) regional board members (commissioned & layperson)
 - 4) members of all elective boards and committees
 - 5) Circuit visitors (ratification of the slate, constituting election) [Synod Bylaw 5.2.2 (h)]
- 8.2.2 Initial and succeeding ballots shall be collected during the session in which they are distributed or conducted electronically.
- 8.2.3 A majority of all votes cast shall be required for election to all elective offices and elective board positions.
- 8.2.4 Except in the election of the president, regional vice-presidents, and circuit visitors, the following regulations shall apply: candidates receiving a majority on the first ballot shall be declared elected. When a second or succeeding ballot is required for a majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes and all candidates receiving less than fifteen (15) percent of the votes cast shall be dropped from the ballot, unless fewer than two candidates receive fifteen (15) percent or more of the votes cast, in which case the three highest candidates shall constitute the ballot. In every election balloting shall continue until every position has been filled by majority vote.
- 8.2.5 The tally of the votes cast for each candidate shall be announced after each ballot in all elections.
- 8.2.6 The committee on elections shall report the official results of each election to the convention and shall file a written report of the tabulation of votes of each election, certified by the chairman and at least one other member of the committee, with the convention chairman and the secretary of the district.

8.3 Procedures for the Nomination and the Election of the District President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Board of Directors, and Circuit Visitors

8.3.1 *District President – Nomination and Election*

The procedure for the nomination of the district president shall be as follows:

- (a) Each member congregation shall be entitled to nominate from the clergy roster of the Synod two ministers of religion—ordained as candidates for president of the district.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall tabulate the nominations and shall report to the convention in the convention workbook the names of all ministers of religion—ordained who have been nominated, in addition to those who appear on the slate of candidates.
- (d) Candidates for the office of president of the district shall be the five (5) ministers of religion—ordained receiving the highest number of votes on the nominating ballots of the congregations. The secretary of the district shall notify each of their nomination.
- (e) The secretary of the district shall receive written approval, within ten (10) days of notification, from each candidate for inclusion of his name on the convention ballot.

- (f) In the event of death, declination, or unavailability of any candidate, the nominee having the next highest number of votes shall be a candidate, upon his approval in writing.
- (g) In the event of a tie for the fifth (5th) position among the candidates, all names involved in the tie shall be included as candidates.
- (h) The secretary of the district shall publish in the convention workbook brief biographies of the five (5) candidates for president of the district, giving adequate information for each candidate.
- (i) The convention shall have the right to alter the slate as provided in these bylaws.

8.3.1.1 The procedure for the election of the district president shall be as follows:

- (a) The candidate receiving the majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected.
- (b) If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the four (4) candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be retained on the ballot, and another vote taken. Thereafter the candidate receiving the smallest number of votes shall be eliminated on each subsequent ballot until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.

8.3.2 ***Vice-Presidents in Line of Succession – Nomination, Selection, Election, and Ranking***

8.3.2.1 After the results of the district presidential election have been announced, the convention shall elect four regional vice-presidents according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation of a region shall have been given opportunity to nominate two ministers of religion—ordained from the clergy roster of the district with membership in a congregation in its designated region as candidates for regional vice-president.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation).
- (d) The names of the five ministers of religion—ordained with membership in a congregation within the boundaries of each geographic region who receive the most nominating votes, and who give their consent to serve if elected, shall form the slate from which the district convention shall select by majority vote each regional vice-president.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall be entitled to vote for one of the candidates from each region. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the three candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be retained on the ballot.
- (f) No opportunity shall be provided for additional nominations from the floor of the convention.
- (g) Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one candidate from each region has received a majority of the votes cast.
- (h) Upon the election of the regional vice-presidents, a final election will take place ranking the vice-presidents by separate ballots with a simple majority of voting delegates determining the first, second, third, and fourth vice-presidents in line of succession.

8.3.3 District Secretary – Nomination

8.3.3.1 After the results of the district vice-presidential election and ranking have been announced, the convention shall elect the district secretary. The procedure for the nomination and selection of the district secretary shall be as follows:

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the Synod in the district shall be entitled to nominate from the clergy roster of the district two ministers of religion—ordained as candidates for secretary of the district.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the nominations committee shall tabulate the nominations.
- (d) At least two candidates and at least one alternate shall be selected by the nominations committee (District Bylaw 6.1.1.2). The secretary of the nominations committee shall notify each candidate of their nomination.
- (e) The secretary of the nominations committee shall receive written approval, within ten (10) days of notification, from each candidate for inclusion of his name on the convention ballot.
- (f) The secretary of the nominations committee shall publish in the convention workbook brief biographies of the candidates for secretary of the district.
- (g) The nominations committee shall have the right to provide additional nominations.

8.3.4 Regional Board of Directors Members: (Ministers of Religion—Commissioned and Layperson)

8.3.4.1 After the results of the district secretary election have been announced, the convention shall elect two commissioned ministers for the combined electoral regions (regions 1 and 2 combined; and regions 3 and 4 combined) according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the district shall have been given opportunity to nominate two ministers of religion—commissioned from the roster of the Synod with membership in a congregation in the designated combined electoral regions as candidates for regional commissioned member of the board of directors.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations and individual members shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation, or by the nominating individual member).
- (d) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the nominations committee, who shall select candidates according to the process outlined in the Synod and district bylaws.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall elect the members of all elective regional positions following the process outlined in the bylaws.

8.3.4.2 After the results of the district board of directors' commissioned minister election have been announced, the convention shall elect four regional board of director layperson members for the electoral regions according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the district shall have been given opportunity to nominate two laypersons, with membership in a congregation in the designated electoral region, as candidates for regional layperson member of the board of directors.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations and individual members shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation, or by the nominating individual member).
- (d) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the nominations committee, who shall select candidates according to the process outlined in the Synod and district bylaws.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall elect the members of all elective regional positions following the process outlined in the bylaws.

Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one candidate from each region has received a majority of the votes cast.

8.3.5 ***Circuit Visitors***

- 8.3.5.1 The procedures for the nomination, selection, and the election of the circuit visitors shall be those specified in the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaw 5.2.2]
- 8.3.5.2 The nominations for circuit visitor from the congregations shall be received by each circuit's respective circuit visitor no later than the day prior to the circuit forum.
- 8.3.5.3 Each visitation circuit will determine no later than one (1) month prior to the circuit forum if it will meet face-to-face or by utilizing e-meeting technologies, as allowed by Synod Bylaw 5.2.2.
- 8.3.5.4 The circuit visitors shall then report in writing the results of the selection process to the district secretary.
- 8.3.5.5 In the event that a circuit visitor has not been selected by a circuit forum or has been selected but is no longer available to serve, thus resulting in no circuit visitor selection being included on the convention slate of circuit visitors for a circuit, the district president shall make the selection, which selection shall then be included on the convention slate of circuit visitors. [Synod Bylaw 5.2.2(f)]

8.4 Terms and Tenure of Office

- 8.4.1 The offices of the district president and of the circuit visitors shall be three (3)-year terms, without limitation as to reelection.
- 8.4.2 The term of service for district reconcilers shall be six (6) years, renewable without limit. [Synod Bylaw 1.10.10.1]
- 8.4.3 All other elected or appointed officers and members of other district organizational entities may serve a total of no more than three (3) successive full three (3)-year terms in the same office. They may be elected or appointed to the same office after an interval of three (3) or more years. [Synod Bylaw 3.2.4.2]
- 8.4.3.1 One-half or more of a term shall be regarded as a full term under limited tenure rules.
- 8.4.4 The newly elected district president, vice presidents, and members of the board of directors shall assume office on September 1 following the district convention, and shall be installed into their respective offices subsequent to that date at a service to be held in conjunction with the first meeting of the newly elected board of directors.

- 8.4.4.1 In the interim, the district's transition policy, which shall be reviewed and revised as needed by the board of directors prior to the district convention, shall be followed.
- 8.4.5 Circuit visitors and all other members of the committees elected at the convention shall be installed into office before the close of the convention and begin their term of service immediately thereafter.

8.5 Vacancies

- 8.5.1 The duties and responsibilities of the office of district president shall be assumed by the first vice-president whenever a vacancy appears in this office or the board of directors determines that the district president is unable to serve in that capacity because of his prolonged illness or disability. The first vice-president shall remain as the acting district president until the board of directors determines that such illness or disability has been removed or until the next regular district convention elects a district president.
- 8.5.2 If for any reason the office of any vice-president becomes vacant, the other vice-presidents shall move up in rank accordingly. The board of directors shall then fill the remaining vacancy in the office of a vice-president by electing a successor in consultation with and with the mutual concurrence of the district president.
- 8.5.3 In the event of a vacancy on the board of directors, with the exception of the district president and the vice-presidents, the remaining members of the board shall elect an appropriate successor to fill the unexpired term.
- 8.5.4 A vacancy in the office of circuit visitor shall be filled by appointment by the district president.
- 8.5.5 A vacancy in any other office shall be filled by appointment by the district president in consultation with the appropriate executive director and any appropriate representative of a district organizational entity, and ratified by the board of directors.

The Bylaws

The Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Cordova, Tennessee

Approved: (By the Mid-South District in Convention)

A Formative Plan was enacted at the beginning of the Mid-South District in 1966; the 1968 Convention voted to continue with the Formative Plan until Bylaws could be adopted.

Adopted: (By the Mid-South District in Convention)

June 7-10, 1970

Amended: (By the Mid-South District Conventions)

June 12-15, 1991

June 12-15, 1994

June 13-16, 1997

June 02-05, 2000

July 11-14, 2003

June 09-12, 2006

June 22-24, 2012

June 26-28, 2015, finalized with the Board of Directors' formal adoption of 1.1.3 (a)-(b) November 2, 2015 per convention resolution

December 23, 2017, amended by the Board of Directors to harmonize with 2016 LCMS Convention

Resolutions June 28-30, 2018

August 24, 2020, amended by the Board of Directors to harmonize with 2019 LCMS Convention resolutions

***THE BYLAWS OF THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT
OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD***

1. ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Constitution and Bylaws

- 1.1.1 The Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, including the confessional position and the mission objectives as stated therein, shall be the constitution and bylaws of the Mid-South District. They shall be supplemented by the bylaws of the Mid-South District as needed for the district's administration and the work of the Synod.
- 1.1.2 Changes and amendments to the bylaws of the Mid-South District may be made by a majority vote of any properly called convention of the Mid-South District, provided that the proposed changes were submitted in writing to the district president, who shall submit them to the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Synod in advance of the convention for review and approval. Any subsequent changes by the convention shall become effective only after approval by the commission. [Synod Bylaws 3.9.2.2.3 (a-b), 4.1.1.2 (b)]
- 1.1.3 In exceptional circumstances and upon the express direction of a convention of the district or Synod, or in response to resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod, amendments may be made by a two-thirds majority of the board of directors of the Mid-South District.
- (a) Such amendments to the bylaws shall be necessary to implement resolutions or bylaw amendments adopted by a convention of the Synod or the district before the next district convention.
- (b) Such amendments shall be drafted by the secretary of the district, to be examined and approved by the Synod's Commission on Constitutional Matters before their adoption. No amendment shall take effect until it has been approved by the commission.
- (c) The board of directors shall notify the district of the adopted amendment(s) in a way deemed most expedient, in addition to its report to the next district convention.

1.2 Basic Principles of District Administration

- 1.2.1 The district president shall be the chief executive of the district.
- 1.2.2 The district president shall be assisted in the administration of his office, including the visitation of congregations of the district, by the circuit visitors and the regional vice-presidents, individually or collectively.
- 1.2.3 The district president, together with the board of directors, shall supervise and administer the financial mission and ministry program of the district.
- 1.2.4 Within the framework of their regular operating procedures, the district president and board of directors shall be governed and bound by the principles and respective duties and prohibitions expressed in the board of directors' policy manual.
- 1.2.5 The district board of directors, ministry teams, task forces, committees, and other entities of the district organization shall make reports and, if needed, recommendations to each convention of the district.

- 1.2.6 All district officers and organizational entities shall be ultimately responsible to the district convention.

1.3 Officers and Board of Directors

- 1.3.1 The officers of the district shall be a president, four regional vice-presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, and the circuit visitors.

- 1.3.2 The board of directors shall be composed of the following voting members:

1. The president of the district
2. Four (4) vice-presidents of the district, one (1) elected by the convention from each electoral region
3. The secretary of the district
4. The treasurer of the district, who shall be a layperson (appointed)
5. Two (2) ministers of religion—commissioned: one (1) elected by the convention from regions 1 and 2; and one (1) elected by the convention from regions 3 and 4
6. Four (4) laypersons, one (1) elected by the convention from each electoral region
7. Up to three (3) at-large laypersons appointed by the elected members of the board of directors to obtain needed additional skill sets (legal, finance, investment, administration, etc.) [Synod Bylaw 4.5.1]

With the exception of the district president, secretary, and treasurer, no more than two voting members of the board shall be members of the same congregation.

- 1.3.3 The executive directors under the district president shall be advisory members of the board.

2. DISTRICT CONVENTIONS AND CONFERENCES

2.1 General Provisions

- 2.1.1 District conventions, conferences for professional church workers, circuit forums, and convocations shall regularly take place according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod, insofar as these may be applicable. [Synod Bylaws 3.1.3 – 3.1.3.1, 4.2, 4.8, 4.9, 5.3, 5.4]

2.2 District Conventions

- 2.2.1 The district president shall be responsible for the organization of the district convention.
- 2.2.2 Reports and overtures shall be submitted in writing to the district president not later than twelve (12) weeks prior to the opening date of the convention. The convention workbook shall be published and distributed by a means of electronic communication not later than six (6) weeks prior to the opening date of the convention to each district congregation, delegate and alternate, all officers of the district, ministry teams, task forces, committees, and other entities of the district. A printed copy shall be provided to any designated recipient upon request.
- 2.2.3 The district president shall appoint convention floor committees and name the chairpersons, and shall assign overtures to the appropriate convention floor committees with their designated meeting times and places.
- 2.2.4 One of the floor committees appointed by the district president shall be the elections committee. This committee shall be composed of at least two (2) ministers of religion—

ordained, one (1) minister of religion—commissioned and two (2) laypersons to conduct and supervise all elections.

- 2.2.4.1 The committee shall be empowered to adopt procedures and methods that will insure efficiency and accuracy, including the use of mechanical, electronic, or other methods of casting, recording, or tabulating votes.
- 2.2.5 The chairperson of each convention floor committee shall appoint a secretary, consult with the chairperson of the appropriate ministry team, task force, committee, or district organizational entity, including district executive directors, and shall report the recommendations of the floor committee to the convention.
- 2.2.6 Floor committees shall consult with the finance office of the district as guided generally in the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaw 3.1.7(g)]
- 2.2.7 Convention proceedings shall be published and distributed by a means of electronic communication to each district congregation, delegate and alternate, all officers of the district, ministry teams, task forces, committees, and other entities of the district. A printed copy shall be provided to any designated recipient upon request.

3. DIRECTIVES FOR OFFICERS

3.1 General Directives

- 3.1.1 All officers shall be elected or appointed as provided in the *Handbook* of the Synod and the district bylaws.
- 3.1.2 All officers shall fulfill the duties assigned to them in the *Handbook* of the Synod, the district bylaws, and by the board of directors.
- 3.1.3 All officers shall be governed and bound by the principles and respective duties and prohibitions expressed in the board of directors' policy manual.
- 3.1.4 Any officer, with the exception of the district president, may be removed from office for cause following the provisions and procedures set forth in the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 1.5.8-1.5.8.1]

3.2 Officers

3.2.1 *The President*

- 3.2.1.1 The president shall be an ex-officio member without vote of all ministry teams, task forces, committees, and organizational entities of the district.
- 3.2.1.2 He shall serve as a voting member of the board of directors and shall serve as chairman of the circuit visitors' conference.

3.2.2 *The Vice-Presidents*

- 3.2.2.1 The vice-presidents shall be advisors to the district president, and shall function as his representatives or assistants in service to the district.
- 3.2.2.2 They may serve as designated representatives of the board of directors, on ministry teams, task forces, and committees, and as advisors on other organizational entities of the district.

3.2.3 *The Secretary*

- 3.2.3.1 The secretary shall be an advisory member of the constitution committee.

- 3.2.3.2 He shall carry out responsibilities for the nomination and election of the district president, vice-presidents, circuit visitors, and the board of directors according to the provisions set forth in the *Handbook* of the Synod and the bylaws of the district.
- 3.2.3.3 He shall carry out responsibilities for the certification of delegates attending district conventions. [Synod Bylaw 4.2.2. (a)]
- 3.2.3.4 He shall carry out the following responsibilities regarding delegates and representatives from the district attending the conventions of the Synod, according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod and in directives from the Secretary of the Synod:
- (a) Administer the certification of the circuit voting pastoral and lay delegates and alternates elected by the circuit forums. [Synod Bylaw 3.1.2.1 (i)]
 - (b) Administer the selection process and certification of advisory delegates and alternates for the commissioned ministers and those ordained ministers not eligible to be elected by congregations as voting representatives, who are members of the Synod within the district. [Synod Bylaw 3.1.3.1 – 3.1.3.1 (c)]
 - (c) Administer the certification of all other district representatives. [Synod Bylaw 3.1.3.2-3.1.3.2 (b)]
- 3.2.3.5 He shall carry out responsibilities for conflict resolution within the district according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 1.10.10.2 and 1.10.11.2]
- 3.2.4 ***The Treasurer***
- 3.2.4.1 The treasurer shall have oversight of all funds and securities of the district and shall provide regular reports of financial status to the board of directors.
- 3.2.4.2 He/she shall evaluate the financial implications of all reports, recommendations, and proposals made to the board of directors.
- 3.2.4.3 He/she shall guide the board of directors in its responsibility in the selection of external auditors and ensure that the board of directors is represented in the annual audit closing conference with the external auditors.
- 3.2.4.4 He/she shall guide the board of directors in its review and approval of the annual operating and capital budgets.
- 3.2.4.5 He/she shall chair the finance committee of the board of directors.
- 3.2.5 ***The Circuit Visitors***
- 3.2.5.1 The circuit visitors and the district president shall constitute the circuit visitors' conference, which shall meet at the call of the district president in the interest of the work and welfare of the district and the Synod, as provided in the *Handbook* of the Synod. The vice-presidents may be requested to attend.
- 3.2.5.2 Within their respective circuits, the circuit visitors shall: foster evangelical and edifying communication and relationships among the congregations, schools, specialized ministries and the professional church workers; assist the district president, as requested, in promoting and obtaining unanimous participation by congregations in the submission of annual statistical reports; and positively encourage mission outreach through visits, circuit forums, circuit convocations, and circuit pastors' conferences as provided in the *Handbook* of the Synod and the district bylaws.

4. DIRECTIVES FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

4.1 General Provisions

- 4.1.1 The board of directors shall be responsible for setting policies and managing the business and legal affairs of the district. It shall have the full legal status and responsibility ascribed to it by and implied in the Articles of Incorporation of the Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
- 4.1.2 The board shall be governed and bound by the principles and respective duties and prohibitions expressed in Synod Bylaw 4.5.1 and the board of directors' policy manual.
- 4.1.3 Any member of the board, who is not an officer of the district, may be removed from office for cause following the process outlined in the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 1.5.7-1.5.7.1]

4.2 Administration

- 4.2.1 By the end of the first meeting of the board following the district convention, the board of directors shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among the board of directors' members to serve a three-year term. The district president is not eligible to serve as chairman or vice-chairman.
- 4.2.2 The board of directors ~~shall~~may appoint a recording secretary (nonvoting) who ~~shall~~may assist the secretary in order to record the official minutes of the meetings of the board of directors.
- 4.2.3 The board of directors shall appoint the district treasurer, who shall be a layperson, after each regular convention of the district.
- 4.2.4 The board of directors shall meet at least quarterly within each year.
- 4.2.5 Special meetings may be called by the chairman or upon the request of three (3) board members.
- 4.2.6 A majority of the voting members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum.
- 4.2.7 The chairman shall conduct the meetings and be responsible for the agenda of each meeting.
- 4.2.8 Task forces or committees may be appointed within the board at its discretion.

4.3 Duties

- 4.3.1 On behalf of and in service to the congregations of the district, the board of directors shall be responsible for establishing and overseeing policies by which it governs itself, the district officers, executive directors under the district president, staff, and the overall organization, consistent with the district mission in fulfilling the Lord's work. The board of directors shall be accountable to the district convention, and the executive directors, staff, and all organizational entities of the district shall be accountable to the board of directors through the office of the district president.
- 4.3.2 The board of directors shall:
- (a) have authority to acquire, lease, mortgage, pledge, sell, convey, or otherwise dispose of property, real or personal, tangible and intangible on behalf of the district;
 - (b) have power to borrow money and to issue, sell or pledge district obligations and evidence of indebtedness, and to mortgage and pledge district property to secure payment thereof, whosoever situate;

Commented [JG1]: This amendment would allow the board the option to appoint a recording secretary if so desired to assist the secretary, rather than mandate it be done.

- (c) establish the annual income and spending budget of the district;
- (d) administer the functions of the Mid-South District, as a Participating District of Lutheran Church Extension Fund-Missouri Synod (LCEF), as described in LCEF's bylaws and in accordance with its policies and procedures;
- (e) supervise the administration of all endowment and special funds of the district;
- (f) fill all executive positions, except that of district president, created by the convention of the district;
- (g) be the legal representative and custodian of all properties and documents of the district and keep on file an accurate inventory of all district properties, legacies and valuable records and documents;
- (h) engage a certified public accountant to audit the financial records of the district at least annually or as often and at any time as it deems advisable;
- (i) provide the bonding of all persons handling district monies;
- (j) in the name of the district, rent and regulate access to the necessary safe deposit space for the safekeeping of all valuable district records and documents;
- (k) provide for implementation within the district of the resolutions of the Synod and district conventions, and assign responsibilities and duties in harmony with the district's fiscal policy;
- (l) establish, or realign, visitation circuits according to geographical criteria [Synod Bylaw 5.1.2], after consultation and mutual concurrence with the congregations of the respective circuit(s);
- (m) determine the composition of its electoral circuits prior to each Synod convention [Synod Bylaw section 3.1.2 (a)];
- (n) establish policies by which all organizational entities of the district and officers shall function according to the spirit of the bylaws;
- (o) ratify and/or fill all appointed district positions of service after each regular district convention;
- (p) ratify all appointments to fill vacancies occurring in any ministry team, task force, committee, or district organizational entity;
- (q) conduct, supervise, and manage all affairs of the district not otherwise assigned;
- (r) report regularly to the convention of the Mid-South District.

5. DIRECTIVES FOR MINISTRY TEAMS, TASK FORCES, AND COMMITTEES

5.1 General Directives

- 5.1.1 Ministry teams, task forces, and committees are appointed persons of the district for advising and assisting the district president and the executive directors under the president in providing leadership, resources and encouragement for district mission and ministry.
- 5.1.2 Ministry teams, task forces, and committees shall be responsible to the board of directors through the office of the district president.

5.2 Administration

- 5.2.1 Ministry teams, task forces, and committees may be formed as needs and opportunities arise in the district.
- 5.2.2 The president of the district shall appoint the members of the ministry teams, task forces, and committees, in consultation with the appropriate executive director(s) under the president, regional vice-presidents, and circuit visitors. These appointments shall be ratified by the district board of directors.
- 5.2.3 The ministry teams, task forces, and committees shall determine frequency of meetings.
- 5.2.4 A majority of members shall constitute a quorum.
- 5.2.5 The chairman shall conduct the meetings and be responsible for the agenda at each meeting.
- 5.2.6 Each ministry team, task force, and committee shall keep the board of directors informed about its mission and ministry through the office of the district president or one of the executive directors under the president.
- 5.2.7 Each ministry team, task force, and committee shall annually prepare requests for funds for its mission and ministry, and shall submit the requests to the responsible executive director under the president.
- 5.2.8 Each ministry team, task force, and committee shall regularly report to the district convention.

6. ELECTED AND APPOINTED POSITIONS

6.1 Elected by the District Convention

6.1.1 *The Nominations Committee*

Membership

- 6.1.1.1 The nominations committee shall consist of a total of six (6) members, as follows:
 - 1. Two (2) ministers of religion—ordained
 - 2. Two (2) ministers of religion—commissioned
 - 3. Two (2) laypersons
 One of each category shall be from electoral regions 1 and 2 combined, and one of each category shall be from electoral regions 3 and 4 combined.

Duties

- 6.1.1.2 The nominations committee shall:
 - (a) solicit names from the rostered congregations and individual members of the Synod in the district;
 - (b) prepare, according to provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod and the bylaws of the district, slates of candidates and alternates for the offices or positions to be voted upon by the district convention, except for the offices of district president, regional vice-presidents, and circuit visitors;
 - (c) obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to select as candidates; and
 - (d) publish the names and qualifications of the nominees in the convention workbook.

6.2 Appointed by the Board of Directors upon Recommendation of the District President

6.2.1 *The Constitution Committee*

Membership

- 6.2.1.1 The constitution committee shall consist of at least two (2) ministers of religion—ordained and one (1) layperson. The secretary of the district shall be an advisory member.

Duties

- 6.2.1.2 The constitution committee shall review new and revised constitutions and bylaws of member and applicant congregations according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 2.2.1-2.4.2]

6.3 The District Reconcilers

Membership

- 6.3.1 District reconcilers shall be appointed according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaws 1.10.10-1.10.10.1]

Informal Efforts toward Reconciliation; Consultation

- 6.3.2 The district reconcilers may assist in informal efforts (not formally requested by a member of the Synod) according to the procedures of Bylaw 1.10.5 in the *Handbook* of the Synod toward reconciliation before disputes reach the formal level. He/she may also be called upon by the district president to serve in efforts at the informal level toward reconciliation.

Formal Efforts toward Reconciliation

- 6.3.3 At the formal level (formally requested by a member of the Synod) according to the procedures of Bylaw 1.10 in the *Handbook* of the Synod, the reconciler shall serve in the following situations arising in the district:

- (a) Procedural questions involved in excommunication cases
- (b) Cases in which a member of the Synod shall have been removed from the position that such member holds in a congregation that is a member of the Synod
- (c) Cases in which a person, whether or not a member of the Synod, is removed from the position which the person holds in the district
- (d) Cases involving differences between congregations within the same district or between a congregation and its district [Synod Bylaw 1.10.10.2(a)-(d)]

- 6.3.4 District reconcilers may also be called upon to serve in the various capacities of a reconciler at the Synod level according to the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaw 1.10]

6.4 Stewardship Promotion

- 6.4.1 The district shall have an appointed ministry team, ad hoc committee, or individual dedicated to, and responsible for, the promotion of stewardship in the district.
- 6.4.2 After each district convention, the board of directors shall determine what structure and format of a stewardship promotion ministry, with the resources available, will best serve the district and its strategic plan to foster cheerful stewardship of God's gifts and resources in and among the congregations of the district.
- 6.4.3 The board of directors will then formalize the process and appoint an appropriate ministry team, committee, or individual for the promotion of stewardship in the district.

- 6.4.4 This ministry team, committee, or individual shall operate according to the provisions of Synod Bylaw section 4.6 and district bylaw chapter 5.

7. THE FINANCIAL MISSION AND MINISTRY PROGRAM

7.1 Preparation and Appropriation

- 7.1.1 The preparation of the financial mission and ministry program of the district shall be coordinated by the finance office in consultation with the district president and executive directors. The program shall take into account district responsibilities toward the financial mission and ministry program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The financial mission and ministry program shall be submitted to the board of directors for its evaluation and approval.
- 7.1.2 Simultaneous to the preparation of the mission and ministry program of the district, the finance office shall inform, inspire, and challenge the congregations of the district to assume responsibility for their fair share of this program by way of their projected mission commitments. The congregations, in a timely manner, shall inform the finance office of their intended mission commitments. The total of these commitments shall be reported to the board of directors.
- 7.1.3 The finance office shall then establish the district spending budget for final approval by the board of directors. This spending budget shall be commensurate with the intended mission commitments of the congregation and other anticipated receipts. Expenditures authorized by the district convention shall be subject to scheduling and appropriation by the board of directors.

8. ELECTION AND VACANCY PROCEDURES

8.1 General Provisions

- 8.1.1 Procedures for the election of all officers, board, and committee members shall follow the provisions of the *Handbook* of the Synod and the bylaws of the district.
- 8.1.2 The following officers and members shall be elected by the convention at each regular convention of the district:
1. The president
 2. The vice-presidents in line of succession, one (1) from each electoral region
 3. The secretary
 4. Two (2) ministers of religion—commissioned to the board of directors, one (1) from regions 1 and 2; and one (1) from regions 3 and 4
 5. Four (4) laypersons to the board of directors, one (1) from each electoral region
 6. The circuit visitors
 7. The nominations committee [District Bylaw 6.1.1.1]
- 8.1.3 Except for the offices of district president, the regional vice-presidents, and the circuit visitors, the nominations committee shall place in nomination at least two (2) candidates, and select at

least one alternate, for each elective office or committee position in the district prescribed by the Synod and district bylaws. These include, but may not be limited to:

1. The secretary [Synod Bylaw 4.3.1, District Bylaw 3.2.3]
2. The regional positions for the board of directors (commissioned and lay) [Synod Bylaw 3.12.3, District Bylaw 1.3.2 - 5,6]
3. The nominations committee [Synod Bylaw 3.12.3; District Bylaw 6.1.1.1]
4. Synod Committee for Convention Nominations [Synod Bylaws 3.12.3-3.12.3.3]

8.1.4 The district, assembled in convention, shall have the right to alter the slates of nominees, and voting delegates may make additional nominations from the floor with the prior consent of the nominee(s) and pertinent information about the nominee(s) provided in writing.

8.1.5 Except for the office of circuit visitor, the election of all offices shall be by individuals and not by slate.

8.1.6 The board of directors shall fill all appointive offices after each regular convention of the district.

8.1.7 The electoral regions of the district shall be four (4):

Region 1: The congregations in the Fayetteville, Fort Smith, and Jonesboro visitation circuits

Region 2: The congregations in the Little Rock-North, Little Rock-South, and Stuttgart visitation circuits

Region 3: The congregations in the Memphis, Nashville, Middle Tennessee, and Paducah visitation circuits

Region 4: The congregations in the Chattanooga, Johnson City, and Knoxville visitation circuits

8.2 Convention Elections

8.2.1 The elections committee shall have the privilege of the floor at the discretion of the convention chairman.

8.2.1.1 The order of elections following that of district president shall be:

- 1) regional vice-presidents, in line of succession
- 2) secretary of the district
- 3) regional board members (commissioned & layperson)
- 4) members of all elective boards and committees
- 5) Circuit visitors (ratification of the slate, constituting election) [Synod Bylaw 5.2.2 (h)]

8.2.2 Initial and succeeding ballots shall be collected during the session in which they are distributed or conducted electronically.

8.2.3 A majority of all votes cast shall be required for election to all elective offices and elective board positions.

8.2.4 Except in the election of the president, regional vice-presidents, and circuit visitors, the following regulations shall apply: candidates receiving a majority on the first ballot shall be declared elected. When a second or succeeding ballot is required for a majority, the candidate

receiving the fewest votes and all candidates receiving less than fifteen (15) percent of the votes cast shall be dropped from the ballot, unless fewer than two candidates receive fifteen (15) percent or more of the votes cast, in which case the three highest candidates shall constitute the ballot. In every election balloting shall continue until every position has been filled by majority vote.

8.2.5 The tally of the votes cast for each candidate shall be announced after each ballot in all elections.

8.2.6 The committee on elections shall report the official results of each election to the convention and shall file a written report of the tabulation of votes of each election, certified by the chairman and at least one other member of the committee, with the convention chairman and the secretary of the district.

8.3 Procedures for the Nomination and the Election of the District President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Board of Directors, Nominations Committee, Synod Committee for Convention Nominations, and Circuit Visitors

8.3.1 *District President – Nomination and Election*

The procedure for the nomination of the district president shall be as follows:

- (a) Each member congregation shall be entitled to nominate from the clergy roster of the Synod two ministers of religion—ordained as candidates for president of the district.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall tabulate the nominations and shall report to the convention in the convention workbook the names of all ministers of religion—ordained who have been nominated, in addition to those who appear on the slate of candidates.
- (d) Candidates for the office of president of the district shall be the five (5) ministers of religion—ordained receiving the highest number of votes on the nominating ballots of the congregations. The secretary of the district shall notify each of their nomination.
- (e) The secretary of the district shall receive written approval, within ten (10) days of notification, from each candidate for inclusion of his name on the convention ballot.
- (f) In the event of death, declination, or unavailability of any candidate, the nominee having the next highest number of votes shall be a candidate, upon his approval in writing.
- (g) In the event of a tie for the fifth (5th) position among the candidates, all names involved in the tie shall be included as candidates.
- (h) The secretary of the district shall publish in the convention workbook brief biographies of the five (5) candidates for president of the district, giving adequate information for each candidate.
- (i) The convention shall have the right to alter the slate as provided in these bylaws.

8.3.1.1 The procedure for the election of the district president shall be as follows:

- (a) The candidate receiving the majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected.

- (b) If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the four (4) candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be retained on the ballot, and another vote taken. Thereafter the candidate receiving the smallest number of votes shall be eliminated on each subsequent ballot until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.

8.3.2 ***Vice-Presidents in Line of Succession – Nomination, Selection, Election, and Ranking***

8.3.2.1 After the results of the district presidential election have been announced, the convention shall elect four regional vice-presidents according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation of a region shall have been given opportunity to nominate two ministers of religion—ordained from the clergy roster of the district with membership in a congregation in its designated region as candidates for regional vice-president.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation).
- (d) The names of the five ministers of religion—ordained with membership in a congregation within the boundaries of each geographic region who receive the most nominating votes, and who give their consent to serve if elected, shall form the slate from which the district convention shall select by majority vote each regional vice-president.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall be entitled to vote for one of the candidates from each region. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the three candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be retained on the ballot.
- (f) No opportunity shall be provided for additional nominations from the floor of the convention.
- (g) Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one candidate from each region has received a majority of the votes cast.
- (h) Upon the election of the regional vice-presidents, a final election will take place ranking the vice-presidents by separate ballots with a simple majority of voting delegates determining the first, second, third, and fourth vice-presidents in line of succession.
- (i)

8.3.3 ***District Secretary – Nomination***

8.3.3.1 After the results of the district vice-presidential election and ranking have been announced, the convention shall elect the district secretary. The procedure for the nomination and selection of the district secretary shall be as follows:

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the Synod in the district shall be entitled to nominate from the clergy roster of the district two ministers of religion—ordained as candidates for secretary of the district.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.

- (c) The secretary of the nominations committee shall tabulate the nominations.
- (d) At least two candidates and at least one alternate shall be selected by the nominations committee (District Bylaw 6.1.1.2). The secretary of the nominations committee shall notify each candidate of their nomination.
- (e) The secretary of the nominations committee shall receive written approval, within ten (10) days of notification, from each candidate for inclusion of his name on the convention ballot.
- (f) The secretary of the nominations committee shall publish in the convention workbook brief biographies of the candidates for secretary of the district.
- (g) The nominations committee shall have the right to provide additional nominations.

8.3.4 Regional Board of Directors Members: *(Ministers of Religion—Commissioned and Layperson)*

8.3.4.1 After the results of the district secretary election have been announced, the convention shall elect two commissioned ministers for the combined electoral regions (regions 1 and 2 combined; and regions 3 and 4 combined) according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the district shall have been given opportunity to nominate two ministers of religion—commissioned from the roster of the Synod with membership in a congregation in the designated combined electoral regions as candidates for regional commissioned member of the board of directors.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations and individual members shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation, or by the nominating individual member).
- (d) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the nominations committee, who shall select candidates according to the process outlined in the Synod and district bylaws.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall elect the members of all elective regional positions following the process outlined in the bylaws.

8.3.4.2 After the results of the district board of directors' commissioned minister election have been announced, the convention shall elect four regional board of director layperson members for the electoral regions according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the district shall have been given opportunity to nominate two laypersons, with membership in a congregation in the designated electoral region, as candidates for regional layperson member of the board of directors.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations and individual members shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation, or by the nominating individual member).

- (d) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the nominations committee, who shall select candidates according to the process outlined in the Synod and district bylaws.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall elect the members of all elective regional positions following the process outlined in the bylaws.

Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one candidate from each region has received a majority of the votes cast.

8.3.5 *Nominations Committee Members (Ministers of Religion—Ordained and Commissioned, and Layperson)*

8.3.5.1 The Nominations Committee is to be regarded as an *ad hoc* convention committee, to which limitations on holding multiple offices do not apply.

8.3.5.2 After the results of the regional district board of directors' elections have been announced, the convention shall elect the ordained members of the Nominations Committee. The convention shall elect two ordained ministers for the combined electoral regions (regions 1 and 2 combined; and regions 3 and 4 combined) according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the Synod in the district shall be entitled to nominate, from the clergy roster of the Synod, two (2) ministers of religion—ordained for each of the two combined electoral regions (regions 1 & 2 combined; and regions 3 & 4 combined) as candidates for the Nominations Committee. Those nominated must hold membership in a congregation in the designated combined electoral region.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations and individual members shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district on behalf of the nominations committee, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation, or by the nominating individual member).
- (d) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the nominations committee, who shall select candidates according to the process outlined in the Synod and district bylaws.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall elect the members of all elective regional positions following the process outlined in the bylaws.

Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one candidate from each region has received a majority of the votes cast.

8.3.5.3 After the results of the ordained Nominations Committee elections have been announced, the convention shall elect two commissioned ministers for the combined electoral regions (regions 1 and 2 combined; and regions 3 and 4 combined) according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the district shall have been given opportunity to nominate, two (2) ministers of religion—commissioned from the roster of the Synod with membership in a congregation in the designated combined electoral regions, for each of the two combined electoral regions as candidates for the Nominations Committee.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations and individual members shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district on behalf of the nominations committee, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual

members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.

- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation, or by the nominating individual member).
- (d) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the nominations committee, who shall select candidates according to the process outlined in the Synod and district bylaws.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall elect the members of all elective regional positions following the process outlined in the bylaws.

Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one candidate from each region has received a majority of the votes cast.

8.3.5.4 After the results of the commissioned nominations committee elections have been announced, the convention shall elect two laypersons for the combined electoral regions (regions 1 and 2 combined; and regions 3 and 4 combined) according to the nominations and elections process.

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the district shall have been given opportunity to nominate two (2) laypersons, with membership in a congregation in the designated combined electoral regions, for each of the two combined electoral regions as candidates for the Nominations Committee.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations and individual members shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district on behalf of the nominations committee, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.
- (c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation, or by the nominating individual member).
- (d) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the nominations committee, who shall select candidates according to the process outlined in the Synod and district bylaws.
- (e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall elect the members of all elective regional positions following the process outlined in the bylaws.

Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one candidate from each region has received a majority of the votes cast.

8.3.6 ***LCMS Committee for Convention Nominations***

8.3.6.1 When called upon by the Secretary of Synod to do so according to the process outlined in the *Handbook* of Synod [Bylaws 3.12.3 – 3.12.3.3], the Mid-South District shall elect through the regular election procedures at the district convention one member to the Synod's Committee for Convention Nominations and an alternate.

- (a) Each member congregation and individual members of the district shall have been given opportunity to nominate two (2) individuals, (a professional church worker or a layperson, depending on the classification noted by the Synod Secretary for that convention cycle), with membership in a congregation in the district, for the Synod's Committee for Convention Nominations.
- (b) Nominating ballots and receiving of ballots from the congregations and individual members shall be the responsibility of the secretary of the district on behalf of the nominations committee, ballots to be received by the congregation and individual members six (6) months prior to the opening date of the convention, and from the

congregations and individual members four (4) months prior to the opening date of the convention.

(c) The secretary of the district shall receive such nominations (signed by the president and secretary of the nominating congregation, or by the nominating individual member).

(d) All nominations received shall be forwarded to the nominations committee, who shall select candidates according to the process outlined in the Synod and district bylaws.

(e) Voting delegates to the district convention shall elect one member to the Synod's Committee for Convention Nominations, and then elect an alternate on a new ballot, following the process outlined in the bylaws.

Balloting shall continue with the candidate receiving the least number of votes eliminated until one candidate has received a majority of the votes cast.

8.3.57 **Circuit Visitors**

8.3.57.1 The procedures for the nomination, selection, and the election of the circuit visitors shall be those specified in the *Handbook* of the Synod. [Synod Bylaw 5.2.2]

8.3.57.2 The nominations for circuit visitor from the congregations shall be received by each circuit's respective circuit visitor no later than the day prior to the circuit forum.

8.3.57.3 Each visitation circuit will determine no later than one (1) month prior to the circuit forum if it will meet face-to-face or by utilizing e-meeting technologies, as allowed by Synod Bylaw 5.2.2.

8.3.57.4 The circuit visitors shall then report in writing the results of the selection process to the district secretary.

8.3.57.5 In the event that a circuit visitor has not been selected by a circuit forum or has been selected but is no longer available to serve, thus resulting in no circuit visitor selection being included on the convention slate of circuit visitors for a circuit, the district president shall make the selection, which selection shall then be included on the convention slate of circuit visitors. [Synod Bylaw 5.2.2(f)]

8.4 Terms and Tenure of Office

8.4.1 The offices of the district president, district secretary, district treasurer, and of the circuit visitors shall be three (3)-year terms, without limitation as to reelection.

8.4.2 The term of service for district reconcilers shall be six (6) years, renewable without limit. [Synod Bylaw 1.10.10.1]

8.4.3 All other elected or appointed officers and members of other district organizational entities may serve a total of no more than three (3) successive full three (3)-year terms in the same office. They may be elected or appointed to the same office after an interval of three (3) or more years. [Synod Bylaw 3.2.4.2]

8.4.3.1 One-half or more of a term shall be regarded as a full term under limited tenure rules.

8.4.4 The newly elected district president, vice presidents, and members of the board of directors shall assume office on September 1 following the district convention, and shall be installed into their respective offices subsequent to that date at a service to be held in conjunction with the first meeting of the newly elected board of directors.

8.4.4.1 In the interim, the district's transition policy, which shall be reviewed and revised as needed by the board of directors prior to the district convention, shall be followed.

Commented [JG2]: This mirrors the Synod's term of office for Synod Secretary and Synod Chief Financial Officer, which are presently without limitation. This is being recommended by President Paavola to the Governance Committee and the Board of Directors to allow the district to choose to reelect a secretary who they feel is well-qualified for this intricate and specialized position, or to elect an individual who they feel is just as or more qualified, letting the election set a limitation of terms rather than a bylaw-enforced limitation of terms. The same concept is proposed for the Board of Directors to reappoint a Treasurer or appoint a new one for this intricate and specialized position.

- 8.4.5 Circuit visitors and all other members of the committees elected at the convention shall be installed into office before the close of the convention and begin their term of service immediately thereafter.

8.5 Vacancies

- 8.5.1 The duties and responsibilities of the office of district president shall be assumed by the first vice-president whenever a vacancy appears in this office or the board of directors determines that the district president is unable to serve in that capacity because of his prolonged illness or disability. The first vice-president shall remain as the acting district president until the board of directors determines that such illness or disability has been removed or until the next regular district convention elects a district president.
- 8.5.2 If for any reason the office of any vice-president becomes vacant, the other vice-presidents shall move up in rank accordingly. The board of directors shall then fill the remaining vacancy in the office of a vice-president by electing a successor in consultation with and with the mutual concurrence of the district president.
- 8.5.3 In the event of a vacancy on the board of directors, with the exception of the district president and the vice-presidents, the remaining members of the board shall elect an appropriate successor to fill the unexpired term.
- 8.5.4 A vacancy in the office of circuit visitor shall be filled by appointment by the district president.
- 8.5.5 A vacancy in any other office shall be filled by appointment by the district president in consultation with the appropriate executive director and any appropriate representative of a district organizational entity, and ratified by the board of directors.



March 18, 2021

Board of Directors and Management of
The Mid-South District, LCMS

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements of the Mid-South District as of and for the year ended December 31, 2020, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, we considered the District's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Mid-South District's internal control.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency or combination of deficiencies in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses. In addition, because of inherent limitations in internal control, including the possibility of management override of controls, misstatements due to error or fraud may occur and not be detected by such controls. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses.

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Directors, management, and others within the Organization, and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.

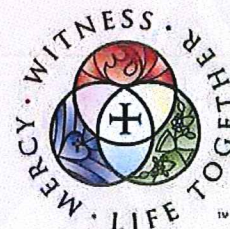
We appreciate the opportunity to provide audit services to the Mid-South District and would like to thank Angela Fowler for the cooperation and courtesy extended to us during the audit process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter or the audited financial statements, or if we can be of further assistance in the current fiscal year, please do not hesitate to call.

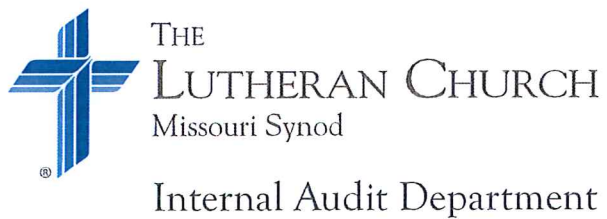
Sincerely,

Joann P. Spotanski

Joann P. Spotanski, CPA
Executive Director, LCMS Internal Audit

1333 S. Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
888-THE LCMS (843-5267)
www.lcms.org





Audited Financial Statements

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

For the Years Ended December 31, 2020 and 2019

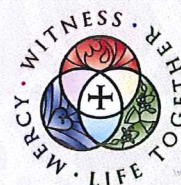


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INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

Board of Directors
Mid-South District of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Cordova, Tennessee

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, which comprise the statements of financial position as of December 31, 2020 and 2019, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

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

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit

INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT (Continued)

Auditor's Responsibility (Continued)

also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, as internal auditors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Mid-South District as of December 31, 2020 and 2019, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
Internal Audit Department

Joann P. Spotanski

St. Louis, Missouri
March 18, 2021

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2020 and 2019

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,093,438	\$ 1,058,200
Operating Investments (Note 4)	3,992,634	3,822,935
Accounts Receivable	4,870	11,850
Prepaid Expenses	26,291	30,349
Contributions Receivable (Note 5)	56,624	44,125
Property Held for Sale	793,702	-
Property and Equipment - Net (Note 6)	949,114	1,700,869
Cash Value of Life Insurance Policies	125,306	127,627
Endowment Investments (Note 4)	355,794	353,849
Beneficial Interests in Perpetual Trusts (Note 4)	<u>82,505</u>	<u>75,683</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 7,480,278</u>	<u>\$ 7,225,487</u>
Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 33,482	\$ 51,355
Deferred Revenue	3,142	3,074
Grants Payable (Note 7)	72,283	93,953
Capital Lease Obligation (Note 9)	<u>34,489</u>	<u>8,332</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>143,396</u>	<u>156,714</u>
Net Assets:		
Without Donor Restrictions (Note 10)	4,631,454	4,489,753
With Donor Restrictions (Note 11)	<u>2,705,428</u>	<u>2,579,020</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>7,336,882</u>	<u>7,068,773</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 7,480,278</u>	<u>\$ 7,225,487</u>

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

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020

	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
<u>SUPPORT, REVENUES, & OTHER ADDITIONS:</u>			
Support -			
District Congregations (Note 1)	\$ 1,559,221	\$	\$ 1,559,221
IMPACT Campaign	69,662		69,662
Synod (Note 15)		47,820	47,820
Other	150	259,873	260,023
Revenues -			
Subscriptions	24,300		24,300
Conventions, Conferences, and Workshops	34,634		34,634
Net Investment Return (Loss)	133,106	39,209	172,315
Agreements with LCEF (Note 13)	170,966		170,966
Other	18,658		18,658
Gain on Sale of Fixed Assets	8,511		8,511
Gain on Forgiveness of PPP Loan (Note 15)	119,545		119,545
Change in Value of Perpetual Trusts		6,822	6,822
Net Assets Released from Restrictions (Note 11)	227,316	(227,316)	-
	<u>2,366,069</u>	<u>126,408</u>	<u>2,492,477</u>
Total Support, Revenues, & Other Additions			
	<u>2,366,069</u>	<u>126,408</u>	<u>2,492,477</u>
<u>EXPENSES:</u>			
Program Services -			
World and National Missions	454,953		454,953
Preparing Church Workers	74,928		74,928
Congregational Health and Services	570,989		570,989
Ecclesiastical Services	203,293		203,293
District and Synodical Conventions	-		-
Support Services -			
Synodical Budget	442,766		442,766
LCEF	174,666		174,666
Management and General	213,822		213,822
Fund-Raising	88,951		88,951
	<u>2,224,368</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,224,368</u>
Total Expenses			
	<u>2,224,368</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,224,368</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	141,701	126,408	268,109
NET ASSETS - Beginning of Year	4,489,753	2,579,020	7,068,773
NET ASSETS - End of Year	\$ 4,631,454	\$ 2,705,428	\$ 7,336,882

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

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
<u>SUPPORT, REVENUES, & OTHER ADDITIONS:</u>			
Support -			
District Congregations (Note 1)	\$ 1,576,515	\$	\$ 1,576,515
IMPACT Campaign	42,633		42,633
Assets from Disbanded Congregation	629,715		629,715
LCEF (Note 13)	160,697		160,697
Other	510,784	296,854	807,638
Revenues -			
Subscriptions	27,971		27,971
Conventions, Conferences, and Workshops	145,207		145,207
Net Investment Return (Loss)	120,503	49,031	169,534
Agreements with LCEF (Note 13)	140,376		140,376
Other	26,852		26,852
Gain on Sale of Fixed Assets	3,371		3,371
Change in Value of Perpetual Trusts		8,268	8,268
Net Assets Released from Restrictions (Note 11)	243,723	(243,723)	-
	<u>3,628,347</u>	<u>110,430</u>	<u>3,738,777</u>
Total Support, Revenues, & Other Additions			
	<u>3,628,347</u>	<u>110,430</u>	<u>3,738,777</u>
<u>EXPENSES:</u>			
Program Services -			
World and National Missions	517,392		517,392
Preparing Church Workers	85,351		85,351
Congregational Health and Services	537,734		537,734
Ecclesiastical Services	209,012		209,012
District and Synodical Conventions	73,516		73,516
Support Services -			
Synodical Budget	445,955		445,955
LCEF	134,979		134,979
Management and General	187,564		187,564
Fund-Raising	113,642		113,642
	<u>2,305,145</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,305,145</u>
Total Expenses			
	<u>2,305,145</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,305,145</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	1,323,202	110,430	1,433,632
NET ASSETS - Beginning of Year	3,166,551	2,468,590	5,635,141
NET ASSETS - End of Year	<u>\$ 4,489,753</u>	<u>\$ 2,579,020</u>	<u>\$ 7,068,773</u>

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

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020

	PROGRAM SERVICES					SUPPORT SERVICES				
	World and National Missions	Preparing Church Workers	Congregational Health and Services	Ecclesiastical Services	District and Synodical Conventions	Synodical Budget	LCEF	Management and General	Fund-Raising	TOTAL
Salaries and Wages	\$ 166,256	\$	\$ 212,654	\$ 88,920	\$	\$	\$ 111,980	\$ 82,329	\$ 51,387	\$ 713,526
Employee Benefits	82,997		60,587	41,405			30,776	34,519	16,566	266,850
Payroll Taxes			6,127	2,069			8,820	7,990	4,180	29,186
Subsidies, Grants, and Other Assistance	157,234	72,700	89,846	2,041		442,766				764,587
Auto Maintenance			771	1,780						2,551
Building and Office Expenses	4,050		34,759	14,104			9,551	24,478	7,343	94,285
Communications, Publications, and Promotion			30,901	426				319	622	32,268
Conventions, Conferences, Workshops, and Meetings	19,191	2,000	59,061	15,776			11,396	1,376	25	97,429
Depreciation			21,145	10,106			196	18,154	3,302	64,103
Equipment Purchases (non-capital) and Maintenance			15,335	1,926				4,357	1,493	23,307
Fees	257		744					5,373	39	6,413
Information Technology	221	228	2,116	4,807			728	989	1,069	9,430
Insurance			9,103	6,814				11,411	662	28,718
Interest								1,446		1,446
Professional Services	10,675		15,562	975			1,219	18,231	731	47,393
Staff Training and Development			1,424	89				279	90	1,882
Travel	14,072		10,686	11,676				1,516	1,240	39,190
Other			168	379				1,055	202	1,804
Total Expenses by Function	\$ 454,953	\$ 74,928	\$ 570,989	\$ 203,293	\$ -	\$ 442,766	\$ 174,666	\$ 213,822	\$ 88,951	\$ 2,224,368

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

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

	PROGRAM SERVICES					SUPPORT SERVICES				
	World and National Missions	Preparing Church Workers	Congregational Health and Services	Ecclesiastical Services	District and Synodical Conventions	Synodical Budget	LCEF	Management and General	Fund-Raising	TOTAL
Salaries and Wages	\$ 137,500	\$	\$ 204,410	\$ 85,391	\$	\$	\$	\$ 84,129	\$ 79,290	\$ 671,089
Employee Benefits	71,105		51,913	21,658				24,466	14,879	211,842
Payroll Taxes			7,353	1,766				6,368	6,173	28,027
Subsidies, Grants, and Other Assistance	249,090	84,642	21,805	3,000		445,955				804,492
Auto Maintenance			2,036	2,064						4,100
Building and Office Expenses	3,514		22,039	21,338			6,626	15,920	5,414	74,851
Communications, Publications, and Promotion	1,786		32,592	567	49			59	1,118	36,171
Conventions, Conferences, Workshops, and Meetings	22,042	500	109,350	27,086	40,537		9,599	19,590	78	200,491
Depreciation			14,129	12,854			17	6,261	2,224	58,396
Equipment Purchases (non-capital) and Maintenance			14,856	1,911				2,931	706	23,751
Fees	199		840				21	2,931	117	4,108
Information Technology		171		6,145				960	973	8,249
Insurance			12,276	6,776			2,874	6,363	1,716	30,005
Interest								1,012		1,012
Professional Services	15,425		23,920	1,028			1,285	13,471	771	55,900
Staff Training and Development	878		671	133				1,303	60	3,045
Travel	15,853	38	19,265	16,941	32,930			2,894	49	87,970
Other			279	354				939	74	1,646
Total Expenses by Function	\$ 517,392	\$ 85,351	\$ 537,734	\$ 209,012	\$ 73,516	\$ 445,955	\$ 134,979	\$ 187,564	\$ 113,642	\$ 2,305,145

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

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020 and 2019

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:		
Change in Net Assets	\$ 268,109	\$ 1,433,632
Adjustments to Reconcile Change in Net Assets to Net Cash Provided (Used) by Operating Activities:		
Depreciation Expense	64,103	58,396
Property from Disbanded Congregation	-	(600,000)
Change in Value of Beneficial Interests in Perpetual Trusts	(6,822)	(8,268)
Net (Gain) Loss on Sale of Fixed Assets	(8,511)	(3,371)
Net (Gain) Loss on Investments	(92,977)	(100,104)
(Gain) on Forgiveness of PPP Loan	(119,545)	-
(Increase) Decrease in Operating Assets:		
Accounts Receivable	6,980	2,860
Prepaid Expenses	4,058	(8,322)
Contributions Receivable	(12,499)	(44,125)
Cash Value of Life Insurance Policies	2,321	(11,424)
Beneficial Interests in Perpetual Trusts	-	(44,212)
Increase (Decrease) in Operating Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	(17,128)	19,485
Deferred Revenue	68	(6,177)
Grants Payable	(21,670)	16,754
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Operating Activities	<u>66,487</u>	<u>705,124</u>
Cash Flows from Investing Activities:		
Proceeds from Sale of Fixed Assets	-	10,000
Purchases of Fixed Assets	(67,065)	(32,461)
Proceeds from Sale of Investments	24,586	126,141
Purchases of Investments	(103,253)	(672,965)
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Investing Activities	<u>(145,732)</u>	<u>(569,285)</u>
Cash Flows from Financing Activities:		
Principal Repayments on Capital Lease	(4,317)	(4,334)
PPP Loan Proceeds	118,800	-
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Financing Activities	<u>114,483</u>	<u>(4,334)</u>
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	35,238	131,505
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Beginning of Year	<u>1,058,200</u>	<u>926,695</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents - End of Year	<u>\$ 1,093,438</u>	<u>\$ 1,058,200</u>
Supplemental Data:		
Noncash Investing and Financing Activities:		
Fixed Assets Acquired with Debt (Capital Lease)	\$ 30,474	\$ -
Reclassification from Fixed Assets to Property Held for Sale	793,702	-
Forgiveness of PPP Loan Principal	118,800	-
Forgiveness of PPP Loan Accrued Interest Payable	745	-

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

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

The Mid-South District (the District), a religious not-for-profit organization, is one of 35 districts of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (the Synod), encompassing 129 congregations in the states of Tennessee, Arkansas and parts of Kentucky. The Synod established its district offices to more effectively achieve its objectives and assist its congregations and their members in conserving and promoting the unity of the faith and in carrying out their mission and ministry.

The District relies on donations from its member congregations for a significant portion of its support. As shown in the Statement of Activities, support from District congregations totaled \$1,559,221 and \$1,576,515 for the years ended December 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively. These donations are subject to fluctuations in the economic status of the areas in which the congregations are located. No provisions have been made for changes in the economic environment. Any significant reduction in the level of this support, however, could have an effect on the District's program and supporting activities.

The costs of providing various programs and other supporting services have been summarized on a functional basis in the Statement of Activities as follows:

- *World and National Missions* – World missions includes the District's personalized world ministry support remitted to the Synod. National missions includes but is not limited to North American new mission work, campus ministries, deaf ministries, ethnic ministries, urban ministries, congregational subsidy, evangelism efforts, and related conferences and events.
- *Preparing Church Workers* – Includes financial aid provided to students normally attending one of the seven colleges/universities or two seminaries of the Synod.
- *Congregational Health and Services* – Supports District congregational service efforts and includes but is not limited to activities such as Sunday School, confirmation, family life, day care, adult education, outdoor ministry, singles ministry, elementary and secondary education, youth services, worship, human care ministries, stewardship education, and related conferences and events.
- *Ecclesiastical Services* – Includes activities of the president's office, vice-presidents, circuit visitors, reconcilers, and related conferences and events, as well as support of the District Board of Directors and its related committees.
- *District and Synodical Conventions* – Includes all activities and expenses incurred for conducting District and synodical conventions, which are each held every three years. The accompanying financial statements include synodical convention expenses in fiscal 2019.
- *Synodical Budget* – Includes remittances to the Synod for synodical budget support.
- *LCEF* – Includes the District's support of the national Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) efforts as discussed in Note 13 (Agreements with LCEF).
- *Management and General* – Includes various mission/ministry support services such as the District's financial and general office operating activities.

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH–MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. NATURE OF ORGANIZATION (Continued)

- *Fund-Raising* – Includes gift planning support and development activities of the District.

All of these program and support services include the related program and administration expense associated with that particular function.

The Mid-South District of the Synod is an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) and, by virtue of a group tax-exempt ruling to the Synod and its component parts, is exempt from federal income taxes. However, any unrelated business income may be subject to taxation. In addition, the District qualifies for the charitable contribution deduction under IRC Section 170(b)(1)(A) and has been classified by the Internal Revenue Service as an organization other than a private foundation.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The significant accounting policies followed by the District are described below:

Basis of Accounting

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

Use of Estimates

We use estimates and assumptions in preparing financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Those estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses. Actual results could differ from those estimates, and those differences could be material.

Principles of Consolidation

The accompanying financial statements include all administrative and program offices or departments of the Mid-South District. They do not include the assets, liabilities, and operations of the congregations, schools, and other separately administered operations of the Synod within the District's geographic area.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

For financial statement purposes, we consider all cash and highly liquid financial instruments with original maturities of three months or less, which are not held for or restricted by donors for long-term purposes (e.g., for building projects, perpetual endowments), to be cash and cash equivalents.

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Investments and Net Investment Return/(Loss)

We record investment purchases at cost, or if donated, at fair value on the date of receipt. Thereafter, investments are reported at their fair values in the Statement of Financial Position. Net investment return/(loss) consists of interest and dividend income, realized and unrealized capital gains and losses, less external investment expenses; it is reported in the Statement of Activities based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions.

Contributions Receivable

Unconditional promises to give that are expected to be collected within one year are recorded at net realizable value. Unconditional promises to give expected to be collected after one year are initially recorded at fair value using present value techniques, incorporating risk-adjusted discount rates designed to reflect the assumptions market participants would use in pricing the asset. In subsequent years, amortization of the discounts is included in contributions/support in the Statement of Activities. We determine the allowance for uncollectible promises to give based on historical experience, an assessment of current economic conditions, and a review of subsequent collections. Contributions receivable are written off when deemed uncollectible.

Property and Equipment

Property and equipment purchases of \$2,500 or more with an estimated useful life greater than one year are capitalized and recorded at cost, or if donated, at fair value on the date of receipt. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets ranging from 3 to 40 years, or in the case of capitalized leased assets or leasehold improvements, the lesser of the useful life of the asset or the lease term. A salvage value of up to 25% is used on certain assets. When assets are sold or otherwise disposed of, the cost and related depreciation are removed from the accounts, and any resulting gain or loss is included in the Statement of Activities. Costs of maintenance and repairs that do not improve or extend the useful lives of the respective assets are expensed when incurred. Property held for sale is recorded at the lower of cost or estimated fair value.

We review the carrying values of property and equipment for impairment whenever events or circumstances indicate that the carrying value of an asset may not be recoverable from its use and eventual disposition. When considered impaired, an impairment loss is recognized in the Statement of Activities to the extent carrying value exceeds the fair value of the asset.

Beneficial Interests in Perpetual Trusts

We have been named as an irrevocable beneficiary of perpetual trusts held and administered by the LCMS Foundation. Perpetual trusts provide for the distribution of the net income of the trusts to the District; however, we will never receive the assets of the trusts. At the date we receive notice of a beneficial interest, a contribution with donor restrictions of a perpetual nature is recorded in the Statement of Activities and a beneficial interest in perpetual trust is recorded in the Statement of Financial Position at the fair value of the underlying trust assets, as determined/calculated by the LCMS Foundation. Thereafter, our beneficial interests in the trusts are reported at the fair value of

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH–MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Beneficial Interests in Perpetual Trusts (Continued)

the trust assets in the Statement of Financial Position, with trust distributions and changes in fair value recognized in the Statement of Activities.

Grants Payable

Unconditional promises to give which have been authorized and communicated to the recipient are reported as liabilities and expenses in the period in which the notification to the recipient occurs. If at the time the promise is made, the District expects to make payment in one year or less, the payable is recorded at net settlement value. Unconditional promises that the District expects to pay in more than one year are reported at fair value, which is measured as the present value of the amounts to be paid.

Net Assets

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

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions – Net assets available for use in general operations and not subject to donor restrictions. These net assets may be subject to self-imposed limits by action of the governing board. These board-designated net assets may be earmarked for future programs, contingencies, purchase/construction of fixed assets, or for other uses.

Net Assets With Donor Restrictions – Net assets subject to donor-imposed restrictions. Some donor-imposed restrictions are temporary in nature, such as those that will be met by the passage of time or other events specified by the donor. Other donor-imposed restrictions are perpetual in nature, where the donor stipulates that resources be maintained in perpetuity. Donor-imposed restrictions that are temporary in nature are released when a restriction expires, that is, when the stipulated time has elapsed, when the stipulated purpose for which the resource was restricted has been fulfilled, or both.

Contributions and Revenue Recognition

Contributions are recognized as support in the Statement of Activities when cash, securities or other assets, an unconditional promise to give, or notification of a beneficial interest is received. Gifts of long-lived assets with explicit restrictions that specify how the assets are to be used and gifts of cash that must be used to acquire long-lived assets are reported as support in net assets with donor restrictions. Absent explicit donor restrictions about how long those long-lived assets must be maintained, we report expirations of donor restrictions when the donated or acquired long-lived assets are placed in service. Conditional promises to give are not included as support until the conditions on which they depend have been substantially met and the promises become unconditional. Donated services are reported as support in the Statement of Activities at fair value when those services (1) create or enhance nonfinancial assets or (2) require specialized skills, are provided by individuals possessing those skills, and would typically need to be purchased if not provided by donation.

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Contributions and Revenue Recognition (Continued)

Revenue is recognized when earned. Program and supporting activity fees and payments received in advance are deferred to the applicable period in which the related services are performed or expenditures are incurred.

Functional Allocation of Expenses

The costs of program and supporting service activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the Statement of Activities. The Statement of Functional Expenses presents the natural classification detail of expenses by function. The financial statements include certain categories of expenses that are attributable to more than one program and supporting function. Therefore, these expenses require allocation to the programs and supporting services benefited on a basis that is reasonable and consistently applied. The expenses that are allocated include compensation and benefits, which are allocated based on estimates of time and effort, and District office building operations/maintenance expenses, depreciation, equipment purchases and maintenance, and insurance, which are all allocated based on the percentage of overall time and effort spent by the employees in each functional area to the total.

Taxes

We follow the accounting standards for contingencies in evaluating uncertain tax positions. This guidance requires financial statement recognition of the impact of a tax position if a position is more likely than not of being sustained on audit by the applicable regulatory authority, based on the technical merits of the position. These rules also provide guidance on measurement, recognition, classification, interest and penalties, transition, and disclosure requirements for uncertain tax positions. No liability has been recognized by the District for uncertain tax positions as of December 31, 2020 and 2019.

Financial Instruments and Credit Risk

We manage deposit concentration risk by placing cash and financial instruments with financial institutions believed by us to be creditworthy. At times, amounts on deposit may exceed insured limits or include uninsured investments in LCEF notes, money market mutual funds, etc. To date, we have not experienced losses in any of these accounts. Credit risk associated with accounts and contributions receivable is limited due to high historical collection rates and because substantial portions of the outstanding amounts are due from our member congregations or other agencies of the Synod who are supportive of our mission. Investment performance is monitored by the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors. Although the fair values of investments are subject to fluctuation from year-to-year, we believe the investment policies and guidelines are prudent for the long-term welfare of the organization.

Reclassifications

Certain amounts in the prior year 2019 financial statements have been reclassified for comparative purposes to conform to the 2020 financial statement presentation. These reclassifications, however, had no effect on the previously reported total net assets or total change in net assets.

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Subsequent Events

The District has evaluated subsequent events through March 18, 2021, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

3. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

The following represents the District's financial assets at December 31, 2020 and 2019, that are available for general expenditure, that is, without donor or other restrictions limiting their use, within one year of the Statement of Financial Position date:

	December 31	
	2020	2019
Financial Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,093,438	\$ 1,058,200
Operating Investments	3,992,634	3,822,935
Account Receivable	4,870	11,850
Contributions Receivable	56,624	44,125
Cash Value of Life Insurance Policies	125,306	127,627
Endowment Investments	355,794	353,849
Beneficial Interests in Perpetual Trusts	82,505	75,683
Total Financial Assets at Year-End	<u>5,711,171</u>	<u>5,494,269</u>
Less Those Unavailable for General Expenditures		
Within One Year Due to:		
Donor-Imposed or Contractual Restrictions	(2,705,428)	(2,579,020)
Board Designations:		
Amounts Set Aside for Operating Reserve	(779,332)	(715,396)
Quasi-Endowment Funds, for Long-Term Investing	<u>(138,128)</u>	<u>(147,900)</u>
Financial Assets Available to Meet Cash Needs		
for General Expenditures Within One Year	<u>\$ 2,088,283</u>	<u>\$ 2,051,953</u>

The Operating Reserve Fund is a designated fund set aside by action of the Board of Directors. Occasionally, the Board designates a portion of any operating surplus to this operating reserve, which was \$779,332 and \$715,396 at December 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively. The minimum amount to be designated as operating reserves will be established in an amount sufficient to maintain ongoing operations and programs for a set period of time, measured in months. The operating reserve serves a dynamic role and will be reviewed and adjusted in response to internal and external changes. The targeted minimum operating reserve is an amount sufficient to maintain ongoing operations and programs for a period of twelve months. Actual calculation of this amount will be based on the cash flow analysis which is completed as a result of the budget each year. This cash flow analysis

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH–MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

3. LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS (Continued)

displays the projected impact each month's operation has on the cash balance available throughout the budget year.

Although the amount set aside for operating reserves is shown in the above table as unavailable for general expenditures within one year, the funds could be drawn upon if necessary in the event of financial distress or an immediate liquidity need. In addition, our board-designated endowments of \$138,128 and \$147,900 at December 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively, could be made available if necessary, although we do not intend to spend from these board-designated endowments.

The District maintains a 5-year financial projection model based on various assumptions concerning future revenue and expense expectations. These assumptions are based on historical data, analysis of congregational support, and church planting demographics; factoring in a 3% annual inflation factor. As part of its liquidity plan, excess cash is invested in short-term investments, including LCEF certificates. As disclosed in Note 8, the District also has unsecured lines of credit with LCEF which are available to meet cash flow needs.

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

We report certain assets and liabilities at fair value in the accompanying financial statements. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Inputs used to determine fair value refer broadly to the assumptions that market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability, including assumptions about risk. Inputs may be observable or unobservable. We consider observable data to be market data that is readily available, regularly distributed or updated, reliable and verifiable, not proprietary, and provided by independent sources that are actively involved in the relevant market.

A fair value hierarchy is used to disclose the measurement of fair value based on the levels of observable or unobservable inputs as follows:

Level 1 Inputs – Quoted prices are available in active markets for identical assets or liabilities as of the measurement date. A quoted price for an identical asset or liability in an active market provides the most reliable fair value measurement because it is directly observable to the market.

Level 2 Inputs – Pricing inputs are other than quoted prices in active markets, which are either directly or indirectly observable as of the report date. Level 2 inputs include assets or liabilities for which quoted prices are available but traded less frequently and assets or liabilities that are fair valued using similar assets or liabilities, the parameters of which can be directly observed.

Level 3 Inputs – Assets or liabilities have little to no pricing observability as of the measurement date. These items are measured using management's best estimate of fair value, where the inputs into the determination of fair value are not observable and require significant management judgment or estimation.

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

In some cases, the inputs used to measure the fair value of an asset or liability might be categorized within different levels of the fair value hierarchy. In those cases, the fair value measurement is categorized in its entirety in the same level of the fair value hierarchy as the lowest level input that is significant to the entire measurement. Assessing the significance of a particular input to entire measurement requires judgment, taking into account factors specific to the asset or liability. The categorization of a financial instrument within the hierarchy is based upon the pricing transparency of the instrument and does not necessarily correspond to our assessment of the quality, perceived risk, or liquidity profile of the asset or liability.

The following table presents financial instruments that are measured at fair value on a recurring basis and the level within the fair value hierarchy in which the fair value measurements fall, as well as the non-leveled instruments at December 31, 2020:

	Total	Fair Value Measurements Using			Investments Measured at Cost or NAV
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	
Operating Investments -					
LCEF Notes	\$ 2,793,281	\$	\$	\$	\$ 2,793,281
LCMS Foundation:					
Moderate Balanced	1,199,353				1,199,353
	<u>\$ 3,992,634</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 3,992,634</u>
Beneficial Interests in					
Perpetual Trusts	<u>\$ 82,505</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 82,505</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Endowment Investments -					
LCEF Notes	\$ 232,712	\$	\$	\$	\$ 232,712
Mutual Fund	123,082	123,082			
	<u>\$ 355,794</u>	<u>\$ 123,082</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 232,712</u>

The following is a reconciliation of beginning and ending balances of assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3) for the year ended December 31, 2020:

	Balance 12/31/2019	Net New or (Matured) Gifts	Change in Value	Balance 12/31/2020
Perpetual Trusts	<u>\$ 75,683</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 6,822</u>	<u>\$ 82,505</u>

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

The following table presents financial instruments that are measured at fair value on a recurring basis and the level within the fair value hierarchy in which the fair value measurements fall, as well as the non-leveled instruments at December 31, 2019:

	Total	Fair Value Measurements Using			Investments Measured at Cost or NAV
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	
Operating Investments -					
LCEF Notes	\$ 2,742,938	\$	\$	\$	\$ 2,742,938
LCMS Foundation:					
Moderate Balanced	1,079,997				1,079,997
	<u>\$ 3,822,935</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 3,822,935</u>
Beneficial Interest in					
Perpetual Trust	<u>\$ 75,683</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 75,683</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Endowment Investments -					
LCEF Notes	\$ 240,818	\$	\$	\$	\$ 240,818
Mutual Fund	113,031	113,031			
	<u>\$ 353,849</u>	<u>\$ 113,031</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 240,818</u>

The following is a reconciliation of beginning and ending balances of assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3) for the year ended December 31, 2019:

	Balance 12/31/2018	Net New or (Matured) Gifts	Change in Value	Balance 12/31/2019
Perpetual Trust	<u>\$ 23,203</u>	<u>\$ 44,212</u>	<u>\$ 8,268</u>	<u>\$ 75,683</u>

A portion of our endowment investments is classified within Level 1 because they comprise marketable securities with readily determinable fair values based on daily redemption values. The fair value of our beneficial interests in perpetual trusts is based on the fair values of the trust investments as reported by the trustee, the LCMS Foundation. This is considered a Level 3 measurement.

(Continued)

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

The District uses the net asset value (NAV) per share as a practical expedient to estimate the fair values of investments in the LCMS Foundation common funds, which do not have readily determinable fair values. These investments are not classified within the fair value hierarchy as shown in the above tables. All investments measured at fair value based on NAV per share as of December 31, 2020 and 2019, are summarized below:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
LCMS Foundation Common Funds:		
Fair Value	\$ 1,199,353	\$ 1,079,997
Unfunded Commitments	\$ -	\$ -
Redemption Frequency	Daily	Daily
Redemption Notice Period	Daily	Daily

The LCMS Foundation carries out its investment management services through various common funds to invest the assets entrusted to it. A common fund pools the assets of numerous smaller accounts to provide for greater diversification and ease of investment management. Holders of a common fund are called participants; the District is such a participant. Participants buy and sell units of the common fund asset. In order to determine the price per unit of a common fund, all assets held by the common fund (which can include individual securities or units of other common funds) are valued as of the end of the month (the valuation date). This value is divided by the total number of units held by the participants in the common fund to determine the per-unit value. Transactions in the common fund (either purchases or redemptions) are calculated based on the per-unit value on the valuation date.

During the valuation process, the common fund accrues income and expenses for the valuation period. The net income to the fund is divided by the total number of units held by participants for the valuation period to establish the income per unit factor. Each participant receives an allocation of the net income determined by multiplying the income per unit factor times the number of units held by the participant of the common fund. Net realized and termination gains in LCMS Foundation common funds are also calculated and distributed annually to the participants.

The LCMS Foundation's Moderate Balanced Fund is a moderate risk investment focused on providing modest income generation with a potential for growth; the portfolio holds both fixed income bonds (50%) and domestic and international securities (50%).

5. CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE

At December 31, 2020 and 2019, we had unconditional promises to give to the District from our member congregations and others totaling \$56,624 and \$44,125, respectively. All amounts were received by the District shortly after the respective fiscal year-end.

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Property and equipment consists of:

	December 31	
	2020	2019
Land	\$ 258,649	\$ 508,649
Office Building	944,958	944,958
Campus Center	-	133,487
Mission Property	92,572	592,572
Office Furnishings and Equipment	232,549	198,625
Vehicles	90,041	86,225
	<u>1,618,769</u>	<u>2,464,516</u>
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(669,655)</u>	<u>(763,647)</u>
Net Property and Equipment	<u>\$ 949,114</u>	<u>\$ 1,700,869</u>

7. GRANTS PAYABLE

The District has unconditionally promised to give to the Synod and various unrelated entities \$72,283 and \$93,953 at December 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively. These amounts are expected to be paid within one year of the respective fiscal year-end.

8. LINES OF CREDIT

LCEF establishes a line of credit for each participating district based on the district's program performance; this line of credit is evaluated and adjusted by LCEF annually in July. As of and for the years ended December 31, 2020 and 2019, we had an unsecured line of credit with LCEF in the amount of \$201,738 and \$193,997, respectively. We also had an additional \$200,000 line of credit with LCEF for both fiscal years. Borrowings under these lines would bear interest at the current rate of 3.875% and 4.25%, respectively. As of and during the years ended December 31, 2020 and 2019, there were no borrowings against these lines of credit.

9. CAPITAL LEASE OBLIGATION

Certain office equipment with a recorded cost of \$30,474 and accumulated depreciation of \$1,016 at December 31, 2020, is held under a lease agreement which expires in October 2025. The lease obligation and related equipment have been recorded as an asset and a liability of the District.

(Continued)

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

9. CAPITAL LEASE OBLIGATION (Continued)

Future minimum principal payments, based on an interest rate of 4.226%, are as follows:

Year Ending December 31	
2021	\$ 6,570
2022	6,854
2023	7,149
2024	7,457
2025	<u>6,459</u>
Total Principal Payments	<u>\$ 34,489</u>

10. NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets without donor restrictions consist of the following:

	December 31	
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Undesignated	\$ 2,319,797	\$ 2,305,185
Designated by Board for:		
World and National Missions	1,129,122	1,062,589
Congregational Health and Services	13,839	13,839
District and Synodical Conventions	12,077	12,077
Management and General	239,159	232,767
Operating Reserve	779,332	715,396
Quasi-Endowments - Preparing Church Workers	<u>138,128</u>	<u>147,900</u>
	<u>\$ 4,631,454</u>	<u>\$ 4,489,753</u>

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

11. NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor restrictions are restricted for the following purposes or periods:

	December 31	
	2020	2019
Purpose Restrictions:		
World and National Missions	\$ 1,260,939	1,136,079
Preparing Church Workers	28,119	38,119
Congregational Health and Services	4,255	3,806
Management and General	930	930
	<u>1,294,243</u>	<u>1,178,934</u>
Time Restrictions:		
Cash Value of Life Insurance Policies	<u>125,306</u>	<u>127,627</u>
Endowments:		
Corpus (Perpetual) -		
Preparing Church Workers	102,352	102,352
Congregational Health and Services	91,331	91,331
	<u>193,683</u>	<u>193,683</u>
Term Endowments -		
World and National Missions	989,187	976,156
Congregational Health and Services	9,522	14,147
Management and General	-	525
	<u>998,709</u>	<u>990,828</u>
Net Investment Return Subject to Appropriation and Expenditure; Restricted by Donors for:		
Preparing Church Workers	7,730	10,678
Congregational Health and Services	3,252	1,587
	<u>10,982</u>	<u>12,265</u>
Beneficial Interests in Perpetual Trusts	<u>82,505</u>	<u>75,683</u>
	<u>\$ 2,705,428</u>	<u>\$ 2,579,020</u>

(Continued)

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

11. NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS (Continued)

Net assets were released from donor restrictions when expenses were incurred to satisfy the restricted purpose, or by occurrence of the passage of time or other events specified by the donors as follows:

	December 31	
	2020	2019
Satisfaction of Purpose Restrictions:		
World and National Missions	\$ 117,636	\$ 185,253
Preparing Church Workers	54,908	50,923
Congregational Health and Services	53,997	7,547
Management and General	775	-
	<u>\$ 227,316</u>	<u>\$ 243,723</u>

12. ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Our endowment (the Endowment) consists of eight individual funds established by donors to provide annual funding for specific activities and general operations. The Endowment also includes certain net assets without donor restrictions that have been designated for endowment by the Board of Directors.

The District classifies amounts in its donor-restricted endowment fund as net assets with donor restrictions until the Board of Directors appropriates amounts for expenditure and any purpose restrictions have been met. Our Board has interpreted the Tennessee enacted version of the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift of the donor-restricted endowment funds, as of the gift date, unless there are explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. As a result of this interpretation, we retain in perpetuity (a) the original value of initial and subsequent gifts donated to the endowment and (b) any accumulations to the endowment that are required to be maintained in perpetuity in accordance with the applicable donor gift instrument. Donor-restricted amounts not retained in perpetuity are subject to appropriation and expenditure by us in a manner consistent with the standard of prudence prescribed by UPMIFA. We consider the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

- The duration and preservation of the endowment fund
- The purposes of the organization and the donor-restricted endowment fund
- General economic conditions
- The possible effect of inflation and deflation
- The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments
- Other resources of the District
- The investment policies of the District

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

12. ENDOWMENT FUNDS (Continued)

From time to time, certain donor-restricted endowment funds may have fair values less than the amount required to be maintained by donors or by law (underwater endowments). We have interpreted UPMIFA to permit spending from underwater endowments in accordance with prudent measures required under law. There were no underwater endowments as of December 31, 2020 and 2019.

Investment and Spending Policies – Endowment assets are currently being managed and invested by the Executive Director for Business and Finance in consultation with the District President. Endowment assets include those assets of donor-restricted endowment funds the District must hold in perpetuity or for donor-specified periods, as well as those of board-designated endowment funds. The District has adopted investment and spending policies for endowment assets that attempt to provide a predictable stream of funding to programs supported by its endowment. In order to accomplish the District's endowment investment objectives, funds are invested in a mix of LCEF term notes, fixed income securities, and equity securities. Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors if the donor specifies an alternate financial institution. The Finance Committee reviews the endowment investments and their performance on an annual basis.

As of December 31, 2020 and 2019, we had the following endowment net asset composition by fund type:

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
<u>December 31, 2020</u>			
Board-Designated Endowment Funds	\$ 138,128	\$	\$ 138,128
Donor-Restricted Endowment Funds:			
Amounts Required to be Maintained in Perpetuity		193,683	193,683
Term Endowments		998,709	998,709
Accumulated Investment Return		10,982	10,982
Total Endowment	<u>\$ 138,128</u>	<u>\$ 1,203,374</u>	<u>\$ 1,341,502</u>
 <u>December 31, 2019</u>			
Board-Designated Endowment Funds	\$ 147,900	\$	\$ 147,900
Donor-Restricted Endowment Funds:			
Amounts Required to be Maintained in Perpetuity		193,683	193,683
Term Endowments		990,828	990,828
Accumulated Investment Return		12,265	12,265
Total Endowment	<u>\$ 147,900</u>	<u>\$ 1,196,776</u>	<u>\$ 1,344,676</u>

(Continued)

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

12. ENDOWMENT FUNDS (Continued)

Changes in the endowment net assets for the years ended December 31, 2020 and 2019, are as follows:

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
<u>Year Ended December 31, 2020</u>			
Endowment Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$ 147,900	\$ 1,196,776	\$ 1,344,676
Net Investment Return	2,637	32,200	34,837
Contributions		350	350
Appropriation of Endowment			
Assets for Expenditure		(25,952)	(25,952)
Distribution from Board-Designated Endowment	(12,409)		(12,409)
Additions to Board-Designated Endowment			-
Endowment Net Assets - End of Year	<u>\$ 138,128</u>	<u>\$ 1,203,374</u>	<u>\$ 1,341,502</u>
<u>Year Ended December 31, 2019</u>			
Endowment Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$ 156,338	\$ 1,254,279	\$ 1,410,617
Net Investment Return	3,642	38,610	42,252
Contributions		595	595
Appropriation of Endowment			
Assets for Expenditure		(96,708)	(96,708)
Distribution from Board-Designated Endowment	(12,080)		(12,080)
Additions to Board-Designated Endowment			-
Endowment Net Assets - End of Year	<u>\$ 147,900</u>	<u>\$ 1,196,776</u>	<u>\$ 1,344,676</u>

13. SUPPORT AND REVENUE FROM THE LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

DRS Funding – In January 2018, a District Relations and Support (DRS) Funding agreement was entered into whereby LCEF agreed to provide annual DRS funding to the District from 2018 through 2021. Per the agreement, these DRS payments are considered support for the general mission of the District and as such, are reported in the Statement of Activities as support from LCEF in net assets without donor restrictions. In September 2019, LCEF decided to accelerate the payout on this agreement and the District received all funds previously scheduled to be received through 2021 in one lump-sum payment. During the year December 31, 2019, the District received total DRS funding from LCEF in the amount of \$70,187.

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

13. SUPPORT AND REVENUE FROM THE LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

(Continued)

Distribution of LCEF Operating Results – Based on LCEF’s annual operating performance, earnings distributions are made available to its partner districts. LCEF operating results are generally restricted for specific mission and ministry programs of the respective district or they can be unrestricted, and are distributed upon request. During the year ended December 31, 2019, the District requested and received unrestricted distributions of LCEF operating results totaling \$90,510. These distributions are reflected in the Statement of Activities as support from LCEF in net assets without donor restrictions.

Agreements with LCEF – In accordance with certain agreements, which are subject to renegotiation each July, LCEF agreed to compensate and reimburse the District for providing facilities and services to LCEF, as well as for promotion and coordination of church extension program activities within the District. The agreements require LCEF to pay the District a fixed amount on a monthly basis. The amounts received by the District in connection with these agreements during the years ended December 31, 2020 and 2019, totaled \$170,966 and \$140,376, respectively, which is reported in the Statement of Activities as revenue in net assets without donor restrictions.

14. DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN

The District participates in the worker benefit plans of the Synod, including the Concordia Retirement Plan (CRP). The CRP provides individuals with post-retirement benefits. Substantially all full-time employees (those employed more than 20 hours per week and at least five months per year) are covered by the CRP. Employees are vested after five years of creditable service. The District contributes a fixed percentage of each participant’s salary to the CRP. Retirement plan expenses for the years ended December 31, 2020 and 2019, totaled \$54,120 and \$50,102, respectively.

There were no significant changes in the District’s relationship to the CRP or changes that would affect the comparability to the CRP during fiscal 2020 or 2019. There were also no contingent liabilities associated with the CRP at December 31, 2020 or 2019. Currently, the District has no intention to withdraw from the CRP; the District’s contributions and level of participation represent a small percentage of the CRP as a whole.

15. COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

As a result of the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus in the United States, multiple businesses across a wide range of industries are being disrupted through mandatory and voluntary closings. The extent of the impact of COVID-19 on our operational and financial performance will depend on certain developments including the duration and spread of the outbreak, as well as its impact on our member congregations, donors, employees, and vendors, all of which are uncertain and cannot be predicted. At this point, the extent to which COVID-19 may impact our financial condition or results of operations is uncertain. We have made several modifications to our operations to account for the potential financial impacts, including participation in the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

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15. COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RELATED ACTIVITIES (Continued)

(as noted below) and reduction of various budgeted expenses. We continue to monitor the financial implications and will adjust accordingly.

PPP Loan – The District received an unsecured loan in the amount of \$118,800 under the PPP established by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act from a Small Business Administration (SBA) approved partner. The loan was subject to a note dated April 20, 2020 and, under the terms of the PPP, all or a portion of the principal and accrued interest is eligible to be forgiven if the loan proceeds are used for qualifying expenses as described in the CARES Act such as payroll costs, benefits, rent, and utilities.

In April 2020, the District recorded a note payable in the amount of \$118,800. When the loan obligation was legally released by the SBA in December 2020, we recognized in the 2020 Statement of Activities a \$119,545 gain on the forgiveness of debt, which included principal of \$118,800 and accrued interest of \$745.

Soldiers of the Cross COVID-19 Response Initiative – As the COVID-19 crisis unfolded in 2020, many church workers found themselves with immediate unmet financial needs stemming from the spread of the pandemic. The District, in partnership with the Synod and LCEF, delivered mercy and human care in the form of benevolent support to church workers within the District through the Synod's Soldiers of the Cross COVID-19 Response Initiative program. During the year ended December 31, 2020, the District received \$47,820 from the Synod for this program and distributed grants of \$58,900 to meet the needs of impacted District church workers.