

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Minnesota South District
Board of Directors Meeting December 4, 2007

Minnesota South District Mission Statement

The purpose of the Minnesota South District is to glorify God by: 1) assisting congregations in building up the body of Christ, and 2) providing mission vision, leadership and opportunities to the people and congregations of the District, so that all people might be reached with the saving Gospel and become disciples of Jesus Christ.

OPENING DEVOTION

Rev. Dr. James Heining opened his devotion by leading the Board in singing the first three verses of “The Advent of Our King.” He based his devotion on Romans 3:21-26. He noted: Our culture is filled with competing theologies of prosperity, and we must be aware of them. One preacher made Jesus into a Santa Claus, who gives gifts to those who give a “seed” (that is, money) to Him. Another said that the statement “Thy will be done” is an insult to God, because God wants to bless us. He singled out one in particular, as one who present Jesus as genie granting the wishes of His people. Yes, we have our work to do. We have been sent by Christ to preach about sin and grace. We ought to be thankful that in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod we can freely proclaim Christ and the grace of God before the world.

Dr. Heining concluded his devotion with a prayer and led the Board in the final three verses of “The Advent of Our King.”

PARLIAMENTARY OBLIGATIONS

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:16 a.m. by the president, Dr. Lane Seitz, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Roll Call

Board Present: Lane Seitz, Daryl Gehlbach, Lu Clemmensen
Klemet Preus, Mark Johnson, Robert Van Gundy, Glen Meints,
Gerhard Bode, Tom Braun, Dale Ortloff, Steve Krause,
Larry Griffin, James Heining, John Moorhouse, Ted Tews,
Robert Schulze, Brian Thorson, Scott Halvorson, Karl Baumann,
Lynn Henry, Richard Eyerly

Staff Present: Kurt Fuhr, Tim Kinne, Peter Meier

Excused: David Roth

Adoption of Agenda

Dr. Seitz distributed copies of the revised agenda, which was adopted as presented.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved, seconded and carried to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2007, Board meeting as printed.

Correspondence

Dr. Seitz referred the Board to the following items of correspondence:

1. Letter from Rev. Francis Stephanos Beko requesting ecclesiastical endorsement – October 17, 2007
2. Letter from Rev. David Muench and Rev. Thomas Acton requesting nominations for the LCMS Professional Church Worker Critical Incident Support Team – November 1, 2007

VISIONING/STUDY ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS

Lutheran Inter-City Network Coalition – Twin Cities (LINC-TC)

President Seitz introduced Rev. Dick Goebel, who addressed the Board. The following is a summary of his report.

- Partners in Mission (PIM) has become Lutheran Inter-City Network Coalition—Twin Cities (LINC-TC).
- PIM was initially begun in order to support the outreach work of Trinity-First Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, then expanded its scope to support ethnic missions.
- Early in 2007 PIM held a retreat with nineteen ethnic leaders and partners in order to discuss ways to improve and make the best use of its resources.
- The PIM leadership sent Rev. Goebel and Rev. David Seabaugh to a summit in Houston, which discussed ways to strengthen relationships among various mission groups supporting ethnic and urban missions.
- The leadership of PIM met again, and they made the decision to partner with LINC-Houston. The group also decided to change the name in order to indicate a fresh start and to identify it with a broader movement.
- The three principles of LINC-TC are indigenous/missional leadership, community development, and church multiplication.
- The purpose of the LINC-TC is to plant seeds and let God do the growing. It complements the mission outreach of the Minnesota South District.
- Among the partners of LINC-TC are the Minnesota South District, through its Mission Committee; the Oswald Hoffmann School of Christian Outreach (OHSCO); Concordia University, St. Paul; and the Lutheran Church Extension Fund.

Parish Strategic Business Project

Rev. Peter Meier, Assistant to the President in Missions, introduced Rev. Dr. Robert DeWerff and Jeanine Kessler from Concordia University, St. Paul, who addressed the Board

concerning the Parish Strategic Business Project. (A copy of their PowerPoint presentation is filed with the protocol copy of the minutes.) The following is a summary of their presentation.

- The project's purpose is to enhance a congregation's administrative decision making capabilities by providing strategic training tools and a long term mentoring association.
- The project has four goals:
 - to identify mission and vision,
 - to engage the congregation in the practical side of vision and priorities,
 - to engage the community in recognizing the key characteristic and strategic objectives, and
 - to provide ongoing consultation while the parish becomes self-sufficient at projecting and measuring their strategic successes.
- The project will benefit congregations, District and Concordia University.
- The project uses a combination of a strategy matrix and the Implications Wheel® developed by Joel Barker.
- They are seeking a grant of \$100,000 to provide funding for program design and initial parish relationship for a two-year period.
- They are not asking any funds from the District. Instead, they are asking the Board to support the project as a grant partner.
- The Board members may find additional information at www.implicationswheel.com and www.joelbarker.com.

Resolutions from Rev. Klemet Preus and the Missions Committee

President Seitz invited Rev. Klemet Preus, 3rd Vice President, to present his proposed resolutions for Board discussion.

The first resolution is entitled "To Fund Congregations which Use the Lutheran Service Book (LSB)." (A copy of this proposed resolution is filed with the protocol copy of these minutes.) A number of comments were made pro and con.

In favor of the proposed resolution:

- Synod has said Lutheran Service Book is our hymnal. Over 90% of our congregations in Synod use a hymnal and 60% of our congregations use LSB.
- The question at issue is do we want to put money into congregations that reflect us and our worship or into congregations that are going a different way?
- The purpose of this resolution is not ecclesiastical supervision but concerns our fiduciary responsibility as a Board.
- This resolution attempts to avoid legalism on the one hand and license on the other.

Against the proposed resolution:

- It is contrary to the Constitution of Synod to restrict our congregations to the use of one hymnal.

- We need to use materials that are theologically and culturally appropriate.
- The unchurched tend to have no use for a hymnal.
- The Scriptures, as well as the Lutheran Confessions, do not prescribe any single form of worship.

The second resolution, untitled, deals with the practice of closed communion on the part of congregations which receive subsidy from the District. (A copy of this proposed resolution is filed with the protocol copy of these minutes.) A number of comments were made pro and con.

In favor of the proposed resolution:

- We want to see that congregations that are subsidized by the District are practicing closed communion.
- We have a fiduciary responsibility to give money to congregations that are willing to practice communion according to Synod's position.
- The great majority of Christians throughout the world practice closed communion.
- If we are funding missions, we have a responsibility to ensure that recipients are following the expectations our Synod has laid down.
- If a congregation is practicing closed communion, it should have no objection to providing a communion statement as a condition of receiving subsidy.

Against the proposed resolution

- Congregations receiving support already must sign a covenant that they will follow Synod's doctrine and practice, which includes communion, as a condition of receiving support.
- Should not the decision to commune ultimately be between the individual and his Lord? A pastor can only do so much with regard to instruction.

“IT’S TIME TO FISH” CAMPAIGN REPORT

Rev. Peter Meier, Assistant to the President for Missions, reported that since May 2006 until November 2007 the District has received \$78,100 from individuals and \$22,300 from congregations for a total of \$100,100.

POLICY REVIEW AND FORMATION

- no items -

INFORMATIONAL AND DECISION ITEMS

Mission Committee

Resolution Concerning Unity in Worship Practices

Mr. Robert Van Gundy, committee chair, introduced the resolution “To Address Unity in Worship Practices in District Supported Missions.” (See Appendix A) It was moved and seconded to adopt this resolution.

It was moved and seconded to offer the resolution “To Fund Congregations which Use the Lutheran Service Book” (See Appendix B) as a substitute. President Seitz put the question to the Board and it agreed to consider the substitute.

After some additional debate, a motion to close debate was seconded and adopted.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to record the vote by a signed ballot.

The substitute motion was adopted by a vote of ten yes, nine no.

Those voting yes: Baumann, Eyerly, Halvorson, Johnson, Meints, Moorhouse, Ortloff, Preus, Thorson, and Van Gundy.

Those voting no: Bode, Braun, Gehlbach, Griffin, Heining, Henry, Krause, Schulze, and Tews

Resolution Concerning Closed Communion

Rev. Klemet Preus moved that the Board consider his resolution concerning the practice of closed communion on the part of congregations receiving subsidy. (See Appendix C) His motion was seconded.

It was moved, second and carried to amend the resolution by removing the third and fourth resolves.

A motion to amend the second resolve by striking the word “receiving” and replacing it with “requesting” was defeated.

A motion to close debate was seconded and adopted.

It was moved, seconded and carried to record the vote by a signed ballot.

The motion as amended was adopted by a vote of fourteen yes and five no.

Those voting yes: Baumann, Eyerly, Gehlbach, Griffin, Halvorson, Heining, Johnson, Meints, Moorhouse, Ortloff, Preus, Tews, Thorson, and Van Gundy.

Those voting no: Bode, Braun, Henry, Krause, and Schulze.

The Board was declared in recess for lunch at 12:03 p.m. and called again to order at 12:42 p.m.

SPECIAL REPORTS

Lutheran Laymen's League

President Seitz introduced Mr. Del Schwieger, former member of the District Board and now President of Minnesota South District Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL). The following is a summary of his report.

- This is the 90th year of the LLL and the 76th year of the Lutheran Hour.
- The Lutheran Hour has 1.2 million listeners each week in the United States, with additional listeners worldwide
- There are 41 Lutheran Hour Ministry (LHM) Centers in other countries. Each LLL District is partnered with one ministry center. The Minnesota South District's partner is India.
- Each ministry center provides home Bible studies, and some sponsor schools.
- Project Connect provides booklets covering a variety of topics. Congregations may order these booklets and other Project Connect resources from the LLL.
- Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) also offers congregational partnerships, which allow churches to harness the resources of LHM to help in a congregation's outreach efforts.
- As part of the partnership program LHM offers an Equipping to Share evangelism training workshop.

Concordia University, St. Paul

President Seitz introduced Rev. Dr. Robert Holst, president of Concordia University, St. Paul. The following is a summary of his report.

- Concordia enjoys its largest enrollment with 2,260 students.
- Many people around the world are connected to Concordia through the Internet, some taking classes and receiving credit.
- Concordia is in partnership with Woodbury Lutheran Church, Woodbury, and the MNS District to support a Spanish-speaking deaconess on campus.
- On cooperation with Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, the university offers a doctor of ministry program.
- The Cross of Christ fellowship center, which is attached to the chapel, has been completed.
- A new residence hall is now under construction.
- Concordia's women's volleyball team won the national championship. This is the first national championship for Concordia.
- Concordia is exploring ways to address the challenges posed by the changing demographics, both at the university as well as in the community. Also there is a need to address ways to better minister to baby boomers.
- He recommends two books by Thomas Saylor, a faculty member – The Good War and The Long Hard Road.
- Concordia has mission opportunities that many congregations do not have.

- God has blessed Concordia with generous, individual benefactors who support the mission and ministry of the university.

INFORMATIONAL AND DECISION ITEMS

- continued -

Finance Committee

1. 2008 District Budget

Mr. Steve Krause, committee chair, presented the proposed budget for 2008. It was moved and seconded to adopt the proposed budget as presented.

It was moved and seconded to amend the budget on page three to delete the \$40,000 line item for Woodbury Lutheran Church.

After some discussion, the question was put before the Board.

It was moved, seconded and carried to record the vote by a signed ballot.

The amendment was defeated by a vote of eight yes and ten no with one abstention.

Those voting yes: Baumann, Gehlbach, Halvorson, Meints, Preus, Tews, Thorson, and Van Gundy.

Those voting no: Bode, Braun, Griffin, Heining, Henry, Johnson, Krause, Moorhouse, Ortloff, and Schulze

Abstaining: Eyerly

It was moved and seconded to amend the budget on page three to delete the \$30,000 line item for Anoka (Ramsey) until such time that the congregation shows evidence that the congregation practices closed communion.

The amendment was adopted by a vote of ten yes and eight no.

The motion to approve the budget as amended is adopted.

2. Use of Funds from the District's Fund Balance

It was moved, seconded and adopted to approve, if needed, the use of the District's Fund Balance at a maximum amount of \$200,000 for 2008.

Ministerial Health Committee (no decision items)

Schools/Commissioned Ministers Committee (no decision items)

Congregational Services Sub Committee (no decision items)

Communications Committee (no decision items)

Constitution and Membership Committee (no decision items)

Continuing Education Committee (no decision items)

Administration

1. Approve Constitution (C), and/or Bylaw (BL) changes (5)

It was moved, seconded and carried to approve the Constitution (C) and Bylaws (BL) of the following congregations:

- Our Savior Lutheran Church, St. Paul, MN (C/BL)
- Immanuel Lutheran Church, Plainview, MN (C/BL)
- Mt. Moriah Lutheran Church, Byron, MN (C/BL)
- Bethel Lutheran Church, St. Paul, MN (BL)
- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, North Mankato, MN (C/BL)
- Trinity Lutheran Church, Mountain Lake, MN (BL)
- St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fairmont, MN (C)

2. Set 2008 Housing Allowance

It was moved, seconded and carried to set the 2008 housing allowances as follows:

Lane Seitz	\$30,000	Evan Schiller	\$ 9,800
Peter Meier	\$48,000	Martin Teigen	\$20,000
Timothy Kinne	\$47,000	Monte Meyer	\$20,000
David Roth	\$29,000		

3. Ecclesiastical Endorsement for Rev. Stephanos Beko

It was moved, seconded and carried to adopt the resolution granting ecclesiastical endorsement to Rev. Stephanos Beko. (See Appendix D)

4. Concordia Historical Institute Museum

It was moved, seconded and carried to adopt the resolution providing a gift of \$5,000 to support the construction of the Concordia Historical Institute Museum in honor of our District Archivist, Dr. Glenn Offermann. (See Appendix E)

5. LCMS Professional Church Worker Critical Incident Support Team

The Board declined to nominate any individuals.

6. Parish Specific Business Project

It was moved, seconded and carried to support a partnership with Concordia University, St. Paul, in seeking grants for the Parish Specific Business Project.

7. Theological Convocation Task Force Report

Owing to the length of the meeting the report was postponed until the next Board meeting.

REPORTS

Treasurer's Report

Lu Clemmensen walked the Board through the Treasurer's Report dated October 31, 2007. She explained a number of items and answered Board members' questions. The report was filed subject to audit.

LCEF Loan Activity Report and Delinquent Loan Report

Kurt Fuhr reviewed the LCEF report on loans. He noted the actions being taken to address delinquent congregations.

Questions Regarding Reports (none)

Special Reports (none)

ROUNDTABLE

(1) Tim recently had the privilege of recently baptizing a granddaughter. (2) Larry was privileged to baptize two granddaughters.

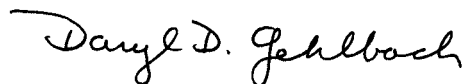
MEETING ADJOURNED/CLOSING PRAYER

It was moved, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting.

Dr. Heining offered the closing prayer.

President. Seitz declared the meeting adjourned at 2:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Daryl D. Gehlbach, Secretary

Appendix A

“To Address Unity in Worship Practices in District Supported Missions”

Whereas, The MNS District intends to facilitate the formation of many new Lutheran congregations in the near future, and

Whereas, The LCMS lists as one of its objectives to "encourage congregations to strive for uniformity in church practice, but also to develop an appreciation of a variety of responsible practices and customs which are in harmony with our common profession of faith" (Constitution Art III 7), and

Whereas, Our Lutheran Confessions clearly do not demand uniformity in human traditions, rites, or ceremonies (AC VII; AP VII and VIII 33; FCSD X 14, 27, 30-3 1), and

Whereas, C. F. W. Walther, in his 1848 Presidential Address states, "according to the constitution under which our synodical union exists, we have merely the power to advise [sic] one another, that we have only the power of the Word [sic], and of convincing [sic]. According to our constitution we have no right to formulate decrees, to pass laws and regulations, and to make a judicial decision, to which our congregations would have to submit unconditionally in any matter involving the imposing of something upon them. Our constitution by no means makes us a consistory, by no means a supreme court of our congregations. It rather grants them the most perfect liberty in everything, excepting nothing but the Word of God, faith, and charity. According to our constitution, we are not above [sic] our congregations, but in them and at their side." (quoted in Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, Carl S. Meyer, ed. St. Louis, CPH, 1964, pp. 170-171), and

Whereas, The Synod in Convention has addressed the diverse viewpoints in our church body concerning worship (1998 Res 2-10; 2001 Res 2-05A; 2004 Res 2-04; 2007 Res 2-01, 2-02A), and

Whereas, The Lutheran Service Book (LSB) is one of many orthodox worship resources available for use in the church, and

Whereas, We desire unity of doctrine and practice without placing before our congregations anything that would be perceived as denying or restricting their freedom as a member of the Synod, or go against the wise counsel of CFW Walther, therefore be it

Resolved, That the IVINS Board of Directors remind all of our missions that "exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymnbooks, and catechisms" is a condition for acquiring and holding membership in the Synod (Constitution, Art VI 4), and be it further

Resolved, That the MNS BoD while affirming the responsible use of freedom in worship (2004 Res 2-04), also encourages its missions to make faithful and joyful use of the LSB and other rich treasures of Lutheran worship, and be it finally

Resolved, That all MNS BoD members thank God for His work among us through His means of grace.

This resolution was introduced by the Mission Committee.

A substitute resolution (Appendix B) was offered and by a voice vote the Board agreed to consider the substitute.

The substitute was adopted.

“To Fund Congregations which Use the LSB”

Whereas the confessions of the church identify the Lutheran practice as retaining and defending the liturgical customs of the church, “At the outset it is again necessary by way of preface to point out that we do not abolish the Mass but religiously retain and defend it...We also keep traditional liturgical forms, such as the order of readings, prayers, vestments, and other similar things.” (AC Ap XXIV 1, Kolb 258)

And whereas the confessions of the church recognize the teaching value of liturgical customs, “People are drawn to Communion and to the Mass. At the same time they are also instructed about other false teaching concerning the sacrament. Moreover, no noticeable changes have been made in the public celebration of the Mass...For, after all, all ceremonies should serve the purpose of teaching the people what they need to know about Christ.” (AC XXIV paragraph 1-3, Kolb p. 68)

And whereas Martin Luther favored a uniform liturgy as a reflection of the one gospel we have received, “As far as possible we should observe the same rites and ceremonies, just as all Christians have the same baptism and the same Sacrament and no one has received a special one of his own from God.” (Luther’s Works, Volume 53, p. 61)

And whereas Luther tempered the liberty of the congregation with the insistence that it be sacrificed for the sake of uniformity, “Each one surrender his own opinions and get together in a friendly way and come to a common decision about these external matters, so that there will be one uniform practice throughout your district instead of disorder – one thing being done here and another there.” (Luther’s Works, Volume 53 p. 47)

And whereas the founders of the LCMS did the same, “While the framers of the [first LCMS] constitution remained faithful to Article VII of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession in that their demand for uniformity was not absolute, they did insist rather vigorously that the member congregations leave no stone unturned in their efforts to introduce uniform ceremonies. The constitution even goes so far as to claim that uniformity in liturgy, especially if this liturgy is increased and developed according to Lutheran standards, will be helpful in purifying the American Lutheran Church of its Reformed excrescences.” (Carl Mundinger, in Government in the Missouri Synod, (St. Louis CPH 1947) 191)

And whereas C.F.W. Walther also recognized that Christian Liberty is misunderstood when it is invoked as aversion to traditional liturgical ceremonies or when it is invoked to promote anything less than uniformity in liturgical practices, “Unfortunately also many of our Lutheran Christians are still without a true understanding of their liberty. This is demonstrated by their aversion to ceremonies. It is truly distressing that many of our fellow Christians find the differences between Lutheranism and papism in outward things. It is a pity and dreadful cowardice when one sacrifices the good ancient church customs to please the deluded American sects, lest they accuse one of being papistic! Indeed! Am I to be afraid of a Methodist, who perverts the word, or be ashamed in the matter of my good cause, and not rather rejoice that the sects can tell by our ceremonies that I do not belong to them?”

“It is too bad also that such entirely different ceremonies prevail in our Synod, and that no liturgy at all has yet been introduced in many congregations....

“With this we are not insisting that there be uniformity of perception or feeling or of taste among all believing Christians – neither dare anyone demand that all should be minded in this as he is. Nevertheless it remains true that the Lutheran liturgy distinguishes Lutheran Worship from the worship of other churches to such an extent that the houses of worship of the latter look like mere lecture halls in which the

hearers are only addressed and instructed, while our churches are in truth houses of prayer in which the Christians serve the great God publicly before the world.

“Uniformity in ceremonies (perhaps according to the Saxon church order published by the Synod, which is the simplest among the many Lutheran church orders) would be highly desirable because of its usefulness. A poor slave of the pope finds one and the same form of service, no matter where he goes, by which he at once recognizes his church. With us it is different!...How different it would be if the entire Lutheran church had a uniform form of worship! This would, of course, first of all yield only an external advantage, however, one which is by no means unimportant. Has not many a Lutheran already kept his distance from the sects because he saw that at the Lord’s Supper they broke the bread instead of distributing wafers?

“The objection: What would be the use of uniformity of ceremonies? – was answered with the counter question: What is the use of a flag on the battlefield? Even though a soldier cannot defeat the enemy with it, he nevertheless sees by the flag where he belongs. We ought not to refuse to walk in the footsteps of our fathers. They were so far removed from being ashamed of the good ceremonies that they publicly confess in the passage quoted: ‘It is not true that we do away with all such external ornaments.’” (C. F. W. Walther “Adiaphora Essays” “Essays for the church,” (CPH 1992) I, 194)

And whereas Walther recognized that the forces behind the criticism of certain customs in America or the encouragement of their disuse are precisely those who want the Lutheran Church to lose its identity and freedom and become part of the Reformed Evangelical community. “These so-called Protestant churches assert that of all Protestant churches the Lutheran has really been reformed the least; for, they say, it still retains much of the leaven of the Romish Church. For proof they cite the gown worn by our ministers when officiating, the wafers used by us instead of ordinary bread at Communion, the crucifix and the candles on our altars, the liturgical chanting of our ministers at the altar, signing persons with the holy cross, and bowing the head at the mention of the name Jesus. All these matters are innocent ceremonies, on which our church does not condition man’s salvation here or hereafter, but which it will not permit to be pronounced sin. For no creature has the right to declare something a sin which God has not declared such. Anything that God has neither commanded nor forbidden is a matter of liberty.” (Walther, Law and Gospel 167)

And whereas the early Missourians, led by C. F. W. Walther encouraged in the strongest possible terms the uniformity of worship. “The usages in the divine services are of the greatest influence on the outward and inward growth of congregations, and the greatest possible uniformity in them is especially desirable because the Lutheran Church is first recognizable from its public worship by unlearned people who have recently come to a place. Now it was especially stressed how desirable such uniformity would be already from the different kinds of singing. . . . All the pastors of our Synod in whose congregations rhythmical singing has not yet been introduced, were admonished to work for its introduction.” (Missouri Synod Western District Proceedings, 1855 in Moving Frontiers, Ed. Carl Meyer, (St. Louis: CPH, 1964) 242)

And, whereas the leading theologians of the LCMS during the transition from German to English (second quarter of the twentieth century) articulated the same position on the desirability of the uniformity in worship. Upon the publication in 1935 of a common liturgy and agenda in English our leaders were ecstatic. Theodore Graebner claimed: “In causing this new liturgy to be printed our synod unquestionably intended to make possible a liturgical uniformity in our congregations in order that this element might be conserved during the transition from German to English.” (Theodore Graebner “Our Liturgical Chaos,” in The Problem of Lutheran Union and Other Essays (St. Louis; CPH 1935) 136)

And W. G. Pollack declared, “The fond hope of having one hymnal for the churches of this body has been realized, giving us another outward manifestation of the unity of faith.” (W. G. Pollack, “Reports and Memorials (St. Louis: CPH 1941) 217) This corrected a situation in which “Every church seems to have

its own private service, different in whole or in part from any others. A visitor, if he can take part in the liturgy at all, is at a great disadvantage.” (W. G. Pollack, “Our Uncommon Service” Lutheran Witness 44(July 14, 1925)) 222)

And whereas, in the production of the LSB, it was the clear intent of the LCMS in Convention that this hymnal reflect the historic position of the Lutheran church that we use this book in our attempt to strive for the greatest degree of uniformity of worship. “Resolved that the Commission on Worship bring together a forum representing the diversity of practices within the Synod (on worship)...for the purpose of increasing understanding building consensus in our doctrine and practice of worship,...And be it finally resolved that everyone heed the advice of Dr. Martin Luther who penned words that speak directly to our time and place: ‘I pray all of you my dear sirs let each one surrender his own opinions and get together in a friendly way and come to a common decision about these external matters so that there will be one uniform practice throughout your district instead of disorder.’” (Proceedings, 1998 Convention of the LCMS p. 109-110)

And whereas it is true that uniformity of practice is neither a condition for salvation nor a condition for fellowship, it is also true that uniformity of worship is so important to the unity of the church that there is no apparent reason to deviate from the historic uniform liturgy of the church.

And whereas it is true that uniformity in worship is not something which should be enforced, it is also true that all pastors and congregations should not need to be forced but should willingly sacrifice their liberty in order to have a uniform liturgy as both the LCMS and Dr. Luther have averred.

And whereas two thirds of the congregations in the LCMS are currently using the LSB.

And whereas 90% of the congregations of the synod currently use a Lutheran hymnal.

And whereas the BoD of the MNS district has the responsibility to use the resources of the district in a manner which reflects both the will of the congregations of the synod in this place and the historic practice of the Lutheran church.

And whereas the decision of the BoD to grant subsidy to this church rather than that church has never been and should not now be construed as denying or restricting the freedom of any given congregation, therefore be it

Resolved that the MNS district give English speaking subsidized congregations of the Minnesota South District sufficient numbers of the LSB for use in their congregational services, and be it further

Resolved that the funding for this gift be reflected in the mission budget of the district, and be it further

Resolved that all new congregations be asked to assure the district that the LSB is being used consistently in the services of the congregation, and be it finally

Resolved that all district BoD members thank God for His work among us through the Divine Service of Word and Sacrament.

This resolution was introduced as a substitute to the Mission Committee resolution “To Address Unity in Worship Practices in District Supported Missions.” (Appendix A)

The Board, by a voice vote, approved the consideration of the substitute resolution.

A motion to close debate was seconded and adopted.

A motion was made, seconded and adopted to record the vote by a signed ballot.

The substitute resolution was adopted by a vote of ten yes, nine no.

[Resolution on Closed Communion]

Whereas the Confessions of the church assert that, “Among us the Mass is celebrated every Lord’s day and on other festivals, when the sacrament is made available to those who wish to partake of it after they have been examine and absolved.”

Whereas the practice of close(d) Communion in which only those are communed who have been examined by the pastor and absolved (AC Ap XXIV, 1, 49, Kolb 258, 267) and who are members of congregations which are in stated fellowship with the congregations of the LCMS (Convention Proceedings 1995, 122) is Biblical and Confessional and,

Whereas this practice has been consistently affirmed by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in convention, most recently in 2007, and

Whereas all congregations of the synod in pledging to “walk together” also pledge to practice close(d) Communion, and

Whereas many congregation of the synod do not practice close(d) communion as expressed by the 1995 resolution of the LCMS, and

Whereas the district BOD has no desire to exercise any type of ecclesiastical supervision over those pastors or congregations in the MNS district which do not practice close(d) communion, and

Whereas the BoD of the MNS district has the responsibility to use the resources of the district in a manner which reflects both the will of the congregations of the synod in this place and the historic practice of the Lutheran church, therefore be it

Resolved that all congregations of the district which are subsidized by the district or which sponsor subsidized congregations be urged and admonished to practice close(d) Communion and administer the sacrament only to those who have been examined and absolved by the pastor and who are members of congregations which are in stated fellowship with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, (except in rare cases of discretion which by their definition are not publicly known), and be it finally

Resolved that congregations of the district which are subsidized by the MNS district (both new missions and sponsoring congregations of new missions) be requested by the Mission Committee of the district to provide proof of the practice of close(d) communion in the form of bulletin announcements, reproductions of announcements or other means, as a condition for receiving subsidy from the district.

*A motion to amend the resolution by deleting the third and fourth resolves was adopted by a voice vote.
The two deleted resolves read as follows:*

Resolved that the BoD appoint a subcommittee of the district composed of three members of the BoD which shall examine the communion statements of all subsidized or sponsoring congregations of the district whether these statements are published or spoken. This subcommittee shall recommend for approval those congregations whose communion policies are in agreement with the Word of God, the Confessions of the Church and Resolution 3-08 of the 1995 convention of the LCMS. And be it finally

Resolved, that the BoD shall vote upon the recommendations of this subcommittee before any financial support of the district is afforded to any subsidized congregation or sponsoring congregation of the district.

A motion to amend the second resolve by striking the word “receiving” and replacing it with “requesting” was defeated by a voice vote.

A motion to close debate was seconded and adopted.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to record the vote by a signed ballot.

The resolution, as amended, was adopted by a vote of fourteen yes, five no.

“Ecclesiastical Endorsement of Rev. Francis Stephanos Beko”

WHEREAS, Rev. Francis Stephanos Beko is a pastor in good standing on the clergy roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Minnesota South District; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Beko currently serves as the Associate Pastor of Trinity First Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, MN; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Beko’s ministry to Ethiopians is supported in part through the mission budget of the District; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Beko is currently enrolled in a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Program with the goal of being board certified to serve as an institutional chaplain; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Beko needs ecclesiastical endorsement in order to continue with his program leading to board certification; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Minnesota South District Board of Directors hereby commends Rev. Beko for pursuing certification as an institutional chaplain as a means of providing support for himself and his family as he serves as a missionary to the Ethiopian population of the Twin Cities; and be it further

Resolved, that the Board of Directors considers Rev. Beko to be fit for work as an institutional chaplain; and be it further

Resolved, that the Board of Directors recognizes Rev. Beko’s chaplaincy ministry as a valid Word and or Word and Sacrament ministry and endorses him for this training and work; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Board of Directors asks Rev. Beko to work with the President of the District, Rev. Dr. Lane R. Seitz, once he is certified for chaplaincy work to renew this endorsement for a specific location where he will serve as a Word and or Word and Sacrament chaplain.

Adopted.

“Financial Support of the Construction of the Concordia Historical Institute Museum”

WHEREAS, the Concordia Historical Institute (CHI) serves as the official archives of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS); and

WHEREAS, the Institute is in the process of constructing the Concordia Historical Institute Museum at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis; and

WHEREAS, the Museum will allow CHI to display the rare and rich treasures of Lutheranism which it possesses; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota South District is a regular contributor to the materials being preserved by the Institute; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Board of Directors commend the Concordia Historical Institute for its bold venture of constructing the Concordia Historical Institute Museum; and be it further

Resolved, that we support the construction of this unique museum with a gift of \$5,000.00 in honor of our District Archivist, Dr. Glenn Offermann.

Adopted.