

**“No Other Name,
Under Heaven
Given Among Men
By Which We Must Be
Saved”**

Acts 4:12

**33rd Convention of the
Montana District LCMS**

June 22-25, 2015

Billings, Montana

Proceedings

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Convention Schedule

Billings, Montana

June 22-25, 2015

“No Other Name...by Which We Must Be Saved”

(Acts 4:12)

Monday- June 22

7:30	Committee Chairmen and Secretaries Orientation
8:00	Registration
9:00	Opening Devotions (In Committees)
9:15	Floor Committees meet (President visits)
3:45	Smalcald Articles (Session # 1)
5:00	Introduce Staff
5:10	Closing prayer
7:00	Opening Worship- Mt. Olive Lutheran Church- Rev. Matthew Harrison, Preacher

Tuesday- June 23

8:00	Opening Devotions (Pastor John Sias)
8:15	Committee 7 – Registration and Credentials
8:20	Orientation- Parliamentary procedures
8:35	Convention Schedule
8:40	District President’s Report and Address
9:10	Election Committee
9:20	Introduction of all nominees to all offices
9:35	Report of Synodical President
10:15	Welcome of new members and congregations of District
10:30	Smalcald Articles (Session # 2)
11:50	Closing Prayer
11:55	Noon Recess
1:15	Opening Devotions (Pastor Steve Schlund)
1:30	Report of Synodical President
2:10	Synodical President (Question and Answer)
2:40	Break
3:10	Committee # 1- Missions/Evangelism
4:05	Committee # 2- Indian/Campus/Deaf/Youth
5:00	Closing Prayer
6:00	Banquet - Recognitions - Square Dance

Wednesday June 24

8:00 Opening Devotions (Pastor Matthew Nelson)
8:15 Smalcald Articles (Session # 3)
9:30 Committee # 3- Stewardship/Human Care
10:05 Break
10:20 Committee # 4- Education/Communication/Schools
11:00 Committee # 5- Administration/Special
11:45 Closing prayer
11:50 Committees meet
12:00 Noon recess
1:15 Opening Devotions (Pastor Ray Larson)
1:30 Committee # 1 Missions/Evangelism
2:10 Committee # 2 Indian/Campus/Deaf/Youth
2:55 Committee # 3 Stewardship/Human Care
3:25 Break
3:40 Committee # 4 Education/Communication/Schools
4:10 Committee # 5 Administration/Special
4:45 Closing Prayer
5:00 Advisory delegates meet with Secretary to elect
Synodical Convention Delegate (Con. XII .B, Bylaw 3.1.3.1)

Thursday June 25

8:00 Opening Devotions (Pastor Charles Lehmann)
8:15 Smalcald Articles (Session # 4)
9:15 Committees as needed
10:00 Break
10:15 Committees as needed
10:55 Committee # 7 Registration/Credentials– final report
11:00 Closing Worship- Memorial, Installations (Pastor Doug Thompson)

VOTING DELEGATES

Congregation Name	City	Pastoral Delegate	Lay Delegate
Redeemer/ Faith	Anaconda/ Boulder	Vacant – Non-Calling	Bob McAllister
Holy Trinity/ Grace	Belgrade Three Forks	Charles Lehman	Tanner Martell
Christ the King	Billings	Ryan Wendt	Kendall Hartman
Hope/Our Redeemer	Billings	Robert Lane	Roy Schoessler
Mt. Olive/ St. Paul	Billings/ Roundup	Mark Grunst	Johnny Buck
Our Savior	Billings	Ken Zoeller	Keith Myhre
Trinity	Billings	Dan Rinderknecht	Dwight Schettler
First	Bozeman	Sam Grayl	Stephen Schultz
St. Paul/St. John	Bridger/Belfry	Paul Shupe	Dennis Wegner
St. Mark/Zion	Butte/Whitehall	James Mavis	Leonard Koehler
Our Redeemer	Columbia Falls	Matthew Nelson	Don Martinus
Church at Creston	Creston	Darold Reiner	Jim Schreiber
Crow Lutheran Ministry	Crow Agency	Daniel Jacobs	Bobbie Schenderline
St. John	Deer Lodge	Robert Mitchell	Aaron Roesler
Shepherd of the Hills	Ennis	Kenneth Stensrud	Gary Hadley
Holy Cross	Eureka	Christopher Tabbert	Chris Moen
St. John/Zion	Fairfield/Power	Noah Fremer	
Concordia/Trinity/ Mt Calvary	Forsyth/Hysham Colstrip	John Sias	Judy Blakesley
First	Fort Benton	Wade Harr	Roger Casteel

Congregation	Name City	Pastoral Delegate	Lay Delegate
Faith/ Trinity/Trinity	Glasgow/ Wolf Point/Plentywood	John Vallie	
Our Savior/Grace	Glendive/Fallon	Greg Lucido	Alan Michaels
Peace/Christ	Great Falls	Steven Schlund	Bruce Clark
Trinity	Great Falls	Gerald Paul	Roy Arves
Grace	Hamilton	Vern Sandersfeld	Steve Jarvis
Redeemer	Hardin	Willis McCall	
Trinity	Harlowton	Terry Forke	Earl Wegner
St. Paul/Zion	Havre/Chinook	Mark Schultz	Randy Martin
First	Helena	Jason Toombs	Gerald Michel
Trinity	Kalispell	Mark Cutler	Arlan Kohl
Circle of Life	Lame Deer	Dennis Bauer	William Mason
St. John	Laurel	Arlo Pullmann	Shawn Hackmann
River of Life	Laurel	Blake Marshall	JoAnn Mourich
St. Paul/ Trinity/Our Savior	Lewistown/ Stanford/Denton	Vacancy	Tova Gerer
St. John	Libby	Steven Thomas	Bill Dawson
Trinity/ Trinity	Miles City/ Rock Springs	Howard Schreibeis	Ted Schreiber
First	Missoula	Mark Christensen	John Mandler
Messiah	Missoula	David Hasselbrook	
St. Paul	Park City	Vacancy	
Mt. Calvary/Zion	Polson/St Ignatius	Kyle Whaley	Jerlin Mintz
St. Paul	Ronan	Timothy Gordish	Frank Delgado

Congregation	Name City	Pastoral Delegate	Lay Delegate
Shepherd	Salmon, ID	Kevin Peterson	Jared Peterson
Holy Cross/ Faith	Seeley Lake/ Condon	Erik Iverson	Glen Stocking
Trinity/St. John	Sidney/Fairview	Rolf Preus	Tom Halvorson
Our Savior	Stevensville	Andrew Eckert	Dave Morrison
Trinity	Superior	Vacancy	Bill Melhorn
Shepherd of the Valley	Thompson Falls	Vacancy	Bill Beck
St. Peter	Whitefish	Michael Flannery	Allen Wolf
Concordia	Williston	John Frahm	Eric Corneliusen

ADVISORY DELEGATES

Pastoral Advisory Delegates

Rev. Matthew Christensen (Chaplain on Active Duty)
Rev. Marc DiConti (Chaplain on Active Duty)
Rev. Timothy Klug (Non-Candidate)
Rev. David Preus (Deployed Missionary)
Rev. Eric Stinnett (Deployed Missionary)
Rev. Doug Thompson (Deployed Missionary)
Rev. Park Timber
Rev. David Warner (Deployed Missionary)

Ordained Emeritus Advisory Delegates

Rev. Bill Bliese
Rev. Eric Christiansen
Rev. John Donnan
Rev. Al Ebel
Rev. Gale Everson
Rev. Arnold Fischer
Rev. Martin Kaarre
Rev. Erich Kaelberer
Rev. James Koss
Rev. Raymond Larson
Rev. Carl Lehmann
Rev. Bruce Linderman
Rev. Jason Menagh
Rev. M.M. Nicolaus
Rev. Herbert Schiefelbein
Rev. Kent Stenzel
Rev. Christopher Wareham
Rev. Robert Weishoff
Rev. Raymond Wieger
Rev. Bruce Zagel

Board of Directors Members

Rev. Terry Forke, President
Rev. Christopher Tabbert, First Vice-President
Rev. Howard Schreibeis, Second Vice-President
Rev. Mark Schultz, Secretary
Steve Hildenburg, Treasurer
Johnny Buck
Frank Delgado
Jerry Roseleip
Mark Scott
David Topp

Commissioned Advisory Delegates

Amanda Adams, DCE, Hamilton
Rebecca Braaten, Trinity, Kalispell
Joann Cutler, Trinity, Kalispell
Katherine Duncan, Great Falls
Susan Eberhard, Missoula
Steven Endicott, Troy
Ruth Endicott, Troy
Lynne Erger, Trinity, Billings
JeAnne Faris, Trinity, Kalispell
Tanya Hensel, Trinity, Billings
Andrea Heiliger, Trinity, Billings
Ken Holste, Trinity, Kalispell
Ardith Johnson, Polson
Melody Johnson, Columbia Falls
Julie Keeley, First Lutheran, Bozeman
Becky Sue Kern, Trinity, Kalispell
Ken Kosche, Billings
Thomas Kosche, Trinity, Billings
Myrna Latusky, Roberts
Debbie Lee, Great Falls
Ted Loomans, Trinity, Billings
Gerald Lustila, Trinity, Kalispell
Kristin McCauley, Trinity, Kalispell
Laura McCoy, Trinity, Billings
Suzanne Rasmussen, Trinity, Kalispell
Rachel Schumacher, Trinity, Kalispell
Cindy Speed, Trinity, Billings
Jerry Schreck, Kalispell
Lisa Steinbrenner, Trinity, Kalispell
Richard Thomas, Trinity, Billings
David Topp, Trinity, Kalispell
Judith Van Andel, Bozeman
Roger Van Andel, Bozeman
Darrell Van Luchene, Bozeman
Sue Zann Van Luchene, Bozeman
Willem Wegner, Great Falls

Mt District Nominations Committee

Rev. Dan Jacobs, Chairman
Roy Arves
Kale Bauer
Rev. James Koss
Rev. Darold Reiner

District Convention Assignments

June 22-25, 2015

Billings

“There is no other name, under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved”

Acts 4:12

Committee # 1 Missions, Evangelism

Chairman: Mark Cutler

Secretary: Steve Thomas

Pastor: Ken Zoeller, Paul Shupe, David Hasselbrook, Noah Fremer, Rolf Preus

Commissioned: Amanda Adams, Kristin McCauley, Susan Eberhard, Ardith Johnson

Lay: Tanner Martell, Don Martinus, Chris Moen, Steve Jarvis, William Mason, Ted Schreiber, Bill Beck

BOD: Mark Scott

Resource: Ray Larson

Committee #2 Indian, Campus, Deaf, Youth

Chairman: Gerald Paul

Secretary: Chad Schopp

Pastor: John Vallie, Steve Schlund, Blake Marshall, Wade Harr, John Frahm

Commissioned: Joan Cutler, Thomas Kosche

Lay: Kendall Hartman, Judy Blakesley, Earl Wegner, Shawn Haskmann, Lyle Grimes, Eric Corneliusen, Steven Schultz

BOD: Crow Buck

Resource: Dan Jacobs, John Sias, Steve Schlund, Ken Zoeller

Committee # 3 Stewardship, Human Care, LCEF/Foundation

Chairman: Dan Rinderknecht

Secretary: Charlie Lehmann

Pastor: Jason Toombs, James Mavis, Greg Lucido, Mark Grunst, Dennis Bauer, Bob Mitchell.

Commissioned: Lisa Steinbrenner, Debbie Lee, Andrea Heiliger

Lay: Roy Schoessler, Roger Casteel, Randy Martin, JoAnn Mourich, Allen Wolf, Jerlin Mintz, Jim Schreiber,
John Mandler

BOD: Frank Delgado

Resource: Kevin Peterson, Vern Sandersfeld, Jeff Snyder

Committee # 4 Education, Communications, Schools

Chairman: Bob Lane

Secretary: Larry Miller

Pastor: Park Timber, Kevin Peterson, Sam Grayl, Andrew Eckert, Michael Flannery

Commissioned: Laura McCoy, Richard Thomas, Judy Van Andel

Lay: Keith Myhre, Bobbie Schenderline, Alan Michaels, Gerald Michel, Tova Gerer, Dave Morrison, Gerald, Michel

BOD: Jerry Rosleip

Resource: Patricia Stricker, Betty Bagley

Committee # 5 Administration, Special overtures

Chairman: Arlo Pullmann

Secretary: Kyle Whaley

Pastor: Ken Stensrud, Matt Nelson, Erik Iverson, Tim Gordish, Mark Christensen, John Sias

Commissioned: Ted Loomans, Becky Kern, Rachel Schumacher

Lay: Dwight Schettler, Aaron Roesler, Bruce Clark, Arlan Kohl, Bill Dawson, Bill Melhorn, Tom Halvorson,
Dennis Wegner

BOD: David Topp

Resource: Chris Tabbert, Howard Schreibeis

Committee # 6 Nominations and Elections

Chairman: Daniel Jacobs

Pastor: Darold Reiner, James Koss

Commissioned: Suzanne Rasmussen

Lay: Roy Arves, Kale Bauer

Committee # 7 Credentials, Registration

Chairman: Raymond Larson

Pastor: Mark Schultz

Commissioned: Becky Braaten

Lay: Gary Hadley

Convention Chaplain: Pastor Howard Schreibeis

Convention Reader: Pastor Chris Tabbert

Convention Manager: Betty Bagley

Convention Minutes: Pastor Mark Schultz

Convention Pianist: Pam Schreiber

Technical Table: Pastor Ryan Wendt

Montana District Treasurer: Steve Hildenburg

MINUTES OF THE 33rd

MONTANA DISTRICT LCMS CONVENTION

Billings, Montana – June 22-25, 2015

“No Other Name...by Which We Must Be Saved”

Acts 4:12

Monday – June 22

After delegate registration, the floor committees met during the morning and early afternoon. At 3:45 p.m. President Terry Forke opened the 33rd Convention of the Montana District with the invocation and opening prayer. He then introduced to the convention delegates Betty Bagley, Montana District Administrative Assistant and Steve Hildenburg, Montana District Treasurer and announced they will both be retiring this summer. He introduced Pastor Ryan Wendt who is the computer, sound, and general tech advisor/worker for this convention.

Smalcald Article Study, Session One – President Forke announced to the delegates and guests that we will be reading and discussing the Smalcald Articles for our study each day during the convention. First Vice-President Chris Tabbert will read it in sections and the delegates will have time for discussion. After Rev. Tabbert read the Preface to the Book of Concord 1580, President Forke elaborated on the importance of making a public confession, that as the Montana District of the LCMS we confess according to the Word of God what we believe, teach, and confess to bring about concord in our land. He instructed the attendees to talk about the questions for the next 30 minutes by following the discussion guide on page 9 “On Making a Public Confession”.

President Forke closed the opening session with prayer at 5:15 p.m.

The opening worship was held at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church at 7:00 p.m. with Synodical President Matthew Harrison preaching and Rev. Mark Grunst as liturgist.

Tuesday - June 23

At 8 a.m. opening devotions followed the Order of Matins, led by Convention Chaplain Rev. Howard Schreibeis with Eastern Circuit Visitor Rev. Dr. John Sias preaching on Acts 3:1-10 “In the Name of Jesus Rise Up and Walk”.

Committee #7 – Registration and Credentials Report

Rev. Ray Larson reported 40 voting pastor delegates, 42 voting lay delegates, and 16 advisory delegates.

President Forke directed the attention of the delegates to page 12 of the Convention Workbook and explained some parliamentary procedures to the delegates to facilitate the work of the convention.

It was **moved and seconded** to adopt the agenda in the convention workbook (pages 4-6) with the addition of a presentation by Concordia Plan Services at 11:50 a.m. on Tuesday. **Motion carried.**

District President's Report

District President Forke gave his report and address on boldly proclaiming the name of Jesus in the face of the devil's attacks manifested in the current challenges of our culture under the theme of "No Other Name". A copy of his address will be included in the Convention Proceedings.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Chairman Rev. Dan Jacobs led the delegates in prayer and then gave a brief synopsis of the procedure for the elections, directed them to pages 100-101 of the convention workbook, and introduced those who have been nominated to the various offices – President, Vice-President, BOD members, Circuit Visitors, etc.

After those introductions, the first order of business was the election of District President – the nominees are Rev. Terry Forke and Rev. Dr. John Sias. The ballots were distributed and the delegates were instructed to vote for one.

Report of Synodical President – part 1

President Forke introduced the Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, President of the LCMS. The delegates watched a 12-minute video about the work of God through the congregations and people of the LCMS (following the outline of Witness, Mercy, Life Together). He spoke to the delegates about the challenges and opportunities facing our church body in the world and domestically.

President Forke introduced to the convention the Rev. Dr. Jon D. Vieker, senior assistant to President Harrison.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Jacobs reported that the vote for District President is as follows: Rev. Terry Forke-70; Rev. Dr. John Sias-8; 1-blank. **Rev. Terry Forke has been re-elected as District President.**

Smalcald Article Study, Session Two – Pastor Tabbert read the Preface of Dr. Martin Luther, and Articles 1 and 2 of the Smalcald Articles to the assembly (the First and Chief Article of the Christian Faith). President Forke made a few comments and commended the questions to the delegates for discussion.

President Forke introduced the pastors of our newest congregations since the last District Convention (2012) – Pastor Ken Stensrud of Living Water Lutheran Church in Dillon; Pastor Blake Marshall of River of Life, Laurel; Pastor Chad Schopp, Emmaus Lutheran Mission (Livingston and Big Timber).

He also introduced the new pastors and teachers of the District since the last District Convention (2012): Rev. Rolf Preus (Sidney and Fairview); Rev. Andrew Eckert (Stevensville); Rev. Greg Lucido (Glendive and Fallon); Rev. Jason Toombs (Helena); Rev. Willis McCall (Hardin); Rev. Charles Lehmann (Belgrade); Rev. John Frahm (Williston); Rev. Chad Schopp (Big Timber and Livingston); Rev. Michael Flannery (Whitefish); Ms. Sue Everhard (First- Missoula)

Concordia Plan Services

Louis Johnson, Benefit Consultant representing Concordia Plan Services, talked about Concordia's health insurance and retirement plans. He showed a short video about CPS (50 years serving the LCMS) and invited the delegates to talk with him during the convention about any question or concerns their congregations have regarding Insurance and Retirement for their church workers.

The delegates recessed for lunch following a closing prayer by Rev. Dr. John Sias at noon and reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

Opening Devotions for the afternoon Session were led by Convention Chaplain Rev. Howard Schreibeis following the order of Responsive Prayer 1 with Central Circuit Visitor Rev. Steven Schlund preaching on Acts 3:11-21 "By Faith in His Name".

President Forke thanked Pam Schreiber (Trinity-Miles City) for playing the hymns and liturgy for the convention and announced that the offering from the opening service at Mt. Olive Monday evening was \$2197.70 and will be divided equally between the four overseas missionaries recently called from the Montana District.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

The ballots were distributed and the delegates were instructed to vote for one of the following for First Vice-President of the District: Rev. Howard Schreibeis; Rev. Dr. John Sias; Rev. Chris Tabbert.

Report of Synodical President – part 2

President Harrison fielded questions from the convention delegates about overseas missionary funding, the LCEF Credit Union, the "shifting" of the number of Christians away from USA to Africa and South America, the inadequacy of the doctrinal reconciliation and discipline process ("anemic" in Harrison's words), alternate routes to the ministry, and seminary funding. President Harrison thanked the convention for again electing Rev. Terry Forke as District President and commended him for keeping the emphasis of the Council of Presidents' meetings on Biblical and doctrinal matters.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Jacobs reported that the vote for First VP is as follows: Rev. Howard Schreibeis – 7; Rev. Dr. John Sias – 23; Rev. Chris Tabbert – 45; invalid – 1. **Rev. Chris Tabbert has been re-elected as First Vice-President.** The delegates were then instructed to nominate by paper ballot one pastor to serve as 2nd Vice-President. The three men receiving the highest number of nominations will comprise the ballot.

The convention recessed until 3:10 p.m.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Jacobs announced the results of the nominating process for 2nd Vice-President. Those pastors receiving nominations are Tim Gordisch – 1; Mark Grunst – 1; Daniel Jacobs – 2; Charles Lehmann – 1; Larry Miller – 1; Matthew Nelson – 2; Arlo Pullmann – 1; Darold Reiner – 1; Daniel Rinderknecht – 2; Vern Sandersfeld – 1; John Sias – 32; Howard Schreibeis – 26; Steven Thomas – 1. Due to a three-way tie for third, the slate consists of Daniel Jacobs, Matthew Nelson, Daniel Rinderknecht, John Sias, Howard Schreibeis. The delegates were instructed to vote for one.

Committee #1 – Missions/Evangelism

Rev. Mark Cutler read Resolution 1-01 “To Address the Fear of Decline of Church Membership”. **Moved and seconded.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** line 12 by striking “LCMS” and replace with “Holy Scriptures”. **Amendment carried.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** the second resolve by striking “LCMS and”. **Amendment carried. Resolution 1-01 adopted as amended.**

Rev. Mark Cutler read Resolution 1-02 “To Encourage the Identification of Church Planting Opportunities within the Montana District”. **Moved and seconded. Resolution 1-02 adopted.**

Rev. Mark Cutler read Resolution 1-03 “To Establish Chaplaincies for Montana Detention Centers”. **Moved and seconded.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** by inserting “a task force to study opportunities for” between “establish” and “chaplaincies” in the title. **Amendment carried.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** by inserting “members of the task force being approved by” and striking “approval of” on lines 25 and 26. **Amendment carried.** Previous question was **moved. Carried. Resolution 1-03 adopted as amended.**

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

The results of the voting for 2nd Vice-President are as follows: Rev. Daniel Jacobs – 3; Rev. Matthew Nelson – 2; Rev. Daniel Rinderknecht – 2; Rev. Dr. John Sias – 37; Rev. Howard Schreibeis – 32. The delegates were instructed to vote for either Rev. Dr. John Sias or Rev. Howard Schreibeis.

Committee #2 – Indian/Campus/Deaf/Youth

Rev. Gerald Paul read Resolution 2-01 “To Call the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to Repentance”. **Moved and seconded.** Discussion. **Moved and seconded to recommit** to committee with the specific direction to distinguish between sinning “against the Word of God” and “against LCMS objectives.” **Moved and seconded to amend the motion to recommit** with the specific directions to fact check. **Motion to amend defeated. Motion to recommit carried.**

Rev. Gerald Paul read Resolution 2-02 “To Request the Reorganization of Campus and Youth Ministries into a Single Committee”. **Moved and seconded.** It was **moved and seconded** to insert “if the committee is reorganized” on line 29 between “that” and “the”. **Motion to amend carried. Resolution 2-02 adopted as amended.**

Rev. Gerald Paul read Resolution 2-03 “To Encourage the Establishment of American Heritage Girls Chapters”. **Moved and seconded. Moved and seconded to postpone debate** on this motion to give the delegates time to investigate the issue until Committee 2 is scheduled to present again tomorrow afternoon. **Motion to postpone is carried.**

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Jacobs reported that the vote for 2nd VP is as follows: Rev. Howard Schreibeis – 37; Rev. Dr. John Sias – 43. **Rev. Dr. John Sias was elected as 2nd Vice-President.**

Rev. Jacobs asked for nominations from the floor for District Secretary. No nominations were received. **Rev. Mark Schultz was re-elected as District Secretary** by voice vote.

The convention recessed at 4:45 p.m. following a closing prayer by Rev. Steven Schlund.

During the banquet on Tuesday evening, in addition to the meal, square dancing, and President Harrison playing the banjo, President Forke presented Amicus Christi Awards from the Montana District to the Rev. Raymond Larson, Sr. and Mr. Steve Hildenburg for their faithful service in God's kingdom.

Wednesday - June 24

Opening devotions for the morning session were led by Convention Chaplain Rev. Howard Schreibeis following the order of Responsive Prayer 2, with Flathead Circuit Visitor Rev. Matthew Nelson preaching “By What Name Did You Do This?” based on Acts 4:1-7.

President Forke took the opportunity to thank the delegates for their confidence in choosing him again as Montana District President. After reading a passage from Jonah 3, he remarked that since the convention operates as a democracy governed by the Word of God, and although he feels somewhat reluctant, he receives this opportunity and is willing to serve the church in this capacity.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Jacobs led the delegates in prayer and explained the bylaws (5.2.2.f,g,h) which changed the way Circuit Visitor vacancies are filled. The slate was then presented as follows (including two appointments by the District President):

Rev. Steven Schlund – Central Circuit

Rev. Charles Lehmann – Divide Circuit

Rev. Howard Schreibeis – Eastern Circuit

Rev. Matthew Nelson – Flathead Circuit

Rev. Daniel Jacobs – Southern Circuit

Rev. Raymond Larson, Sr. - Western Circuit

He asked if there were any amendments to the slate as presented. Receiving none, the delegates **ratified the slate as presented** by voice vote.

Smalcald Article Study, Session Three – 1st VP Rev. Tabbert read to the assembly the next sections of the Smalcald Articles dealing with the Papacy. President Forke commented on the reading by pointing out Luther's consistent argument holding fast to the chief article of redemption in Christ Jesus alone and how false teaching takes away the certainty of the forgiveness believers have in and through the work of Christ. He commended the questions from Session III to the delegates for discussion.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Daniel Jacobs presented the slate for Pastor member of BOD. The nominations are as follows: Rev. Mark Grunst; Rev. Gerald Paul; Rev. Ryan Wendt; Rev. Kyle Whaley

Committee #3 – Stewardship and Human Care

Rev. Daniel Rinderknecht read Res. 3-01 "To Allow for the Review of Acquittals". **Moved and seconded. Resolution 3-01 adopted.**

Committee member Frank Delgado read Res. 3-02 "To Adopt a New Method for Dealing with Charges of Heresy Apart from the Dispute Resolution Process". **Moved and seconded.** A **suggestion was accepted to change** "dispute resolution" in every instance it occurs to "existing expulsion process" by friendly amendment. **Moved and seconded to amend** line 18 by striking "another nature" with "a nature other". **Amendment carried.** Previous question was **moved. Defeated.** Having no further discussion, **Resolution 3-02 adopted as amended.**

Committee member John Mandler read Res. 3-03 “To Clearly Confess the Lutheran Doctrine of Marriage through Our Practice”. **Moved and seconded.** Extended discussion in favor and against. Previous question was **moved. Carried. Resolution 3-03 defeated.**

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Daniel Jacobs reported the results for Pastor member of BOD. The results are as follows: Rev. Mark Grunst – 18; Rev. Gerald Paul – 10; Rev. Ryan Wendt – 47; Rev. Kyle Whaley – 8. **Rev. Wendt is elected as pastor member of the BOD.**

Nominations for Teacher member of the BOD – Richard Thomas. No nominations from the floor. **Mr. Richard Thomas was elected as teacher member of the BOD** by voice vote.

Committee #4 – Education/Communication/Schools

Chairman Rev. Robert Lane read Res. 4-01 “To Call for Members with Confessions Contrary to that of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) to Leave the Synodical Union Voluntarily”. **Moved and seconded. Moved to amend** line 28 to strike “women's” on line 28. **No second. Moved and seconded to refer** Res. 4-01 back to committee in order to distinguish between dissent supported by “the Word of God” versus “resolutions of the Synod.” After discussion, **motion to refer is withdrawn. Moved and seconded** to amend by replacing “e.g.” on line 27 with “i.e.” **Motion to amend defeated.** It was **moved and seconded** to strike “LCMS” on line 27 and in the title to insert “Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions”. **Amendment carried. Resolution 4-01 adopted as amended.**

Committee #5 – Administration/Special

Rev. Arlo Pullmann read Res. 5-01 “To Amend the Montana District Bylaws Regarding the Title Circuit Visitor”. **Moved and seconded. Resolution 5-01 adopted.**

Rev. Arlo Pullmann read Res. 5-02 “To Approve the Revised Montana District Articles of Incorporation”. **Moved and seconded. Resolution 5-02 adopted.**

Rev. Arlo Pullmann read Res. 5-03 “To Call on the Reverend Dr. Matthew L. Becker to Repent and Recant”. **Moved and seconded.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** by adding “out of true love for the Rev. Matthew Becker” on line 24 between “2015” and “Call” and change the second use of “the Rev. Matthew Becker” to “him”. **Amendment adopted.** Previous question was **moved. Carried. Resolution 5-03 adopted as amended.**

Rev. Arlo Pullmann read Res. 5-04 “To Call Upon the Synodical President to Invoke the Procedure for Expulsion from the Synod of the District President of the Northwest District”. **Moved and seconded. Moved and seconded to amend** by inserting “Rev. Paul Linnemann” preceding “Northwest District President” wherever it occurs. Amendment **carried. Moved and seconded to refer** Res. 5-04 back to committee and insert the language of a call to repentance. **Motion to refer withdrawn.** Res 5-04 **discussion was suspended due to the orders of the day.**

The delegates recessed for lunch following a closing prayer by Rev. Matthew Nelson at noon and reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

Opening Devotions for the afternoon Session were led by Convention Chaplain Rev. Howard Schreibeis following the order of Responsive Prayer 1 with Western Circuit Visitor Rev. Raymond E. Larson, Sr. preaching on Acts 4:8-10 "Let the Name of Jesus Be Known".

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Daniel Jacobs presented the slate for lay-members of the BOD as follows: Mr. Pat Lewis, Great Falls; Keith Meier, Billings; Jerry Roseleip, Deer Lodge; Mark Scott, Polson. He asked for nominations from the floor and received one: Gary Hadley, Ennis. Committee #6 will prepare the ballot.

Committee #1 – Missions/Evangelism

Rev. Mark Cutler read Resolution 1-04 "To Provide Ongoing Support for International Missionaries Called from the Montana District". **Moved and seconded.** By friendly amendment: in line 35 strike "said missionaries in" with "Missionaries who received calls out of the Montana District to" and in line 18 strike "Board of Mission Services" and replace with "Office of International Mission" and in line 30 strike "Board of Directors of the" and add "Montana District Assembled in Convention in Billings" and strike "be directed". **Resolution 1-04 adopted.**

President Forke dismissed Committee #1 and thanked them for their work.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Daniel Jacobs and committee distributed the ballot for lay-members of the District BOD as follows: Mr. Pat Lewis; Keith Meier; Jerry Roseleip; Mark Scott, Gary Hadley. The delegates were instructed to vote for four.

Committee #2 – Indian/Campus/Deaf/Youth

Rev. Gerald Paul brought Resolution 2-03 "To Encourage the Establishment of American Heritage Girls Chapters" again to the floor after discussion was postponed the day before. **Resolution 2-03 adopted.**

Rev. Gerald Paul reported that Committee #2 **declined to bring Res. 2-01 back to the floor.**

President Forke dismissed Committee #2 with thanks.

Rev. Charles Lehmann **moved** "To Dissolve the LCMS". **No second.**

Committee #3 – Stewardship and Human Care

Rev. Daniel Rinderknecht asked Rev. Vern Sandersfeld to read Res. 3-04 "To Encourage People and Pastors of the Montana District to Stand Firmly Against the Culture of Death and Support

Those Voices that Actively Challenge It”. **Moved and seconded.** By friendly amendment: in Line 13 strike “take life unjustly” and add “murder”. **Resolution 3-04 adopted.**

Rev. Daniel Rinderknecht asked Rev. Charles Lehmann to read Res. 3-05 “To Support Pastors and Laity in Firmly Confessing the Biblical Understanding of Human Sexuality”. **Moved and seconded.** By friendly amendment in line 10: replace the word “gender” with “sex”. It was **moved and seconded to amend** the first Whereas by striking “union of” and replace with “activity between”. It was **moved and seconded to amend the amendment** by adding “any persons outside of Biblical Marriage is” and strike “those of the same sex”. It was **moved and seconded to further amend** by adding “, including those of the same sex, is” after “marriage”. **Carried. The amendment to the first amendment carried. The first amendment carried as amended.** It was **moved and seconded** to add on line 31 after “resources” “for church and civil realms”. **Amendment carried.** By friendly amendment: in Line 9 strike “the” and add “that”. **Resolution 3-05 adopted as amended.**

Rev. Daniel Rinderknecht asked Rev. Jason Toombs to read Res. 3-06 “To Assist Congregations in Their Privilege to Welcome All People Regardless of What Sexual Identity They Profess”. **Moved and seconded. Moved and seconded** to amend line 17 by adding “the public assembly of” after “to”. **Amendment Carried. Resolution 3-06 adopted as amended.**

President Forke dismissed Committee #3 with thanks.

Committee #6 – Nominations and Elections Committee

Rev. Daniel Jacobs reported the results for lay-members of BOD as follows: Mr. Gary Hadley–33; Mr. Pat Lewis–45; Keith Meier–46; Jerry Roseleip–53; Mark Scott–48. **The four lay-members of the BOD are Mr. Pat Lewis; Keith Meier; Jerry Roseleip; Mark Scott.**

Rev. Jacobs presented the slate for pastor members of the Convention Nominating Committee as follows: **Rev. Blake Marshall; Rev. James Koss; Rev. Kyle Whaley.** No nominations were received from the floor. The three men were elected by voice vote.

Rev. Jacobs presented the slate for lay members of the Convention Nominating Committee as follows: **Roy Arves; Kale Bauer; Joel Olinghouse.** No nominations were received from the floor. The three men were elected by voice vote.

Rev. Jacobs presented the slate for teacher member of the Convention Nominating Committee as follows: No nominations were received from the floor. **Becky Braaten** was elected by voice vote.

President Forke dismissed Committee #6 with thanks.

Committee #4 – Education/Communication/Schools

Chairman Rev. Robert Lane read Res. 4-02 “To Direct a Portion of the Monies Given by the Montana District to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) in Support of Our Seminaries”. **Moved and seconded.** By friendly amendment: in line 80 strike the word “from undergraduate studies”. It was **moved to amend** lines 62 through 68 – starting in line 62 strike “reduce” through “ten percent of” in line 68 and replace with “direct all” and strike line 67 parenthetical statement “(\$57,500 projected for 2015)”. **Move to amend withdrawn. Motion defeated.**

Chairman Rev. Robert Lane read Res. 4-03 “To Uphold Our Stated Confession of the Office of the Ministry”. **Moved and seconded.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** line 40 to insert “regularly” before “preparing”. **Amendment defeated. Res. 4-03 adopted.**

Committee #4 was dismissed with thanks.

President Forke asked for a motion to amend the orders of the day. It was **moved and seconded** to change the orders of the day by moving the closing prayer to 4:35 p.m. and to recall Committee #5 to the floor at 9:15 am tomorrow. **Motion defeated.**

It was **moved and seconded to change** the orders of the day to continue work on Res. 5-04 until 5 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Committee #5 – Administration/Special

Discussion resumed on Res. 5-04, “To Call Upon the Synodical President to Invoke the Procedure for Expulsion from the Synod of the District President of the Northwest District”. It was **moved and seconded to add** another whereas after the first one: “Whereas, the current bylaws of the LCMS do not provide for the removal of a member from office apart from expulsion from Synod, and”. **Amendment carried. Moved and seconded to postpone indefinitely.** The previous question was **moved. Carried.** Motion to postpone is **defeated.** Previous question was **moved. Motion carried. Res 5-04 adopted as amended.**

The convention recessed at 5:05 p.m. following a closing prayer by Rev. Raymond Larson, Sr.

In meetings convened by the District Secretary after the convention recessed on Wednesday afternoon, the commissioned ministers selected Tom Kosche, Trinity-Billings as advisory delegate to the Synodical Convention in 2016 and Becky Kern as alternate. Rev. Michael Donnan, Billings was selected as the advisory delegate to the Synodical Convention in 2016 and Rev. Raymond E. Larson, Sr. as alternate for the ordained advisory delegates.

Thursday - June 25

Opening devotions for the morning session were led by Convention Chaplain Rev. Howard Schreibeis following the order of Responsive Prayer 2, with Divide Circuit Visitor Rev. Charles Lehmann preaching “Jesus Is the Cornerstone” based on Acts 4:11.

Smalcald Article Study, Session Four – 1st VP Rev. Tabbert read to the assembly the final sections of the Smalcald Articles dealing with God's gifts through His church. President Forke thanked Pastor Tabbert for his reading to the assembly. President Forke shared with the delegates some comments on the reading regarding our public confession (particularly paragraph 9 in accordance with being spiritual but not religious). Sinful human beings do not want to submit to the Word of God, but would rather make decisions based on how they feel. God does not wish to deal with us apart from His Word. He then directed the delegates to discuss the questions from Session IV.

Committee #5 – Administration/Special

Chairman Rev. Arlo Pullmann read Res. 5-05 “To Emphasize Effective Ecclesiastical Supervision in the Districts of the Synod”. **Moved and seconded.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** the presented resolution by removing the second to the last resolved. **Carried.** It was **moved and seconded to remove** the third whereas. It was **moved to amend the amendment** by keeping the whereas and only strike “; and also ... difficult”. **Carried. Amendment carried. Res. 5-05 adopted as amended.**

Chairman Rev. Arlo Pullmann read Res. 5-06 “To Commend for Study the Report on Worship”. **Moved and seconded.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** by adding as the final resolve “and be it finally resolved, that the 2015 Montana District convention memorialize the LCMS in its 2016 convention to commend these documents to the entire Synod as useful for growth together in unity of doctrine and harmony of practice.” **Amendment carried. Res. 5-06 adopted as amended.**

Committee #5 was dismissed with thanks.

Rev. Mark Grunst **moved and seconded** “To Memorialize Synod at the 2016 Convention to Direct the Synodical Board of Directors to Determine Budget Redistribution in Order to Fully Fund our Seminaries and Missionaries”. It was **moved to amend** the final resolve by deleting “redirect monies to” and add “fully fund up to the amount of 50 million dollars per year.” **Amendment defeated.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** after “seminaries” in line 38 by adding “, and the Global Seminary Initiative”. **Amendment carried.** It was **moved and seconded to amend** the title by striking “fully” and add “better” and insert after “seminaries” “the Global Seminary Initiative”. Previous question was **moved. Amendment carried. Resolution adopted as amended.**

President Forke asked for a change in the orders of the day. It was **moved, seconded, and carried** to change the orders of the day by receiving Committee #7's report and then reconvening after a short break for the closing service and installation of officers at 10:45 a.m.

Committee #7 – Registration and Credentials

Rev. Raymond E. Larson, Sr. gave the committee's final report as follows:

Seated pastoral voting delegates – 41

Seated Lay voting delegates – 42

Seated Advisory delegates – 17

Excused pastoral voting delegates – 3

Excused Lay voting delegates – 2

Excused Advisory delegates – 22

Unexcused pastoral voting delegates – 0

Unexcused Lay voting delegates – 0

Unexcused Advisory delegates – 19

President Forke dismissed Committee #7 with thanks and declared the 33rd Convention of the Montana District closed.

The convention concluded with the Closing Worship, following the order of Prayer and Preaching (LSB p. 260) with the Rev. Howard Schreibeis as liturgist and Southern Circuit Counselor Rev. Daniel Jacobs as preacher. The readings from Holy Scripture were Isaiah 42:1-9 and Acts 4:12. The theme of the sermon: "There Is No Other Name". As part of the service, LCMS Regional Vice-President Rev. Nabil Nour installed Rev. Terry Forke as District President and President Forke then installed the Vice-Presidents, the Circuit Visitors, the members of the Board of Directors, and the members of the Nominations and Elections Committee.

Submitted by Rev. Mark A. Schultz,

District Secretary

Election Results

District President: Rev. Terry Forke

1st Vice-President: Rev. Chris Tabbert

2nd Vice-President: Rev. Dr. John Sias

District Secretary: Rev. Mark Schultz

Circuit Visitors:

Rev. Steven Schlund – Central Circuit

Rev. Charles Lehmann – Divide Circuit

Rev. Howard Schreibeis – Eastern Circuit

Rev. Matthew Nelson – Flathead Circuit

Rev. Daniel Jacobs – Southern Circuit

Rev. Raymond Larson, Sr. - Western Circuit

Pastor member of the BOD: Rev. Ryan Wendt

Teacher member of the BOD: Mr. Richard Thomas

Lay-members of the BOD: Mr. Pat Lewis; Keith Meier; Jerry Roseleip; Mark Scott

Convention Nominating Committee: Rev. Blake Marshall; Rev. James Koss; Rev. Kyle Whaley;
Mr. Roy Arves; Mr. Kale Bauer; Mr. Joel Olinghouse;
Teacher Becky Braaten

“No Other Name”

Presidential Address 2015-2018

Introduction:

Some two thousand years ago the leaders of the nation of Israel found themselves on the horns of a dilemma. Having thought they had dealt with the problem of Jesus, they were befuddled when His name started popping up again. Apparently a lame man had been healed by invoking the name of Jesus. If the name Jesus is powerful enough to heal, they reasoned, it is probably too powerful for us to control. This name could be used to unseat us, and that would be bad for the nation. Their preferred solution: a gag order on one word, the name of Jesus. “In order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name.” You can read all about it in Acts chapter four. Good patriots, once again, for the sake of the nation, these leaders had to silence Jesus.

The conflict between the world and the name of Jesus has reached a feverish pitch once again. There is a national interest involved in today’s conflict as well. Many of the leaders of our nation seem to think that it is in the best interest of the United States to limit what has traditionally been understood as the freedom of religion, especially as exercised by Christians.

Soon you too may be asked, “What name do you confess.” What was once beyond imagination now consumes much energy from many believers. Will this be the generation that is told to no longer speak to anyone in the name of Jesus? Will we be persecuted for our faith? Will the law threaten us? Will other religions “take over” our country?

I do not stand before you to frighten you. I stand here, that by the power of the Word of God you may be liberated from fear, to prepare you for the fight that seems inevitable. The dark clouds of persecution, massing on the horizon cannot stand against the name of Jesus. He has promised that His Church will prevail. He will protect His people. Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What the rulers and elders of Israel did not count on, could not control, were unable even to comprehend was the power of the name. The name of Jesus works in and through His people. Peter and John answered the threat against the name of Jesus, by saying, “We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.” So also, by the same Spirit, today you declare that you cannot but speak the name of Jesus. The Church is secure, but your neighbors are not. Some have never heard the name of Jesus, some don’t think they need it and some are sworn against it. They are all lame. They need the name, desperately.

We might take the long view. “Persecution comes and goes,” we might say, “so let’s just soldier on.” But I am suggesting to you today that it would be beneficial, for the sake of our neighbor to examine, for a few moments, the specific strategy that satan has thrown up, at this time, against the name of Jesus. One of his favorite tactics is to substitute the false for the real.

I. The world offers many names to follow.

A. In the name of the people. For example, one of the powerful names in our culture is the name of the people. A democracy grants power to the people, and that is most recognizable in the power of the vote. We do not object so far. Where the name of the people is clashing with the name of Jesus is with respect to the Office of the Ministry. If the power of the people is wielded in such a way that the Pastor serves at the whim of the people the name of Jesus will suffer. In today's world many congregations have developed the attitude that the Pastor should tell them only what they want to hear. The fact that the Pastor must speak law and Gospel under the authority of the name of Jesus may be lost, in the minds of many, to the name of the people

B. In the name of science. For some, the name of science has become the ultimate authority. "Scientism," so-called, is the doctrine which asserts that a materialistic science, excluding the supernatural, is the sole method for gaining reliable knowledge for life. Conflict with the name of Jesus is inevitable, not only for those involved in the sciences, but for every Christian. Scientism may be solely responsible for a recent phenomenon within the Church, whereby the faith is separated into an emotional category of life. The believer who falls sway to the name of science as the absolute authority, may seek to justify his belief by relegating it to a separate, private part of life so as to avoid conflict with science. In the LCMS this is particularly evident in the controversy over the teaching of evolution.

C. In the name of the law. Faithful Christians now find themselves in the peculiar position of opposing some of the laws of the land. What if the law says that abortion is a basic human right? What if the law says that homosexual behavior must be accepted and is subject to the rights of marriage? What if the law says that people have the right to die at a moment of their choosing? We have already heard from at least one judge, determining a religious rights case, that in the name of the law we must give up some of the tenets of our faith. Does the fact that it is legal make it right? How do we react to this challenge to the name of Jesus?

D. In the name of god. A pesky problem of fairly recent origin is how to react to men and women executing violent acts in the name of god. Terrorism has shaped how many people view religion in general. The concept of using violent means to achieve religious ends is not new, but the number of adherents willing to participate in the practice has increased, as has its visibility in the public eye. Distinguishing the name of Jesus from the name Allah is not as easy as it may sound. This is especially so due to the fact that many Christians, perhaps frustrated by loss of earthly power, have concluded that if violence works for them it can also work for us. If satan can incite significant numbers of Christians to exercise such savagery, the name of Jesus will be sullied to the degree that a clear message of the Gospel cannot be sounded. The people of God are called to live holy lives so that the world will see our good works and glorify the name of Jesus.

E. Ordered them not to speak in His name. We are not the first Christians to witness such an aggressive attack on the name of Jesus. We are not the first to have suffered for bearing His name. From the earliest days the Church has listened to the voice of the martyrs, “How long, O Lord, how long?” The leaders of the Church of Israel ordered Peter and John not to speak to anyone in the name of Jesus. But even under the most explicit prohibition the name of Jesus thrives. The laws of the first century were incapable of stamping out the name of Jesus. The laws of the twenty-first century will prove equally inept. How can this be? How can a name survive such insurmountable odds? And how, centuries later, does this name provide you with the confidence to live the life of faith in such a way that the name of Jesus can be known among and through member congregations of the Montana District? Let’s take a look at how much God has invested in the name of Jesus.

II. Our confession is that Jesus is the only saving name.

A. (Mt 1:21). She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

The name of Jesus is intimately connected to the salvation God provides from the sinful condition.

B. (Ac 10:42–43). And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The entire Old Testament is about the name of Jesus, as the means, through faith, by which sins are forgiven.

C. (Ac 2:38). And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The name of Jesus calls people out of sin through repentance. The name of Jesus baptizes people into life through forgiveness.

D. (1 Co 6:11). And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

We were all condemned to death through our various sin. But the name of Jesus works justification, in which our sin is washed away and we are reborn as the children of God.

E. (Jn 20:30–31). Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The entire New Testament is a testament to the name of Jesus so that life may come to those who believe.

F. (Lk 24:46–47). and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

In the name of Jesus the Church moves out to all nations to proclaim the name of Jesus.

G. (Ac 15:25–26). it has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the beginning the proclamation of the name of Jesus has included some risk. God has always, and will always supply men willing to risk their lives for that name.

H. (Col 3:17). And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The people God do more than speak the name with their lips, they live the name with their lives.

I. (Php 2:9–11). Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Do not fear little flock. The name of Jesus is powerful. Because there is no other name, under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved, it will be proclaimed until the end. And in the end every knee shall bow at the high name of Jesus.

III. God has blessed the Montana District with many gifts with which to proclaim that name.

This confidence, in the name, gives us cause to rejoice and celebrate the gifts which God has bestowed upon us. Chiefly are we bound to praise Him for the gift of His Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, and great joy. We praise Him also for the gift of His Holy Spirit, through whom we ever receive the gifts of Word and Sacrament.

And when I think about the Montana District I am thankful, and I invite you to thank Him as well for the faithfulness He has bestowed on His people here. I want to direct your attention to specific groups. Please forgive me if I have left someone out.

A. Faithful congregations. During the last three years the Montana District has received three new congregations, River of Life, Laurel; Emmaus Lutheran Mission, Big Timber and Livingston; and Living Water, Dillon. Together we are 70 congregations confessing the name. But numbers are not most significant. What I call you to give thanks for is the faithfulness of the congregations you represent. Their dedication to the Word of God and to the Confessions of the Lutheran Church is a blessing to me personally, to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and to the world.

B. Faithful schools. We are blessed by God to have six day schools in the District, as well as 16 preschools. In these schools dedicated men and women daily teach

the name of Jesus to little children. Some of those children will have no other opportunity to hear the name of Jesus except, perhaps, as used in vain. Our schools are a precious gift and we should care for them as such. I urge congregations not to separate the work of school and Church, but to seek new ways to support schools as a mission to proclaim Jesus, first to our own members and then to non-members who will also submit to the Word of God.

C. Faithful members and leaders. Look around you in this room. Here gathered are leaders of congregations from across the Montana District. Some of you have known each other for years. Some are new acquaintances. I give thanks that this convention is a time when the faithful leaders of our congregations can join together for consolation, commiseration, and joy. Thank you for your service to the Church, and please make it a point to meet every other delegate while you are here.

D. Faithful Pastors. And now we turn to my Pastors, to your Pastors, men who have dedicated their lives to the name of Jesus. I know, intellectually, that not a single one of them is perfect. Yet to me they are perfect, they are perfectly qualified for where and to whom God has called them. And they sacrifice their time, their energy, and even their families so that the name can be proclaimed. I know that, by all statistics they could be paid way more in almost every other district of the Synod. Still they serve, and for that I am very, very thankful.

E. Faithful Teachers. In my view the unsung heroes of the battle for the name of Jesus are the teachers of our schools. These men and women are in the trenches every day. They see and hear good things as children grow in the name of Jesus. They also see awful things as they experience the lives of so many children that are not cared for as they should be. They strive to bring the name of Jesus into every subject that they teach, because that is why they are there. And they are not compensated the way they should be. But they are faithful, and they are passionate about putting the name of Jesus into little ears.

F. Faithful Youth workers. If teachers are unsung, our youth workers are unknown. There are only two of them. Working with the young people of our congregations is a tough job. The groups are constantly changing as one class moves in, and another moves out. The pressures on our young people are unfathomable for most of us. Our youth workers seek to direct these young people to the name of Jesus. He is the great burden bearer.

G. Faithful leaders. I have been blessed by the support, and you have been blessed by the leadership that God has granted to this District. These dedicated men and women are faithful, to a fault, to the Scriptures and Confessions, taking their cue first from the Word of God and not from the dictates of corporate America. I am thankful for the past and current:

1. Vice Presidents- Pastor Chris Tabbert, Pastor Howard Schreibeis
2. Circuit Visitors- Pastors Ray Larson, Matt Nelson, Steve Schlund, Charlie Lehmann, Dan Jacobs, John Sias.
3. Board of Directors- Pastors Christ Tabbert, Howard Schreibeis, Mark Schultz, David Warner, Principal David Topp, Crow Buck, Frank Delgado, Mark Scott, Jerry Roseleip
4. Committees- Members of the Missions Evangelism, Human Care Stewardship, Indian Ministry, Campus Education and the youth committees.
5. Office Staff- Treasurer, Steve Hildenburg; Administrative Assistant Betty Bagley

These people understand that the work of the Synod is not to accomplish the proclamation of the Gospel, but to assist the congregations of the Synod, to fulfill their calling to make the name known.

IV. The congregations of the Montana District proclaim the name within its unique context. Let's take a few minutes to examine how God is at work in the unique context of the Montana District to make the name of Jesus known. Here a few observations about our work together.

A. Very small congregations. Sixty percent of our congregations have fewer than 50 people in Church on Sunday. Eighty two percent have fewer than 100 average attendance. The total average attendance in Montana District congregations is 52 people. Those numbers mean that our congregations are very, very small. Some of my colleagues on the Council of Presidents question the viability of such small congregations and such a small District. There are those who label smallness as a weakness. I prefer to think of it as a strength of our context. For the most part our congregations are family and community oriented. We are connected with the people around us. In these close relationships we have ample opportunity to speak and live the name of Jesus.

I realize that many of you feel like you are living under the threat of closing your doors. That fear will have a negative impact on your testimony, and it is a burden you should not bear. One of the purposes of a Synod is to bring to bear the gifts of the strong in favor of the weak. The Montana District is committed to keeping the doors of all of our congregations open. We believe our message is the Gospel in its truth and purity. If we leave a community, we leave those people without access to the Good News.

B. Predominantly multi-parish. Sixty percent of our congregations are in multi-parish relationships, (dual and triple parishes.) Again, many would consider this statistic an indication of weakness, that is, we cannot support our Pastor without joining into groups that splinter his time. On the other hand multi-parish relationships can be used to strengthen bonds between fellow believers. I encourage those of you in such relationships to work hard at loving your brothers and sisters in your fellow congregations.

C. Isolated. The average distance to the next closest LCMS congregation in the Montana District is 27.5 miles. This is a significant number because it reveals, even though it is an average number, that most of our congregations are quite isolated. That is to say that most people are not going to drive 30 miles to attend church. This reinforces the previous point that we must work hard to keep our congregations open. People will not drive to the next closest LCMS congregation.

So allow me to submit a method to the principle of keeping congregations open. In order to do that, we must begin to research innovative solutions to smallness and isolation. I have already mentioned, as one option multi-parish relationships. I think the number of such congregations is going to increase. Let me suggest also that your Pastor may have to retain another job to supplement his income. Thirdly, we may also bring technology to bear as they have been doing in Wolf Point, Plentywood and Glasgow for years. I am trying to create some space for you to rethink how things have always been done. The way it has been is not necessarily the way it must be. It is OK if your Pastor serves one or two other congregations. It is OK if he has another job. It is OK if you hear the Word from your Pastor via the internet every once in a while. On the other hand, there are some bridges that we will not cross. We will not use laymen as Pastors. That is contrary to the Scriptures and the Confessions. We will not treat Pastors as hirelings. And we will not compromise the Word in favor of gaining more people.

D. Confessional. This brings me to my favorite characteristic of the Montana District. I have found you, Pastor and people, to be confessional people. By that I mean you are committed to speaking and living, both as individuals and as congregations, the Word of God and the confessions of the Lutheran Church. You might expect that to go without saying, but in today's world it is not so. This unique aspect of service in Montana cannot be over-emphasized. The power and wisdom of God's Word will carry us through, and yes, will be the allure that grows the Church in the future. Furthermore, as confessional people we have a solid foundation from which to proclaim the name. As I often say, I believe that the Montana District has a lot to say to the LCMS, and to the world.

E. Adventurous. The apostle Paul has written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Co 2:6-9). In other words, our tiny minds cannot capture what God is up to next. We cannot put Him into a box of our own design. He will do what His Word says He will do, but that still leaves Him a great deal of creative space. As His people we receive that as a gift and trust our Heavenly Father for a safe ride through life. This is an adventure. That is another thing I have noticed about Montana District congregations. You are up for the adventure of the life of faith. Bold, innovative, yet Scriptural and godly methods do not phase you. You are willing to become all things to all people so that by all means the name of Jesus may be proclaimed.

Conclusion

God is at work. Despite the threats of this world the name of Jesus will be proclaimed and will be heard. After Peter and John were told not to speak the name of Jesus they went straight to their congregation and prayed, as follows:

“Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, ‘Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed’”. For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.” (Ac 4:23–31).

God grant it in our day also by the name of Jesus. Amen.

S.D.G.

Terry Forke

6-23-15

Resolutions of the Montana District Convention 2015

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Action</u>
1-01	To Address the Fear of Decline of Church Membership	Adopted as Amended
1-02	To Encourage the Identification of Church Planting Opportunities within the Montana District	Adopted
1-03	To Establish a Task Force to Study Opportunities for Chaplaincies for Montana Detention Centers	Adopted as Amended
1-04	To Provide Ongoing Support for International Missionaries Called from the Montana District	Adopted
2-01	To Call the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to Repentance	NOT Adopted
2-02	To Request the Reorganization of Campus and Youth Ministries Into a Single Committee	Adopted as Amended

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Action</u>
2-03	To Encourage the Establishment of American Heritage Girls Chapters	Adopted
3-01	To Allow for the Review of Acquittals	Adopted
3-02	To Adopt a New Method for Dealing With Charges of Heresy Apart From The Existing Expulsion Process	Adopted as Amended
3-03	To Clearly Confess the Lutheran Doctrine of Marriage through Our Practice	NOT Adopted
3-04	To Encourage People and Pastors of the Montana District to Stand Firmly Against the Culture of Death and Support Those Voices That Actively Challenge It	Adopted
3-05	To Support Pastors and Laity In Firmly Confessing the Biblical Understanding of Human Sexuality	Adopted as Amended

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Action</u>
3-06	To Assist Congregations in Their Privilege to Welcome All People Regardless of What Sexual Identity They Profess	Adopted
4-01	To Call for Members with Confessions Contrary to that of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions to Leave the Synodical Union Voluntarily	Adopted as Amended
4-02	To Temporarily Redirect a Portion Of the Monies Given by the Montana District to the LCMS in Support of Our Two LCMS Seminaries	NOT Adopted
4-03	To Uphold Our Stated Confession of the Office of the Ministry	Adopted
5-01	To Amend the Montana District Bylaws Regarding the Title Circuit Visitor	Adopted
5-02	To Approve the Revised Montana District Articles of Incorporation	Adopted

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Action</u>
5-03	Out of True Love for the Reverend Matthew L. Becker to Call on Him to Repent and Recant	Adopted as Amended
5-04	To Call Upon the Synodical President to Invoke the Procedure for Expulsion from Synod the Rev. Paul Linnemann, District President of the Northwest District	Adopted as Amended
5-05	To Emphasize Effective Ecclesiastical Supervision in the Districts of the Synod	Adopted as Amended
5-06	To Commend for Study the Report on Worship	Adopted as Amended
Delegate-01	To Memorialize Synod at the 2016 Convention to Direct the Synodical Board of Directors to Address Budget Redistribution and Synodical Organization in Order to Better Fund Our Seminaries, The Global Seminary Initiative, and Missionaries	Adopted as Amended

Resolution #1-01

Title: To Address the Fear of Decline of Church Membership

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, there may be a tendency within the church to react out of fear of decline and that fear is a poor reason to change policy and practice; and

Whereas, a reaction to fear of decline may cause people to move away from the sound doctrine of the Holy Scriptures; and

Whereas, Jesus Christ builds the Holy Christian Church (Matthew 16:15-18); and

Whereas, the LCMS and the Montana District have the greatest strength by relying solely on the Word of God rather than the human emotion of fear; therefore be it

Resolved, that we will not veer from our present course of relying solely on the inerrant Word of God; and be it further

Resolved, that the Montana District will consider no actions that will compromise our sound doctrine; and be it finally

Resolved, that fear of decline has no power over us, we continue to rejoice in our commitment to law and gospel and petition the Synod to continue proclaiming the Gospel in its truth and purity

Resolution #1-02

Title: To Encourage the Identification of Church Planting Opportunities within the Montana District

Action: Adopted

Whereas; the Lord of the harvest has called us to make disciples of all nations of the world and has graciously promised to stay with us to accomplish this task; and

Whereas, new church planting has proved to be an effective means for reaching unchurched persons with the Gospel; and

Whereas, successful church plants have taken place in the Kalispell, Thompson Falls, and Livingston-Big timber areas of the Montana District; and

Whereas, there are still many other areas of the District that are ripe for the harvest; and

Whereas, it is of utmost importance to proclaim the Gospel in its truth and purity, therefore be it

Resolved, that the congregations and circuits of the Montana District be encouraged to identify opportunities for church planting to the District Missions Committee, and be it finally

Resolved, that the District Missions Committee be directed to provide encouragement and resources for congregations and circuits to do this task.

Resolution #1-03

Title: To Establish a Task Force to Study Opportunities for Chaplaincies for Montana Detention Centers

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas; there may be opportunities for chaplaincy care at the Montana state penitentiaries and other detention centers; and

Whereas, there continues to be possible connections with congregations in the vicinities of these institutions; and

Whereas, it is a goal to serve these populations as best we can with the Gospel, Word and Sacrament, counseling and encouragement; and

Whereas, relationships between local congregations and institutions may require study and conversations; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District of the LCMS direct the District President to appoint a task force with the members of the task force being approved by the Board of Directors (BOD) to study the matter of establishing chaplaincies connected to parishes in proximity to various detention centers; and be it further

Resolved, that this task force report to the BOD and President as soon as possible as to the possibilities, alternatives and recommendations outlining possible arrangements, costs and ministry work with a goal of establishing such chaplaincies if deemed feasible and sustainable; and be it finally

Resolved, that the District BOD set aside financial support to pay for the cost of this task force.

Resolution #1-04

Title: To Provide Ongoing Support for International Missionaries Called from the Montana District

Action: Adopted

Whereas, Jesus said, “all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20); and

Whereas, God continues to open doors for mission work throughout the world; and

Whereas, the Office of International Mission has instituted a program for personalized missionary support called “Together in Mission” (TIM); and

Whereas, this program enables us to show those whom we send that we are sharing in their ministry, thereby encouraging them in their task; and

Whereas, TIM provides an opportunity for us to work together as we strive to fulfill the great commission; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District assembled in convention in Billings, MT, on June 22-25, direct the Board of Directors to create a line item in the Montana District Budget, the amount to be determined at their discretion, to support missionaries who received calls out of the Montana District to their respective international callings; and be it further

Resolved, that these funds be equally distributed using TIM; and be it further

Resolved, that should one of the international missionaries complete their service, that the remaining amount assigned for that missionary be equally distributed to those missionaries that remain; and be it finally

Resolved, that this support be ongoing until a future Montana District Convention determine otherwise.

Resolution #2-01

Title: To call the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to Repentance

Action: NOT Adopted

Whereas; Article III, Paragraph 1 of the constitution of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod states that an objective of the Synod is to “Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3-6; I Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy”; and

Whereas; the Synod’s dispute resolution process has proven ineffective at addressing heresy in the Synod and

Whereas; Article III, Paragraph 2 of The Constitution of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod states that an objective of the Synod is to “Extend that Gospel witness into all the world”; and

Whereas; the Synod’s current International Mission Funding Model requires missionaries to raise 75% of the first year’s budget themselves; and

Whereas; Article III, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod states that an objective of the Synod is to “Recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth”; and

Whereas; our seminaries receive less than three percent of their funding from Synod’s budget; and

Whereas; the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is no longer serving three of the purposes for which it was founded; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod calls the Council of Presidents and the entire Synod to repentance for failure to uphold the objectives of Synod as stated in Article III.

Resolution #2-02

Title: To Request the Reorganization of Campus and Youth Ministries Into a Single Committee

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, campus ministries are currently part of the Education Committee and need more attention; and

Whereas, large numbers of young people leave the church between junior high and college age; and

Whereas, the Youth Committee of the Montana District is focused primarily on the annual summer camp held near Red Lodge; and

Whereas, Lutheran campus ministry has great value in outreach to the unchurched as well as shaping future Lutheran leaders; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District in convention requests the Montana District Board of Directors to reorganize the Youth Committee and Parish Education/ Campus Ministry Committee into the Youth/ Campus Ministries Committee and the Parish Education Committee; and be it finally

Resolved, that if the committee is reorganized the Montana District in convention encourage the Youth/Campus Ministries Committee to evaluate effective outreach and retention strategies for youth from confirmation through college age in coordination with LCMS-U.

Resolution #2-03

Title: To Encourage the Establishment of American Heritage Girls Chapters

Action: Adopted

Whereas; in recent years groups such as the Girl Scouts have become increasingly prone toward philosophies that oppose Biblical views of sexual identity and the sanctity of life; and

Whereas, clubs and associations for girls may indeed serve to further their healthy, God-pleasing relationships with each other and their community; and

Whereas, President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison and American Heritage Girls (AHG) Executive Director Patti Garibay signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) May 14, 2014; and

Whereas, this memorandum states: “the American Heritage Girls program is centered on the same principles, and partners with the local LCMS church to assist and support girls through spiritual development, life skill enhancement, development of teamwork, social skills, citizenship, girl leadership skills while building confidence and discovering their identity in Christ.” and

Whereas, it was further resolved: “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and American Heritage Girls will work together, within the guidelines of the policies and regulations of each organization to establish and nurture American Heritage Girls troops within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod so that girls may be provided with life skills, leadership development opportunities, service programs, and character building opportunities.” Therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District in convention encourage local congregations to investigate, and if feasible and fitting for local ministry, establish a chapter of the American Heritage Girls, to the glory of God.

Resolution #3-01

Title: To Allow for the Review of Acquittals

Action: Adopted

Whereas, bylaws 2.14 through 2.15 are ineffective at expelling open and manifest heretics from the roster of the Synod; and

Whereas, this has caused great scandal for the church, its member congregations and their members, and the Synodical union; and

Whereas, the Synod in convention is the supreme authority in our union; be it therefore

Resolved, that the Montana District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod memorialize the 2016 Synodical convention to amend the Synod's constitution as follows:

Proposed wording:

Article XIII expulsion from the Synod

1. Members who act contrary to the confession laid down in Article II and to the conditions of membership laid down in Article VI or persist in an offensive conduct, shall, after previous futile admonition, be expelled from the Synod.
2. Expulsion shall be executed only after following such procedure as shall be set forth in the bylaws of the Synod.
3. After the procedure set forth in the bylaws of Synod has been followed, the Praesidium of the Synod shall review those cases in which one accused of the teaching of false doctrine was not expelled from Synod. If they find legitimate cause for expulsion, the Praesidium of the Synod should bring the case before the Synod for adjudication at its next regular convention.
4. If the member expelled is a pastor or teacher in a congregation of the Synod, such congregation, unless it has already done so, is held to depose him from

office and to deal with him in accordance with the Word of God, notwithstanding an appeal. if it persistently refuses to do so, the respective District is to deal with it. If all negotiations and admonitions fail of their purpose, such congregation forfeits its membership in the Synod.

5. Because of their expulsion those so expelled forfeit their membership and all share in the property of the Synod. The latter holds good also with respect to those who for any reason themselves sever their connection with the Synod.

Resolution #3-02

Title: To Adopt a New Method for Dealing With Charges of Heresy Apart from the Existing Expulsion Process

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, the first objective of the Synod reads: “the Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall— 1. Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy;” (article III of the Synodical Handbook, emphasis added); and

Whereas, the current method of dealing with charges of heresy is through the existing expulsion process; and,

Whereas, disputes over behavior or other difficulties in personal relationships are of a nature other than those regarding charges of heresy; and,

Whereas, the Synodical union has had difficulty maintaining this first objective as a result of the inability of the existing expulsion process to handle charges of heresy; therefore be it

Resolved, that the President of the Synod appoint a task force comprised of one professor from each seminary, two District Presidents, one parish pastor, one commissioned minister, and three laypersons (one of whom shall be an attorney) to develop bylaws for dealing with heresy to be presented to the 2019 Synodical Convention; and be it further

Resolved, that all charges of heresy be brought directly to the Praesidium of the synod for a determination as to whether such charges have grounds to be considered under the bylaws for dealing with heresy; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Montana District meeting in convention memorialize the Synod in convention in 2016 to make this resolution its own.

Resolution #3-03

Title: To Clearly Confess the Lutheran Doctrine of Marriage Through Our Practice

Action: NOT Adopted

Whereas, the church “is the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is purely preached and the Hold Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel” (AC VII:1); and

Whereas, Luther writes, “Since marriage has existed from the beginning of the world and is still found among unbelievers, there is no reason why it should be called a sacrament of the new law and of the Church alone. The marriages of the ancients were no less sacred than are ours, nor are those of unbelievers less true marriages than those of believers, and yet they are not regarded as sacraments.” (AE 36:92-93); and

Whereas, Lutherans have historically understood marriage as a civil estate; and

Whereas, the definition of marriage which is legally binding in the State of Montana is contrary to the word of God (Matthew 19:4-6); therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District hold to the civil nature of marriage as taught in scripture and confessed in our symbols; and be it further

Resolved, that the Montana District encourage its member congregations and pastors to refrain from acting as agents of the State by solemnizing marriages (i.e. executing the legal documents to register the marriage with the state); and be it further

Resolved, that the Montana District encourage its member congregations and pastors to continue to bless marriages by having ceremonies and prayers which proclaim that God delights to bring one man and one woman together to establish a lifelong union which reflects Jesus Christ and His bride, the church; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Montana District memorialize that 2016 Convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to do the same.

Resolution #3-04

Title: To Encourage People and Pastors of the Montana District to Stand Firmly Against the Culture of Death and Support Those Voices That Actively Challenge It

Action: Adopted

Whereas, the culture of this world has in many ways answered the struggles of life with the choice of death: either by abortion, euthanasia or assisted suicide; and

Whereas, such an answer is in direct conflict with the simple command of God, “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13); and

Whereas, the Montana District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod have consistently and clearly spoken for life and proclaimed the theology of the cross, “not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us.” Romans 5:3-5; therefore be it

Resolved, that laity and pastors be encouraged to speak publicly when issues of life are being debated and stand visibly when public demonstrations for life are being held in our communities, state, and nation (such as life chain, synodical life conference, and 40 days for life) and to promote those organizations that unify God’s people for the cause of life (such as Lutherans for Life).

RESOLUTION #3-05

Title: To Support Pastors and Laity in Firmly Confessing the Biblical Understanding of Human Sexuality

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, the Synod in convention has repeatedly confessed the Biblical teaching that marriage between one man and one woman is a blessed estate, and that sexual activity between any persons outside of Biblical marriage, including those of the same sex, is contrary to the word of God; and

Whereas, there is increasing pressure from our culture to accept LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, questioning), etc. lifestyles as legitimate and God pleasing; and

Whereas, we are called as the Church to stand contra mundum (against the world) as the Apostle states, “They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error” (1 John 4:5-6); therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod memorialized the 2016 Convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to direct the office of the President to see to the production of resources for church and civil realms using various media to assist pastors and laity in communicating in the spirit of truth and grace what scripture teaches regarding sexual aberrations.

Resolution #3-06

Title: To Assist Congregations in Their Privilege to Welcome All People Regardless of What Sexual Identity They Profess

Action: Adopted

Whereas, our Lord tells us in Matthew 9 that He has come not for the righteous but sinners; and

Whereas, James 2:10 reminds us that, “Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it”; and

Whereas, pastors and laity struggle to relate as Christians to their families and communities and also to welcome people to the public assembly of the church whom they perceive to be in open, manifest, and unrepentant sin of a sexual nature; and

Whereas, all people are always invited and welcome to hear the proclamation of Law and Gospel in the public assembly of the church; therefore be it

Resolved, that the congregations of the Montana District be urged to study God’s word and consider how they might share the grace and truth of God’s Word with all who pass through their doors; and be it further

Resolved, that the Montana District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod memorialize the 2016 convention of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to direct the Office of the President to give guidance to congregations that they might remain steadfast in speaking the truth in love by preaching the Gospel to all and that God’s people might be protected from giving the appearance of condoning the public sins of those they desire to serve.

Resolution #4-01

Title: To Call for Members with Confessions Contrary to that of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions to Leave the Synodical Union Voluntarily

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, the organizing principle for a Synodical Union is its confession of faith (LCMS Constitution, Article II); and

Whereas, the first objective of the Synod reads: “The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall—1. Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3-6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy;” (Article III); and

Whereas, the Synodical union’s provision for dissent is not intended to provide a means of repeated attacks on the confession of the synod; and

Whereas, there are members of the Synodical union who continue to hold confessions contrary to that of the scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, (e.g. abortion, evolution as the origin of man, homosexual behavior, women’s ordination) despite consistent rejection at synodical conventions for those positions; and

Whereas, holding a confession contrary to that of the synodical union while remaining in membership thereof creates unnecessary conflict and stress within the union and raises questions with regard to the integrity of the dissenter, therefore, be it

Resolved, that for the sake of the unity of this confession and for their own integrity, the Montana District respectfully requests that those members who hold a confession contrary to that of the LCMS voluntarily resign their membership in the Synodical union; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Montana District in convention memorialize the LCMS in convention in 2016, to adopt this resolution as its own.

RESOLUTION #4-02

Title: To Temporarily Redirect a Portion of the Monies Given By The Montana District to The LCMS in Support of Our Two LCMS

Action: NOT Adopted

Whereas, the Montana District President, the Synodical President, and numerous other pastors and teachers in our Synod have encouraged the Synod to give serious consideration to the reasons that our Synodical union exists, specifically to do together the work that few congregations could do separately (i.e., send missionaries, train pastors, publish doctrinally sound teaching materials, and exercising ecclesiastical supervision); and

Whereas, in the past triennium Synod congregations have seen a renewed zeal in the sending of missionaries and the publishing of useful and doctrinally sound teaching materials; and

Whereas, in contrast, regarding the matter of training pastors, one of the most important tasks of Synodical union's work together, the cost to educate men who earnestly desire to serve their Lord as pastors, continues to increase; and

Whereas, reports of levels of student indebtedness continue to show a disturbing trend; and

Whereas, our two seminaries must continue to employ advancement officers and the presidents of the institutions must spend considerable time and effort in fundraising in order to meet their budgets; and

Whereas, the unrestricted subsidy that the Synod was "able to supply" according to the November 2014 edition of the "Pastoral Education" insert from the November 2014 issue of the "Reporter" was only \$643,729 for the fiscal year ending June 30th, 2014, while during the same period, \$1,669,025.36 was given by the join seminary fund; and

Whereas, the Board of Directors of the Montana District is elected by the District Convention, and "Shall be accountable to the Delegate Convention of the district

for the discharge of its duties: (Bylaw 2.2.6.2.B), and “Shall be vested with the general management and supervision of the district’s business and legal affairs” (Bylaw 2.2.6.2.A); and

Whereas, the Montana District has faithfully supported the mission of the Synodical union in training pastors and yet we are gravely concerned that another triennium has come and gone and nothing has changes with support of our seminaries from the Synod’s budget; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District in convention instruct the District Board of Directors to change our “Synodical budget pledge” for fiscal year 2016 and following from twenty-five percent (25%; \$143, 750 projected for 2015) of the total “Congregation giving pledge to Synod” (from adopted budget 1-12-2015) to twenty percent (20%; \$136.563 projected) and to redirect that five percent (5%; \$7,188) equally to the undesignate3d funds of our two Synodical seminaries; and be it further

Resolved, that this redirected funding from the Montana District is to be restored to the Synod if and when the Synod has taken steps to provide unrestricted funds for at least twenty-five percent (25%) of each of the seminaries operating budgets; and be it further

Resolved, that this action be reported by the Montana District President through the District Secretary to the Synodical Treasurer, Secretary, and Council of Presidents; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Montana District in convention memorialize the synod in convention to adopt as a mission and ministry emphasis the work of adequately funding the seminaries and assisting men to become pastors while not increasing their indebtedness from undergraduate studies during the next triennium.

Resolution #4-03

Title: To Uphold Our Stated Confession of the Office of the Ministry

Action: Adopted

Whereas, we are called to speak the truth in love; and

Whereas, practices of individual congregations have the potential to affect our entire Synodical Union and others in fellowship with us around the world; and

Whereas, the Augsburg Confession, one of our Synodical Union's subscribed confessions, states in Article XIV (14) under the title "ecclesiastical order" that "our churches teach that nobody should preach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments unless he is regularly called;" and

Whereas, the Synodical Union has always recognized the theological truth and ability for a non-ordained person to administer baptism in an emergency; and

Whereas, there is a need to see that pastors in the pulpit are properly prepared; and

Whereas, there are currently means to be regularly called for public preaching and administering the sacraments, such as Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Program and training from our Synodical seminaries; therefore, be it

Resolved, that congregations with lay men (non-ordained men) not under a supervisor in a field education or vicarage program who are preparing sermons and preaching publicly and/or administering the sacraments be instructed by their District President, for the sake of the Gospel and our agreed confession, to stop no later than October 1, 2016; and be it further

Resolved, that all Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod District training programs preparing lay men to preach publicly and administer the sacraments in the church, be brought to an end no later than October 1, 2016; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Montana District in convention memorialize the synod in convention in 2016 to make this resolution its own.

Resolution #5-01

**Title: To Amend the Montana District Bylaws Regarding the Title
Circuit Visitor**

Action: Adopted

Whereas; the 2013 Synodical Convention adopted Resolution 7-02a, changing the title of Circuit Counselors to Circuit Visitors; and

Whereas, resolution 7-02a was subsequently ratified by the required 75% of member congregations of the Synodical Union; and

Whereas, the Bylaws of the Montana District must be congruent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Bylaws of the Montana District be amended, in every place where the term Circuit Counselor occurs to be changed to Circuit Visitor.

Resolution #5-02

Title: To Approve the Revised Montana District Articles of Incorporation

Action: Adopted

Whereas; the Commission on Constitutional Matters of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod highly encouraged Districts of the Synod to revise their Articles of Incorporation to be congruent with a model developed by the commission; and

Whereas, the Board of Directors of the Montana District revised the Articles of Incorporation of the Montana District and submitted them to the Commission; and

Whereas, the Commission has notified the Board of Directors of the Montana District that the revised Articles of Incorporation have been approved; and

Whereas, the revised Articles of Incorporation for the Montana District are available for review by the delegates in Appendix A of the Montana District 2015 convention workbook; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District, in convention, approve the revised Articles of Incorporation of the Montana District.

Resolution #5-03

Title: Out of True Love for the Reverend Matthew L. Becker to Call on Him to Repent and Recant

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, The Reverend Dr. Matthew L. Becker has been found by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations to hold positions contrary to the Holy Scriptures as confessed by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod with regard to the nature of the Holy Scriptures, ordination, and evolution as the origin of man, and

Whereas, Rev. Dr. Matthew L. Becker’s continued public espousal of positions contrary to those of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod is harmful to members of the Synodical Union as well as to his own faith, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District meeting in convention in 2015 out of true love for the Reverend Matthew L. Becker call on him to repent and recant his positions on these issues or to resign his membership from the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, and be it finally

Resolved, that the Montana District in convention memorialize the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in convention in 2016, to adopt this resolution as its own.

Resolution #5-04

Title: To Call Upon the Synodical President to Invoke the Procedure for Expulsion from Synod the Rev. Paul Linnemann, District President of the Northwest District

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, section 2.15 of the Synodical Bylaws of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod provides that the Synodical President has authority and the duty to act as provided specifically in subsection 2.15.4, and

Whereas, the current Bylaws of the LCMS do not provide for the removal of a member from office apart from expulsion from Synod, and

Whereas, Rev. Dr. Matthew L. Becker, a member of the Northwest District, continues to publicly teach false doctrine concerning Scripture, creation, ordination, and the fall into sin, and

Whereas, the Rev. Paul Linnemann, Northwest District President has failed to suspend the Rev. Dr. Becker in accordance with Bylaw 2.14.4, and

Whereas, the Rev. Paul Linnemann, Northwest District President, in tolerating false teaching, is complicit in the violation of Synod's Constitution Article II and persists in giving offense to the faithful, constituting grounds for expulsion under Article XIII; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District meeting in convention in 2015 calls upon the Synodical President to invoke the procedure in section 2.15 for the expulsion from the synod of the Rev. Paul Linnemann, District President of the Northwest District, and be it finally

Resolved, that the Montana District meeting in convention in 2015 memorializes the 2016 Synod Convention to direct the Synodical President to take this action if it has not already been taken.

Resolution #5-05

Title: To Emphasize Effective Ecclesiastical Supervision in the Districts of the Synod

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas “[t]he District Presidents shall...especially exercise supervision over the doctrine, life, and administration of office of the ordained and commissioned ministers of their District and acquaint themselves with the religious conditions of the congregations of the District” (LCMS Const. Art. XII 7); and

Whereas such supervision is the primary means by which the key elements of the first objective of Synod, namely, to “[c]onserve and promote the unity of the true faith...and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism, and heresy” (Const. Art. II.1) are carried out; and

Whereas the Montana District President’s report notes a concern for “effectively dealing with those publicly holding a position that is contrary to that of Synod;” and

Whereas several District Conventions have already forwarded overtures expressing grave concern with how our “united defense against schism, sectarianism, and heresy” is being effected in at least some of the Synod’s Districts through their respective District Presidents; and

Whereas the Bylaws emphasize in setting out the purpose for regular Council of Presidents meetings “opportunity for the President of the Synod to advise and counsel his representatives in the Regions and Districts and for the Regional Vice-Presidents and District Presidents in turn to give counsel to the President” and “to provide opportunity for the Presidents of the Districts and the Praesidium of the Synod to counsel with one another on matters regarding the doctrine and administration of the Synod, its Regions, and its Districts, and to edify and support one another in the work they share.” (Bylaw 3.10.1.2) and further, that the President “shall meet regularly with the Council of Presidents and, as deemed necessary, with individual District Presidents, or small groups of District Presidents, to see to it that their administration is in accordance with the

Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. He shall receive regular reports on this subject from the District Presidents.” (Bylaw 3.3.1.2[b]); and

Whereas the Bylaws: (1) suggest a program agenda of the Council of Presidents having principally to do with their representation of the President of Synod as ecclesiastical supervisors (Bylaw 3.3.1.1.1[b]) and (2) place the responsibility for the development of said program agenda principally with the President of Synod, whose duty it is to see that the District Presidents act in accordance with Synod’s Constitution, etc., and who shall “conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the Districts of Synod (Const. Art. XI B 2–3); and

Whereas it has become, contrariwise, the practice of the Council of Presidents to set its own program agenda; and

Whereas while the 2013 Synod Convention attempted to advance the concerns of “unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of Synod” by directing the Council of Presidents to engage in a Koinonia process on three topics of controversy in the Synod, with progress publicly reported (2013 Res 3–01A), no report of substantive progress in the direction of unity and practice has yet been provided; be it therefore

Resolved that the Montana District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod memorialize the 2016 convention of the same to direct that this triennium’s program agenda for the Council of Presidents, that is, the entire part of its meetings not devoted to various Bylaw-mandated administrative tasks and deliberations, be organized by the President of Synod and not by the Council of Presidents or a subcommittee thereof; and be it further

Resolved likewise to memorialize Synod that the program agenda devised by the President for the Council shall be, in whole and in part, concerned with advancing the “unity of doctrine and practice in all the Districts of Synod” and with counsel regarding the “doctrine and administration of Synod,” with opportunity for input and mutual counsel by other members of the Council, but within the program agenda set forth by the President under this directive of the Synod; and be it finally

Resolved likewise to memorialize Synod that the President of Synod shall through Synod's official publications deliver pertinent, detailed, timely, and regular reports of the Council's progress in working toward "unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of Synod."

Resolution #5-06

Title: To Commend for Study the Report on Worship

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, Resolution 5-03 of the 2012 Montana District Convention resolved to “direct the District President and Vice-Presidents to review the worship materials and practices in use in the congregations of our District”; and

Whereas, the same 2012 resolution also resolved “that a report of findings and recommendations be forthcoming from the Office of the President within this triennium, so that member congregations understand worship practices in the District and how to evaluate worship practices in light of the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions, so as to grow together in unity of doctrine and harmony of practice”; and

Whereas, a third resolve of said resolution is “that the Montana District Pastors’ Conference be directed to study the President’s report as a conference topic”; and

Whereas, the President’s report, the results of a worship survey, arguments for maintaining traditions, questions to be asked before changes in liturgy are made, challenges to a true understanding of worship, and Luther on the order of the mass are all included in the 2015 Montana District Convention Workbook; therefore be it

Resolved, that the 2015 Montana District Convention commend the worship related materials in the 2015 Montana District Workbook to the Montana District Pastors’ Conference, and be it further

Resolved, that the 2015 Montana District in convention commend the President’s report and the other worship related materials in the 2015 Convention Workbook to the congregations of the Montana District as useful for growth together in unity of doctrine and harmony of practice, and be it finally

Resolved, that the 2015 Montana District Convention memorialize the LCMS at its 2016 Convention to commend these documents to the entire Synod as useful for growth together in unity of doctrine and harmony of practice.

Resolution Delegate–01

Title: To Memorialize Synod at the 2016 Convention to Direct the Synodical Board of Directors to Address Budget Redistribution and Synodical Organization in Order to Better Fund Our Seminaries, The Global Seminary Initiative, and Missionaries

Action: Adopted as Amended

Whereas, one objective for forming a synod is to accomplish what congregations were not able to do on their own such as the training of men to be pastors and missionaries; and

Whereas, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod allocates funds on many meetings (such as the council of presidents) which could be spent on the support of our seminaries and missionaries who are actually involved in conducting word and sacrament ministry to people who God desires to hear the Gospel and come to salvation; and

Whereas, the synod budget has been stymied over the past two decades due to restricted giving which has severely limited the synodical funding of our seminaries and missionaries; and

Whereas, financially supporting our seminaries and missionaries would be more Christ-centered and God-pleasing than funding “think tank” endeavors; and
Whereas, our seminaries and missionaries should not raise funds to carry out the work which the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has called them to do; therefore be it

Resolved, that the 2015 Montana District in convention petition the Synodical 2016 Convention to direct the Synodical Board of Directors to investigate and present changes to the synod’s budget and organization to the 2019 Synodical Convention in order to redirect monies to our seminaries, the Global Seminary Initiative, and missionaries beginning 2020.

MONTANA STATISTICAL REPORT-June to December 2012

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Fremer, Noah	Ordained & Installed 7/22/12 as Sole Pastor of Zion, Power & St John, Fairfield
Lehmann, Charles	Installed 7/8/12 as Sole Pastor of Holy Trinity, Belgrade & Grace, Three Forks

Changes Within the District

Nicolaus, M.J.	Emeritus 6/30/12
New Congregation	Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church received into the LCMS at the Montana District Convention, June 2012

Transferred to Other Districts

Carver, David	Transferred 10/30/12 to Grace Evangelical, San Mateo CA
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COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Schumacher, Rachel	Commissioned and Installed 8/12/12 at Trinity, Kalispell
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Changes Within the District

Holste, Ken	Emeritus 8/15/12
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MONTANA STATISTICAL REPORT-2013

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Eckert, Andrew	Installed as Sole Pastor of Our Savior, Stevensville
Flannery, Michael	Installed 8/4/13 as Sole Pastor of St Peter, Whitefish
Kaelberer, Erich	Installed 6/2/13 as Sole Pastor of Shepherd of the Valley, Thompson Falls
Richard, Matt	Colloquy 8/23/13
Schopp, Chad	Ordained & Installed as Missionary-at-Large for Livingston/Big Timber on 7/14/13 at Mount Olive, Billings

Changes Within the District

Everson, Gale	Emeritus 1/1/13
Reinke, Jay	Removed 9/18/13

Transferred to Other Districts

Renfro, David	Transferred 8/13/13 to Trinity, Cedar Rapids, IA
Richard, Matt	Transferred 11/1/13 to North Dakota District
Maxwell, James	Transferred 2/4/13 to Rock of Ages, CO Springs, CO

Called to Glory

Berninghaus, Gilbert	Called to Glory 11/10/13
Ondov, Daniel	Called to Glory 4/22/13

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Lastusky, Myrna	Transferred from 4/22/13 from South Wisconsin
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Changes Within the District

Elliott, Suzanne	Resigned 3/12/13
Lehmann, Jennifer	Resigned 3/14/13
Ritter, Shannon	Resigned 4/20/12
Schwartz, Heidi	Resigned 2/1/13

MONTANA STATISTICAL REPORT-2014

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Frahm, John	Installed 9/27/14 as Sole Pastor of Concordia, Williston, ND
Toombs, Jason	Installed at First, Helena on 9/7/14

Changes Within the District

Received into Membership	River of Life, Laurel on 2/23/14
Wareham, Christopher	Emeritus 7/1/14
Wiegert, Ray	Emeritus 9/1/14
Zagel, Bruce	Emeritus 12/31/14

Emeritus Transfer

Beale, Les	Emeritus transfer 5/14/14 from Pacific Southwest
Donnan, John Michael	Emeritus transfer 10/31/14 from NW District

Transferred to Other Districts

Baikie, Marcus	Transferred 3/3/14 to Our Savior, Cheyenne WY
Hageman, James	Transferred 9/15/14 to Our Redeemer, Overland, MO
Herman, Justin	Transferred 8/1/14 to Univeristy Lutheran Church, Lafayette, IN
Richholt, Timothy	Transferred 2/1/14 to Zion, Wetaskiwin, AB, Canada
Schneider, Don	Emeritus transfer 8/13/14 to CNH
Thompson, Richard	Emeritus transfer 3/1/14 to South Wisconsin

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Duncan, Katherine	Transferred 6/24/14 form Ohio District
Eberhard, Susan	Commissioned & Installed on 9/7/14, First Lutheran, Missoula
Lustila, Jack	Tranferred 9/1/14 from Florida-Georgia District

Transferred to Other Districts

Baikie, Tiffany	Transferred 3/1/14 to Wyoming District
Mlnarik, Katie	Transferred 7/23/14 to South Dakota District

MONTANA STATISTICAL REPORT-January to May 2015

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Klug, Timothy	Transferred as Non-Candidate from
Lucido, Greg	Installed 2/22/15 as Sole Pastor at Our Savior, Glendive, and Grace, Fallon.
Mavis, James	Installed 1/25/15, Sole Pastor of St Mark, Butte And Zion, Whitehall
Preus, Rolf	Installed 2/15/15 as Sole Pastor of St. John, Fairview and Trinity, Sidney

Changes Within the District

Kaelberer, Erich	Emeritus 4/13/15
Koss, James	Emeritus 4/20/15
Warner, David	Deployed Missionary to Spain 2/15/15
Stinnett, Eric	Deployed Missionary to Ethiopia 3/22/15
Preus, David	Deployed Missionary to Dominican Republic 3/22/15
Thompson, Doug	Deployed Missionary Ghana 3/15/15

Transferred to Other Districts

Schleicher, Jason	Transferred to Salem Lutheran Church, Tomball, TX
Schleicher, Amy	Transferred to Texas District

Called to Glory

Wackler, Myron	Called to Glory 2/8/15
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COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Kosche, Kenneth	Emeritus transfer from South Wisconsin District
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CONGREGATIONAL ANNIVERSARIES

In 2013

60	Faith, Boulder
125	St Mark, Butte
100	Zion, Chinook
40	Mt Calvary, Colstrip
65	First, Ft Benton
55	Faith, Glasgow
75	Our Savior, Glendive
100	St. John, Laurel
100	St. John, Libby
100	St. Paul, Park City
100	Zion, Power
35	Shepherd of the Valley, Salmon
85	Trinity, Sidney
55	Zion, Whitehall
20	Our Redeemer, Worden

In 2014

55	Mount Olive, Billings
95	Trinity, Billings
85	First, Bozeman
85	Concordia, Forsyth
95	Grace, Hamilton
95	St Paul, Havre
60	Trinity, Stanford
60	Our Savior, Stevensville
55	St. Peter, Whitefish

In 2015

60	Holy Cross, Eureka
60	St. John, Fairfield
85	St. John, Fairview
95	Trinity, Harlowton
120	Trinity, Kalispell
15	Circle of Life, Lame Deer
115	First, Missoula
100	St. Paul, Ronan
55	Trinity, Superior
85	Trinity, Wolf Point

2015 ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Dennis Bauer	33	Larry Miller	32
William Bliese	7	Robert Mitchell	20
Eric Christiansen	24	Matt Nelson	11
Mark Christensen	4	Mark Nicolaus	45
Matt Christensen	7	Gerald Paul	15
Al Ebel	26	Kevin Peterson	16
Mark Cutler	27	David Preus	4
Andrew Eckert	49	Rolf Preus	36
Gale Everson	37	Arlo Pullmann	28
Arnold Fischer	58	Darold Reiner	43
Michael Flannery	39	Daniel Rinderknecht	32
Terry Forke	32	Vern Sandersfeld	32
John Frahm	17	Herbert Schiefelbein	63
Noah Fremer	3	Steven Schlund	32
Tim Gordish	17	Chad Schopp	2
Sam Grayl	11	Howard Schreibeis	30
Mark Grunst	34	Mark Schultz	32
Wade Harr	22	Paul Shupe	4
David Hasselbrook	8	John Sias	6
Erik Iverson	9	Ken Stensrud	7
Daniel Jacobs	29	Kent Stenzel	42
Martin Kaarre	34	Eric Stinnett	11
Erich Kaelberer	4	Christopher Tabbert	17
Klug, Timothy	25	Steven Thomas	16
James Koss	19	Doug Thompson	18
Raymond Larson	40	Park Timber	4
Robert Lane	17	John Vallie	15
Carl Lehmann	20	Christopher Wareham	35
Charles Lehmann	8	David Warner	11
Bruce Linderman	39	Robert Weishoff	54
Greg Lucido	15	Ryan Wendt	11
Blake Marshall	14	Kyle Whaley	5
James Mavis	22	Raymond Wiegert	56
Jason Menagh	28	Ken Zoeller	16

2012 Commissioned Ministers–Active Anniversaries

Amanda Adams	3
Rebecca Braaten	33
Joann Cutler	30
Sue Eberhard	1
Lynne Erger	39
JeAnne Faris	5
Andrea Heiliger	3
Tanya Hensel	1
Julie Keeley	1
Becky Kern	33
Thomas Kosche	13
Debbie Lee	7
Ted Loomans	20
Jack Lustila	28
Kristin McCauley	13
Laura McCoy	14
Suzanne Rasmussen	40
Rachel Schumacher	3
Cindy Speed	3
Lisa Steinbrenner	11
Richard Thomas	33
David Topp	16

Circuit Visitor Triennial Reports 2012-2015

Circuit Name: Divide
Visitor: Charles Lehmann
 (9/24/14-Present, this report is inclusive only of those dates)

Congregational Visits:
 Regular: 0
 Special Issues: 1 (Call Meeting)
 Phone counsel: 7
 School visits: 0

Conferences:
 Winkel: 3
 Circuit (Quad, South/East): 1
 District Pastors: 1
 Synodical: 0

Meetings:
 Circuit Counselors: 2
 Forums: 1
 Convocations: 0
 Other: 1

Vacancies and Calls:
 Vacancies during triennium: 1
 Current vacancies: 2
 Meetings regarding calls: 1
 Installation/Ordinations: 1

Circuit Name: Central Circuit
Visitor: Rev. Steven Schlund

Congregational Visits:
 Regular: 0
 Special Issues: 6
 Phone counsel: 26
 School visits: 0

Conferences:
 Winkel: 20
 Circuit (Quad, South/East): 3
 District Pastors: 3
 Synodical: 1

Meetings:
 Circuit Counselors: 6
 Forums: 1
 Convocations: 0
 Other: 16

Vacancies and Calls:
 Vacancies during triennium: 1
 Current vacancies: 1
 Meetings regarding calls: 0
 Installation/Ordinations: 1

Circuit Visitor Triennial Reports 2012-2015

Circuit Name: Flathead
Visitor: Rev. Matt Nelson

Congregational Visits:

Regular	0
Special Issues	6-8
Phone counsel	20-25
School visits	0

Conferences:

Winkel	21
Circuit (Quad, South/East)	3
District Pastors	3
Synodical	0

Meetings:

Circuit Counselors	9
Forums	3
Convocations	0
Other	0

Vacancies and Calls:

Vacancies during triennium	1
Current vacancies	0
Meetings regarding calls	5
Installation/Ordinations	0

Circuit Name: Western
Visitor: Rev. Raymond Larson

Congregational Visits:

Regular	5
Special Issues	1
Phone counsel	9
School visits	0

Conferences:

Winkel	11
Circuit (Quad, South/East)	3
District Pastors	3
Synodical	0

Meetings:

Circuit Counselors	9
Forums	2
Convocations	0
Other	8

Vacancies and Calls:

Vacancies during triennium	– 4
Current vacancies	– 3
Meetings regarding calls	– 12
Installation/Ordinations	– 4

Among the topics discussed at our Winkels these three years were several thesis of Walther’s Church and Ministry, and various topics from the Synod’s publication, “This We Believe,” as well as discussions as to how each of our congregations uses the various parts of the liturgy in divine worship. Due to several personal and District business trips I was required to take since the last Convention, I had to miss eight of our 20 Winkels. In my absence, Pastors Vernon Sandersfeld and David Renfro each chaired some of those eight Winkels

Circuit Visitor Triennial Reports

2012-2015

Circuit Name: Eastern

Visitor: Rev. John Sias

I was appointed on 9/2/14 to fill the position vacated by Rev. James Hageman. These statistics cover from 9/2/14 to 2/29/15.

Congregational Visits:

Regular	0
Special Issues	0
Phone counsel	~6
School visits	0

Conferences:

Winkel	3
<p>Winkels have been planned monthly, except where conferences, forums, etc., have provided an alterative time for the pastors to caucus. We have been studying the lessons for the week and progressively through the Formula of Concord, Epitome. Travel time in a large circuit limits the time we have together. We have been working on increasing the amount of study we are able to do together.</p>	
Circuit (Quad, South/East)	0
District Pastors (Oct 2014)	1
Synodical	0

Meetings:

Circuit Counselors (Oct 2014; Jan 2014)	2
Forums	1
<p>The Jan 2015 forum included a presentation on the Constitution of the LCMS by Pr. Sias, entitled, "What every congregation should know about its participation in the Synodical Union." At least one delegate attended from each parish.</p>	
Convocations	0
Other	

Vacancies and Calls:

Vacancies during triennium
 Concordia, Williston (Pr. Nicolaus); Concordia, Forsyth/Trinity, Hysham (Pr. Sias); Trinity, Sidney/St. John, Fairview (Pr. Nicolaus); Our Savior's, Glendive/Grace, Fallon (Pr. Schreibeis).

Current vacancies
 None, finally—thanks be to God!

Meetings regarding calls
 President Forke handled these meetings.

Installation/Ordinations 2
 Pr. Sias installed Rev Rolf Preus in Sidney on 2/15/15; Pr. Schreibeis (2nd VP) installed Rev. Greg Lucido in Glendive on 2/22/15.

Convention Study

During the Convention, in four sessions, over 5 hours were dedicated to the study of the Lutheran Confessions. The delegates listened as Rev. Chris Tabbert read selections each day. In the first session he read the Preface to the Book of Concord. In three succeeding sessions he read the entirety of the Smalcald Articles. Following each daily reading, the delegates formed small groups and discussed these important confessions by answering a list of prepared questions. A special emphasis was placed on what it means to make a public confession, and the effect of such a public confession on the proclamation of the Gospel made by our congregations and their members.

AMICUS CHRISTI

Steve Hildenburg

Steve Hildenburg was born in Colorado and grew up in Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas. He was raised in the Presbyterian faith as a child with his older brother and younger sister. He attended San Antonio College after high school, married his first wife Wanda and had a son Christopher just before his Viet Nam draft lottery number was drawn and his life plans changed. He immediately enlisted in the Air Force and served in Texas, Viet Nam, Thailand, and Colorado for 9 years before returning to college to finish his degree. His first marriage ended in divorce due to his overseas military service.

Steve met his present wife Sallie while serving in Colorado and was married at Trinity Lutheran Church, Billings, MT in June of 1979. A year later he decided to finish his college degree in Business at the University of Northern Colorado. Upon graduating he re-entered the Air Force as a commissioned officer where he served as a Missile Launch Officer, evaluator, and trainer at Ellsworth AFB, Rapid City South Dakota. He completed his Master Degree in Business Management (MBA) from the University of South Dakota while at Ellsworth. He later served 3 years in Germany as a Command and Control officer and Airfield Manager. He returned to Rapid City in 1990 and served as the Ellsworth AFB Airfield Manager before being assigned to South Korea as a Plans and Program officer. He finished his career in 1996 after a 23 year career. Steve and Sallie relocated to Berthoud Colorado where he worked for Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) and then became a Home Repair and Remodeling contractor. After 5 years of running his business they returned to Sallie's home town of Billings to build a retirement home and retire.

Through the years since his marriage to Sallie, Steve has served many LCMS congregations in the capacity of Evangelism committee, Call committees, Board of Lay Ministry, Board of Education Chairman, Board of Trustees and Properties, Congregation Treasurer, Vice Chairman, and Congregation Chairman. After finishing their retirement home, Steve worked for the Small Business Administration as an on call Disaster Claims Verification officer and worked the hurricane Katrina and Ike disasters in Louisiana and Texas. He worked for the Cleary Building Corporation as a Regional Manager until he decided to try retirement again in 2009. When the Montana District LCMS Treasurer job became vacant in 2009, Sallie thought this would be a great fit for a semi want-to-be retired person. She was right. Steve entered the position as Treasurer and began the process of reviewing and managing the District finances to provide the Board of Directors and the congregations of the District with meaningful and accurate District financial information and reports. While working at the District office Steve remodeled the conference room, managed the upgrade of building repairs and building

maintenance. Steve also found the time to serve as a committee member and Chairman of the LCMS Business Managers Planning Committee that presented annual 3 day training and fellowship conferences for all LCMS business managers, treasurers, and national and international Concordia Universities.

Steve and Sallie have again decided to retire and spend their winters at their beach home in Surfside Beach, Texas to be around their grandchildren and spend their summers here in Billings Montana. Steve has agreed to continue to serve the Montana District as a financial consultant until the new District Treasurer and Book Keeper get comfortable with the position.

Thank you, Steve for your many years as a “Servant of Christ”, and for your help and expertise as The Montana District, LCMS, Treasurer and Business Manager.

AMICUS CHRISTI

Rev. Raymond Larson

Already in junior high school, Rev. Larson became aware of a desire to tell others of the salvation Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross won for all people. He was very active in the Walther League and enjoyed their activities and the many events which presented biblical truths. However, completing his high school requirements early and at a young age it seemed useful to enlist in the Marine Corps on his 17th birthday and go on to college later. While he was in the Marine Corps he married Rosanne Amundsen and they began their family. For both of them work in the church became an important part of their lives.

After terms as Elder, Stewardship Chairman, First Vice-President, Sunday school teacher, and youth group leader in congregations in Hawaii and California, and as Protestant Lay Leader in both units he served with in Viet Nam, Rev. Larson determined he should leave the Marine Corps and study for pastoral ministry. He completed all seminary academic requirements at Concordia Theological Seminary in August of 1974. Rev. Larson was installed as Pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church, Boyceville, Wisconsin 8 September of the same year.

During almost six years at St. John's in Boyceville, Rev. Larson served as LLL Circuit Counselor, Circuit youth group leader, and three years as Circuit Counselor for Circuit 18. In 1979 he also began a mission congregation in Menomonie, Wisconsin which became Faith Lutheran Church. While at Boyceville Rev. Larson joined the National Guard. Guard leadership appointed him as Chaplain for 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment. Rev. Larson found this position to offer frequent opportunities to speak the Gospel message to soldiers who would otherwise not have heard that message. Upon his completion of the Army Chaplain Basic course the LCMS Armed Forces Commission Called Rev. Larson to be an active duty LCMS chaplain.

His active duty chaplain assignments began in 1981 at Fort Riley, Kansas and included over the next twenty years tours with units in Germany and Fort Irwin, California. For four of his years in the chaplaincy he was an Instructor at the Army Chaplains School. In his last active duty assignment as Deputy 100th ASG Command Chaplain Rev. Larson was responsible for all chaplain and chapel activities in all of the U.S. Army posts in the State of Bavaria in Germany and was able to encourage more biblical preaching by other Protestant chaplains.

In the summer of 2000 while still in the 100th ASG Rev. Larson received the Call to be Pastor of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Stevensville, Montana. After a combined 35 years of military service he was Installed at Our Savior on the 25th of February. Rev. Larson served as Pastor of Our Savior until his retirement in October of 2007. During the years as Pastor there, and continuing on until today, he has been part of the work of the Montana District as: Facilitator

for District Convocation, Human Care Committee Chairman, PALS facilitator, Missions and Evangelism Committee Chairman, Ablaze Task Force Chairman, Circuit Counselor/Visitor of the Western Circuit, Bible study leader for LWML annual retreats, Prison Ministry Retreat Bible study leader, Delegate to 2004 Synodical Convention, and as a member of the Pastor's Conference Planning Committee. In all of these positions Rev. Larson has always tried to encourage congregations, members, leaders, and pastors to look for ways to spread the message of Jesus Christ into their families and communities.

Throughout all of these years and experiences Rev. Larson has enjoyed the full and enthusiastic and loving support of Rosanne, his wife of 53 years. Not satisfied to be a waiting wife she has found ways to help others in the many military communities they have lived in and still to be active in the congregations and worship groups that Rev. Larson has led. Rev. Larson and Rosanne have six children, 17 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

CALLED TO GLORY

Rev. Daniel Ondov was born on August 6, 1923 to Michael and Bertha Ondov in Minneapolis, MN. He was called to glory on April 22, 2013. His funeral was held at Mount Olive Church, Billings on April 27, 2013 with burial at Yellowstone Valley Memorial Park.

He graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and began his 42 years of parish ministry. He was ordained at St. Johns, Rudyard in 1948 and then served parishes in Missoula; Scottsbluff, NE; Omaha, NE; Lincoln, NE; and retired after serving Mount Olive in 1990. Rev. Ondov served on many boards and committees within the District Synod.

Rev. Ondov was preceded in death by his daughter, Beth and his son, Jonathan.

He is survived by his wife, Lorraine; a son, David and a daughter, Rachel in addition to 4 grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.

Rev. Gilbert Berninghaus was born on January 30, 1934 to Rudolph and Meta Berninghaus in West Bend, IA. He was called to glory on November 10, 2013. His funeral was held at Peace Lutheran Church in Harlan, IA.

Rev. Berninghaus was a Lay Minister from 1968-1994 and served in Omaha, NE; Jeffrey City, WY; Christ Church for the Deaf, Great Falls; Zion/St John in Power/Fairfield; and then graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1994. After that he served Zion/St John as their Pastor until he retired in 1997.

He is survived by his wife, Gayle; daughters Gwen, Giselle, Gloria; and his son, Garth.

Rev. Myron Wackler was born on May 9, 1924 to Edmond and Frances Wackler in Howard Lake, MN. He was called to glory on February 8, 2015. His funeral was held May 8, 2015 at First Lutheran, Missoula.

Rev. Wackler graduated from Concordia College in Springfield, IL and went on to spend over 50 years serving as a pastor in San Jose IL; Thomasboro, IL; Our Redeemer/St Peter, Columbia Falls/Whitefish; Eugene, OR; Our Savior, Glendive; St John, Deer Lodge; and Trinity, Superior. He retired in December, 1992.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Geraldine and son, Jonathan. He is survived by sons, Daniel; Joe; Tom; Tim; and daughter, Jane. Rev. Wackler was blessed with 15 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.