

MONTANA DISTRICT
of the
LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD



2018 CONVENTION WORKBOOK
June 11-14, 2018

Montana District Office
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The 2018 Montana District Convention Workbook

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MONTANA DISTRICT
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

God's peace be with you! You have been chosen to serve as a delegate to the 34th Convention of the Montana District of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. This is a high honor and responsibility. You will be expected to be well prepared to deal with the issues that come before the convention. This Workbook will assist you in that endeavor. Please study its contents carefully.

I would like to encourage you to make an extra effort to study the reports contained in this workbook. Many of them call for specific action. Each of you has been assigned to a convention floor committee. The committees are also assigned to look at the reports to see if some action is called for during the convention.

The convention will also be a time of study and encouragement in the Word of God. Our theme is from John 1:17 "The truth came through Jesus Christ." During the course of the convention we will read and discuss the Gospel of John, as a way of exploring this theme.

There will also be time for worship. Pastor Tabbert will be our chaplain and the Circuit Visitors will be preaching.

This year our meetings will take place at Trinity School at 2802 Belvedere in Billings. I want to thank the staff and members of Trinity for their gracious hospitality.

We want your stay in Billings to be pleasant. There will be a number of people to help. Our convention manager Ruth Kosche, my administrative assistant, will be your first source for all answers. Our District Treasurer, Susan Loomans will also be available to help with financial issues. Together they are willing and able to help with questions about convention or lodging matters. Please call the office, (406-259-2908) if you have questions prior to the convention.

I keep you and the entire convention in my prayers; that God will bless us with His Word, as He uses us to proclaim, "The truth came through Jesus Christ."

In His Service,

Terry Forke
President- Montana District LCMS
Pastor Trinity Lutheran Church, Harlowton

34th Montana District Convention Schedule

Billings, Montana

June 11-14, 2018

“The Truth Came through Jesus Christ”

(John 1:17)

Monday- June 11

- 7:30 am Committee Chairmen and Secretaries Orientation
- 8:00 Registration
- 9:00 Opening Devotions (In Committees)
- 9:15 Floor Committees meet (District President visits)
- 3:45 Welcome
- 3:50 Gospel of John (Session # 1)
- 4:45 Introduce Staff and Support crew
- 5:00 Closing prayer
- 7:00 pm Opening Worship-Trinity Lutheran Church-Rev. Nour, Preacher

Tuesday- June 12

- 8:00 Opening Devotions (Pastor Preus)
- 8:15 Registration and Credentials Committee
- 8:20 Gospel of John (Session # 2)
- 9:10 Orientation- Parliamentary procedures
- 9:20 Convention Schedule
- 9:30 Report of Synodical President
- 10:15 District President’s Report and Address
- 10:35 District Treasurer’s report

10:45 Introduction of all nominees to all offices
10:55 Election Committee
11:05 Welcome of new members (Ordained, Commissioned, Congregations)
11:15 Report of Synodical President
12:00 Closing Prayer
12:05 Noon Recess
1:15 Opening Devotions (Pastor Jacobs)
1:30 Gospel of John (Session # 3)
2:20 Concordia Plan Services
2:35 Break
3:05 Committee # 1 - Mission
4:05 Committee # 2 - Specialized Ministries
5:00 Closing Prayer
6:30 Banquet - Amicus Christi Award

Wednesday June 13

8:00 Opening Devotions (Pastor Thomas)
8:15 Gospel of John (Session # 4)
9:05 Committee # 3 - Human Care
10:00 Break
10:15 Committee # 4 - Education
11:00 Committee # 5 - Administration
11:45 Closing prayer
11:50 Committees meet

12:00 Noon recess

1:15 Opening Devotions (Pastor Larson)

1:30 Gospel of John (Session # 5)

2:20 Committee # 1 - Mission

2:50 Break

3:05 Committee # 2 - Specialized Ministries

3:30 Committee # 3 - Human Care

4:00 Committee # 4 - Education

4:30 Committee # 5 - Administration

5:00 Closing Prayer

5:05 Advisory delegates meet with Secretary to elect
Synodical Convention Delegate (Con. XII. B, Bylaw 3.1.3.1)

Thursday June 14

8:00 Opening Devotions (Pastor Lehmann)

8:15 Gospel of John (Session # 6)

9:15 Committees as needed

10:00 Break

10:15 Committees as needed

10:55 Registration and Credentials Committee - final report

11:00 Closing Worship- Memorial, Installations (Pastor Schlund)

First Vice-President Tabbert Chaplain

Second Vice-President Schreibeis Reader

2018 District Convention Committee Assignments

"The Truth Came through Jesus Christ"

(John 1:17)

Floor Committee # 1 Mission

Chair - Ken Zoeller *Secretary* - Russ Dewell

Pastor: Kevin Bueltmann, Wade Harr, Dan Jacobs, Mark Grunst, Chad Schopp, Park Timber

Commissioned: Andrea Heiliger, Joann Cutler

Lay: Heidi Donnelly, Steve Hildenburg, Bobbi Schenderline, Roger Casteel, Bruce Wegner, John Mandler, Dan Kern, Arnold Wirth, Jim Normark

Floor Committee # 2 Specialized Ministries

Chair - Gerald Paul *Secretary* - Vern Sandersfeld

Pastor: Mark Cutler, Erik Iverson, Rolf Preus, Rick Schneider, Marcus Williams, Kyle Winter, Adam Salinas

Commissioned: Cameron Heiliger, Roger Van Anandel

Lay: Kendall Hartman, Keith Fletcher, Fred Lewis, Brad Persinger, Randy Avery, Lorraine Roach, Chris Wallace, Dennis Wegner, Eric Corneliusen, Russ Lundgren

BOD: Mark Scott

Floor Committee # 3 Human Care

Chair - Samuel Grayl *Secretary* - Dan Keinath

Pastor: Dennis Bauer, Ray Larson, James Mavis, Arlo Pullmann, Paul Shupe, John Vallie, Bruce Linderman

Commissioned: Tanya Hensel, Judy Van Anandel

Lay: Larry Peabody, Lee Miller, Frank Allen, Dean Johnson, Justin Jares, Terry Westerfield, Bill Melhorn, Bill Beck, Stephen Schultz

BOD: Jerry Roseleip

Floor Committee # 4 Education

Chair - Matt Nelson *Secretary* - Willis McCall

Pastor: David Johnson, Bob Lane, Larry Miller, Dan Rinderknecht, Bob Weishoff, Steve Thomas,

Commissioned: Ken Kosche,

Lay: John Suchen, Benjamin Worm, Lance Pluid, Neil Textor, Terry Druyvestein, Larry Brown, Gary Donahue, Ruth Torgerson

BOD: Pat Lewis

Floor Committee # 5 Administration

Chair - Kevin Peterson *Secretary* - Andrew Eckert

Pastor: Michael Flannery, Charles Lehmann, Bob Mitchell, Ken Stensrud

Commissioned: Ted Loomans

Lay: Keith Myhre, Joe Peters, Thomas Halverson, Steve Jarvis, Alicyn Chapman, Amy Schneider, Ron Jung, David Chepulis, Dick Ellwein

BOD: Keith Meier

Nominations and Elections Committee

Chair - Blake Marshall

Pastor: Kyle Whaley, James Koss

Commissioned: Rebecca Braaten

Lay: Roy Arves, Kale Bauer, Joel Olinghouse

Credentials/Registration Committee

Chair - Greg Lucido

Pastor: Mark Nicolaus

Technical

Chair - Pastor Wendt

Assistants - Tom Kosche

Trinity School and Church Support Crew

Rick Thomas, Jonathan Boll

Convention Musician - Dr. Kenneth Kosche

Office

Convention Manager - Ruth Kosche

Treasurer - Susan Loomans

Assistants - Andrea Heiliger, Laura McCoy

VOTING DELEGATES

<u>Congregation Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Pastoral Delegate</u>	<u>Lay Delegate</u>
Redeemer	Anaconda	Jim Pierce Pastor Elect (07/2018)	Gary Donahue
Holy Trinity/ Grace	Belgrade Three Forks	Charles Lehman	Heidi Donnelly
Emmaus Lutheran Mission	Big Timber/ Livingston	Chad Schopp	
Christ the King	Billings	Ryan Wendt	Kendall Hartman
Hope Our Redeemer	Billings Worden	Robert Lane	Larry Peabody
Mt. Olive/ St. Paul	Billings/ Roundup	Mark Grunst	John Suchen
Our Savior	Billings	Ken Zoeller	Keith Myhre
Trinity	Billings	Daniel Keinath	Steve Hildenburg
Faith	Boulder	Vacant – Non-Calling	Keith Fletcher
First	Bozeman	Samuel Grayl	Stephen Schultz
St. John St. Paul	Belfry Bridger	Paul Shupe	Dennis Wegner
St. Mark Zion	Butte Whitehall	James Mavis	Ron Jung
Zion St. Paul	Chinook Havre	Marcus Williams	Lee Miller
Mt Calvary Concordia Trinity	Colstrip Forsyth Hysham	Blake Marshall	Benjamin Worm
Our Redeemer	Columbia Falls	Matthew Nelson	Joe Peters
Faith Holy Cross	Condon Seeley Lake	Erik Iverson	Jim Normark
Church at Creston	Creston	Kyle Winter	
Crow Lutheran Ministry	Crow Agency	Daniel Jacobs	Bobbie Schenderline

Congregation Name	City	Pastoral Delegate	Lay Delegate
Our Savior	Denton	Served by	Ruth Torgerson
St. Paul	Lewistown	Vicar Mark Wiegert	
Trinity	Stanford		
St. John	Deer Lodge	Robert Mitchell	Fred Lewis
Living Water	Dillon	Kenneth Stensrud	Frank Allen
Shepherd of the Hills	Ennis		
Holy Cross	Eureka	Christopher Tabbert	Lance Pluid
St. John	Fairview	Rolf Preus	Tom Halvorson
Trinity	Sidney		
Grace	Fallon	Greg Lucido	Dean Johnson
Our Savior	Glendive		
First	Fort Benton	Wade Harr	Roger Casteel
Faith	Glasgow	John Vallie	Brad Persinger
Trinity	Plentywood		
Trinity	Wolf Point		
Peace/Christ	Great Falls	Steven Schlund (Excused)	Arnold Wirth
Trinity	Great Falls	Gerald Paul	Roy Arves
Zion	Fairfield		
St. John	Power		
Grace	Hamilton	Vern Sandersfeld	Steve Jarvis
Redeemer	Hardin	Willis McCall	Dave Chepulis
Trinity	Harlowton	Terry Forke	Earl Wegner
First	Helena	Larry Miller	Dick Ellwein
Trinity	Kalispell	Mark Cutler	Randy Avery
Circle of Life	Lame Deer	Dennis Bauer	Russel Lundgren
St. John	Laurel	Arlo Pullmann	Justin Jares
St. John	Libby	Steven Thomas	Neil Textor
Trinity	Miles City	Howard Schreibeis	Alicyn Chapman

Congregation Name	City	Pastoral Delegate	Lay Delegate
First	Missoula	David Johnson	John Mandler
Messiah	Missoula	Vacant – Calling	Chris Wallace
St. Paul	Park City	Russel Dewell	Terry Westerfield
Mt. Calvary Zion	Polson/ St. Ignatius	Kyle Whaley	Terry Druyvestein
St. Paul	Ronan	Richard Schneider	Amy Schneider
Shepherd of the Valley	Salmon, ID	Kevin Peterson	Dan Kern
Our Savior	Stevensville	Andrew Eckert	Lorraine Roach
Trinity	Superior	Vacant – Calling	Bill Melhorn
Shepherd of the Valley	Thompson Falls	Vacant – Calling	Bill Beck
St. Peter	Whitefish	Michael Flannery	Larry Brown
Concordia	Williston	Vacant – Calling	Eric Corneliusen

ADVISORY DELEGATES

Pastoral Advisory Delegates

Bueltmann, Rev. Kevin
Christensen, Rev. Matthew (Chaplain on Active Duty)
DiConti, Rev. Marc (Chaplain on Active Duty)
Klug, Rev. Timothy (Candidate)
Potter, Rev. Jeffery (Candidate)
Preus, Rev. David (Deployed Missionary)
Salinas, Rev. Adam
Rinderknecht, Rev. Daniel
Thompson, Rev. Doug (Deployed Missionary)
Timber, Rev. Park
Warner, Rev. David (Deployed Missionary)
Wiegert, Vicar Mark (Vicar)

Ordained Emeritus Advisory Delegates

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

Board of Directors Members

Rev. Terry Forke, President
Rev. Christopher Tabbert, First Vice-President
Rev. Howard Schreibeis, Second Vice-President
Rev. Mark Schultz, Secretary (Pro Tempore)
Susan Loomans, Treasurer
Rev. Ryan Wendt
Pat Lewis
Keith Meier
Jerry Roseleip
Mark Scott
Richard Thomas

Commissioned Advisory Delegates

Boll, Jennifer
Braaten, Becky
Cutler, Joann
Doucette, Rachel
Susan Eberhard
Edgar, Stephanie
Erger, Lynne
Faris, JeAnne
Hensel, Tanya
Heiliger, Andrea
Heiliger, Cameron
Holste, Ken
Hoy, Claire
Johnson, Ardith
Johnson, Melody
Kern, Becky
Kosche, Ken
Kosche, Thomas
Lee, Debbie
Loomans, Ted
McCoy, Laura
Rasmussen, Suzanne
Rehbein, Erika
Rehbein, Timothy
Renken, Alyssa
Speed, Cindy
Schreck, Jerry
Thomas, Richard
Van Andel, Judith
Van Andel, Roger
Van Luchene, Darrell
Van Luchene, Sue Zann
Wegner, Willem

MT District Nominations Committee

Rev. Blake Marshall, Chairman
Rev. James Koss
Rev. Kyle Whaley
Roy Arves
Kale Bauer
Rebecca Braaten
Joel Olinghouse

PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS

The parliamentary process is intended to enable a group to conduct its business with the least possible confusion in order that everyone in the group may understand as clearly as possible what is being decided.

The parliamentary process also protects the rights of both minority and majority within an assembly. Unless the assembly creates special rules itself, the rules given in "Robert's Rules" are followed.

In order to help delegates understand parliamentary procedure we offer these few basic rules and procedures.

1. Always address the chairman, or the presiding officer. Debate between members is not permitted. Comments and discussion are addressed to the assembly.
2. Wait until the chairman has recognized you, and granted you permission to speak. "The chair recognizes Mr./Mrs. _____ " "You have the floor."
3. Main Motions require a majority vote, and are amendable.
4. Try to learn the basic language used in parliamentary procedure. This is given below for your use:

MAIN MOTION:

I move

I move the adoption of this report

I wish to present the following resolution _____. *I move its adoption, or I move the adoption of the proposition in the report.*

COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions presented by a convention committee do not require a motion or a second. The presumption is that this has already happened since the committee has formalized, adopted and presented the resolution to the convention.

The chairman says, "This resolution (motion) is now before the Convention" places any motion or resolution on the floor for discussion. *Prior to this announcement by the chairman any discussion is out of order.*

POSTPONE INDEFINITELY

I move to postpone this matter indefinitely. In effect kills a motion.

AMEND

I move to amend the motion by inserting _____ between _____ and _____.

I move to amend by adding _____ after _____.

I move to amend by striking out _____ and inserting _____.

I move to amend by striking out the motion and substituting this motion. (Read or state substitute motion)

COMMIT OR RE-COMMIT

I move that this matter be referred to a committee of _____ to be named by _____ with instruction _____.

POSTPONE TO A SET TIME

I move that this matter be postponed to _____

I move that this matter be postponed to _____ meeting at (name time) and be made a Special Order of business. (2/3 vote is required)

PREVIOUS QUESTION

I move the previous question. (2/3 vote required)

**2018 MT District - LCMS
Convention Expense Reimbursements**

CONGREGATIONAL ANNIVERSARIES

2016		2017		2018	
120	Redeemer, Anaconda	15	Holy Trinity, Belgrade	5	Emmaus Lutheran Mission Big Timber/Livingston
100	St. John, Belfry	45	Hope, Billings		
50	Christ the King, Billings	35	Our Savior, Billings	65	Faith, Boulder
60	Our Redeemer, Columbia Falls	105	St. Paul, Bridger	130	St Mark, Butte
50	Faith, Condon	20	Crow Lutheran Ministry, Crow Agency	105	Zion, Chinook
65	Our Savior, Denton	35	Shepherd of the Hills, Ennis	45	Mt Calvary, Colstrip
85	Grace, Fallon			70	First, Ft Benton
55	Christ Lutheran for the Deaf, Great Falls	125	Trinity, Great Falls	60	Faith, Glasgow
60	Peace, Great Falls	75	Redeemer, Hardin	80	Our Savior, Glendive
110	Trinity, Miles City	130	First, Helena	105	St. John, Laurel
50	Messiah, Missoula	75	Trinity, Hysham	105	St. John, Libby
35	Mt. Calvary, Polson	100	St. Paul, Lewistown	105	St. Paul, Park City
50	Holy Cross, Seeley Lake	105	Trinity, Plentywood	105	Zion, Power
90	Grace, Three Forks	105	St. Paul, Roundup	40	Shepherd of the Valley, Salmon, ID
		70	Zion, St. Ignatius	90	Trinity, Sidney
		5	Shepherd of the Valley, Thompson Falls	60	Zion, Whitehall
				85	Concordia, Williston, ND
				25	Our Redeemer, Worden

2018 ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Dennis Bauer	36	Larry Miller	35
William Bliese	63	Robert Mitchell	23
Kevin Bueltmann	7	Matt Nelson	14
Steven Carlson	36	Mark Nicolaus	48
Matt Christensen	11	Gerald Paul	18
Eric Christiansen	27	Kevin Peterson	19
Mark Cutler	30	David Preus	7
Russell Dewell	11	Rolf Preus	39
Mark DiConti	36	Arlo Pullmann	31
John Donnan	25	Darold Reiner	46
Al Ebel	26	Daniel Rinderknecht	35
Andrew Eckert	22	Adam Salinas	8
Gale Everson	40	Vern Sandersfeld	35
Michael Flannery	42	Herbert Schiefelbein	68
Terry Forke	35	Steven Schlund	35
Sam Grayl	14	Richard Schneider	2
Mark Grunst	37	Chad Schopp	5
Wade Harr	25	Howard Schreiber	33
Edwin Iverson	43	Mark Schultz	35
Erik Iverson	12	Paul Shupe	7
Daniel Jacobs	32	Ken Stensrud	10
David Johnson	30	Kent Stenzel	45
Martin Kaarre	37	Christopher Tabbert	20
Erich Kaelberer	7	Steven Thomas	19
Daniel Keinath	9	Doug Thompson	21
Timothy Klug	28	Park Timber	7
James Koss	22	John Vallie	18
Robert Lane	20	Christopher Wareham	38
Raymond Larson	43	David Warner	14
Carl Lehmann	23	Robert Weishoff	57
Charles Lehmann	11	Ryan Wendt	14
Bruce Linderman	42	Kyle Whaley	8
Greg Lucido	18	Raymond Wiegert	59
Blake Marshall	17	Marcus Williams	1
James Mavis	25	Kyle Winter	2
Jason Menagh	31	Ken Zoeller	19

2018 Commissioned - Ministers Anniversaries

Rebecca Braaten	36
Joann Cutler	33
Susan Eberhard	3
Stephanie Edgar	7
Lynne Erger	42
JeAnne Faris	8
Andrea Heiliger	10
Cameron Heiliger	2
Tanya Hensel	4
Claire Hoy	1
Thomas Kosche	15
Debbie Lee	9
Ted Loomans	23
Laura McCoy	17
Suzanne Rasmussen	42
Erika Rehbein	4
Timothy Rehbein	4
Cindy Speed	6
Richard Thomas	36

2017 Circuit Statistics

Southern Circuit

City	Church	Baptized	Confirmed	Average Attendance
Belfry	St. John	50	47	18
Billings	Christ the King	159	114	82
	Hope (2015 Statistics)	74	67	54
	Mt Olive	571	463	160
	Our Savior	184	151	57
	Trinity	1348	1034	391
Bridger	St. Paul	73	62	20
Crow Agency	Crow Ministry	73	42	2
Hardin	Redeemer	125	100	45
Harlowton	Trinity	23	22	13
Lame Deer	Circle of Life	68	35	35
Laurel	River of Life* (2016 Statistics)	22	17	17
Laurel	St. John	543	421	117
Park City	St. Paul	107	94	40
Roundup	St. Paul	15	14	8
Worden	Our Redeemer (2015 Statistics)	31	26	14

Western Circuit

City	Church	Baptized	Confirmed	Average Attendance
Condon	Faith	20	20	16
Hamilton	Grace	383	321	121
Missoula	First	672	566	226
	Messiah	80	66	37
Salmon, ID	Shepherd of the Valley	124	102	57
Seeley Lake	Holy Cross (2015 Statistics)	62	55	30
Stevensville	Our Savior	140	135	48
Superior	Trinity	48	48	18
Thompson Falls	Shepherd	46	39	22

Eastern Circuit

City	Church	Baptized	Confirmed	Average Attendance
Colstrip	Mt. Calvary	210	157	20
Fairview	St. John (2016 Statistics)	41	37	13
Fallon	Grace	20	20	11
Forsyth	Concordia	180	148	57
Glasgow	Faith	40	32	11
Glendive	Our Savior	1018	755	115
Hysham	Trinity (2014 Statistics)	55	40	12
Miles City	Trinity	451	327	112
Plentywood	Trinity	76	62	24
Rock Springs	Trinity* (2015 Statistics)	7	6	12
Sidney	Trinity (2016 Statistics)	182	180	143
Williston, ND	Concordia	113	94	64
Wolf Point	Trinity (2011 Statistics)	29	29	14

Central Circuit

City	Church	Baptized	Confirmed	Average Attendance
Chinook	Zion	90	65	40
Denton	Our Savior	29	29	15
Fairfield	St. John	32	30	15
Ft. Benton	First (2005 Statistics)	34	34	18
Great Falls	Christ Lutheran for the Deaf	27	27	5
	Peace	160	139	71
	Trinity	419	324	84
Havre	St. Paul (2016 Statistics)	120	90	59
Lewistown	St. Paul	126	99	40
Power	Zion	95	79	25
Stanford	Trinity	36	29	20

Divide Circuit

City	Church	Baptized	Confirmed	Average Attendance
Anaconda	Redeemer	7	7	5
Belgrade	Holy Trinity	176	157	70
Big Timber/ Livingston	Emmaus Lutheran Mission	36	24	28
Boulder	Faith Lutheran	30	28	10
Bozeman	First Lutheran	553	452	232
Butte	St. Mark	171	136	50
Deer Lodge	St. John	107	97	40
Dillon	Living Water	15	10	14
Ennis	Shepherd	57	39	25
Helena	First Lutheran	693	495	222
Three Forks	Grace	102	84	8
Whitehall	Zion	80	73	28

Flathead Circuit

City	Church	Baptized	Confirmed	Average Attendance
Columbia Falls	Our Redeemer	272	217	130
Creston	The Church at Creston	295	270	170
Eureka	Holy Cross	226	166	64
Kalispell	Trinity	1174	851	326
Libby	St. John	143	131	60
Polson	Mt. Calvary	86	69	32
Ronan	St. Paul	95	89	49
St. Ignatius	Zion	51	38	28
Whitefish	St. Peter	48	46	35

TOTALS		70	13,048	10,372	4,274
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Avg. Att: 61

*Congregations now closed

MONTANA STATISTICAL REPORT -June to December 2015

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Entered the District

McCall, Willis	Installed as Sole Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Hardin, on 06/14/15
Schlund, Andrew	Ordained & Installed as Deployed Missionary to Mexico on 07/19/15
Keinath, Daniel	Installed as Assistant Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Billings, on 08/09/15

Changes Within the District

New Congregation	Living Water Lutheran Church June 2015
New Congregation	Emmaus Lutheran Mission June 2015
Gordish, Timothy	Active to Candidate status on 09/07/15
Lehmann, Carl	Non-Candidate to Emeritus status 12/2015
Sias, John	Installed as Sole Pastor of multi-point parish: Mt. Calvary, Colstrip/Concordia, Forsyth/Trinity, Hysham on 11/01/15
Iverson, Edwin	Emeritus Transfer from Pacific Northwest 09/15

Transferred to Other Districts

Schlund, Andrew	Missouri District 07/2015
Gordish, Timothy	New England District 09/07/15

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Renken, Alyssa	Commissioned & Installed as Teacher at Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Kalispell on 08/06/15
Edgar, Stephanie	Installed as Teacher at Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Billings 8/23/15
Reeves, Sonja	Commissioned & Installed as Deaconess at First Lutheran Church, Missoula on 08/30/15

Transferred to Other Districts

Duncan, Katherine	Southern Illinois on 06/25/15
Topp, David	Pilgrim Lutheran Church and School, Houston, TX on 07/10/15
Steinbrenner, Lisa	Zion Lutheran and School, Brighton, CO on 08/01/15

MONTANA STATISTICAL REPORT - 2016

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Johnson, David	Installed as Senior Pastor of First Lutheran Church, Missoula on 01/10/16
Bonine, Jonathan	Installed as Sole Pastor of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Thompson Falls on 01/30/16
Wiegert, Mark	Installed as Vicar of Trinity, Stanford, Our Savior Denton, St. Paul Lewistown on 02/14/16
Dewell, Russell	Installed as Sole Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Park City on 02/21/16
Carlson, Steven	Emeritus transferred from Pacific Northwest on 03/24/16
Potter, Jeffery	Received with Candidate Status 07/01/16
Schneider, Richard	Ordained & Installed as Sole Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ronan on 07/31/16
Winter, Kyle	Ordained & Installed as Sole Pastor of The Church at Creston – Lutheran on 08/07/16

Changes Within the District

Nicolaus, Mark	Vacancy Pastor to Concordia Lutheran Church, Williston, ND, 07/2016
Reiner, Darold	Active to Emeritus status on 8/31/16

Transferred to Other Districts

Fremer, Noah	Bethel Lutheran Church Lander, WY on 06/01/16
Frahm, John	Trinity Lutheran Church, Boulder Junction, WI on 06/15/16
Sias, John	Sectary of Synod, Missouri District 07/2016
Toombs, Jason	Zion Lutheran Church, Downs, KS 11/20/16

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Roach, Lorraine	Deaconess Candidate from Pacific Northwest District, 09/2016
Heiliger, Cameron	Commissioned & Installed as Director of Youth and Parish Education at Trinity Lutheran Church, Billings on 04/03/16

Changes Within the District

Boll, Jennifer

Active to Candidate status on 06/01/16

Doucette (Schumacher), Rachel

Active to Candidate status on 08/15/16

Lastusky, Myrna

Removed on 10/21/16

Transferred to Other Districts

Endicott, Ruth

Pacific Southwest 01/11/16

Endicott, Steven

Pacific Southwest 01/11/16

Adams, Amanda

Christ Lutheran Church, Topeka, KS on
05/16/16

Keeley, Julie

Peace Lutheran Church, Grand Island, NE on
08/01/16

MONTANA STATISTICAL REPORT - 2017

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Bueltmann, Kevin	Installed as Associate Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Kalispell on 07/09/17
Williams, Marcus	Installed as Sole Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Chinook and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Havre on 8/6/17
Salinas, Adam	Ordained & Installed as Sole Pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Fairfield and Zion Lutheran Church, Power, and as Associate Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Great Falls, on 12/10/17

Changes Within the District

Marshall, Blake	Installed as Sole Pastor of Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Colstrip, Concordia Lutheran Church, Forsyth and Trinity Lutheran Church, Hysham on 06/04/17
Schultz, Mark	Active to Emeritus status on 07/31/17
Hasselbrook, David	Active to Candidate status on 09/06/17
Sandersfeld, Vernon	Vacancy Pastor to Messiah Lutheran Church, Missoula, 09/2017
Larson, Raymond	Vacancy Pastor to Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Thompson Falls, 10/2017
Potter, Jeffery	Restrict Status Lifted on 12/20/17
Closed Congregation	River of Life Lutheran Fellowship, Laurel 05/21/2017

Transferred to Other Districts

Christensen, Mark	Transferred to Bismarck, ND on 10/01/17
Bonine, Jonathan	Shepherd's Hill Retreats, St. John, ND on 10/16/17

Called to Glory

Fischer, Arnold	Called to Glory on 01/31/17
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COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Hoy, Claire

Commissioned & Installed at Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Kalispell on 08/27/17

Rehbein, Erika

Installed at Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Kalispell on 08/27/17

Rehbein, Timothy

Candidate from Nebraska District on 08/27/17

Changes Within the District

Kern, Becky Sue

Active to Emeritus status on 07/01/17

Transferred to Other Districts

Lustila, Gerald

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Bay City, MI on 06/25/17

McCauley, Kristin

St. James Lutheran Church, Shawano, WI on 07/16/17

Eberhard, Susan

Black Hills Lutheran School, Rapid City, SD on 07/31/17

MONTANA STATISTICAL REPORT - January to May 2018

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Changes Within the District Closed Congregation

Trinity Lutheran Church, Rock Springs on
01/28/18

Transferred to Other Districts

Zagel, Bruce

St. Johns Lutheran Church, Mayville, WI on
01/01/18

Hasselbrook, David

Candidate to the Iowa East District on
01/15/18

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Entered the District

Salinas, BethAnn

Candidate transfer from Nebraska District,
02/2018

Eberhard, Susan

Transfer from the South Dakota District
05/28/2018

“The Truth Came Through Jesus Christ”

President’s Report 2018 Montana District Convention

Introduction

While the world is sorely afflicted by suffering and death through fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, abortions, threats of nuclear war, and mass shootings, some may consider a convention discussing a topic so esoteric as the nature and function of truth to be insensitive at best and irrelevant at worst. What the world needs now, some may argue, is kindness, generosity, mercy, and heroic acts of human care.

Suffering will always exist in a sinful world, from various sources and to varying degrees. Though their effects are temporary, the value of physical acts of mercy cannot be ignored. We are told to help our neighbor. We can and should seek to alleviate its physical impacts.

We may all agree, however, that the most effective answer to human suffering is something that transcends it. If there were something that endured forever, something that remained active for all people of all times and places, something that could provide answers beyond the temporal effects of suffering, something like... truth, then, perhaps every act of mercy could have an enduring foundation. Far from being esoteric, truth underlies all that we, as Christians see, feel, think, and do.

In a day when the conversation is often dominated by conflict regarding “fake news” it will serve us well to be confident we know the truth. How can we help our neighbor physically or spiritually if we cannot articulate the truth? Together, at this convention, we will read the Gospel of John with an eye specifically attuned to ferreting out the truth. This Gospel was chosen because John has a particular interest in the concept of truth, using the concept three times more often than the other three Gospel writers combined.

One observation regarding John’s presentation of the truth ought to be made at the outset. He tells us that God, (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), is the truth. This is a jarring revelation, so far from common usage that it requires a radical reorientation of thought. Truth is not out there floating around, a commodity for us to search and find. Truth is a Divine prerogative because God is truth. Truth is not just that which corresponds to the way it really is. Truth establishes the way it really is. God speaks this Word of truth into the world in Jesus. So our theme verse for our study at the convention is, “The truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17)

Knowing the truth makes all the difference in the world. It gives us a confidence that others in this subjective, post-modern world may lack. It gives us zeal to share the Good News. It gives us a place to turn for our own comfort, and peace. Truth, Jesus, is the foundation for everything we do.

I. Early Days in Montana

It has always been that way in Montana. Take, for example the astounding effort to speak the truth in Montana even before the Montana District existed. During the middle of World War II the Lutherans of Montana still managed to scrape together the funds to support a remarkable mission endeavor.

It seems that the North Dakota-Montana District, as it was then called, was unable to fund all the mission work the Montana Pastors desired to accomplish, so they took things into their own hands. They formed the Montana State Pastoral Conference, and working together with the Montana Lutheran Women's Missionary League, established the unique and unparalleled "Montana Trailer Mission."

From 1943 to 1945 Pastor Wilton Sonsthagen, working out of Trinity, Great Falls, visited various Montana communities in order to speak the truth about Jesus. A common practiced appears to be that Pastor Sonsthagen and local congregations, or individuals would work together to knock on the doors of every home in the community with a message about Jesus.

One picture exists from that project. It shows a 1940's era sedan pulling something like an airstream trailer, both emblazoned with the logo, "Montana Trailer Mission." Apparently, Pastor lived in the trailer while on the road. We also have a brief report from the last year of the mission. Pastor Sonsthagen wrote that it was exhilarating to witness the faith of Lutherans in isolated Montana communities "struggling against tremendous odds..." to speak the truth about Jesus.

It is difficult for us to imagine, today, the commitment it took to undertake such work. Pastor Sonsthagen wrote that he travelled 4000 miles that "season." But these were not normal miles by our scale. One trip of 23 miles, from Paradise to St. Regis took him 7 hours. Most of the time, he wrote, was spent "...rolling boulders off the thing the map called the highway." In another case, the brakes on both the car and the trailer failed while descending McDonald Pass into Helena. By the time he hit the bottom the speedometer registered 110 miles an hour. I do not think the highway consisted of four lanes in 1945.

This is your heritage. This is your commitment. It may yet be costly. It may yet prove dangerous, but you speak and live the truth "struggling against tremendous odds," because the Holy Spirit of God is at work in you.

II. Speaking the Truth

Jesus is, Himself the truth. He is the Word given by God to be and to reveal the truth. God wants the truth to be revealed. *"This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."* 1 Timothy 2:3-5 God does not keep the truth to Himself.

God speaks the truth in two ways. He speaks the truth to us indirectly through the creative Word, *"Let there be..."* Everything that was created, as God spoke it, is the truth, in the sense that it is "fact, reality, the way it is." Of course, it was subsequently perverted by sin. Still, since Jesus is that creative Word, we can say that God spoke the truth of creation through Jesus. (John 1:3) The truth of God is contained in creation, even if sinful human beings struggle to accurately observe or state it.

God also speaks the truth directly in and through Jesus. (*"Your Word is truth."* John 17:17) Of course, we know that Jesus Himself is the Word. The Word of Jesus that was necessary for us to know, God had written down in the Scripture. Since Jesus accepts that which "is written" to be the Word of God so do His followers.

Speaking the truth is how Jesus summarized His service when he spoke to Pilate during His trial. *“You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world – to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”* John 18:37 Jesus says that He both is the truth and speaks the truth.

This reality has an impact on us. Being His body in the world, we also speak and live the truth.

III. Speaking the Truth in Montana

The Montana District is one of the smaller districts in the LCMS. Our district covers a lot of territory where relatively few people live. The majority of our congregations are in small isolated communities. Since our congregations are so far apart, closing one of them would mean greater distances for people to travel in order to hear the Word of God taught in its truth and purity. We have taken Jesus at His word when He said, “Where two or three are gathered, there I am in the midst of them.” Small congregations may not be the most efficient method of proclaiming, but they can be very effective at speaking truth.

The Montana District is composed of 69 congregations served by some 49 Pastors. Fifty-six percent of our congregations have fewer than 50 people in average attendance. Eighty-one percent have fewer than 100. Sixty percent of our congregations are in multiple parish relationships. Fully fifty percent of our congregations are in towns that are experiencing population decline. We have lost some fifteen percent of our membership since 1971, down from 15,224 to 13,048 baptized members. This brief review of statistics paints the picture of congregations and Pastors that are working very hard, under sacrificial circumstances, in order to make the confession.

Sadly, during this triennium two congregations were closed. We thank God for all the work He did in and through His people at Trinity, Rock Springs/ Angela, which closed in January 2018, and River of Life, Laurel, which closed in May of 2017. While it is always difficult to see congregations close, I am delighted to report, that in both cases the members of these congregations were transferred to other LCMS congregations. The truth about Jesus continues to be proclaimed.

Despite the smallness of the district, God has blessed us immensely through the generosity of His people. The district has underwritten its budget for the past twelve years. We send twenty-five percent of the offerings we receive at the district level to the Synodical offices for work at that level, and yet we always have enough. We contribute to the work of four missionaries, Pastors who left Montana to enter overseas missions. (Pastor David Warner- Spain, Pastor David Preus- Dominican Republic, Pastor Eric Stinnett- Ethiopia, Pastor Doug Thompson- Sierra Leone.)

During the past three years we have continued to subsidize newly opened congregations in Big Timber and Livingston. We have granted scholarships to an average of 13 church-work students each year. We have helped an average of 8 church-workers pay off student loans each year. We have given grants to many of our schools. We continue to subsidize the work on the Crow and Cheyenne reservations. We manage the Mercy Fund to help Church-workers with catastrophic health care events. This triennium the Montana District will be sponsoring new work in the community of

Anaconda. All of these citations are examples of the generosity of God's people, and are focused on speaking the truth to the world.

The most significant characteristic of the Montana District is its faithfulness to the confession of the name of Jesus. Our Pastors, Teachers, DCEs, Congregations, and Schools desire to be Lutheran. I thank God for your faithfulness. Compared to anecdotes that I hear from other districts, the Montana District has very few problems when it comes to speaking truth. It is a rare occasion when I, as ecclesiastical supervisor, find it necessary to correct some teaching. In my estimation, this faithfulness means that the Montana District has much to say to the rest of the Synod.

IV. Speaking the Truth as the LCMS

One might expect a confessional Church body that strongly opposes the dominant political correctness of the day to diminish. This is certainly true for The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. This sad reality cannot, and must not be used as an excuse to refrain from boldly speaking the truth into the world. If the world exchanges the truth about God for a lie, (Romans 1:25) we must not. On the other hand, the slow degradation of our numbers cannot be used as an excuse to compromise the truth.

I have found in the current leadership of the LCMS strong champions of the truth. We should be thankful and remember them in our prayers. Human leadership, while important, will not save us. I am asking that you remember the congregations of the LCMS in your prayers that we may remain bold in our proclamation of the truth.

Human institutions come and go throughout the course of history. If our Synodical Union serves the truth well, God be praised. However, I assure you that if, God forbid, the LCMS should cease to exist; the Church on earth will continue to live until the return of Christ.

V. Challenges to Speaking the Truth

1. Fear of decline

One of the most powerful tools that Satan is using against the LCMS right now is the fear of decline. Our convention could say something to the Synod and District regarding the fear of numerical decline and the avoidance of compromising the truth for the sake of numbers.

2. Life and death

The state of Montana continues to struggle with life issues such as assisted suicide and abortion. Something could be said to district congregations about standing for life.

3. Marriage

"Gender non-conforming" people have been granted new rights in our nation which have brought the Church into conflict with this new social norm. Some of our Pastors have reported being confronted about our unwillingness to recognize such unions. Something could be said to encourage congregations to speak the truth in this arena.

4. Religious freedom

Stories about faithful Christians losing jobs and businesses as a result of a desire to be faithful to the truth abound. To some degree this may be the price we have to pay. On the other hand there appears to be an erosion of some historically held religious

freedoms. Someone recently wrote that God does not need religious freedom. My response is that while that may be true, your neighbor does. Our district might support a resolution asking our political representatives to defend religious freedom.

5. The teaching of evolution

I wrote in the January 2018 Reflections about an article in one of the Seminary Journals that appeared to compromise the Scriptural presentation of the creation event. Thankfully that controversy was brought to a happy conclusion. However, the pressure on LCMS institutions of higher education to teach evolution remains. I recommend that we support a resolution calling for the LCMS President's office to conduct a review and report of how the theory of evolution is being handled at each of our colleges and universities.

VI. Opportunities for Speaking the Truth

1. Helping small congregations

The demographics for the congregations of the Montana District do not look good. Many of our congregations in dying population centers are barely hanging on. Perhaps we could ask larger congregations to consider making it their mission to support smaller congregations.

2. Supporting Lutheran Schools

As public schools are forced to teach the politically correct position on marriage, sexuality, life and death, our Lutheran schools grow in significance. While every congregation in the district is not in a position to support a school, perhaps we could support a program giving every congregation the opportunity to support one of our existing schools.

3. Support for our Seminaries

Our two seminaries must invest a lot of time and money raising funds. Many of you are probably on their mailing lists. There may be a better way. Perhaps our district could ask the Synod to raise its support of the seminaries from its general fund.

4. The size of LCMS Districts

In my experience one of the major obstacles for maintaining a pure teaching of the truth in the LCMS is that many district presidents are too busy to invest time in that endeavor. I recommend that the Montana District support a resolution calling for a study of the impact of restructuring the Synod to the effect that no district would consist of more than 100 congregations.

Conclusion

"The Truth came through Jesus." That bold statement leaves little room for doubt regarding our next step. The people of God, having been delivered from sin, death and hell by the power of the truth, now speak and live the truth daily. May this convention be an opportunity for you to be confirmed, lifted up, and sent out in the power to the truth of Jesus.

Summary of Presidential Activity 2015-2018

Official Acts

Ordinations	4
Installations	12

District Activities

Congregational visits	87
Pastor Visits	186
Commissioned visits	15
School visits	12
Board of Director mtgs	12
Circuit Visitor meetings	9
Vice-President meetings	3
Circuit Winkels	27
Preaching	35
Other meetings	80

Served as Pastor to Trinity, Harlowton on a part-time basis

Synodical Activities

Council of Presidents	14
Other Synod level mtgs	46

First Vice President's Triennium Report 2018 Montana District Convention

"Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." How many times have you heard these words of Apostolic Greeting? Probably more than you can count, as you listened to the opening words of many of our pastors' sermons.

But these words are more than merely an introduction to a sermon. You might say they are a whole message in themselves. This is God's grace we speak of, our Lord's own loving desire to bless and save; this is God's own mercy through our Lord Jesus that comes by His death on the cross to pay the price for our sins; and this is the peace that God declares to us in our Lord's glorious resurrection; peace with our Lord, forgiveness and reconciliation in Him for everlasting life. These words bring the Gospel itself!

It is this proclamation of God's grace, mercy and peace - both in word and witness - that our Montana District of the LC-MS has the blessed task of assisting, guiding, and encouraging through the work of our congregations, pastors and people - all of us together.

What a privilege and blessing it has been for me during this past triennium to serve our District as 1st Vice President. As always, the 1st Vice-President serves at the direction of the president in pursuing our District's objectives, providing counsel when requested, and representing the President at times as may be needed. Activities have also included participation in District Committee Planning Meetings, Circuit Visitors Meetings, Church Worker Compensation analysis, and Congregational Constitution reviews.

The 1st Vice-President also serves as a voting member of the District Board of Directors. The Board meets quarterly to attend to District business.

One very special part of this business for me has been the opportunity to purposively support our work to enhance existing missions, and especially to seek to develop new ones. Even as we all need to continue hearing the message of God's grace, mercy and peace in our Lord Jesus, there are many more, right here in Montana, that still need to hear it.

May God grant each and all of us continued joy, encouragement, and comfort in our Lord Jesus Christ, and keep us steadfast in His Word.

Respectfully, in our Lord's service,

Rev. Chris Tabbert

Second Vice President's Triennium Report 2018 Montana District Convention

Men and Women of the Montana District,

I greet you with these borrowed words of the Lord's holy apostle: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:2-6, ESV).

As the Second Vice-President, I serve as an ex-officio member of the Montana District Board of Directors and otherwise at the discretion and pleasure of the District President in assisting him with the responsibilities and duties assigned him in the synodical and District constitutions and bylaws.

My service as Second Vice-President this triennium did not actually begin until the second year after our last convention. Rev. Dr. John Sias had been elected Second VP. The first year I served as the Circuit Visitor for the Eastern Circuit. However, at the Synod's 2016 Convention Pastor Sias was elected Synod Secretary, necessitating him to resign as vice-president of the Montana District and move to St. Louis. Given that I had received the next highest number of votes at our 2015 District convention, President Forke appointed me to serve as Second Vice-President of our Montana District.

Over the course of the past two years my service has consisted in attending the quarterly Board of Directors' meetings, the spring district planning meetings, several presidium meetings via conference calls, and two circuit visitor/ VP meetings, as well as, occasionally offering counsel to President Forke on several matters when requested.

It has indeed been a privilege and a joy to serve the Lord of the Church and you, His good people of the Montana District, in this capacity.

"...May the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20-21, ESV).

In His service,

Howard Schreibeis

Circuit Visitor Triennial Report Form 2016-2018

Circuit Name: Southern Circuit
Visitor: Rev. Daniel Jacobs

Congregational Visits:

Regular:	12
Special Issues:	1
Phone counsel:	0
School visits:	2
Pastoral visits:	7

Conferences:

Winkel:	17
Circuit (Quad, South/East):	2
District Pastors:	3
Synodical:	0

Meetings:

Circuit Counselors:	9
Forums:	2
Convocations:	0
Other:	0

Vacancies and Calls:

Vacancies during triennium	
Current vacancies:	0
Meetings regarding calls:	2
Installation/Ordinations:	3

Circuit Visitor Triennial Report Form 2016-2018

Circuit Name: Western Circuit
Visitor: Rev. Raymond Everet Larson, Sr.

Congregational Visits:

Regular:	5
Special Issues:	1
Phone counsel:	6
School visits:	0

Conferences:

Winkel:	9
Circuit (Quad, South/East):	3
District Pastors:	3
Synodical:	0

Meetings:

Circuit Counselors:	8
Forums:	2
Convocations:	1
Other:	0

Vacancies and Calls:

Vacancies during triennium:	5
Current vacancies:	3
Meetings regarding calls:	9
Installation/Ordinations:	3

Notes:

Among the topics discussed at our Winkels these three years were several thesis of Walther's Church and Ministry, the Smalcald Articles, 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.

Our Circuit Convocation was put together in such a way that it became part of the District celebration of 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Inviting congregations from surrounding circuits this became a Regional event with members of four circuits attending. The event consisted of several presentations on Reformation topics by Circuit pastors and President Forke. After the presentations attendees sang hymns of the Reformation, and then all joined for dinner served by members of First Lutheran Church, Missoula.

Circuit Visitor Triennial Report Form
2016-2018

Circuit Name: Eastern Circuit
Visitor: Rev. Rolf Preus

Congregational Visits:

Regular:	0
Special Issues:	0
Phone counsel:	8
School visits:	0

Conferences:

Winkel:	9
Circuit (Quad, South/East):	1
District Pastors:	1
Synodical:	0

Meetings:

Circuit Counselors:	3
Forums:	1
Convocations:	0
Other:	0

Vacancies and Calls:

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

Circuit Visitor Triennial Report Form 2016-2018

Circuit Name: Central Circuit
Visitor: Rev. Steven Schlund

Congregational Visits:

Regular:	11
Special Issues:	4
Phone counsel:	27
School visits:	0

Conferences:

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

Meetings:

Circuit Counselors:	8
Forums:	0
Convocations:	2
Other:	0

Vacancies and Calls:

Vacancies during triennium:	2
Current vacancies:	0
Meetings regarding calls:	3
Installation/Ordinations:	2

Circuit Visitor Triennial Report Form

2016-2018

Circuit Name: Divide Circuit
Visitor: Rev. Charles Lehmann

Congregational Visits:

Regular: 0
Special Issues: 4
Phone counsel: 20
School visits: 0

Conferences:

Winkel: 15
Circuit (Quad): 3
District Pastors: 3
Synodical: 0

Meetings:

Circuit Counselors: 9
Forums: 3
Convocations: 0
Other: 0

Vacancies and Calls:

Vacancies during triennium: 4
Current vacancies: 3
Meetings regarding calls: 1
Installation/Ordinations: 1

**Circuit Visitor Triennial Report Form
2016-2018**

Circuit Name: Flathead Circuit
Visitor: Rev. Steven Thomas

Congregational Visits:

Regular:	0
Special Issues:	0
Phone counsel:	4
School visits:	0

Conferences:

Winkel:	7
Circuit (Quad, South/East):	1
District Pastors:	1
Synodical:	0

Meetings:

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

Vacancies and Calls:

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

Montana District Board of Directors Triennial Report 2015-2018

Being a summary of major actions of the Board as contained in the minutes.

June 22, 2015

Special Meeting, District Convention Site - Billings

President Forke reported that Susan Loomans applied for the District Treasurer position. He, Steve Hildenburg, and Crow Buck recommend her to the BOD. It was moved, seconded, and carried to appoint Susan Loomans to the position of District Treasurer. Steve will stay on until August 31 to train her for the position.

President Forke also reported that Ruth Kosche will be hired as the Administrative Assistant in the District Office.

July 27, 2015

District Office - Billings

Emmaus request for subsidy – It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the ELM subsidy request of \$7,461/month for the next six months (the remainder 2015). This amount is approximately the same as the District's support for the Mission, but it will now be considered as a subsidized congregation. It was moved, seconded, and carried to provide a written commitment to LCEF from the District for continued support for Emmaus Lutheran Mission for a minimum of three years. It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve a contribution of \$40,000 from The Fund to Emmaus Lutheran Mission for a down payment on the building in Big Timber where they have been meeting.

Power/Fairfield – Subsidy request- Proposal (See docket item III.J.9):

Whereas, the congregations in Power and Fairfield have reported to the DP that they will have spent all available resources for general expenses by October of 2015, and

Whereas, the Montana District Board of Directors has budgeted \$6,000 for 2015 for this purpose, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Montana District Treasurer begin issuing checks to this dual parish in the amount of \$500 per month for the remainder of the year, beginning 8/1/15.

October 12, 2015

District Office - Billings

2016 Budget – Jerry Roseleip and Treasurer Loomans presented the finance committee's 2016 budget proposal (docket III.J.1). At line 78, the proposed \$84,720 release from "The Fund" to ELM was increased to \$90,340 (see III.J.11 below). At lines 196-7, the President's salary was increased by 3% from \$61,931 to \$63,789 and his HAS contribution, from \$2,000 to \$5,700. After amendment, total expenditures for 2016 are projected at \$811,038, for a planned surplus of \$42,213.

500th Anniversary of Reformation 2017 – It was moved, seconded, and approved that the President appoint a 500th Anniversary of the Reformation Committee to study suitable district-wide observances.

January 25, 2016

District Office – Billings

Compensation Guidelines Task Force – Report. 2nd VP Sias gave a brief report from the task force. They are reviewing income and cost of living expenses statewide for comparison to District church worker compensation and are not planning to adjust by location within the state. The initial recommendation is to maintain the guidelines we now have. President Forke asked the task force to add further clarifying narrative to the Compensation Guidelines Narrative section.

Support of Anaconda Vicar – Proposal Docket item III.J.5 was discussed. It was noted that moving expense needs to be included in the estimated expenses of the proposal. President Forke will talk with the congregation and ask them what level of monetary support they would be willing to provide and convey to them that the BOD is willing to assist. After President Forke talks with the congregation, there will be an email vote to determine the level of BOD monetary support.

Chaplaincy Task Force – It was moved, seconded, and carried to appoint Pastor Arlo Pullmann, Mr. Jerry Roseleip, Rev. Gale Everson, and Mr. Crow Buck to the Montana District Chaplaincy Task Force.

May 6, 2016

Trinity Lutheran Church – Great Falls

Support for High School in Billings – Proposal to hold online classes from Wittenburg Academy (classical education) at the District Office. It will be geared toward students who are capable of carrying a heavy load, self-directed, and intelligent. This would be a first step. Even though it is online, there would be value in having the students together – a step toward building a traditional high school. Various issues were discussed by the BOD – including adult supervision of students, liability, and insurance questions. The total extra personnel cost to District was estimated at \$6318 on an annual basis (extra time for Susan and Ruth to supervise the students). It was moved, seconded, and carried to appoint Rev. Ryan Wendt, Jerry Roseleip, and Terry Forke to continue to investigate the possibility of housing an online high school at the District Office and report their recommendations to the next BOD meeting.

Support for Montana Pastor's Network – see docket item see III.J.6. This is a network of Montana Pastors for the purpose of informing them and calling them to action in three specific areas of cultural and theological significance: life issues, marriage issues, and religious freedom. In July the Montana Pastor's Network will sponsor speaker Ryan Anderson – author of "Truth Overruled" – to address Pastors on the issue of same-sex marriage. It was moved, seconded, and carried to support the Montana Pastors' Network by donating \$200 from the general fund for speaker Ryan Anderson in Billings in July.

Amending District Bylaws for Nominations committee. It was moved, seconded, and carried to propose that the 2018 District in Convention amend Bylaw 1.3.2 Nominations and Elections which currently reads: "a. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall consist of three Ministers of religion—ordained, one Minister of religion—commissioned, and three laymen. b. The committee shall be elected by the District Convention triennially and shall serve for the succeeding regular convention." by substituting the following: "The Nominations and Elections Committee shall consist of one Minister of Religion—Ordained, one Minister of Religion—commissioned, and one layman, one of which shall be appointed chairman by the Board at the first Montana Board of Directors' meeting following the convention."

July 25, 2016

District Office - Billings

Bi-vocational Pastor Conference budget – Proposal. President Forke proposed that the Montana District include in its annual budget \$10,000 to reimburse bi-vocational pastors for time off without pay so that they can attend District Pastors' Conferences and Winkels without loss of income (see docket item III.J.4). The BOD discussed and approved his proposal in concept and it will be taken into consideration for 2017 budget purposes.

Replace Impala (District car) – The District's 2012 Impala has 140,000+ miles. It is running well and has new tires and a new windshield. The Finance Committee has discussed the advisability of replacing it. There is currently \$20,000 in the car fund. It was moved, seconded, and carried to appoint Jerry Roseleip, Director and/or Susan Loomans, Treasurer to investigate and purchase a new(er) District car for President Forke's use and stay within the Car Fund budget.

Support for Joint Seminary Education Fund – Discussion. President Forke explained the background of the Synodical resolution to raise support for the Joint Seminary Fund which incorporates a Synod-wide contest to determine who has the better mustache – President Harrison or President Forke. The BOD voiced their approval of his part in this fund-raising resolution.

October 17, 2016

District Office - Billings

Prison Chaplaincy Task Force Report. The task force was formed by action of the 2015 Montana District Convention Resolution 1-03. Rev. Arlo Pullmann gave a brief overview of the task force's report (Docket Item III.J.2a). The task force presented two possible models: 1) A Circuit Rider model (cost: approximately \$90,000/year); or 2) Partner with a congregation that cannot support a full-time pastor (cost: depends on the details worked out with the calling congregation). The Task Force prefers the partnership model. Rev. Pullmann directed the BOD to the last two paragraphs of the report and mentioned that the Southern Illinois District is "eager to help districts and their Prison Ministry Coordinators establish, maintain, and encourage prison ministry." There is an informational handbook "The Prison and Jail Ministry Handbook of the

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod” from the Southern Illinois District available as well. After Rev. Pullmann's report, the BOD discussed President Forke's meeting with our congregations in Power/Fairfield (docket III.J.2.b). The general consensus was that partnering with those congregations for a Prison chaplain is likely not feasible at this time. The matter was tabled until the discussion of the 2017 budget later in the meeting.

District Bylaw Amendment re: Budget. In order to clarify Bylaw 2.2.6.7.c, it was moved, seconded, and carried to insert the following sentence: “The expected income of the District shall be understood to include the cash reserves on hand at the end of the previous fiscal year.” before the final sentence “The Board shall not borrow funds for operating expenditures.”

Amend SOP Manual re: fiscal year. To match with current District practice, it was moved, seconded, and carried to alter the SOP Manual, p. 26, part V.A. to read as follows:

V. FISCAL YEAR

- A. For tax accounting, distribution, or other purposes, the fiscal year of Montana District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod shall begin on January 1st of each year and end on December 31st of that year.

2017 Budget. Discussion began with the information that there are three parishes who are not able to give the amount of offerings to the District that they have in years past. The 2017 budget will need to be reduced accordingly. The BOD reviewed docket item III.J.5.b detailing the amount and use of Donor Restricted Cash Reserves and Unrestricted Cash Reserves (BOD designated and undesignated). Various options were considered on how best to balance the budget. It was moved, seconded, and carried to amend the proposed budget to include \$7,000 for Prison Chaplaincy in the Human Care line item and to remove line items 119 (Task Force on Chaplaincies), 120 (Incidentals), 121 (Pastor Salary Benefits) – [a net budget reduction of \$28,000] and to direct the Human Care Committee to investigate the possibility of Prison Chaplaincy further by building on the recommendations and work of the Prison Chaplaincy Task Force. It was moved, seconded, and carried to amend the proposed budget by reducing by \$5,000 Line item 73 (Bi-vocational Pastor Loss of Pay Offset) and to remove \$5500 from Line item 77 (500th Anniversary Task Force) [Line item 73 is now \$5,000 and Line item 77 is \$15,300.] It was moved, seconded, and carried to amend the proposed budget by increasing District Missionaries (Line item 115) to \$4,000 and increasing the estimated Congregational giving the commensurate amount (Line item 3) to balance the 2017 Budget. It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the proposed 2017 Budget as amended.

January 30, 2017 Go to Meeting

Due to weather conditions many of the Board members attended electronically.

1. Request for funds – Our Savior, Glendive. Docket item III.J.1. After discussion, it was moved, seconded, and carried to grant Our Savior-Glendive \$20,000 from The

Fund to help provide suitable housing for their pastor with a provision that they have a serious conversation about buying a parsonage. Before any money is sent to them, President Forke will communicate with them their need to solve the situation of the tax liability to the pastor and also their long term housing plan for the future. Some suggested that a parsonage might be a better path forward for them with an equity fund for the pastor.

2. Request for funds – Stanford/Denton/Lewistown, Proposal. Docket item III.J.2. It was moved and seconded to grant \$6,000 from The Fund to the tri-parish (Stanford/Denton/ Lewistown) for their SMP vicar's educational expenses in the Specific Ministry Program (SMP). Discussion. It was moved, seconded, and carried to table the previous motion until the BOD can get further information. The District President was directed to investigate the BOD's concerns, which include:
 - a. SMP students' access to financial assistance from the seminaries;
 - b. the specifics about the economics of the tri-parish;
 - c. whether or not they promised to cover their vicar's educational expenses;
 - d. will funds continue to be requested each year of their vicar's education.

May 5, 2017

Trinity Lutheran Church – Great Falls

Rev. Gerald Paul, Chairman of the District Missions/Evangelism Committee, reported to the BOD regarding the potential for calling an LCMS pastor for the Anaconda community. He spoke last week with Rev. Steve Schave (Director of LCMS Church Planting for the Office of National Mission [ONM]). Rev. Schave discussed the possibility of the support of ONM for missionary training and assistance in building a network of support. He suggested the District might provide half of the funds and that the other half come from building a network of support. Rev. Paul stated that the District would call the pastor (he would not be an employee of the Synod). President Forke gave a brief synopsis of the recent history of our congregation in Anaconda. It has been served on a vacancy basis for quite a long time. Anaconda is the seventh largest community in Montana, but the congregation is small. The District (through President Forke) has explored other avenues – finding a bi-vocational pastor, a vicar serving from a nearby congregation, a seminary candidate – but to date none of those ideas has come to fruition. After discussion, the BOD will consider this issue under New Business later in the meeting.

River of Life Lutheran Fellowship closure. Rev. Blake Marshall has accepted a call to serve the tri-parish in Forsyth/Colstrip/Hysham. He has been serving River of Life in Laurel as a bi-vocational pastor. The congregation voted to close and transfer ownership of all real property to the Montana District. It was moved, seconded, and carried that The Montana District of the LCMS accept the gift of all property and monies from River of Life Lutheran Fellowship, that President Forke be authorized to dispose of the property as reasonably and as quickly as possible, and that a decision regarding the allocation of the assets be deferred until the final disposition of the property has been concluded.

Request for funds Dillon (Down payment on Building) – Ratification of the email vote. It was moved, seconded, and carried to ratify the email vote taken between 3/22/17 and 3/24/17 “to grant Living Water Lutheran Church of Dillon \$10,000 from the Fund for the purpose of purchasing a building.” The BOD received a “Thank You” note from the congregation. (III.J.2.c).

Appointment of Montana District Secretary (Syn. Con.- 3.3.3.3. Dist. Bylaw-2.1.4.2). Since Rev. Schultz is resigning from serving as District Secretary, the BOD is charged with appointing another pastor to fill the unexpired term. The BOD decided to appoint Rev. Chad Schopp – Emmaus Lutheran Mission Big Timber and Livingston as District Secretary. The BOD thanked Rev. Schultz for his service and President Forke led the BOD in prayer for Pastor Schultz and the new phase in his life as he retires from full-time service as pastor.

Insurance alternatives for Church workers – Discussion. (See docket item III.J.7.a) The BOD discussed a letter and response between President Forke and the Concordia Plan Services President about the long-term viability of CHP, health co-ops, smaller congregations struggling to provide health care for workers, etc. No BOD action taken.

July 24, 2017

Montana District Office – Billings

River of Life Lutheran Fellowship closure. Rev. Forke and Mrs. Loomans had to physically empty the building of the church’s contents. Some of these were offered up to the congregations of the District. The parsonage and the church building cross the lot lines, so a surveyor has been hired to split the property into two lots. The gas lines also must be rerouted to follow the new lot lines. The renters in the parsonage have indicated a desire to purchase the house for approximately \$90,000. The church building will be put up for sale once the survey and gas lines are complete, possibly by the end of July.

Stanford/Denton/Lewistown met with Pastor Peterson for a Stewardship Presentation. The remaining \$3000 will be sent by the District to the congregation.

October 17, 2017

Montana District Office – Billings

2018 Budget Proposal – Susan Loomans walked us through the proposed 2018 budget (III.J.4.a) based upon projected total revenues of \$738,252 (-\$2312). Projected expenses include an increase in conference expenses of \$9000, a decrease in President’ office expenses of \$17,121. Total Program Expenses is \$497,165, an increase of nearly \$60,000. Approximately \$40,000 of this is for the 2018 Convention.

Total proposed expenditures for 2018 is \$773,621, an increase of \$60,587, for a net deficit of \$35,369. This is explained by the attached note: Regarding the negative net income of this budget, the District President and previous Boards have interpreted Bylaw 2.2.6.7.c to include in income the previous year end balances of accounts. A revision of Bylaw

2.2.6.7.c will be presented at the 2018 District Convention to clarify that in preparing a budget, prior year end balances of asset accounts may be used to meet the next year's budget expenses and will be considered to offset a negative net income.

Motion made and seconded to increase District Support to international missionaries from Montana from \$4000 to \$8000, to be split evenly amongst all missionaries. Motion amended to include additional funding from the Mission & Ministry Fund (Montana District Foundation Fund). Motion carried to increase line item.

Motion made and seconded to approve budget as presented and amended. Motion was carried.

Amendment Bylaw, 2.2.1.1 (III.J.5.b) – As part of the CCM's review of 2.2.6.7 & 3.1, the CCM recommended changes to 2.2.1.1. If approved, the Board of Directors will submit the District in Convention changes to 2.2.1.1, specifying the duties of the District President. Motion made, seconded and carried.

Amendment Bylaw, 2.2.6.7 (III.J.6) – Proposed changes to be presented to the District Convention. Motion made to accept changes. Seconded and carried.

Amendment Bylaw, 3.1 (III.J.7) – Proposed changes to be presented to the District Convention. Motion made, seconded and carried.

January 29, 2018

Montana District Office - Billings

Pursuit of candidate for Anaconda – Proposal: President Forke will talk to the placement committee at the COP meeting next week. The number of candidates available from both seminaries is limited.

Disbursement of River of Life property – Report: A prospective buyer has approached the District about buying the church building in Laurel. An agreement was made for \$10,000. Closing is scheduled for 2-2-19. The prospective buyers/current renters in the house are nearly \$3,000 in arrears, so their loan approval must be revisited. After discussion, the Board agreed that the best course of action is to initiate eviction proceedings while still reaching out for an equitable solution.

Policy Amendment – Montana District Foundation Fund – Proposal (III.J.1): The proposal is to rewrite the policy for clarity. The proposed name change is from Montana District Foundation Fund to Mission and Ministry Fund. Several additional changes were recommended by the board in committee. It was moved, seconded, to adopt the policy as amended. Motion was carried at 11:16am. Motion was made to authorize the treasurer to change the name of the MT District Foundation Fund at the LCMS Foundation to match this language. Motion was made, seconded and carried

Distribution of the District Budget Surplus (III.A.1.c): There is an unrestricted, undesignated budget surplus made up of financial assets of about \$98,000. One

suggestion was use to part of the surplus (~\$26,000) in lieu of receiving the annual congregation assessment for conventions. Another suggestion was to assist smaller congregations with the creation of websites for outreach. A recommendation was made that the Missions and Evangelism Committee could draw up guidelines for congregation social media/websites.

Other recommendation included using the remainder (after the assessment refund) in the General Fund in anticipation of calling a pastor for Anaconda, supporting K-12 school in Montana and increasing the corpus of the scholarship fund for pastoral training.

A proposal was made to split the surplus (about \$98,000) over the four areas: 1) Suspension of congregation assessment for 2018 (about \$23,000); 2) The corpus of the MT District Scholarship Fund (\$25,000); 3) The corpus of the Montana District Schools Fund (\$25,000); 4) Support of a pastor called to serve Anaconda by adding funds to the MT District Mission and Ministry Fund (see III.J.1) (\$25,000). A motion was made and seconded to the amended proposal. Motion was carried.

Parish Education Committee Report 2015-2018

The Education Committee began as a group of 'newbies'. Time has been spent on getting to know the aspects of our responsibilities as we attended the District planning meetings.

This past year we were able to offer a Go and Be reconciled seminar for teachers, pastors, and congregation leaders by Ambassadors of Reconciliation. It was held in Great Falls and there were 23 attended. We also have been in contact with Bethesda Ministries and have received materials for each congregation regarding welcoming children with disabilities. There is a brochure available for each congregation. If there is interest shown, we will organize a seminar with Bethesda Ministries to be held in Montana. Our committee has also been in contact with Minnesota North District the Cross program as a possible tool for helping all the Montana congregations to support and value Lutheran Education.

The current project we are working on is bringing Vacation Bible School to communities in Montana. We will be using the Splash Canyon from Concordia Publishing House materials. It is exciting that two congregations have taken us up on the offer. We will be headed to Three Forks in June and Forsyth in July.

M Jane Johns, Annie Colson, and Sue Eberhard*
Education Committee Members

*Committee member 2016-2017

Indian Ministry Committee Report 2015-2018

The activities of the Indian Ministry Committee during the past three years have been in three areas: communication with the churches of the District, powwow ministry, supporting local ministries.

The primary tool of communication has been *Lutherans in Indian Communities* newsletter (LINC). This is published twice a year and is sent to all the congregations and to individuals who request a personal copy. Occasional articles are published in *Montana Reflections* and *LWML Missive*. "the LINC newsletter also goes out to various agencies, colleges and libraries on the seven reservations in Montana. All issues of the LINC are on the District Website."

Powwow ministry has gone on at Arlee, Wolf Point, Crow Agency, and Ashland. (Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Columbia Falls, continues its work on the Blackfeet Reservation.) This ministry provide opportunity to build relationships with community members on "their turf". This is especially helpful in reaching traditional/nativist folks. As well as being part of the camp community, which typically involves participating in the dancing, we are able to hold VBS and Sunday worship service.

In terms of support work, this involves providing devotion books to reservation ministries, including to non-Lutheran, native pastors. *Portals of Prayer* are provided to Everything Beautiful Thrift Store in Lame Deer and to the Welcome Center at Benefis Hospital in Great Falls (Peace and Trinity L.Cs. provide the ones used in Great Falls).

The committee continues to fund "Food for Thought" Gospel radio broadcast done by Pastor John Vallie. This program goes out over a large portion of northeastern Montana, including the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.

Also, the committee has been working with our pastors and congregations on the Flathead Reservation toward them starting ministry at the Elmo powwow.

What we would like to do in the next three years is to continue the powwow ministries with expansion to Elmo, continue keeping the District folks informed of what's happening concerning Indian communities of Montana, and continue supporting, as needed, those working in Indian ministry.

The biggest challenge of Indian ministry (as in all ministry) is spiritual. Many of the reservation churches have no understanding of the pure Gospel, which means that at best only law is proclaimed, which crushes many and leads to despair, and at worst Law and Gospel get badly confused, which makes the Truth impossible for people to discern.

Consequently, Christianity is seen either as some muddled "white man's religion" or simple another belief system trying to teach people how to be good. Considering that a

common attitude toward religion in Indian country is that "all forms of prayer [religion] are good", such a misunderstanding of Christianity opens things up to syncretism, which is rather common, or to simply continuing with traditional religions, which are gaining in following on many reservations.

The spiritual confusion that has risen from all this, along with many historical and social factors, has led to spiritual lostness and hopelessness. This is a driving force behind the continued substance abuse (especially of meth) and suicide in Native communities.

I don't know that an overture is needed to speak to this matter, but certainly the prayers of the church are.

Dan Jacobs, chairman of the Indian Ministry Committee

Montana District Missions and Evangelism Committee Report 2015-2018

Missions and Evangelism Committee Mission Statement: Called by God's grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through the Word and Sacraments, the mission of the Missions and Evangelism Committee of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod Montana District is to assist congregations in building up the body of Christ, providing mission vision, leadership, opportunity, encouragement, and support to the congregations of the District so that the people of God reach others with the saving Gospel to the end that everyone is presented perfect in Christ. (Colossians 1:28)

Emmaus Lutheran Mission in Big Timber/Livingston and Shepherd of the Hills in Dillon have been received as congregations of the Montana District at the District's last convention. Since these congregations are still financially dependent on the District, further mission starts were put on hold until these congregations can be self-supporting. However, every congregation of the Montana District is encouraged to reach out with the Gospel in their given context. Congregations in the growing urban areas of our state are well placed to plan on planting daughter congregations. To this end a church-planting workshop was held at Mt. Olive in Billings this past triennium. Pastor Steve Schave from Mission Field USA, was our presenter and he brought church planting resources with him. These resources are available from the committee chair for any congregation looking into planting a church. In addition to this an Evangelism Workshop was held in Great Falls. The new evangelism resource from the LCMS Office of National Mission was introduced to the participants. The "Every One His Witness" Lutheran Evangelism is a wonderful resource for congregations and is highly recommended. This resource can be found on the LCMS website and be ordered from there too.

The last convention instructed the District President to put a taskforce together to come up with suggestions for future Gospel ministry to Anaconda and surrounding area. The District BOD also tasked the Missions and Evangelism Committee to think about the future of Anaconda and make suggestions. The Task Force was put together in 2016 and explored the possibility of a chaplaincy to serve Boulder, the detention center in Deer Lodge, Gallen, and Warm Springs. The Task Force also discussed whether it might be possible to combine this chaplaincy position with a pastor position in Anaconda. The thought was that the pastor could focus on outreach to the Anaconda community as well as his chaplaincy duties. Other options were also explored. The missions and evangelism committee was also engaged in a demographic study of Anaconda to get an overview of the community and the need for a Lutheran presence in that community. The LCMS Office of National Mission was engaged in this process including Mission Field: USA in an attempt to find solutions that might serve and encourage this congregation and community well. Mission Central in Iowa was also visited to research possible funding models for a missionary to Anaconda.

All these avenues were pursued and the district BOD weighed all the options and finally decided to call a missionary to Anaconda, who will also bring Word and Sacrament to the remaining members of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Anaconda.

Our committee is working closely with the LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission (RSTM) to provide opportunities for congregations in the rural and small town areas of our District to learn how they can engage their communities with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Him crucified for their salvation. Rev. Ray Larson has agreed to be the liaison between RSTM and the congregations in the rural communities. RSTM and Rev. Larson will help these congregations to organize "Engaging your Community Events". A couple of events have been held this past Triennium, with more events in the planning stages. If your congregation would be interested in such an event, please contact Rev. Larson or a member of this committee.

The committee is implementing a Congregation Contact Initiative to improve communication between the committee and the district congregations. The list of the district congregations has been divided among the committee members and each member is encouraged to contact the congregations on their list. It is hoped that this would be a two-way communication on mission and evangelism opportunities locally, the district, synod and internationally.

Finally, the congregations of the Montana District are encouraged to support the international missionaries that have close ties with our district, including the pastors Preus, Stinnett, Thomson, Warner and Schlund.

Present members of the Montana District Missions and Evangelism Committee

Rev. Gerald Paul, Chair

Teacher Thomas Kosche

Bradley Williams

Glenn Stocking

Frank Delgado

Members who served the Mission and Evangelism Committee earlier in the triennium

Heidi Sias

Stewardship & Human Care Committee Report 2015-2018

The Montana District's Stewardship and Human Care Committee has a very broad area of concern, and that was very evident over this past triennium. The area of stewardship, for example, has seen a couple new exciting developments, while the Human Care sub-categories of Disaster Response, Life Issues, Prison Ministry, and Operation Barnabas (a program of the Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces) have received the largest focus of our attention and resources. In each of these areas, the committee has also sponsored key members of the district to attend conferences tailored to their fields of ministry or responsibility.

As noted, there have been two developments in the area of Stewardship this past year. The first was the sponsoring of what are called "Philippians Workshops." These are one day workshops put on by Synod's Stewardship Ministry and are designed to bring pastors and congregational lay leaders together to explore how they can work together in the realm of stewardship. These workshops have been held in each of the four western circuits, with the two eastern circuits hopefully to have theirs sometime this fall.

The second addition to the Stewardship portfolio was the development of our Stewardship Guest Preacher/ Presenter Program. Two pastors in our district, Rev. Kevin Peterson (Salmon, ID) and Rev. Ryan Wendt (Billings, MT), have been trained and are available to preach and/or present on the topic of stewardship, with several congregations so far making use of this resource. The cost of inviting either of them to come and preach on a Sunday morning (honorarium, motel, meals, etc.) is borne by the inviting congregation. The committee, on the other hand, covers the cost of their travel expenses and reimburses their own respective congregations for guest preachers in their absence. An additional option is that Rev. Peterson has received training from the LCMS Foundation on Christian Estate and Gift Planning and can speak on this topic, as well.

The Human Care area of Disaster Response has been another significant focus for our committee. Earlier in the triennium, LERT (Lutheran Emergency Response Team) training was scheduled and provided. In addition, the committee has provided matching funds to congregations holding fundraisers. In some cases, the money raised went directly to our Synod's Disaster Response funds. In others, such as in the case of Grace Lutheran Church in Hamilton, Montana, the funds raised went to fund their own team to travel down to Texas and provide much needed assistance in the aftermath of the 2017 hurricane season. This year we have increased the funds available for disaster response and are looking to expand the program with both matching funds and grants.

The annual March for Life in Washington D. C. has been the receiver of the lion's share of our Life Issues budget. Each year funds have been released, enabling members of our district to go and represent Montana (as well as Idaho and North Dakota) at the event. The hope is that these individuals can go, participate, learn, and be re-energized, and

then come back with new enthusiasm and knowledge and be stronger voices for those who cannot speak for or defend themselves.

The work of prison ministry in our district has largely fallen to the good folks at St. John Lutheran Church in Deer Lodge, Montana, and their pastor, Rev. Bob Mitchell. The main reason, of course, is that Deer Lodge is home to the Montana State Prison, with the congregation providing regular worship and bible study opportunities at that institution. Our committee, through its budget, has enabled Pastor Mitchell to attend Synod's conference on Prison Ministry in the past. This year, we will be sponsoring two elders from that congregation to attend.

Lastly, we would like to welcome the newest member of the Stewardship & Human Care fold, Operation Barnabas! As noted earlier, this is a program developed by the Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces. The three-fold goal of this program is to (1) Care for Reserve chaplains and their families and congregations. (2) Train and assist local congregations in the care, support and outreach to all military connected people in their congregations and their communities. And (3) Serve as a resource to other organizations that provide care to military connected people. Our committee recently sponsored Rev. Ray Larson to attend a training session/ conference on Operation Barnabas and we look forward to watching this much needed program be rolled out in our district.

Your servant in Christ,
Rev. Kevin Peterson

Chairman

Montana District Youth Committee Report 2015-2018

The youth board's primary focus the last three years has been on summer camps in Red Lodge where a strong volunteer base seeks to share the gospel with high school and middle school campers every year. This year the youth board invited Rev. Marcus Zill of LCMS to attend our annual pastor's conference to lead a preconference workshop on college and campus ministry. He was also asked to share about LCMS U, an initiative to connect and support Lutheran students as they head off to college and face countless challenges to their biblical worldview, doctrine, ethics and practices. We look forward to utilizing his partnership and guidance in the coming years.

In the coming years our hopes are threefold: (1) to create a database of contact information for LCMS college students from the Montana District, (2) to create and distribute a faith preparation guide for students heading off to college, and (3) host a retreat for college students to enrich and strengthen their adult faith.

Kyle Winter - Chairman of the Youth Board

Nominations for District President and Vice President

The slate for District President

Nominations for District President (listed in alphabetical order)

Rev. Terry Forke - **accepted** the nomination

Rev. Howard Schreibeis - **declined** the nomination

The slate for 1st VP

Nominations for 1st VP (listed in alphabetical order)

Rev. Arlo Pullmann - **declined** the nomination

Rev. Daniel Rinderknecht - **accepted** the nomination

Rev. Howard Schreibeis - **declined** the nomination

Rev. Chris Tabbert - **accepted** the nomination

Rev. Ryan Wendt - **accepted** the nomination

Circuit Visitor Elections

Central – Rev. Steven Schlund

Divide – Rev. Charles Lehmann

Eastern – Rev. Rolf Preus

Flathead – Rev. Steven Thomas

Southern – Rev. Daniel Jacobs

Western – Rev. Raymond Larson, Sr.

Nominations for the Board of Directors

The Slate for District Secretary:

Rev. Kevin Peterson	Accepted
Rev. Chad Schopp	Declined
Rev. Ryan Wendt	Declined
Rev. Ken Zoeller	Declined

The Slate for Pastor Member of the Board of Directors

Rev. Ryan Wendt	Accepted
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The Slate for Teacher Member of the Board of Directors

Mr. Richard Thomas	Accepted
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The Slate for Lay Member of the Board of Directors

Mr. Kendall Hartman	Accepted
Mr. Pat Lewis	Accepted
Mr. Keith Meier	Accepted
Mr. Jim Rigby	Accepted
Mr. Jerry Roseleip	Accepted

Nominations for the Convention Nominating Committee

The Slate for Pastor Member of Convention Nominating Committee

Rev. James Koss	Accepted
Rev. Kyle Whaley	Accepted

The Slate for Lay Member of Convention Nominating Committee

Mr. Kale Bauer	Accepted
Mr. Joel Olinghouse	Accepted

The Slate for Teacher Member of Convention Nominating Committee

Mrs. Becky Braaten	Accepted
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Nominations for the Synodical Committee for Convention Nominations

The Slate for Synodical Committee for Convention Nominations

Mr. Frank Delgado
Mr. Greg Hein
Mr. Steven Hildenburg
Mr. Jerry Roseleip
Mrs. Shelly Schultz

NOMINEES FOR MONTANA DISTRICT PRESIDENT

Forke, Rev. Terry

He was born on February 7, 1956 in Omaha Nebraska. He was raised in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, and married Cheryl Koschmann on April 7, 1979. They have five children Joshua, Jacob, Ruth, Judy, and Christal, and twelve grandchildren.

Education:

St. Paul's College in Concordia, MO from 1974 to 1976; received AA
Concordia College, Ann Arbor, Michigan; received BA
Concordia Seminary; 1983; received MDiv; 1989 received STM

Congregations Served:

Ordained in 1983
Grace/Shepherd of the Hills in Three Forks/Ennis, Montana from (1983-1993)
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Columbia Falls, Montana (1993-2006)
Trinity, Harlowton, Montana (2011- present)

Service within the Montana District:

Chairman of the Youth Committee, Chairman of the Stewardship Committee, Member of the Indian Ministry Committee, Member Nominations Committee, Chair Task Force on Vacancies, Chair Committee on Constitutions, Chair Montana District 60th Anniversary Committee, Member Ablaze Task Force, Circuit Counselor for the Flathead Circuit (1993-2000), 2nd Vice President Montana District LCMS (2000-2002), 1st Vice President Montana District LCMS (2002-2006)

President of the Montana District LCMS (2006-present)

Has been active in Lutherans for Life in various capacities for 33 years.

Community Service:

Board of Directors of Three Rivers Health Care, Three Forks Youth Task Force, School Board Building Committee Columbia Falls, Board of Directors for Habitat for Humanity Flathead Valley, High School Junior Varsity Soccer Coach, Billings Family Action Committee

Published:

Numerous articles in the "Lutheran Witness" and other LCMS publications.

NOMINEES FOR MONTANA DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENT

Rinderknecht, Rev. Daniel

Pastor Rinderknecht was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on October 15, 1954 into the home of Donald and Betty Rinderknecht. He is the second of five children. He was baptized on November 16, 1954 at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Atkins, Iowa. He attended parochial school there and then the family moved to Cedar Rapids where he was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church. He attended Trinity Lutheran School until the middle of second grade. His family moved to Waterloo, Iowa where he attended Immanuel Lutheran School until February 1963. Just before finishing the 3rd grade his family moved to Salinas, California where he was a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Salinas. He attended public school in California through the 5th grade and the family moved back to Atkins, Iowa and returned to Lutheran parochial education. In 1972 he graduated from High School in Van Horne, Iowa and then moved again with his family to Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Pastor Rinderknecht graduated from Concordia College, St. Paul in 1979 and entered Concordia Seminary, St. Louis where he graduated in 1983. He served his vicarage at Trinity Lutheran Church in Davison, Michigan. Pastor Rinderknecht accepted his first Call to St. John's Lutheran Church just outside of Stony Plain, Alberta, Canada. He served at St. John's for 20 years. On September 7, 2003, Pastor Rinderknecht was installed at Trinity Lutheran Church in Billings, Montana as Senior Pastor where he serves to this day.

Pastor Rinderknecht also has served as a Circuit Counselor from 1986-1996. He was chairman for the North Alberta Church Workers Conference from 1991 to 1996. He began studies for the Doctor of Ministry degree in 1994 through Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. In 1996 Pastor Rinderknecht was elected as Vice President for Lutheran Church-Canada and in 2002 was elected as First Vice President of LC-C. From 1996- 2003 he also served as the Chairman of the Board of Regents for Concordia Lutheran Seminary in Edmonton, Alberta and was a member of the Board of Directors of Lutheran Church-Canada. In the Fall of 1999 and the Spring of 2013 he taught at the Lutheran Seminary in Odessa, Ukraine. He served on the Board of Directors for the Montana District from 2006-2009.

Pastor Rinderknecht was joined in marriage with Cathy (nee: Schiefelbein) on January 29, 1977. God has blessed them with four children and four grandchildren. He enjoys a variety of activities: visiting children and grandchildren; playing guitar; working with his hands in construction; golf; music; reading and traveling. He continually marvels at God's abundant blessings given to him by grace and counts it a privilege to share the love and grace of Jesus.

Tabbert, Rev. Christopher

Personal

Born: New York, NY, March 7, 1951

Grew up in and around NYC and New Jersey

Moved to Texas to attend University in 1969; lived in N. Texas for 25 years.

Married Cheryl Hollabaugh, 1973.

We have been blessed with three daughters, and eleven grandchildren (to date!)

Education

* University of Texas at Arlington, B.A. 1973, Psychology

* U. of Texas, Arlington, 30 hours graduate work in Experimental Psychology ('74-'75)

Professional Experience prior to Seminary (1975-1994)

* Television production, broadcast engineering, writing and consulting (4 years).

* Senior manager positions in corporate training, marketing communications, product marketing, and new business venture development for a world-wide telecommunications manufacturer (15 years).

Also:

Served on Board of Elders, Jr. High Sunday School Teacher, Nursing Home Devotions Leader and Family "Cell Group" Careciple Leader in home congregation, prior to Seminary.

Seminary/Ministry

* Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN; 1994-1998. MDiv. 1998.

* Serving as pastor at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Eureka, MT, 1998-Present.

District Activities

Flathead Circuit Counselor 2003- 2009

Flathead Circuit Pastoral Delegate to Synodical Conventions (2001, 2007 and 2013)

District Pastoral Representative to Synodical Theological Convocations (2004 and 2008)

Chaired District Theological Convocation, 2005

Served on Pastors' Conference Program Planning Committee

Elected 2nd Vice-President at 2009 MT District Convention

Filled out term as 1st Vice-President 2010-2012

Elected to office of 1st Vice-President at 2012 District Convention-Present

Eureka/Lincoln County Community Activities

HCE - Healthy Communities/Eureka - County Mental Health initiative, January 2018-Present

Good Samaritan Mountain View Manor Nursing Home, Advisory Board Member, 2004-Present

Eureka/Tobacco Valley Ministerial Association, 1998-Present

Horizons Community Leadership Program (Member, Steering Committee, 1 year)

Lincoln County Disaster Board (Community Planning Committee, 1 year)

Wendt, Rev. Ryan

Born 27 Aug 1974, in North Kansas City, Missouri to Curtis and Elenita Wendt. Baptized 8 Sept 1974, Confirmed 24 Apr 1988, Married Sara Elaine (Jaschen), 1 Aug 1998, and Ordained 12 Apr 2004, Holy Cross Lutheran Church (LCMS), Kansas City, MO. Ryan and Sara have been blessed to be able to raise four children, Samuel, Elizabeth, Lydia, and Rachel, six others are with the Lord.

Education: Holy Cross Lutheran School, Kansas City, MO: K-8; Kansas City Lutheran High School, Kansas City, MO, 1988-1992; Concordia College, Seward, NE, 1994-1998: B.S. in Education with Lutheran Teaching Diploma, Business and Theology. Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN, 2000-2004: M.Div., Exegetical and Systematic Theology. Vicarage (2002-2003): Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Billings MT, under Rev. Mark Grunst.

Ministry: (1) Teacher, May 1998, Rockford Lutheran High School, Rockford, Illinois. High School math, business, computer, and religion teacher, 1998-2000. Junior High School chapel coordinator; High School Varsity soccer coach and JV baseball Coach; Chairman of the Information Technology Department 1998-2000. Who's Who Among America's Teachers 1998-1999. (2) Pastor and Head Master, Zion Lutheran Church and School, Kearney, NE, 2004-2006. (3) Pastor, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Billings MT, May 2006-present. Vacancy Pastor, Mount Calvary, Colstrip, MT, fall 2008 - Easter 2009.

District Service: Board of Directors (2016-present); Technical Advisor (2008-present); Montana District Pastors' Conference Program Committee, (2008-2013), Pastors' Conference President (2013-2015); MT District Representative to LCMS Stewardship Conferences, (2014, 2015). Chairman of the Campus Ministry Committee and of the MT District High School Task Force (2006-2009).

Synod Service: Montana District Southern Circuit Voting Pastoral Delegate: 2010, 2013, 2016 LCMS Conventions. Floor Committee #5 (CTCR), 2016 LCMS Convention. Author for *Lutheran Witness*, *Concordia Pulpit*, and *Billings Gazette*.

Other Service: *Pro Bono* computer services to numerous non-profits in Rockford, IL, Kearney, NE, and Billings, MT (ongoing). Golden Eagle Community Water Board Users' Association, Board of Directors (2008-present). Regular participant at the meetings of the Billings South Side Task Force (2007-present).

NOMINEES FOR MONTANA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECRETARY OF THE DISTRICT

Peterson, Rev. Kevin

Rev. Kevin M. Peterson was born on April 20, 1967, in Fayetteville, NC, to Carl & Lois Peterson. He has been married to Julia (nee Johannes) for almost 29 years and they are the parents of Faith (23), Jared (21), Hope (17), and Jesse (15). A graduate of Clarksville High School (Tennessee - 1985) and Concordia Teachers College (Seward, NE - 1993), he taught for two years at St. Matthew Lutheran School in Holt, MI, before heading off to the seminary. Following graduation from Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne, IN, he was ordained and installed in June of 1999 as pastor of Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Commerce City, Colorado. He served there for nearly nine years before he received the call to his current parish, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Salmon, ID. In his time as pastor, he has served the church-at-large in a number of different capacities: such as, LLL and LWML zone counselors, Northeast Denver Circuit Counselor, Chairman - Rocky Mountain District Bylaws Committee, Chairman - House Church Task Force (RMD), President - Denver Area Pastors' Conference (RMD), Program Coordinator - Denver Area Pastors' Conference (RMD), and Mentor - Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology. He currently is serving as the Chairman of the Montana District's Stewardship and Human Care Committee.

PASTOR MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wendt, Rev. Ryan

See bio under Nominees for Montana District Vice President

LAY MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Hartman, Kendall

Kendall is married to Dee Ann (43 years), two kids (Travis 38 and Kari 33) and three grandchildren. Kendall was confirmed at Trinity Lutheran Church in Billings and was an original member of Christ the King Lutheran Church. Kendall was a member at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Park City, MT before transferring back to Christ the King Lutheran in Billings. His son, daughter and family all attend Christ the King Lutheran Church.

Work History:

Manager of Knox Lumber Company in Billings, Mt for 25 years. Supervised up to 100 employees. Responsible for product purchasing, sales, delivery, training of staff, human resource management, budget planning and administration. Area manager of Knox Lumber Company overseeing stores in Billings, Mt, Fargo, ND, and Sioux Falls, SD. Was Business Consultant with the State of Montana (13 years) working with businesses on issues with human resources, hiring, firing, layoffs, employee retention, and labor laws.

Boards and Associations:

B.E.A.R. (Business Expansion and Retention with Big Sky Economic Development) (10 years)

Rural B.E.A.R. (Business Expansion and Retention with Beartooth Resource Conservation and Development) (10 years)
Stillwater County Planning Board (2 years)
Bach Group Home Board of Directors (5 years)
Beartooth Resource Conservation and Development Board of Directors (10 years)

In Christ:

Montana District Stewardship/Human Care Committee member (2 years)
Youth Advisor/ Chaperone "River of Life" youth gathering in San Antonio, Texas
President St Paul's Lutheran Church in Park City, Mt. (2 years)
Treasurer Christ the King Lutheran Church in Billings, Mt. (2 years)
Vice President Christ the King Lutheran Church in Billings, Mt (1 year)
President Christ the King Lutheran Church in Billings, Mt. (3 years, currently serving)
Elder Christ the King Lutheran Church in Billings, Mt (5 years, currently serving)

Lewis, Pat

Patrick (Pat) Lewis is a member of Peace Lutheran Church in Great Falls. Over the years, he has served on Peace's Board of Elders (current Board Chairman) and their Board of Trustees. Additionally, he conducts lay-led services at Peace and First Lutheran in Fort Benton during Pastoral absences. Pat is a past member of the Montana District Board of Directors and a current Synodical Dispute Resolution Panel Facilitator. During his free time, he enjoys hunting, fishing, and golf. He is married to Helen Lewis (nee Mentzel). They have three grown children: Brandon, Jennifer, and Michael, and eight grandchildren.

Meier, Keith

Keith is married to Pam Meier (28 years), two kids (Garret-23; McKenna- 18, graduating senior @ Billings West); both kids attended Trinity Lutheran School K-8; Keith & Pam are lifelong LCMS members and products of Lutheran K-8 schools in Iowa District East. Lived in Billings for 23 years, Salt Lake City for 3 years, Albany, NY for 3 years, Iowa for 23 years. BS Meteorology (Iowa State University); MS Atmospheric Science (State University of New York @ Albany).

Professionally:

Meteorologist In Charge of the National Weather Service Billings, MT (18 years) - Responsible for supervision of 22 staff members (ranging from scientists to technical specialists and administrative support staff); Administer budgets, project development/management/implementation. direct software development/implementation. Strengths: Human Resource management, development of procedures/work flow processes and identification of technical issues/solutions.

Church Work:

- Montana Board of Directors (2006-2009; 2015-2018)
- Member of Synodical Committee for Convention Nomination for 2007 Convention (Montana District rep)
- Congregational Executive Director (3 years)

- Director:
 - Boards of Elders/Lay Ministry (4 years)
 - Stewardship (4 years)
- Board Member
 - Elders/Lay Ministry (14 years)
 - Stewardship (2 years)
 - Endowments (3 years)
 - Education (liaison)
- Sunday School/Bible Class Teacher
 - High School Youth
 - Grades 4-5
 - Topical Adult/small group
- Usher (25+ years)

Volunteer basketball coach, Trinity Lutheran School (boys-5th/6th grade-2 years; girls - 7th/8th assistant-2 years)

Volunteer for Billings Education Foundation - Saturday Live (numerous years)

Volunteer for Billings Clinic Classic (5 years)

Rigby, Jim

James Rigby resides in Billings with his wife Sarah, and their daughters Abigail (14) and Rebekah (11,) where they are busy homeschooling. The Rigbys moved to Billings in 2014 from Seattle after visiting Mount Olive Lutheran Church. The purpose of the move was to enable the girls to grow up in a Christian-friendly community.

The Rigbys transferred their LCMS membership to Mount Olive Lutheran Church at the time of their move and have been members since then. Rigby serves on the Mount Olive Lutheran Church Council of Deacons and is Schoolboard President of the Mount Olive Lutheran Church Day School -Classical Academy. Rigby recently spearheaded the effort at Mount Olive to amend their By-Laws to include sections from the LCMS-Alliance Defending Freedom project: Protecting Your Ministry From Sexual Orientation Gender Identity Lawsuits. Rigby is also working through the Council of Deacons to initiate security protocols during services.

Sarah and Jim were married at Messiah LCMS in Seattle in 2002. Jim became a member of Messiah LCMS in 2000. He served as the Church Council Secretary for several years and served as Messiah's representative on the Concordia Day School Schoolboard.

Rigby practiced law at his firm in Seattle, The Rigby Law Firm, for 35 years, prior to moving to Billings. He was a bankruptcy trustee and his practice focused on bankruptcy matters. He has not taken new cases since moving to Montana and has wound down his Washington practice. Rigby has obtained a Montana license to practice law, but is not engaged in the active practice of law in Montana.

Rigby did, however, assist in drafting Montana Senate Joint Resolution No. 15, adopted by both houses in 2017. The resolution chastised the Montana Supreme Court for proposing to adopt sanctionable rules of professional conduct for lawyers which

prohibit biblical statements concerning marriage and sexual relations, prohibit membership in churches which literally profess the Sixth Commandment, and prohibit representation of clients who take traditional biblical stances concerning such matters.

Rigby received his law degree from the University of Puget Sound School of Law in 1979. He graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in political science in 1976. He was born in 1954 and grew up in Everett, Washington where he was baptized and confirmed at Faith Lutheran Church (LCA).

Roseleip, Jerry

Jerry Roseleip, 62, is a lifelong member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. He is baptized and confirmed at Zion Lutheran Church in St. Ignatius, Montana and served as President, Vice -President, Secretary and Treasurer of that congregation over the years. He currently is a member of Grace Lutheran Church in Three Forks. He served on the Montana District LCMS Board of Directors from 2000-2009 and was re-elected to the District Board in 2012. He served the District as a member of the Stewardship-Human Care Committee working with Prison Ministry in the District from 2009-2012. He served as a delegate from the Divide Circuit to the 2010 Synodical Convention. Jerry and his wife, Billye, farmed in St. Ignatius for many years and Jerry is now a Dairy Supervisor for Montana Correctional Enterprises in Deer Lodge. They have five grown children and 14 grandchildren.

TEACHER MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thomas, Richard

See bio under Amicus Christi Award

NOMINEES FOR THE CONVENTION NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

PASTOR MEMBER OF THE CONVENTION NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Koss, Rev. James

Retired in April 2015 as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Hardin. He has served as Chairman of the District Indian Mission Committee.

Whaley, Rev. Kyle

I was born in 1965 in Billings, Montana into a family with a strong Lutheran heritage. From Kindergarten until the 8th grade I was in a parochial school run by our church. I attended Trinity Lutheran School, (Billings & Kalispell). I attended Trinity Lutheran Church in Kalispell. My family moved to Bigfork, Montana. I graduated from Bigfork High School in 1983. I moved to Missoula to attend the University of Montana.

In 1992 I volunteered to work with our missionaries in Panama. For two months I taught English as a second language while helping the missionaries in whatever they asked.

At 33 years of age I joined the United States Navy. I was trained as an Electronics Technician with a specialty in satellite communications. I travelled around the world seeing what I had only read in books. I advanced quickly through the ranks to become a valued and respected member of our country's armed forces,

When I joined the Navy I was fortunate enough to have Lutheran chaplains available to me. I thrived in the service and even devoted my free time to assisting the Chaplains in their service whenever possible. I became good friends with my Chaplain and colleague and am still in contact with him today.

My enlistment period was coming to an end and it was time for me to re-enlist or move on to other opportunities. I had completed my bachelor's degree at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Ill. At that time, I decided to return to school, specifically the Seminary.

I moved to St. Louis to attend the Concordia Seminary as a Master's of Divinity student. I sold my house in Montana to help pay for my education. For six months I remained in the Naval Reserves in order to maintain my military connections as well as my pension. The school work was very intensive and I left the Reserve unit in order to concentrate on my studies. It was obviously the right thing to do since the month after my discharge, my unit was called up for duty in Kuwait.

I graduated from Concordia Seminary on May 27, 2010 with a Masters of Divinity degree. I was called to the two parishes of St. Ignatius and Polson, MT. I am very happy to be back in the country where I grew up and am blessed by the Grace of God for my new vocation.

LAY MEMBER OF THE CONVENTION NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Bauer, Kale

Kale is 30 years old. He is an E/I Field Tech for Conoco. He is Vice President of Hope Lutheran Church in Billings.

Olinghouse, Joel

TEACHER MEMBER OF THE CONVENTION NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Braaten, Becky

NOMINEES FOR THE SYNODICAL COMMITTEE FOR CONVENTION NOMINATIONS

Delgado, Frank

Frank is a graduate of Pepperdine University with a BA, and owns his own business. He attends St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ronan.

He has served on the Montana District Board of Directors, and the District Mission and Evangelism committee. He has served as Vice President of the Church Council. He served on the Ronan Library Board of Directors and as president of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

Hein, Gregg

Billings, MT; Mount Olive (MT); LCMS Age 57

I am married to DeAnn (nee Meyr) and have 6 children. Currently employed as a salesman for Gensco, a wholesale HVAC distributor. I am a member of Mount Olive Lutheran in Billings, MT, where I was confirmed as a junior in 1975. I was recently elected to serve as president of the congregation. I have served as a member of the Board of Regents of CUSP. I have been a delegate to the district convention and a delegate to a synodical convention. I am an alumnus of CUSP (B.A., '82) and have an M.Div. ('86) from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Hildenburg, Steven

Steve Hildenburg was born in Colorado and grew up in Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas. He served many years in the Air Force, before earning a degree in Business from the University of Northern Colorado. Upon graduation, Steven re-entered the Air Force as a commissioned officer. During this time, Steven was stationed in South Dakota, Germany, and South Korea, and earned a MBA from the University of South Dakota. He retired from active military service in 1996 after a 23-year career. He has since worked for Aid Association for Lutherans, as a Home Repair and Remodeling contractor, for the Small Business Administration as an on call Disaster Claims Verification officer, Regional Manager for the Cleary Building Corporations, and as the Montana District – LCMS Treasurer and Business Manager.

Steve married Sally (from Billings, MT) in 1979. 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. He has also served as a committee member and Chairman of the LCMS Business Managers Planning Committee. Steve and Sallie spend their winters at their beach home in Surfside Beach, Texas to be around their grandchildren and spend their summers here in Billings Montana.

Roseleip, Jerry

See bio under Lay Member of the Board of Directors

Schultz, Shelly

Raised in the small town of Noonan, North Dakota, I grew up with a love of the outdoors and the prairies. In keeping with my interests, I attended NDSU-Bottineau Branch Institute of Forestry (now Dakota College) and earned an associate's degree in wildlife management. Understanding that full-time employment in the wildlife field is not easily obtained, I furthered my education earning a double major in English and biology, and eventually I completed my master's degree in literacy. For over thirty-five years, I have worked as an instructor, teaching courses ranging from life science to AP literature. Coupled with my teaching, I have also coached academic and athletic activities, and involved myself with FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes), and NHS (National Honor Society), while teaching Sunday school, and serving on various church boards and church council. Presently, I teach middle school English, life science, and biology at Trinity Christian School, and I coach the debate team and the middle school speech team. I have one son who is a pastor in Lake City, Iowa, and my husband, Greg, is an attorney in Williston, ND.

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **1-01 TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S GIFT OF PASTORS AND**
4 **TO MEMORIALIZE THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD**
5 **TO INCREASE ITS BUDGETED SUPPORT OF BOTH SEMINARIES**
6

7 WHEREAS, "Our churches teach that people cannot be justified before God by their
8 own strength, merits, or works. People are freely justified for Christ's sake, through
9 faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are
10 forgiven for Christ's sake. By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins. God
11 counts this faith for righteousness in His saints (Romans 3 and 4)" (Augsburg
12 Confession IV); and,
13

14 WHEREAS, "This article about justification by faith (as the Apology says) is the chief
15 article in all Christian doctrine. Without this teaching no poor conscience can have
16 any firm consolation or truly know the riches of Christ's grace." (Formula of
17 Concord, Solid Declaration, III.6); and,
18

19 WHEREAS, "So that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and
20 administering the Sacraments was instituted. Through the Word and Sacraments, as
21 through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given. He works faith, when and where it
22 pleases God, in those that hear the good news that God justifies those who believe
23 that they are received by grace for Christ's sake. This happens, not through our
24 merits, but for Christ's sake." (Augsburg Confession V); and,
25

26 WHEREAS, "He Himself gave the apostles, and the prophets, and the evangelists, and
27 the pastors, that is, teachers unto the equipping of the saints into work of service,
28 into building the Body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-12); and,
29

30 WHEREAS, "How can they call on the One in whom they have not believed? Yet how
31 can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard? Yet how can they hear
32 without someone preaching? Yet how can anyone preach unless he is sent? As it is
33 written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'" (Romans 10:14-
34 15); and,
35

36 WHEREAS, "The Synod is organized to work in support of and on behalf of
37 congregations to assist them in carrying out their ministries as they seek to serve our
38 Lord Jesus Christ, the members of His body, and the whole world which stands in
39 need of the Word and the impact of His redeeming love." The Synod is "to assist
40 [member congregations] in carrying out their functions of worship, witness,
41 teaching and nurture, service, and support." (LCMS Bylaw 1.1.1); and,

42 WHEREAS, the Synod's objectives are:

- 43 "1. Conserve and promote unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3-6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through
44 its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and
45 provide a united defense against schisms, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy;
- 46 "2. Strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and
47 deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that
48 Gospel witness into all the world;
- 49 "3. Recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers and
50 provide opportunity for their continuing growth;
- 51 "4. Provide opportunities through which its members may express their Christian
52 concern, love, and compassion in meeting human needs;
- 53 "5. Aid congregations to develop processes of thorough Christian education and
54 nurture and to establish agencies of Christian education such as elementary and
55 secondary schools and to support synodical colleges, universities, and seminaries;
- 56 "6. Aid congregations in providing a variety of resources and opportunities for
57 recognizing, promoting, expressing, conserving, and defending their confessional
58 unity in the true faith;
- 59 "7. Encourage congregations to strive for uniformity in church practice, but also to
60 develop an appreciation of a variety of responsible practices and customs which are
61 in harmony with our common confession of faith;
- 62 "8. Provide evangelical supervision, counsel, and care for pastors, teachers, and other
63 professional church workers of the Synod in the performance of their official duties;
- 64 "9. Provide protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other professional
65 church workers in the performance of their official duties and the maintenance of
66 their rights;
- 67 "10. Aid in providing for the welfare of pastors, teachers, and other professional church
68 workers, and their families in the event of illness, disability, retirement, special need,
69 or death." (Constitution of the LCMS, Article III); and,

70

71 WHEREAS, the ministry of teaching the Gospel is needed to best carry out objectives 1,
72 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7; and a major way to provide for "the welfare of pastors" is not to
73 saddle seminary graduates with large debt upon graduation; and,

74

75 WHEREAS the number of pastoral candidates is down from "240 recent annual
76 averages of candidates" to "90 pastoral candidates" in 2017 to "87 pastoral candidates
77 expected" in 2018, which is not sufficient to cover the Synod's needs (*Reporter*,
78 November, 2017); and,

79

80 WHEREAS in May, 2017, the Board of Regents for Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
81 approved a budget of \$23 million dollars "for the coming fiscal year" [2017-18]
82 (Concordia Seminary News), and Concordia Theological Seminary has a budget of
83 \$12.9 million for "this fiscal year" [2017-18] (email from Dr. Ron Garwood, CTS

84 Board of Regents, December 1, 2017), and the two seminaries are also running the
85 Global Seminary Initiative; and,

86
87 WHEREAS, only 4.2% of the Synod's budget (\$3,097,000) goes toward "Pastoral
88 Education" (*Lutheran Witness*, November, 2017); therefore, be it
89

90 *RESOLVED*, that the Montana District meeting in convention acknowledge 1) that the
91 Lord of the Church has chosen, given, instituted, and established "the ministry of
92 teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments" (that is, the Office of the
93 Word/Pastoral Office) to be the primary means through which He expands His
94 kingdom and upholds His Body, the Church, 2) that it is through this Office that the
95 Synod carries out the majority of its purposes and objectives, and 3) that we receive
96 with thanksgiving both those men He has currently called to this office and those He
97 calls to be trained for this office; and be it further
98

99 *RESOLVED*, that the Montana District in convention memorialize the Lutheran
100 Church—Missouri Synod in convention in 2019 to adopt the above "RESOLVED" as
101 its own; and be it finally
102

103 *RESOLVED*, that the Montana District in convention memorialize the LCMS in
104 convention in 2019 to direct the Synod's Board of Directors to increase the Synod's
105 budgeted support of both seminaries by 10% *per annum* until reaching 50% of the
106 combined seminaries' budgets by the 2025 synodical budget.
107

108 Respectfully Submitted by

109
110 ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
111 LAUREL, MT

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **1-03 TO INCREASE THE ACADEMIC STANDARDS OF THE**
4 **SYNOD’S “SPECIFIC MINISTRY PASTOR” (SMP) PROGRAM**
5

6 WHEREAS, Jesus sets an example of the importance of a robust theological education
7 by teaching His disciples for nearly three uninterrupted years during which time He
8 warns them to “beware the leaven of the Pharisees” (Matt 16:6) along with many
9 other admonitions to watch, pray, guard and then to baptize and teach all nations
10 “to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt 28:20) and,
11

12 WHEREAS, after his conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul goes away into Arabia
13 to learn the Scriptures anew in light of the death and resurrection of Jesus and after
14 three years goes up to Jerusalem to present himself to Peter and to the other
15 Apostles to be recognized as one called by God to preach and teach (Acts 9,
16 Galatians 1:17-18), and
17

18 WHEREAS, after he had preached and taught for many years, Paul says to pastor
19 Timothy, “Command and teach these things... set the believers an example in
20 speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity ... devote yourself to the public
21 reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching... keep a close watch on yourself
22 and on the teaching” (1 Timothy 4:11-13, 16). Paul also challenges Timothy to “do
23 your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to
24 be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of Truth” (2 Timothy 2:15), and to “preach
25 the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with
26 complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure
27 sound teaching...” (2 Timothy 4:2-3a), and
28

29 WHEREAS, “handling the Word of Truth” rightly requires diligent study of God’s
30 Word and our Lutheran Confessions, knowledge of the original Biblical languages,
31 of the dogmatics and historical texts of the church, of the many heresies that the
32 devil continues to promote, of hermeneutical principles and homiletical approaches
33 as well as a good grasp of the entirety of God’s Word coupled with an aptitude to
34 teach, and
35

36 WHEREAS, “your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking
37 someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8), so too does he desire to destroy the teacher and
38 the pure teaching of God’s Word of Truth, and
39

40 WHEREAS, due to the importance of the work and the challenges of the vocation, the
41 church is cautioned by Jesus’ brother James, “Not many of you should become

42 teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater
43 strictness” (James 3:1), and,
44 WHEREAS, a teacher who teaches falsely, even from ignorance, leads many astray from
45 the Truth (Matt 5:19-20 and 18:6), and
46
47 WHEREAS, we desire to protect hearers of the Word from false teaching as well as
48 those who preach the Word from being unprepared for their Divinely given task,
49 and because we dare not return to the deplorable conditions that Dr. Luther found
50 among the uneducated clergy in the early days of the reformation,¹ and
51
52 WHEREAS, our congregations deserve well-trained pastors and the men who dedicate
53 themselves to this high calling deserve to be well-prepared to succeed in the task for
54 which they are sent, and
55
56 WHEREAS, world Lutheranism continues to look to our seminaries to send teachers
57 and to receive students so that their church bodies may benefit from greater
58 theological education, and
59
60 WHEREAS, both of our seminaries have recently undergone adjustments and
61 improvements to their curriculum to better serve the residential students, and
62
63 WHEREAS, the education of pastors remains one of the matters of primary importance
64 in our Synod for the sake of the pure proclamation of the Gospel around the world,
65 and
66
67 WHEREAS, the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program of Concordia Seminary, Saint
68 Louis (CSL), requires only a total of 16 online courses that are taught over four
69 years. Each class being only “an 11-week class,” and each course is “counted as two-
70 semester credit-hour courses:”², for a total of 32 credit-hours. After the 9th course is
71 completed the man in the SMP program is called by and ordained into the
72 congregation that at the outset signed an agreement with him to be their vicar and
73 enter this program, he is rostered as an SMP pastor and is permitted to administer
74 the sacraments as any general pastor, and
75
76 WHEREAS, the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program of Concordia Theological
77 Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), offers a slightly different curriculum the number of
78 online courses and credit-hours are the same as CSL’s program,³ and

¹ McCain, P. T. (Ed.). (2005). *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions* (pp. 352–353). St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

² CSL website on 1-11-2018, <https://www.csl.edu/academics/programs/specific-ministry-pastor-smp/>

³ CTSFW website on 1-11-2018, <http://www.ctsfw.edu/future-students/pastoral/smp/program-structure/>

79 WHEREAS, in dramatic contrast to the SMP program, the M.Div program of Concordia
80 Seminary requires a total of 98 credit hours, “averaging 12 credit hours per
81 semester” for three years of on-campus education plus a year of vicarage, prior to
82 graduation, certification, and ordination with no guarantee of a calling congregation
83 and placement,⁴ and

84
85 WHEREAS, the M.Div program of Concordia Theological Seminary stands in even
86 greater contrast to the limited education offered by the SMP program, requiring 139
87 credit hours during three years of on-campus education plus a year of vicarage and
88 two theological interviews prior to graduation, certification, and ordination, also
89 with no guarantee of a calling congregation and placement⁵, and

90
91 WHEREAS, the residential M.Div program of study offers a superior theological
92 education, and

93
94 WHEREAS, neither seminary’s SMP program is accredited and therefore the students in
95 the program are ineligible to receive government secured student loans, and

96
97 WHEREAS, neither seminary’s SMP program yields an academic degree that is
98 recognized by any national accrediting agency or academic institution including the
99 seminaries themselves, and

100

101 WHEREAS, neither seminary’s SMP program requires a bachelor’s degree for
102 admission, be it

103

104 *RESOLVED*, that ~~the Montana District in convention memorialize~~ the Synod and her
105 two seminaries, ~~to~~ immediately begin work to bring the academic standards of the
106 SMP program up to the standards of the residential M.DIV program by the start of
107 the academic year 2021 so that even though the time spent on campus will be
108 significantly less than in the residential program, still the academic competence of
109 the two programs will be equivalent, and be it further,

110

111 *RESOLVED*, that when the man in the SMP program completes all of his course work
112 and has undergone a final theological competency interview (known also as a
113 “Theological Interview”) by the institution administering the SMP program in which
114 he is participating, the SMP pastor would then be rostered as an M.DIV pastor, and
115 be it further

116

117 *RESOLVED*, that if after ordination the SMP pastor does not complete his coursework
118 within three academic years, he will be removed from the Roster of the Synod and

⁴ CSL website on 1-11-2018, <https://www.csl.edu/academics/programs/master-divinity-mdiv/>

⁵ CTSFW website on 1-11-2018, <http://www.ctsfw.edu/future-students/pastoral/mdiv/program-structure/>

119 not eligible to continue preaching or administering the sacraments in the LCMS, and
120 be it further

121
122 *RESOLVED*, that additional costs incurred by the seminaries to make all of their
123 residential classes suitable for distance education as well as all additional costs
124 incurred by adding necessary staff to cover the teaching of these classes be included
125 in the tuition of the program and be borne primarily by the SMP student with the
126 support of the congregation(s) and district that requested the man to pursue
127 ordination through this course of study, and be it further

128
129 *RESOLVED*, that by prayer this gathering give thanks to the Lord that He has preserved
130 His saving Word among us and that our seminaries and their faculty are among the
131 best in the confessional world, and be it further

132
133 *RESOLVED*, that each congregation and member of the Synod diligently pray that the
134 Lord of the Harvest would continue to send out more workers into His harvest field,
135 and be it finally

136
137 *RESOLVED*, that the Montana District memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt
138 this resolution as its own.

139
140
141
142
143

Respectfully Submitted by
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH
BILLINGS, MT

42 *RESOLVED* that Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Belgrade, Montana thank and praise
43 God for revealing to us His Word; and be it further

44
45 *RESOLVED* that we encourage the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to produce
46 materials to assist called church workers in teaching the significance of what God’s
47 Word teaches regarding the creation of the universe and the fall of man, specifically
48 that the universe was created in six ordinary, solar days by God’s command and
49 that all death is a result of sin; and be it further

50
51 *RESOLVED* that we encourage all rostered members of Synod teach what God’s Word
52 has revealed regarding these matters in every appropriate context; and be it finally

53
54 *RESOLVED* that we call upon the 2018 Convention of the Montana District of the
55 Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to make this resolution its own and memorialize
56 the 2019 Convention of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to do the same.

57
58 Respectfully Submitted by

59
60 HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH,
61 BELGRADE, MT
62 GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
63 THREE FORKS, MT

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **2-03 TO REVIEW LCMS EXECUTIVE SALARIES**

4
5 WHEREAS, the Holy Scriptures call us to be good stewards of all that God has given us
6 (II Cor. 9:6-15, Gal. 6:9-10, Phil. 1:9-11, I pt. 4:10-11), and

7
8 WHEREAS, the governing documents of the Synod call for stewardship to be a priority,
9 (2016 Synodical Handbook, 2.2.1 (a), 3.8.2, 4.4.4, (e), 4.6.1), and

10
11 WHEREAS, our beloved Synod often references a shortage of financial
12 support/offerings, (e.g. Witness, Reporter), and

13
14 WHEREAS, our synodical leaders are called to be servants of Christ by serving His
15 people, and not as corporate executives, (ecclesiastical model over against corporate
16 model), and

17
18 WHEREAS, those who thus serve are “called” to humble service, and not to “lord it
19 over the flock” (ordination and installation vows), and not for gain, and

20
21 WHEREAS, our synodical President is paid more than any U.S. Representative, Senator,
22 the Speaker of the House, the Majority and Minority Leaders, and the Vice-President
23 of the United States, (latest available information), and

24
25 WHEREAS, our synodical President is paid:
26 \$252,573 salary (Reporter, 11/17)
27 \$10,000 Entertainment allowance
28 Full Concordia Plans
29 Paid travel; and,

30
31 WHEREAS the synodical Secretary reports that the synodical President’s salary is
32 determined by averaging the actual salaries of the CEOs of: LCEF, LCMS
33 Foundation, CHI, and CPH which is then placed on a pay scale grid, and

34
35 WHEREAS, many Pastors and parochial school Teachers are poorly remunerated and
36 struggle to make ends meet, and

37
38 WHEREAS, the November 2017 Reporter reports that our six leading officials at the
39 synodical level make a combined salary of \$1,140,345, and

40
41 WHEREAS, the 2013 report of the Board of Directors includes the following, “the Board
42 of Directors is responsible for determining the compensation of the employees of
43 corporate Synod,” therefore be it

44 *RESOLVED*, that the Montana District in convention memorialize the LCMS in
45 convention to direct the Synodical Board of Directors to develop a new method of
46 establishing the salaries of our synodical officers, the synodical President in
47 particular, with an eye toward bringing said salaries into harmony with the
48 Scriptural call toward Godly stewardship, and humble service, and away from the
49 corporate world model.

50
51
52
53
54

Respectfully Submitted by

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH
WILLISTON, ND

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **3-01 TO ESTABLISH LUTHERAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS**
4 **(LERT) IN THE MONTANA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH**
5 **MISSOURI SYNOD**

6
7 WHEREAS, During calendar year 2017, nearly 2 million acres of Montana’s total land
8 mass of 93 million acres were destroyed by range and forest wildfire; and

9
10 WHEREAS, That 2,100 square miles of land and property that burned resulted in the
11 worst fire season in more than 100 years and cost state, federal and local government
12 and private citizens more than 300 million dollars to contain; and

13
14 WHEREAS, This fire trend unfortunately is continuing and even increasing as in 2012,
15 more than 1,800 square miles of Montana burned; and

16
17 WHEREAS, In 2017, just one range fire consumed more than 270,000 acres in the rural
18 counties just north of the Rosebud County, where Concordia Lutheran Church is
19 located; and

20
21 WHEREAS, While in 2012, a series of range and forest fires consumed more than
22 340,000 acres in Rosebud County, on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and in
23 adjoining counties; and

24
25 WHEREAS, Historical data indicates we must go back to 1910 to find a worse fire
26 season, when a major fire burned more than 4,000 square miles in Montana, Idaho,
27 and Washington; and

28
29 WHEREAS, In Musselshell County, the town of Roundup and its residents were
30 recently impacted by three (3) consecutive years of flooding of the Musselshell
31 River; and

32
33 WHEREAS, Along Montana’s highline 2017-2018 snowfall totals are already breaking
34 100-year records and the winter is only half over; and

35
36 WHEREAS, In 2017, these fires have resulted in loss of real and personal property (78
37 primary residences, 134 out-buildings and vacation homes, fences, vehicles, farm
38 equipment, crops, livestock) and human life (2 firefighter fatalities, 2 civilian
39 fatalities, 104 firefighter injuries); and

40
41 WHEREAS, Montanans continue to increasingly build their new residences and
42 recreational properties (78 percent in 2017) in more isolated locations in what is

43 known as the rural/urban interface, making protection of life and property even
44 more difficult for firefighters; and

45
46 WHEREAS, Besides increasing fire danger and damage, Montana is being increasingly
47 impacted by other man-made and natural disasters and in climate change effects
48 weather including drought, floods, blizzards, streams and rivers (large and small)
49 creating ice jams, hailstorms, earthquakes and tornadoes; and

50
51 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, at the Synod level, has implemented
52 a Lutheran Emergency Response Team (LERT) program and a coordinated Disaster
53 Response organization that responds to disasters all across the nation and even
54 internationally; and

55
56 WHEREAS, Many LCMS Districts and congregations across the country have
57 established LERT programs and secured Disaster Response Trailers (DRT) to better
58 respond to such disasters in their jurisdictions; and

59
60 WHEREAS, The Montana District of the LCMS has, to date, never developed or
61 implemented the establishment of a formal LERT program or secured resources to
62 purchase, stock and maintain DRTs; and

63
64 WHEREAS, These LERT teams of pastors and lay persons not only provide resources
65 and manpower to clean up and restore damaged properties and provide clothing,
66 food and water, but also minister to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of
67 those victims of such disasters; and

68
69 WHEREAS, Congregants of the LCMS Montana District are committed to community
70 service, outreach and social justice within their communities throughout the State;
71 and

72
73 WHEREAS, The establishment of a Montana District statewide coordinated Disaster
74 Response program, the establishment of local or regional congregation-based LERT
75 teams, and the establishment of Disaster Response Trailers that are strategically
76 located and can be readily deployed in such emergencies would be very beneficial to
77 victims of such disasters; and

78
79 WHEREAS, Many LCMS District members are already trained as firemen, EMTs, law
80 enforcement, Search and Rescue, Red Cross, Severe Weather Spotters and other
81 emergency service providers and could cross-train and partner with the potential
82 LERT members; and

83

84 WHEREAS, Resources may be available at the LCMS Synod level and elsewhere to train
85 LERT personnel and fund the establishment of strategically located Disaster
86 Response Trailers that could be deployed as needed; Therefore be it
87

88 *RESOLVED*, The LCMS Montana District establish a coordinated disaster response
89 program that includes the establishment and training of community or regionally-
90 based LERTs and assist in securing a sufficient number fully-equipped DRTs that
91 can be deployed to respond to such disaster; and be it further
92

93 *RESOLVED*, Montana District LCMS survey the District's congregations to prioritize
94 the need for and desire and ability of individual congregations to participate in such
95 LERT programs; and be it finally
96

97 *RESOLVED*, The Montana District LCMS seek financial resources at the synod, district,
98 and congregational levels as well as from governmental entities and non-profit
99 philanthropic individuals and organizations to establish, develop, maintain and
100 sustain a statewide LERT program and DRTs across Montana.
101

102
103 Respectfully Submitted by

104 CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH
105 FORSYTH, MT

42 WHEREAS, Such community service and outreach activities will not only build
43 goodwill with the served and the host city but will develop interaction and team
44 building, improve communication and partnership among the Convention
45 delegates; and

46
47 WHEREAS, Leveraging the combined manpower of the Convention attendees, even for
48 a short period of time, can have a substantial positive impact on the agencies and
49 their clients they serve; and

50
51 WHEREAS, Those participation in LCMS- affiliated organization meetings (Lutheran
52 Laymen’s League, LWML, etc.) and Winkle’s should be encouraged to explore,
53 learn about, and possibly participate in a community service and outreach activities
54 in the local community where they meet ; therefore be it

55
56 *RESOLVED*, That the Montana District LCMS set aside and promote at its District
57 Convention, a portion of the agenda for a community service and outreach activity
58 in the host community and make that an integral component of the convention
59 experience; and be it further

60
61 *RESOLVED*, That upon selection of a host community for such future convention, the
62 Montana District LCMS identify and prioritize originations and activities where
63 convention attendees can participate in such community service and outreach
64 activities; and be it further

65
66 *RESOLVED*, That prior to the convention, delegates be informed of and educated about
67 their possible community service and outreach activities and encouraged all
68 delegates to participate in such endeavors; and be it further

69
70 *RESOLVED*, That the LCMS Montana District encourage all LCMS affiliated
71 organizations to participate in such similar community service and outreach
72 activities in the host communities when and wherever they meet; and be it finally

73
74 *RESOLVED*, That the Montana District LCMS seek financial resources within and
75 outside the synod (i.e., Thrivent, LCMS Foundation, Rural and Small Town
76 Missions, etc.) to better conduct such activities and provide for the needs of the
77 participants.

78
79
80 Respectfully Submitted by

81
82 CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH
FORSYTH, MT

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **3-03 TO STREAMLINE THE CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**
4 **AND PROVIDE FOR THE EDUCATION OF PROFESSIONAL**
5 **CHURCH WORKERS**
6

7 WHEREAS the Concordia University System (CUS) is comprised of ten colleges and
8 universities in the United States which are affiliated with the Lutheran Church –
9 Missouri Synod; and

10
11 WHEREAS the initial purpose of these colleges and universities was to prepare men
12 and women for full time service in the church; and

13
14 WHEREAS many of the faculty at CUS institutions are not rostered members of Synod
15 nor members of LCMS congregations; and

16
17 WHEREAS the consistent confession of our faith has been visibly weakened at more
18 than one member CUS university in recent days (eg. The chartering of a Gay Pride
19 student organization at Concordia Portland and the publication of Advent
20 Devotions featuring ELCA female “clergy” at Concordia Bronxville); and

21
22 WHEREAS most students at CUS institutions are not in church work related programs;
23 and

24
25 WHEREAS it is extremely expensive to maintain the physical plant and bureaucratic
26 infrastructure for ten universities; and

27
28 WHEREAS the number of CUS students currently enrolled in church work programs
29 could easily be served at one campus; and

30
31 WHEREAS if plurality of the institutions of CUS were reduced it would be possible to
32 have a faculty that is completely comprised of rostered members of Synod; and

33
34 WHEREAS such an arrangement would enhance the ability of the Synod to attend to
35 the integrity of its confession; and

36
37 WHEREAS the collegial atmosphere of the Synod would be enhanced if more of the
38 church workers had more shared academic experiences; be it therefore

39
40 *RESOLVED* that Holy Trinity Lutheran Church memorialize the Montana District of the
41 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod to memorialize the 2019 Convention of the
42 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod to do the following:

- 43 1. Authorize the President of Synod to appoint a blue ribbon task force to
44 perform the following tasks.
- 45 a. Determine which campuses can best serve as the sites for a streamlined
46 Concordia University System with no more than four sites.
 - 47
 - 48 b. Constitute the new CUS with a primary focus on training such
49 students as desire to become rostered members of Synod – -namely
50 students preparing to attend a LCMS seminary for pastoral or
51 deaconess studies and students preparing to serve as commissioned
52 teachers, directors of Christian education, and directors of Christian
53 outreach.
 - 54
 - 55 c. Assess the needs of the new universities in terms of the number and
56 composition of the faculty.
 - 57
 - 58 d. Develop a plan for finding calls for rostered members of Synod
59 currently employed within the CUS who would not have a position at
60 the new universities.
 - 61
 - 62 e. Develop a plan for the gradual closing and sale of the unused
63 campuses over a period of ten years using the proceeds from such
64 sales to fund the new universities’ joint endowment and retire all
65 debts.
 - 66
 - 67 f. Develop a plan to raise additional monies (if necessary) to educate
68 professional church workers at no personal expense.
 - 69
 - 70 g. That to avoid squabbling between the alumni of current CUS
71 universities that as a part of the consolidation of the CUS campuses all
72 current universities be closed and the consolidated universities be new
73 corporate and academic entities.
 - 74
 - 75

76 Respectfully Submitted by

77
78 HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
79 BELGRADE, MT
80 GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
81 THREE FORKS, MT

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **4-02 TO CELEBRATE AND GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE 125TH**
4 **ANNIVERSARY OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, SEWARD,**
5 **NEBRASKA**

6
7 WHEREAS, Since its founding on November 18, 1894, the Lord of the Church has
8 blessed Concordia University, Nebraska by empowering it to serve The Lutheran
9 Church – Missouri Synod as an educational institution equipping students to learn,
10 serve and lead in the Church and world; and

11
12 WHEREAS, The Lord of the Church led the founders of the University to provide the
13 funds and land to locate the institution in Seward, Nebraska so that the institution
14 would be a blessing to the local community, the Nebraska and surrounding Districts
15 and the entire LCMS; and

16
17 WHEREAS, The Lord of the Church has blessed Concordia University, Nebraska to be
18 the leading preparer of fulltime workers in the ministries of the LCMS, as today it
19 places more graduates into the commissioned teaching and Director of Christian
20 Education ministries of the church than any other institution of the Concordia
21 University System; and

22
23 WHEREAS, The Lord of the Church has blessed Concordia University, Nebraska to
24 equip men for the pastoral ministry through its pre-seminary and other academic
25 programs so that, historically, each year between 40 and 50 are involved in academic
26 and spiritual preparation to study at an LCMS seminary with the result that seven
27 (7) percent of those serving as pastors in the LCMS today are alumni of Concordia
28 University, Nebraska; and

29
30 WHEREAS, The God of all creation has blessed Concordia University, Nebraska with
31 opportunities to equip students with a Lutheran Christian higher education for
32 vocations of service in business, laboratories, hospitals, industry, courtrooms,
33 government, the military, their home and the communities where they reside; and

34
35 WHEREAS, The God of all wisdom and knowledge has blessed Concordia University,
36 Nebraska by enabling it to serve the Church and world through 110 undergraduate
37 and graduate academic programs at its campuses in Seward and Lincoln, through its
38 high school partners and online; and

39
40 WHEREAS, The God of service has blessed the Church and world through the more
41 than 23,000 alumni, sainted and living, of Concordia University, Nebraska who have

42 walked by faith and not by sight and the hundreds of gifted and faithful faculty and
43 staff who served these men and women during their educational studies; and

44

45 WHEREAS, The God of abundance has blessed Concordia University, Nebraska
46 through the tens of thousands of donors who have faithfully supported the
47 University with their prayers, generous gifts and referral of students; and

48

49 WHEREAS, The God of grace and mercy continues to bless Concordia University with
50 record numbers of undergraduate and graduate students – 2,757 in 2016-17;
51 therefore, be it

52

53 *RESOLVED*, That the 2018 Convention of the Montana District of The Lutheran
54 Church – Missouri Synod pause from its regular business to offer special
55 thanksgiving and praise to almighty God for His continued blessings on Concordia
56 University, Nebraska and to commend its students, faculty, staff and administration
57 to His continued providential care. Be it further

58

59 *RESOLVED*, That the Montana District memorialize the LCMS at its July 2019
60 Convention to declare November 17, 2019 as a synod wide “Concordia University,
61 Nebraska Sunday,” encouraging and facilitating prayers, thanksgiving, offerings,
62 gifts and student referrals to be given in celebration of the Lord’s abundant blessings
63 to the Church through one of its treasured universities.

64

65

66

67

Respectfully Submitted by

MONTANA DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **4-03 TO STUDY HOW TO AMEND THE PRACTICE OF ISSUING OF**
4 **CALLS TO POSITIONS NOT IN THE DIRECT SERVICE OF THE**
5 **PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL**
6

7 WHEREAS {1}, The Augsburg Confession (AC) Article V. The Ministry states, “So that
8 we may obtain this faith [that our sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake, in Article IV],
9 the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was
10 instituted;”⁶; and,
11

12 WHEREAS {2}, AC Article XIV. Order in the Church states, “Our churches teach that no
13 one should publicly teach in the Church, or administer the Sacraments, without a
14 rightly ordered call;” and,
15

16 WHEREAS {3}, The Power and Primacy of the Pope (The Treatise), states, “The Gospel
17 assigns those who preside over Churches the command to teach the Gospel
18 [Matthew 28:19], to forgive sins [John 20:23], to administer the Sacraments, and also
19 to exercise jurisdiction;” and,
20

21 WHEREAS {4}, the Smalcald Articles Part III Article X. teach that “...[the bishops] do
22 not even want to be true bishops, but worldly lords and princes, who will neither
23 preach, nor teach, nor baptize, nor administer the Lord’s Supper, nor perform any
24 work or office of the Church,” and,
25

26 WHEREAS {5}, these Confessional statements infer that the purpose of a call is only
27 publicly teaching the Faith, and administering the Sacraments; and,
28

29 WHEREAS {6}, the constitution of the Synod accepts these Confessions as a true and
30 unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God; and,
31

32 WHEREAS {7}, since a number of called positions to the Synod offices, districts, colleges
33 and universities, CPH, LCEF, LCMS Foundation, CPS, CHI, CUS, etc., as well as
34 RSOs, and auxiliaries have little or no connection to Word and Sacrament, it seems
35 the LC-MS has the practice of issuing calls to positions whose duties do not require
36 teaching the Word or administering the Sacraments; and
37

38 WHEREAS {8}, the practice of issuing calls to positions that are not in the direct service
39 of the proclamation of The Gospel conflicts with the referenced portions of The
40 Confessions, and creates confusion regarding the nature of the call; therefore be it

⁶ All references from *Concordia The Lutheran Confessions, A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord* Second Edition, as cited (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), 33

41 *RESOLVED* {1}, that the Montana District convention memorialize-the LC-MS
42 convention in 2019 to direct the President of the LC-MS to appoint a committee of
43 one theological professor from each seminary and one district president to study
44 how the practice of issuing calls, (bylaw 3.11.1) to positions without direct
45 involvement in the proclamation of The Gospel and administration of The
46 Sacraments may be amended to comply with The Confessions; and be it further
47

48 *RESOLVED* {2}, that by July 30, 2020 this committee make its recommendations to the
49 LC-MS Board of Directors (BOD) regarding LC-MS practice on the calls it issues, and
50 be it finally
51

52 *RESOLVED* {3}, that these recommendations, together with the BOD response to the
53 recommendations be reported to the LC-MS convention in 2022.
54

55 Respectfully Submitted by
56
57 ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
58 PARK CITY, MT

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **5-01 TO AMEND MONTANA DISTRICT BYLAW 1.3.2.A**

4
5 WHEREAS, bylaw 1.3.2 currently reads:

- 6
- 7 "a. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall consist of three Ministers of
- 8 religion–ordained, one Minister of religion–commissioned, and three laymen.
- 9
- 10 b. The committee shall be elected by the District Convention triennially and
- 11 shall serve for the succeeding regular convention," and,
- 12

13 WHEREAS, the current use of electronic means for nominations and elections within
14 the district does not require the services of seven people, and

15
16 WHEREAS, Synodical bylaw 4.7.2 give districts the right to establish the constitution of
17 the nominating committee by stating in part, "A nominating committee of each
18 district shall be elected by the district convention," therefore be it

19
20 *RESOLVED* that bylaw 1.3.2.a be amended to be constituted of one ordained, one
21 commissioned and one layman, so that the amended by would read.

- 22
- 23 a. "The Nominations and Elections Committee shall consist of one Minister of
- 24 Religion–Ordained, one Minister of Religion–commissioned, and one layman,
- 25 one of which shall be appointed chairman by the Board at the first Montana
- 26 Board of Directors' meeting following the convention."
- 27

28 Respectfully Submitted by

29
30 MONTANA DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
31

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **5-02 AMENDMENT TO BYLAW 2.2.1.1**

4
5 WHEREAS, the Commission on Constitutional Matters notes that, as currently written,
6 Montana District Bylaw 2.2.1.1 does not adequately reflect the fact that the
7 Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod give District Presidents specific duties, and
8

9 WHEREAS, the bylaw currently reads:

10
11 **2.2.1. The President of the District**

12 **2.2.1.1 General Rights and Duties of the District President**

13
14 The District President, by virtue of his office, represents the Synod. His rights
15 and duties will therefore be similar in nature and identical insofar as they apply,
16 as outlined for the President of the Synod. (See Synodical Handbook) He shall
17 carry out his duties in accordance with the Constitution, bylaws, and resolutions
18 of the Synod. Therefore, be it
19

20 *RESOLVED*, that bylaw 2.2.1.1 be amended by inserting the phrase, “in addition to
21 those specified for District Presidents in Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod” in
22 the second sentence following, “His rights and duties will...” so that the bylaw as
23 amended would read.
24

25 **2.2.1. The President of the District**

26 **2.2.1.1 General Rights and Duties of the District President**

27
28 The District President, by virtue of his office, represents the Synod. His rights
29 and duties will, in addition to those specified for District Presidents in
30 Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod, therefore be similar in nature and
31 identical insofar as they apply, as outlined for the President of the Synod. (See
32 Synodical Handbook) He shall carry out his duties in accordance with the
33 Constitution, bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.
34

35 Respectfully Submitted by

36
37 MONTANA DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1 **2018 Montana District Convention Overture**

2
3 **5-04 AMENDMENT TO BYLAW 3.1**

4
5 WHEREAS, the Commission on Constitutional Matters notes that, as currently written,
6 Montana District Bylaw 3.1 does not adequately reflect the procedure for
7 amendment outlined in the Synodical bylaw, and
8

9 WHEREAS, Bylaw 3.1 currently reads:

10
11 **AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

12 **3.1 Amendments to the by-laws may be made, provided that they are:**

- 13 a. Not contrary to the constitution and by-laws of the Synod
- 14
- 15 b. Submitted to and approved by the Commission on Constitutional Matters in
- 16 advance of the District convention at which they are to be considered.
- 17
- 18 c. Submitted to the by-laws committee for review and recommendation prior to
- 19 the convention; therefore be it
- 20

21 *RESOLVED* to amend bylaw 3.1 by inserting the phrase, “, or proposed to the
22 convention as contingent on the approval of said Commission.” at the end of the
23 sentence in paragraph b, so that the proposed amendment would read:
24

25 **AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

26 **3.1 Amendments to the by-laws may be made, provided that they are:**

- 27 a. Not contrary to the constitution and by-laws of the Synod
- 28
- 29 b. Submitted to and approved by the Commission on Constitutional Matters in
- 30 advance of the District convention at which they are to be considered, or
- 31 proposed to the convention as contingent on the approval of said
- 32 Commission.
- 33
- 34 c. Submitted to the by-laws committee for review and recommendation prior to
- 35 the convention
- 36

37 Respectfully Submitted by

38
39 MONTANA DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CALLED TO GLORY

Rev. Arnold Fischer was born in 1931 to Ewald and Martha Fischer in Milbank, SD. He was called to glory on January 31, 2017. His funeral was held February 6, 2017 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Great Falls, MT.

During Rev. Fischer's ministry, he served congregations in North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, Wyoming and Nebraska, as well as serving as a Circuit Counselor and on various parish service committees.

Rev. Fischer was ordained on July 21, 1957, and installed to serve Zion in Fortuna, North Dakota, Redeemer in Crosby, North Dakota and Trinity in Plentywood, Montana.

His final call before retiring to Great Falls was to St. Paul in Rushville and Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hay Springs, Nebraska.

Rev. Fischer is survived by his wife Marjory, his two daughters, six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

AMICUS CHRISTI – Rev. Al Ebel

I am the first son of Paul and Mabel Ebel, born on Father's Day the 21st of June, 1942 in Alamosa, Colorado. My schooling occurred at First Lutheran Church and School in Long Beach, California, Walter Memorial Lutheran High school in Los Angeles, California, at Concordia Teacher's College, Seward, Nebraska and later Master Degrees from Azusa Pacific University, Concordia University Nebraska and a colloquy from Concordia Theological Seminary at Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Nancy, the second daughter, and third child of Don and Ruth Seim and I were married on June 17, 1966 in Covina, California. She graduated from C.T.C. Seward in 1966 two years after I did. We met during her freshman year as she and her house mates were in the process of moving from a campus house to the new dorm, "Ruth." I was partnered with her cousin, Dan Seim in a "new sheet for a dirty one," a campus perk once upon a time. We are proud parents of three children, Robert living in Nebraska with his wife Joni, Thomas living in Billings, Montana with his wife and four children (two of which are attending Concordia, Nebraska) and Susan living in Lake Forrest, California with Glenn and five children (two of which attend Concordia, Irvine).

I began teaching in Lutheran Schools at Our Savior Lutheran Church and School in Lake Worth, Florida in 1964 and Nancy began her teaching career at Trinity Lutheran School in Delray Beach, Florida in 1966. In the spring of 1968 we were asked to be missionary educators in Papua New Guinea. We arrived in October to begin Language School and in January 1969 I began teaching Standard Five and being Head Teacher at Papayuku Lutheran School. While at Papayuku both Richard and Thomas were born. In 1972 we moved to Amapyaka to teach at the School for Missionary's Children. Susan was born in 1973. All three were born at Immanuel Lutheran Hospital at Mambasanda. While on furlough, we spent the fall of 1973 and summer of 1974 at Concordia, Seward. We returned to Amapyaka to teach another four years before returning to the USA and Seward.

After finishing the Master's degree at Seward I began working at the Center for Indian Ministry and Studies at Seward which lasted until 1985 when we moved to CTS in Fort Wayne in the Fall of 1986. I did my vicarage at Messiah Lutheran Church on Oahu (Hawaii) in the summer of 1987 and was ordained at Messiah in the spring of 1988. In 1997 I accepted a call to be the pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Havre, Montana and Zion Lutheran Church in Chinook, MT retiring in 2005.

Nancy and I bought a house in Red Lodge, Montana for retirement, but before moving there I served a vacancy at Grace in Hamilton. While in retirement and living in Red Lodge I was asked and accepted the position of pastor of Trinity in Harlowton from 2008-2011. In 2011 Nancy and I were asked to attend the confirmation ceremony of Glenn and Susan's oldest two children at the Lutheran Seminary in Pretoria, South Africa. During the six months in South Africa I served as vacancy pastor for

Evangelical Lutheran Fellowship in Johannesburg (Randsburg), South Africa. Returning to Rd Lodge I served a vacancy in Rudoso, New Mexico after which I helped at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Powell, Wyoming while their pastor was recovering from an illness and later as vacancy pastor in Butte and the Tri-parish in Colstrip, Forsyth and Hysham.

Nancy and I are living in Billings. We have nine grandchildren, no pets, four sewing machines, a house, a car, a truck, a travel trailer and our walls fills with mementoes of the places God has sent us and His children we have met. The blank spots on the walls are covered with many of the quilts that Nancy has made. We are thankful that God has sent us to many places visiting with many of His elect and being given children and grandchildren who are members of His family and ours.

AMICUS CHRISTI - Richard Thomas

Rick was born in Bryan, Ohio in 1958-though he says he's a true Hoosier, not a Buckeye! He did grow up in Fort Wayne, Indiana. His education was entirely through the Lutheran school system in Fort Wayne, graduating from Trinity Lutheran Grade School and Concordia High School. Rick went on to graduate from Concordia Teacher's College in Seward, Nebraska. (To pay his way through college, Rick and his dad ran a concession business during the summer months.) He earned his Master's Degree from Indiana University.

Rick's first teaching call was to Brownstown, Indiana-a small, rural town in the southern-most part of the state. After three years there, he received a teaching call to Fort Wayne. It happened to be to the same grade school he had attended! He enjoyed seven years of teaching there, three of those years also being the principal. In 1992, Rick received another call, this time to Trinity Lutheran School in Billings, Montana! Rick's wife Suzie, grew up in Billings and loved the idea of living close to family! Rick has been Trinity's principal along with part-time teacher for 26 years.

When asked who influenced Rick to become a Lutheran school teacher, he said it was his fifth grade teacher, Mr. Don Hendrickson. He was a wonderful example of dedication to his Savior and sharing his love for Jesus with his students. Mr. Hendrickson also happened to be Rick's Boy Scout leader!

Rick is married to Suzie, the Kindergarten teacher at Trinity. They met in college in Seward. They have four grown children, 2 daughters-in-law, 1 son-in-law, and 3 grandchildren.

Rick enjoys everything about living in Montana! He loves hunting, camping, and fly fishing. Rick's favorite Bible verse is Psalm 46:10.

Be still, and know that I am God. I am exalted among the nations. I am exalted in the earth!