

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
California - Nevada - Hawaii
72nd District Convention

First Session
Friday, May 6th, 2022

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

On Thursday, May 5th convention attendees gathered at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church and School in Livermore at 6:30 pm for a “Cinco de Mayo” themed dinner and time of fellowship. The dinner was followed by a Service of Divine Worship in the Church sanctuary. The sermon for the evening was presented by Synod President, the Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison. President Harrison’s theme for the evening’s message was “Rock Solid”.

1. ORIENTATION

Secretary Rev. John Standley welcomed delegates to the convention at 9:30 am and offered comments about convention procedure. Convention Parliamentarian Rev. Richard Rice reviewed the Convention Standing Rules.

This year the convention will use the Election Buddy program for voting. LCEF District Vice President, Edward Kwak offered an overview of the system and Log-In instructions. After all voting delegates had access to the program several test votes were taken. Edward, Doug Benton, and others were available throughout the convention to assist delegates.

2. OPENING

CNH District President Rev. Michael Lange opened the convention at 10:15 am. The President’s opening comments built on the convention theme “Building Our House(s) on the Rock”.

Mike went on to introduce several of our guests and district workers. LCMS Synod President Matthew Harrison, CNH President Emeritus Walter Tietjen and his wife Ione, CNH President Emeritus Robert Newton and his wife Pricilla, Mike’s wife Kristi Lange, CNH 1st Vice President Tom Zelt, CNH Board of Directors, and Administrative Assistant Glenna Sanlis.

The President thanked Rev. Dr. Tom Zelt, the Worship Team, and all the workers at Prince of Peace that made Thursday evening’s pre-convention activities such a memorable experience.

3. REGISTRATION REPORT

Rev. John-Paul Meyer presented the first Convention Registration Report. A detailed list of convention attendees will be posted in the Convention Proceedings.

Voting Lay Delegates = 76

Voting Pastoral Delegates = 67

Total Voting Delegates = 143

Total Non-Voting Participants = 100

Total Registered = 243

4. ADOPTION OF THE STANDING RULES

President Lange asked for a motion to approve the Standing Rules that were read by Parliamentarian Rick Rice during the Orientation. ***A motion was made and seconded to adopt the Standing Rules. The motion was approved.***

5. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The President asked for a motion to approve the Convention Agenda as posted earlier by email. ***A motion was made and seconded to adopt the Convention Agenda. The motion was approved.***

6. OPENING DEVOTION

Rev. Mark Whittaker, Senior Administrative Pastor of Peace Lutheran Church – Arroyo Grande, CA offered the opening devotion. In his devotion Rev. Whittaker followed the Convention theme “Building Our House(s) on the Rock” noting that the Rock is no mere concept, rather it is a new reality. Building Our House(s) on the Rock is a complete reorientation of life.

Peter denied Christ, later Jesus appears to Peter with His peace (Shalom). Christ’s peace was life-changing for Peter just as it is for us. What would it be like to see Jesus in the tomb and then three days later be in the presence of the Risen Lord? Peter was changed forever, as are we.

Mark used a series of Scripture readings in his devotion. That list can be found in the addendum to the convention minutes. The time of devotion was closed with prayer and singing of the hymn “*Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds*” LSB 465

7. MEMORIAL ROLL CALL

President Lange called the names of the Ordained and Commissioned Ministers that were called to glory in the past Quadrennium. The list of these names can be found in the Convention Proceedings workbook.

8. DISTRICT PRESIDENT’S REPORT – PART 1

President Lange offered opening remarks reflecting on the challenges in the District over the past four years. A video was shown building on the theme of the convention – *Building Our House(s) on the Rock*. (Check the Convention Website for Convention Videos).

Mike introduced Joel Wahlers who serves as Assistant to the President - Education. Joel spoke briefly about the Strategic Ministry Plan (SMP) that has been developed by the president and staff as a strategic plan for district operations. Joel reviewed the five components of the plan – Mission / Vision / Values / Goals / Initiatives.

Joe Robb – Assistant to the President – Missions introduced a video featuring the Mercy Hollistic Ministry led by Rev. Berhanu Didanu. The ministry offers showers and other basic needs to the homeless community in the Greater Sacramento Area.

Mike added additional comments to conclude the first part of his report.

9. WELCOME TO NEW DISTRICT CONGREGATIONS

The President welcomed representatives of two new district congregations, St. Matthew's – Kauai, Hawaii, and Shepherd of the Valley – Galt, CA to the podium. Members of the third congregation Trinity – Chowchilla, CA were not able to attend. The Lay members representing St. Matthew's and Shepherd of the Valley met with Secretary Standley to sign the district's constitution.

10. ELECTION PROCEDURES

Rev. Rob Weller, Chair of the Elections Committee thanked his committee and offered comments concerning election procedures. The Chair advised that nominations from the floor would be accepted for all elections except for President and First Vice President. Permission from the nominee and a short Bio would be required for all floor nominations. Rob also reviewed the process that is proposed for elections in the Regional Caucuses.

11. ELECTION OF THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

Nominees for the office of President were:

Rev. Jason Bredeson – Accepted Nomination

Rev. Michael Lange – Accepted Nomination

Rev. Todd Pepperkorn – No longer in CNH District

Rev. Dr. Thomas Zelt – Declined Nomination

A prayer was offered by Rob before the start of the election.

Election Results:

Rev. Jason Bredeson – 26

Rev. Michael Lange – 120

Rev. Michael Lange was elected as the President of the CNH District of the LCMS

Rev. Zelt offer words of prayer for President Lange

12. ELECTION OF THE DISTRICT FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Nominees for the office of First Vice President were:

Rev. Daniel Deuel – Accepted Nomination

Rev. Mitchell Gowen – Accepted Nomination

Rev. Dr. Thomas Zelt – Declined Nomination

Rev. Mark Zier – Accepted Nomination

Election Results – First Vice President

Rev. Daniel Deuel – 41

Rev. Mitchell Gowen – 81

Rev. Mark Zier – 15

Rev. Mitchell Gowen was elected as the First Vice President of the CNH District of the LCMS

President Lange offered a prayer for leadership for Mitch.

13. INTRODUCTION OF DISTRICT STAFF

While waiting for the previous vote to begin, President Lange introduced his staff:

Glenna Sanlis -- Administrative Assistant -- Office of the President

Aldebaran Austin -- Administrative Assistant -- Office of Mission Agency

Denise Lo -- Assistant to the President -- Operations Executive

Shelly Alba -- Administrative Assistant -- Office of Education

Doug Benton -- Communications Assistant

Matt Newton -- In Touch Editor

Rev. Joseph Robb -- Assistant to the President -- Mission Leadership

Joel Wahlers -- Assistant to the President – Education

13. WEST COAST DISTRICT PARTNERSHIPS

President Lange introduced the President of the Pacific Southwest District Rev. Dr. Mike Gibson and Rev. Dr. Paul Linnemann President of the Northwest District.

President Linnemann addressed the convention speaking of the importance of the partnership that has developed between the three West Coast Districts. Paul stressed that ministry on the West Coast is challenging – *“We need each other!”*

President Gibson reiterated the importance of the alliance between the districts, adding that *“Isolation destroys us”*. Mike advised that the Mission Training Center which is now found at Concordia Irvine is more important than ever after the end of the Licensed Lay Deacon program at the 2016 Convention of the Synod. He said that the Mission Training Center still trains Deacons as well as other servants. He went on to note that the District’s Mission Executives also meet together. Rev. Gibson ended by saying, *“We are in this together”*.

President Lange also spoke to the necessity of the partnership. He talked about the importance for him of the Zoom calls that take place between the three Presidents at

the start of each week. Mike also mentioned the ongoing training of new pastors that is offered as a joint program between the districts. Mike concluded his comments by saying, *“We’re better together”*.

Rev. Gowen offered a prayer with the three Presidents ending with this quote from Isaiah Chapter 43, *“Now this is what the LORD says— the One who created you, Jacob, and the One who formed you, Israel — “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine. I will be with you when you pass through the waters, and when you pass through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you. You will not be scorched when you walk through the fire, and the flame will not burn you.”*

14. BREAK FOR LUNCH

Before the lunch break, Rev. Zelt announced that the amount of the offering that was taken at the Worship service on Thursday was \$2501.00. The funds will go to help finance the work of the Mercy Holistic Ministry. Tom then offered the meal prayer.

During lunch, which was served in the Convention Hall, videos were shown featuring the LCMS Armed Forces Ministry and Concordia Plan Services. There were also slides from various exhibitors.

SECOND SESSION DAY ONE

President Lange called the session to order at 1:00 pm

14. REGISTRATION REPORT

Rev. John-Paul Meyer presented the second Convention Registration Report. A complete list of Convention attendees will be posted in the Convention Proceedings.

Voting Lay Delegates = 76

Voting Pastoral Delegates = 72

Total Voting Delegates = 148

Total Non-Voting Participants = 107

Total Registered = 253

15. GREETINGS FROM OTHERS

In introducing President Emeritus Walter Tietjen, President Lange talked about the help Walt had given him during his first term saying, *“Walt showed me what pastoral care looks like.”*

Walt spoke words of encouragement to the convention attendees as he so aptly does. He noted the discouraging words that so often flow from the mouths of the world around us. He acknowledged that those voices can sometimes get so loud that we may want to say, “I quit”. When those times come, he advised us to “look to the cross and hear Jesus say, I didn’t”

President Lange went on to introduce President Emeritus, Robert Newton. Bob quipped that he thought that this was the youngest group that he could ever remember.

In his remarks, Rev. Newton reflected on the effects of Covid on the ministry of the church. He remarked about how he had watched Mike go from Prophet (Mission Exec) to King (District President) and how in light of COVID that came at just the right time. He recalled hearing during COVID that the church was not essential and then watched and worked as the church pushed back. Rev. Newton closed his thoughts with prayer.

16. CNH DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Before getting into the report of the District Board President Lange asked Tom and Sue Zelt and his wife Kristi to join him on the podium. Mike and Kristi presented gifts to Tom and Sue thanking them both for their service to the district and to the church.

Chair of the CNH District Board of Directors Tom Zelt presented the report of the Board. Tom briefly reviewed policy-based governance and noted that in that system a major work of the board is to build the Outcomes (Goals). Perhaps even more important is the crafting of the Metrics or the means by which the Outcomes are measured.

Tom briefly reviewed the Outcomes that the Board has worked with during the past Quadrennium.

1. THE CNH DISTRICT CONSISTS OF WELL-EQUIPPED, HEALTHY, MISSIONALLY-COMMITTED LEADERS.

A. There is a district-wide culture that facilitates the overall wellness and equipping of leaders

B. Identify and utilize *and retain* leaders across the district to assist others in mission for both congregations and schools.

2. CONGREGATIONS HAVE A POSITIVE MISSION DIRECTION.

A. Congregations have hope with a vision for the future.

B. Cooperative ministries between congregations is fostered and enabled

3. BASIC CONGREGATIONAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED IN AN EFFICIENT AND COST-EFFECTIVE WAY.

Tom noted the increased portion of the district's funds now going to missions even as support from congregations has declined. He gave thanks for the opportunities that the district has given him to be of service.

17. LCEF REPORT

President Lange introduced Edward Kwak who serves as the LCEF District Vice President to the CNH District. Ed commended Bill Swift for all the fine work he did with the Lutheran Church Extension Fund in the CNH District. He stated that he has worked closely with Joe Robb. He also noted that \$59,000.00 has come from LCEF to go toward Worker Wellness. In closing, a video was shown highlighting the Worker Wellness programs.

18. CONVENTION BUSINESS

Resolution #3-06 -- Mr. Don Young representing Floor Committee #3 was welcomed to the podium. Don presented Resolution #3-06 -- TO RECOGNIZE AND THANK THE LCMS FOR THE STRENGTHENED AND EXPANDED "SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS" COVID-19 RESPONSE INITIATIVE

Don moved for approval of the resolution. The motion was seconded. The Chair called for discussion, hearing none the vote was called for by way of Hands and Voices. The motion was approved.

Resolution #1-03 -- Rev. James Beyer Chair of Floor Committee #1 introduced Rev. Otis Byrd who presented resolution #1-03 -- MAKING THE CNH DISABILITY MINISTRY TASK FORCE A STANDING MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Rev. Byrd moved for approval of the resolution. The motion was seconded. The Chair called for discussion, hearing none the vote was called for by way of Hands and Voices. The motion was approved.

19. SYNOD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Harrison began his report with a video presentation reviewing some of the work of the Synod over the past four years. The video also featured many of the programs offered through the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Matthew introduced the Greek word - Homologeto. (ὁμολογία)

He said the word literally means to speak the same. It is used throughout scripture to confess our sins. Scripture is all about us as sinners, not about telling others of their sins. We are sinner-saints. The confession of the early church was "Jesus is Yahweh".

The President then offered a second Greek word – Marturion (μαρτύριον) which is translated as confession/witness. In John Chapter 4 the woman at the well witnessed what she had heard and believed and those who heard her came and believed. Our witness is a strong confession of our faith.

Homologeto – President Harrison referred to Matthew 11:25 – “*At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children"*. Rev. Harrison noted that a life of thankful praise is our confession. He went on to say that after 175 years of the LCMS we are losing our privileged position, but we still have the one thing left “Only Jesus”.

President Harrison turned to a PowerPoint presentation on the effects and responses to COVID. He stated that he believes that the government has no business inside the sanctuary - that belongs to the individual congregation.

Rev. Dr. Harrison reviewed some of the Synod's programs including the work of our Universities and Seminaries. He also spoke of our sister church in Finland and the trials that they have endured in their fight to stay true to scripture. He talked a bit about the LCMS International Missions' work in South Sudan. The President mentioned that we

are now down about one hundred missionaries because of COVID. He also said that we only have twelve people to support all our missionary families.

The President added commentary to captions that were projected on the screens in the meeting room to highlight some of the many activities and accomplishments of the LCMS.

- Online Missionary study for ministry - opening ministries to many places we have never been before.
- Mission is reaching out to many Farsi-speaking people. Many Muslim converts.
- Dominican seminary has over 200 graduates -- New Latin American hymnal.
- 15 Seminaries in Africa -- prosperity theology is a big problem.
- Life network continues to grow.
- First ever official Chainsaw use manual -- Legal Counsel approved. 😊
- 19,000 "Everyone His Witness" workbooks sold.
- LCMS was able to move forward with the Youth Gathering.
- Child Protection program.
- Best financial condition in 30+ years -- maybe best ever.
- 4 million to Seminaries
- "Set Apart to Serve" -- Church worker recruitment program.
- Annotated Large Catechism is coming out.
- 2 million in Church Planting Grants (Small grants work better).
- Church Planting "Boot Camp" planned. (Churches that plant churches tend to grow).

After this President Harrison took time for questions. Those questions are listed below.

1. What is the Synod's position on online worship and communion?
2. Suggestion to study the effects of the Lutheran Hour broadcast from its inception.
3. As a church body is there a way that we might be better prepared for persecution such as we experienced during covid?
4. What might be ways that the dichotomy between the missional and confessional divide might find common ground?

(Secretary's note – The President's answers were candid and in-depth. As such I do not feel that short of a word for word verbatim, I could accurately do justice to his presentation.)

President Harrison closed his report with a blessing.

20. CONVENTION BUSINESS

Resolution # 3-01 -- Rev. Daniel Deuel, Chair of Floor Committee #3 was welcomed to the podium. The committee presented Resolution # 3-01 -- TO CONSIDER RE-ALIGNMENT OF OBJECTIVES 1 & 2 FOR SYNOD CONSTITUTION ARTICLE 3

The committee moved to approve Resolution #3-01, the motion received a second. There was considerable discussion before the Chair called for the question. The motion to end discussion was seconded and approved with a vote by hand and voice. The Chair announced that the resolution had been adopted. There was then a call for a "Division of the House". That vote by hand and voice was counted twice. ***The motion to accept Resolution #3-01 was approved 77 Yes / 31 No.***

Resolution #3-03 -- Floor Committee #3 introduced Resolution #3-03. TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS PREPARING FOR GENERAL ORDINATION THROUGH DISTANCE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND BY EXPANDING THE WORK OF THE CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY CENTER - CUI(CMC). (Note - #3-03 is a compilation of original Resolutions #3-03, #3-04, and #1-02)

The committee moved that Resolution #3-03 be approved. The motion was seconded. After a significant period of discussion, the chair called the question. ***The motion was approved by a hand and voice vote.***

21. DISTRICT PRESIDENT'S REPORT – PART 2

Board chair Tom Zelt welcomed President Lange to the podium for part 2 of his report. Mike asked Rev. Eric Van Scharrel who is a member of the Missio Dei Foundation to join him at the podium to offer information about the newly formed organization. Pastor Van Scharrel talked about the work of the Foundation. He noted that resources from closed congregations that have chosen to work with the Foundation would be invested. Earnings from those funds will be used for mission activity in the district. President Lange added that the district also has committees to assist congregations that are considering the future path of their ministry.

Mike went on to speak about the value of prayer in reaching out to non-believers. He related the experiences that he and Kristi have had in conversation with some of their neighbors. He asked those present to take about 5 minutes to talk with others at their table concerning experiences they may have had in reaching out to neighbors with the gospel and then end with prayer.

President Lange introduced District Mission Executive, Rev. Joe Robb. Joe talked about the changes in demographics in the district and about the way that mission is conducted. He noted that there are many options for mission education in our district. He talked about the SMP program and how that program allowed Rev. William Pierce to be ordained, enabling him to provide Word and Sacrament ministry to Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church in Kauai, one of the congregations that were welcomed into the district and Synod this morning.

Rev. Robb went on to talk about the work of LINC Ministries - Bay Area which has been helpful in furthering mission in our district. A video featuring Director Aaron Putnam and

the work of LINC – Bay Area was shown. Joe closed by talking about a few of the tools that are available through the mission agency including grants, short-term mission trips, and mission plants.

Assistant to the President for Education Joel Wahlers was welcomed to the podium. Joel asked those present to turn to page 34 in the Convention Workbook. He stated that there are 50 preschools in the CNH district serving 2810 students, 18 elementary schools, and 1 high school serving together 3469 students. In addition, there are various groups and many people who support the district education system.

Joel talked about the challenge of attracting qualified staff. He noted that using the colloquy program is one way to increase the percentage of Rostered workers. He asked that we continue to encourage our youth to consider a vocation as a rostered LCMS teacher.

22. CONVENTION BUSINESS

President Lange returned to the podium to introduce the video “Growing Ministries” which will serve as an introduction to the next resolution #1-01 – Mission Plants

Resolution #1-01 -- The Chair of Floor Committee #1 introduced Aaron Putnam who read the resolves from Resolution #1-01 TO ESTABLISH NEW MISSIONS IN CNH

The committee moved for approval of Resolution #1-01, the motion was seconded. After discussion had concluded, the chair called for the vote by hand and voice. ***The motion was approved.***

Resolution #2-02 -- Rev. Mitchell Gowen, Chair of Floor Committee #2 came to the podium. Resolution #2-02 was introduced - TO AMEND THE CNH DISTRICT ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION – The resolve section of the resolution was read. The committee moved for the adoption of Resolution #2-02, and the motion was seconded. Hearing no discussion, **the chair called for the vote by hand and voice. *The motion was approved.***

Resolution #2-03 / #2-03a / #2-04 -- Floor Committee #2 presented three resolutions dealing with changes, additions, and updates to the CNH Bylaws

- Resolution #2-03 -- PROPOSED ADDITION TO THE CNH DISTRICT BYLAWS (*District Bylaw changes necessitated by actions of Synod in Convention*)
- Resolution #2-03a -- BYLAW ADDITION TO INCLUDE PROCESS FOR ELECTION OF REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS –
- Resolution #2-04 -- TO ACCEPT CHANGES TO CNH DISTRICT BYLAWS AS RECOMMENDED BY SYNOD AND DISTRICT COMMISSION ON CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

The committee moved that the three resolutions be considered together. The motion was seconded, and the Chair asked for discussion. As discussion ended the vote was called for the vote by hand and voice. **The motion was approved.**

23. CLOSING DEVOTION

Rev. Jason Bredesen was welcomed to the podium to offer the closing devotion. Jason commented on the confusion by some in the world today regarding the human body. His response to that was simply, "God created it – We broke it"! Christ's body was broken for us. In His body, He comes to us in the broken bread and poured out wine. Jason ended with words from 1st Corinthians -- We are the body of Christ – "Be steadfast knowing that your work is not in vain".

24. DISMISSAL TO REGIONAL CAUCUS

President Lange called the session to a close at 5:00 pm and released the delegates to their respective Regional Caucus.

Submitted By

John M. Standley

Rev. John M. Standley
CNH District Secretary