



**Resolutions Approved at the 61st Regular
Convention of the Atlantic District of the
Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
July 22-23, 2022**

Floor Committee 1

Theological & Broader Church

Resolution 2022-01-01

To Strengthen and Expand Routes to Ministry

Whereas, the Masters of Divinity program is the preferred route to training pastors in the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod; and

Whereas, in 2006 the Atlantic District in Convention passed resolutions designed to strengthen and expand the scope of mission and ministry by resolving to prepare 100 home-grown mission leaders for service to Lord and Church, and

Whereas, by God’s grace well over 100 men and women have been developed, trained and sent to serve in congregations of the Atlantic District as Atlantic District Lay Deacons, Deaconesses, Commissioned Rostered Workers and Pastors, and

Whereas, the benefits of this leadership development model have been visible signs of God’s grace in more than half of the congregations of the Atlantic Districts exercising various spiritual gifts in service, and

Whereas, mission opportunity remains at the highest level in the Atlantic District even as transitions in leadership demand more strong Lutheran Christian leaders in our congregations and their communities, and

Whereas, the Atlantic District Lay Deacon Program, the Specific Ministry Program (SMP), the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT), the Center for Hispanic Studies (CHS), Concordia University Irvine’s Mission Training Center (MTC), and others have provided excellent avenues for continuing the development toward service of “home-grown mission leaders” in the Atlantic District, and

Whereas, the pastors being developed, ordained, and called to the Atlantic District through these programs—and others for Commissioned workers—remain a primary source of hope for the Lutheran Christian future in Eastern New York State; Therefore, be it

Resolved, that these programs leading to the development of mission leaders at all levels of service be commended and recommended to the congregations of our District for use, and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in Convention send this commendation and recommendation to the 2023 Synod in convention for adoption, and be it further

Resolved, that in particular the global impact programs—EIIT, CHS, MTC—be commended to the seminaries and to the Synod in convention for strengthening and expanding, including the SMP, in scope and potential, in preparing and certifying “General Pastors” for the LCMS, and be it finally

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in Convention in July 2022 resolve to renew its 2006 commitment by pledging to raise up and prepare 100 new home-grown mission leaders, including a significant percentage of ordained pastors, in the next six years.

Resolution 2022-01-02

To Recognize and Give Thanks for Work at Concordia College New York

Whereas, Concordia College New York was founded in 1881 in what was the LCMS Eastern District (**New York Ministerium**) and is now the LCMS Atlantic District when The Evangelical Lutheran Church and School of St. Matthew in Manhattan established a "Sexta" and "Quinta" at St. Matthew Academy, thereby beginning what would be called the "New York Progymnasium;" and

Whereas, Concordia College (referred to as the "Progymnasium," "Concordia Progymnasium," and "Concordia Lutheran Collegiate Institute" before being known universally as "Concordia College") relocated to the Hamlet of Hawthorne, New York on Buttermilk Hill before moving to its current location in the Village of Bronxville, New York; and

Whereas, Concordia College New York not only has served the east coast of the United States but people throughout the nation and around the world by giving all people access to quality Christian education and rigorous opportunities to pursue studies in the liberal arts; and

Whereas, Concordia College has been a place for Lutherans and for others to gather for conventions, meetings, concerts, art events, sports events, and other activities for over a century; and

Whereas, There is a time for all endeavors of man, which blossom one day and wither the next like the flowers of the field, but the Word of the Lord and His work of salvation endure forever (Ecclesiastes 3; Isaiah 40; James 1); and,

Whereas, Concordia College ceased all academic operations at the end of the 2020-2021 academic year; and

Whereas, the closure of Concordia College has left an enormous hole in the hearts of alumni, faculty, staff, friends, and the Atlantic District; therefore be it

Resolved, That we, the Atlantic District in Convention recognize, remember, and give thanks to God for the good and godly work of the many alumni, faculty, and staff throughout the history of Concordia in the training and instruction of God's Word and Christian life; and be it further

Resolved, That we recognize, remember, and give thanks to God for the good and godly work of the many friends of Concordia which they have done and will continue to do in our congregations and communities; and be it further

Resolved, That we recognize, remember, and give thanks to God for the Care and Comfort Committee that raised dollars to support the faculty and staff members of Concordia College who were losing jobs due to the closure of the school; and be it further

Resolved, That we give voice to our thanks and praise to God for working through Concordia College, and pray His continued guidance, as we rise and sing the Common Doxology; and be it finally

Resolved, That we memorialize the 2023 Synod in convention to adopt the above resolution.

Resolution 2022-01-03

To Explore Future Lutheran Higher Education Opportunities in the East Coast Region

Whereas, in 1881 the Lutheran Church of St. Matthew in Manhattan established a school to prepare men to continue education at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis which later became Concordia College New York; and

Whereas, Concordia College New York served as an institution of higher education

for over 140 years; and

Whereas, Through the Concordia University System, countless women and men receive a quality, Christian education to be sent out to live their vocations in the name of Jesus; and

Whereas, Concordia College New York continues to have a significant impact on the church at large through the witness of the priesthood of believers who attended the college; and

Whereas, the Atlantic District is thankful to God for Concordia College New York and its contribution to the wider church and society; and

Whereas, With the closure of Concordia College New York, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod does not have a center for higher and professional education on the East Coast of the United States; therefore let it be

Resolved, That the Atlantic District in Convention encourages the District President

to work with other District Presidents in the East Coast Region and the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, in identifying opportunities for the establishment of a new center for higher and professional education, either physically or virtually, based in the East Coast Region.

Resolution 2022-01-04

Supporting Colleges and Universities of the Concordia University System (CUS)

Whereas, colleges and universities of the CUS provide "Christian higher education communities of learning where mutual respect flourishes, responsibility is developed and reverence for God is cultivated so that students can pursue lives of passion, purpose and service" (Mission Statement of Concordia College New York); and

Whereas, each of the colleges and universities within CUS is committed to the integration of curricula and academic subjects with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the colleges and universities of the CUS have served thousands of people throughout the nation and around the world by giving them access to quality Christian education and rigorous opportunities to pursue studies in the liberal arts; and

Whereas, thousands of people have been graduated from colleges and universities within the CUS including thousands of professional Church workers who have served throughout Christ's Holy Church all over the world as they have been provided quality theological education and vocational formation; and

Whereas, the colleges and universities of the CUS have provided many people the opportunity to hear the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ as they are encouraged and directed in their vocations of service throughout the world, with many people being baptized and countless people being re-rooted to the Christian faith; therefore be it

Resolved, the colleges and universities of the CUS be commended for their God-pleasing work; and be it further

Resolved, that Lutherans in their congregations promote the colleges and universities of the CUS and their programs and offerings, especially programs that train workers for the Church; and be it further

Resolved, that Lutherans throughout The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod be encouraged to support the colleges and universities of CUS with their regular prayers, precious time, diverse talents, and generous financial resources; and be it further

Resolved, that all who have benefitted in any way through the years from the colleges and universities of the CUS support them in any way possible; and be it finally

Resolved, that both the LCMS Atlantic District and the entire LCMS take every available step and use every gift given to them by God to ensure that the colleges and universities of CUS continue to operate with their inspiring mission for generations to come to the glory and praise of Almighty God-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Resolution 2022-01-05

Producing Religious Education Materials

Whereas, the teaching of the faith is part of the primary work of the Church;
and

Whereas, the use of doctrinally sound resources is part of the covenant in which members of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod(LCMS) walk together, according to Article III and Article V of the Constitution of the LCMS; and

Whereas, the faith is communicated with words and images; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in convention petition the LCMS to publish religious education materials including, but not limited to, images and languages that better reflect and serve global diversity (cf. Revelation 7); and be it further

Resolved, that images from Bible stories, liturgical art, and images of our Lord Jesus Christ do not only include images of people of European descent, but better reflect global artistic traditions; and be it further

Resolved, that the publication arms of the LCMS consult directly with people from diverse cultures, sociological backgrounds, and ministry experiences in the LCMS to ensure the resources are appropriate; and be it finally

Resolved, that progress on this front be reported to the Synod for the 2026 Regular Convention.

Resolution 2022-01-06

To Provide Christian Resources in Addressing Racism

- Whereas,** Racism remains an issue that is apparent in our society; and
- Whereas,** Dr. Martin Luther taught, and we confess, that the Fifth Commandment, “You shall not murder,” means that we should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbors, but help and defend them in every physical need, which we have failed to do; and
- Whereas,** Racism is a sin, as well as an obstacle to the work of the Church, it is incumbent upon us to examine our own human failings in view of the Word of God; and
- Whereas,** We lament the silence of many Christians in the face of racism; and
- Whereas,** Racism is manifested in discrimination in jobs, housing, education—past and present—and causes great suffering and harm to many people; and
- Whereas,** Many LCMS convention resolutions on the issue of race have asserted the clear teaching from the Holy Scriptures that all human beings, have been created in the image of God and redeemed through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, yet the challenges in mission outreach across cultures and dealing with racism remain pronounced; and
- Whereas,** There have been those within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who hold beliefs and positions contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture regarding racism, slavery, and racial injustices, thus following the path of our surrounding culture and conforming to the world rather than being transformed in Christ (Rom. 12:2); and
- Whereas,** We give thanks to God for courageous leaders among us who have lived love by sharing the Gospel of Jesus across cultural divides; and
- Whereas,** To reach deeply into the life of our congregations, a church-wide campaign that is truly filled with the love and joy of the Holy Spirit cries out for our response; therefore be it
- Resolved,** that we give thanks for the work that the LCMS has done addressing racism; and be it further
- Resolved,** that we, the Atlantic District in convention, likewise acknowledge our failures for not seeing racism and addressing it for what racism is in our church body and beyond, and repent of those failures; and be it further
- Resolved,** that we memorialize the LCMS in convention our repentance and acknowledgment of our silence to racism that have hurt God’s children; and be it further
- Resolved,** that curricula be developed by Concordia Publishing House to teach people about the ills of racism and how we are called to combat it; and be it further
- Resolved,** that these curricula developed are designed so that people of all ages and in all educational settings (homeschool, preschool, elementary school, middle school, high school, college, graduate school, seminary, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, parish educational programs,

etc.) will benefit directly and intentionally from them; and be it further

Resolved, that, in addition to the development of new curricula, educational and catechetical material dealing with the Fifth, Seventh and Eighth Commandments in our church body's educational resources shall address the issue of racism directly and clearly so that "racism" is not regarded simply as a side topic but as a part of the broader and necessary body of knowledge for Christians to learn; and be it further

Resolved, that sermon-writing resources be developed so that pastors will be able to identify how racism is addressed in the Holy Scriptures and be assisted in making homiletical applications for the preaching of Law and Gospel; and be it further

Resolved, that in the development of these new resources the LCMS consult directly with people from diverse cultures, sociological backgrounds, and ministry experiences in the LCMS to ensure the resources are appropriate; and be it further

Resolved, that we do everything possible so that as we in the LCMS are "making disciples for life," this church body will be known as a church body that welcomes people regardless of their ethnicity or culture in the Name of and by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and be it finally

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the LCMS for action at the 2023 LCMS convention.

Resolution 2022-01-07 To Address Violence

Whereas, the Lord has created human beings fearfully and wonderfully (Genesis 1; Genesis 2; Psalm 139); and

Whereas, the Fifth Commandment says, “You shall not murder,” (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17; Small Catechism, Fifth Commandment) since all life belongs to God; and

Whereas, Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose from the dead so that we may have life in His name by grace through faith, delivered through the Means of the Spirit (John 3:16; John 6; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 3:21; 1 Corinthians 11); and

Whereas, sinful people continue to reject Christ’s extravagant grace as violence continues in our land, especially when people use guns to murder and harm people; and

Whereas, many people have been injured and murdered recently in schools, parking lots, churches, and stores; and

Whereas, violence is not limited to mass shootings but also happens daily in our land through domestic violence, suicide, accidental shootings in the home, stabbings, etc; and

Whereas, much public debate and discussion have ensued with various perspectives on issues related to violence and specifically gun violence; therefore be it

that first responders such as law enforcement, peace officers, mental health workers, and educators be prayerfully supported and encouraged in every appropriate way in our neighborhoods and communities; and be it further

Resolved, that the 2022 Atlantic District in convention decry gun violence and any violence that harms the lives of our neighbors as part of our proclamation of the sanctity of human life; and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in convention pray for all who have been affected by gun violence and any violence that harms the lives of our neighbors; and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in convention strongly urge its members to steward their citizenship so that responsible action be taken that limits gun violence and any other violence in our time and in our land; and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in convention direct the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) to provide resources to educate people and inform the public discourse concerning violence and especially gun violence; and be it further

Resolved, that the LCMS work intentionally with civic authorities and others to prevent further violence in our land; and be it finally

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the LCMS for consideration at the 2023 Synod in convention.

Resolution 2022-01-08

To Conform the Election of Synod President to Longstanding Practice

Whereas, the President of Synod has extensive responsibility for supervision of doctrine and the administration of the Synod (LCMS Constitution, article XI.B); and

Whereas, there are five candidates for President of Synod (Bylaw 3.12.2.1); and

Whereas, the number of candidates was changed from three to five at the previous convention of the Synod (2019 Resolution 9-07); and

Whereas, current bylaws provide that “if no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast... the candidate receiving the fewest votes and all candidates receiving less than 15 percent of the votes cast shall be dropped from the ballot...” (Bylaw 3.12.2.4); and

Whereas, this practice is contrary to historical practice for the election of the President of Synod (e.g. Bylaw 3.12.1.4 of the 2007 Handbook) and current practice for the election of First Vice-President (Bylaw 3.12.2.6(b)); and

Whereas, This practice may promote electioneering; and

Whereas, Voter participation in the election of the President of Synod is of concern (2019 Resolution 9-16); therefore be it

Resolved, bylaw 3.12.2.4 be amended as follows

~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

3.12.2.4 ... If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, a second or succeeding ballots are required for a majority; the candidate receiving the fewest votes ~~and all candidates receiving less than 15 percent of the votes cast~~ shall be dropped from the ballot, ~~unless only one candidate receives 15 percent or more of the votes cast, in which case the three highest candidates shall constitute the ballot and~~ another vote shall be taken in the same manner.

and be it finally

Resolved, the Secretary of Synod, in consultation with the Commission on Handbook, consider the possibility of implementing the online presidential election using one ranked-choice ballot and include the results of this consideration in his report to the next regular convention of the Synod.

Resolution 2022-01-09

Encouraging the Use of the Ancient Catechumenate Model

Whereas, our Lord told His apostles to preach the Gospel, making disciples of all nations; and

Whereas, faith formation is part of the ongoing work of the Church; and

Whereas, the ancient catechumenate has provided a way not only to help receive new people into the Church but has helped to shape congregations to be conscious of their liturgical and missional identities; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in convention commend the ancient catechumenate to its congregations as a helpful model for helping new people to be received into the Church and helping congregations realize and embrace their liturgical and missional identities; and be it further

Resolved, that congregations already employing this model be consulted with respect to how this can be implemented in congregations; and be it finally

Resolved, that forminglutherans.org be consulted as a resource for learning more about the ancient catechumenate model and its implementation in congregations.

Resolution 2022-01-10

To Audit Concordia Plan Services Retirement Funding

Whereas, the number of professional church workers in the LCMS has been declining, therefore resulting in a smaller pool of resources which are a part of the Concordia Plan Services Retirement Plan; and

Whereas, increased life expectancy and growing number of retired workers increases the payout of monies to retirees; and

Whereas, financial challenges in the economy have impacted investment earnings; and

Whereas, critical shortages could threaten the financial stability of the independent Concordia Plans Services Retirement Plan, and

Whereas, transparency is critical for trust and compliance; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in Convention move the 2023 Synod in Convention to create an Audit Committee to review the Retirement plans, including projections for funding and capacity of the funds for the next 25 years, safeguards to protect funds and its solvency for the next 25 years, and any recommendations for changes to the structure for best practices; and be it finally

Resolved, that the reports of the Audit Committee be shared with the Council of Presidents and then electronically shared to all workers in Concordia Plan Services Retirement Plans by December 31, 2023.

Resolution 2022-01-11

To Create a Restructuring Task Force to Consider Transfer of Synod Congregations, Ministries, and Assets

Whereas, the baptized and communicant membership of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is declining; and

Whereas, COVID-19 pandemic and cultural trends have and are accelerating this decline; and

Whereas, proactive planning is good stewardship; and

Whereas, ecclesiastical structure is not mandated by Scripture and may be decided by congregations for the good of mission and ministry; therefore be it

Resolved, that the 2022 Atlantic District in Convention move the 2023 Synod in Convention to create a Restructuring Task Force to report results and make recommendations to the 2026 Synod in Convention; and be it further

Resolved, that this Task Force be constituted by the Council of Presidents and include one lay person, one commissioned, and one ordained from each Region of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, that the following question be addressed:

What are the short term (10 years) and long term (20-30 years) projections for Synod in the areas of

Baptized Membership

Average in person weekly attendance

Average digital weekly engagements

Ordained Workers

Rostered Workers

Lutheran School Enrollment

Funding for National Synod and Districts

The viability and adaptability of RSO partners and Synod entities (CPS, CPH) to transfer; and be it further

Resolved, that protocols be researched for orderly implementation in the event of a shut-down of Synod so that mission may continue with vigor. Special emphasis should be given to address transfer of congregations and assets that honors the local intention, and the study of the following questions:

What is the process for Synod to consider this plan for adoption properly?

What is a realistic timeline to enact the transition, if adopted?

What are methods to help congregations, schools and ministries and RSOs and entities of Synod to celebrate restructuring as a healthy part of the life cycle that perpetuates ministry; and be it finally

Resolved, that this matter be undertaken only with prayerful reliance on the Holy Spirit and in a Spirit of humility to God's goodness to work in and through Synod, even if that means a restructuring for the sake of mission and ministry.

Resolution 2022-01-12

To Affirm and Protect Freedom to Exercise Religion

Whereas, Government shall make no law prohibiting the free exercise of religion (1st Amendment, Constitution of the United States of America); and

Whereas, The natural right of all people to worship God according to their conscience is fundamental to human flourishing; and

Whereas, The free exercise of religion is not limited to the ability to think religious thoughts, but also entails the ability to participate freely in religious rituals; and

Whereas, Public gathering is essential to Christian religious practice (Heb. 10:25) and that of many other religions; and

Whereas, During the COVID-19 crisis of 2020 many government actions in New York State and elsewhere limited the free exercise of religion; and

Whereas, These actions have resulted in real harm to members of congregations in the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) and others residing in our communities; and

Whereas, The Synod, and therefore the Atlantic District of the LCMS, “shall provide protection for congregations, pastors, teachers, and other church workers in the performance of their duties and the maintenance of their rights” (LCMS Constitution, Article III:9); therefore be it

Resolved, The congregations of the Atlantic District continue to perform the responsibilities of boldly proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost and continue to perform the spiritual care required for her members and community with all necessary caution in light of whatever circumstances may arise; and be it further

Resolved, the 2022 Atlantic District in convention directs the Atlantic District Board of Directors to petition the governor and legislature of New York State to codify in state law that houses of worship be deemed “essential businesses/entities/services” and clergy and church workers be deemed essential workers so that the freedom of conscience and free exercise of religion may be protected; and be it finally

Resolved, The Atlantic District of the LCMS memorialize the LCMS in convention to pass a similar resolution at the next regular convention of the LCMS.

Resolution 2022-01-13

Resolution on Ukraine

WHEREAS, The Russian invasion of Ukraine is ongoing, displacing the people of Ukraine and creating painful tragedy, human suffering and threatening world peace; and

WHEREAS, The Ukrainian Lutheran Church continues to minister to the people of Ukraine with human care needs and the hope of the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, LIFE For Ukraine, as well as other humanitarian aid agencies are working with our partners in Ukraine; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the members of the Atlantic District continue to pray for peace and reconciliation in Ukraine, Russia, and throughout the world, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the LCMS and Atlantic District endeavor to find ways to aid and promote peace in our partner and sister churches in Ukraine and Russia, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the members of the Atlantic District be encouraged to support agencies and organizations within the church to promote peace, reconciliation between warring parties and aid and comfort to those displaced or effected by the war, and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Atlantic District pray for LCMS workers and all people working for peace through the hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ all over the world and especially in areas of war and conflict.

Floor Committee 2

Practical and Local Church

Resolution 2022-02-01

To Reassign Resurrection Lutheran Church

Whereas, the Atlantic District is charged with establishing visitation circuits within her geographical boundaries (LCMS Handbook 2019, 5.1.1 & 5.1.2), and

Whereas, such visitation circuits form the basis for electoral circuits to the LCMS convention, and

Whereas, it is helpful for the Atlantic District to be represented in the LCMS at its national convention, and

Whereas, the requirements of an electoral circuit are established as needing 7 to 20 member congregation, involving an aggregate confirmed membership ranging from 1,500 to 10,000. (LCMS Handbook 2019, 3.1.2.1), and

Whereas, Circuit 2 (Albany) no longer has the minimum number of confirmed members necessary to be a circuit without an exception, Therefore be it,

Resolved, That the Atlantic District in convention assign Resurrection Lutheran Church in Cairo, NY to Circuit 2, and be it further

Resolved, That the Atlantic District endeavor to examine the circuits of the district and propose a plan of new visitation and electoral circuits to the next regular convention of the Atlantic District as necessary.

Resolution 2022-02-02

To Recognize and Give Thanks for recent graduates of the Atlantic District/ECCE Lay Deacon Training Program

Whereas, following the Biblical principles of providing dedicated individuals for service to Christ and His Church [Philippians 1:1; I Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:1-6), the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church -Missouri has established the Office of Lay Deacon in a Ministry of Word and Service; and,

Whereas, the Atlantic District further established the Lay Deacon Training Program to equip these dedicated individuals to be publicly recognized as Lay Deacons of the Atlantic District; and,

Whereas, the Atlantic District has historically thanked God for the efforts of these individuals through their successful completion of the academic portion of the Lay Deacon Training Program through a annually held Service of Graduation; and,

Whereas, the COVID pandemic of 2020 to date has precluded such congratulatory gatherings, Therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in Convention include in its proceedings a public recognition of graduates of the Atlantic District/ECCE Lay Deacon Training Program for the years 2020, 2021 and 2022; and, Be it finally

Resolved, that after the reading of the graduates' names [see below) the Atlantic District in Convention give thanks and praise to God for working through these dedicated individuals, and pray His continued guidance and blessing upon their service by rising and singing the Common Doxology.

Class of 2020

Carrie Ausman -All Saints, Lagrangeville
Paul Rafuse -St Luke's, Dix Hills

Class of 2021

Melissa Derenches -Bethlehem, Delmar
Robin Friesheim -St Timothy's, Hyde Park
Anthony Hallman -Good Shepherd, Warwick
Miguel Orabona -St Paul's, Saratoga Springs
Erik Petersen -Messiah, Tampa, FL
Gary Sandt -Faith, Easton, PA

Class of 2022

Andrea Ansorge -Village, Bronxville
Diana Auer -Resurrection, Garden City
Larry Cosentino -Village, Bronxville
Anton DeRosa -Village, Bronxville
Patrick Doyle -Grace, Mastic Beach
Jennifer Engheben -Resurrection, Garden City
Daniel Harrison -Family of Faith, Middletown
Gary Miranda -Grace, Mastic Beach
Kristin Pimentel -Village, Bronxville

Resolution 2022-02-03

To Begin New Ministries in Sustainable Way

Whereas, Our Lord, Jesus Christ in the Great Commission commands His disciples "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.", and

Whereas, the Atlantic District was founded with a mission mindset that planted churches and ministries throughout New York City, Long Island, the Hudson Valley, Capital Region and beyond as expressed in our guiding statement Engaging the World with the Gospel of Hope, and

Whereas, the population of New York continues to grow with people from the United States and immigrants from other countries, and

Whereas, New York City and the Capital Region consistently are listed as cities in the nation with the largest percentage of dechurched and unchurched people, and

Whereas, the Atlantic District's guiding statement, "Engaging the World with the Gospel of Hope" encourages us to share the hope of Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world at in our neighborhoods, and

Whereas, congregations, schools, social ministry organizations, enrichment programs all share the love of Jesus through word and deed collectively as ministries in various means, therefore be it

Resolved, the Atlantic District reaffirm our guiding statement Engaging the World with the gospel of Hope as congregations, pastors, commissioned ministers and members of our congregations recommit to being a missionary people by virtue of our baptismal identity, and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District through Task Force 1 - Missions be charged with providing support and guidance, human and financial, in planting at least one new ministry, with the involvement of local and regional leaders, between each regular district convention, and be it finally

Resolved, a report be given on the effort, progress and future goals of each new ministry to be shared at the next successive convention.

Resolution 2022-02-04

To Support the Work of Chaplains in the Atlantic District

Whereas, there is a need to reach out with the Gospel to individuals and their families both in our congregations as well as to a wide range of people within our communities hurting during difficult times; and

Whereas, chaplains deliver Christ's mercy through their words and service, providing much-needed spiritual care for His people in unique and challenging environments, often in crisis situations; and

Whereas, formal chaplaincy training through a recognized CPE program can enhance pastoral ministry to individuals in the congregation as well as to institutions in the community such but not limited to hospitals, nursing homes, schools and universities, prisons, the military, the maritime industry, to emergency medical teams, and at times of domestic attacks; therefore be it

Resolved, that we recognize and thank ordained and commissioned workers already serving in chaplaincy ministry in the Atlantic District; and be it finally

Resolved, that we encourage and support pastors and commissioned workers to consider formal chaplaincy training to enhance their ministry in bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ specifically into institutions and emergency contexts, serving hurting and broken people who are often in crisis desiring to live as God's redeemed children.

Resolution 2022-02-05

To Assess the impact of COVID needs of AD Congregations and Determine a Path Forward

Whereas, COVID-19 came as a global pandemic and touched people across the world, and

Whereas, COVID-19 hastened the stagnation and decline some churches were already experiencing and has impacted each congregation in its own way, and

Whereas, the full impact of COVID-19 has not been realized in our churches as well as other parts of society, and

Whereas, to develop an effective plan, one must understand the actual data and issues that need to be overcome, and

Whereas, as the Synod in this place the Atlantic District strives to walk together as we share the joys and challenges of each of our congregations and members of synod, therefore be it

Resolved, the District President in consultation with Task Force 7 - Health and Human Care develop an assessment tool to evaluate the effects of COVID-19 on the life of our congregations and workers, be it further

Resolved, that each congregation be encouraged to report statistical data to the synod to provide accurate data that can be used as part of this assessment, be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District seek to identify keys for spiritually and economically viable congregations; and be it further

Resolved, that after the assessment information is codified, regional gatherings be held to discuss the findings of the pandemic's impact on congregational life, be it further

Resolved, that the District President, District Praesidium, District Circuit Visitors, and District Staff discuss and report findings to Atlantic District congregations and church workers via its various mediums of communication, be it finally

Resolved, a final reporting of the data and regional discussions including the findings of the strategies, plans, successes, and new opportunities implemented by local congregations be shared with all congregations to strengthen, empower and encourage congregations and workers as we endeavor to further the hope of the Gospel throughout the district.

Resolution 2022-02-06

To Recognize the Atlantic District's Successes, Failures, and Opportunities in Ministry With Communities of Color

Whereas, the Synod in convention (2019 Resolution 11-04A, "To Affirm the Common Humanity of All People and Ethnicities") resolved, "That the members of the congregations of the Synod be encouraged to work toward racial reconciliation and equality within the Church and within society-at large"; and

Whereas, the legacy of racism enacted through prejudice and discrimination has negatively impacted the needs, well-being, income, and property of people based solely on the color of their skin; and

Whereas, the people of God are striving to live faithfully, but still may participate in sinful thoughts, words, and deeds in what they do and leave undone (1 John 1:8-10), which can and has included the sin of racism; and

Whereas, Jesus tells us that the greatest commandments are to love God and love your neighbor (Mark 12:30-31); and

Whereas, Jesus illustrates for his disciples that they are to treat all persons as neighbor (Luke 10:29-37); and

Whereas, Paul exhorts us to show the love of Christ as we "bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2); and

Whereas, Martin Luther extolls us to show that love as we care for our neighbors as we support them in their needs, well-being, income, and property in his explanations of the fifth and seventh commandments; and

Whereas, in order for the Atlantic District to better engage acts of reconciliation and equality it should be informed of its history within communities of color to understand its successes and its failures; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the District President commission a task force to study the District's history of mission, ministry, and education within communities of color, seeking regional input to be completed prior to the next regular district convention, so that we might better recognize and give thanks to God for our successes and make confession of any failures; and be it further

Resolved, that the results of this task force's study would also provide us with tangible ways to move forward in our present and future outreach efforts within communities of color; and be it further

Resolved, that the study be shared through various means including in person forums as feasible; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to call on the faculty of our two seminaries, universities and Concordia Historical Institute to do a similar study of our national mission, ministry, and education efforts to be completed within twenty four months after district proceedings and made available on the Synod website.

Resolution 2022-02-07

To Strengthen the Nonvoting Advisory Delegate Participation at Conventions

Whereas, Currently, there are 12,010 Ministers of Religion - Commissioned (Church Worker Update System - March 2021) who serve the mission and ministry of congregations, schools, child development centers, camps, compassion centers, and mission work throughout the national and global mission fields; and

Whereas, The current structure of the Synod does not allow for a third category of voting delegates at district and Synod conventions (Synod Handbook: Article IX, Article XII.10.b); and

Whereas, The Synod highly values Ministers of Religion - Commissioned for their eagerness to serve the Lord and His Church (2019 Resolution. 9-17, "To Study Voting Privilege in the LCMS" p.201 of 2019 LCMS Convention Proceedings); and

Whereas, Ministers of Religion - Commissioned are considered Advisory Members with representation, voice, but no vote at conventions of districts and Synod, along with "those ordained ministers not eligible for election as a voting delegate" under Bylaw 3.1.2.1(d) ... (p,101 Handbook 2019) with representation, voice, but no vote at conventions of districts and Synod; and

Whereas, Some districts utilize the voice and guidance of their Ministers of Religion - Commissioned in district conventions through a non-counted advisory member vote; and

Whereas, The Atlantic District has passed resolutions in previous conventions to study and garner the guidance of Ministers of Religion - Commissioned, and

Whereas, This honors the bylaw and structure of the Convention while allowing the Nonvoting Advisory Delegate voice to be heard and their vote recognized; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Atlantic District enable Nonvoting Advisory Delegates to provide a preliminary non-binding poll of resolutions, not elections, during its regular conventions, and be it further

Resolved, that each circuit forum elect two advisory delegates, at most one of which is a minister of religion-ordained, who shall exercise the privilege of voting in polls at regular conventions of the Atlantic District; and be it further

Resolved, That the results of the advisory poll be announced prior to the delegate vote; and be it further

Resolved, That this become effective with the next District Convention in 2025, and be it finally

Resolved, That the Atlantic District in Convention memorialize the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in Convention to pass a like-minded resolution.

Resolution 2022-02-08

To Promote Ministry to College and University Students among the Congregations of the Atlantic District

Whereas, a vital demographic in need of sustained ministry and spiritual care in the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) is comprised of college and university students (including undergraduate and graduate students); and

Whereas, this demographic is most-susceptible to falling away from the faith without sustained pastoral care and a supportive church community; and

Whereas, successful and effective campus ministry is often the product of a coordinated group-effort on the part of multiple congregations working together to ensure that the children of said congregations are connected to a supportive and nurturing church community at their university or college; and

Whereas, LCMS campus ministries can be at a disadvantage in terms of funding, man-power, and communications; and

Whereas, consistent synodical support for and promotion of campus ministries cannot be relied upon given constraints on funding and personnel; and

Whereas, a robust campus ministry focus is necessary not only for the health of Synod but, more importantly, for the health and souls of young adults on our college and university campuses; and

Whereas, The Atlantic District of the LCMS is in a unique position, by virtue of its size, to encourage mutual promotion of campus ministries among the congregations within its boundaries; Therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Atlantic District encourage congregations and clergy in the Atlantic District to connect parents and students with local congregations upon their leaving to attend higher education; and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District develop a directory of congregations either currently involved in campus ministry or in proximity to college and university campuses to better facilitate the sharing of resources between congregations that can serve campuses, as well as communication between pastors who are seeking to ensure proper pastoral care for students in their congregations; and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District take the lead in reaching out to other districts in the LCMS to encourage pastors there to reach out to Atlantic District congregations that their students may attend to better facilitate their pastoral care; and be it finally

Resolved, that the District President of the Atlantic District would work with Task Force 4 - Education to oversee and develop a set of resources in the carrying-out of these resolutions and report back to the next regular district convention.

Resolution 2022-02-09

To Encourage House Blessings

Whereas, Holy Scripture speaks often of the divine blessing of house and home (viz. Psalm 104, Psalm 128, Luke 19, Luke 10), and

Whereas, Martin Luther's Small Catechism includes devotions and prayers for use in the home, and

Whereas, the Lutheran Service Book and other Lutheran hymnals and agendas include liturgies for the blessing of a home for pastoral and congregational use, and

Whereas, the blessing of a home provides opportunity for a ministry of congregational hospitality in mission for both member families and those requesting such blessing, Therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Atlantic District in convention commend to her own congregations and pastors the ministry of house blessings, and be it further

Resolved, that the President of the Atlantic District, through Task Force 2 - Revitalization share resources and avenues to begin this ministry in the congregations and regions of the Atlantic District with resources in the next triennium, and be it finally

Resolved, that these resources and this commendation be brought to the national assembly of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod at its convention for use and guidance.

Resolution 2022-02-10

To Promote Transparency of District Governance

Whereas, The Board of Directors of the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod serve on behalf of the congregations of the district; and

Whereas, The Atlantic District relies on the congregations for prayer, volunteers, and financial support; and

Whereas, Many congregations and ministers in the Atlantic District may be unaware of the actions of the Board of Directors; and

Whereas, Many congregations and ministers in the Atlantic District may be unaware of the financial position, assets and liabilities, and activities of the district; and

Whereas, Communication of the minutes of Board meetings and of audited financial statements are to be accessible to the congregations and ministers of the Atlantic District; therefore be it

Resolved, The scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors, task forces, and other governance bodies of the Atlantic District continue to be posted on the district website; and be it further

Resolved, That the Atlantic District through Task Force 6 - Communications review the conveyance of information regarding: minutes of the Board of Directors, Task Forces, and other Governance Bodies; financial reports; audits; and the real and personal property held by the district; and be it further

Resolved, That the Atlantic District in coordination with Task Force 6 - Communications make recommendations and implement a new strategy in sharing said information in a timely way; and be it finally

Resolved, that members of the Atlantic District, rostered churches, ordained and commissioned workers, be encouraged to request information as allowed by the LCMS Handbook, through the District President and participate in the ongoing work of ministry in the Atlantic District.

Resolution 2022-02-11 To Encourage the Study of Church History

Whereas continued theological study is expected of all pastors in the LCMS (2019 Resolution 6-04) and beneficial to all church workers.

Whereas the theologians and church leaders who have faithfully gone before us have much to teach the church today

Whereas the challenges facing the Church in our day are like unto those faced by our forebears

Whereas among the church workers and congregants of the Atlantic District there is considerable expertise and interest in church history

Resolved, that the Atlantic District give thanks to our Lord for our fathers in the faith, and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District commend for study the writings and actions of our forbearers as examples of the Lord's gracious work in the world and faithful discipleship in the face of opposition to the Gospel (AC XXI), and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District encourage and support local gatherings of church workers for the purpose of studying the history of the Church and applying it to contemporary challenges, and be it further

Resolved, that the Atlantic District direct the conference committee to dedicate at least one conference in each triennium to a topic in church history, drawing either from local expertise and discussion or from sources outside the Atlantic District.