



Proceedings of the 61st Regular Convention of the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

I. OPENING OF CONVENTION

The 61st Regular Convention of the Atlantic District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was begun with God’s blessing in Divine Worship at 12:30 PM and officially called to order at 2 PM by Bishop Lecakes.

**+CONVENTION SESSION #1:
FRIDAY, July 22, 2022 at 2 PM+**

II. CALL TO ORDER

President Lecakes called the Convention to order in the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit at 2:03 PM.

III. OPENING DIRECTIONS AND REMARKS

The Bishop began with a blessing to all delegates and provided a brief primer on District Conventions from the Convention Workbook. He also reminded delegates the purpose of conventions from the Synod Handbook.

He stated the following:

*“The purpose of District Conventions
2016 LCMS Handbook - Bylaw 4.2.1 Conventions of the districts shall afford opportunities for worship, nurture, inspiration, fellowship, and the communication of vital information. They are the principal legislative assemblies, which amend the district’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, consider and take action on reports and overtures, and handle appropriate appeals.”*

President Lecakes reminded delegates that the Convention is the principal legislative assembly, and that the convention’s time together is also to be a time to remember what it is that binds us together: worship, nurture, inspiration, and fellowship

President Lecakes reminded Voting Delegates where they were to be seated and that only Voting Delegates are to be seated in this section. He also announced housekeeping issues

for delegates. In addition, he advised Guests and Advisory Delegates where they were to be seated and the position and use of mics for all delegates.

Bishop Lecakes introduced the Secretary of the Atlantic District, The Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell who is the Senior Pastor of Village Lutheran Church and The Chapel School in Bronxville.

Lecakes also introduced the 1st Vice President of the Atlantic District, The Rev. Dr. Dien Ashley Taylor, Pastor of Redeemer in the Bronx, who will play a major role in the convention. After reviewing the floor plan and amenities of the Convention Hall, Bishop Lecakes thanked Our Savior's Lutheran Church and School in Colonie for hosting.

In addition, the Bishop thanked The Rev. Adam Wiegand, Senior Pastor of St. Paul in Saratoga Springs, and The Rev. Dien Ashley Taylor for preparing the worship and devotional services for the Convention.

Finally, the digital format of convention documents were introduced and technology announcements were made.

Bishop Lecakes welcomed special guests attending the Atlantic District Convention, including:

- The Rev. Dr. Matthew H. Harrison, the President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and
- The Rev. Christopher Esget 5th Vice President, Representing the East-Southeast Region, of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and finally
- The Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Hemmer - Assistant to the President

President Lecakes also noted Atlantic District President Emeritus, The Rev. Dr. David H. Benke

In addition, the bishop welcomed:

- The Rev. Dr. Greg and Edith Walton, currently from Florida-Georgia District, both originally from this district and graduates of Concordia College – NY.
- The former Atlantic District LWML President, Ms. Linda Guteres.
- The current Atlantic District LWML President, Deaconess Raquel Rojas, Deaconess from Redeemer in the Bronx.

IV. REGISTRATION AND CREDENTIALS REPORT

The Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell gave the Registration and Credentials Report.

Hartwell noted that the Convention met the quorum of 34 congregations with at least one delegate present and the report was announced as follows:

- 57 Congregations represented.
- 50 Pastoral Delegates
- 48 Lay Delegates
- 15 Advisory Delegates
- 32 Guests
- 98 Total Voting Delegates

The Rev. Chair walked the Convention through the Standing Rules for the Convention, especially standing rule #8.

Bishop reviewed this rule that allows for the Chair to call for advisory delegates to inform the assembly of their view of the matter at hand through a nonbinding poll. He indicated this would normally occur just prior to a vote of the voting delegates of the Convention.

Motion #1 The adoption of the standing rules, including #8.

Moved: The Rev. Dr. David Benke, St. Peters, Brooklyn

Seconded: Mr. Frank Consiglio, Holy Trinity, Middle Island

Adopted by unanimous acclamation.

Motion #2 The Acceptance of the Agenda.

Moved: The Rev. Adam Weigand, St. Paul, Saratoga Springs

Seconded: The Rev. Henry Albrechtsen, All Saints, Lagrangeville

Adopted by unanimous acclamation.

Bishop Lecakes noted that two Floor Committees were established for the Atlantic District 2022 Convention. Floor Committee One deals with theological issues and the church at large. It is chaired by The Rev. Matthew Staneck of St. John, Glendale. He further stated that Floor Committee Two is for Practical Matters and the Local Church and is chaired by The Rev. David Wackenhuth. Pastor Lecakes commented that the Floor Committees' task was to take the overtures and reports and craft the resolutions we will be discussing throughout the convention.

To recognize newly rostered congregations and workers, Bishop Lecakes called forward Atlantic District Secretary Hartwell.

V. RECOGNITION OF NEWLY ROSTERED WORKERS

Pastor Hartwell invited rostered commissioned and ordained members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, who have joined the Atlantic District during this past quadrennium, to stand and the Convention honored them with a round of applause.

VI. PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS REPORT

Atlantic District Secretary Hartwell continued by directing the delegates to the Convention Workbook for the listing of pastors nominated for elected Presidential positions and announced those nominated and the names of those running on Presidential ballots. He also noted biographies of nominees and the addition of a nominee for a later election, Mr. Bill Collins and his biographical information located in the Convention Supplement.

The Chairman of the Elections Committee, The Rev. Daniel Cohn, the Pastor of St. John, Stuyvesant, was welcomed to the podium to lead the election of the District President. He began the election with a prayer.

Chairman Cohn introduced the delegates to their voting device, which for the first time was the delegate's own smartphone, tablet, or computer. Cohn also reminded delegates that LCEF had supplied power packs, if needed, to the delegates and that they are available at the Registration Desk. He then walked delegates through voting procedures and general rules of voting for the convention which included only delegates with voting lanyards being allowed to cast a vote. In addition, Chairman Cohn instructed delegates of a summary of voting rules which included:

- Uncontested elections may proceed via a request for acclamation
- Candidates must receive at least 50% of the votes cast to win an elected position
- In the event a clear majority is not present, serial electronic run-offs will be performed
- Lowest number of votes and/or any candidate not securing at least 15% of the vote will be removed

Several tests were conducted to test the voting system and then the election was held.

Bishop Lecakes won reelection as District President/Bishop with a majority of the votes cast.

Pastor Dien Taylor led the convention in the singing of the Common Doxology.

Mrs. Amy Lecakes was recognized as the 1st lady of the Atlantic District and flowers were presented.

VII. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

Bishop Lecakes thanked the convention for the support of his wife and family by the District. Part I of the *Report of the District President* was included in the Convention Workbook. Pastor Lecakes gave Part II of his report saying the following:

“Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

It truly is my honor to serve you, the members of the Atlantic District. I have never felt so humbled and in awe of the responsibility of the office you have entrusted to me. I thank you for your support, your prayers, your thoughts and more.

I must thank my wife and family for their support and sacrifice. They are a wonderful expression of living love to me, and I cherish their ongoing support.

Thank you to my staff as they continue to serve the district and carry out this event. They have assisted in overcoming so many challenges since the last convention not the least of planning a convention in a brand-new location and learning all the details with which we had grown accustomed.

Thank you to the Atlantic District Praesidium, we have experienced inordinate change over the last 4 years. Vice President Taylor has remained at my side. And Vice President Wackenhuth has moved from the 4th VP to the 2nd VP. Vice President Staneck joined the praesidium and stepped up to assist. And Vice President Vic Nelson took office just a few months ago. They are blessings to me as we gather to discuss and discern the issues, the joys, the challenges and the next steps in the district.

Thank you to the Board of Directors and the Task Force chairs. We have worked through a strange 4 years having to pivot to online meetings and the challenges of zoom, but always with the best interests of our congregations and our workers in mind as we sought navigate all that which we encounter.

The first part of my report was printed in the workbook and continues to be available online.

Living Love is the theme of this 61st Convention. Living Love was chosen because that describes us. It describes what we have received and describes how we are to engage the world with the Gospel of Hope. That has not changed.

We encounter Living Love in the person of Jesus Christ, He is the fulness of Living Love as we watch him from the pages of scripture engage the world. We see this living love on display through the healing he does. Think of Jairus’ daughter, the woman who had been bleeding for years, the man born blind, or the lame man as he is lowered through the roof. We see living love in those miracles and in other miracles, like turning water to wine at a wedding, or stilling the wind so the water is calm and the fear of the disciples taken away. We see living love in His words and teachings. The reading from Luke in our

opening worship was the story of the Good Samaritan. Here Jesus teaches how we are to be living love in our lives as he grows the idea of who is my neighbor. Jesus is engaging the world by being the Living Love they encounter. And the result of this living love is the creation and growth of faith.

We are called to be living love as a result of our Baptism in Jesus. It is the waters of Baptism that God claims us by water and word. It is in our Baptism that the Holy Spirit enters in and faith is created. God continues to nurture that faith through his word and through the blessed sacrament. As that faith grows that Living love grows in me. From the Lord's table I am then sent out into this world to be living love to those I meet ...to those who are my neighbor.

Missional Theologian The Right Reverend Leslie Newbigin is quoted as saying, "The church is the hermeneutic of the Gospel. The church is to make the Gospel visit the people." I can appreciate what he is getting at here. I may rephrase. The church is the expression of the Living Love of Christ as God's word is shared through the proclamation of the Gospel, through the sacraments of Baptism and Lord's Supper as we receive the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting, And through us Living Love in our daily lives.

We don't change people. Christ's Living Love does, and he uses us as vessels to share Living Love with this world.

These last four years have been a challenge. The shift in this world to a postmodern mindset has already offered many challenges to the church. The world has changed. The mindsets have changed. COVID-19 exacerbated the problem in many ways. So many things have changed, and yet the problem to what ails this world has not changed. We - need - Jesus. We need that Living Love and that is what we as the church have strived to do over the last 2 years. Living Love to our neighbor because Jesus describes our neighbor as everyone, as we see in the Good Samaritan.

We live in a challenging time and a challenging place. We don't just open our doors and people walk in. Many of our congregations have faced decline. What can the district do to support congregations? One of those things is Leader development. For our laity we are increasing opportunities to pour into our leaders and assist congregations in developing additional leaders. Helping leaders understand their responsibilities as it comes to the work of the church.

The district is blessed with a number of lay deacons. We are currently reviewing the program and making it even better. We are looking at adding additional continuing education classes to further develop the gifts that God has given them that they might be Living Love through their local congregations. Opportunities for lay deacons to work with the pastor to identify needs and develop a plan to meet them. These are trained lay people seeking to Engage their communities and workplaces as the Living Love of Christ.

It's not just about our lay deacons. How can we better support the elected leaders of our congregations? We are looking at a series of listening posts and opportunities aimed at our elected leaders. These gatherings are to support the sharing of ideas and understanding how we can better help them.

This ties in directly with another of our targets being Congregational support.

This has led to partnerships like the one we are developing with Concordia Plan Services. Beyond a great health plan, it is also about parish support. Can we assist in shared accounting, facility planning, budgeting, or Human Resources? How many of you have an employee manual or make sure you have all the paperwork needed in a new hire. This partnership is seeking to provide expert assistance to the business function of the congregation, so our leaders are freed to be more a part of ministry.

The partnership with Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld LLP, our lawyers, gives us expert advice to property and legal issues. They were a great support in navigating the PPP loans. They have been supportive of parishes as they pursue possible redevelopment or needed to work through tenant issues. This fall they will be doing a zoom call to share information on developing an appropriate lease. What do you need to know to protect the church?

But Congregational support isn't just about the business side. IT is also about revitalizing congregations. In cooperation with Task Force 2 and LCEF, we are offering reimagining workshops throughout the district by region. These are a series of 4 morning sessions for congregations to work through mission, vision, and making a few simple goals for the future. This is done in person through a combination of large and small group processes so that we can learn from one another as we take a step forward to restart mission after the last 2 years. For larger churches it can be building a full mission plan as you look at the next 5 years and expanding the work you are already about.

We have talked about Lay leaders and congregational support, but we also need to continue to pour into our Church Workers. How can we assist our young in ministry pastors as they get used to serving in New York? How do we better equip them to be prepared for a mission field? We are providing opportunities for theological engagement. Lectionary study groups to assist in sermon preparation that speaks to our people. Learning from those who have gone before us that have served in this field. Interviews with seasoned pastors that share the challenges they faced and the things they wished they knew when they started. We can share challenges and joys and learn from one another.

More opportunities to learn from the wisdom around our synod. Revitalizing our Pastors conferences and additional opportunities through zoom to maintain and grow our connections.

Even as we revitalize and pour into our congregations, pastors, and lay leaders, there is also a need to start new ministries. We must take the great commission seriously to Go and make disciples of all nations, because all nations are right out our door. Look around this gathering. We are a diverse people. We are blessed to be living love together. We want to celebrate this and continue to plant new ministries in places that are underserved.

As a district we must speak clearly to our context and to our Synod. When it comes to matters of diversity, we look different than most of the rest of the synod. We must lead the way in developing a voice that speaks to the challenges of the Northeast, to the challenges of New York and challenges of the inner city. Instead of walking away from these challenges we choose to stand and be living love a voice of Hope.

We need to speak with a clear voice on matters of racism and social justice. These are the areas of life that Living Love makes a difference. We will not tolerate racism of any kind, because the Gospel is for all people everywhere. We cannot walk away from issues of race. We need to embrace them head on as we share the Gospel in this context. The church is not immune from these issues. We are uniquely situated at this crossroads of the world to speak with a clear voice as these issues affect us. We cannot walk away from the downtrodden, because Jesus reaches out with arms of love. Living Love in the Gospel causes us to speak to these issues we face. God uses us, his baptized believers, to share living love to the hopeless. This is true in Racism, true in Social Justice, true for the NONEs, and true for all people everywhere. God's love is for all people, and He has given us that love.

We are the SYNOD in this place. We sit at this crossroads of the pluralism of this world. And we have an opportunity to speak and be heard, because we face these challenges each and every day. Paul writes:

23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

We proclaim the Living Love of Jesus in this world. We need to speak this truth and reality, clearly and loudly so that all voices are heard. Living Love is embracing all of our sisters and brothers, listening to their concerns and walking together to see what solution might present itself. It is going above and beyond.

We continue to seek partnerships, continue to seek guidance, because we are not perfect. We need to communicate better, hear each other and work together to see what the future holds.

Paul writes about Love. Love is patient and kind. He talks about what Love is not. It does not rejoice at wrong doing, it is not irritable or resentful. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. – That is the Living Love that we are

talking about. That is the Living Love we are to be to each other and to the world around us, our neighbor.

These last 2 years have given us the greatest challenge I have ever faced. It has been exhausting and even a bit overwhelming. But we are still here. The message is still the same. The Living Love of Jesus hasn't changed. The Living Love of Jesus remains the message this world needs to hear. So let's take this next step together. I pledge to continue to hold you in my prayers. I pledge to seek the Lord's guidance as we seek to serve this world. I pledge to work with you in determine what the next steps for our district and your congregation are."

President Lecakes ended his remarks by making the pledge to walk with the District congregations, ministries, laypersons and workers as we together "receive the Living Love of Jesus and Engage the world around us with the Gospel of HOPE."

VIII. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Pastor Daniel Cohn led the election of First Vice President (non-geographic) of the Atlantic District.

The Rev. Dr. Dien A. Taylor was elected 1st Vice President (non-geographic) with a majority of votes cast.

IX. TASK FORCE I REPORT

Mission Executive and the Chair of Task Force I (Missions), The Rev. Dr. Johnson Rethinasamy, Pastor of Immanuel, Whitestone shared his report along with video of ministry activities around the district.

X. TASK FORCE II REPORT

The Chair of Task Force II (Congregational Revitalization and Leadership Development), The Rev. Dr. Vic Nelson, Pastor of Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Cairo shared his report.

Bishop Lecakes summarized that several Task Forces of the District are functioning at some level but are not able to give a report.

XI. TASK FORCE VII REPORT

Mrs. Amy Lecakes, Co-Chair of Task Force VII (Health and Human Care), gave the report of the Task Force. Lecakes is a commissioned minister of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and a School Counselor at Martin Luther High School in Queens. Ms. Lecakes serves along with co-chair, Mrs. Kate Gonzalez.

XII. TASK FORCE VIII REPORT

The Chairs of Task Force VIII (Disaster Response) was given by The Rev. Tom Cusanelli, the Associate Pastor of St Luke, Dix Hills. Cusanelli reviewed the challenges and opportunities during the pandemic and the need to get LERT training to help in disasters. He also encouraged congregations and schools to partner in caring out disaster response.

Bishop Lecakes commented that the work of Task Force IX is often duplicated by Task Force 1, therefore Task Force IX was included in Task Force I reporting.

XIII. FLOOR COMMITTEE ONE

Chairman of Floor Committee One, The Rev. Matthew Staneck, Third Vice-President of the Atlantic District in Region II, was welcomed to the podium and he began by thanking his Committee Members.

Motion #3 To Dispense with the Reading of the Whereas Clauses for the Sake of Time.

Motion: The Rev. Dr. John Hannah, Emeritus

Second: Mr. Ron Sommer, St. Paul, Monroe

Adopted unanimously by acclamation.

Motion #4 (Resolution 2022-01-01) To Strengthen and Expand Routes to Ministry Moved by Floor Committee One.

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.

Discussion Occurred.

Adopted by a majority vote (98Y/8N/2A).

Motion #5 (Resolution 2022-01-02) To Recognize and Give Thanks for Work at Concordia College New York

Moved by Floor Committee One.

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.

Discussion was held.

Adopted by acclamation.

Convention rose to sing the “Common Doxology” as approved.

Motion #6 (Resolution 2022-01-03) To Explore Future Lutheran Higher Education Opportunities in the East Coast Region

Moved by Floor Committee One.

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.

Discussion was held.

Adopted by majority vote (91Y/2N/1A).

A friendly amendment was received by The Rev. Dr. George Kirkup

Motion #7 (Resolution 2022-01-04) Supporting Colleges and Universities of the Concordia University System (CUS)

Moved by Floor Committee One.

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.2022 01-04

Support the CUS System.

Discussion was held.

Adopted by majority vote (87Y/2N/4A).

Motion #8 (Resolution 2022-01-05) Producing Religious Education Materials

Moved by Floor Committee One.

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.

No Discussion was held.

Adopted by majority vote (81Y/8N/3A).

Floor Committee action was further explained by the Rev. Chair.

Motion #9 (Resolution 2022-01-06) To Provide Christian Resources in Addressing Racism

Moved by Floor Committee One.

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.

Approved by majority vote (86Y/7N/3A).

Discussion was raised to add 8th Commandment and 7th Commandments which was received as a friendly amendment.

Motion #10 (Resolution 2022-01-07) To Address Violence

Moved by Floor Committee One.

(Amended) Resolved, 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.

Discussion was held

Call the Question on 1st Amendment (73Y/22N)

Call the Question Moved: The Rev. Robert Boehler, St. Mark’s, Yonkers

1st Amendment Rejected (23Y/69N/2A)

1st Amendment Moved: The Rev. Neil Mittelstaedt, St. James, St James

1st Amendment Seconded: The Rev. Peter Deebrah, St. Matthew, Manhattan

2nd Amendment Adopted. (Acclimation)

2nd Amendment Moved: The Rev. Dr. David Benke, St. Peter’s, Brooklyn

2nd Amendment Seconded: The Rev. Jessie Wilson, Bethlehem, Delmar

Motion approved by majority vote (78Y/17N/2A).

The Convention went into recess for the following events:

- Service of Thanksgiving for the Ministry of Concordia College, New York
- Dinner

**+Convention Session #1 Continued
FRIDAY, July 22, 2022 at 7 PM+**

XIV. WELCOME

Bishop Lecakes welcomed back the delegates to the convention and welcomed Mr. Thomas Roemke, the President of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church and School. President Lecakes commented that Tom was Principal Emeritus and Commissioned Teacher Emeritus and a lifelong worker of the District.

Mr. Roemke brought greetings from Our Savior’s as well as a history of the church and school. He started the session off with prayer.

XV. REGISTRATION AND CREDENTIALS REPORT

Secretary Hartwell updated the convention on the registration count as of 7:00 PM:

- 58 Congregations represented.
- 51 Pastoral Delegates
- 51 Lay Delegates
- 16 Advisory Delegates
- 34 Guests
- 102 Total Voting Delegates

XVI. ELECTIONS

The chair welcomed The Rev. Dan Cohn back to the stage to guide delegates through Elections.

The Advisory Commissioned and Advisory Pastors met to elect delegates to the National Convention.

Ordained Minister Advisory Delegate to LCMS 2023 Convention:

Delegate: The Rev. Steven Williamson-Link

Alternate: The Rev. Philip Bartelt

Commissioned Minister Advisory Delegate to LCMS 2023 Convention:

Delegate: Ms. Betsy Kocsis

Alternate: Mr. Kevin Cook

Regional Vice-President Elections were conducted with regional representatives voting with the following results.

The Rev. Dr. Victor Nelson, Jr. (Region I)

The Rev. Matthew Staneck (Region II)

The Rev David Wackenhuth (Region III)

The results of the elections for regional vice-presidents were accepted by acclamation.

The Rev. Cohn led the delegates through a ranking of the 2nd through 4th vice-presidents with the following results:

Atlantic District 2nd Vice-President - The Rev. Matthew Staneck (Region II)

Atlantic District 3rd Vice-President - The Rev David Wackenhuth (Region III)

Atlantic District 4th Vice-President - The Rev. Dr. Victor Nelson, Jr. (Region I)

Bishop Lecakes welcomed the Chairman of the Nominations Committee, Mr. Tom Roemke.

Motion #11 To Close Floor Nominations

Moved: The Rev. George Kirkup, St. John, Holbrook

Seconded: Mr. Mark Mather, St. Paul, Amityville

Approved by unanimous acclamation.

Five elections were announced as running unopposed.

Atlantic District Secretary – Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell

Atlantic District Treasurer – Mr. Brian Martin

Atlantic District Nominations Committee – Commissioned Mr. Michael Schultz & Mr. Gary Frederickson

Atlantic District Nominations Committee Lay Person Positions – Ms. Ellen Farber & Ms. Sue Stewart

Elected by acclamation.

Contested Elections were held for the following positions with the following results:

Atlantic District Board of Directors, Region I Pastor - The Rev. Adam Wiegand

Atlantic District Board of Directors, Region I Layperson - Ms. Sue Stewart and Mr. Edward Kleinke

Atlantic District Board of Directors Region II, Pastor – The Rev. Matthew Gonzalez

Atlantic District Board of Directors, Region II Lay Person – Mrs. Eliza Ko and Mr. Leonides Maldonado

Atlantic District Board of Directors, Region III Pastor – The Rev. Travis Yee

Atlantic District Board of Directors, Region III Layperson - Ms. Ellen Farber and Mr. Mark Mather

Atlantic District Board of Directors, Rostered Commissioned Workers - Deaconess Raquel A. Rojas and Deaconess Janine Bolling and DCE Christopher Boccalupo

Atlantic District Nominations Committee 2025 Convention, Pastor – The Rev. Francis Rigobert and The Rev. Henry Albrechtsen

Committee for Convention Nominations for Synod Nominating Committee Position – Mr. Richard Schaefer
Alternate – Mr. Bill Collins

XVII. Floor Committee Two – Practical and Local Church

The Bishop welcomed Vice-President David Wackenhuth to lead the convention in resolutions from Floor Committee Two:

Motion #12 (Resolution 2022-02-01) To Reassign Resurrection Lutheran Church Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Unanimously approved by acclimation.

Motion #13 (Resolution 2022-02-02) To Recognize and Give Thanks for recent graduates of the Atlantic District/ECCE Lay Deacon Training Program

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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

Unanimously approved by acclimation.

The Convention rose and sang the “Common Doxology” as adopted in the resolution.

Motion #14 (Resolution 2022-02-03) To Begin New Ministries in Sustainable Way
Moved by Floor Committee Two.

Resolved, the Atlantic District reaffirm our guiding statement to 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.

Unanimously approved by acclamation

Motion #15 (Resolution 2022-02-04) To Support the Work of Chaplains in the Atlantic District

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Unanimously approved by acclamation.

Discussion was held regarding the ability to encourage with resources. President Lecakes indicated there are resources from the District to help train chaplains.

Motion #16 (Resolution 2022-02-05) To Assess the impact of COVID needs of AD Congregations and Determine a Path Forward

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Approved by acclamation.

Motion #17 (Resolution 2022-02-06) To Recognize the Atlantic District’s Successes, Failures, and Opportunities in Ministry with Communities of Color

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Approved by majority vote. (75Y/9N/1A).

A friendly amendment to add “ Universities and Concordia Historical Institute” as a part of study process was accepted.

Motion #18 (Resolution 2022-02-07) To Strengthen the Nonvoting Advisory Delegate Participation at Conventions

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Amendment 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

Moved: The Rev. Dr. George Kirkup, St. John, Holbrook

Seconded : Mr. Mark Mather, St. Paul, Amityville

Adopted by majority vote.

Motion Approved by majority vote.(63Y/23N/A4)

Motion #19 (Resolution 2022-02-08) To Promote Ministry to College and University Students among the Congregations of the Atlantic District

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Approved by acclamation.

Friendly Amendment was accepted to add “parents” to motion.

Motion #20 (Resolution 2022-02-09) To Encourage House Blessings

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Approved by acclamation.

Motion #21 (Resolution 2022-02-10) To Promote Transparency of District Governance

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Approved by majority vote (67Y/8N/7A).

XVIII. CLOSING DEVOTIONS

The Rev. Adam Weigand, Pastor of St. Paul, Saratoga Springs led the Convention in Closing Worship.

The Convention was called to recess until the July 23, 2022, morning session.



61st Regular Proceedings of the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

**+Convention Session #2
SATURDAY, JULY 23, 2022 at 8:00 AM+**

XIX. OPENING DEVOTIONS

The Session began with devotions from the Rev. Francis Rigobert.

XX. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Bishop Lecakes welcomed the Rev. Dr. Matthew H. Harrison, the Synodical President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He noted that Pastor Harrison served as the preacher for our opening Eucharist and now addresses the Atlantic District Convention and shares the work of our Synod.

President Harrison commented on the challenges of leading the Synod through Covid-19. He also commented on the blessings of financial giving during the Pandemic.

Pastor Harrison shared with the Convention his thankfulness on the ability of the Synod to help people during pandemic and provide resources.

He also addressed what he felt was an upcoming issue of the Synod in Convention in 2023. He believes that 7-03 Task Force of Concordia University System will be the issue. The main recommendation is that Regents would have the power to work independently yet that the Universities would have to be accredited in what Harrison called “Lutheran identity.”

President Harrison spoke regarding the closing of Concordia University - Portland. He also commented on the closing of Concordia College – Steward and on the recent closure of Concordia College – New York.

The challenges of the Concordia University System are cost related and there are leadership opportunities and theological opportunities that are exciting, according to Harrison.

President Harrison commented on the Madagascar Lutheran Church and other exciting activities with Church Relations including work in South Korea and South Sudan.

Pastor Harrison spoke to the delegated about religious freedom issues in the Church of Finland.

He also commented on the trouble in Ukraine and fundraising to help Lutherans in Eastern Europe.

President Harrison praised the LWML which continues to support the synod in mission grants and helping women to get involved in the study of scripture.

President Harrison talked about issues of sexuality and race and stated his belief that the LCMS has the strongest teaching in these areas and that we have the ability to speak to our culture.

An update on the Office of International Mission was shared with the issues that we deal with during pandemic and the proper funding for supporting our missionaries, especially as they go back into the field following the pandemic.

Reports from Bishop Harrison included Livonian Lutheran Project and mission training in Europe as well as outreach in the Middle East and especially exciting work of our German partner church, SELK, and her mission outreach to Muslims.

The Dominican Seminary has over 30 students and are beginning to ordain pastors. According to President Harrison, they have ordained over 200 pastors.

President Harrison announced that the Spanish Lutheran Hymnal has been published by CPH and will be in an app format in about a year.

The Taiwan Seminary was discussed as well as issues related to pulling out of this joint work.

President Harrison updated the convention on Africa Seminaries and a fully rebuilt seminary in India.

In addition, the Synod Program “Making Disciples for Life” and the “Life Network”, a Life advocacy of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod were reviewed.

Speaking to the strength of Human Care, after the earthquake in Hatti, the LCMS church partnership in South Hatti distributed almost 400,000 meals in the disaster zone in addition to many other relief efforts of Synod.

President Harrison shared a \$3 million “Life Match” that was being offered to assist congregations with pro-life missional opportunities.

Harrison touted that over 19,000 “Everyone His Witness” workbooks have been sold, increasing Evangelism opportunities in congregations.

He also lifted up Rural and Small-Town Ministry and the upcoming “Child Protection Program” in relation to preventing sexual abuse cases

President Harrison commented again that the Synod is in “best financial shape” ever. He related this to giving and good fiscal stewardship.

He added that he hopes to share the Gospel and to help the synod stay in the business.

President Harrison commented on the financial support of seminaries and “Set Apart to Serve” church recruitment and his desire to have all of us recruit pastors for church work.

Finally, he shared a 2017 LCMS Youth Ministry Study and talked about a \$2 Million Church Planting Grant opportunity.

Time was allotted for discussion and question and answer with President Harrison.

A question was raised about student debt and work that the seminaries are doing to help church workers.

A question was raised about Harrison’s comments regarding seminary education and alternate routes.

President Harrison talked about the serious issue of student debt.

The Q and A was extended to allow more with the Synod President.

The issue of racism and how to respond to conflicted issues was addressed.

The issue of Concordia College – New York closing was raised.

XXI. SERVANT OF CHRIST AWARD

The Rev Hartwell introduced the first Servant of Christ Award which was awarded posthumously to Mr. James Darden.

The Rev. David Haberer, Mr. Darden’s pastor shared a little about Mr. James Darden and his servant heart and faith.

XXII. REGISTRATION AND CREDENTIALS REPORT

The Rev. Secretary Hartwell announced the current registrations as of 9:30 AM.

Pastoral Voting Delegates 45
Lay Voting Delegate 47
Advisory Delegates 11
Guests 24
Total Voting Delegates 92
Total Congregations Represented 54

XXIII. FLOOR COMMITTEE ONE – THEOLOGICAL AND LARGER CHURCH

Bishop Lecakes invited the Chairman of Floor Committee One, the Rev. Matthew Staneck to continue his work.

Motion #22 (Resolution 2022-01-10) To Audit Concordia Plan Services Retirement Funding

Moved from Floor Committee One

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. The Chair invites Rev Secretary Hartwell once again.

Adopted by majority vote of the delegates (67Y/8N/7A).

Motion #23 (Resolution 2022-01-11) To Create a Restructuring Task Force to Consider Transfer of Synod Congregations, Ministries, and Assets

Moved by Floor Committee One.

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 properly 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.

Approved by majority vote (62Y/15N/5A).

Motion #24 (Resolution 2022-01-12) To Affirm and Protect Freedom to Exercise Religion

Moved by Floor Committee Two.

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.

Passed unanimously by acclamation .

Motion #25 (Resolution 2022-01-13) Resolution on Ukraine

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.

Amendment

Moved: The Rev. Nils Niemeier, Messiah, East Setauket

Seconded: The Rev. George Kirkup, St. John, Holbrook

Amendment Adopted by majority vote (44Y/33N/5A).

Motion adopted by majority vote (71Y/14N/1A).

Amendment was approved to include Russian partner Churches in our efforts to promote peace.

XXIV. SERVANT OF CHRIST

Secretary Hartwell announced the second Servant of Christ Award which was awarded to Mr. Gary Muller. Mr. Muller has served on the Board of Regents for Concordia College and SonRise Lutheran Church.

Ms. Deborah Eaves shared comments about Mr. Muller and his servant heart for ministry.

XXV. FLOOR COMMITTEE TWO – PRACTICAL AND LOCAL CHURCH

The Chairman of Floor Committee Two, The Rev. David Wackenhuth brought one last Resolution to the Convention.

Motion #26 (Resolution 2022-02-11) To Encourage the Study of Church History

Moved by Floor Committee Two

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 forebearers 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.

Adopted by unanimous acclamation.

XXVI. SERVANT OF CHRIST

Secretary Hartwell announced the final Servant of Christ Award is given to Ms. Honey Pabst, a member of St. John Lutheran Church, Sayville. Pastor Brian Noack, St. John Sayville, commented on her faithfulness in the congregation, the LWML, and her community.

XXVII. ANNIVERSARIES OF OUR PARISHES, SCHOOLS, AND WORKERS

Secretary Hartwell directed the convention delegates to the Supplement for a listing of anniversaries and then the Vice-Presidents offered prayers of thanksgiving.

- Rev Vice President Matthew Staneck Prayed for our parishes
- Rev Vice President David Wackenhuth Prayed for our commissioned workers
- Rev Vice President Vic Nelson Jr. Prayed for our pastors

XXVIII. WORDS OF THANKSGIVING

President Lecakes gave thanks to our Lord for all the workers completing their time as elected/appointed workers within the Atlantic District including:

- Mrs. Sonia Holder-Bowman
- Mrs. Eunice Bailey
- The Rev. Robert Boehler

Rev Vice President Dien Ashly Taylor prayed for the those completing service at this time.

XXIX. PARTNERS' GREETINGS

Special Partners of the Atlantic District were welcomed to give words of greeting to the convention. These included:

Atlantic District LWML: President, Deaconess Raquel Rojas spoke about the make up of the zones of the Atlantic District LWML. She also spoke about the mite boxes and the mission grants that have been given out as well as resources that are available. She also challenged the convention with the Spanish phrase “Atrévete en Cristo” or to “Dare in Christ” to reach out to the lost, lazy and lonely with the Gospel message.

LCEF: President of the Lutheran Church—Extension Fund (LCEF), the Rev. Bart Day who joined the Convention via Video address.

Atlantic District Vice-President of LCEF Peter Labenberg and the Rev. Billy Brath, LCEF Vice President of Ministry Support also gave greeting from the podium. Mr. Labenberg spoke about the many congregations and schools that have benefited from LCEF and the very favorable terms that LCEF offers and the many ministry projects these investments help to fund. Currently 3% of church members support 90% of congregations that take advantage of LCEf support. He hopes that this will grow.

Bishop Lecakes shared that LCEF is a strong partner not only with loans and property issues, but also with Mission Clarity. Peter Labenberg is part of the district staff and is able to assist when there are financial challenges, building projects, loans and more.

President Lecakes also commented that Pastor Billy Brath works with us in partnership with LCEF assisting congregations in looking at mission clarity.

Haitian Ministry in Dominican Republic: The Rev. Dr. Josh Hollmann, True Light, Manhattan spoke on behalf Mr. John Moran on a mission opportunity that was created for Haitian refugees in the Dominican Republic and a special children’s shelter to help orphans.

Mill Neck and LSS-NY: The work with Lutheran Friends for the Deaf at Mill Neck Manor was also highlighted as well as the great work with Lutheran Social Services – New York (LSS-NY).

XXX. DISTRICT STAFF

Bishop Lecakes continued to offer words of appreciation to the Atlantic District Staff, whom he called “a special blessing” over the last quadrennium. He thanked two workers who have recently stepped down from their service:

- Ms. TH Ardnt, Bookkeeper
- Mrs. Marcia Kollman, Archivist

He also commented on current District staff including:

- Mr. Peter Labenberg, Director of Stewardship & Finance and LCEF Vice President
- Mrs. Carol Mittelstaedt, Mission Society Coordinator
- The Rev. Dr. Johnson Rethinasamy, Mission Executive
- The Rev. George Carstensen, Director of Gospel Communications
- The Rev. Dan Cohn, Associate Director of Finance
- Mrs. Kathleen Donaghy, Executive Assistant
- Mr. David DeJesus, Director of Properties
- The Rev. Henry Albrechtsen, Registrar, Atlantic District Lay Deacon Program

The convention thanked District Staff with a round of applause.

XXXI. INSTALLATIONS

Before closing the convention, President Harrison installed Bishop Lecakes as District President and Bishop Lecakes installed the Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and Board of Directors of the Atlantic District as well as the Circuit Visitors.

XXXII. CLOSING PRAYERS

The Rev. Patrick Singh led the convention in closing prayer called the Itinerarium

XXXIII. ADJOURNMENT

The 61st Regular Convention of the Atlantic District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was adjourned in the Name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit at 12:15 PM.

Motion #27 To Adjourn

Moved: Mr. Ron Sommers, St. Paul, Monroe

Seconded: The Rev. Dr. David Elseroad, Trinity, Hawthorne

Approved by unanimous acclamation.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell
Atlantic District Secretary
August 10, 2022