

Floor Committee 3: Mercy

Chairman and Amendment Field Guide

Portrait print-friendly edition for LCMS 2026 Convention delegates

Purpose: Help delegates create, share, and bring forward useful amendments that strengthen mercy work without building unnecessary centralized control.

Operating lens: Kingdom over castle. Mission over machinery. Congregations and districts served well. Five capitals released for mercy. Low control with high accountability.

One-sentence test for every amendment
Does this help congregations, districts, and mercy partners deliver Christ's mercy locally, with clear confession, practical accountability, and without turning Synod into a centralized mercy-control tower?

Five capitals	How to ask about them
Spiritual	Does this strengthen Word, Sacrament, prayer, pastoral care, confession, catechesis?
Relational	Does this build trust, partnerships, families, volunteers, local care networks?
Physical	Does this steward facilities, shelters, food pantries, disaster tools, meeting spaces?
Intellectual	Does this provide training, legal clarity, trauma awareness, theological guidance?
Financial	Does this use grants, benevolence, insurance, scholarships, emergency aid wisely?

Committee 3 proposed resolutions in Today's Business: 3-01 Life Ministry, 3-02 Adoption and Foster Care, 3-03 Disaster Response, 3-04 Telehealth Counseling, 3-05 Worker Wellness, 3-06 Addiction Crisis, 3-07 Congregational Mercy Ministries.

How to Address the Chairman

Use formal, clean language. Keep it calm, clear, and short. The goal is not to win the microphone. The goal is to help the assembly do faithful work.

Purpose	What to say
Speak in favor	Mr. Chairman, I rise in favor of Resolution 3-__.
Speak against	Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to Resolution 3-__.
Ask committee question	Mr. Chairman, I rise to request information from the floor committee.
Move an amendment	Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 3-__ by adding the following resolved.
Explain amendment	This amendment strengthens local mercy while preserving accountability.
Clarify wording	Mr. Chairman, may I clarify the wording of my amendment?
Withdraw amendment	Mr. Chairman, I request permission to withdraw my amendment.
Point of order	Point of order.
Parliamentary inquiry	Parliamentary inquiry.
Close debate	I move the previous question.

Delegation huddle script

Before going to the mic: 1) What problem are we solving? 2) Is the amendment narrow and germane? 3) Does it preserve local flexibility? 4) Does it add meaningful accountability? 5) Can a small congregation use this? 6) Is the tone firm, fraternal, and useful?

Simple amendment workflow

Step	Action
1. Identify	Name the resolution and exact place to amend.
2. Draft	Use one clear resolved clause. Avoid rewriting the whole resolution unless necessary.
3. Test	Ask: mission, five capitals, low control, high accountability.
4. Share	Give the wording to your delegation and, if possible, the floor committee.
5. Move	Go to the mic with exact wording ready.
6. Explain	Say why it helps, then stop. Let the words do the plowing.

Committee 3 Amendment Dashboard

Committee 3 is mostly Kingdom-facing. The key is to connect mercy to Christ, local congregational action, professional competence where needed, and transparent accountability.

Priority	Resolution	Best amendment focus
1	3-04 Telehealth and counseling	Licensing, confidentiality, emergency response, affordability, access, cost reporting.
2	3-06 Addiction crisis	Qualified consultation and clear boundaries between pastoral care, clinical care, peer recovery, and congregational mercy.
3	3-03 Disaster response	District coordinator readiness updates and 2029 summary of training, coverage, service hours, and lessons.
4	3-05 Worker wellness	Annual worker-care review and clear communication of resources to boards and workers.
5	3-02 Adoption and fostering	Practical congregational support after placement: respite, meals, trauma-informed help.
6	3-07 Congregational mercy	Share practical models and keep bodily care connected to pastoral care and congregational life.
7	3-01 Life ministry	Connect pro-life advocacy to concrete local care across the whole span of life.

Master amendment paragraph

Resolved, That implementation of this resolution be carried out in a way that strengthens local congregational mercy, honors district and congregational context, protects confidentiality where needed, encourages partnership with confessionally faithful ministries and qualified professionals, and provides a brief report before the 2029 convention describing resources created, partnerships formed, congregations served, five capitals stewarded, and lessons learned.

Tone guardrails

- Affirm the concern before narrowing the claim.
- Do not accuse motives. Address wording, structure, accountability, and local usability.
- Avoid turning mercy into mere social service or transactional evangelism.
- Keep Christ, Word and Sacrament, pastoral care, and neighbor love at the center.
- A good amendment is a scalpel, not a riding mower.

Resolution 3-01: Commend and Encourage Life Ministry Efforts

Plain-language read: Commends pro-life witness among congregations, schools, districts, and recognized service organizations. It encourages advocacy, education, and resources while leaving local action flexible.

Suggested amendment

Resolved, That congregations, schools, districts, and recognized service organizations be encouraged to connect life ministry advocacy with concrete local mercy, including support for pregnant mothers, fathers, children, families in crisis, those grieving abortion, people with disabilities, the elderly, and those facing end-of-life decisions; and be it further Resolved, That Life Ministry resources be shared in ways usable by small congregations, schools, youth groups, and families.

Why this helps

This keeps life ministry from becoming only a march, statement, or annual Sunday. Public confession matters, but the neighbor in crisis needs embodied care: prayer, pastoral care, a ride, a meal, a crib, a counselor, a congregation, and the Gospel of Christ for sinners.

Five capitals examples

Capital	Example
Spiritual	Prayers for life, pastoral care after abortion, end-of-life catechesis.
Relational	Partnerships with pregnancy centers, disability ministries, and family care teams.
Physical	Diaper closets, baby supplies, meal trains, support-group space.
Intellectual	Teaching on life from conception to natural death.
Financial	Benevolence for mothers, adoption support, pregnancy care grants.

Microphone-ready phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 3-01 by adding language that connects life advocacy with concrete local mercy for mothers, fathers, children, families in crisis, people with disabilities, the elderly, and those facing end-of-life decisions.

Delegation huddle question

Does this resolution help our congregations move from pro-life statements to pro-life care?

Resolution 3-02: Promote Awareness of Christian Adoption and Fostering Needs

Plain-language read: Promotes awareness of adoption and foster care needs, connecting Christian adoption to God's adoption of us in Christ and encouraging families, congregations, and ministries to consider faithful support.

Suggested amendment

Resolved, That congregations and schools be encouraged to support adoption and fostering not only through awareness, but also through practical congregational care, including prayer, respite care, meals, mentoring, trauma-informed support, financial assistance where appropriate, and partnership with confessionally faithful adoption and foster-care ministries.

Why this helps

Awareness is a beginning, not the finish line. Foster and adoptive families often need long-haul congregational support after the first joyful announcement. This amendment makes the resolution congregation-serving and mercy-ready.

Five capitals examples

Capital	Example
Spiritual	Teach baptismal adoption and pray for children and families.
Relational	Support teams around foster and adoptive families.
Physical	Meals, respite care space, supplies, safe gathering places.
Intellectual	Trauma-informed training for pastors, teachers, and volunteers.
Financial	Adoption grants, foster-care support funds, emergency help.

Microphone-ready phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 3-02 by adding practical congregational support for foster and adoptive families, including prayer, respite care, meals, mentoring, trauma-informed support, and financial assistance where appropriate.

Delegation huddle question

Does this help congregations support foster and adoptive families after the first announcement, when the real work begins?

Resolution 3-03: Thank God for Disaster Response and Human Care Partners

Plain-language read: Thanks God for disaster response work and requires each district to appoint a disaster response coordinator to work with LCMS Disaster Response and encourage Lutheran Early Response Team training.

Suggested amendment

Resolved, That each district disaster response coordinator, in collaboration with LCMS Disaster Response, be encouraged to provide an annual readiness update to the district identifying training offered, congregations engaged, volunteer capacity, partnerships formed, and any major needs for improved disaster readiness; and be it further Resolved, That LCMS Disaster Response be encouraged to provide a summary before the 2029 convention of district coordinator coverage, LERT training participation, volunteer service hours where available, and lessons learned from recent disaster responses.

Why this helps

This is low control with high accountability. It does not micromanage every district, but it asks who is responsible, what training exists, what gaps remain, and what lessons have been learned. Mercy needs prayer, and mercy also needs the chainsaw list.

Five capitals examples

Capital	Example
Spiritual	Disaster chaplaincy, prayer, pastoral care after trauma.
Relational	District coordinators, volunteers, emergency partners.
Physical	Trailers, chainsaws, cleanup supplies, church staging areas.
Intellectual	LERT training, safety procedures, crisis communication.
Financial	Disaster grants, emergency funds, district support.

Microphone-ready phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 3-03 by adding annual district readiness updates and a 2029 summary of coordinator coverage, LERT participation, volunteer service hours where available, and lessons learned.

Delegation huddle question

Does this create readiness without micromanaging how every district responds?

Resolution 3-04: Encourage Counseling and Telehealth Services for Church Workers

Plain-language read: Encourages counseling and telehealth services for care and retention of church workers and directs a feasibility study for a possible synodwide telehealth counseling network.

Suggested amendment

Resolved, That the feasibility study include attention to state licensing requirements, pastoral confidentiality, clinical privacy, referral protocols, emergency response for suicidality or abuse, affordability for workers and families, and options for workers whose congregations or schools are not enrolled in Concordia Plan Services; and be it further Resolved, That the study report be provided before the 2029 convention and include projected costs, legal considerations, possible service models, and recommendations for low-cost access across all districts.

Why this helps

This is the most important Committee 3 amendment. The idea is strong, but telehealth has real legal, pastoral, clinical, financial, and confidentiality issues. Explore it with guardrails and a flashlight, not vibes and a brochure.

Five capitals examples

Capital	Example
Spiritual	Pastoral care alongside counseling, prayer, confession and absolution.
Relational	Trusted referral networks, worker-care teams, family support.
Physical	Telehealth platforms, private meeting spaces, retreat sites.
Intellectual	Clinical training, legal guidance, suicide-prevention protocols.
Financial	Affordable counseling, insurance coordination, emergency funds.

Microphone-ready phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 3-04 by requiring the feasibility study to address licensing, confidentiality, emergency response, affordability, access for non-CPS workers, projected costs, and possible service models before the 2029 convention.

Delegation huddle question

Does this amendment protect workers and families while preventing a well-intended program from becoming legally or financially vague?

Resolution 3-05: Commend Worker Wellness and Encourage Participation in Concordia Plan Services

Plain-language read: Commends worker-wellness efforts and encourages ministries to compare health coverage and use available wellness resources, especially where workers may be uninsured or underinsured.

Suggested amendment

Resolved, That congregations, schools, and ministries be encouraged to review worker compensation, health coverage, wellness resources, counseling access, and family support at least annually, in consultation with district leadership as appropriate, so that care for workers is treated as faithful stewardship rather than crisis response; and be it further Resolved, That available worker-wellness resources, including retreats, counseling, grants, financial assistance, and peer-support opportunities, be communicated in simple and accessible formats for congregational leaders, boards, and workers.

Why this helps

Worker wellness is more than plan comparison. It includes spiritual, emotional, relational, physical, and financial care. This moves worker care from midnight crisis response to ordinary Christian stewardship.

Five capitals examples

Capital	Example
Spiritual	Retreats, prayer, confession and absolution, pastoral care for pastors.
Relational	Peer groups, mentoring, circuit support, family care.
Physical	Time off, sabbatical planning, healthy work expectations.
Intellectual	Board training on compensation, burnout, and healthy expectations.
Financial	Health coverage, retirement, disability, emergency assistance.

Microphone-ready phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 3-05 by encouraging annual review of worker compensation, health coverage, wellness resources, counseling access, and family support, and by asking that worker-wellness resources be communicated clearly to congregational leaders and workers.

Delegation huddle question

Does this move worker wellness from crisis response to ordinary stewardship?

Resolution 3-06: Respond to the Growing Addiction Crisis

Plain-language read: Directs investigation and recommendations for how churches and service organizations can support those impacted by addiction, encourages districts to establish at least one new partnership, and calls the Synod to prayer.

Suggested amendment

Resolved, That the Office of National Mission's investigation include consultation with pastors, deaconesses, licensed addiction counselors, mental-health professionals, recovery ministry leaders, law enforcement chaplains, families affected by addiction, and congregations already serving in addiction recovery; and be it further Resolved, That any recommendations distinguish clearly between pastoral care, clinical treatment, peer recovery support, and congregational mercy, so that congregations are equipped to serve faithfully without being asked to practice beyond their competence.

Why this helps

Addiction ministry is a major mercy and mission field, but congregations should not be asked to become treatment centers without training, licensing, or boundaries. The church brings Christ, mercy, community, forgiveness, and hope, while honoring clinical vocations.

Five capitals examples

Capital	Example
Spiritual	Gospel hope, confession and absolution, prayer, pastoral care.
Relational	Recovery mentors, family support, care ministry partnerships.
Physical	Meeting space for recovery groups, safe transportation, referral lists.
Intellectual	Addiction training, referral protocols, trauma awareness, boundaries.
Financial	Support recovery ministries, grants, benevolence for treatment-related needs.

Microphone-ready phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 3-06 by adding consultation with qualified addiction professionals, pastors, recovery leaders, families, and congregations already serving in this area, and by clarifying the distinction between pastoral care, clinical treatment, peer recovery support, and congregational mercy.

Delegation huddle question

Does this equip congregations to serve people in addiction without asking them to operate beyond their competence?

Resolution 3-07: Give Thanks for Congregations Engaging in Mercy Ministries

Plain-language read: Gives thanks for congregations engaged in mercy ministries such as shelters, food pantries, counseling, prison ministry, wellness ministry, and disaster response, and connects mercy to witness and local congregational life.

Suggested amendment

Resolved, That congregations engaged in mercy ministries be encouraged, where appropriate, to share practical models, volunteer training tools, partnership examples, and lessons learned with other congregations, especially small and rural congregations seeking faithful ways to serve their neighbors; and be it further Resolved, That such mercy ministries continue to connect bodily care with pastoral care and invitation into the life of the congregation, without reducing mercy to either social service alone or evangelism as a transaction.

Why this helps

This turns thanksgiving into multiplication. Mercy should not be mere social service detached from Christ, and it should not become bait-and-switch evangelism. It is love flowing from Christ to the neighbor.

Five capitals examples

Capital	Example
Spiritual	Prayer with neighbors, pastoral care, invitation to Word and Sacrament.
Relational	Volunteer teams, local partners, ministry mentors.
Physical	Food pantries, shelters, counseling space, prison ministry resources.
Intellectual	Training guides, safety protocols, best-practice sharing.
Financial	Local mercy funds, grants, shared purchasing, emergency assistance.

Microphone-ready phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 3-07 by encouraging congregations engaged in mercy ministries to share practical models, volunteer training tools, partnership examples, and lessons learned, while keeping bodily care connected to pastoral care and the life of the congregation.

Delegation huddle question

Does this help mercy ministries multiply locally without turning them into either mere social service or transactional evangelism?

Final Field Notes for Committee 3

Mercy is not a distraction from doctrine. Mercy is doctrine with work gloves. The strongest amendments preserve clear confession, local flexibility, practical support, professional competence where needed, and honest reporting.

Good amendment	Weak amendment
Adds clear accountability without central control.	Adds a new mandate without reporting or funding clarity.
Helps small congregations participate.	Assumes every congregation has staff, money, and program capacity.
Connects mercy to Word, Sacrament, pastoral care, and neighbor love.	Turns mercy into either mere social service or evangelism as a transaction.
Honors qualified professionals where needed.	Asks congregations to operate beyond competence or vocation.
Uses five capitals wisely.	Uses slogans without local steps.

Closing Gospel frame

Christ has shown mercy to sinners by His cross and resurrection. He forgives, restores, adopts, heals, comforts, feeds, shelters, and sends. So the church's mercy work should always say, plainly and beautifully: Christ is risen indeed, and His mercy is not theoretical.

Last microphone reminder: name the resolution, offer exact wording, explain why it helps mission and accountability, then stop. The Holy Spirit does not require a delegate filibuster, thanks be to God.