

Floor Committee 4: Life Together

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 life together in Christ without building unnecessary centralized control.

Operating lens: Kingdom over castle. Mission over machinery. Congregations, schools, districts, circuits, and local ministry contexts served well. Five capitals released for Gospel witness. Low control with high accountability.

One-sentence test for every amendment

Does this strengthen faithful local ministry, preserve Lutheran confession, release spiritual, relational, physical, intellectual, or financial capital for Gospel witness, and avoid unnecessary central control?

Five capitals	How to ask about them
Spiritual	Does this strengthen Word, Sacrament, prayer, pastoral care, confession, catechesis?
Relational	Does this build trust, partnerships, local leaders, district and circuit relationships?
Physical	Does this steward facilities, schools, chapels, service spaces, archives, media tools?
Intellectual	Does this provide theology, training, research, teaching, technology wisdom?
Financial	Does this use grants, budgets, resources, and stewardship transparently and sustainably?

Committee 4 proposed resolutions in Today's Business: 4-01 Tell the Next Generation, 4-02 Mission emphasis process, 4-03 Sunset mission priorities, 4-04 Recognized Service Organizations, 4-05 Chaplaincy nomenclature, 4-06 Commission on Worship, 4-07 Political violence and public life, 4-08 CTCR on political and social issues, 4-09 Artificial intelligence, 4-10 Concordia Historical Institute centenary.

How to Address the Chairman and the Delegation

Use short, clear phrases. Name the motion. State the exact wording. Then stop. The microphone is not a pulpit with parliamentary upholstery.

Purpose	What to say
Be recognized	Mr. Chairman.
Ask a question	Mr. Chairman, I rise to request information from the floor committee.
Move an amendment	Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-__ by adding the following final resolve...
Speak for it	I speak in favor of this amendment because it strengthens local ministry while preserving accountability.
Speak against	I speak against this amendment because it may add confusion or unnecessary control.
Clarify wording	Parliamentary inquiry. Would this amendment be in order if offered as a new final resolve?
Ask committee intent	Could the committee explain how this resolution will be implemented and reported?
Offer substitute wording	I move to substitute the following wording for the pending amendment.
Withdraw	I request permission to withdraw my amendment.
Call attention to cost	Could the committee clarify the financial and staffing implications?

Delegate huddle script

- What problem are we trying to solve?
- Does this amendment serve congregations or mostly strengthen the institution?
- Is the wording clear enough for delegates to vote on without guessing?
- Does it add accountability without adding unnecessary control?
- Does it release spiritual, relational, physical, intellectual, or financial capital for Gospel witness?
- Would this still make sense for a small congregation, school, mission start, or rural parish?

Tone guardrail

Affirm the concern. Narrow the claim. Offer better wording. Keep the tone firm, fraternal, and useful. The goal is not to win a microphone duel. The goal is to serve Christ and His Church.

Amendment Workflow and Committee 4 Dashboard

Step	Delegate action
1. Read	Read the resolution in the latest Today's Business, including any revised or substitute text.
2. Mark	Underline the phrase that needs to be added, clarified, narrowed, or reported.
3. Draft	Write one clean amendment. Avoid sermon-length amendments wearing a tie.
4. Huddle	Ask your delegation whether the amendment is useful, germane, clear, and worth floor time.
5. Submit/share	If possible, share wording with the floor committee before offering it.
6. Move	State the exact amendment when recognized. Provide written wording if required.
7. Explain	Speak briefly: problem, amendment, why it helps, why it is accountable.

Master amendment paragraph

Resolved, That implementation of this resolution be carried out in a way that serves congregations, schools, districts, circuits, and local ministry contexts; preserves clear Lutheran confession; avoids unnecessary centralization; and provides a brief report before the 2029 convention describing resources created, partnerships formed, congregations served, five capitals stewarded, and lessons learned.

Priority	Resolution	Why it matters
1	4-02 Mission emphasis process	Biggest castle risk. Needs local input and reporting.
2	4-06 Commission on Worship	Doctrine/practice impact and cost. Needs advisory/resource guardrails.
3	4-05 Chaplaincy terminology	Terminology must not harm faithful workers.
4	4-04 RSO oversight	Needs relational accountability, not surprise compliance raids.
5	4-09 Artificial intelligence	Needs privacy, authorship, doctrine, and pastoral limits.

Big-picture read: Committee 4 is mixed. Some items are very Kingdom-facing. Others carry process, governance, oversight, or cost implications. The question is whether each structure functions like a trellis that helps the vine grow, or a cage that keeps the vine where the cage prefers.

Resolution 4-01: To Establish Tell the Next Generation as Synod Mission and Ministry Emphasis

Watch-for concern

Good emphasis, but it could become a slogan unless resources are practical for homes, small congregations, schools, and mission starts.

What it does

Adopts "Christ Is Risen! Tell the Next Generation" as the mission and ministry emphasis for 2026-2029, with focus on intergenerational catechesis and witness, especially children, youth, families, and future generations.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That Tell the Next Generation resources be developed in formats usable by households, small congregations, rural congregations, urban congregations, schools, campus ministries, mission starts, and congregations without full-time staff; and be it further Resolved, That such resources emphasize Word and Sacrament life, family catechesis, intergenerational relationships, local witness, and practical ways to engage disconnected children, youth, parents, and young adults.

Why this helps

This keeps the emphasis from becoming a logo with a slogan. It helps a grandma teach the Creed, a dad pray with his child, a youth leader follow up after confirmation, and a small church disciple the young people God has actually placed among them.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Catechism prayer cards, baptismal identity teaching, youth devotions.
Relational	Mentoring across generations, parents and elders praying with youth.
Physical	Use homes, schools, fellowship halls, youth spaces.
Intellectual	Teaching guides on Psalm 78, Deuteronomy 6, Matthew 28.
Financial	Free or low-cost resources for small congregations.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-01 by adding language that Tell the Next Generation resources be usable by households, small congregations, schools, mission starts, and congregations without full-time staff.

Delegation huddle question

Will this help local congregations tell the next generation about Christ, or mostly give us a new banner to hang?

Resolution 4-02: To Amend Bylaws to Refine Process for Creating Triennial Mission and Ministry Emphases

Watch-for concern

This is the clearest castle-risk item in Committee 4. Streamlining may be helpful, but grassroots input must not be quietly removed from the process.

What it does

Refines the process for creating triennial mission and ministry emphases. This is a process and governance item because it shapes how mission priorities are formed and brought to convention.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That prior to recommending any future triennial mission and ministry emphasis, the Boards for National and International Mission shall solicit input from districts, circuits, congregations, schools, mission leaders, and lay delegates through accessible means, including written feedback, district gatherings, digital surveys, or optional circuit forums; and be it further Resolved, That the boards shall summarize this input in their report to the Synod in convention.

Why this helps

Low control does not require mandatory meetings everywhere. High accountability does require the boards to listen broadly and report what they heard. Process shapes trust. Trust shapes participation. Participation shapes mission.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Hear what congregations need for catechesis, evangelism, worship, and mercy.
Relational	Restore trust by gathering input from districts, circuits, and lay leaders.
Physical	Use district gatherings, digital meetings, local forums.
Intellectual	Combine mission trend data with local testimony.
Financial	Avoid expensive required meetings by using simple low-cost feedback tools.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-02 by requiring future mission-emphasis recommendations to include accessible input from districts, circuits, congregations, schools, mission leaders, and lay delegates, with a summary reported to the convention.

Delegation huddle question

Does this process listen to the field before setting the emphasis, or does it send a top-floor memo and call it mission?

Resolution 4-03: To Commend and Sunset Synod Mission Priorities

Watch-for concern

Do not accidentally signal that witness, mercy, and life together are no longer useful local planning categories.

What it does

Gives thanks for prior Synod mission priorities of witness, mercy, and life together, encourages continued local use, and sunsets them as formal Synodwide triennial priorities.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That although these mission priorities be formally sunset as Synodwide triennial priorities, congregations, districts, schools, agencies, and ministries be encouraged to continue using witness, mercy, and life together as helpful descriptive categories for local planning, assessment, and Gospel service.

Why this helps

The Synod can move forward without burying useful language. Witness, mercy, and life together describe what the church actually does: proclaim Christ, love the neighbor, and live as the Body of Christ.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Use the categories to assess preaching, Sacraments, catechesis.
Relational	Strengthen fellowship, care, and neighbor relationships.
Physical	Connect facilities to mercy and outreach uses.
Intellectual	Use the categories for planning and leadership development.
Financial	Budget around witness, mercy, and life together priorities.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-03 by clarifying that while these priorities are formally sunset as Synodwide triennial priorities, congregations and districts may continue using them locally as helpful planning categories.

Delegation huddle question

Does the sunset language preserve local freedom to keep using what has helped congregations?

Resolution 4-04: To Clarify Oversight and Revitalize Role of Recognized Service Organizations

Watch-for concern

RSO oversight can become either neglect until trouble appears, or surprise compliance raids. The better path is relational accountability.

What it does

Clarifies oversight of Recognized Service Organizations and seeks to revitalize their role. It reinforces accountability and encourages stronger relationships with organizations serving in the Synod sphere.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That revitalization of the RSO program include regular relational visitation, clear doctrinal accountability, transparent expectations, practical support for faithful RSOs, and a process that distinguishes between intentional doctrinal drift and good-faith challenges created by law, regulation, funding, or local context; and be it further Resolved, That the Board for National Mission provide a brief report before the 2029 convention describing visitation, support, accountability actions, and lessons learned.

Why this helps

This keeps accountability clear without treating faithful service organizations as suspects. Some ministries face real pressures from laws, grants, contracts, and regulation. That does not excuse unfaithfulness, but it does require careful discernment.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Ensure RSOs remain confessionally Lutheran.
Relational	Regular visitation and relationships with RSO leaders.
Physical	Support mercy sites, schools, care facilities, family-service ministries.
Intellectual	Clarify policies, legal pressures, doctrinal review, governance.
Financial	Help RSOs steward funding while maintaining confession.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-04 by adding language for relational visitation, clear doctrinal accountability, practical support for faithful RSOs, and a process distinguishing intentional drift from good-faith challenges caused by law, regulation, funding, or local context.

Delegation huddle question

Does this create accountability that builds trust, or control that burns trust?

Resolution 4-05: To Clarify Nomenclature for Chaplaincy and Institutional Care Work and To Amend Related Bylaws

Watch-for concern

Words can affect endorsement, roster status, institutional access, employment, insurance, and pastoral support. Terminology must be careful.

What it does

Clarifies terminology for chaplaincy and institutional care and amends related bylaws. It touches roster status, specialized ministry, chaplaincy language, and institutional care work.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That any terminology changes preserve clear support for military chaplains, institutional chaplains, police and fire chaplains, healthcare chaplains, prison chaplains, campus chaplains, specialized spiritual care workers, and other approved care contexts; and be it further Resolved, That implementation guidance be provided to districts and affected workers so that faithful workers are not unintentionally disadvantaged, mislabeled, or disconnected from ecclesiastical supervision and pastoral support.

Why this helps

Define terms clearly, but do not accidentally kneecap faithful ministry because the terminology got a haircut with garden shears. Chaplains and specialized care workers need clarity, supervision, and support.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Maintain pastoral care and Word ministry in institutions.
Relational	Preserve trust with hospitals, military, police, prisons, campuses.
Physical	Maintain access to care spaces, hospitals, institutions, public-service settings.
Intellectual	Provide clear terminology and district guidance.
Financial	Protect employment, endorsement, benefits, and ministry sustainability.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-05 by adding implementation guidance so terminology changes do not unintentionally disadvantage faithful chaplains or specialized spiritual care workers.

Delegation huddle question

Could this wording unintentionally harm faithful workers serving in chaplaincy or institutional care settings?

Resolution 4-06: To Amend Bylaws to Reinstate Commission on Worship

Watch-for concern

A worship commission can serve congregations as a teaching and resource body, or it can be perceived as a liturgical compliance clipboard.

What it does

Reinstates the Commission on Worship, amends bylaws, and outlines membership and responsibilities. This has doctrine, practice, governance, and cost implications.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That the Commission on Worship, if reinstated, serve primarily as a resource, teaching, and advisory body for congregations, schools, districts, and Synod entities, producing doctrinally faithful resources that honor Lutheran confession, pastoral care, Christian freedom, local context, and the distinction between doctrine and human ceremonies; and be it further Resolved, That the commission provide a report before the 2029 convention describing resources produced, congregations and schools served, costs incurred, and how its work has strengthened faithful worship without binding consciences beyond Scripture and the Confessions.

Why this helps

Worship matters deeply. The goal is not rigid sameness or anything-goes experimentation. The goal is faithful Lutheran worship that teaches Christ, gives Christ's gifts, honors the Sacraments, and distinguishes doctrine from ceremonies.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Worship resources centered in Word, Sacrament, confession.
Relational	Consult pastors, musicians, teachers, small churches, schools.
Physical	Service materials, hymn resources, school chapel resources.
Intellectual	Teach doctrine, liturgy, hymnody, pastoral application.
Financial	Track costs and demonstrate congregational benefit.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-06 by clarifying that the Commission on Worship serve primarily as a resource, teaching, and advisory body, and report before 2029 on resources produced, congregations served, costs incurred, and how its work strengthens faithful worship without binding consciences beyond Scripture and the Confessions.

Delegation huddle question

Does this commission serve congregations with resources and teaching, or risk becoming a control structure?

Resolution 4-07: To Condemn Political Violence and Encourage Participation in Public Life

Watch-for concern

This should not become a partisan statement. It should be rooted in Lutheran doctrine, Christian vocation, repentance, and prayer for authorities.

What it does

Condemns political violence and encourages peaceful Christian participation in public life.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That congregations be encouraged to teach the doctrine of the two kingdoms, Christian vocation, prayer for governing authorities, peaceful civic engagement, care for neighbors harmed by violence, and repentance for sinful anger, hatred, and dehumanizing speech.

Why this helps

Political violence is not only out there. Before hands become violent, tongues often do. Before tongues do, hearts do. Law exposes hatred. Gospel forgives sinners and creates peaceable neighbors.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Preach repentance, forgiveness, prayer for authorities.
Relational	Teach members to speak across political differences.
Physical	Host peaceful civic forums or prayer services.
Intellectual	Two-kingdoms Bible studies and vocation resources.
Financial	Support care for victims of violence or local peacemaking efforts.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-07 by adding encouragement for congregations to teach the two kingdoms, Christian vocation, prayer for governing authorities, peaceful civic engagement, and repentance for dehumanizing speech.

Delegation huddle question

Does this keep the resolution pastoral and doctrinal rather than partisan?

Resolution 4-08: To Direct the CTCR to Examine Current Political and Social Issues

Watch-for concern

This topic is loaded. Without definitions and careful distinctions, delegates may hear slogans instead of theological guidance.

What it does

Directs the CTCR to examine current political and social issues, including racism, antisemitism, and Christian Nationalism, and prepare documents for the Synod's edification.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That any CTCR resources developed under this resolution include clear definitions, careful distinctions among competing ideologies, evaluation according to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, guidance on the two kingdoms, and practical study materials usable by pastors, teachers, lay leaders, parents, and congregations; and be it further Resolved, That these resources avoid partisan framing and instead call the church to repentance, reconciliation, truth, neighbor-love, and unity in Christ.

Why this helps

The church needs clarity, not slogan-slinging. Definitions, distinctions, confessional evaluation, and lay-accessible study prevent vague condemnation, partisan fog, and loaded words that are never explained.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Repentance, reconciliation, unity in Christ.
Relational	Help members speak charitably across cultural and political divides.
Physical	Small-group studies, district workshops, school resources.
Intellectual	Clear definitions and confessional analysis.
Financial	Low-cost digital study resources.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-08 by requiring clear definitions, careful distinctions, Scriptural and confessional evaluation, two-kingdoms guidance, and practical study materials usable by pastors, teachers, lay leaders, parents, and congregations.

Delegation huddle question

Does this request produce useful confessional guidance, or only label issues without teaching people?

Resolution 4-09: To Address Uses of Artificial Intelligence

Watch-for concern

AI can help with administration, accessibility, translation, and brainstorming, but it can also damage privacy, flatten pastoral care, hallucinate facts, or blur responsibility.

What it does

Encourages responsible use of AI for mission, education, and administration while directing theological and ethical guidance for the church.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That the CTCR study address human authorship and responsibility, pastoral care, sermon preparation, catechesis, worship materials, data privacy, copyright, bias, hallucinations, disclosure, protection of minors, and the danger of substituting artificial outputs for pastoral presence, human wisdom, and the communion of saints; and be it further Resolved, That the Office of National Mission and LCMS Communications be encouraged, after the CTCR provides guidance, to develop practical best-practice tools for congregations, schools, pastors, teachers, and lay leaders.

Why this helps

Do not let the robot write the sermon and then ask it to absolve you. Low control does not require banning tools. High accountability requires clarity on responsibility, doctrine, privacy, authorship, and pastoral limits.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Protect preaching, catechesis, prayer, and pastoral care.
Relational	Preserve real human presence and trust.
Physical	Use tools for admin, communication, accessibility, translation.
Intellectual	Train pastors and teachers in AI limits and best practices.
Financial	Use AI carefully to save time without compromising quality or privacy.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-09 by adding that the CTCR study address authorship, pastoral care, sermons, catechesis, worship materials, privacy, copyright, bias, hallucinations, disclosure, minors, and the danger of substituting AI for pastoral presence and human wisdom.

Delegation huddle question

Does this give practical guardrails for AI without pretending the internet can be solved by one resolution?

Resolution 4-10: To Celebrate Concordia Historical Institute Centenary and Renew the Synod's Commitment to Treasure and Trumpet Its Redeemed History

Watch-for concern

Anniversary resolutions can become polite applause unless they help congregations preserve and share their own history.

What it does

Celebrates the centenary of Concordia Historical Institute and recognizes its work preserving and sharing the Synod's history through archives, exhibits, publications, and resources.

Amendment to offer

Resolved, That congregations, schools, districts, and agencies be encouraged to identify, preserve, digitize where appropriate, and share local records, photographs, oral histories, mission stories, anniversary materials, and artifacts that bear witness to Christ's work among His people; and be it further Resolved, That CHI be encouraged to provide simple guidance for local congregations and schools on preserving records and telling their history for the sake of future generations.

Why this helps

History is not just old stuff in boxes. It is memory in service of mission. Congregations need help preserving records before minutes, photos, and founding documents end up in a storage closet beside broken VBS decorations and a suspicious coffee urn from 1986.

Five capitals in play

Capital	Example for this resolution
Spiritual	Tell stories of Christ's faithfulness across generations.
Relational	Interview older members, pastors, teachers, founders.
Physical	Preserve records, photos, artifacts, banners, school materials.
Intellectual	Teach local church history and Lutheran identity.
Financial	Budget small amounts for digitization and archive supplies.

Microphone phrase

Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution 4-10 by encouraging congregations, schools, districts, and agencies to preserve and share local records, photographs, oral histories, mission stories, and artifacts, and asking CHI to provide simple guidance for local preservation.

Delegation huddle question

Does this turn historical thanksgiving into local preservation and future witness?

Final Quick Sheet: Speak Clearly, Amend Narrowly

Keep amendments short enough to be understood and specific enough to be voted on. A good amendment does one clear thing: adds accountability, clarifies implementation, protects local context, improves theological precision, or releases resources for faithful ministry.

Need	Simple wording
Add accountability	Add a final resolve requiring a brief report before the 2029 convention.
Protect local context	Add language honoring congregational, school, district, circuit, and local ministry contexts.
Avoid central control	Clarify that the Synod office serves as resource, teacher, connector, or advisor.
Protect doctrine	Name Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, Word and Sacrament, and pastoral care.
Ask about cost	Could the committee clarify expected costs and who bears them?
Ask about implementation	Who is responsible for doing this, and how will delegates know it happened?
Avoid overreach	Replace "shall require" with "encourage" where doctrine does not require a mandate.

Closing Gospel frame

Life together in the Church is life in Christ, gathered around Word and Sacrament, confessing truth, bearing burdens, teaching children, guarding worship, speaking wisely in public, using tools responsibly, preserving memory, and sending the baptized into their vocations. Christ is risen indeed, and the Church's life together should smell less like control and more like resurrection, repentance, forgiveness, courage, and mission.