

Kingdom Over Castle

Ministry-Restraint Watch Report

Pastoral formation, worship practice, RSOs and chaplaincy, ecclesiastical supervision, and
Concordia Lutheran identity

A print-friendly delegate study packet for the 2026 LCMS Convention

Prepared for thoughtful, charitable, mission-minded convention conversation

Source boundary and caution

This report is a study aid based on Today's Business, Issue 1, the 2026 Convention Workbook, the 2023 LCMS Handbook, Harvest Partnership values, and prior resolution analysis prepared for delegate study. It does not claim final convention action. Later Today's Business issues may revise, substitute, amend, or reorder resolutions. Always verify final wording on the floor before moving an amendment.

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One-page dashboard

Delegate filter				
Ask of every resolution: Does this equip congregations to preach Christ, administer the Sacraments, form disciples, raise workers, and reach the lost, or does it mainly add control, suspicion, cost, or process without clear Gospel-serving fruit?				
Rank	Item	Topic	Why it matters	Recommended posture
1	6-04 to 6-09	Pastoral formation and SMP	Directly affects worker pipeline, mission plants, ethnic ministry, rural vacancy care, and bivocational contexts.	Amend before adopting. Avoid locking the Synod into a narrow pipeline.
2	4-06	Commission on Worship	Creates worship structure, bylaw authority, and budget. Could serve congregations or become standardization machinery.	Amend for advisory role, reporting, and Christian freedom.
3	7-07 and 7-08	Concordia identity and CUS structure	Defines Lutheran identity and studies corporate status. Long-term impact on church-worker formation.	Amend for Scripture and Confessions, mission outcomes, and open study.
4	10-02 and 10-04	Dispute, expulsion, digital conduct	Could reshape supervision, discipline, and public speech practices.	Amend for due process, reconciliation, truthfulness, and protection of the vulnerable.
5	5-09	Public Scripture reading	Directly affects congregations using lay readers and women lectors.	Refer or amend to avoid condemning current practice before study.
6	4-04 and 4-05	RSOs and chaplaincy	Affects mission partners, mercy organizations, specialized care, and institutional ministry.	Amend for partnership, transition, and role clarity.

How to use the motion language

- Use these motions as draft floor language. The chair, secretary, and parliamentarian may require adjustment to fit the exact pending motion.
- For a proposed resolution, the normal posture is: move to amend the resolution by adding, deleting, or substituting words.
- For an omnibus or referral item, the cleaner posture is usually: move to amend the omnibus resolution by removing the overture from the omnibus list for separate consideration or a specific referral.

- For underlying overtures that are not directly before the floor, amend the proposed resolution that responds to them. Do not try to amend an overture unless the convention is actually acting on that overture text.

Theological and confessional guardrails

- Christ is risen. The convention serves the Gospel, not institutional self-preservation. First Corinthians 15:20-22 is not window dressing. It is the center of the room.
- The Synod exists to support congregations in confession, mission, education, mercy, and church order. The castle may be useful, but it is not the kingdom.
- Augsburg Confession IV keeps justification by grace through faith in Christ at the center. AC V keeps the ministry of Word and Sacrament central. AC VII keeps unity grounded in the Gospel and Sacraments, not identical human ceremonies everywhere.
- Formula of Concord X guards Christian freedom in ceremonies while also warning against careless changes that harm confession or scandalize the weak.
- The Harvest Partnership lens asks whether a resolution strengthens the Spirit's Sending, Kingdom Focus, Open-Handed Generosity, Humility, and Trust, especially high accountability with low control.

Plain-language warning

Not every control is bad. The Church needs doctrine, order, supervision, and accountability. But when order begins to choke local Gospel ministry, the shepherding staff has become a turnstile. That is when delegates should amend.

Risk Bucket One: Pastoral Formation Restrictions

Why this bucket matters

This is the highest-impact mission bucket. Pastoral formation policy affects church plants, ethnic and immigrant ministries, rural congregations, vacancy care, SMP, EITT, CHS, CMC, online and hybrid access, bivocational ministry, and whether local congregations can receive faithful pastoral care without waiting until the harvest field grows weeds up to the stained glass.

Item	What it affects	Risk	Posture	Suggested motion
6-04 Support Residential M.Div. and Alternate Route Pastoral Formation	Residential M.Div., Alternate Route, and how the Synod frames all other routes	High	Amend before adopting	I move to amend Resolution 6-04 by inserting before the final Resolved: 'Resolved, That while the Synod gratefully affirms residential seminary formation as a preferred and richly beneficial route, the Synod also affirms the continued faithful use of all approved routes to the Office of the Holy Ministry, including M.Div., Alternate Route, SMP, EITT, CHS, CMC, and Spanish-language SMP, when conducted under Synod's doctrinal standards and ecclesiastical supervision, especially where such routes serve mission plants, ethnic ministries, rural congregations, and bivocational ministry contexts.'
6-05 Reaffirm Synod's Process for Training and Certification for Pastors	Certification, ecclesiastical accountability, and access to preparation	Medium-high	Adopt only with mission access language	I move to amend Resolution 6-05 by adding: 'Resolved, That these processes be administered with clarity, transparency, timely communication, and pastoral concern so that faithful candidates and calling congregations are not unnecessarily hindered from serving urgent mission and pastoral needs.'
6-06 Support Established Parameters of Specific Ministry Pastor Program	SMP access, context limits, and local mission need	High	Amend or refer if overly restrictive	I move to amend Resolution 6-06 by adding: 'Resolved, That any application of SMP parameters shall preserve the program's ability to serve genuine local mission needs, including church planting, ethnic ministry, rural and underserved communities, and contexts where a residentially formed pastor is not presently feasible.'
6-07 Encourage and Support SMPs to Pursue General Pastor Certification	SMP to General Pastor Certification pathway	Medium	Generally support, add funding and access clarity	I move to amend Resolution 6-07 by adding: 'Resolved, That districts, congregations, and seminaries be encouraged to identify scholarship, cohort, online, hybrid, and mentoring support so that SMPs are encouraged

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				toward further certification without placing unreasonable financial or family burdens upon them.'
6-08 Amend Bylaw 2.13.1 to Clarify SMP Mentorship and Oversight	SMP terminology, supervision, and bylaw language	Medium-high	Amend for support, transition, and accountability	I move to amend Resolution 6-08 by adding: 'Resolved, That the implementation of this terminology shall include clear transition guidance, mentor training, and a written explanation of how oversight will function as support and accountability rather than unnecessary control of local ministry.'
6-09 Implore COP to Fulfill 2019 Res. 6-03A re Oversight of SMPs	COP guidelines, district practice, and SMP supervision	High	Amend with practitioner input and reporting	I move to amend Resolution 6-09 by adding: 'Resolved, That the Council of Presidents include SMP pastors, supervising pastors, mission practitioners, district mission executives, ethnic ministry leaders, and seminary representatives in developing any guidance, and report implementation progress to the 2029 convention.'
6-10 Amend Bylaws to Address Seminary Adjunct Faculty	Adjunct faculty approval and flexible formation capacity	Medium	Amend for timely approval and mission access	I move to amend Resolution 6-10 by adding: 'Resolved, That any adjunct faculty approval process include clear criteria, reasonable timelines, and a means of review so that faithful adjunct instructors may support accessible, rigorous, and confessionally accountable pastoral formation.'
6-12 Reinsert 2007 Pastoral Colloquy Bylaws from Policy Manual	Colloquy process for pastors entering the LCMS	Medium-high	Amend for transparency and timeliness	I move to amend Resolution 6-12 by adding: 'Resolved, That the colloquy process shall be administered with published expectations, ordinary timelines, pastoral communication, and appropriate review so that qualified candidates and congregations are not left in unnecessary uncertainty.'

Pastoral formation omnibus and referral watch

Item	Concern	Recommended action	Suggested motion
Ov. 2-04	Divine call opportunities for EIIT pastors	Remove from omnibus/referral for separate attention or amend related action to require a study with EIIT pastors and ethnic ministry leaders.	I move to amend Omnibus Resolution A by removing Overture 2-04 from the omnibus list and referring it for separate consideration by the appropriate floor committee, with attention to ethnic ministry pastors, EIIT graduates, and congregations served by immigrant and multilingual ministries.
Ov. 2-05	Protect divine calls of missionaries	Do not bury call-protection questions in a broad referral. Calls of missionaries affect retention and mission continuity.	I move to amend Omnibus Resolution A by removing Overture 2-05 from the omnibus list and directing that its call-protection concerns be considered separately,

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			with input from missionaries, the Board for International Mission, and ecclesiastical supervisors.
Ov. 5-13	Call review after termination or self-termination	Keep due process and pastoral care clear, especially for workers and congregations in fragile situations.	I move to amend Omnibus Resolution A by removing Overture 5-13 for separate consideration or referral with a required report on due process, worker care, congregational rights, and appeal mechanisms.
Ov. 5-14	Divine calls to positions not directly tied to Word and Sacrament	Important theology of call issue. Needs careful treatment, not quick disposal.	I move to remove Overture 5-14 from Omnibus Resolution A and refer it for specific theological and bylaw review, requesting clear distinctions between pastoral calls, commissioned service, institutional calls, and other ministry appointments.
Ov. 6-75	Priority in assignment of pastoral candidates	Could affect church plants, small congregations, and underserved contexts waiting for pastors.	I move to amend Omnibus Resolution A by removing Overture 6-75 and requesting separate consideration of candidate assignment priorities with attention to mission starts, rural congregations, ethnic ministries, and vacancy length.
Ov. 6-88	Functions of the pastoral office	Theology of office and lay service affects mission starts and contexts without full pastoral coverage.	I move to remove Overture 6-88 from Omnibus Resolution A and refer it for separate discussion with the CTCR report on deacons, evangelists, and the Office of the Holy Ministry as a required source.
Ov. 10-24	Call integrity / service without a call	Could affect local arrangements during vacancies, church plants, and specialized ministries.	I move to remove Overture 10-24 from Omnibus Resolution A and refer it for separate consideration with attention to vacancy care, temporary service, and the rights of congregations to call ministers.
Ov. 10-25	Call integrity / service without a call	Same concern as 10-24, especially if policy becomes restrictive without pastoral exceptions.	I move to remove Overture 10-25 from Omnibus Resolution A and request a written report distinguishing emergency pastoral care, vacancy service, preaching stations, and improper assumption of office.
Ov. 10-31	Call process and pastoral service	May shape future COP policy on calls and roster status.	I move to remove Overture 10-31 from Omnibus Resolution A and refer it for separate study with input from district presidents, congregations, circuit visitors, and pastors serving mission contexts.
Ov. 10-34	Call process and pastoral office concern	Future policy could restrain flexible pastoral coverage if not carefully bounded.	I move to remove Overture 10-34 from Omnibus Resolution A and require any resulting policy proposal to include protections for congregational self-government, vacancy care, and mission-field realities.
Ov. 10-35	Call process and pastoral office concern	Same family of call-process issues. Watch future consequences.	I move to remove Overture 10-35 from Omnibus Resolution A and refer it for separate review with a report to the 2029 convention.

Pastoral formation delegate questions

- Does the resolution affirm all approved routes while still improving quality and supervision?
- Will this help or hinder ethnic ministry, rural ministry, church planting, and congregations with long vacancies?
- Does the resolution distinguish residential formation as preferred from residential formation as functionally exclusive?
- Does the resolution provide scholarships, online or hybrid access, mentoring, and realistic timelines?

- Who bears the burden, the congregation, the candidate, the district, the seminary, or corporate Synod?

Risk Bucket Two: Worship Standardization Beyond Doctrinal Purity

Why this bucket matters

Worship resources can bless the Synod. Worship control can burden congregations. The aim is neither liturgical anarchy nor a photocopy machine with candles. The faithful middle is doctrine, reverence, pastoral care, catechesis, and Christian freedom under Scripture and the Confessions.

Item	What it affects	Risk	Posture	Suggested motion
4-06 Reinstate Commission on Worship	Creates a standing worship commission with bylaw duties and an estimated annual cost. Helpful if resource-oriented, risky if it becomes standardization machinery.	High	Amend with advisory limits and reporting	I move to amend Resolution 4-06 by adding before the final Resolved: 'Resolved, That the Commission on Worship shall serve in an advisory, resource-developing, and congregation-serving capacity, and shall not bind consciences beyond Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Synod's constitutional and bylaw requirements; and be it further Resolved, That the commission report annually on cost, outputs, congregational usefulness, and how its work supports local Word and Sacrament ministry.'
5-09 Address Public Reading of Scripture	Affects lay readers and especially congregations that allow women to read Scripture in worship.	Very high	Refer or amend to avoid condemning current practice before study	I move to amend Resolution 5-09 by replacing any language that discourages or condemns women lectors with: 'Resolved, That the Synod request the CTCR to study the public reading of Scripture in the Divine Service and report to the 2029 convention, and that congregations not be judged out of harmony with the Synod solely on the basis of existing lector practice prior to that report, provided the practice is carried out under pastoral supervision and in harmony with the Synod's confession.'
7-06 Encourage University Worship Practices	Shapes Concordia chapel worship and student formation, including future church workers.	Medium-high	Support with local-practice respect	I move to amend Resolution 7-06 by adding: 'Resolved, That such guidance shall respect the breadth of faithful worship practices used by LCMS congregations, distinguish doctrine from local custom, and form students to receive the church's liturgical heritage without treating every local practice as a confessional test.'
5-05 Open Communion and Pastoral Exceptions	Closed Communion doctrine is important. The restraint risk is unclear or punitive implementation of pastoral exceptions.	Medium-high	Support with pastoral discretion language	I move to amend Resolution 5-05 by adding: 'Resolved, That any study or guidance on pastoral exceptions shall clearly distinguish ordinary practice from extraordinary pastoral circumstances,

				preserve the doctrine and practice of closed Communion, and avoid new disciplinary standards before the Synod has received and considered the requested CTCR guidance.'
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Underlying worship overtures to watch

Item	Concern	Recommended action	Suggested motion
Ovs. 4-23 to 4-31	Worship commission, hymnal, youth gathering, CUS chapel, camps, worship review, children's sermons, chief Divine Service	Treat as the underlying worship-standardization cluster behind 4-06. The motion should amend 4-06 rather than attempt to amend each overture directly.	When Resolution 4-06 is before the floor, I move to amend by adding: 'Resolved, That the commission's work shall distinguish between doctrinal norms, confessional worship principles, and local ceremonies or customs that remain matters of Christian freedom.'
Ovs. 4-40 to 4-42	Chalice, weekly Communion, first Communion prior to confirmation	These touch sacramental practice and pastoral care. Avoid sweeping mandates or one-size-fits-all praise/condemnation.	When any substitute or amendment addresses these overtures, I move to insert: 'Resolved, That congregations be encouraged to teach clearly, examine catechetically, and administer the Sacrament faithfully while respecting pastoral care and local order in matters not mandated by Scripture or the Confessions.'
Ov. 4-46	Judge practice by the Word alone	A good principle can be misused if it treats preferred customs as explicit divine commands.	I move to amend any resolution arising from Overture 4-46 by adding: 'Resolved, That this judgment shall distinguish clear Scriptural doctrine from human ceremonies, traditions, and local practices, in keeping with Augsburg Confession VII and Formula of Concord X.'

Worship delegate questions

- Is the resolution binding doctrine, or is it binding a preferred ceremony?
- Does the resolution distinguish guidance from governance?
- Does it protect faithful congregational variety while upholding Lutheran confession?
- Does it help mission churches teach the faith clearly, or does it make local ministry more brittle?
- Will a proposed commission produce usable resources for congregations, or merely process?

Risk Bucket Three: RSO and Chaplaincy Tightening

Why this bucket matters

RSOs and chaplaincy ministries often work at the edges of need: hospitals, prisons, schools, family services, mercy agencies, mission societies, recovery contexts, and places where the Gospel meets people outside the church building. Accountability matters. But if partnership begins with suspicion, mercy gets audited before it gets to love the neighbor.

Item	What it affects	Risk	Posture	Suggested motion
4-04 Clarify Oversight and Revitalize Role of RSOs	RSO oversight, doctrine, partnership, mercy and mission organizations	High	Amend for mission partnership and transition	I move to amend Resolution 4-04 by adding: 'Resolved, That the Synod's oversight of RSOs shall be exercised in a way that preserves doctrinal accountability while actively supporting faithful mission, mercy, educational, and specialized-care partnerships, with clear transition timelines, written reasons for adverse action, and a fair process for response or correction.'
4-05 Clarify Nomenclature for Chaplaincy and Institutional Care Work	Chaplain title, ordained ministry, commissioned workers, spiritual care providers	High	Amend for grandfathering and role clarity	I move to amend Resolution 4-05 by adding: 'Resolved, That implementation shall include transitional guidance for existing workers and ministries, shall not diminish the faithful service of commissioned ministers, deaconesses, counselors, and trained spiritual-care workers, and shall provide clear language for institutions where the term chaplain has legal, professional, or contractual meaning.'
Ov. 4-32 RSO board membership flexibility	May help mission societies working in places without LCMS representation	High	Incorporate flexibility into 4-04	I move to amend Resolution 4-04 by adding language allowing faithful witness service organizations, where mission context requires it, to include qualified board members who are not LCMS members while preserving a clear LCMS or partner-church majority and doctrinal accountability.
Ov. 4-33 RSO transparency and recognition of certain educational institutions	Transparency is good, but recognition criteria must not become arbitrary.	Medium-high	Add due process and published criteria	I move to amend Resolution 4-04 by adding: 'Resolved, That RSO recognition, denial, suspension, or removal shall be governed by published criteria, written explanation, and opportunity for response and correction.'
Ovs. 4-34 to 4-35 RSO status and human sexuality concerns	Important doctrinal accountability, but implementation could harm mercy partners without careful facts.	High	Require case-by-case review	I move to amend Resolution 4-04 by adding: 'Resolved, That concerns regarding an RSO's public advocacy or practice shall be addressed through documented, case-specific review under

				Scripture and the Confessions, with opportunity for repentance, correction, and restoration where possible.'
Ov. L4-57 Faithful child and family RSOs under legal or regulatory pressure	Mercy partners may face state or legal mandates that require careful pastoral, legal, and doctrinal guidance.	High	Add legal-context study	I move to amend Resolution 4-04 by adding: 'Resolved, That the appropriate Synod entities study and provide guidance for faithful child, family, and mercy RSOs facing legal or regulatory pressures that may threaten their ability to serve while remaining confessionally faithful.'

RSO and chaplaincy delegate questions

- Does this preserve doctrinal accountability while also preserving faithful partnerships?
- Are existing workers and organizations given transition guidance?
- Are terms like chaplain, spiritual care, commissioned minister, and institutional care clearly distinguished?
- Does the resolution account for legal, contractual, or professional usage in hospitals, law enforcement, prisons, and care institutions?
- Does it allow mission organizations to include local-context expertise on their boards while preserving LCMS accountability?

Risk Bucket Four: COP Policies, Supervision, Discipline, and Digital Conduct

Why this bucket matters

Future policies can be more consequential than one headline resolution. Referral language can become tomorrow's COP manual, dispute rule, social-media expectation, or discipline process. That means delegates should watch not only what passes, but what gets sent to become future machinery.

Item	What it affects	Risk	Posture	Suggested motion
10-01 CTCR Opinion on Matthew 18:15-20	Private admonition, public correction, discipline, and social media accusation	Medium-high	Support with abuse and public-sin clarity	I move to amend Resolution 10-01 by adding: 'Resolved, That the requested opinion distinguish private offense, public false teaching, public scandal, abuse reporting, whistleblower situations, and online accusation, so that Matthew 18 is not misused either to avoid repentance or to silence necessary protection of the vulnerable.'
10-02 Task Force on Bylaw 1.10 and 2.14	Dispute resolution, expulsion, due process, and congregational rights	Very high	Amend with composition and guardrails	I move to amend Resolution 10-02 by adding: 'Resolved, That the task force include pastors, lay leaders, circuit visitors, district presidents, dispute-resolution practitioners, and representatives from mission and small-congregation contexts; and that any proposed changes protect due process, congregational self-government, evangelical reconciliation, and doctrinal accountability.'
10-03 Sexual Misconduct by Rostered Workers and Spiritual Care	Abuse response, discipline, victim care, congregational trust	High and necessary	Support, add trauma-informed clarity	I move to amend Resolution 10-03 by adding: 'Resolved, That all implementation prioritize the safety and care of those harmed, confidentiality where appropriate, lawful reporting, trauma-informed pastoral care, transparent process, and accountability for offenders, while distinguishing pastoral care from institutional self-protection.'
10-04 Unity, Peace, and Digital Communications	Social media strife, public accusations, discipline, speech conduct	High	Amend to avoid speech-policing overreach	I move to amend Resolution 10-04 by adding: 'Resolved, That any statement on digital communications shall encourage Eighth Commandment speech, repentance, truthfulness, and reconciliation while preserving appropriate public accountability, protection of the vulnerable, and the right to raise substantiated concerns through proper channels.'
10-05	District governance and	Medium	Support if procedural, add	I move to amend Resolution

Installation of District Presidents	oversight culture		notification clarity	10-05 by adding: 'Resolved, That implementation guidance be clearly communicated to districts, circuits, and congregations so that the change strengthens order without increasing confusion about district ecclesiastical supervision.'
10-06 Amend Bylaw 2.11.2.2(c)	Roster status and continued eligibility	Medium-high	Amend for transition and appeal	I move to amend Resolution 10-06 by adding: 'Resolved, That any change to roster-status provisions include transition guidance, written notice, pastoral care, and a clear process for response or review by affected workers.'

Supervision omnibus and referral watch

Item	Concern	Recommended action	Suggested motion
Ovs. 10-01, 10-02, 10-03, 10-09, 10-36	Ecclesiastical supervision and digital conduct	Remove from omnibus if the referral would hide major future policy questions.	I move to amend Omnibus Resolution A by removing Overtures 10-01, 10-02, 10-03, 10-09, and 10-36 from the omnibus list and referring them for separate consideration with a required report on supervision, due process, digital conduct, and evangelical reconciliation.
Ovs. 10-24, 10-25, 10-31, 10-34, 10-35	Call and pastoral office questions	These touch calls, vacancies, and pastoral service. Do not allow future policy to form quietly.	I move to amend Omnibus Resolution A by removing Overtures 10-24, 10-25, 10-31, 10-34, and 10-35 from the omnibus list and directing separate review of their call-process implications for congregations, pastors, vacancies, mission starts, and specialized ministries.

Supervision delegate questions

- Does the proposal serve repentance, reconciliation, and restoration, or does it mainly sharpen procedural weapons?
- Does it protect due process for accused workers and congregations while also protecting victims and the vulnerable?
- Does it clarify Matthew 18 without using Matthew 18 to silence public accountability in public matters?
- Does digital communication guidance encourage truthful speech and charity without becoming speech policing?
- Does it preserve congregational self-government where the Handbook and Constitution require it?

Risk Bucket Five: Concordia Lutheran Identity and University

Governance

Why this bucket matters				
<p>The Concordias form future pastors, teachers, DCEs, deaconesses, parish musicians, lay leaders, parents, and citizens. Lutheran identity should be clear, biblical, confessional, and mission-serving. The risk is not Lutheran identity. The risk is defining it so broadly, politically, culturally, or procedurally that the Gospel gets buried under checkboxes wearing academic regalia.</p>				
Item	What it affects	Risk	Posture	Suggested motion
7-02 Amend Bylaw 3.10.6.2.2	CUS/regent training and governance	Medium	Support with training access	I move to amend Resolution 7-02 by adding: 'Resolved, That any training or verification requirements be made accessible, timely, and clear for regents and university leaders, with materials focused on Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, church-worker formation, and institutional mission.'
7-03 Amend Bylaw 3.6.6.1	CUS Board responsibilities and church-worker program oversight	High	Amend for objective criteria and appeals	I move to amend Resolution 7-03 by adding: 'Resolved, That any review or approval process for church-worker programs include published criteria, reasonable timelines, written reasons for decisions, opportunity for response, and attention to the mission needs of congregations and schools.'
7-04 Prior Approval Protocols for University Theological Faculties	Faculty approval, formation of church workers	High	Amend for transparency and timeliness	I move to amend Resolution 7-04 by adding: 'Resolved, That prior approval protocols shall include published theological criteria, ordinary timelines, written notice of concerns, opportunity for response, and a process for review so that doctrinal accountability is paired with fairness and institutional stability.'
7-05 Prior Approval Protocols for University Presidential Candidates	University president approval and leadership culture	Medium-high	Amend for fair process	I move to amend Resolution 7-05 by adding: 'Resolved, That prior approval for presidential candidates shall be administered with clear criteria, timely communication, confidentiality, written explanation of concerns, and respect for the responsibilities of boards of regents.'
7-06 University Worship Practices	Chapel worship and student formation	Medium-high	Coordinate with worship amendment	I move to amend Resolution 7-06 by adding: 'Resolved, That university worship guidance distinguish Lutheran doctrine and confession from local custom, and that students be formed to appreciate faithful congregational

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7-07 Clarify Lutheran Identity for Concordia Universities	Definition of Lutheran identity, LIMOS, visitation standards	Very high	Amend to anchor identity in Scripture and Confessions	variety within the Synod.' I move to amend Resolution 7-07 by adding: 'Resolved, That Lutheran identity shall be defined first and foremost by Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, especially the pure teaching of the Gospel, the right administration of the Sacraments, and the church's life of catechesis, vocation, mercy, and witness, and shall not be defined by cultural, political, ethnic, or merely institutional preferences.'
7-08 Study Synodwide Corporate Status of CUS	CUS structure, corporate status, possible commission model	Very high	Support only as open study, not pre-decision	I move to amend Resolution 7-08 by adding: 'Resolved, That this study shall not presume a predetermined structural outcome, but shall include legal, financial, accreditation, governance, mission, church-worker formation, and relational consequences, with input from university presidents, regents, faculty, students, district leaders, congregations, and Synod officers.'
Ovs. 7-28 and 7-29 Concordia transparency	Transparency concerns may shape trust in CUS and universities	Medium-high	Remove from omnibus if needed	I move to amend Omnibus Resolution A by removing Overtures 7-28 and 7-29 from the omnibus list and directing separate review of their transparency concerns with a report to the Synod before the 2029 convention.

University delegate questions

- Is Lutheran identity defined by Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, or by undefined cultural preferences?
- Do LIMOS standards help universities form students for faithful vocation, or mainly create defensive compliance behavior?
- Are prior approval protocols clear, timely, written, and fair?
- Does CUS structural study include legal, accreditation, financial, and relational effects before recommending major change?
- How will these resolutions help congregations receive faithful church workers?

Delegate Next Steps

Before convention

- Mark 6-04 to 6-09, 4-06, 5-09, 7-07, 7-08, 10-02, and 10-04 as must-read items.
- Compare the proposed resolution text in Today's Business with the related overtures in the Workbook.
- Decide ahead of time which items should not be handled by consent, omnibus, or quick referral.
- Prepare one or two concise amendment motions rather than trying to fight every sentence on the floor.
- Talk with your circuit, lay delegate, pastors, and mission practitioners. Ask what would actually help congregations.

At open hearings

- Lead with affirmation: thank the committee for addressing real concerns.
- Narrow the concern: name the specific phrase or resolve that could restrain ministry.
- Offer a concrete amendment. Committees can work with clear language better than a theological weather report.
- Ask for reporting requirements where cost, control, or future policy is involved.
- Ask whether small congregations, mission plants, ethnic ministries, and rural contexts were considered.

On the floor

- Do not begin with suspicion. Begin with the shared concern and then amend the overreach.
- Use the motion bank. Keep floor speeches short, direct, and fraternal.
- Avoid fighting old wars. Speak to the pending motion.
- For omnibus items, move to remove the specific item from the omnibus only when it has real policy consequence.
- For budget-heavy resolutions, ask for outcome reporting, sunset review, and accountability to congregations.

After convention

- Track adopted resolutions through the Proceedings and later Handbook changes.
- Build a follow-up list for items referred to COP, CTRC, CUS, BOD, or other entities.
- Prepare congregational summaries explaining what actually changed and what did not.
- Watch implementation. A good amendment can still be implemented poorly, and a scary resolution can be implemented pastorally if the right people stay engaged.

Fraternal floor language

Try this posture: "I affirm the concern behind this resolution. My amendment narrows the action so that we preserve doctrinal accountability without unnecessarily restraining faithful local ministry." That is bridge-building with a spine, not theological jellyfishery.

Motion Bank: Condensed Quick Reference

Highest-priority motions

Item	Motion type	Core move
6-04	Amend	Add explicit affirmation of all approved routes and mission contexts.
4-06	Amend	Make the worship commission advisory, resource-oriented, and accountable through reporting.
5-09	Refer or amend	Do not condemn women lectors or current practices before CTCR study and Synod consideration.
7-07	Amend	Define Lutheran identity by Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, not cultural or political preferences.
7-08	Amend	Require open CUS study without predetermined structural outcome.
10-02	Amend	Protect due process, congregational self-government, reconciliation, and broad task force representation.
10-04	Amend	Encourage Eighth Commandment digital speech while preserving public accountability and protection of the vulnerable.
4-04	Amend	Preserve doctrinal accountability while revitalizing faithful RSO partnership and due process.
4-05	Amend	Add transition and role clarity for commissioned ministers, deaconesses, counselors, and institutional spiritual-care workers.

Omnibus removal template

Use when an overture should not disappear into omnibus/referral: "I move to amend Omnibus Resolution A by removing Overture [number] from the omnibus list and referring it for separate consideration by the appropriate floor committee, with a report or proposed action addressing [specific concern]."

Advisory amendment template

Use when a resolution creates a commission, standard, study, or process: "I move to amend by adding: Resolved, That implementation shall be advisory, congregation-serving, transparent, and accountable, and shall not bind consciences beyond Holy Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod."

Reporting amendment template

Use when cost, control, or future policy is involved: "I move to amend by adding: Resolved, That the responsible entity report to the 2029 convention on cost, implementation, congregational usefulness, mission impact, and any unintended burdens on congregations, schools, RSOs, or church workers."

Source Notes and Verification Boundaries

- Primary convention source: LCMS 2026 Today's Business, Issue 1, Proposed Resolutions, June 5, 2026. Relevant sections include Omnibus Resolutions A-C, pp. 51-55; Life Together, pp. 82-94; Theology and Church Relations, pp. 95-110; Pastoral Ministry and Seminaries, pp. 110-125; University Education, pp. 126-132; Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution, pp. 180-185; Proposed Resolution Cross-Reference, pp. 187ff.
- Primary overture source: LCMS 2026 Convention Workbook, Reports and Overtures, especially Floor Committees 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10.
- Governance reference: LCMS Handbook, 2023 Edition, especially Constitution Articles II, III, VII, and relevant bylaws governing membership, dispute resolution, pastoral formation, CUS, commissions, and RSOs.
- Conversation lens: Harvest Partnership values, especially Spirit's Sending, Kingdom Focus, Open-Handed Generosity, Humility, and Trust.
- Confessional anchors: Augsburg Confession IV, V, VII, XIV, XXVIII; Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration X; Luther's Small Catechism on Baptism, Office of the Keys, and Sacrament of the Altar.
- Verification caution: This report intentionally offers analysis and draft motion language. Delegates must verify the exact pending wording before making a motion, since later Today's Business issues may revise proposed resolutions.

Closing Gospel Frame

Christ is risen indeed. That means the convention is not an exercise in institutional anxiety. It is a chance for the Synod to repent where needed, speak clearly where doctrine is at stake, and remove needless burdens from the places where Christ is preached to sinners. Good order serves the Gospel. Good supervision restores trust. Good policy equips congregations. The harvest belongs to the Lord, not to the castle.