Convention Minutes

Session 3
Monday a.m., July 20, 2026

Matins

The Rev. Christopher S. Esget, Fifth Vice-President (East-Southeast Region), preached on John 11:14–27 in the Office of Matins, with Chaplain Sean Daenzer serving as liturgist. Kantor Matthew Machemer provided accompaniment; soloist Jonathan Busarow and guitarist Andrew Schempf provided special music.

[The entire text of Vice-President Esget's sermon will be printed in the *2026 Convention Proceedings.*]

Committee 11: Registration, Credentials, and Elections

President Harrison opened the session, calling upon the Rev. James Maxwell, chairman of Committee 11 (Registration, Credentials, and Elections). He explained that, based on evaluation of data from Padgett, his committee is leaving the voting clock at 25 seconds. He also updated the registration report, which read as follows:

Voting delegates	951
Advisory delegates	161
Advisory representatives	171
Special guests and others	168

The report was moved and adopted unanimously without discussion, by voice vote.

Consent Calendar

The chair introduced the day's consent calendar, as found in *Today's Business* issue 3 (3:323), including Res. 1-05A, "To Prioritize Revitalization Work" (*TB*, 2B:271); Res. 1-08A, "To Educate Young People" (*TB*, 2B:273); Res. 1-13A, "To Strengthen the Synod's Digital Witness and Congregational Connections" (*TB*, 2B:276); Res. 1-14, "To Give Thanks for Lutheran Hour Ministries and Encourage Enhanced Collaboration" (*TB*, 1:67–68); Res. 6-03, "To Give Thanks for the Office of the Holy Ministry and our Synod's Pastors" (*TB*, 1:111–12); [Res. 9-01A was removed from the calendar as read]; Res. 9-02A, "To Amend Bylaws 1.5.1.2–1.5.2 to Clarify Service Expectations and Handling of Conflicts of Interest" (*TB*, 3:345–47); Res. 9-03, "To Amend Bylaws regarding Doctrinal Review" (*TB*, 1:143–46); Res. 9-04, "To Amend Various Bylaws for Purposes of Clarification or Improvement" (*TB*, 1:146–51); Res. 9-05, "To Amend Bylaw 3.6.4.3 to Increase the Number of Lutheran Church Extension Fund Directors Elected by the Synod in Convention from Three to Four" (*TB*, 1:152); Res. 9-06, "To Amend Bylaws 3.6.1.8 (c) and 3.6.4 (a) to Clarify that Two-Thirds Approval Requirements for Synodwide Corporate Entity and Lutheran Church Extension Fund Governing Document Amendments are Based on Members Actually Present at Meeting" (*TB*, 1:152–53); and Res. 9-07, "To Amend Bylaw 3.6.4.3 to Clarify That No More Than Two Lutheran Church Extension Fund Directors Can Be from the Same District" (*TB*, 1:154). The chair noted that Res. 9-01A is not included, as it is going back to committee for further work.

It was moved to remove Res. 6-03, "To Give Thanks for the Office of the Holy Ministry and our Synod's Pastors" (*TB*, 1:111–12), from the consent calendar. This removal carried at the request of more than 10% of the voting delegates [Yes: 151; No: 732], sending Res. 6-03 back to the regular floor committee schedule.

It was moved to remove Res. 9-02A, "To Amend Bylaws 1.5.1.2–1.5.2 to Clarify Service Expectations and Handling of Conflicts of Interest" (*TB*, 3:345–47), from the consent calendar. This removal carried at the request of more than 10% of the voting delegates [Yes: 183; No: 705], sending Res. 9-02A back to the regular floor committee schedule.

Debate exhausted, the consent calendar was adopted [Yes: 867; No: 40], including Res. 1-05A, 1-08A, 1-13A, 1-14, 9-03, 9-04, 9-05, 9-06, and 9-07.

Greetings—Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Extension Fund

The chair invited the Rev. Bart Day, president and chief executive officer of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF), to bring greetings to the convention, during which Fourth Vice-President (Great Plains Region) Nabil Nour assumed the chair. After an introductory video, President Day brought greetings on behalf of LCEF, thanking the 850 delegates at convention who are investors and borrowers with LCEF. Post-pandemic the Synod responded to financial challenges by increasing investments and borrowing through LCEF. Thanks to this trust, LCEF has assets at over $2.1 billion and a loan portfolio of $1.7 billion. LCEF remains financially strong, enabling ministry growth and the spread of the Gospel. Day emphasized LCEF's commitment to supporting ministry beyond financial needs through Ministry Solutions and the Real Estate Solution teams, by providing strategic guidance and expertise. President Day also shared updates on the Church Worker Loan Pool, a critical tool providing affordable loans for LCMS church workers. He concluded by thanking the delegates for their partnership with LCEF and emphasized LCEF's commitment to LCMS ministries.

Committee 6: Pastoral Ministry and Seminaries

The chair recognized Chairman Scott R. Murray, Third Vice-President (West-Southwest Region), to begin the report of his committee; during Vice-President Murray's introduction of his committee members, President Harrison resumed the chair.

Res. 6-01A, "To Uphold a Deep and Broad Study of Holy Scripture and Book of Concord in Synod Seminaries" (*TB*, 3:326–27), was read and introduced by the committee. The resolution was adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

Res. 6-02, "To Encourage Seminary Specialized Witness and Outreach Training" (*TB*, 1:111), was read and introduced by the committee. The resolution was read to strike, on l. 18, "which was adopted by unanimous voice vote." There being no objection, the resolution was adopted as read by consent.

Res. 6-03, "To Give Thanks for the Office of the Holy Ministry and our Synod's Pastors" (*TB*, 1:111–12), was read and introduced by the committee.

It was moved and seconded to amend by striking the *resolve* on p. 112, l. 10, namely, "*Resolved*, that the Synod rise and sing, 'To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray' (*LSB* 768)." After an uncertain voice vote, and after it was clarified that Res. 6-03 had been pulled from the day's consent calendar, the amendment was adopted [Yes: 532; No: 381].

Res. 6-03 was thereafter adopted as amended by unanimous voice vote.

Res. 6-04A, "To Support Residential Master of Divinity and Residential Alternate Route Pastoral Formation for the Sake of the Flock" (*TB*, 3:327–29), was read and introduced by the committee. On a question it was clarified by the committee that this would not end the Cross-Cultural Ministry Program.

It was moved and seconded to amend, at p. 329, l. 21, to insert, before "online," the word "exclusively." It was moved to close debate on the amendment and the main motion; this failed [Yes: 514; No: 393]. Debate continued on the amendment. Twenty minutes having elapsed, closure of debate was automatically called on the amendment and the main motion. This failed [Yes: 580; No: 345]. Debate continued on the amendment. On a point of order the chair determined this not a substitute amendment. It was moved to close debate on the amendment, which carried without objection. The amendment thereupon failed [Yes: 282; No: 660].

Debate continued on the resolution. It was moved and seconded to close debate on the resolution; this carried [Yes: 680; No: 258]. Res. 6-04A was adopted without amendment [Yes: 707; No: 230].

Res. 6-05A, "To Reaffirm the Synod's Process for Training and Certification for Pastors" (*TB*, 3:329–31), was read and introduced by the committee.

A point of personal privilege was raised by the Rev. Dr. Jeff Kloha, noted in the resolution (as "the dean of CMPL") as trying to change Synod's processes. He requested removal of lines 1–11 on p. 330. The committee responded.

Noting a great number of requests for information in the queue, the chair requested and the body granted by voice vote that the chair should intersperse questions with pro/con debate.

It was moved and seconded to amend the final *resolve* by appending, at p. 331, l. 2, the words, "for the purpose of rostered status in the LCMS." It was moved and seconded that consideration be postponed until Tuesday afternoon; this failed [Yes: 286; No: 634], debate continuing on the amendment. It was moved and seconded to close debate on the amendment and the resolution; this carried [Yes: 737; No: 184]. The amendment failed [Yes: 256; No: 659]. The resolution was adopted without amendment [Yes: 767; No: 170].

It was moved, after a related parliamentary inquiry, to include President Egger's comments in the minutes. Their being objection to consent, this was put to a vote. After an uncertain voice vote, this carried [Yes: 509; No: 300]. Dr. Egger's remarks on Res. 6-04A were as follows:

> The question was raised whether the resolution as currently worded would prohibit the seminaries from using some online elements or internet technology for their residential coursework. The seminaries would not interpret or read this resolution as it is currently phrased as prohibiting that. The overall context of the resolution makes clear that what is being affirmed is valuing and prioritizing residential formation for the M.Div. and RAR programs and it does not prohibit some use of computer technology or communication within our residential programs.

Committee 11: Registration, Credentials, and Elections – Balloting for Secretary and Synod Board of Directors

With Sixth Vice-President (Great Lakes Region) Eric Skovgaard assuming the chair, the chair called Committee 11 Chairman James Maxwell to the podium to conduct the elections of the Secretary and members of the Synod Board of Directors. The committee proceeded to conduct the elections of the Secretary and members of the Board of Directors, with Chaplain Daenzer offering an opening prayer:

Secretary (Ordained, 3-year term)

Richard C. Rudowske Jr. (MO)	149		
John W. Sias (MO)	**691**		**(declared elected)**

Board of Directors (Lay, Central Region, 6-year term)

Andrew N. Grams (MDS)	**479**		**(declared elected)**
Aaron J. Silletto (IN)	226		
Kevin W. Washburn (MDS)	118		

Board of Directors (Lay, West-Southwest Region, 6-year term)

Trey Cox (PSW)	181	182	
Jerald L. Folkerts (RM)	91		
Stephen Reavis (TX)	202	226	
Jesse L. Yow Jr. (CNH)	378	**458**	**(declared elected)**

Board of Directors (Lay, At-Large, 6-year term)

Thomas J. Deadrick (SD)	228	313	
David C. Eastburn (IE)	211		
John W. Edson (MNS)	410	**551**	**(declared elected)**

Board of Directors (Commissioned, At-Large, 6-year term)

Nathan T. Domsch (NEB)	226	316	
Jay A. Krause (SI)	225		
Jan W. Lohmeyer (SO)	420	**550**	**(declared elected)**

Special Recognition—LCMS President Emeritus

With President Harrison resuming the chair, the chair welcomed the Rev. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President Emeritus, and his wife, Terry, recognizing his service in the office from 2001–2010, and prior to that as president of the Texas District, 1991–2001.

The chair noted that on March 1, 2025, past President Robert T. Kuhn was called to glory after a lifetime of faithful service to the church. Dr. Kuhn assumed the role of president when President Al Barry died suddenly in spring 2001. Dr. Kuhn served as President until 2004. Dr. Kuhn's unwavering devotion to Christ and the church and his joy-filled personality were a blessing to all he encountered.

Convention Essay: "Christ Changes Everything"

During the presentation, the chair was relinquished to the Rev. Dr. Jon M. Braunersreuther, president, Texas District.

[The entire text of the essay by the Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Egger, president, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, as well as the response by the Rev. C. Bryan Wolfmueller, pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Chuch, Austin, Texas., will be printed in the *2026 Convention Proceedings.*]

Committee 4: Life Together

With First Vice-President Lange assuming the chair, the chair recognized Chairman Christopher S. Esget, Vice-President, to continue the report of his committee.

Res. 4-05, "To Clarify Nomenclature for Chaplaincy and Institutional Care Work and To Amend Related Bylaws" (*TB*, 1:86–88), was read and introduced by the committee. Without debate, the resolution was adopted [Yes: 736; No: 34].

Res. 4-04B, "To Clarify Oversight and Revitalize Role of Registered Service Organizations" (*TB*, 3:324), was read and introduced by the committee.

It was moved and seconded—it being clarified that the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) had approved the presentation of the amendment in advance—to amend at l. 32 to insert the first *resolve* from Ov. 4-32 (*CW*, 319):

> *Resolved*, That Bylaw 6.2.2 (a) be amended as follows, so that a witness service organization may have board membership of at least two-thirds members from congregations of the Synod or its partner churches;
>
> PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING
>
> 6.2.2 Policies shall distinguish the three classes of recognized service organization, with criteria, procedures, and benefits appropriate to each, further distinctions being drawn within the categories as needed:
>
> (a) A *witness service organization*, under the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions, engages in Word or Word-and-Sacrament mission society activity, support of specific missions, mission-and- ministry training, church worker professional development, church worker care, or other work directly related to the church's proclamation. A witness service organization is governed solely by Synod (or partner church) congregations or a board comprising ~~solely~~ members<u>, at least two-thirds of whom are members</u> of member congregations of the Synod (or its partner churches).
>
> (b) An *educational service organization* …
>
> (c) A *mercy service organization* …

It was moved to close debate on the amendment; this carried [Yes: 790; No: 59]. The amendment failed [Yes: 195; No: 664].

It was moved to amend at l. 33 to replace the words "that intentionally promote actions" with the words "whose words and actions are." It was moved and seconded to close debate on the amendment and on the resolution; this carried [Yes: 754; No: 113]. The amendment failed [Yes: 363; No: 512]. Res. 4-04B was adopted without amendment [Yes: 823; No: 64].

Res. 4-07, "To Condemn Political Violence and Encourage Participation in Public Life" (*TB*, 1:91–92), was read and introduced by the committee.

It was moved and seconded to amend the final *whereas* at p. 91, l. 25, after "persuasions," to include "in particular the public assassination of Charles J. Kirk." It was moved and seconded to cease debate on the amendment; this carried [Yes: 621; No: 271]. The amendment failed [Yes: 409; No: 487].

In response to a question, it was noted that the forthcoming, commended CTCR report (ll. 37–38) is in process and should be delivered soon. It was moved and seconded to cease debate on the resolution; this carried [Yes: 840; No: 56]. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 845; No: 60].

Res. 4-08A, “To Direct the Commission on Theology and Church Relations to Examine Current Political and Social Issues” (*TB*, 2B:291), was read and introduced by the committee with the insertion of “as is deemed appropriate” after “new documents” in l. 35.

It was moved to amend by adding after line 25 a new *whereas*: “Whereas, A CTCR minority opinion regarding racism was published in 1994; and” and to add a final resolve, “That such examination include the 1994 document ‘Racism and the Church: A Dissenting Opinion.’” It was noted that this document as well as the majority opinion and an executive committee response are included in the 1995 *Workbook*. It was moved and seconded to close debate on the amendment and the resolution; this [Yes: 791; No: 93]. The amendment failed [Yes: 419; No: 473]. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 811; No: 90].

Res. 4-09, “To Address Uses of Artificial Intelligence” (*TB*, 1:92–93), was read and introduced by the committee.

It was moved to amend the second whereas at line 39, to replace “create” with “generate.” Without objection, this was accepted.

The resolution was adopted [Yes: 864; No: 34].

Session 4
Monday p.m., July 20, 2026

Midday Prayer

The Rev. Dr. Terrence Chan, chairman, Board for International Mission, preached on Romans 5:8–17 in the order of Midday Prayer, with Chaplain Daenzer serving as liturgist and Mariachi San Pablo of Ysleta Lutheran Mission Human Care providing accompaniment and special music.

[The entire text of Dr. Chan’s sermon will be printed in the *2026 Convention Proceedings.*]

Minutes

With the indulgence of the body, after an explanatory video, President Harrison updated the body on the National Offering, “Tell the Next Generation.” With $60,750.11 received at the opening service and matching from a generous $500,000 Bolick seed grant, the total received to date stands at $742,522.11.

President Harrison, having called the convention back to order, introduced the review of the minutes from Sunday’s morning and afternoon sessions, as prepared by the Secretary and distributed along with *Today’s Business*. The minutes were accepted as presented.

Committee 12: Convention Nominations – Presentation of Report and Floor Nominations for Other Boards and Commissions

The chair called on the Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy, chairman of the Committee for Convention Nominations, to present the slate for the remaining positions to be elected and to prepare the delegates to present floor nominations for such according to the procedure of Standing Rule 26. Hardy noted the printed report of his committee in the *Biographical Synopses and Statements of Nominees* and updates thereto regarding the restored Commission on Worship (*TB*, 2B:304–5). Hardy presented the up-to-date slate in *Today’s Business*, 3:359–67, reiterated the instructions for submission of floor nominations, and reminded delegates to review Tuesday’s *Today’s Business* for information on such floor nominees as may issue. The chair declared floor nominations in order for all boards and commissions other than the Board of Directors.

It was moved to add Doss Tychicus, West Covina, Calif., PSW District, to the slate for Board for International Mission, West-Southwest Region, layperson. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add David P. Ramirez, Union Grove, Wis., SW District, to the slate for the board of regents, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., ordained. The floor nomination was, after a call for division, carried [Yes: 699; No: 134].

It was moved to add Thomas J. Winterstein, Frankenmuth, Mich., MI District, to the slate for the Commission on Worship, director of parish music or parish teacher. He is not in the pool, so the motion was at first out of order. The chair then put the question on opening the pool before the assembly for Commission on Worship. This carried [Yes: 563; No: 284]. Thereupon the addition carried [Yes: 610; No; 227].

It was moved to add Rev. Dr. Harald G. Tomesch, Slinger, Wis., SW District, to the slate for board of regents, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ordained. The floor nomination carried [Yes: 669; No: 150].

It was moved to add Dr. Theodore J. Hopkins, Saline, Mich., MI District, to the slate for Commission on Theology and Church Relations, ordained. The floor nomination carried [Yes: 637; No: 198].

It was moved to add Rev. Dr. Steven P. Mueller, Irvine, Calif., PSW District, to the slate for the Commission on Worship, parish pastor. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Rev. Daniel C. Ross, Mustang, Okla., OK District, to the slate for Commission on Worship, parish pastor. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Rev. Brent W. Kuhlman, Murdock, Neb., NEB District, to the slate for Commission on Worship, parish pastor. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Janis G. McDaniels, Kernersville, N.C., SE District, to the slate for Board for National Mission, East-Southeast Region, layperson. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Jason M. Kaspar, La Grange, Texas, TX District, to the slate for Commission on Worship, parish pastor. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Steven C. Briel, Maple Grove, Minn., MNS District, to the slate for Commission on Worship, parish pastor. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add David P. Ramirez, Union Grove, Wis., SW District, to the slate for the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, parish pastor. The floor nomination carried by voice vote. [Rev. Ramirez subsequently declined this nomination.]

It was moved to add Joseph L. Olson, Whitefish Bay, Wis., SW District, to the slate for Commission on Theology and Church Relations, layperson. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Paul M. Soulek, Seward, Neb., NEB District, to the slate for Commission on Worship, director of parish music or parish teacher. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Michael Hollman, Fort Wayne, Ind., IN District, to the slate for Commission on Worship, lay. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Darin D. Koenemann, Fort Wayne, Ind., IN District, to the slate for Commission on Worship, director of parish music or parish teacher. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

It was moved to add Sean R. Smith, Clarksville, Tenn., MDS District, to the slate for Commission on Worship, parish pastor. The floor nomination carried by voice vote.

Seeing no further delegates offering floor nominations, the chair declared floor nominations closed.

Presentation—International Witness: Planting Churches

The Rev. Sergio Maita, an LCMS missionary serving in Puerto Rico as a church planter and theological educator, raised Lutheran in Venezuela as a result of one of the first churches planted there by the LCMS, presented on his church planting work. There are thousands in Puerto Rico who do not know the Gospel, and especially the reception of the forgiveness of sins through the Word and Sacrament. Work must go far beyond the church walls to reach them. “The death and resurrection of Jesus is the answer to all our problems…this is what Puerto Ricans need to hear, what we all need to hear.” And the missionary gets to see the “first love” of those who understand the Gospel for the first time. He gave thanks for mission work in Venezuela in years past and noted translation of the Book of Concord, in Puerto Rico, into Spanish, making it available and even familiar, to some, even before they attend a divine service or take a catechism class. He noted long-term needs in the region now being filled with well-trained, ordained pastors and evangelists.

Committee 6: Pastoral Ministry and Seminaries

Without objection at his thus filling free time created by Floor Committee 2’s efficiency, the chair recognized Chairman Scott R. Murray, outgoing Third Vice-President, to continue the report of his committee. Harrison expressed appreciation for Murray’s service; Murray, in turn, asked the Synod to support his successor in office as it had supported him.

Res. 6-06A, “To Affirm and Support Established Parameters of Specific Ministry Pastor Program” (*TB*, 3:331), was read and introduced by the committee. Murray summarized changes from the original version.

It was moved and seconded to amend at l. 22, to add after “policies,” the words “with the exception of the age restriction.” It was moved and seconded to cease debate on the amendment and the resolution; this carried [Yes: 693; No: 207]. Thereupon the amendment failed [Yes: 415; No: 493] and the resolution was adopted without amendment [Yes: 739; No: 178].

Res. 6-07A, “To Encourage and Support Specific Ministry Pastors to Pursue General Pastor Certification” (*TB*, 3:331–32), was read and introduced by the committee. It was moved and seconded to cease debate, which carried on a voice vote. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 791; No: 102].

Res. 6-08, “To Amend Bylaw 2.13.1 to Clarify Terminology for Specific Ministry Pastor Mentorship and Oversight” (*TB*, 1:116–18), was read and introduced by the committee. An amendment to the standing rules was ruled out of order at the time. The resolution was adopted by voice vote.

A delegate suggested that the body has sinned against Dr. Kloha in approving the resolution containing language to which he objected; the chair suggested the delegate confer with the floor committee. The orders of the day were called.

Greetings—LCMS Foundation

The chair called upon David Fiedler, president of the LCMS Foundation, to bring greetings to the convention. He highlighted the dual and coordinated mission of the LCMS Foundation: (1) assisting God’s people in making significant gifts to LCMS ministries, primarily through estate and gift plans, and (2) helping those ministries steward such gifts wisely through prudent investment options, including endowments. Properly governed endowments are active and “muscular,” regularly distributing funds for current ministry needs—such as church worker scholarships, missions, and operational support—while the principal continues to grow through long-term investing, sustaining ministry for future generations. Gift planning counselor Jim Schroeder was noted for his 30 years helping district members create faith-reflective gift plans in Iowa District West; a video illustrated the mission in action there, supported by a Foundation-managed endowment.

Thankful for LCMS planned givers, Fiedler reported that in the past year the Foundation helped donors create gift plans projecting $190 million in future support for LCMS ministries. Additionally, $70 million was distributed to over 1,000 LCMS organizations from matured gifts. He invited congregations, schools, and districts with questions about gift planning services, investment opportunities, or establishing endowments to visit the Foundation’s booth.

Greetings—Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

The chair—noting that the LCMS and Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) have annually met since 2012 for informal theological discussions marked by candor, mutual respect, and a shared desire for mutual understanding—called upon WELS President Mark Schroeder to bring greetings to the convention. Harrison noted with gratefulness that WELS counterparts as knowing the languages, Lutheranism, history, and thanked President Schroeder for reaching out years ago to start the dialogue. President Schroeder also spoke with appreciation and with pleasure brought greetings from fellow confessional Lutherans in the WELS, many of whom will be paying attention to the LCMS convention and keeping us in their prayers.

Schroeder expressed appreciation for “all the LCMS has done historically for the WELS,” noting strong criticism and then encouragement toward confessional Lutheranism in the first and second WELS presidencies, for which WELS is thankful to the LCMS. When WELS ended its fellowship with LCMS in 1961, he noted, the resolution was merely to “suspend” fellowship, indicating this sad and painful situation as one that shouldn’t continue, and a footnote called for WELS leadership to continue talks that didn’t happen for 55 years. Shortly after Harrison’s election, a fishing trip turned into 20 delegates from LCMS, WELS, and ELS coming together for informal doctrinal discussions. These have been more of a blessing than could have been imagined. They found great agreement on important doctrinal issues; they also discussed differences that remained with boldness and honesty.

There is still work to do, vital discussions to have—and for those, the WELS is again deeply appreciative. WELS has appreciated, reciprocally, the depth of scholarship and biblical knowledge among LCMS counterparts. Caricatures have been undone. Now agencies across the Synod are taking to each other. Schroeder was glad to recognize another Synod “standing on the Word of God and so faithful in taking the mission of Christ to the world.”

Committee 9: Structure and Administration

It was moved and seconded to add a standing rule, as used in 2023, that "A motion to close debate ('call the question') shall apply only to the immediately pending question." In the interest of time, the chair proposed and the body did not object to one speaker for and one against. Thereupon the motion carried with the required 2/3 vote [Yes: 570; No: 280].

The chair recognized Chairman Justin A. Panzer, President, Kansas District, to begin the report of his committee; he began by introducing the members of his committee and thanking the CCM, Commission on Handbook, and Secretary for helping the committee help the Synod live within a framework that does "all things in good order."

Res. 9-02A, "To Amend Bylaws 1.5.1.2–1.5.2 to Clarify Service Expectations and Handling of Conflicts of Interest" (*TB*, 3:345–47), was explained and introduced by the committee. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 837; No: 44].

Res. 9-08, "To Amend Bylaws to Clarify and Streamline Responsibilities of Appointed Synod Officers" (*TB*, 1:154–57), was read and introduced by the committee. It was read to change "finance and accounting" to "finance, accounting" on p. 154, l. 47; and to change "Financial" to "Operating" on p. 156, l. 37.

It was moved and seconded to amend, on p. 156, l. 15, to delete the words "and a layperson," it being noted the CCM has approved the change. This failed [Yes; 116; No: 767]. It was moved to cease debate; this carried by voice vote. The resolution also was adopted as read but without amendment by voice vote.

Res. 9-09, "To Amend Bylaws to Coordinate Responsibilities of Chief Mission Officer with Other Synod Officers" (*TB*, 1:157–59), was read and introduced by the committee. Without debate, the resolution was adopted by voice vote.

Res. 9-11, "To Amend Bylaw Section 1.5, etc., to Unify in the Bylaws and Revise Corporate Formation Requirements for Instrumental Entities of Corporate Synod and Agencies of the Synod" (*TB*, 1:160–73), was read and introduced by the committee. It was read on p. 163, ll. 39 and 44, to make "its agencies" read "agencies of the Synod." At p. 172, l. 19, "further" becomes "finally"; on p. 172, lines 40–51, and on p. 173, ll. 1–8 are struck, this provision being treated instead in Res. 8-02A. The committee chairman also noted CCM Op. 26-3082, treating of district church extension funds being agencies of the Synod (*TB*, 3:319–20).

With twenty minutes of debate elapsed, closure of debate was put to the body according to the rule; this carried. The resolution was adopted as read [Yes: 659; No: 239].

Presentation—National Missions: Church Planting

With First Vice-President Peter Lange assuming the chair, the Rev. Dr. Quentin Cundiff, director of LCMS Church Planting in the Office of National Mission, presented on his engagement on a local level, coming along side districts and their new church plants to support them. He shared the work as part of *God's Mission Here*, with 32 plants in process from planning to sustainability and another 97 identified future sites. Accompanied by church plant and community members, New England President Robert Beinke and Nebraska District President Richard Snow shared about church planting in their districts, such as Lakes Region Lutheran Church in Moultonborough, N.H., and work being done with high school students and their families in Syracuse, Nebr. They noted support from the LCMS comes not just through finances but through processes to assist in moving forward and avoiding pitfalls. Cundiff noted that planting is a team effort, focusing on communities of laity who want to see churches planted in their communities. Pastor John Bussman and Mr. Brian Hayes, members of a team in Helena, Ala. spoke about their experience—the pastor being aided by laity especially because of the distances involved—of replanting a church in the community. Rev. Cundiff noted that church planning is not easy, but it is worthwhile, and that no one does this work alone.

Committee 1: National Witness

The chair recognized Chairman Eric C. Johnson, President, Southern District, to continue the report of his committee.

Res. 1-07A, "To Increase Church Planting at the Parish Level" (*TB*, 2B:272–73), was read and introduced by the committee. The resolution was adopted by voice vote.

Res. 1-12, "To Support Campus Ministry" (*TB*, 1:66–67), was read and introduced by the committee. It was moved to cease debate; this carried by voice vote. The resolution was adopted by voice vote.

Res. 1-09A, “To Promote Ministry Among Youth and Young Adults” (*TB*, 2B:273–74), was read and introduced by the committee.

It was moved to amend on p. 274 to add to the list in lines 31–33, the LCMS Youth Gathering and the Hodos Gathering. Upon clarification from the committee, the amendment was withdrawn. The resolution was adopted by voice vote.

Vespers

Chaplain Daenzer led the convention in the Office of Vespers with a reading of Ezekiel 37:1–14.

John W. Sias, *Secretary*