



***Convention Headquarters
Marriott Orlando Airport
7499 Augusta National Drive
Orlando, Florida 32822***

Workbook

Dear Fellow Servants of Jesus,

Greetings in the name of our Master, Jesus, who calls us and sends us into the vineyard of this world to gather a harvest with His love and grace. I want to thank you for your willingness to serve as a delegate to the 32nd Regular Convention of the Florida-Georgia District. A time of celebration awaits us as we gather to grow and engage in the Master's business. We are privileged to reach out in His mission fields by equipping, empowering and engaging—connecting people to Jesus!



Enclosed is the workbook for the 32nd Regular Convention of the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, to be held in Orlando, Florida June 12-14, 2015. We wanted to get the enclosed materials to you in plenty of time and invite you to study them so that you will be well equipped to participate meaningfully in our triennial convention.

Our convention theme, "Engaged in the Master's Business," is based on the parable in Luke 19 (*ESV), where we read, "As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, '**Engage in business until I come.**'"

When we gather for convention it is generally congregational leaders who attend. You are God's chosen leaders in the places where He has called you, whether pastoral or lay. This convention will focus on moving beyond the boundaries of a church campus into the communities where God has placed us. It begins with leaders showing the way, even as Jesus did for each of us. During these next three years we will consider how we have been called to make disciples, and to do that means reaching into the world around us, knowing the needs, and meeting them for the sake of Jesus. This is exactly what our Lord Jesus did. Rarely do we find Him in the synagogue or temple. Mostly He was out among the people, listening, caring, sharing and encouraging. You and I have been called to the same kind of ministry. My hope is that our convention will inspire us to action.

During the District convention we will have time to worship, pray, and study the Word of God, as well as laugh and celebrate our partnership in the Gospel. Our essayist is the Rev. Dr. John Denninger, President of the Southeastern District, who serves a large and diverse District, like ours, where outreach is an active part of the ministry, particularly in neighborhoods. They have some exciting things going on and he will be sharing some ways that we can reach out. Our convention chaplain will be the Rev. Dr. Brian Kneser, pastor of Woodlands Lutheran Church, Montverde, FL, and our Bible Study Leader will be Dr. Kurt Senske, CEO of Upbringing/Lutheran Social Services of the South. A special guest presentation will be from Cindy Steinbeck, author and CEO of Steinbeck Vineyard and Winery, who will share with us about the Vine and the Branches. Synod President Matthew Harrison will be with us Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning to share information about our Synod and take time for questions and answers. All in all, it will be a great time to engage in fellowship, study, business and worship!

This Workbook includes reports from the circuit visitors, the various commissions and advisory councils in our District, the staff, both present and former, and key ministry partners, together with the overtures which have been submitted for consideration. Additionally, the Floor Committees have developed Resolutions based on these overtures. These are all part of this mailing.

Since the custom in the Florida-Georgia District has been weekend conventions, worship resources will be provided for all congregations in mid-May, including a suggested order of service. A sermon has been provided by Rev. Douglas Kallesen, Executive Director of Missions and Outreach.

I am looking forward to this 32nd Regular Convention and pray that it will open our eyes to the opportunities all around us to be about the Master's business and connect people to Jesus. As we gather to be built up, may we be engaged so that we can better engage others with the love and grace of Jesus. Many blessings on your preparations and travel plans! If you have any questions don't hesitate to visit our web page or contact the District Office. See you in Orlando!

Peace in Jesus,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rev. Gregory S. Walton". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rev. Gregory S. Walton, President
Florida-Georgia District, LCMS



A Word about our Convention Logo

The Logo for the 32nd Regular District Convention focuses on the third emphasis of our Vision Statement. The Vision of the Florida-Georgia District is to Equip, Empower, and Engage, Connecting People to Jesus. These three emphases correlate with our critical targets of leadership, congregations and outreach. Leaders are equipped for ministry and service. Congregations are empowered by Word and Sacrament. As we are engaged in the world, we naturally reach out to those who don't know Jesus. While each of these elements are ongoing, in the next triennium the focus will be on this idea of engaging.

Engaged in the Master's business comes from Luke 19:13. In the parable the master hands out resources and then instruction. He says, "Engage in business until I return." As stewards of God's grace, empowered by His Word. We are to engage in the Master's business. This is exactly the instruction with which our Lord Jesus charges each of us. It was with this in mind that we developed the theme for this convention. Jesus, in Matthew 9:37, said, "Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." As we see the church around us in decline, our hearts can't help but be moved to action. There is an urgency in our Lord's command to go and make disciples of all nations. His Word is clear, and so is His call.

Visiting a vineyard this past summer gave me a whole new appreciation and insight into the work that Jesus calls each of us to in John 15:5 and 8. He says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing...By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples." A branch grafted into the Vine, as it is nurtured and taken care of, will naturally produce fruit. We, who are so richly cared for with Word and Sacrament, should be overflowing in carrying out the Father's desire to see all people saved. Jesus reminds us, in John 15:16, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you."

In the logo you see the green harvest field or vineyard, bordered by a Cross, which leads to the Word and Sacrament. This is what empowers us to engage in the Master's business. We go out into the world, well-resourced and carrying the good news of Jesus. This is our mission field, and all around us is the mission. Now is the time for us to be engaged in the Master's business! It's not about grapes or vineyards. It's always about people. We go in His power, with His Word, to connect people to Jesus. May this logo serve as a reminder of our calling to engage in the Master's business.



**Convention Headquarters
Marriott Orlando Airport
7499 Augusta National Drive
Orlando, Florida 32822**

District President

The Reverend Gregory S. Walton
The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS
Orlando, Florida

Special Presenter

Mrs. Cindy Steinbeck, Author
Steinbeck Vineyards & Winery
Paso Robles, California

Special Guest

The Reverend Matthew C. Harrison, President
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
Saint Louis, Missouri

Parliamentarian

The Reverend Pat F. A. O'Brien, Emeritus
First Lutheran Church
Clearwater, Florida

Convention Chaplain/Host Congregation

The Reverend Dr. Brian N. Kneser, Sr. Pastor
Woodlands Lutheran Church & ELC
Montverde, Florida

Judge of Elections

The Reverend William "Billy" Brath
Trinity Downtown Lutheran Church
Orlando, Florida

Convention Bible Study Leader

Dr. Kurt Senske, CEO
Lutheran Social Service of the South
Austin, Texas

Convention Manager

The Reverend James L. Guelzow, Emeritus
Messiah Lutheran Church
Tampa, Florida

Convention Essayist

The Reverend Dr. John Denninger, President
Southeastern District, LCMS
Alexandria, Virginia

Exhibit Coordinator

Ms. Emily Moss, DCE
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church and School
Orlando, Florida

Synod Representative

The Reverend Dr. Robert T. Kuhn, 6th Vice President
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
Oviedo, Florida

Nominations Chair

The Reverend Charles T. Reich
Grace Lutheran Church & School
Winter Haven, Florida

District Staff: The Rev. Gregory S. Walton, Mr. Mark Brink, The Rev. Douglas Kallesen, Mr. Daniel J. Reichard, Mr. John M. Elliott, Mrs. Cindy Hammerstrom, Mrs. Kathy Keene, Ms. Debra Talbot, Mrs. Lynda Voss, Mrs. Laura Zirbel.

The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS Board of Directors

The Rev. Gregory S. Walton, President	Mr. William Gaik, Region One
The Rev. David C. Brighton, 1 st Vice President	Mr. Jay Wendland, Region One
The Rev. James L. Guelzow, Chairman, 2 nd Vice President	Mr. Donald Kaufman, Region Two
The Rev. Stephen Wipperman, 3 rd Vice President	Ms. Lois Schaefer, Region Two
The Rev. Dr. Brian Kneser, 4 th Vice President	Mr. Jon Brazee, Region Three
The Rev. Dr. Frank Marshall, 5 th Vice President	Ms. Sonia Tellez, Region Three
The Rev. Jay Winters, Secretary	Ms. Beverly Nyce, Region Four
Mrs. Renee Varga, Treasurer	Mr. Jeff Richards, Region Four
Ms. Lois Ford, Commissioned Minister of Religion	Ms. Karen Smith, Region Five
Mr. Nick Moss, Commissioned Minister of Religion	Ms. Nancy Volz, Region Five
Mr. Robert Ziegler, Commissioned Minister of Religion	

Convention Nomination Committee

Ordained:	The Rev. Gregory Michael, The Rev. Charles Reich (Chairman)
Commissioned:	Mr. Jerry Bisping, Mr. John Westol
Lay:	Mr. Dick Evers, Mr. Jim Ingersoll, Mrs. Ellen Jugar, Mrs. Soraya Trujillo
Advisory:	The Rev. Jay Winters

2015 District Convention Floor Committees

Floor Committee 1: Leadership

Chairman:	Rev. David Brighton
Members:	Rev. Jay Winters Mr. Jeff Richards Mr. Don Kaufman Mrs. Nancy Volz
Staff:	Mr. Dan Reichard

Floor Committee 2: Congregations

Chairman:	Mr. Jay Wendland
Members:	Mrs. Beverly Nyce Mr. John List Mr. Jon Brazee Ms. Sonia Tellez
Staff:	Mr. Mark Brink

Floor Committee 3: Outreach

Chairman:	Rev. Steve Wipperman
Members:	Mrs. Lois Schaefer Mrs. Eileen Bishop Mr. Bob Ziegler Mrs. Kathy Keene
Staff:	Rev. Doug Kallesen

Floor Committee 4: Bylaws

Chairman:	Mr. Bill Gaik
Members:	Mr. Rusty Huseman Mrs. Renee Varga
Staff:	Mr. John Elliott

Appointed District Reconcilers

2012 –

Rev. Dr. T. Kent Fuqua
Hope Lutheran Church
Hudson, Florida

Rev. George Murdaugh
Oak Road Lutheran Church
Lilburn, Georgia

Mr. William Patrick
Faith Lutheran Church
Marietta, Georgia

Mr. Leonard Raschke
St Paul Lutheran Church
Lakeland, Florida

**Synod Hearing Facilitator
Florida-Georgia District**

Ms. Adrian Tocklin
Grace Lutheran Church
St Petersburg, Florida

Ministerial Interview Committee

2012-2015

Georgia

The Rev. Earl Steffens, Chairman
Peace Lutheran Church
Tifton, Georgia

Mr. Bill Arndt
Rivercliff Lutheran Church
Atlanta, Georgia

Mrs. Teresa Murdaugh
Oak Road Lutheran Church
Lilburn, Georgia

Mr. Dan Palisch
Saint Paul Lutheran Church
Peachtree City, Georgia

Florida

The Rev. Dr. Randy Winkel, Chairman
Lakeside Lutheran Church
Venice, Florida

Mr. Christian Rau
Grace Lutheran Church
Saint Petersburg, Florida

Mrs. Jean Roehrs
Lakeside Lutheran Church
Venice, Florida

The Rev. Warren J. Thomason
Grace Lutheran Church
St Petersburg, Florida

Vision Statement

“Every member...Equipped, Empowered, Engaged...Connecting People to Jesus.”

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Florida-Georgia District is to Serve, Assist and Encourage congregations in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Critical Ministry Targets

Critical Ministry Target: Leadership

Desired Outcome

- *District leaders show an annual increase in the number of objective continuing education benchmarks completed.*
- *Demographic and generational diversity among leaders in the District to increase annually.*

Critical Ministry Target: Congregations

Desired Outcome

- *Each year 50% of the District congregations will report an increase of its members engaged in the study of God’s Word. (Additionally, we want to see 50% of our congregations increase worship attendance.)*

Critical Ministry Target: Outreach

Desired Outcome

- *District congregations report at least 3,500 adult confirmations and professions of faith annually.*

Core Value Statement

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 (NIV)

- ∞ We value the truth that all people matter to God and therefore to us. (1 John 2:1-2; Acts 1:8)
- ∞ We value the gathered fellowship of believers. (Acts 2:42-47; Colossians 3:11-17)
- ∞ We value life-long nurturing of the faith (Christian Education). (Ephesians 4:14-16; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:11-6:3; Colossians 3:11-17)
- ∞ We value the gifts of God’s people as they offer them in service, both individually and corporately, to the Church and the world. (Ephesians 4:7-13; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12)
- ∞ We value servant leadership. (Mark 10:35-45; Acts 28:3a; Mark 9:33-37; Philippians 2:1-11; Isaiah 61:1-3; John 13:14-17; Isaiah 42:1-4)
- ∞ We value integrity. (Genesis 39:9; James 1:22-25; Psalm 78:70-72; Ephesians 4:1-2, 14-16; Ezekiel 11:16-20; Jeremiah 31)
- ∞ We value a trust in God and His people which frees us for responsible risk-taking. (Matthew 15:21-28; Genesis 18:16-33; Matthew 16:21; Acts 4:8-13)

Therefore we are committed to carry on this God-given, Spirit-driven ministry of Word and Sacrament through which He shares His love for us and empowers us to share His love with others.