



FloridaGeorgia District
C O N V E N T I O N

Orlando, FL



June 5-7, 2025

**The 35th Regular
Convention
Of the
Florida-Georgia
District, LCMS
Workbook**



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Greetings from President Rockey



Dear Fellow Alongsiders and Servants of Christ,

Greetings in the name of our resurrected and victorious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

In just a few short weeks, we will gather in Orlando for the 35th Regular Convention of the Florida-Georgia District of the LCMS. I pray that as you begin to prepare for our time together that the victory and celebration of Easter will continue to fill your spirit. One of my favorite Scriptures for resurrection Sunday comes from Matthew after the women run to the tomb and encounter the angel. “So, the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.” They certainly had good reason to be afraid. Whether it was the uncertainty of what their future held, encountering the angel or otherwise, fear would be a natural reaction. However, even in the midst of their fear and encounter, the women were “yet filled with joy and ran to tell his disciples!”

My friends, that is my prayer for all of us as followers of Jesus. He is risen! He has done what we could not, conquering Satan, sin and death! That is indeed our greatest reason for and source of joy and I pray that it is so real and so powerful in your life that you are **Compelled** to run and share it with everyone around you! That is our mission and that is our business and calling as servants of our Savior.

For some a convention can simply be seen as a “business” meeting, yet I challenge you to see this as a “family meeting” and reunion of sorts. I know that when my family has an event, regardless of the circumstances, I want to be there. I want to join my family in reflecting, praying, discerning, enjoying each other and tending to whatever matter may lay before us.

I therefore pray that you will take the time to prepare your hearts and minds for our gathering June 5 – 7. Together we will spend time in worship, prayer, the study of God’s Word, while we also consider matters of before us including elections, overtures and mission priorities for the District and Synod. I am also sure that there will be time filled with great fellowship, laughter and celebration over our work as partners in the Gospel!

We will be blessed by two very gifted servant leaders in the Missouri Synod, the Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford, Minnesota South District President and author of several books, will serve as our Bible Study leader, and the Rev. Dr. Bill Harmon, Southeastern District President, will serve as our Essayist. Our convention chaplain will be the Rev. Adolfo Borges. Pastor of Prince De Paz in Orlando. Our Synodical President, the Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, will preach at our opening worship and be with us on Friday morning to share his report and answer questions.

This workbook includes reports from each of our five regions and each Circuit Visitor. Various commissions, the staff and ministry partners reports are also included. Further you will find the Overtures that have been submitted for consideration. Lastly, the Floor Committees have developed Resolutions based on these overtures.

May the Lord bless you as you prepare for our time together. I pray that our work and prayers lead to us boldly living out our Vision that “Every member (of the District)...is Equipped, Empowered and Engaged...Connecting People to Jesus!

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact the District Office.

Serving with joy!

Rev. James H. Rockey, President

Vivid Description of the FLGA Vision

The people of the Florida-Georgia District are compelled by Christ's love to connect the lost, confused and hurting to Jesus, who is the true source of peace, hope and life!

As those saved by grace, we must share the message of salvation. Our focus is on empowering congregations to help individuals discover the hope and joy of salvation. Our task is to ignite the disciple-making potential within our congregations, so that all people experience the life-changing love of Jesus.

Corporate worship and vital community is foundational. We love our neighbors by reaching out to people where they are, building relationships, and discipling others. We are Alongsiders, called to live urgently, reflecting Christ's love in our daily lives, so that the hope and joy of salvation overflow into the world around us.



FLGA 35th Regular Convention Theme

As you consider our Convention Theme ***Compelled***, I pray that you take time to reflect upon our Scripture text from 2 Corinthians 5: 14-15, “For Christ’s love **COMPELS** us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”

We developed our convention logo and our use of the image of the world is a vital and urgent reminder that:

You are the light of the **world**. (Matt 5:14)

And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole **world** as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matt 24:14)

He said to them, “Go into all the **world** and preach the gospel to all creation. (Mark 16:15)

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the **world**! (John 1:29)

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)

Do you see it? These verses make it clear that Jesus was serious when He said, “You will be My witnesses...to the ends of the world” (Acts 1:8)! Our directive and mission are clear. It’s our neighbors, anyone in need and the whole world! That may be overwhelming but empowered by the Holy Spirit and our abiding Lord, it is the mission of God, and it has been given to us!



Convention Team



*“For Christ’s love **COMPELS** us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”*

***Convention Headquarters
Embassy Suites Orlando Lake Buena Vista South
4955 Kyngs Heath Road
Kissimmee, FL 34746***

District President

The Reverend James H. Rockey
The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS
Orlando, Florida

Special Guest Preacher

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

Convention Bible Study Leader

The Reverend Dr. Lucas V. Woodford,
President
Minnesota South District, LCMS
Burnsville, Minnesota

Convention Essayist

The Reverend Dr. William “Bill” Harmon,
President
Southeastern District, LCMS
Henrico, Virginia

Synod Representative

The Reverend Christopher S. Esget
Fifth Vice-President
Alexandria, Virginia
East-Southeast Region

District Secretary

The Reverend Dr. Gregory C. Michael
Christus Victor Lutheran Church & Student Ctr
Athens, Georgia

Convention Chaplain

The Reverend Adolfo Borges
Principe de Paz
Orlando, Florida

Judge of Elections

The Reverend Kenneth D. Green, II
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church; Principe de Paz
Orlando, Florida

Convention Worship Chair/Host Congregation

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

Parliamentarian

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

Parliamentarian

The Reverend Dr. R. Brian Stolarczyk
Lutheran Church of the Cross
Port Charlotte, Florida

Nominations Chair

Mr. William “Bill” Gaik
Trinity Lutheran
Toccoa, Georgia

District Staff: Rev. Dr. Peter Meier, Mrs. Jennifer Tanner, Mr. Jay Wendland, Mrs. Laura Zirbel
Mrs. Debra Arrington, Mrs. Cindy Hammerstrom, Mrs. Kathy Keene, Mrs. Meridith Swanson



The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS Board of Directors

The Rev. James H. Rockey, President
The Rev. Dr Victor Belton, 1st Vice President
The Rev. Jay Winters , 2nd Vice President,
Chairman
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The Rev. Dr. David Brockhoff, 4th Vice President
The Rev. Stephen Carretto, 5th Vice President
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Mrs. Tamie Worthington, Commissioned Minister of Religion
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Mrs. Deborah Beck, Region 2
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Mrs. Becky Hartmann, Region 3
Mrs. Sheryl DeWitt, Region 3
Mr. Jon Boeche, Region 4
Ms. Jody Schweichler, Region 4
Mr. Stephen Bradshaw, Region 5
Mrs. Nancy Volz, Region 5

Advisory Members

Mr. William “Rusty” Huseman, P.A. District Legal Counsel
Mr. John List, Lutheran Life Editor, Communications Director

Appointed District Reconcilers

2022 – 2025

Rev. Dr. Kent Fuqua
Rev. Roger Schwartz
Mrs. Nancy Volz

Convention Nomination Committee

Ordained: The Rev. Dr. Brian Kneser; Rev. Jon Zehnder
Commissioned: Mr. Jeremy Becker; Mr. Jon Peterson
Lay: Mr. William “Bill” Gaik (Chair); Mr. Dennis Cerny; Mr. John List; Ms. Becky Stiles
Advisory: The Rev. Dr. Gregory Michael

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Region 1:

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Mrs. Myriam Brauckman
Rev. John Lehenbauer

Region 2:

Rev. Terry McKee, Chair
Mrs. Anette Shanks
Rev. Patrick McKenzie

Region 3:

Rev. Ed DeWitt, Chair
Dcn Liz Borth
Rev. John Hohe
Dr. Eugenia Kolasinski

Region 4:

Rev. Marc Nauman, Chair
Mr. Roy Heflin
Mrs. Tuni Miller
Mrs. Lori Schwan

Region 5:

Rev. Scott Gress, Chair
Rev. Deon Hull
Mr. John List
Rev. Mark Stillman

2025 Florida- Georgia District Convention Floor Committees

Floor Committee 1 – Missions and Outreach

Chair: Rev. Charles Reich
Members: Mrs. Deb Beck
Mr Steven Bell
Mr. Stephen Bradshaw
Mrs. Becky Hartmann
Mr. John List
Mrs. Tamie Worthington
Staff: Rev. Dr. Peter Meier

Floor Committee 2 – Mercy/Life Together and Leadership

Chair: Rev. Dr. Victor Belton
Members: Mrs. Michele Branham
Mrs. Karen Cerny
Rev. Stephen Carretto
Mrs. Sheryl DeWitt
Mrs. Jody Schweichler
Mrs. Nancy Volz
Staff: Mrs. Jennifer Tanner & Mr. Jay Wendland

Floor Committee 3 – Administration and Theology

Chair: Rev. Dr. David Brockhoff
Members: Mr. Jon Boeche
Mr. Tracy Cripe
Mr. Gary Engel
Mrs. Lori Lee Joerz
Mr. Bob Kirklin
Mrs. Renee Varga
Staff: Mrs. Laura Zirbel





Credentialed Delegates
(At time of publication)

Congregation	City	State	Title	First	Last Name	Role
Trinity	Albany	GA	Rev.	Gary	Bowman	Pastoral Delegate
Trinity	Albany	GA	Mr.	Theodore	Wertz	Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Apopka	FL	Rev.	Donald	Moore	Pastoral Delegate
St. Paul	Apopka	FL	Mr.	Joseph	Rowden	Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Apopka	FL	Mr.	Jerald	Berg	Alternate Lay Delegate
Christus Victor	Athens	GA	Rev. Dr.	Gregory	Michael	Pastoral Delegate
Christus Victor	Athens	GA	Mr.	Benjamin	Michael	Lay Delegate
Trinity	Athens	GA	Rev.	Timothy	Davis	Pastoral Delegate
Trinity	Athens	GA	Mr.	Martin	Lambert	Lay Delegate
Our Redeemer	Augusta	GA	Rev.	Roger	Schwartz	Pastoral Delegate
Our Redeemer	Augusta	GA	Mr.	Bryan	Haag	Lay Delegate
Christ	Avon Park	FL	Rev.	Scott	McLean	Pastoral Delegate
Christ	Avon Park	FL	Mrs.	Linda	McLean	Lay Delegate
Christ	Avon Park	FL	Mr.	Adam	Forbes	Alt. Lay Delegate
All Saints	Blairsville	GA	Rev.	Dave	Wesche	Pastoral Delegate
All Saints	Blairsville	GA	Mr.	Jon	Pearson	Lay Delegate
All Saints	Blairsville	GA	Mrs.	Sally	Wesche	Alt. Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Boca Raton	FL	Mr.	John	List	Lay Delegate
Hope	Bonita Springs	FL	Rev.	Richard	Browning	Pastoral Delegate
Hope	Bonita Springs	FL	Mrs.	Tina	Browning	Lay Delegate
Son Life	Boynton Beach	FL	Ms.	Deborah	Wyman	Lay Delegate
Hope	Bradenton	FL	Ms.	Teena	Lichtenberger	Lay Delegate
Immanuel	Brandon	FL	Rev.	Phil	Ressler	Pastoral Delegate
Immanuel	Brandon	FL	Mr.	Nicolas	Jewett	Lay Delegate
Christ	Brooksville	FL	Mr.	Alan	Halladay	Lay Delegate
Christ	Brooksville	FL	Mrs.	Terry	Halladay	Alt. Lay Delegate



Christ	Cape Canaveral	FL	Rev.	Gregory	Le Sieur	Pastoral Delegate
Christ	Cape Canaveral	FL	Mr.	Jon	Brazee	Lay Delegate
Ascension	Casselberry	FL	Rev.	Mark	Mueller	Pastoral Delegate
Ascension	Casselberry	FL	Mr.	Daniel	Wendlick	Lay Delegate
Good Shepherd	Chiefland	FL	Rev.	Larry	Griffin	Pastoral Delegate
Good Shepherd	Chiefland	FL	Mrs.	Martha	Reaves	Lay Delegate
Bethel	Clearwater	FL	Rev.	Aaron	Schnelle	Pastoral Delegate
Bethel	Clearwater	FL	Mr.	Klaus	Miodov	Lay Delegate
Bethel	Clearwater	FL	Mr.	Paul	Blake	Alt. Lay Delegate
First	Clearwater	FL	Rev.	Andrew	Apple	Pastoral Delegate
First	Clearwater	FL	Mr.	Fredrick	Howard	Lay Delegate
First	Clearwater	FL	Mr.	Daniel	Tilney	Alt. Lay Delegate
Faith	Clewiston	FL	Mr.	Verle	Hennings	Lay Delegate
Luth. Ch. of the Redeemer	Columbus	GA	Rev.	John	Bumgardner	Pastoral Delegate
Luth. Ch. of the Redeemer	Columbus	GA	Mr.	Michael	Hill	Lay Delegate
Redeemer	Columbus	GA	Mr.	Jonathan	Main	Alt. Lay Delegate
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Trinity	Crawfordville	FL	Ms.	Janice	Salgado	Lay Delegate
Trinity	Crawfordville	FL	Mrs.	Ingrid	Matlock	Alt. Lay Delegate
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Living Faith	Cumming	GA	Mr.	Richard	Brauckman	Alt. Lay Delegate
St. Peter	Dahlonega	GA	Rev.	Charles	Kanefke	Pastoral Delegate
St. Peter	Dahlonega	GA	Mr.	Mark	Siedschlag	Lay Delegate
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Emmanuel	Delray Beach	FL	Rev.	Daniel	Bartley	Pastoral Delegate
Emmanuel	Delray Beach	FL	Mrs.	Nadege	Fremond	Lay Delegate
Trinity	Delray Beach	FL	Rev.	Gary	Boye	Pastoral Delegate
Trinity	Delray Beach	FL	Ms.	Julie	Butera	Lay Delegate
Faith	Dunedin	FL	Rev.	Andrew	Sorenson	Pastoral Delegate
Faith	Dunedin	FL	Mr.	Fred	Robbins	Lay Delegate



Peace	Dunnellon	FL	Rev.	Terry	McKee	Pastoral Delegate
Peace	Dunnellon	FL	Mrs.	Cynthia	McKee	Lay Delegate
Trinity	Eastanollee	GA	Rev.	Roland	Vega	Pastoral Delegate
Trinity	Eastanollee	GA	Mrs.	Carolyn	Gaik	Lay Delegate
Lake Oconee	Eatonton	GA	Rev.	Steven	Hayden	Pastoral Delegate
Lake Oconee	Eatonton	GA	Dr.	Dave	Ringer	Lay Delegate
Faith	Eustis	FL	Rev.	Marc	Kappel	Pastoral Delegate
Faith	Eustis	FL	Mr.	Jeff	Albright	Lay Delegate
Faith	Eustis	FL	Mr.	Michael	Repass	Alt. Lay Delegate
Trinity	Fort Lauderdale	FL	Rev.	Jeffrey	Wilhelm	Pastoral Delegate
Trinity	Fort Lauderdale	FL	Mrs.	Holly	Wilhelm	Lay Delegate
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Bethlehem	Fort Myers	FL	Ms.	Suzanne	Rinehart	Lay Delegate
Zion	Fort Myers	FL	Mr.	Joseph	Nobile	Lay Delegate
Zion	Fort Myers	FL	Mr.	Duane	Fenn	Alt. Lay Delegate
Shepherd of the Coast	Ft. Lauderdale	FL	Rev.	Chad	Czischke	Pastoral Delegate
Shepherd of the Coast	Ft. Lauderdale	FL	Mr.	Rich	Luce	Lay Delegate
Zion	Ft. Myers	FL	Rev. Dr.	Curtis	Deterding	Pastoral Delegate
Abiding Savior	Gainesville	FL	Rev.	Graham	Glover	Pastoral Delegate
Abiding Savior	Gainesville	FL	Dr.	Charles	Moss	Lay Delegate
First	Gainesville	FL	Rev.	Chris	Kollmann	Pastoral Delegate
First	Gainesville	FL	Mrs.	Roberta	Partridge	Lay Delegate
Good Shepherd	Gainesville	GA	Mr.	John	Westad	Lay Delegate
Good Shepherd	Gainesville	GA	Mr.	Douglas	Fuge	Alt. Lay Delegate
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Christ Our Savior	Griffin	GA	Mr.	Trent	Christian	Lay Delegate
Christ Our Savior	Griffin	GA	Mr.	David	Robb	Alt. Lay Delegate
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Trinity	Holly Hill	FL	Mr.	Denny	McCombs	Lay Delegate
Trinity	Holly Hill	FL	Ms.	Joan	Ingersoll	Alt. Lay Delegate
Principe de Paz	Hollywood	FL	Rev.	Eliexer	Ramirez	Pastoral Delegate
Hope	Hudson	FL	Rev.	James	Zang	Pastoral Delegate
Hope	Hudson	FL	Mr.	Wayne	Wollerman	Lay Delegate
Hope	Hudson	FL	Mrs.	Sonia	Zang	Alt. Lay Delegate
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First	Inverness	FL	Mr.	Howard	Warner Jr.	Lay Delegate
First	Inverness	FL		Mark	Hanenberger	Alternate Lay Delegate
Holy Cross	Jacksonville	FL	Ms.	Paula	Southerland	Lay Delegate
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Hope	Jacksonville	FL	Mr.	Ronald	Charlton	Lay Delegate
Our Redeemer	Jacksonville	FL	Rev.	William	Reister	Pastoral Delegate
Our Redeemer	Jacksonville	FL	Mrs.	Robin	Paris	Lay Delegate
Our Redeemer	Jacksonville	FL	Mr.	Richard	Paris	Alt. Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Jacksonville	FL	Rev.	Stephen	Wiggins, Sr.	Pastoral Delegate
St. Paul	Jacksonville	FL	Mr.	Larenza	Mungin	Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Jacksonville	FL	Mrs.	Tresa	Woods	Alt. Lay Delegate
Bethlehem	Jacksonville Bch	FL	Rev.	Dana	Brones	Pastoral Delegate
Bethlehem	Jacksonville Bch	FL		Jaime	Heimbach	Lay Delegate
Grace	Key West	FL	Rev.	Buck	LeGreco	Pastoral Delegate
Holy Trinity	Kingsland	GA	Rev. Dr.	Joel	Meyer	Pastoral Delegate
Holy Trinity	Kingsland	GA	Mr.	Caleb	Newberry	Lay Delegate
Holy Trinity	Kingsland	GA	Ms.	Marcia	Potter	Alt. Lay Delegate
Our Redeemer	Lake City	FL	Rev.	Stephen	Fair	Pastoral Delegate
Our Redeemer	Lake City	FL	Mr.	Kellam	Bartley	Lay Delegate



Our Redeemer	Lake City	FL	Mr.	Peter	Herrick	Alt. Lay Delegate
Trinity	Lake Placid	FL	Rev.	Richard	Norris	Pastoral Delegate
Trinity	Lake Placid	FL	Mr.	Stephen	Bradshaw	Lay Delegate
Lake Wales	Lake Wales	FL	Rev.	William	Whitehead	Pastoral Delegate
Lake Wales	Lake Wales	FL	Mr.	Richard	Evans	Lay Delegate
Lake Wales	Lake Wales	FL	Mr.	Donald	Fennell	Alt. Lay Delegate
Our Savior	Lake Worth	FL	Rev.	Jacob	Roedsens	Pastoral Delegate
Our Savior	Lake Worth	FL	Mr.	Rock	Tate	Lay Delegate
Christ	Lakeland	FL	Rev.	Christopher	Hazzard	Pastoral Delegate
Christ	Lakeland	FL		Kim	Kaniecki	Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Lakeland	FL	Rev.	Andy	Ritchie	Pastoral Delegate
St. Paul	Lakeland	FL	Mr.	David	Cheyne	Lay Delegate
Christ the King	Largo	FL	Rev.	Michael	Mast	Pastoral Delegate
Christ the King	Largo	FL	Mr.	Jon	Boeche	Lay Delegate
Faith	Lecanto	FL	Rev.	Patrick	Galligar	Pastoral Delegate
Faith	Lecanto	FL	Mrs.	Gina	Galligar	Lay Delegate
Faith	Lecanto	FL	Mr.	Matthew	Richardson	Alt. Lay Delegate
Bethany	Leesburg	FL	Rev.	Mike	Hanel	Pastoral Delegate
Bethany	Leesburg	FL	Mr.	Steven	Bell	Lay Delegate
Incarnate Word	Lilburn	GA	Rev.	Wilton	Heyliger	Pastoral Delegate
Incarnate Word	Lilburn	GA	Mrs.	Johnetta	Gillies	Lay Delegate
Incarnate Word	Lilburn	GA	Mrs.	Janice	Craig	Alt. Lay Delegate
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Ev. Luth. Ch. of the Holy Trinity	Macon	GA	Ms.	Barbara	Wells	Lay Delegate
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Martin Luther Chapel	Marathon	FL	Mr.	Jason	Dixon	Lay Delegate
Martin Luther Chapel	Marathon	FL	Mr.	Juan	Lopez	Alt. Lay Delegate



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Faith	Marietta	GA	Mr.	Dennis	Cerny	Lay Delegate
Holy Trinity	Masaryktown	FL	Rev. Dr.	David	Brockhoff	Pastoral Delegate
Holy Trinity	Masaryktown	FL	Mrs.	Bonnie	Brockhoff	Lay Delegate
Faith	Merritt Island	FL	Rev.	Andrew	Scherbeck	Pastoral Delegate
Faith	Merritt Island	FL	Mr.	Robert	Kirclin	Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Miami	FL	Rev.	William	Sielk	Pastoral Delegate
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Woodlands	Monteverde	FL	Mr.	William	Wood	Lay Delegate
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Grace	Naples	FL	Mr.	Greg	Davenport	Lay Delegate
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Peace	Naples	FL	Mr.	Anton	Mount	Lay Delegate
Pelican	Naples	FL	Mr.	Alexander	Jimenez	Lay Delegate
Faith	New Pt Richey	FL	Rev.	Kent	Fuqua	Pastoral Delegate
Good Shepherd	North Fort Myers	FL	Rev.	Robert	Davis	Pastoral Delegate
Faith	No. Palm Beach	FL	Rev.	Mark	Stillman	Pastoral Delegate
Faith	No. Palm Beach	FL	Mrs.	Fran	Hickman	Lay Delegate
Our Redeemer	Ocala	FL	Rev.	Joseph	Signore	Pastoral Delegate
Our Redeemer	Ocala	FL	Mr.	Alan	Simpkins	Lay Delegate
Our Redeemer	Ocala	FL	Mr.	Michael	Grosvenor	Alt. Lay Delegate
St. John	Ocala	FL	Rev.	Jeffrey	Shanks	Pastoral Delegate
St. John	Ocala	FL	Mr.	Mark	Locher	Lay Delegate
Peace	Okeechobee	FL	Rev.	Deon	Hull	Pastoral Delegate
Peace	Okeechobee	FL	Mr.	Craig (CJ)	Smith Jr.	Lay Delegate
Peace	Okeechobee	FL	Mr.	Thomas	Bieri	Alt. Lay Delegate



Christ the King Ev. Luth.	Orlando	FL	Rev.	Timothy	Brown	Pastoral Delegate
Christ the King Ev. Luth.	Orlando	FL	Mrs.	Shelley	Brown	Lay Delegate
Hope	Orlando	FL	Ms.	Michele	Branham	Lay Delegate
Prince of Peace	Orlando	FL	Rev.	Ken	Green	Pastoral Delegate
Prince of Peace	Orlando	FL	Mrs.	Maria	Vazquez	Lay Delegate
Prince of Peace	Orlando	FL	Mrs.	Nina	Cavalli-Rojas	Alt. Lay Delegate
Amazing Grace	Oxford	FL	Rev. Dr.	Paul	Burtzlaff	Pastoral Delegate
Amazing Grace	Oxford	FL	Mr.	John	White	Lay Delegate
Amazing Grace	Oxford	FL	Dr.	John	LeFavour	Alt. Lay Delegate
Risen Savior	Palm Bay	FL	Mr.	Fred	Anderson	Lay Delegate
Faith	Parrish	FL	Rev.	Patrick	Poock	Pastoral Delegate
St. Paul	Peachtree City	GA	Rev.	Mark	Dahn	Pastoral Delegate
St. Paul	Peachtree City	GA	Mr.	Thomas	Guebert	Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Peachtree City	GA	Mr.	Bruce	Karas	Alt. Lay Delegate
Christ	Perry	GA	Mr.	Paul	Jordan	Lay Delegate
Hope	Plant City	FL	Rev.	Dean	Pfeffer	Pastoral Delegate
Hope	Plant City	FL	Mr.	Kenneth	Hartmann	Lay Delegate
Hope	Plant City	FL	Mrs.	Elizabeth	Pfeffer	Alt. Lay Delegate
Our Savior	Plantation	FL	Rev.	Kenneth	Durante	Pastoral Delegate
Our Savior	Plantation	FL	Ms.	Debi	Bauer	Lay Delegate
Our Savior	Plantation	FL	Mr.	Rodger	Burrows	Alt. Lay Delegate
Luth. Ch. of the Cross	Port Charlotte	FL	Rev. Dr.	Brian	Stolarczyk	Pastoral Delegate
Luth. Ch. of the Cross	Port Charlotte	FL	Mr.	Mark	Polzin	Lay Delegate
Luth. Ch. of the Cross	Port Charlotte	FL	Mr.	William	Heffernan	Alt. Lay Delegate
Trinity Lutheran of SW. FL	Port Charlotte	FL	Rev.	Brian	Albrecht	Pastoral Delegate
Trinity Lutheran of SW. FL	Port Charlotte	FL	Mr.	William	Balogh	Lay Delegate



Grace	Port Saint Lucie	FL	Rev.	Cris	Escher	Pastoral Delegate
Grace	Port Saint Lucie	FL	Mr.	Kevin	Garbers	Lay Delegate
Faith	Punta Gorda	FL	Rev.	Dana	Narring	Pastoral Delegate
Faith	Punta Gorda	FL	Mr.	Kenneth	Mikeworth	Lay Delegate
Christ the King	Riverview	FL	Rev.	Kevin	Yoakum	Pastoral Delegate
Christ the King	Riverview	FL	Mr.	William	Mooney	Lay Delegate
Christ the King	Riverview	FL	Mrs.	Kathy	Yoakum	Alt. Lay Delegate
Rivercliff	Sandy Springs	GA	Rev.	Jacob	Berlinski	Pastoral Delegate
Rivercliff	Sandy Springs	GA	Mr.	Steve	Frerking	Lay Delegate
Rivercliff	Sandy Springs	GA	Mr.	Mike	Lutz	Alt. Lay Delegate
Luth. Ch. of the Redeemer	Sanford	FL	Rev.	Edward	DeWitt	Pastoral Delegate
Luth. Ch. of the Redeemer	Sanford	FL	Mr.	Joe	Brooks	Lay Delegate
Beautiful Savior	Sarasota	FL	Rev.	Rossetter	Leavitt	Pastoral Delegate
Beautiful Savior	Sarasota	FL	Mr.	Robert	Morris	Lay Delegate
Beautiful Savior	Sarasota	FL	Mr.	Randy	Thies	Alt. Lay Delegate
Good Shepherd	Sarasota	FL	Mr.	Paul	Larsen	Lay Delegate
Trinity	Savannah	GA	Rev.	Jeffrey	Webb	Pastoral Delegate
Trinity	Savannah	GA	Mr.	Emery	Wiltse	Lay Delegate
Faith	Sebring	FL	Rev.	Robert	Maulella	Pastoral Delegate
Faith	Sebring	FL	Mrs.	Linda	Maulella	Lay Delegate
Forest	Silver Springs	FL	Mr.	Joseph	McFarland	Lay Delegate
Christ Our Savior	St. Augustine	FL	Rev.	Mark	Stirdivant	Pastoral Delegate
Christ Our Savior	St. Augustine	FL	Mr.	R	Davis	Lay Delegate
Christ Our Savior	St. Augustine	FL	Mr.	Larry	Mull	Alt. Lay Delegate
Grace	St. Cloud	FL	Rev.	John	Hohe	Pastoral Delegate
Grace	St. Cloud	FL	Ms.	Ann	Brooks	Lay Delegate



Grace	St. Cloud	FL	Mr.	Fred	Korte	Alt. Lay Delegate
Grace	St. Petersburg	FL	Rev.	Kevin	Loughran	Pastoral Delegate
Grace	St. Petersburg	FL	Mr.	Richard	Dawson	Lay Delegate
Grace	St. Petersburg	FL	Mr.	Doug	Fulthorpe	Alt. Lay Delegate
Our Savior	St. Petersburg	FL	Rev.	Daniel	Ritter	Pastoral Delegate
Our Savior	St. Petersburg	FL	Mr.	Todd	Sloan	Lay Delegate
Our Savior	St. Petersburg	FL	Ms.	Debbie	Sloan	Alt. Lay Delegate
King of Kings	Talking Rock	GA	Rev.	Jefrey	Jensen	Pastoral Delegate
King of Kings	Talking Rock	GA	Mr.	James	Kolassa	Lay Delegate
King of Kings	Talking Rock	GA	Mr.	Barry	Hixsen	Alt. Lay Delegate
Epiphany	Tallahassee	FL	Rev.	Timothy	Barber	Pastoral Delegate
Epiphany	Tallahassee	FL	Ms.	Rebecca	McCoy	Lay Delegate
Epiphany	Tallahassee	FL	Mrs.	Amber	Barber	Alternate Lay Delegate
University	Tallahassee	FL	Rev.	Jay	Winters	Pastoral Delegate
University	Tallahassee	FL	Mr.	Andrew	Cheyne	Lay Delegate
University	Tallahassee	FL	Mrs.	Elizabeth	Winters	Alt. Lay Delegate
Holy Trinity	Tampa	FL	Rev. Dr.	Daniel	Prugh	Pastoral Delegate
Holy Trinity	Tampa	FL	Mr.	Colter	Reicherter	Lay Delegate
Holy Trinity	Tampa	FL	Ms.	Lisa	Milne	Alt. Lay Delegate
Messiah	Tampa	FL	Rev.	Mark	Adrian	Pastoral Delegate
Messiah	Tampa	FL	Mrs.	Jody	Schweichler	Lay Delegate
Messiah	Tampa	FL	Mr.	Mark	DeLory	Alt. Lay Delegate
Peace	Tifton	GA	Mr.	Tucker	Parrish	Lay Delegate
Good Shepherd	Titusville	FL	Rev.	Bruce	Alberts	Pastoral Delegate
Good Shepherd	Titusville	FL	Mr.	Michael	Corey	Lay Delegate
Messiah	Valdosta	GA	Rev.	Richard	Lohmeyer	Pastoral Delegate
Messiah	Valdosta	GA	Mrs.	Connie	Di Marco	Lay Delegate
Lakeside	Venice	FL	Rev.	David	Dahlke	Pastoral Delegate
Lakeside	Venice	FL	Mr.	George	Shepard	Lay Delegate
Mount Calvary	Warner Robins	GA	Rev.	Andrew	Howe	Pastoral Delegate



Mount Calvary	Warner Robins	GA	Mr.	William	Bohm	Alt. Lay Delegate
Mt. Calvary	Warner Robins	GA	Mr.	Eric	Gossman	Lay Delegate
Redeemer	W. Palm Beach	FL	Rev.	Daniel	McPherson	Pastoral Delegate
Redeemer	W. Palm Beach	FL	Dr.	Wesley	Borucki	Lay Delegate
St. Paul	Weston	FL	Rev.	Scott	Henze	Pastoral Delegate
St. Paul	Weston	FL	Mr.	Steve	Jones	Lay Delegate
Grace	Winter Haven	FL	Rev.	Charles	Reich	Pastoral Delegate
Grace	Winter Haven	FL	Dr.	Kenneth	Rogers	Lay Delegate
Grace	Winter Haven	FL	Mr.	Barry	Walker	Alt. Lay Delegate
Timothy	Woodstock	GA	Rev.	Daniel	Brammeier	Pastoral Delegate
Timothy	Woodstock	GA	Mr.	Michael	Parnow	Lay Delegate
Our Savior	Zephyrhills	FL	Ms.	Heather	Lorancaitis	Lay Delegate
Our Savior	Zephyrhills	FL	Mr.	Keith	Ploetz	Alt. Lay Delegate

Advisory Delegates

Rev. Isaac Baroi	Living Faith	Cumming	GA
Rev. Jino Jeong	Living Faith	Cumming	GA
Rev. Jeffrey Jordan	Rivercliff	Sandy Springs	GA
Rev. Nathan McCarty	Bethlehem	Jacksonville Beach,	FL
Rev. Dr. Jeffery Moore	Trinity	Holly Hill	FL
Mr. Jim Rice	Grace	Winter Haven	FL
Mr. Michael Rottmann	Grace	Winter Haven	FL
Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn	Prince of Peace	Orlando	FL

*“For Christ’s love **COMPELS** us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.” 2 Corinthians 5:14-15*



Tentative Agenda - FLGA 35th Regular Convention
"Compelled"



Tentative Agenda

Adjustments may be made in the schedule to accommodate convention business

Thursday, June 5, 2025 11:00 am – 11:00 pm *Compelled to Believe*

- 11:00 am Exhibit Hall Opens
- 12:00 pm Check-In Opens
- 1:00 pm Floor Committee - Open Hearings
- 2:30 pm Floor Committee Meetings - closed
- Dinner on your own
- 5:40 pm Exhibit Hall Closes
- 5:45 pm Opening/ Welcome
- Pre-Worship Music
- 6:00 pm Opening Worship – open seating
- 7:05 pm Session I**
- Call to Order
- 7:30 PM President's Report
- 7:45 pm Break - assigned seating upon return**
- 7:45 pm Late Check-in opens
- 8:00 pm Election of District President
- 8:25 pm Bible Study I – Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford, President, MN So District
- 8:55 pm Regional Caucus'
- 9:10 pm Ratification of Vice-Presidents
- 9:30 pm President's Reception

Friday, June 6, 2025 7:55 am – 5:30 pm *Compelled to Live as AlongSiders*

- 7:30 am Check-in opens
- 7:30 am Exhibits Open
- 7:45 am Music
- 7:55 am Opening Devotion
- 8:10 am Call to Order - Session II**
- Regional Lay Ratification
- 8:30 am Report from Synod
- Q & A
- 10:00 am Break**
- 10:20 am Missions and Outreach Report
- 10:40 am Bible Study II – Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford

11:10 am	Convention Business Floor Committee 1 – Missions and Outreach Ministry Partners
11:40 am	Doulos tou Christou 1
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	Devotion
1:10 pm	Session III Convention Business Ingathering – Lutheran Church of Uganda & Grace Uganda
1:20 pm	Essayist – Rev. Dr. Bill Harmon, President, Southeast District
1:40 pm	Convention Business Floor Committee 2 – Leadership, Mercy, Life Together Election of District Secretary Ministry Partners
2:20 pm	Bible Study 3 – Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford
2:40 pm	School & Youth Ministry - Report
2:55 pm	Break
3:10 pm	Ratification of Circuit Visitors Ministry Partners Convention Business Floor Committee 3 – Administration & Theology Election of Commissioned Ministers of Religion Doulos tou Christou 2
4:30 pm	Ministry Partners
4:25 pm	LCEF Vice President FLGA Report
5:00 pm	Lutheran Church Extension Fund Doulos tou Christou 3
5:30 pm	Dismissal Dinner on your own

Sat. June 7, 2025 7:55 am – 12:00 pm – Compelled to no longer live for self but for others

7:55 am	Opening - Session IV
8:20 am	Doulos tou Christou 4 Music & Prayers <i>Reading of Minutes</i> Synod Emphasis
8:45 am	Essay II – Rev. Dr. Bill Harmon
9:15 am	Financial Report Ministry Partners
9:35 am	Break

	Unfinished Convention Business
	Nomination Committee Elections
10:40 am	President's Acceptance Speech
10:55 am	Installation Worship
	Installation of Officers
	Installation of Circuit Visitors
12:00 pm	Adjournment

Ingathering Recipient: Lutheran Church of Uganda



From the first seeds of the gospel, planted in 1993, a Lutheran mission was initiated by five lay people. Through regular Bible studies, the ground was prepared by missionaries from Ghana for the first Lutheran worship service on October 30, 1994. From these humble beginnings, the work of God's Kingdom

in Uganda continued to grow. Since 1997, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has sent 10 missionaries to serve in Uganda. Over time, the congregations grew from a couple of congregations to over 150 congregations serving over 50,000 members.

Uganda is home to 48 tribes and 52 spoken languages, and the Lutheran Church of Uganda (LCU) currently serves 11 tribes and 14 language areas. While English is the national language used in schools, most Ugandans worship in their tribal language. There is a great need for translations of Bibles, hymnals, catechisms, and other materials to spread the Gospel.

[Ingathering for the 2025 Convention](#) – link to items requested

We're excited to share that the Lutheran Church of Uganda has specifically requested support, and we're thrilled to be able to help! The goal of the ingathering is to collect gently used items from the [Ingathering Items List](#) that are no longer needed by your congregation, pastors, and members—the items should still be in good condition and can make a meaningful impact on these LCU mission communities.

Your contributions will truly make a difference, and we're grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside them!

The Convention Offering is designated for the LCU and will also be used to cover costs of shipping ingathering items to Uganda.

GraceUganda is a 501(c)3 mission RSO, which provides support from the United States and LCMS congregations to help meet the needs of the LCU. GraceUganda supports through Education, Health, Church & Community projects.

Rafiki Foundation is located in Eustis, FL. Rafiki means "friend" in Swahili and depicts the foundation's purpose—to help people know God and raise their standard of living with excellence and integrity. Rafiki focuses on the education of children and youth and livelihood projects for village women.

Speaker Biographies

Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford – Bible Study Leader



Rev. Dr. Lucas V. Woodford, (MDiv, STM, DMin), is President of the Minnesota South District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and Associate Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Farmington, MN. He is the author of *Great Commission, Great Confusion, or Great Confession?* (Wipf & Stock, 2012). He is co-author with Harold Senkbeil of *Pastoral Leadership: for the Care of Souls* (2nd ed Lexham Press, 2021) and their book on contextual mission, *Culture of the Word*, is forthcoming from Lexham. He has written numerous articles published in *The Lutheran Witness*, *Logia*, and *Seelsorger*, including a monograph *What does this mean? Responding to Social Justice and Critical Race Theory* (2021).

Woodford is a member of the Board of Regents of Concordia University, St. Paul, MN. He has served as an adjunct instructor for Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN and the Institute of Lutheran Theology in Brookings, SD. Dr. Woodford is a Fellow in the Collegium of DOXOLOGY: The Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel, charged with research, writing, and speaking regarding the care of souls in the contemporary context. He frequently presents on matters related to soul care, missiology, marriage, sex and gender issues, as well as critical race theory. He is a husband to Becca and father to their seven children, five girls and two boys: Isabella (married to Zach), Thaddaeus, Aletheia, Ekklacia, Soteria, Titus, Basileia.

Rev. Dr. Bill Harmon – Essayist



Rev. Dr. Bill Harmon is the 14th President of the Southeastern District (SED) of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), elected in May 2022. With deep roots in Baltimore, Maryland, he is a graduate of Emmanuel Lutheran School, Baltimore Lutheran (now Concordia Preparatory School), Concordia College, New York, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Regent University, Virginia Beach, VA, where he earned a Doctor of Ministry in leadership, renewal, and coaching. President Harmon is married, and he and his wife, Gayle, have three sons.

As President, his focus is the theme of "Immeasurably More," inspired by Ephesians 3:20-21, emphasizing God's ability to do far more than we can ask or imagine. The mission and vision of the SED is to connect people with Jesus so that lives are transformed as God's Kingdom grows. The Southeastern District encompasses 214 churches and 71 schools across York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Washington, DC, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Bristol, Tennessee.

To learn more, visit se.lcms.org or follow the district on Facebook and Instagram for updates.



Primer of Parliamentary Procedures

A. Purpose of Parliamentary Law and Procedure

Parliamentary procedure assists a deliberative and decision-making assembly in carrying out its purpose and aims in an orderly, fair, and expeditious manner.

It is not the purpose of parliamentary procedure to make the conduct of business in an assembly difficult, to entangle an assembly in technicalities, or to provide a channel for individuals to flaunt their parliamentary knowledge.

Parliamentary law protects six basic rights:

- 1) The right of the majority to make a decision;
- 2) The right of the minority to be heard in hopes that it may become the majority;
- 3) The right of absentees to be protected;
- 4) The right of the assembly to be comfortable and to hear;
- 5) The right of the individual member to be honored;
- 6) And the orderly consideration of one subject at a time.

B. Basic Steps of Parliamentary Procedure

The chairman and members of the assembly should be acquainted with and observe eight basic parliamentary steps to take care of convention business in an orderly and fair manner. They are:

Members:

- 1) Address the chair. "Mr. Chairman" (or Mr. President)
- 2) Await recognition by the Chair.
- 3) Make the motion. "I move that ... "
- 4) Second the motion. (Unless not required)

Chair:

- 5) State the motion. (Or rules it out of order)
- 6) Calls for discussion. (Unless motion is undebatable) "Is there any discussion?" or "Are there any remarks?" Ample opportunity must always be given for expression of opinion and for discussion.
- 7) Takes the vote. (Or "Puts the question")
- 8) State the results.
"The 'ayes' have it and the motion is carried." Or, "The 'noes' have it and the motion is lost."
The vote does not go into effect until the results are announced.

Basic Parliamentary Principles For The Florida-Georgia District Convention

- 1) The district delegate convention is a parliamentary assembly called to deliberate and to make decisions. It receives the reports of the District President and the Board of Directors. In addition, the convention deliberates and makes decisions on recommended resolutions of designated floor committees which have considered proposed resolutions (overtures) from congregations.

- 2) All voting delegates have equal rights, privileges, and obligations.
- 3) The vote of the majority decides. The will of a district convention is determined by the taking of a vote.
- 4) Free discussion of every proposition or resolution presented for decision is an established right for all delegates, voting and advisory. To accomplish the closure of debate, a delegate must gain the recognition of the chair and, without any comment for or against the pending resolution, say, "I move the previous question." If seconded, this motion is put to an immediate vote. If adopted by a two-thirds majority, discussion is finished and the pending resolution is put to the assembly without further debate. The convention has the right to decide when it has heard sufficient discussion. This right, however, should be exercised with restraint.
- 5) Both proponents and opponents of a given proposal have rights which must be safeguarded. The decision belongs to the majority, but the right to discuss, the right to be heard, and the right to oppose should be upheld. A member of the majority on one question is often a member of the minority on another.
- 6) The simplest and most direct parliamentary procedure for accomplishing a purpose should be followed rather than taking devious routes and multiplying technicalities.
- 7) Every delegate has the right to know what question is before the convention and what its effect will be, for every action taken by a deliberative body should be taken knowledgeably.
- 8) Voting delegates are not bound and are not to be bound by previous instructions of their home or neighboring congregations.
- 9) Each member of the convention, when recognized by the chair, shall state their name, the name of their congregation or of the administrative unit represented.
- 10) Questions of privilege shall ordinarily be addressed in writing to the chair, or its appointee, instead of consuming convention time.
- 11) Resolutions prepared by the floor committees which are not acted upon by the convention before adjournment die. The subject matter may be reintroduced at the next convention by means of an overture.
- 12) Unless covered by these standing rules of the convention, parliamentary procedure shall be governed by *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* (12th Edition).
- 13) The "*Behnken Rule*" which governs the introduction of substitute motions will be employed. The "*Behnken Rule*" is this: When a substitute motion is offered in place of a motion that is being discussed, the chair may ask the assembly by a vote if it wants to consider the substitute motion. If the assembly votes by majority to support discussion of that substitute motion, then the original motion is set aside, the substitute motion taking its place. If after any discussion the substitute motion is approved by the assembly, the original motion is dead. If the substitute



motion is not approved by the assembly, then the original motion comes back to the assembly for any discussion and decision.

- 14) The two-minute rule shall apply for all who speak from the floor and for the committee during debate. (During debate, the two-minute rule for speaking to the motion shall apply to the floor committee and to all speakers from the floor.)

The President's Report

As I read over the list of Delegates to the 35th Regular Convention of the Florida-Georgia District, I rejoice that you have been chosen to represent your congregation. In truth, this is likely not the first time that you have been “chosen.” You likely serve in some leadership capacity already in your congregation, but understand, God has chosen you even before this particular role. Consider Jesus’ words in John 15: 16, “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit that will last.” That is truly the reason behind our Convention and the work that we do together...that we, as God’s people, should go and bear fruit in order that His Kingdom grow!

Often themes are seen as little more than the focus for our three days together. However, I believe that the evidence proves that they have staying power and a message that carries us into the future. For instance, in 2018, the Convention Theme was “Chosen for a Purpose – to Abide in Jesus!” None of us knew what we would face less than two years later when the Covid Pandemic struck. Yet that theme in the verses from John 15, reminded us that regardless of life’s circumstances, we are the Lord’s. His love is unceasing, and we are chosen for a purpose - to love others and bear fruit that will last.

In 2022, our Convention theme was "Fixed on Jesus" Based upon Hebrews 12:2. As the District and our world we're coming out of the pandemic and into a world quickly changing before our eyes, that theme said everything! Yes, we could the bemoan, panic or complain about the changes and the challenges OR we could “Fix our eyes on Jesus.” For He has been and He remains ever faithful, no matter what. He is the author of life, the perfecter of our faith and as we fix our eyes on Jesus “we will not grow weary and lose heart.”

At this year's convention, we will build upon the past and turn our full attention over to the lives to which we have been called forward. Our theme comes from 2 Corinthians 5: 14-15.

*For Christ's love **compels** us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

Compelled! Each day of our convention will have a specific focus. As we gather on Thursday, June 5th, our focus will be “Compelled to Believe.” On Friday, June 6, pretension will turn to being “Compelled to Live as AlongSiders.” Then on Saturday, our focus will turn to celebrating that as “Christ died for all,” we are now “Compelled to no longer live for self but for others.”

As I write this report it is Holy Week and I find myself deep in reflection over the undeserved and unimaginable love of Christ Jesus for me and all. I know my sin and as King David said, “My sin is ever before me.” My sin does not change the character, the mercy or the grace of God. But instead, His love led Him to take my place, my punishment and die for me and for all! Through Christ we have been made new! “All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself” (5:17).

This is a deeply personal reality. This is not about “religion” but our “relationship” with the one true God and Savior. He died and rose for me and for you! That is what drives us to be **Compelled!**

As a District and individuals, this is our calling and mission. We are “Compelled” to tell others what Christ has done for us and for them. We are still to be the “Evangelical” Lutheran Church, as our Synod originally had in its name, so that many more may be “Connected to Jesus.”



For more than 75 years, the FLGA District has been known for its focus on the mission of God. This is beautifully summarized in our Bylaws:

Since God's mission and ministry occur through local congregations, and it is our desire that every congregation be a church in mission; and every man and woman a missionary, all working together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, empowered by His Gospel, to share his Love. Therefore the Vision of the Florida-Georgia District is:

Every member ... Equipped, Empowered, Engaged ... Connecting People to Jesus!

I am excited and look forward to our time in worship, Bible Study, celebration and setting the course for our work together. That word “Together” is key to understanding what it means to be Synod and our work as the Body of Christ. Again, let me refer you to our Bylaws:

As individual congregations, the Body of Christ in our various locales, we recognize that by working together we can assist one another in love and trust to accomplish more effectively this mission and ministry of the whole Church. Therefore, we joyfully and freely commit ourselves to the following Bylaws and we hold ourselves accountable to the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, a corporate servant structure, whose purpose is to serve, assist, and encourage congregations, church workers, and leaders, expanding God's mission and ministry.

I have been honored and humbled to serve as your District President these past three years. I have been blessed to stand upon the shoulders of incredible servants of Christ who served before me and to continue our commitment to being a people “Compelled” so that all of us are actively sharing Christ’s love and “connecting people to Jesus.”

During the past three years, we have continued to focus on two critical targets: Leadership and Outreach. These two areas are foundational as Spirit-led leaders focus on the mission of Christ, outreach, which leads to healthier congregations and greater fruit. Over the past three years our staff has been guided by these critical targets.

During this triennium, our Educator conferences, Pastor conferences, circuit convocations and the President’s Equip Conference have all given priority to equipping God's people for outreach and leadership. We have seen our attendance at these events increase to new highs. We have seen new ministries start, our schools grow, and there is an openness to helping every congregation live out Rev. Dr. Peter Meier’s challenge, “Every Congregation a Church Planting Congregation – Start Something New!” It may not be a new “church” but a new ministry that will be a bridge to reach new people and connect them to Jesus.

Just two months after my election, Hurricane Ian struck the West Coast of Florida. More than 20 congregations were impacted. In a sense, this storm was a tangible reminder of the challenges facing the Church. Yet it was also a powerful witness to God's provision and how even in such "storms", God's mission and love are unchanging and can even bring unexpected blessings. I am ever grateful for Jay Wendland, our Disaster Response Coordinator and LCEF Vice President, for all of his work in leading us through this disaster. I am also truly thankful for the many from across our District and Synod who supported us with their gifts, prayers, labor and more. Together we were able to help more than 120 workers financially and otherwise. That then enabled them to help their congregations & communities as Christ's hands and servants. The Lord took this trial turning it into a great testimony and witness!

During my first year in office, I set out with our executive staff to hold "District Circuit Partnership Events" across the District. These were hosted by local congregations in the evening with a meal and fellowship. Pastors, Lay leaders and workers from almost every circuit congregation gathered together. The district staff shared who we are, how we are here to serve and resource congregations and their ministries. In addition to sharing some of the realities and challenges of our time, there was a time for question and answer. Over and over we heard, "I didn't know all the ways and resources our District can partner with us." That remains who we are, your partners in ministry!



In September 2023, we hosted our President's Equip Conference in Orlando with more than 1000 people attending. Our theme was *Living as Alongsiders – Disciples Making Disciple Makers*. That theme continues to be carried forward in congregations and leaders alike. Jesus, invited the disciples to come alongside of Him where He spent time with them in the Word, prayer and discovering what it means to be a disciple who discipled. He then sent them out to do the same. Today He is still calling us to "Go and Make disciples" Truly one of the most effective ways of doing this is through discipleship or living as an alonsider! People may not be interested in coming to church, but they are very open to someone sharing from their heart the heart of God!

On the final night of the PEC, we celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Florida-Georgia District! It was an incredible evening banquet and program focusing on beginning with 22 congregations as a mission district and...how today we are still focused and committed to mission! The evening program highlighted our past, as we heard from former District Presidents, Rev. Dr. Tom Zehnder, Rev. Dr. Gerhard "Mike" Michael, and Rev. Dr. Greg Walton, and our longtime Education Executive, Mark Brink.

As part of our anniversary celebration, the District committed to starting ten new congregations and raising the funds for those grants. Progress has been made, and it is still moving forward. 75 years and it's still all about God's mission!

Living as Christ's Witnesses

Celebrating 75 Years of Mission



The FLGA District is incredibly blessed by amazing servant leaders on our Board of Directors, Circuit Visitors and staff! In an effort to better understand and guide the work of our staff and Board, we have worked with the Rev. Jacob Hoyer in board development, clarity of roles and developing clarity for where we are going in the future. More about this will be shared at the convention.

We have gathered our Circuit Visitors and Presidium twice yearly for communication, planning and to further equip them for their roles. This included training over several months both online and in person by Ambassadors of Reconciliation (<https://www.aorhope.org/>). Leadership has continued to be developed through a number of approaches. This includes hosting an Emergent Leader training for rostered and lay workers led by Kurt Bickel and Cornerstone Ministries. Training and workshops have been offered for youth workers, school leaders, pastors and school administrator teams, preschool directors and more by our Executive Director of Schools and Youth Ministry, Jennifer Tanner.

Rev. Dr. Peter Meier has continued to offer multiple ongoing and short-term training opportunities for leadership and outreach. This includes Transformation Tuesdays, an online weekly zoom discussion forum, Missionary Pathways training, coaching and visioning work with congregations. He works with our Rev 7:9 team in praying and laboring in creating a sense of urgency and hope as they build coalitions of ministry to inspire and equip pastors, leaders and congregations to reach ethnic groups beyond their own. Yet, many congregations have worked with Dr. Meier in the district in utilizing opportunities through Miracle Grow and Kingdom Seed grants. These have resulted in a number of new ministries in congregations across the District. In addition, we have seen several new ethnic congregations start, a new mission society form in Naples and several church revitalizations.

Further leadership development and training has been offered through our Executive Director of Finance and Administration, Laura Zirbel, with Treasurer's Workshops, HR, resources and more. As we know, our world is filled with many new challenges and therefore the work and the support of the District's legal counsel, Mr. Rusty Huseman, Esq. has become even more vital. We were also blessed by the Lutheran Legal League, which became a Recognized Service Organization of the Synod in 2024. Through this ministry started by Mr. Huseman, many churches, schools, workers and leaders have been blessed through their Lutheran attorneys.

The congregations of the District are the district! Together we make up the Body that seeks to be Christ's light in their respective communities. That statement, "the congregations are the district" reflects our structure and the way that we work together. The District office and staff are here to support, encourage and help equip congregations, leaders and workers so that the mission of Christ may be accomplished.



Certainly, this includes the work already noted that is done by our staff. Yet it also includes other ways that we come alongside workers. Over the past triennium, dozens of workers and ministries have been helped through the President's Circle. This fund is designed to support workers in need. These funds have helped in times of medical crisis, transition, disaster and more. Your continued support and gifts to this fund make it possible for many to know that they are not alone and to continue serving.

Along with the President's Circle, our Synod has been a great partner through Lutheran Disaster Response. Whether in response to the multiple hurricanes over the past three years, the freeze in 2023 or other situations, they have partnered with the district to give over \$1M in grants to congregations, schools and individuals! Additionally, the District received and distributed over \$900K.

Today the Synod and our District are facing an ever-growing need for workers. There are more than 700 plus calling congregations for pastors and less than 28% of our educators across the Synod are rostered. This is an area crying out for our daily prayers. The Lord says, "Pray that the Lord would send out workers into the harvest." I urge you to take Dr. Meier's challenge and pray every day at **10:02** (Luke 10:02) So that workers would be raised up and Christ's Kingdom would grow. Further, pray for who you might personally encourage to consider serving as a full-time Church Worker.

Responding to this growing need for workers, the District takes seriously its role in helping raise future workers and in providing support through our Scholarship Committee. Each year, on your behalf, they distribute more than \$35,000 to help students studying for church work professions. Over the past three years we have seen the number of applicants double and for this we praise the Lord. We do have a dedicated fund from which many of these funds come, but with the growing need and number of students more funding is needed.

Additional financial assistance is available to help workers with less than 10 years in ministry with their educational debt. Vicars, who serve in the FLGA District can also receive assistance when returning for their fourth year at the seminary through the David Brighton Scholarship.

Many of our congregations are blessed by gifted and dedicated youth leaders. Certainly, part of what they do is nurture and disciple young men and women, yet I believe that we need to recognize and celebrate the leaders that our youth are today and will also be in the future. That is why our District continues to host its fall Middle School Gathering, High School leadership events and summer youth servant events. In addition, the FLGA District has nearly one third of its congregations send many of their young leaders to the National Youth Gathering every three years. This July the NYG will be in New Orleans and there our youth will be immersed in workshops, worship, study and mass events that will build upon the theme, *Endure*.

Our District is blessed to have 58 schools and early learning centers that daily impact children and their families both of our members and our communities beyond. These ministries not only provide excellent education in a safe, loving environment, but they share God's amazing grace and help



students know that they are valued, loved and redeemed by Christ. Over the past three years our schools and their staff have been used to bring more than 400 children into the family of faith through Baptism! Praise the Lord!! Many of our schools are expanding and the need continues to grow. We are blessed by great staff and leaders, but I'll leave that to Jennifer Tanner to share more in her report.

Often leadership and outreach overlap, but each are critical targets. Our changing society where many churches are struggling, people are walking away from the faith and Christianity is marginalized, congregations are at times just trying to hang on. Yet I believe that God has not only called us to survive but thrive! We are the living "Body of Christ." We are the "called out ones" meant to be set apart for Christ mission and purpose. We are here not to get more members but to make new disciples. When we focus upon God's heart for all people and desire that all mankind be saved, he will take care of the rest!

I love Jesus' words when He said, "You will be my witnesses..." That my dear brothers and sisters in Christ includes each and every person who is a disciple/believer in Christ. That is why we continue to live under our District mission of seeing every person "Equipped, Empowered and Engaged in connecting people to Jesus."

Under Rev. Dr. Peter Meier, that has become even more our focus and emphasis. He has done incredible work with congregations, circuits and individuals. However, he will be retiring following the convention in June. I truly thank the Lord for all that Dr. Meyer has done and for the foundation he has laid for his successor. Speaking of successors, the District Board of Directors extended a Divine Call on March 28th. Our prayer is that he is the man the Lord has chosen and that we will then be able to introduce him as our new Executive Director of Missions & Outreach at the convention.

We continue to serve the Lord and work together through a number of vital ministry partnerships. Those include: Lutheran Counseling Services, Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries, Lutheran Services Florida, Inspiritus, Lutheran Services of N. Florida, Mission Haiti, IRIS – Lending Library for the Blind, Lutheran Legal League, Florida-Georgia Lutheran Early Response (FLGER), The Black Clergy Caucus, Stepping Stone Mission and Lutheran Haven. Additionally, we have two campus properties, at Florida State University in Tallahassee, and at the University of Georgia in Athens. We support these ministries as well as campus ministries at the University of Florida; Florida Gulf State University; University of Central Florida; University of North Georgia; Kennesaw State University, and Valdosta State University. These ministries are vitally important and continue to bear fruit in our District and the Kingdom.

The Florida-Georgia District continues to be phenomenally blessed by many of its retired pastors and workers. Without them many of our vacant congregations would be without a pastor or classrooms without a substitute teacher. Annually we sponsor the Veterans of the Cross Retreat for retired professional church workers, spouses and lay leaders. This is one of the most joyful events that we are privileged to host. This event gathers folks from across the District and even from across the United States. It is a time of friendship, worship and great keynote speakers. The retreat is a wonderful way for us to honor and serve those who have given so much for the cause of the Gospel.

This past triennium we have remained debt-free. Much of this has been through being faithful stewards of that which we receive in congregational tithes to the Lord's mission and management of the dedicated funds we have. We thank the Lord for the support we receive from the congregations and the partnership demonstrated in this way. We are also thankful to see our highest percentage of contributing congregations in years with 86%. You make it possible for us to provide things like leadership training, pastors and educator conferences, scholarships, support of ministries, grants for new ministries, consultations and more. While the District staff is smaller than it once was, you are



served by one of the most gifted and dedicated groups of individuals. I know that they bless you and your ministries every day. Yet they have made my transition from the parish to District President one of joy! I am truly surrounded by great partners in ministry, and I especially thank Kathy Keene for her wisdom, patience and dedication that has blessed my transition without end. Further, the support staff each fill vital roles too numerous to mention: Debbie Arrington, Cindy Hammerstrom & Meridith Swanson. They along with the Executive Staff, Peter Meier, Jennifer Tanner, Jay Wendland, Laura Zirbel and Rusty Huseman, all have the same passion...Connecting people to Jesus.

In addition to the District staff, we are greatly blessed by the services of others who serve in various ways: Rev. Pat O'Brien, who chaired our Constitution & Bylaw Committee for many years; rev. Dean Pfeffer and rev. Tony Durante who have chaired the Multi-cultural/All Nations Commission; Lutheran Counseling Services, and specifically Dr. Rick Armstrong and Megan Miessler Executive Director of LCS, who have worked with us on any number of levels, serving many of our workers. Rev. Scott Gress who provides coaching and visioning to workers and congregations; Rev. Mike Mast and Dr. Victor Belton who have served as regional mission facilitators; our Pastoral Interview Committees, Conference Committees and more.

Lastly, I give thanks to God for my dear wife, helpmate and partner in life and ministry, Martha! She truly holds me up in prayer, helps me at times see things I need to see and manages even through her health crisis, supports me and the work the Lord has called me to accomplish!

Dear friends in Christ, we, the Florida-Georgia District is making an eternal difference. Lives are being transformed because of what the Lord is doing through us, and the heavens are rejoicing over each and every lost soul who is connected to Jesus! We have much work to do, but empowered by Spirit in our Baptism, fed on Word and sacrament, we will continue to see many more being added to those being saved daily!

I look forward to gathering with you at the Convention and sharing more with you about what has been accomplished and how we will go forward to have an even greater Kingdom impact. Therefore, may we continue to boldly live as those ***Compelled by Christ's Love!***

Respectfully submitted by
Rev. James H. Rockey, President
The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS

Missions and Outreach Report

Having spent time in nearby towns and villages where He was teaching and preaching the good news of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness, Jesus "saw the crowds and felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:35ff). Looking around the towns and villages of the Florida-Georgia District, the cities and neighborhoods of our states and nation, we would come to the same conclusion today. How our world needs Jesus! How our communities need the Good News of the Kingdom He came to bring! How we need the healing of our Good Shepherd!

Jesus not only calls our attention to our need for good news and healing – but He calls us to action: "Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send workers into His harvest" (Mt 9:38 & Luke 10:2). In the very next verses, Jesus sends out His Disciples with authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out and to



heal every disease and sickness (Matthew 10:1). Having invited them to pray, Jesus sends them out. It's no different for us.

Our Convention theme is **Compelled!** Having received the healing love and saving grace of Jesus ourselves, we are compelled to share it with people where we live, work and play. Christ's love compels us, His work in us becomes our operating system which shapes and molds our Christian life and purpose. This is the work of "missions" in FLGA. This work is not done by "the District," but by the people of God, everyday missionaries and disciples in their local churches and communities. This is the work we celebrate from the past triennium, and the work into which we lean as we start a new triennium. This is God's mission which He carries out through us, His people, His church.

What follows is a brief snapshot of how the FLGA District has come alongside the people and congregations of the District as we are "compelled by Christ's love" to make disciples of all the nations. Please pray as you read, and celebrate God's work of **Equipping, Empowering, Engaging – Connecting people to JESUS!**

Prayer is the Strategy! The work of missions begins as we humbly come to our Lord in prayer. The daily **10:02 Prayer** for the Harvest (Luke 10:02) is a vital work for every single Christian! Set your alarm for 10:02 and join with fellow FLGA members and friends to pray. Use the monthly **Mission Prayer Guide** (available in both English and Spanish) to pray intentionally for God's mission among us. Join fellow pray-ers at 10:02 as we meet on the first Wednesday of each month to pray on Zoom for District missions and beyond. **Prayer Requests** can be made through the website, where other prayer resources may also be found.

Plant the Church is our Mission Initiative designed to help every member of every congregation engage in multiplying disciples and groups of disciples. Every congregation, no matter how small or large, can be involved to planting THE Church, "connecting people to Jesus."

- Every congregation can **make and multiply new disciples** who follow Jesus, learn from Jesus, want to become like Jesus and makes more disciples. To that end, we have partnered with The Kairos Network to provide Missionary Pathway training to nearly 200 people throughout the District. This training gives inspiration and tools for every Christian to be an everyday missionary.
- A **new Outreach Ministry** of one or more congregations is another way to connect people to Jesus. This past triennium, our *Miracle Grow Grants* and *Kingdom Seeds Investments* provided financial help for 27 new outreach initiatives.
- **Micro-Churches or Multi-sites**, and **New Chartered Congregations** are more "traditional" ways to Plant the Church. This past Triennium, we praise God for these new starts:
 - Emanuel, Norcross GA (Living Faith, Cumming, GA)
 - Atlanta Mekane Yesus Church, Lilburn GA (Oak Road, Lilburn GA)
 - Iglesia Conexión, Naples FL
 - Nona Hope micro-church (Hope, Orlando FL)
 - Clear Hope micro-church, Clearwater FL
 - Holy Trinity in Yulee FL (a site of Holy Trinity, Kingsland GA)
 - Mision Hispana Fe Abundante (new Spanish worship community, Faith Sebring FL)
 - Trinity Academy (Trinity, Fort Pierce FL)
 - Zion Lutheran School, Elementary Expansion (Zion, Ft. Myers FL)
- **Leave a Legacy** – Churches who are nearing the end of their life-cycle can plan intentionally to leave a legacy that will carry on their mission beyond their lifetime. This Triennium, we saw Hope Lutheran Church in Milledgeville GA close. They transferred their property to the District,

who has since transferred it to Lake Oconee Lutheran in Eatonton. Lake Oconee is developing a health ministry and Bible Study/preaching station at that site – a great example of a re-start from a mission legacy!

REV7:9 – Taking its name from Revelation 7:9, “a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb...” this was a partnership with Mission Nation Publishing (Naples, FL, Rev. Dr. Robert Scudieri) and a grant from the National LWML. 22 Congregations participated in this mission initiative to help congregations do ministry with neighbors of another culture or ethnicity. Rev. Dr. Victor Belton served as Project Manager. This initiative shared resources, training, coaching, and networking with participating pastors and congregations. Overall awareness was raised, ministries were strengthened, and several new ministries were begun as a result. In April 2024, a gathering of leaders from around the Synod was held in Orlando to review the results and to determine how such an initiative would benefit the entire LCMS. Follow up development is being carried out under the auspices of Mission Nation Publishing.

Outreach and Mission Training – Transformation Tuesday is a Zoom mission gathering which has met on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month throughout the Triennium. Starting during COVID as “Mission Monday,” these hour-long sessions offer training and discussion on a wide variety of mission topics. Nearly 100 topics are now available for congregation training, idea and resource sharing. **Outreach Workshops** have also been offered throughout the District for personal witness and disciple-making, as well as help in identifying community outreach opportunities. **Vision Workshops** assist congregations to clarify their vision for local mission, and to develop initial plans to reach their community. Together with the Southeastern District, we continue to offer **Deacon Training** for men and women who want training to serve their church and community in a more intense fashion. This two-year program includes coaching and development of a new ministry plan. Together with the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF), **MissionInsite demographics** and interpretation are available to every congregation. Just ask!

Collegiate Ministries are vital to keeping students connected to Jesus and reaching new people for Christ. As students are shaping their worldviews, growing in the realities of politics, power, and their future life in Christ, campus ministry has a powerful impact. Every congregation located near a post-secondary institution is encouraged to see these campus’ as their mission field. We are thankful for these District-supported ministries on our college campuses:

- University of Georgia, Athens, Rev. Dr. Greg Michael, Christus Victor Lutheran Church & Student Center
- Florida State University & Florida A&M, Tallahassee, Rev. Jay Winters, University Lutheran Chapel.
- Florida Gulf Coast University, Estero, Rev. Dr. John Roth, Thrive Community Church.

Other post-secondary schools are served by area churches and may be viewed on our website.

Financially Supported Partner Ministries include Stepping Stones Mission, Rev. Joseph Song, Atlanta; Redeeming Life Outreach, Ms Sheryl DeWitt, Sanford, FL; Lutheran Service of Georgia/Inspiritus; Lutheran Social Services of NE Florida; Lutheran Services of Florida; Lutheran Counseling Services; and Mission Haiti.

International Mission Partners

- **Mission Haiti** continues to meet the spiritual and physical needs of our brothers and sisters in Haiti through their Field Director, Mr. Lophane Laurent who lives in Haiti. Ms. Anne Dobbins serves as the US Coordinator. Please pray for the people of Haiti and those who minister to their needs!
- The **Puerto Rico FORO** offers congregations and individuals the opportunity to support LCMS church planting and mission work in PR. The District supports the FORO financially, and offers opportunities for mission trips, service events, and other mission engagement. At this convention, we welcome PR Missionaries Rev. Gustavo and Ruth Maita, LCMS Missionaries in Mayaguez.
- We are also pleased to welcome the Presiding Bishop of a new LCMS Partner Church, the **Lutheran Church of Uganda** to our Convention. Bishop Charles Bakema and Mr. Stephen Maxwell of Grace/Uganda will bring greetings. Our Ingathering and Convention Offering will support the work of the LCU. You are encouraged to visit them at their booth in the Vendor's area to learn of their Gospel mission work, perhaps arranging for a mission trip to Uganda!

This past triennium, our mission work has been organized to meet the two primary targets established by our Board of Directors:

- ***Leadership – Leaders of mission and ministries are visionary people of the Word who model Christ-centered living, equipping and empowering others to engage collaboratively in the Church's role of mission.***
- ***Outreach – Living out their faith in Jesus with urgency and joy, the people of the Florida-Georgia District eagerly invest, both individually and corporately, in bold and intentional service and witness to make known the love of Christ to all people.***

Thanks to our mission team who brings these statements to action in the lives of FLGA Congregations! We recognize our part-time Mission Facilitators, Rev. Dr. Victor Belton, Rev. Mike Mast, Rev. Scott Gress. Together with Rev. Meier, these men serve as coaches for missional leaders who work for mission engagement in their regions. Mrs. Debbie Arrington serves as the Executive Assistant to Rev. Dr. Meier.

A personal note: This Convention will be my last convention before I retire from full-time service to the District. I have been honored to serve as your Executive Director for Missions and Outreach for the past five years, and look forward to continued service as God provides opportunities. As I complete 43 years of full-time ministry, I count my ministry in FLGA to be one of my greatest joys. Thank you for the privilege of serving you!

Please continue to pray and engage with us in God's mission in the Florida-Georgia District!

Compelled by Christ's love, we exist to connect people to JESUS!

Respectfully Submitted by,

Rev. Dr. Peter A. Meier, Executive Director of Missions and Outreach

The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS



Youth Ministry Report

Youth ministry is vital for a strong and vibrant church body, as it nurtures the next generation of believers and leaders. Youth leaders play a vital role in this process by walking alongside students in their faith journey—offering guidance, encouragement, and opportunities to grow. Through authentic relationships, intentional discipleship, and creating spaces where questions are welcomed and faith is explored, youth leaders help young people form a lasting identity in Christ. The Florida-Georgia District is blessed to have faithful workers caring for our young people.

District Youth Ministry Council

The District Youth Ministry Council, established in 2015, works with our leaders to equip, empower and engage the Youth of the Church for lives of Christian Discipleship.

Those appointed to the Council are:

- DCE Nick Moss, Chair St. Paul, Lakeland
- DCE Betsy Burnham Woodlands, Montverde
- DCE Trevor Fiala St. Paul, Peachtree City
- Pastor Mark Adrian Messiah, Tampa
- DCE Annalisa Fitzsimons St. Luke’s, Oviedo, SELC Representative

DCE Interns are invited to serve on the Council as an opportunity to experience service beyond the parish and to connect them with others who serve in Youth Ministry.

Middle School Youth Gatherings

The Middle School Youth Gathering (MSYG) is an annual event hosted at Lake Yale in Leesburg, Florida, designed to nurture faith and build lasting Christian friendships among middle schoolers. Led by a dedicated planning team chaired by Katie Wenger of Redeemer, Stuart, the event features dynamic mass gatherings, interactive breakouts, and impactful service projects—all centered on deepening youth in their walk with Christ.

- **2022** – Under the theme *“Living Hope”* inspired by 1 Peter 1:3, 320 youth and adult leaders came together to discover Jesus as the ultimate source of hope. Poet and speaker Tanner Olson guided students through powerful reflections on God’s promises.
- **2023** – With the theme *“Stitched,”* 386 participants were reminded by former FLGA District DCE Cassie Moore that they are never alone but intricately connected as the body of Christ. Worship was led by Jim Marriott and the Concordia University, Austin, praise band, with a student choir adding their voices to the celebration.
- **2024** – Drawing from Matthew 11:30, 438 youth and leaders explored the theme *“Pressure,”* learning to lay down their burdens and take up Christ’s light yoke. Tribe and Tongue, a Lutheran worship band, teamed up with returning presenter Cassie Moore to deliver engaging worship and meaningful messages.

High School Leadership Event

A critical target for youth ministry is the development of servant leadership. Held concurrently with the Middle School Youth Gathering, this annual event is specifically designed to equip high school students with the tools and confidence to lead through service. Under the direction of chair Nick Moss, students engage in intentional small group sessions that help them discover their unique gifts and strengths. The program encourages participants to return to their churches and schools ready to serve, lead, and make a meaningful impact in their communities.

Seven Practices of Healthy Youth Ministry

Through the work of Julianna Shults and Rev. Mark Kiessling, LCMS Youth Ministry has identified the 7 *Practices of Healthy Youth Ministry*—a framework designed to foster vibrant, faith-nurturing environments to care for young people. Recognizing their value, the FLGA District Youth Ministry Council (DYMC) has adopted these practices as guiding principles to strengthen youth faith formation. Throughout the upcoming triennium, the DYMC will use the 7 Practices as a foundation to equip, empower, and engage congregations—encouraging all members to take an active role in nurturing the faith of the next generation.

Middle School Servant Event Camp

The Middle School Servant Event Camp, held each summer at Luther Springs in Hawthorne, Florida, has become a highly anticipated highlight of the season. Throughout the week, youth and their adult leaders dive into meaningful Bible study, serve the surrounding community through hands-on projects, and enjoy classic camp experiences. With its strong focus on both faith and fellowship, the camp consistently reaches capacity—drawing students eager to build friendships and serve alongside peers from congregations across the region.

2025 National Youth Gathering

Over 450 youth and leaders from FLGA will be in New Orleans from July 19-23rd to participate in the Gathering with the theme “Endure” based on Hebrews 12:1-3. The District will sponsor an event that begins with a meal and ends with students taking part in a second line jazz parade.

Youth Ministry Mini-Conference

In February 2025, the District hosted its first-ever Youth Ministry Mini-Conference in Orlando, bringing together youth workers, pastors, and lay leaders for a dynamic time of learning and connection. Julianna Shults from LCMS Youth Ministry led engaging, interactive sessions that combined current research with biblical principles. Participants explored how creating a warm, Christ-centered environment—marked by both challenge and grace—can significantly shape and strengthen the faith of young people when supported by intentional, invested adults.

Respectfully Submitted by

Mrs. Jennifer Tanner, Executive Director of School & Youth Ministry

The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS

School Ministry Report

Lutheran schools are vital for kingdom growth, offering high academic standards in Christ-centered environments. They partner with families to meet students’ needs while nurturing a culture rooted in Jesus’ love. The Gospel is woven into daily interactions, as faith lessons extend beyond the classroom into real-life moments between teachers and students. Through concrete acts of love and service, Lutheran schools shine as places where faith and learning come together to nurture both hearts and minds.



2015 2018 2022 2025

DISTRICT SCHOOLS

*FREE STANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS	43	38	35	32
PREK-8 TH GRADE	27	25	24	24
HIGH SCHOOLS	1	1	2	2
TOTAL FLORIDA-GEORGIA DISTRICT	71	64	61	58

(*) Early Childhood Center without an Elementary School

Schools that Closed 2023-2025

- Marathon Lutheran Early Childhood Center, Marathon, FL

School Expansions 2023-2025

- Zion, Ft. Myers, FL expanded from Early Childhood into Elementary in 2024
- Grace, Naples, FL added a homeschool, hybrid Christian-Classical Academy in 2024

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

2015 2018 2022 2025

FREE STANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS	5191	4772	2313	2140
PREK-8 TH GRADE	3966	4022	6020	5851
HIGH SCHOOLS	101	94	131	139
TOTAL STUDENTS	9258	8888	8464	8130

Lutheran schools are a mission field! With the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship expansion and growing dissatisfaction with public schools, more families without religious affiliation are turning to private education. In the FLGA District, only 12% of students are LCMS members, and over 35% have no church home—creating rich discipleship opportunities. Each year, more than 50 students are baptized.

Synodically Rostered Teachers

Teachers who have earned the Lutheran Teachers Diploma after graduating from the Concordia University System or who have completed the colloquy program and who have been commissioned and installed as a Commissioned Minister of Religion are “Rostered” in the Synod. There are three classifications:

- **Active** – currently serving in a ministry position
- **Candidate** – not currently serving but eligible and willing to consider a Call
- **Emeritus** - Retired or disabled

ROSTERED TEACHERS

2015 2018 2022 2025

ACTIVE	142	142	128	142
CANDIDATE	107	96	80	76
EMERITUS	74	103	105	125



Doctrinal Training for Educators

Lutheran schools today face complex challenges as they work to meet evolving parent expectations and diverse student needs. Staffing is a major concern, driven by an overall teacher shortage and fewer Concordia graduates.

Teachers who are members of a Lutheran church can complete colloquy and become rostered. Ten workers completed the eight online courses and were colloquized as commissioned ministers of religion.

The FLGA District partnered with Concordia University Wisconsin to offer doctrinal training through the Lutheran Education Development program, with 18 teachers completing the first 12-hour course. To support faith integration in early childhood classrooms, the District also provided Early Childhood Directors access to the Lutheran Education Association’s Spiritual Nurture Modules. Over 35 staff members completed all five modules.

National Lutheran School/Florida-Georgia District Accreditation

National Lutheran School/Florida-Georgia District Accreditation is a rigorous process designed to foster school improvement.

ACCREDITED SCHOOL STATISTICS	2015	2018	2022	
FREESTANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD	16/44	17/38	20/35	17/32
	42%	45%	57%	53%
ELEMENTARY/HIGH SCHOOL	24/28	23/25	22/24	23/26
	89%	92%	92%	88%

The FLGA District accredits other Lutheran schools including 4 SELC District, 2 Southern District, 1 LCMC, and 1 ELCA.

The District Accreditation Commission (DAC) is led by Jon Peterson, who has served in the District as a teacher and administrator for many years. The DAC works diligently to uphold the integrity of the accreditation process. We are grateful to Jon, the commission, Team Captains, and visiting team members for their steadfast commitment to strengthening our schools. Members of the DAC include:

- Jon Peterson Grace, Winter Haven
- Roger Walker Retired
- Aimee Knoepfel Amazing Grace, Oxford
- Anne Dobbins Prince of Peace, Orlando
- Betty Hoyer Retired
- Karen Smith Peace, Okeechobee
- Kristin Freeman Timothy, Woodstock
- Ruth Wiedenmann Retired
- Michael Rottmann Grace, Winter Haven
- Jim Richards St. Paul, Boca Raton
- Jeff Potter St. Paul, Boca Raton
- Nicole Clifton Grace, St. Petersburg
- Tim Schmidt St. John, Ocala

Schools Accredited 2023-2025

- Faith Hialeah, FL
- Good Shepherd Sarasota, FL
- St. Paul Boca Raton, FL
- Trinity Delray Beach, FL
- Trinity Rockledge, FL
- Trinity Tiny Tots Lake Placid, FL
- Amazing Grace Oxford, FL
- Holy Cross Sanford, FL
- Our Savior Plantation, FL
- St. Michael Ft. Myers, FL
- St. Paul Peachtree City, GA
- Woodlands Montverde, FL
- Trinity (ELCA) Kissimmee, FL
- Trinity Orlando, FL
- St. Paul Lakeland, FL
- Messiah Tampa, FL
- Immanuel Brandon, FL
- Holy Cross N. Miami, FL
- Grace St. Petersburg, FL
- Gloria Dei Davie, FL
- Faith (SELC) Viera, FL
- Christ the King Largo, FL

Florida-Georgia District Educators Conference

Since the first gathering of 25 educators in 1953, a highlight of school ministry has been the District Educator’s Conference- a time for professional development and spiritual growth. Awards honor and celebrate educators and pastors who serve with distinction, living the light of Jesus in our Lutheran schools. Honorees during the triennium were:

- Rev. Kevin Yoakum Christ the King, Riverview, FL
- Ileana Barbari St. Luke’s, Oviedo, FL
- Rev. Michael Popp Grace, Jacksonville, FL
- Susan Norris Trinity, Lake Placid

Hearts for Jesus

Hearts for Jesus began in the Florida-Georgia District in 1979. Each year, schools dedicate a month of chapel offerings to support a special mission or human care project. Like the widow’s mite, these gifts—though small—are given with great love and gratitude for God’s many blessings.

- 2022 Redeeming Life - Lutheran pro-life ministry and maternity home for single mothers
- 2023 Helping Hands of Eastern Europe - distributing food packets through a Lutheran church in Ukraine
- 2024 IRIS Lending Library – providing Christian materials for the blind and vision impaired

Respectfully Submitted by

Mrs. Jennifer Tanner, Executive Director of School & Youth Ministry

The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS

Finance & Administration Report

1) Timeframe

- a. July 2022 to June 2025

2) People

- a. Debbie Arrington, Part-Time Bookkeeper
 - i. Debbie continues to organize and execute accounting functions with excellence.
- b. Meridith Armstrong, Part-Time Communications Specialist
 - i. Meridith continues to further innovate and elevate District communications throughout the FLGA District.

3) Financial Issues

- a. District remains Debt Free.
- b. All restricted accounts are fully funded.
- c. District received \$2.2M in Disaster Response donations, which includes \$1M from LCMS to support the \$1.9M in Disaster Response grants to congregations and church workers in need throughout the FLGA District.
- d. District continues to allocate 3% of congregational giving annually into Congregational Revitalization funds which were used to underwrite the President's Equip Conference in 2023.
- e. District fulfilled its commitment of tithing 17% of congregational giving to Synod for a total of \$1M collectively for the last 3 years.
- f. District distributed \$25K in educational debt repayment for qualifying church workers.
- g. District distributed \$133K cumulatively in student aid for qualifying students at various Concordia institutions.
- h. District issued a mission loan of \$150K. Currently, 2 mission loans on record.
- i. District received \$498K in proceeds from building sale, related to Amigos En Cristo of SW FL. Funds were held for a time and distributed by year end 2024 upon AMOS organizational structure finalized.
- j. Carr Riggs & Ingram continue to audit the District books, accounting processes and controls. Continued clean audits during this period.
- k. District changed its financial reporting year end from January 31 to a calendar year end December 31.

4) Facilities and Properties

- a. Estero Property, Fort Myers, FL – currently remains vacant land.
- b. Campus Properties: Athens, GA and Tallahassee, FL – Continue to share costs of larger maintenance and repairs.
- c. Upon the closing of Hope Lutheran in Middleburg, GA, the congregation transferred ownership of their property to the District. In 2024, this property was transferred to Lake Oconee Lutheran Church for ownership and further mission work serving the surrounding community.
- d. Pelican Lutheran Church and Community Center, Naples, FL - District received this property in 2016. In 2024 this property was transferred to Pelican for ownership and use for their mission work serving their community.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Mrs. Laura Zirbel, Executive Director of Finance & Administration

The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS



Florida-Georgia District Lutheran Church Extension Fund Report

Mission. The mission of Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is to start, sustain and strengthen Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS) ministries through financial and strategic partnership.

Vision. Growing ministry opportunities, including congregations, schools, recognized service organizations (RSO) and both lay and rostered church workers (RCW).

Values

In Christ—

- Be Faithful
- Pursue Excellence and Innovation
- Inspire Belief through Partnerships
- Endure Balancing Resources and Risk
- Learn Continually

LCEF Target Outcomes –

1. Strategic Partnerships

LCEF grows the impact of ministry through existing and new partnerships by the alignment and the leveraging of LCEF's strengths in organizational and business leadership to better the stewardship of God's resources.

2. Financial Strength

LCEF provides ministry support and financial services around the world by aggressively growing assets for a positive impact on ministry.

LCEF is an organization that empowers ministry. Incorporated in 1978, the LCEF has faithfully served the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), by offering funding and financial solutions in service of the church's mission and goals. Through the dollars invested by thousands of individuals, congregations, schools, organizations, and businesses, LCEF assists ministries with custom loans and ministry support services. Together, these partnerships have grown total assets to \$2.03 billion.

There are 115 loans in the Florida-Georgia District with just over \$70,000,000 in commitments. It is exciting to see the ministry partnership support that LCEF provides in loans to repair existing buildings or new worship centers in our district. Over the last three years, the LCEF has given out numerous low interest loans to assist with disaster relief efforts caused by Hurricanes Ian, Helene & Milton. These low interest loans assisted almost a dozen churches in Southwest Florida alone.

The Florida-Georgia District has over 2,700 of its members investing over \$81,000,000 of their congregation's, ministries and personal funds. Investors are the source that enables the LCEF to lend to our churches, schools, and rostered workers. While only one of the states (Florida), in the Florida-Georgia District permit LCEF to lend directly to rostered workers, LCEF provides those workers in Georgia the ability to obtain loans through the Lutheran Federal Credit Union. Lutherans providing for Lutherans—Investing in LCEF builds churches, schools and early childhood centers.

Over the last three years, LCEF has provided Operational Earnings Distributions to the Florida-Georgia District amounting to over \$250,000. As a non-profit organization, LCEF returns operational earnings



(which if not distributed would be considered profit) to support our district ministry's efforts. These funds have been used in the Florida-Georgia District to provide for:

- Presidents Equip Conference
- Mission Development Efforts
- Leadership Development
- Staff Enrichment

Over the last three years, LCEF has provided over \$10,200,000 to LCMS directly and to each of the districts that partnership with LCEF. In many ways you can think of LCEF having a closed ecosystem for your investment and loan dollars. Every dollar invested in LCEF, and interest paid on each loan stays within the LCMS.

LCEF has always considered ministry partnership as the most important aspect of our relationship with our LCMS congregations. This is why during the last three years, LCEF has increased our resources, services and support for our church workers through the expansion of Grace Place Wellness Ministries. In addition to Grace Place Wellness providing wellness educational resources for all rostered church workers of the LCMS, we are sponsoring, coaching, and providing grants for sabbaticals. We recognize the need to give our workers the opportunity to reset to ensure they don't burn out.

LCEF also established Real Estate Solutions (RES) to help congregations explore their real estate resources and explore opportunities to use those resources to establish additional funding streams to provide additional income. RES can help you with:

- Advice when considering purchasing real estate
- Advice when you are considering selling real estate
- You would like to expand your ministry through your real estate assets
- You are considering a construction project
- You have extensive deferred maintenance
- You are considering the opportunity for senior housing

As your representative to LCEF, I can provide significantly more ministry partnership opportunities.

MissionInsite demographic studies are available to any requesting congregation to get to know and understand the "neighbors" in the communities around your church. Demographics provide critical social, economic, ethnic, and family information for those who live in those communities around your church. As we shift our focus from our needs within our congregation to those who are outside our worship centers, it's important to gather as much information and learn as much about our neighbors as possible. It's the first step in getting to understand and subsequently develop trust relationships so that we can connect others to Jesus.

District Disaster Relief Efforts can be synonymous with taking care of our neighbors. It's the "how" we provide and care for our neighbors, during times of distress. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the Samaritan provided his time to take care of the injured man along the road. Florida-Georgia District provides disaster relief training to congregations through a training and instruction program known as "Lutheran Early Response Training (LERT)". This program is available to requesting congregations and provides disaster training and builds up volunteers to be deployed during times of need. We have



also partnered with our District RSO, Florida-Georgia Early Response Team to assist with relief efforts not only within our district, but also to assist those outside our district.

If you have any questions or would like to explore anything outlined above in greater depth, please contact the LCEF District Vice President for the Florida-Georgia District, Jay Wendland.

Respectfully submitted by,

Mr. Jay Wendland, FLGA District Vice President

Lutheran Church Extension Fund/The Florida-Georgia District, LCMS

**THE CHARTER AND ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF THE FLORIDA-GEORGIA DISTRICT OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD**

**FLORIDA-GEORGIA DISTRICT, THE LUTHERAN
CHURCH MISSOURI - SYNOD
CHARTER AND BYLAWS**



JUNE 18, 2022

FLORIDA-GEORGIA DISTRICT, LCMS

Article I

The name of this corporation shall be The Florida-Georgia District of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod (hereinafter referred to as "District")

The principal business office of this corporation shall be located in Orlando, State of Florida.

Article II

The mission of this District is:

- a. To proclaim the Gospel throughout the District, and specifically to establish and maintain missions, educational, and charitable work within the District.
- b. To unite in a corporate body the congregations holding membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (also referred to herein as "Synod"), by and through The Florida-Georgia District of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod and to support the Synod's work of Gospel proclamation throughout the world.
- c. Receive, acquire, hold, manage, and control real and personal property of whatever description and such other property as may hereafter be acquired.
- d. This corporation shall have power and authority in its corporate name to contract, sue; to use a corporate seal; to have, receive, hold, purchase, convey, mortgage, and lease property, both real and personal; and to make and establish laws, rules, and regulations for its management and support as shall be necessary and proper.

Article III

Membership in this District is held and may be acquired by congregations, ministers of religion—ordained, and ministers of religion—commissioned, as defined by the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, who confess and accept the confessional basis of Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and who have been received into the District at the time of joining the Synod, who have been transferred from another District, or who have been assigned to the District by the Synod.

Article IV

The term for which this corporation is to exist is perpetual.



Article V

Section 1

The affairs of the corporation are to be managed by the following officers, to wit:

- A President
- A First Vice-President
- A Second Vice-President
- A Third Vice-President
- A Fourth vice-President
- A Fifth Vice-President
- A Secretary
- A Treasurer

And such other officers as the Bylaws may provide.

Section 2

All officers and members of the Board of Directors shall be members of a member congregation of the District and when appropriate residents of appropriate regions during the course of their tenure. The Board of Directors shall consist of the following:

- a. Elected at large from the roster of the District:
 - (i) the President;
 - (ii) the Secretary; and
 - (III) three (3) ministers of religion, commissioned, who are members of the Synod.
- b. Selected on a regional basis and elected by ratification by the District Convention:
 - (i) five (5) Vice-Presidents who are ministers of religion-ordained .
 - (ii) Ten (10) lay persons who shall serve as representatives of the region they represent within the District.
- c. Appointed by the Board of Directors, a Treasurer who shall be a layperson with knowledge and experience in matters relating to corporate finance.

Section 3

The officers and the Board of Directors shall be elected at a regular meeting of the District by the delegates constituting the same as provided for in the bylaws, with the exception that the Treasurer shall be appointed by the Board of Directors at its next regular meeting following the election meeting of the District. All officers shall hold their respective offices for a term of three (3) years, and shall assume office at the time specified in the bylaws.

Section 4

Whenever an officer or director shall cease to be a member of a member congregation of the District, or shall cease to reside within the region he or she represents, he or she shall forthwith cease to be an officer or a director of this corporation.

Article VI

The Bylaws of this Corporation are to be made, altered, or rescinded by the members of the District in its District Convention, provided the same have been reviewed and approved by the Synod's Commission on Constitutional Matters, have been found to be consistent with the then existing Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and are not inconsistent with this Charter, or with the laws of the land.

Article VII

The voting power of this corporation shall be exercised by the accredited pastoral and lay delegates of the congregations constituting its membership, each congregation being entitled to one (1) pastoral and one (1) lay vote. Parishes in which two (2) or more congregations are served by the same pastor shall be restricted to one (1) lay vote and one (1) pastoral vote.

Article VIII

Section 1

The Board of Directors shall have power to buy, sell, lease, mortgage, hypothecate property, whether movable or immovable, borrow, issue bonds, notes, and pledges of all kinds, and generally to manage and control the property and the secular and business affairs of this District, and shall do all things necessary to promote the objects and purposes of this Corporation as set forth in Article II.

Section 2

Replacements for vacancies on the Board of Directors shall be filled by Board appointment at its next regular meeting or at a special meeting held for that purpose.

Section 3

A majority of the members of the board, each of whom must be in attendance at the meeting, shall constitute a quorum to transact business.

Section 4

All citations or any other legal process shall be served on the Registered Agent of this corporation, or, in his/her/its absence, upon the President of the District.

Article IX

This Corporation shall meet triennially in the year prior to the regular convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. In cases of urgent necessity, the District President is empowered to convene special sessions of the District. In that event; he must previously have obtained consent of at least a majority of the voting members of the District, after having informed them and the President of the Synod of the purpose of the intended special session.



Article X

All provisions of these Articles and Bylaws adopted thereto are subject to the provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the resolutions of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod in convention and to the laws of Florida and Georgia when applicable.

Article XI

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended at any regular or special meeting of this Corporation, provided such amendment, or amendments, are not inconsistent with Article II or Article III of this charter, or with the laws of the state of Florida, or with the then existing Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of the Synod, and provided such amendment, or amendments, are approved by a majority vote of the members present at such meeting, and provided further that a copy of the proposed amendment, or amendments, shall have been forwarded previously to the Commission on Constitutional Matters of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for their review and approval, and to all congregations constituting the membership of the District at least sixty (60) days prior to such meeting. Such amendments become effective within sixty (60) days unless more than one-third of the congregations of the District send written dissent to the Secretary of the District. Should this occur, the matter is referred to the Board of Directors to determine that the provisions of this article (Article X) have been met and if so, the amendment will become effective no later than 120 days from its passage at the convention.

Article XII

In the event this corporation is dissolved or its existence otherwise terminates or is terminated, after the payment of the debts of the corporation, all right, title, and interest in and to its property, whether tangible or intangible and whether real or personal, shall thereupon automatically vest in or be transferred to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, a Missouri Corporation, or its successor, and this corporation covenants and agrees to execute and deliver to the Synod such documents and instruments and to take such other and further actions as the Synod may deem reasonably necessary or desirable, in order to evidence and give full effect to the foregoing.

If, however, on the date of such proposed dissolution, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, a Missouri Corporation, or its successor, is no longer in existence, the assets of the Corporation may distributed to any other Section 501(C)(3) organization as designated by the Board of Directors.



BYLAWS TO THE CHARTER OF THE FLORIDA-GEORGIA DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD, INC.

PREAMBLE

The Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, though an independent corporation under the laws of Florida, adopts and holds as its own the Constitution of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. It shall do all in its power to promote the Synod's aims and purposes, and shall be subject to all applicable general rules and regulations of the Synod. For the more efficient execution of its own local affairs, the District adopts the following rules and regulations as Bylaws to its legal Charter:

VISION STATEMENT

The Mission of The Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod grows out of God's merciful mission to a sinful and hurting world. This mission centers on Jesus, the crucified and risen Christ, whose ministry continues among us to bring life and healing to the world today. The Holy Spirit, who creates and sustains one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ, seeks to guide all that this Church does in His name to the glory of God the Father.

Within this fellowship, Christians are called to love each other with the love of Christ and to work together in a trust that is established by His Grace. Called by His Spirit into this fellowship, all of God's people are sent back into the world to share the Good News of God's redeeming love and grace for all people.

As individual congregations, the Body of Christ in our various locales, we recognize that by working together we can assist one another in love and trust to accomplish more effectively this mission and ministry of the whole Church. Therefore, we joyfully and freely commit ourselves to the following Bylaws and we hold ourselves accountable to the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, a corporate servant structure, whose purpose is to serve, assist, and encourage congregations, church workers, and leaders, expanding God's mission and ministry.

Since God's mission and ministry occur through local congregations, and it is our desire that every congregation be a church in mission; and every man and woman a missionary, all working together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, empowered by His Gospel, to share his Love. Therefore the Vision of the Florida-Georgia District is: Every member. . . Equipped, Empowered, Engaged. . .Connecting People to Jesus!

D1.01 VOTING DELEGATES

Pastors and lay delegates of congregations holding voting membership, as specified in Article VII of the Charter, shall be voting delegates. The lay delegates shall be District representatives to their respective congregations between conventions.

D1.02 ADVISORY DELEGATES

The following ministers of religion, ordained or commissioned, who hold membership in the Synod through the District shall be regarded as advisory members with full freedom of speech in District Conventions and may be called up to serve in an elected or appointed capacity by the District:

- a. Ministers of religion - ordained whose congregations do not hold membership in the Synod (i.e. mission congregations);
- b. Ministers of religion-ordained, not in charge of congregations (i.e. retired pastors, Specific Ministry

Pastors);

- c. Ministers of religion-commissioned Ministers of religion – ordained who are on the roster of the District but are not voting delegates of congregations.
- d. Candidates for the ministry of religion, either ordained or commissioned.

D1.03 NON-VOTING CONGREGATIONS

Non-voting congregations are encouraged to send representatives to the District convention and to become members of the Synod. Such representatives may serve as advisory delegates if applicable or may be given the privilege of the floor at the discretion of the presiding officers. Lay representatives of non-voting congregations may not vote or serve on any committee.

D1.04 DELEGATES TO SYNODICAL CONVENTIONS

- a. Each electoral circuit of member congregations shall elect one (1) pastoral and one (1) lay delegate.
- b. One advisory delegate shall be elected for every 60 advisory ordained and specific ministry pastors, and one (1) advisory delegate shall be elected for every 60 commissioned ministers. (Synod Bylaw 3.1.3.1) Those individuals who are eligible to serve as advisory representatives under Synod Bylaw 3.1.4, are not to be included in these calculations for elections. (Synod Bylaw 3.1.3.1.c)

D2.01 OFFICERS

The officers of the District shall be:

- a. The President ;
- b. Five (5) Regional Vice-Presidents;
- c. A Secretary;
- d. A Treasurer;
- e. One Circuit Visitor per visitation Circuit of the District.

D2.02 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- a. The Board of Directors of the District shall be composed of:
 1. The Officers of the District with the exception of the Circuit Visitors
 2. Three (3) ministers of religion-commissioned;
 3. Ten (10) laypersons, two (2) laypersons per region of the District.

D2.03 APPOINTIVE OFFICIALS AND COMMITTEES

The president may appoint the following officials and committees:

- a. LCEF Committee. The members of the LCEF Committee shall be approved by the Board of Directors of the District upon the recommendation of the President in consultation with the Vice President of LCEF. The duties of the Committee shall be to further the ministries partnership of LCEF through its investments, loans and ministry support, and the Committee may consist of the President of the District, the chairman of the Board of Directors, and other such members as recommended by President and/or Vice President-LCEF for the District. Such member recommendations are subject to ratification by the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the triennium.
- b. Committee on Convention Registration, Credentials, Housing, and Attendance, composed of:
 1. One (1) minister of religion-ordained, pastor of a voting congregation;
 2. One (1) lay person, member of a voting congregation;
 3. One (1) minister of religion-commissioned, member of a voting congregation.
- c. Judge of Elections, who is to be the pastor of a voting congregation, for whom the District shall

furnish adequate clerical assistance.

- d. Committee on Conference Essays and Minutes, composed of:
 - a. One (1) minister of religion-ordained, pastor of a voting congregation;
 - b. One (1) lay person, member of a voting congregation;
 - c. One (1) minister of religion-commissioned, member of a voting congregation.
- e. Convention Reviewing Committee and Floor Committees for the processing of reports and overtures, as determined to be necessary by the President.
- f. Committee for District Archives shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors.

D2.04 TERM OF OFFICE

The term of office for all officers and the Board of Directors shall be three (3) years. All officers and the Board of Directors shall begin their term of office at the time specified in these Bylaws. No elected individual shall serve more than three (3) consecutive terms in any one (1) elective office, except that the President and the district treasurer shall be eligible for four (4) consecutive terms of office.

D2.05 TRANSITION OF ADMINISTRATIONS

- a. The President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, the members of the Board of Directors (except the Treasurer), and all members of elected committees shall assume their respective duties within (90) ninety following the adjournment of the District Convention following their election.
- b. At all times material during the Transition of Administrations the Board of Directors shall work in good faith with the incoming administration to assist the newly elected President with matters relating to his transition which may include, without any limitation, his relocation to the District Office.
- c. The newly elected President shall meet with the members of the District staff and the new Board of Directors as soon as reasonably possible after his election, to assess the state of the District, to plan for the communication and carrying out of the resolutions of the District convention, and to gather names and obtain information helpful for making wise appointments.
Following the election of a new President, the outgoing President shall continue to receive a full salary to the end of the calendar year, unless he accepts another position.

D2.06 DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The duties of all officers and the Board of Directors, elected or appointed, shall be consistent with its Charter and the Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of the Synod.

D2.07 ACCOUNTABILITY

The Board of Directors, all officers, and the elected committee for nominations shall be accountable to the District for all their transactions. All other committees shall be accountable to the Board of Directors.

D2.08 VACANCIES

All vacancies shall be filled according to Charter provided the method of filling vacancies is not contrary or inconsistent with the then existing Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of the Synod.

THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

D2.09 RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The District President, shall assure all of his responsibilities as outlined in the Bylaw 4.4 of Synod are fulfilled. These responsibilities are:
 1. to be the chief executive of the District;
 2. to represent the Synod in his District;
 3. to represent the Synod in connection with all ordinations, commissioning, and installations;
 4. in his ministry of ecclesiastical supervision, visit the congregations of the District;
 5. to supervise the teaching, the life, and the official administration of the ordained and commissioned ministers of the District or are subject to his ecclesiastical supervision; and shall inquire into the spiritual conditions of the congregations of his District and take such action as may be necessary, which may include suspending from membership ordained or commissioned ministers for persistently adhering to false doctrine or for having given offense by an ungodly life;
 6. to arrange for official visitations or investigations when a controversy arises in a congregation or between two or more congregations or when there is evidence of a continuing unresolved problem in doctrine or practice;
 7. to maintain the official rosters of his District;
- b. In addition to those responsibilities outlined in Bylaw 4.4, the District President, shall assure that the following responsibilities are fulfilled:
 9. At the sessions of the District, the President shall conduct the meetings according to the accepted parliamentary rules and in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod and of the District.
 10. He shall be an ex officio voting member of all committees, and task forces of the District.
 11. He shall oversee the creation and distribution of the convention manual prior to the District convention.
 12. He shall sign legal documents and instruments requiring his signature and shall perform all additional duties which the District places on him through its Bylaws, regulations, and by special resolution.
 13. He shall be a full-time executive. He shall not be in charge of a congregation or hold a chair at any educational institution.
 14. He shall be the chief executive officer of the District and have supervision of all officers and employees of the District.

15. He shall make regular reports to the District Board of Directors regarding critical ministry targets and desired outcomes of the Board of Directors.
16. He shall be responsible for carrying out the resolutions of the District Convention.

D2.10 VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

- a. When a vacancy occurs in the office of the President and is officially declared so by the Board of Directors, the First Vice-President shall be requested by the Board of Directors to assume the office; and if he consents, he shall be declared President by the Board of Directors.
- b. If the First Vice-President declines, the Second Vice-President shall be requested by the Board of Directors to assume the office; and if he consents, he shall be declared President by the Board of Directors.
- c. If the Second Vice-President also declines, the Third Vice-President shall be requested by the Board of Directors to assume the office; and if he consents, he shall be declared President by the Board of Directors.
- d. If the Third Vice-President also declines, the Fourth vice-President shall be requested by the Board of Directors to assume the office; and if consents, he shall be declared President by the Board of Directors.
- e. If the Fourth vice-President also declines, the Fifth Vice President shall be requested by the Board of Directors to assume the office; and if consents, he shall be declared President by the Board of Directors.
- f. If the Fifth Vice President also declines, the Board of Directors shall appoint an acting President. If less than one (1) year remains in the term of the President, the acting President shall remain in office until the next regular convention of the District. If more than one year remains, the Board of Directors shall call for nominations by the congregations of the District for candidates to fill the office of President and shall be empowered to elect a President from those five (5) candidates who have received the largest number of nominations and who have indicated a willingness to serve.

D2.11 PERTAINING TO THE VICE-PRESIDENTS

- a. The Vice-Presidents shall be voting members of the Board of Directors.
- b. A Vacancy in the Vice-Presidency shall be filled as follows and those filling the vacancy shall serve the remainder of the term:
 1. A vacancy in the First Vice-presidency shall be filled by advancing the Second Vice-President.
 2. A vacancy in the Second Vice-presidency shall be filled by advancing the Third Vice-President.
 3. A vacancy in the Third Vice-presidency shall be filled by advancing the Fourth vice-President.
 4. A vacancy in the Fourth vice-presidency shall be filled by advancing the Fifth Vice-President.
 5. A vacancy in the Fifth Vice-presidency shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Directors .

THE DISTRICT SECRETARY

D2.12 THE OFFICE OF SECRETARY

The Secretary shall be a minister of religion, ordained, and a rostered member of the District.

D2.13 DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

- a. He shall cause a full and complete record of the business transacted by the corporation at all regular and special conventions and the meetings of the Board of Directors to be kept.
- b. He shall be the official correspondent of the corporation and the Board of Directors.
- c. He shall submit to the members of the Board of Directors copies of the minutes of the board.

- d. He shall cause a report to be sent to all officers of the District and to all committees, and task forces of the District of the resolutions pertinent to them, or their work, enacted by the District at its convention or by its Board of Directors.
- e. He shall function, if appropriate, as an administrator in the dispute resolution process (Handbook of Synod [2016 edition, or its progeny] Bylaws 1.10.4a and 1.10.6.)
- f. He shall be responsible for carrying out the nomination procedures outlined in these bylaws according to the appropriate Synodical Bylaws (Handbook of Synod [2016 edition, or its progeny] Bylaw 4.7.). He shall cause the proceedings of the conventions of the District to be published. He shall oversee the preparation of the manuscripts, recording all resolutions in the wording in which they have been adopted, and cause the proceedings to be published after the President of the District has approved.
- g. He shall, prior to the District convention, submit to the Commission on Constitutional Matters for their review, a copy of all anticipated corrections, additions, or deletions to or of the District bylaws.
- h. He shall, upon the close of the District convention, present a copy of all corrections, additions, or deletions to or of the District bylaws to the Board of Directors, and when prepared, provide an updated copy of the Articles of incorporation and Bylaws to the Office of the Secretary of Synod.

D2.14 DUTIES OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

- a. An assistant Secretary shall be a member of the Board of Directors, and appointed by the board in consultation with the District President.
- b. The responsibility of the assistant Secretary shall be limited to the signing of official documents as authorized by the Board of Directors in the absence of the Secretary.
- c. Copies of documents signed by the Assistant Secretary will be provided to the District Secretary.

D2.15 THE DISTRICT TREASURER

The District Treasurer, appointed by the Board of Directors, shall be responsible, either directly or through staff assistance, to the Board of Directors for the following:

- a. To assist in the preparation of the District budget;
- b. To report quarterly to the board on the financial status of the District and provide an annual report to the District at the close of each fiscal year;
- c. To assure that all District monies are appropriately received, recorded, and deposited District, in financial institution(s) approved by the Board of Directors;
- d. To make District financial records available for audits authorized by the board;
- e. To assure that all District funds are disbursed as authorized and in accordance with the District budget;
- f. To provide for the safe-keeping of all notes, deeds, and other official documents of the District;
- g. To ensure that all District officers and staff (professional and clerical) handle District moneys properly and successfully completed a background check by the District;
- h. To arrange for the borrowing of moneys in the name of the District as authorized by the Board of Directors.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

D2.16 MEMBERSHIP

- a. The Board of Directors shall consist of twenty-one (21) persons as follows: the District President; the five (5) vice-Presidents; the District Secretary; the District Treasurer; ten (10) lay persons who are resident members of congregations, two (2) from each respective regions of the District; and three (3) ministers of religion, commissioned, who are members of the Synod.

- b. Every member of the board shall be a member of a member congregation of the District and, if an individual member of the Synod, on the district roster. When a member of the board ceases to be a member of a member congregation of the District or, if an individual member of the Synod, ceases to be on the district roster., he/she shall automatically lose membership on the board. Those members of the Board of Directors who are elected representatives for regions of the District shall cease to be members of the board if they are no longer residing in the region which they represent.

D2.17 REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Members of the board shall discharge their duties in good faith. The following are considered cause for removal pursuant to Synod Bylaw 1.5.7:

- a. Incapacity
- b. Breach of fiduciary responsibility
- c. Neglect or refusal to perform the duties of office
- d. No longer satisfying the qualifications for a Board member
- e. Conviction of a felony
- f. Failure to disclose conflicts of interest
- g. Conduct evidencing a scandalous life
- h. Advocacy of false doctrine, as per the confessional standard of the Synod (Constitution, Article II)
- i. Failure to honor and uphold the doctrinal position of the Synod
- j. Accumulation of three (3) unexcused absences within any term of office

D2.18 VACANCIES

The board shall have power to fill all vacancies in its membership. The member thus appointed shall serve out the unexpired term of the person he/she succeeds.

D2.19 OFFICERS

At the first meeting of the triennium, the Board of Directors shall elect one (1) of its members to serve as Chairman. The Secretary of the District shall function as the Secretary of the board.

D2.20 AUTHORITY

The Board of Directors, charged with the general management of the District's affairs, shall assume office at the time specified in Bylaw D2.05.

D2.21 ORGANIZATION

- a. Between conventions, the Board of Directors shall formulate policy and evaluate the programs designed to carry out the District's work in accordance with the rules and regulations of the District.
- b. The Executive staff of District (as more particularly defined by the President of the District) shall be advisory to the board and shall implement the programs and policies determined by the District President.

D2.22 MEETINGS

- a. The board shall meet four (4) times a year.
- b. The President or at the direction of at least one-third of the members of the Board of Directors, may call other meetings, special or regular, as may be deemed necessary.
- c. Meetings may be held in person or by electronic means including, without any limitation, Skype, or its progeny, video conferencing, or by teleconference call according to LCMS Board of Directors policy for electronic meetings. Such meetings shall take into consideration fostering the open

exchange of ideas, availability of technology to all members, stewardship of resources, perception of fairness, controversial nature of agenda items, and whether secret ballots should be used

- d. The majority of the voting membership of the board shall constitute a quorum provided that all members have been duly notified by mail or telephone as to time and place of meeting at least one week in advance.

D2.23 AUTHORITY BETWEEN MEETINGS

Executive Committee

- a. At its first meeting the newly elected board shall elect from among its members an executive committee consisting of the District President, the Treasurer, and three (3) additional members, at least one (1) of whom must be a minister of religion ordained and one (1) a member of the laity.
- b. Also, the chairman of the board shall be one (1) of the five (5) members of the executive committee.
- c. The committee shall have the authority to act for the board between meetings.
 - a. This committee may not perform acts specifically required by statute or by legislation or the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.
 - b. This committee may not overturn actions of the Board of Directors.
 - c. The actions of this committee shall be reported to the plenary sessions of the Board of Directors.

D2.24 DUTIES

The duties of the Board of Directors shall be:

- a. To conduct an annual evaluation of the District President regarding his administrative performance.
- b. To appoint the Treasurer;
- c. To ratify the hiring/terminating of any executive staff of the District, and determine their length of service;
- d. To annually review the system for determining the compensation of all personnel salaried by the District;
- e. To hold in trust the properties of the District, with power to buy, sell, or hold properties of all types, in accord with the rules and regulations of the District;
- f. To adopt the annual budget, with powers of review and change as necessary, upon the advice of the District Treasurer
- g. To determine the validity of any appeal for funds within the District by organizations or groups inside or outside the District;
- h. To authorize the Treasurer to borrow money necessary for the orderly operation of the District;
- i. To indemnify members of the Board of Directors.
- j. To conform its actions to applicable rules and regulations of the Synod and the District. Appeals concerning actions of the board shall be brought to the District convention. The action of the convention on such appeals shall be final.
- k. To approve legal aspects of the corporation in compliance with all applicable laws.
- l. To approve congregational constitutions and bylaws upon recommendation of the District President.
- m. To appoint legal counsel.

D2.25 EXPENSES

All expenses incurred by the board in carrying out its duties shall be paid by the District.

D2.26 AUDITOR

All books and financial records of the District shall be audited at least annually by an external certified public accountant or by CPA's of the Synod's Internal Audit Department as determined by the Board of Directors in its sole discretion. A full report of any such audit shall be submitted to the board, with a summary report made available to the District convention.

SELECTIONS OF OFFICERS AND BOARD

D2.28 JUDGE OF ELECTIONS

- a. The President of the District shall appoint a judge of elections prior to the first session of the convention in which elections are to be held. The District shall supply adequate administrative assistance and the necessary equipment to prepare and tabulate ballots.
- b. The ballots shall designate the office to be filled and the number of candidates to be voted for. The ballot shall list in alphabetical order the names of the candidates to be voted for in each office or board. . In the necessity of a second and subsequent ballot for president or vice president, the candidate having the least number of votes shall be removed from the ballot. In ballots for all other positions, any candidate receiving less than 15% of the vote shall also be removed from the ballot unless fewer than two candidates receive 15 percent or more of the votes cast, in which case the three highest candidates shall constitute the ballot. Balloting shall continue until a majority vote is received.
- c. The ballot shall be prepared in such manner as to show clearly how the delegates are to indicate their votes.
- d. Ballots shall be distributed only to delegates properly identified and present on the convention floor or properly present in convention committee rooms.
- e. Once voting has begun, no recess or adjournment shall be taken until the respective ballots have been cast.
- f. For the tabulation of votes: mechanical, electronic, or other equipment may be employed, but if manual counting of ballots becomes necessary the tabulation shall take place in the customary manner by at least one (1) reader and one (1) tabulator:
 - a. In reporting the number of votes cast and the number of votes required for election, all ballots cast, except blanks, should be counted. A vote shall be credited to the name of the respective candidate if the meaning is clear and the intention of the voter can be established.
- g. Before announcing the names of the candidates elected, the judge of elections shall give copies of the tabulated votes to the Chairman and the Secretary of the convention. The tally of the votes cast for each candidate shall be announced after each ballot in all elections.
- h. All ballots shall be preserved by the judge of elections separately, according to the order of balloting, until the convention has been adjourned.
- i. The judge of elections shall distribute the information concerning the candidates which has been furnished him by the committee on nominations at least two (2) hours prior to the vote.
- j. Since it is not feasible for all candidates to be present at the convention, it shall be the policy not to introduce to the convention, in person, any candidate.

D2. 29 MAJORITY OF VOTES

A majority of all votes cast shall be required for election to all elective offices and other elective positions. Candidates receiving a majority on the first ballot shall be declared elected. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, balloting will proceed with the candidate receiving the smallest number of votes eliminated from consideration until one (1) candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, who shall be

declared elected.

D2.30 ELECTION OF THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

Nominations

Nominations for District President shall be made by member congregations from the ordained roster of Synod through the District Secretary and shall close ninety (90) days prior to the beginning of the convention. The District Secretary shall call for nominations at least 180 days prior to the convention. Each congregation shall have the right to nominate two (2) candidates for the office of the presidency. There shall be no opportunity provided for additional nominations.

The five (5) ministers of religion, ordained, receiving the highest number of nominations shall be considered candidates.

Biographical sketches and indications of the candidates' willingness to serve shall be secured by the District Secretary.

Elections

- a. Each voting delegate shall have one (1) vote and the candidate receiving the majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected.
- b. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, see D2.28.b.

D2.31 PRIMARY ELECTION FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

Nominations

- a. Nominations for regional Vice-President shall be made from the ordained roster of the District by member congregations of each region within the District no later than ninety (90) days prior to the beginning of the convention. Nominees must be residents within the region they represent. The District Secretary shall call for nominations at least 180 days prior to the convention.
- b. The member congregations of each region have the right to nominate two (2) ministers of religion ordained.
- c. In each region, the three (3) ministers of religion, ordained who receive the highest number of nominations shall be considered candidates.

Biographical sketches and indications of the candidates' willingness to serve shall be secured by the District Secretary.

Selection

- a. At a regional caucus held at the District convention, each voting delegate of the region shall be entitled to vote in the selection of a candidate for regional vice president to be ratified by the entire convention. There shall be no additional nominations from the floor during the regional caucus;
- b. The first nominee to receive a majority of the votes cast shall be declared selected as candidate; if no nominee receives a majority of the votes cast, see D2.28.b;
- c. All regional selections of candidates shall be subject to ratification by the entire convention which retains the right to amend the slate.

D2.32 ELECTION AND RANKING OF VICE-PRESIDENTS

After the election of the vice-Presidents by ratification by the entire convention, they shall be ranked (1st, . . . 5th) each by a separate ballot on which each delegate shall vote for one candidate for each Vice Presidential office. The candidate in each ranking receiving the majority vote shall be considered ranked in order of the ballot taking place

D2.33 REGIONS OF THE DISTRICT

- a. For the purpose of electing representatives to the Board of Directors, the District shall be divided into five (5) regions. These regions shall consist of:
 - Region I - North Atlanta, South Atlanta, East Central Georgia, and NE Georgia Circuits
- b. Region II - Tallahassee, First Coast, and North Central Florida Circuits
- c. Region III - Orlando East, Orlando West, Space Coast, , and Winter Haven Circuits
- d. Region IV - Suncoast, St. Petersburg, Tampa, Sarasota, and Southwest Circuits
- e. Region V - Treasure Coast, South Palm Beach, Gold Coast, Heartland, and Monroe-Miami-Dade Circuits
- f. Additional Circuits which may be formed shall be assigned to a Region by the convention.

D2.34 SELECTION OF REGIONAL LAY REPRESENTATIVES ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- b. Nominations for regional lay representatives on the Board of Directors shall be made by member congregations of each region no later than ninety (90) days prior to the start of the convention. The District Secretary shall call for nominations at least 180 days prior to the start of the convention.
- c. Any congregation within a region may nominate two (2) individuals to be regional lay representative to the District Board of Directors. Congregations may nominate candidates who reside within in the region of the congregation.
- d. Nominations shall be sent to the District Secretary, and shall contain biographical information as well as an indication of the individual's willingness to serve if elected
- e. At the regional caucus to select lay representatives
 1. There shall be no additional nominations from the floor during the regional caucus;
 2. Two (2) lay persons from the region shall be selected in a the same manner as in D2.31
 3. Only one (1) lay representative may be selected from a single congregation.
 4. All regional selections shall be subject to ratification by the entire convention which retains the right to amend the slate.

D2.35 COMMITTEE FOR NOMINATIONS

- a. Nominating Committee. Members of the Nominating Committee are elected at the District Convention. The Nominating Committee shall be a committee for nominations, composed of two (2) ministers of religion-ordained, four (4) lay persons, and two (2) ministers of religion-commissioned.
 1. Each region of the District shall be represented on the committee.
 2. The term of office shall be three (3) years.
 3. Committee members shall not succeed themselves.
 4. In the event that a member of the Committee for nominations is unable to serve, the District Board of Directors shall appoint a replacement from the same Region and the same classification.
- b. Duties of the Nominating Committee - At least 180 days before the District convention, the committee for nominations shall, through the District Secretary, request the voting congregations of the District to submit suggestions for nominees for the following offices: District Secretary; members of the Board of Directors who are ministers of religion, commissioned; the District committee for nominations; and/or others not covered by specific rules and regulations.
- c. A special form for information concerning the nominees shall be included. (See Suggested Information Sheet, D2.36.)
- d. The nominations shall be sent to the Secretary of the District, who shall forward them to the

committee for nominations. As nominations are received, the chairman of the committee shall notify all nominees with the request that they state their willingness to serve in the event of their election. The committee for nominations shall do the actual selecting of the nominees from those who have indicated their willingness to serve. A declaration of a willingness to serve does not guarantee nominating.

- e. Forms on which nominations are to be made shall be available also at the convention, to be signed by persons making such nominations. Nominations shall be called for at the beginning of the morning session of the first day of the convention, and the completed forms must be submitted no later than 10:00 A.M. of the same day, and not less than two hours prior to the vote. Elections may take place in the afternoon session of that day or at the direction of the chair.
- f. The convention shall have the right to amend any slate of nominations by floor nomination. When a nomination is made from the floor, the Committee for Nominations shall require that consent and biographical data be provided for anyone being nominated by the delegate offering the nominations. This consent and biographical information shall be publicized by the judge of elections at least 2 hours prior to a vote.

D2.36 INFORMATION SHEET AND STATEMENT OF WILLINGNESS TO SERVE

In the nominating of ministers of religion, ordained or commissioned, and lay persons for a District office, information concerning them shall be made available at the District convention. The following information shall be included in the information furnished:

- a. Information required of all nominees
 1. Name and address
 2. Email
 3. Phone Number(s)
 4. Age
 5. Present congregation
 6. Number of years in the District
 7. Present incumbent
 8. District offices previously held
 9. Office to which nominated
 10. Statement of willingness to serve
- b. Additional information for ministers of religion, ordained)
 1. Former churches or ministries served
 2. Year of ordination
- c. Additional information for ministers of religion, commissioned)
 1. Years in office
 2. Former services rendered
- d. Additional information for lay persons
 1. Formal education
 2. Business Occupation (past, present)
 3. Employed/Retired
 4. Former congregations and offices held there

DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

D3.01 TIME OF ELECTION

The election of District officers, board members, and committee and commission members shall take place

at a regular convention of the District.

D3.02 RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE

The accredited pastor and lay delegate of each voting congregation in the District shall be entitled to vote. If a pastor serves two (2) or more congregations, these shall be regarded as one (1) parish and shall be entitled to only one (1) lay vote.

DISTRICT OFFICERS

D3.03 ELIGIBILITY

All officers, board members, commission members and members of committees shall be members of member congregations of the District or the District roster and shall have been active in the District for at least one (1) year. The one (1) year limitation shall not apply to the office of District President, District vice President, District Secretary, and circuit visitor (Synod Bylaw 4.3.1).

D3.04 THE RATIFICATION OF CIRCUIT VISITORS

The ratification of the circuit visitors shall take place after the election of the President, vice-Presidents, and Secretary, according to the provisions of the Bylaws of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

DISTRICT MISSIONS

D4.01 ESTABLISHMENT OF MISSIONS

It is the purpose of the District assist and encourage every congregation of the District to be a church in mission; and every man and woman a missionary, all working together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, empowered by His Gospel, to share his Love. To that end, the Board of Directors shall see that resources are provided to the congregations and the ministries of the District, as they are available and deemed appropriate.

D5.01 AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Changes in the Bylaws and additions thereto may be made, provided they are:

- a. Not contrary to the Charter of the District, or the Constitution or Bylaws of the Synod;
- b. Presented in writing to the Board of Directors; the District Secretary shall forward proposed bylaw amendments the Commission on Constitutional Matters for review and approval prior to their being considered by the District convention (Synod Bylaw 3.9.2.23 [a-b]);
- c. Passed by a majority of the voting delegates in convention assembled.

Bylaws revised on the basis of the actions of the 2022 Convention of The Florida-Georgia District, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Resolution 03.5-2022.



Overtures

Overture: 1-01 – 2025

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**
2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

3 **To Equip Disciples to Share Their Faith and Boldly Speak the Name of Jesus**

4 WHEREAS, the risen Lord Jesus gives His followers the imperative to “make disciples of all nations”
5 (Matthew 28:18-20), and St. Peter encourages every believer to be ready “to give an answer to
6 everyone who asks you to give reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 3:15); and

7 WHEREAS, those whom the Holy Spirit has called to faith are also called and empowered to be
8 witnesses (Acts 1:8); and

9 WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit is the One who, by means of the spoken and written word of Christ, calls,
10 gathers, enlightens and sanctifies His church (Romans 10:17, Luther’s Explanation of the 3rd
11 Article); and

12 WHEREAS, the first LCMS President, Dr. C.F.W. Walther proclaimed it to be the holy desire and duty of
13 every Christian to “bring souls to Christ,” stating, “Through holy baptism, every Christian has
14 been consecrated, ordained and installed into the ministry to teach, admonish, and comfort his
15 neighbor. Through holy baptism each Christian has obtained not only the authority, power, and
16 right, but also the high, holy obligation... of rousing himself to care and to help so that
17 others may be brought to Christ,” and again, “Every Christian is a missionary, sent out by God
18 into his own circle to convert others to Christ...” (Sermon preached in 1842, “Bringing Souls to
19 Christ: Every Christian’s Desire and Duty”); and

20 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod seeks to “vigorously to make known the love of
21 Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world” (LCMS Mission
22 Statement); and

23 WHEREAS, our Florida-Georgia District calling is that we “are compelled by Christ’s love to connect the
24 lost, confused and hurting to Jesus, who is the true source of peace, hope, and life” and that “as
25 those saved by grace, we must share the message of salvation... so that all people experience
26 the life-changing love of Jesus” (Vivid Description of the FLGA Vision); therefore be it

27 *Resolved*, That congregations and schools of The Florida-Georgia District intentionally equip and
28 encourage their members and families to share their faith in ways appropriate to their station
29 in life and their contexts; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That the District assist congregations and schools to identify and utilize means to train and
31 equip their members and families to share the hope they have in Christ with confidence and
32 courage, making disciples who make disciple-makers; and be it finally

33 *Resolved*, That the people of The Florida-Georgia District join daily to pray for at least three
34 unchurched or unconnected people they know personally, while intentionally seeking
35 opportunities to make disciples by establishing relationships and speaking of Jesus with friends
36 and neighbors.

37 Submitted by The Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the
38 2025 Florida-Georgia District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 1-02 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

3 **To Encourage Church Multiplication as a Means of Making New Disciples**

4 WHEREAS, the number one imperative for disciples of Jesus is to make and multiply more disciples
5 (Matthew 28:18-20); and

6 WHEREAS, the book of Acts and the example of St. Paul and the early church describes church planting or
7 church multiplication as part of God’s strategy to make disciples; and

8 WHEREAS, Jesus Himself, as Lord of the Church, has promised to build His Church (Matthew 16:18); and

9 WHEREAS, the local church is God’s mission agency in its local context (Eph 3:10); and

10 WHEREAS, God has designed all healthy living things, including His Bride, the Church, to multiply (Genesis
11 1); and

12 WHEREAS, a plentiful harvest in the FLGA District demands aggressive disciple-making and church
13 multiplication to reach a diverse population (Matthew 9:37; John 4:35); and

14 WHEREAS, religious demographers note that in the US, approximately 86 congregations of all
15 denominations die each week while only 58 are started, and a District needs to plant the equivalent
16 of at least 4% of its congregations each year to thrive, which means the FLGA District should have
17 nearly 7 new church starts each year (Lifeway Research, “Church Life and Practice,” May 25, 2021);
18 and

19 WHEREAS, new churches re-energize and refocus existing congregations on the mission of God; and

20 WHEREAS, 42% of people attending new churches were previously unchurched (LifeWay Research, 2015),
21 and

22 WHEREAS, planting new churches is one of the Seven Mission Priorities of the LCMS, and

23 WHEREAS the FLGA District has established a goal of at least two new congregations each year for the next
24 five years; and

25 WHEREAS, resources and assistance for church multiplication are available from the FLGA District, the
26 LCMS, and other LCMS church planting networks; therefore be it

27 *Resolved*, That daily, congregation members and their leaders ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth
28 laborers into His harvest fields (Luke 10:2), especially asking that the Lord give them His vision to
29 seed the plentiful harvest fields around them; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That congregations and their leaders be encouraged to plant new churches, and collaborate with
31 other congregations and their circuits to multiply churches locally; and be it further

32 *Resolved*, That congregations be encouraged to support the church multiplication efforts of the Florida-
33 Georgia District with their prayers, offerings, and other types of appropriate support for new starts
34 in the District; and be it finally

35 *Resolved*, That congregations explore and utilize the resources available from the District, the LCMS, and
36 other LCMS church planting networks in these multiplication efforts.

37 Submitted by The Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the 2025
38 Florida-Georgia District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 1-03 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

3

4 **To Celebrate, Support and Expand Lutheran Schools as Vital Means of Outreach**

5 WHEREAS the LCMS and our Florida-Georgia District are well known and respected for our Lutheran
6 Schools and Early Learning Centers which provide quality education for our own members, and

7 WHEREAS our Lutheran schools also serve as powerful Great Commission centers where disciples are
8 made and multiplied, and where children and their families are brought to Jesus; and

9 WHEREAS our population in the FLGA District continues to grow rapidly even as fewer people profess
10 faith in Christ; and

11 WHEREAS our schools not only meet educational needs of families and their children, but also are vital
12 tools for the expansion of Christ's Kingdom, making disciples as Jesus commanded (Matthew
13 28:18-20); therefore be it

14 *Resolved*, That the Florida-Georgia District in convention give thanks to God for our District's Lutheran
15 Schools and Early Learning Centers, and all who teach and serve in them; and be it further

16 *Resolved*, That congregations and circuits explore opportunities in partnership with the District to
17 start new Lutheran Schools while strengthening the mission action of our current schools; and
18 be it further

19 *Resolved*, That the District equip and encourage our churches and schools to work together to be the
20 most effective and productive mission and outreach tools they can be; and be it finally

21 *Resolved*, That all the congregations of the Florida-Georgia District be encouraged to pray on a regular
22 basis for our Lutheran Schools and those who minister in them beginning at this Convention
23 immediately upon adoption of this Resolution.

24

25 Submitted by The Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the
26 2025 Florida-Georgia District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 1-04 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

3

4 **To Offer the National Synod Mission and Ministry Emphases**

5 WHEREAS the District is responsible to submit triennial mission and ministry emphases for
6 consideration by the national convention (2023 LCMS Handbook, District Conventions
7 4.2.1.b,page 196); and

8 WHEREAS the FLGA District has identified primary mission emphases through overtures received
9 from the District, therefore be it

10 *Resolved* That the LCMS be encouraged to accept these three as primary mission emphases for the
11 Synod: Making Disciples who Make Disciple-Makers, Church Multiplication, and Lutheran
12 Schools as Vital Means of Outreach.

13

14 Submitted by The Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the
15 2025 Florida-Georgia District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 1-05 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

3 **To Give Priority to the Kingdom of God Over Institutional Preservation**

4 WHEREAS, Faithful disciples not only take up their cross and follow Christ but lift high the cross, the
5 love of Christ to proclaim; and

6 WHEREAS, Jesus warned us that the cares of this world potentially choke the fruit that flows from faith
7 in our crucified, risen, and ascended Lord; and

8 WHEREAS, Jesus assures us that our heavenly Father knows what we need to sustain our earthly
9 constitution and so urges us to seek first the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:25); and

10 WHEREAS, Those who have faith and trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior are given a place in the
11 universal Church which supersedes denominational affiliation; and

12 WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated the reign of God not only through his miracles of
13 healing and casting out demons but also by going to the cross and dying according to the will of
14 the Father in self-giving love for the other; therefore be it,

15 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri
16 Synod (hereafter District) focus on demonstrating life on the new earth as those already living
17 under the gracious rule of our Lord, Jesus; and be it further,

18 *Resolved*, That those in positions of leadership in the District focus on promoting this life lived under
19 the gracious rule of our Lord, Jesus, rather than preserving the institution of the District or that
20 of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and be it further,

21 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the District be encouraged to take up the cross of seeking first the
22 Kingdom of God trusting that the Lord of the Church will continue to provide all that we need to
23 support the “body life” of the congregation; and be it further

24 *Resolved*, That District entities faced with the same institutional pressures as congregations, model
25 what putting Kingdom priorities above institutional needs looks like; and be it further,

26 *Resolved*, That those in District positions of leadership serve and assist the congregations of the
27 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod by producing Bible studies to ground this Kingdom
28 emphasis in God’s Word; and be it finally,

29 *Resolved*, That those in District leadership serve and assist the congregations of the Lutheran Church –
30 Missouri Synod by compiling a list of resources available to congregations wherein the Lord of
31 the Church is already providing solutions to ease institutional related pressures; and be it
32 finally,

33 *Resolved*, that the Convention of the District urge, by way of overture to the National Convention, the
34 leadership and membership of Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod to do the same.

35

36 Submitted by Circuit 5 – Tallahassee for consideration and adoption at the 2025 Florida-Georgia
37 District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 2-01 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership**

3
4 **Dedicating Time at the Annual FLGA District Pastors Conference to Address the**
5 **Pastoral Shortage**
6

7 WHEREAS, The 2023 LCMS Handbook requires the FLGA District to hold official conferences
8 for the spiritual and professional growth of pastors and church workers (2023 LCMS
9 Handbook, 4.8.1), a responsibility the district has faithfully upheld; and
10

11 WHEREAS, The FLGA District is experiencing a growing pastoral shortage. By 2025, the
12 average pastor’s age will be 59, with many nearing retirement. The number of available pastors
13 is limited, and congregations face an average wait time of 24 months to complete the call
14 process. This challenge is expected to intensify in the coming years; and
15

16 WHEREAS, The 2023 LCMS Handbook allows official conferences to address broader
17 concerns, including matters affecting congregations, schools, and the work of the Synod (2023
18 LCMS Handbook, 4.8.1b). This flexibility enables the district to allocate significant time at its
19 annual pastors conference to addressing the pastoral shortage and developing solutions;
20 therefore, be it
21

22 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District dedicate at least 50% of the annual pastors conference to
23 discussing the pastoral shortage and developing strategies to present at the 2028 District
24 Convention; and be it further
25

26 *Resolved*, That this dedicated time be used to equip pastors in best practices for training lay leaders to
27 assist in ministry and ensuring that congregations remain strong and mission-focused despite
28 the fact that there is a pastoral shortage.
29

30 Submitted by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Tampa, FL for consideration and adoption at
31 the 2025 Florida-Georgia District Convention

3 **Ensuring Pastoral Ministry in the LCMS During Times of Shortage**

4 WHEREAS, 2023 Synod Convention Resolution 6-02A "...affirms the necessity and fruitfulness
5 of Synod-approved alternate routes to ministry to be used in appropriate ministry
6 settings and for appropriately qualified candidates (currently, the Specific Ministry
7 Pastor program, the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology, the Center for Hispanic
8 Studies, the Specific Ministry Pastor - Espanol / English Program, the Cross-cultural
9 Ministry Center, and the Residential Alternate Route program; previously, DELTO)..."
10 and "strongly encourage[s] [district presidents and seminaries] to direct men to
11 residential pastoral ministry routes [at our Synod's seminaries] as the preferred option
12 (2019 Res. 6-02, Proceedings, 159)" as the way that the church operates during normal
13 circumstances; and

14 WHEREAS, The FLGA District faces a growing pastoral shortage, with the average pastor's
15 age reaching 59 by 2025 and a significant number approaching retirement. The number
16 of available pastors is inadequate, and congregations often wait an average of 24 months
17 to complete the call process. This challenge is expected to intensify in the coming years;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Within 15 years, the average age of the current pastoral workforce will rise to 74,
20 leading to a critical shortage of pastors. This will impact not only small congregations
21 that cannot afford full-time pastors but also larger, well-resourced churches. Without
22 intervention, there will be too few pastors to serve even half of existing congregations,
23 let alone to support church planting and growth; therefore, be it

24 *Resolved*, That to ensure the ongoing proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the
25 Sacraments, the FLGA District of the LCMS requests that the 2026 Synod Convention
26 authorize district presidents to utilize all existing Synod-approved pastoral formation
27 programs at their discretion, allowing them to determine the most suitable training
28 pathway for candidates in their district; and be it further

29 *Resolved*, That the Synod direct its seminaries to provide equal financial support for all
30 approved pastoral formation programs, removing financial barriers and expanding
31 access to pastoral training. By strengthening multiple formation pathways, the FLGA
32 District will be better equipped to meet the needs of congregations and to continue
33 advancing the mission of the Church.

34
35 Submitted by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Tampa, FL for consideration and adoption at
36 the 2025 Florida-Georgia District Convention

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**
2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership**

3 **To Continue and Establish New Ministry to Next Generation Leaders in the District**

4 WHEREAS, Our Lord encourages His disciples to "look, I tell you, lift up your eyes and see that the
5 fields are white for harvest," (John 4) and;

6 WHEREAS, the average member of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (hereafter LCMS) in 2015
7 was 47 years of age and “[c]ompared to U.S. Census estimates, our congregations are
8 disproportionately long on seniors 65 and older (they make up 24 percent of total baptized
9 membership) and short on young adults ages 18–34 (15 percent).” (LCMS Reporter “Annual
10 Statistic Reporting: Beyond the Numbers” November 18, 2016); and

11 WHEREAS, the Florida-Georgia District of the LCMS (hereafter “District”), has a long history of
12 supporting ministry to younger generations including the Middle School Gathering, High School
13 Youth programming, and support for campus ministries on the various campuses in the
14 District; and

15 WHEREAS, this ministry continues to be vital in the continued growth of the church and opening up
16 new avenues for the Gospel to be brought to those outside of the Body of Christ; therefore, be it

17 *Resolved*, that the District continues support of ministry to next generation leaders, especially those in
18 middle and high school as well as those in campus ministries, and be it finally,

19 *Resolved*, that the District seek new ways to engage next generation leaders, for the sake of the growth
20 of the church.

21

22 Submitted by Circuit 5 – Tallahassee for consideration and adoption at the 2025 Florida-Georgia
23 District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**
2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership**

3 **To Encourage Ministry Sabbaticals for Church Workers**

- 4
5 WHEREAS, Ministry Sabbaticals serve to bless both the church worker and the ministry; and
6
7 WHEREAS, The Word of God points to the command for Sabbath rest, (Genesis 2:3, Exodus 20:8-11;
8 Leviticus 25:4ff); and
9
10 WHEREAS, Many Christian denominations strongly encourage pastors to take sabbaticals, recognizing
11 the importance of periodic rest and renewal for sustained ministry effectiveness; and
12
13 WHEREAS, A Ministry Sabbatical is a structured time for spiritual reflection, study, personal
development, and rest for church workers; and
14
15 WHEREAS, There is historical precedent in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod going back to the
16 first Synod President, C.F. W. Walther, who in 1859 took much needed ministry sabbatical to be
refreshed and renewed; and
17
18 WHEREAS, Walther’s example of returning with renewed energy and great productivity blessed the
LCMS; and
19
20 WHEREAS, Currently we are seeing a decrease of seminary graduates, DCE and Lutheran School
21 teachers available to fill a growing number of calls and a growing number of church workers
retiring; and
22
23 WHEREAS, A ministry sabbatical is an investment in a local ministry to reinvigorate the ministry and
the church worker, strengthening it for future ministry; and
24
25 WHEREAS, Ministry Sabbaticals can help church workers combat burnout, refresh their perspective,
and return to ministry with renewed energy and focus; and
26
27 WHEREAS, Even some in the business world have recognized the benefit of offering sabbaticals to
retain good workers. Sabbaticals can also enable retention and longer service in churches; and
28
29 WHEREAS, Since COVID in 2019 we have seen higher expectations placed on Church Workers with
30 decreased participation and a steady decline in many places, leading to discouragement and
burnout among current church workers; and
31
32 WHEREAS, The need to continually cultivate longevity among current church workers is beneficial to
the whole church; Therefore, be it
33 *Resolved*, That ministries study the benefits of ministry sabbaticals on their workers; and be it further
34 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District provides a template for a Ministry Sabbatical Policy Guideline for
35 ministries to adapt and adopt to their circumstances; and be it further
36 *Resolved*, That ministries be encouraged to set aside funding regularly to support their church workers
37 in taking a sabbatical; and be it further
38 *Resolved*, That the District works together with other districts to put together a list of available grants and
39 scholarships which help provide necessary funding for a Ministry Sabbatical; and be it further



40 *Resolved*, That the District avails itself of available resources within the LCMS, including those
41 provided by Lutheran Church Extension Fund (through Grace Place Wellness), to explore and
42 promote healthier church workers and healthier ministries; and be it finally resolved

43 *Resolved*, That the District memorializes this resolution to all districts of the LCMS at the 2026 LCMS
44 convention.

45 Submitted by The Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the
46 2025 Florida-Georgia District Convention

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**
2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership**

3 **To Reduce Restrictions On SMP Pastors**

4 Whereas Our Lord Jesus Christ established the Office of Public Ministry by sending out His Apostles
5 to preach, teach and baptize those they went to serve ; and

6 Whereas the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod since its inception has faithfully overseen and
7 consistently provided for the education and placement of qualified men to serve in the Office
8 of Public Ministry for local congregations; and

9 Whereas the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod has established The Specific Ministry Pastor
10 Program at the 2007 National Convention as a distance-based, specialized program of
11 theological education available at both seminaries; and

12 Whereas, the Specific Ministry Pastor program is available to those selected by a congregation to
13 serve as vicars for the first two years of the program; and

14 Whereas upon successful completion of the first two years and certification by the seminary faculty,
15 these students are ordained and complete two additional years of instruction; and

16 Whereas participants have the approval and support of their home church, the faculty of the
17 seminary at which they train, and the LCMS district they serve; and

18 Whereas each SMP is supervised by an experienced LCMS pastor during and after his program of
19 study; and

20 Whereas ordained pastors trained via this program face restrictions concerning service in the
21 pastoral ministry, including the restriction of certain voting rights and the inability to hold
22 office at the Circuit and District level; therefore be it

23 *Resolved* that restrictions on voting and holding office at the Circuit and District level be lifted upon
24 completing the entire four year SMP course of study and successfully completing three
25 additional years of continuous supervised ministry and be it finally

26 *Resolved* that we give thanks for the faithful and dedicated ministry of all Pastors of the Lutheran
27 Church – Missouri Synod.

28 Submitted by Heartland Circuit 12 for consideration and adoption at the 2025 Florida-Georgia District
29 Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Overture: 2-06 - 2025**
 2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership**

3

4 **Convene a Florida-Georgia District Day of Prayer**

5 WHEREAS, The Lord Jesus promises to answer prayer and scripture encourages us to pray; and
 6 WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ enters into prayer to seek the face of His Father before major events
 7 in His life; and

8 WHEREAS, The early disciples in Acts 2:42 “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the
 9 fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer”; and

10 WHEREAS, Our Mission Executive Rev. Dr. Peter Meier has imparted the value of prayer among us by
 11 hosting monthly prayer for the members of our district and provided a guide for the same;
 12 therefore be it

13 *Resolved*, That the members of the Florida-Georgia District set aside Ash Wednesday as a day of prayer,
 14 and be it further,

15 *Resolved*, That the Mission Executive provide devotional assistance for the devotional watches of the
 16 day at 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., and be it finally

17 *Resolved*, That this be established as an annual day of prayer through the coming Triennium.

18 Submitted by Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the 2025
 19 Florida-Georgia District Convention

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Overture: 2-07 - 2025**
 2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership**

3

4 **Giving Thanks for Ministry Partners**

5 WHEREAS, The Rev. Dr. Peter Meier has served the FLGA district with faithfulness, distinction and a
 6 servant heart; and

7 WHEREAS, The FLGA District staff works as alongsiders to equip, empower and engage the ministries
 8 of the FLGA District; and

9 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church Extension Fund and District VP Jay Wendland works to support the
 10 ministries and disaster relief efforts in the FLGA District; therefore be it

11 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District in convention gives thanks for the gifts of God evidenced in their
 12 ministry and service; and be it finally

13 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District in convention rise and sing the Doxology.

14 Submitted by Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the 2025
 15 Florida-Georgia District Convention

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 3-01 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

3

4

To Increase Clarity in the Charter and Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws

5 WHEREAS, the Synod Handbook governs the Charter and Articles of Incorporation of the Florida-
6 Georgia District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; and

7 WHEREAS, Changes have been made to the Synod Handbook that require governance that differs from
8 the Charter and Articles of Incorporation (Charter and Articles) and Bylaws passed at the 2022
9 District Convention; and

10 WHEREAS, Clarity in the governing documents specific to the Florida-Georgia District helps the
11 members of the District exercise the expectations of the governing documents; and

12 WHEREAS, During the review of the Charter and Articles and Bylaws, additional editorial changes have
13 been proposed to provide further clarity to the documents; therefore be it

14 *Resolved*, That Charter and Articles Article V Section 2, 3, and 4 be amended as follows:

15 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

16 Section 2

17 All officers and members of the Board of Directors shall be members of a member congregation of
18 the District and when appropriate members of member congregations ~~residents~~ of appropriate
19 regions during the course of their tenure. The Board of Directors shall consist of the following:

20 d. *Elected at large from the roster of the Synod District:*

21 (i) *the President;*

22 b. Elected at large from the roster of the District:

23 ~~(ii)~~ (i) *the Secretary; and*

24 ~~(iii)~~ (ii) *three (3) ministers of religion, commissioned, who are members of the District-Synod.*

25 e. *Selected on a regional basis and elected by ratification by the District Convention:*

26 (i) *five (5) Vice-Presidents who are ministers of religion-ordained and on the roster of the*
27 *District.*

28 (ii) *Ten (10) lay persons who shall serve as representatives of the region they represent within*
29 *the District.*

30 f. *Appointed by the Board of Directors, a Treasurer who shall be a layperson with knowledge and*
31 *experience in matters relating to corporate finance.*

32 Section 3

33 The officers and the Board of Directors shall be elected at a regular meeting of the District by the
34 delegates constituting the same as provided for in the bylaws, with the exception that the Treasurer
35 shall be appointed by the Board of Directors at its next regular meeting following the election meeting
36 of the District. All officers shall hold their respective offices for a term of three (3); years and shall
37 assume office at within the time specified in the bylaws.

38 Section 4

39 Whenever an officer or director shall cease to be a member of a member congregation of the
40 District, or, in the case of regional positions, ~~shall cease to reside within~~ of a member
41 congregation of the region he or she represents, he or she shall forthwith cease to be an officer or
42 a director of this corporation.

43 and be it further

44 *Resolved*, That Charter and Articles Article VI be amended as follows:

45

46 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

47 **Article VI**

48 The Constitution of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is the Constitution of the District and
49 the Bylaws of the Synod are primarily the bylaws of the District. Further ~~The~~ Bylaws of this
50 Corporation are to be made, altered, or rescinded by the members of the District in its District
51 Convention, provided the same have been reviewed and approved by the Synod’s Commission on
52 Constitutional Matters, have been found to be consistent with the then existing Constitution, Bylaws,
53 and resolutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and are not inconsistent with this Charter,
54 or with the laws of the land .

55 and be it finally

56 *Resolved*, That Bylaw D1.02, D1.05, D2.03f., D2.04, D2.13, D2.16b, D2.22b, D2.24k., D2.28b., D2.29,
57 D2.31a., D2.32, D2.34, D5.01, and D6.01 with relevant changes to affected enumeration be amended as
58 follows:

59

60 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

61

62 D1.02 ADVISORY DELEGATES

63 “Advisory delegates are all commissioned ministers, and those ordained ministers not
64 presently serving as voting representatives of congregations, who are members of the Synod
65 within the District. In addition, a congregation that is part of a multi-congregation parish, other
66 than the congregation supplying the voting lay delegate, may elect and depute an advisory lay
67 delegate.” ~~The following ministers of religion, ordained or commissioned, who hold membership in~~
68 ~~the Synod through the District shall be regarded as advisory members with full freedom of speech in~~
69 ~~District Conventions and may be called up to serve in an elected or appointed capacity by the District:~~

- 70 a.—~~Ministers of religion—ordained whose congregations do not hold membership in the Synod~~
71 ~~(i.e. mission congregations);~~
72 b.—~~Ministers of religion—ordained, not in charge of congregations (i.e. retired pastors, Specific~~
73 ~~Ministry Pastors);~~
74 c.—~~Ministers of religion—commissioned Ministers of religion—ordained who are on the roster~~
75 ~~of the District but are not voting delegates of congregations.~~
76 d.—~~Candidates for the ministry of religion, either ordained or commissioned.~~



77 D1.05 DELEGATES TO SYNODICAL CONVENTIONS

78 c. Each electoral circuit of member congregations shall elect one (1) pastoral and one (1) lay
79 delegate. (Const. Art. XII 10b)

80

81 D2.03 APPOINTIVE OFFICIALS AND COMMITTEES

82 The president may appoint the following officials and committees:

83 f. Individual or committee responsible for stewardship promotion.

84

85 D2.04 TERM OF OFFICE

86 The term of office for all officers and the Board of Directors shall be three (3) years. All officers and
87 the Board of Directors shall begin their term of office ~~at~~ within the time specified in these Bylaws. No
88 elected individual shall serve more than three (3) consecutive terms in any one (1) elective office,
89 except that the President and the district treasurer shall be eligible for four (4) consecutive terms of
90 office.

91

92 D2.13 DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

93

94 e. He shall function, if appropriate, as an administrator in the dispute resolution process
95 (Handbook of Synod [~~2016 edition, or its progeny~~] 2023 Bylaws 1.10.4a and 1.10.6 as may
96 hereafter be amended.)

97

98 f. He shall be responsible for carrying out the nomination procedures outlined in these bylaws
99 according to the appropriate Synodical Bylaws (Handbook of Synod [2023 ~~2016 edition, or its~~
100 ~~progeny~~]. Bylaw 4.7. as may hereafter be amended). He shall cause the proceedings of the
101 conventions of the District to be published. He shall oversee the preparation of the
102 manuscripts, recording all resolutions in the wording in which they have been adopted, and
103 cause the proceedings to be published after the President of the District has approved.

104

105 THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

106

107 D2.16 MEMBERSHIP

108 d. Every member of the board shall be a member of a member congregation of the District and, if
109 an individual member of the Synod, on the district roster When a member of the board ceases
110 to be a member of a member congregation of the District or, if an individual member of the
111 Synod, ceases to be on the district roster, he/she shall automatically lose membership on the
112 board. Those members of the Board of Directors who are elected representatives for regions of
113 the District shall cease to be members of the board if they are no longer members of member
114 congregations of ~~residing in~~ the region which they represent.

115

116 D2.22 MEETINGS

117 b. The President may or, at the direction of at least one-third of the members of the Board of

118 Directors, ~~shall~~ **may** call other meetings, special or regular, as may be deemed necessary.

119

120 D2.24 DUTIES

121

122 **k. To appoint a governance committee as needed.**

123

124 D2.28 JUDGE OF ELECTIONS

125

- 126 b. The ballots shall designate the office to be filled and the number of candidates to be voted for.
127 The ballot shall list in alphabetical order the names of the candidates to be voted for in each
128 office or board. In the necessity of a second and subsequent ballot for president or vice
129 president, the candidate having the least number of votes shall be removed from the ballot. In
130 ballots for all other positions, **the candidate receiving the fewest votes and all** ~~any~~
131 ~~candidates~~ receiving less than 15% of the vote shall ~~also~~ be removed from the ballot unless
132 fewer than two candidates receive 15 percent or more of the votes cast, in which case the three
133 highest candidates shall constitute the ballot. Balloting shall continue until a majority vote is
134 received.

135

136 D2. 29 MAJORITY OF VOTES

137 A majority of all votes cast shall be required for election to all elective offices and other elective
138 positions. ~~Candidates receiving a majority on the first ballot shall be declared elected. If no candidate~~
139 ~~receives a majority of the votes cast, balloting will proceed with the candidate receiving the smallest~~
140 ~~number of votes eliminated from consideration until one (1) candidate receives a majority of the votes~~
141 ~~cast, who shall be declared elected.~~

142

143 D2.31 PRIMARY ELECTION FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

144 Nominations

- 145 d. Nominations for regional Vice-President shall be made from the ordained roster of the
146 District by member congregations of each region within the District no later than ninety (90)
147 days prior to the beginning of the convention. Nominees must be **members of member**
148 **congregations** ~~residents~~ within the region they represent. The District Secretary shall call for
149 nominations at least 180 days prior to the convention.

150

151 D2.32 ELECTION AND RANKING OF VICE-PRESIDENTS

152 After the election of the vice-Presidents by ratification by the entire convention, they shall be
153 ranked (1st, . . . 5th) each by a separate ballot on which each delegate shall vote for one
154 candidate for each Vice Presidential office. The candidate in each ranking receiving the majority
155 vote shall be considered ranked in order of the ballot taking place. **In the event of no majority,**
156 **the ranking process will be the same as the election process as indicated in D2.28 (b)**

157

158 D2.34 SELECTION OF REGIONAL LAY REPRESENTATIVES ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



- 159 f. Any congregation within a region may nominate two (2) individuals to be regional lay
160 representative to the District Board of Directors. Congregations may nominate candidates
161 who are members of member congregations ~~reside~~ within ~~in~~ the region of the congregation.
162

163 **D5.01 DISTRICT STEWARDSHIP PROMOTION**

164 **The District President shall appoint individual or committee responsible for stewardship**
165 **promotion.**

166 **This individual or committee shall cooperate with the Synod's elected or appointed**
167 **person/persons responsible for stewardship and shall assist and advise local congregations in**
168 **the development and promotion of an adequate stewardship program.**

169 **D6.01 CONGREGATIONAL CONSTITUTION REVIEW**

170 **The District President shall appoint a constitution committee to review congregational**
171 **constitutions and bylaws of congregations seeking membership in the Synod within the District**
172 **and of District congregations amending their constitutions and bylaws. The review shall seek to**
173 **ensure the expectations of the current Synod Handbook relating to congregational**
174 **constitutions and bylaws are met. Once the congregation's governing documents fulfill**
175 **expectations, the constitution committee shall recommend approval to the District Board of**
176 **Directors for the Board's action as noted in the Synod Handbook.**

177
178 Submitted by Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the 2025
179 Florida-Georgia District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 3-02 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

3 **To Clarify Transitions of Officer**

4

5 WHEREAS, The President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, the members of the Board of Directors (except
6 the Treasurer), and all members of elected committees need sufficient time to transition into
7 the positions to which they are elected; and

8 WHEREAS, Transitions need to take place quickly to allow the duly elected to serve as they have been
9 elected to do; and

10 WHEREAS, Clearly defined transition times provide clarity during transitions; therefore be it

11 *Resolved*, That the Florida-Georgia District Bylaw D2.05 be amended as follows:

12

13 D2.05 TRANSITION OF ADMINISTRATIONS

- 14 a. The President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, the members of the Board of Directors (except
15 the Treasurer), and all members of elected committees shall assume their respective duties
16 within ~~ninety (90)~~ sixty (60) days following the adjournment of the District Convention
17 following their election. **The outgoing executive committee shall work with the newly
18 elected to designate the official starting date for each position.**

19

20 Submitted by Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the 2025
21 Florida-Georgia District Convention

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 3-03 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

3 **To Provide Clarity About Amendments To Resolutions**

4 WHEREAS, the Apostle Paul proclaims that “For God is not a God of confusion but of peace...” (I
5 Corinthians 14:33) and;

6 WHEREAS, the current practice at the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod Convention (hereafter
7 “Synod Convention” is to show changes to resolutions only in their final form in the publication
8 of the “Today’s Business,” with no clear explanation of the changes to the resolutions (e.g.
9 7.1.a), and;

10 WHEREAS, many of the resolutions are significantly lengthy, especially those dealing with changes to
11 Bylaws, and;

12 WHEREAS, it is difficult for the delegates to the convention to understand the changes to these
13 amendments given the window between the publication of the “Today’s Business,” which is
14 often short, and;

15 WHEREAS, delegates who do not understand an amendment will not be able to vote in good
16 conscience on a given resolution, be it therefore:

17 *Resolved*, that Convention of the Florida Georgia District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
18 (hereafter “District Convention”) petition the Committee on the Handbook and other
19 appropriate parties consider changes to the practice of bringing amendments to the floor to
20 include a complete verbal explanation of changes made in an amendment as well as a print
21 notation of changes made in an amendment, and be it finally

22 *Resolved*, that the District Convention petition the Convention seek to bring more clarity to the
23 delegates who are voting upon the important matters considered.

24

25 Submitted by Tallahassee Circuit 5 for consideration and adoption at the 2025 Florida-Georgia District
26 Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 3-04- 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

3 **Regional Vice President Selection**

4 WHEREAS the Synod utilizes entities within specific groupings to live out its life together as Synod in
5 an orderly way for the benefit of the Body;

6 WHEREAS districts are “the Synod itself performing the functions of Synod”; [4.1.1.1]

7 WHEREAS “[t]he district president shall represent the Synod in his district”; [4.4.2]

8 WHEREAS “[a] president shall be elected from the clergy roster of the Synod by each district”; [4.3.1]

9 WHEREAS “[a] visitation circuit is a network of congregations that “walks together” for mutual care,
10 support, advice, study, ecclesiastical encouragement, service, coordination, resources, and
11 counsel—all for the sake of greater congregational participation in God’s mission”; [5.1.1]

12 WHEREAS districts “establish visitation circuits according to geographical criteria”; [5.1.2]

13 WHEREAS “Each circuit visitor shall assist the district president within the circuit. (a) He shall serve
14 under the direction of and be accountable to the district president and shall serve as his
15 spokesman when so authorized and directed and shall assist him in doctrinal and spiritual
16 supervision.” [5.2.3; 5.2.3(a)]

17 WHEREAS “[t]he circuit visitor shall hold his position by virtue of his selection by the circuit forum
18 and ratification by the district convention” [5.2.2]

19 WHEREAS “The [Synod] vice-presidents shall be elected advisors of the President and, upon the
20 President’s request or as provided by the Synod, shall assist him in discharging his
21 responsibilities or represent him.”

22 WHEREAS the filling of a vacancy in a regional vice-presidency is only made “in consultation with the
23 district presidents within that region” [3.3.2.4]

24 WHEREAS five Synod vice-presidents are designated “regional vice-presidents”; [3.3.2.3]

25 WHEREAS selection by regional groupings is deemed appropriate for circuit visitor and district
26 president, both of whom serve under the direction of another, elected by a broader grouping;

27 WHEREAS circuit visitors are selected in their regional grouping and ratified by the district in
28 convention; therefore be it

29 *Resolved* that the office of the Secretary of Synod develop an overture to be submitted to the 2029
30 Convention that provides for the needed changes so that the
31 five regional vice-presidents would be selected by their respective regions and ratified by the
32 Synod in convention for the 2032 Convention.

33

34 Submitted by Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the 2025
35 Florida-Georgia District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Overture: 3-05- 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

3 **To Provide Guidelines for Ecclesiastical Supervision in an Internet Age**

4 **Preamble**

5 The Biblical and Confessional theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church address ecclesiastical
6 supervision clearly with a focus on Gospel-focused collegiality and accountability. A spirit of personal
7 interaction, trust, and restoration sets the tone for ecclesiastical supervision efforts with
8 congregations and pastors. “Spying,” “going after” erring constituents, and playing “gotcha!” with
9 pastors, congregations, or fellow district presidents runs counter to the clear teaching of the Scriptures
10 and Confessions and the spirit of ecclesiastical oversight. The use of the Internet to supplement
11 visitation and oversight must be consistent with the clear doctrinal and constitutional foundations of
12 the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

13 ***RATIONALE***

14 **The constitution of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod assigns the responsibility of**
15 **ecclesiastical supervision of congregations and church workers to district presidents as follows:**

16 LCMS Constitution XII, 7:

17 “The district presidents shall, moreover, especially exercise supervision over the doctrine, life, and
18 administration of office of the ordained and commissioned ministers of their district and acquaint
19 themselves with the religious conditions of the congregations of their district. To this end they shall visit
20 and, according as they deem it necessary, hold investigations in the congregations. Their assistants in
21 this work are the circuit visitors, who therefore shall regularly make their reports to the district
22 president.”

23 **Ecclesiastical Supervision is defined as follows in the LCMS bylaws:**

24 LCMS Bylaws 1.2.1.j

25 “Ecclesiastical supervision: The responsibility, primarily of the President of the Synod and district
26 presidents, to supervise on behalf of the Synod the doctrine, life, and administration of its members,
27 officers, and agencies. Such supervision, subject to the provisions of the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws,
28 and resolutions, includes visitation, evangelical encouragement and support, care, protection, counsel,
29 advice, admonition, and, when necessary, appropriate disciplinary measures to assure that the
30 Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod are followed and implemented. Thus, ecclesiastical
31 supervision is also the presenting, interpreting, and applying of the collective will of the Synod’s
32 congregations. Ecclesiastical supervision does not include the responsibility to observe, monitor,
33 control, or direct the day-to-day activities of individual members of the Synod, whether in the conduct
34 of their work or in their private lives (cf. Bylaw 2.14.1 [a]). Further, those constitutional articles and
35 bylaws pertaining to ecclesiastical supervision shall determine the full definition of ecclesiastical
36 supervision.”

37 **Additionally, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations noted complications in dealing**
38 **with supervision issues in an Internet age, noting in its document, “Public Rebuke of Public Sin”:**

39 As we reflect on the meaning of the term “public” in this present context in which we in the LCMS find
40 ourselves, we would do well to keep in mind the situation in the earlier years of our Synod. We may
41 note, for example, that the polity of the LCMS makes all of its members—pastors and congregations—
42 accountable to each other for their lives and teaching. When that polity was adopted in the nineteenth

43 century, communication was such that pastors and congregations that were not in close geographic
44 proximity would know very little about each other. Only the most serious cases would be found worthy
45 of being reported to synodical leadership, and only a very few would ever have been considered by the
46 Synod as a whole. Today that is simply not the case. No deliberation at the local level is needed, when
47 anyone can send an e-mail or post a rebuke on their Web site in response to a real or perceived sin. This
48 situation creates some profound difficulties—not the least of which is that there is nothing in Scripture
49 or the Confessions that justifies a public rebuke made unilaterally in the absence of conversation with
50 others who are aware of the public sin (cf. Acts 18:24–26). In the case of Paul rebuking Peter, Paul was
51 in conversation with the church in Antioch. Luther, too, could and did enlist the help and support of
52 others who recognized that the message of the Gospel had been obscured by the papacy.

53 Even if consultation should take place, however, modern methods of communication have added
54 another layer of complexity to the problem. Not only is it possible, but it is likely that a public rebuke
55 will receive a wider audience than the public sin that elicited it. In other words, the rebuke has the side
56 effect of publicizing the sin more widely, of making it known to an audience that had no prior knowledge
57 of it. We must recognize that the number of people directly affected by a public sin might be limited.
58 Although all members of the Synod are accountable to each other, in most cases it will only be necessary
59 to deal with public sin at the local level. Publicity beyond that level may serve to scandalize more than
60 to instruct. This observation should lead to a careful consideration of the audience for a public rebuke.
61 It is neither necessary nor beneficial to involve all members of the Synod in every case of public sin.
62 Those who would undertake a rebuke should take great care, therefore, in choosing their medium of
63 communication and in determining their audience. (pgs. 22-23 of “Public Rebuke of Public Sin”)

64 **Furthermore, this same CTCR document cites the Confessions in emphasizing the need for**
65 **Christian charity in addressing wrongdoing that becomes known by others:**

66 “In the matter of “public sin” it is also important to recognize that traditionally theologians have
67 distinguished between sins committed willfully and those committed out of ignorance. This distinction
68 is maintained, for example, in the Preface to The Book of Concord.

69 “In regard to the condemnations, criticisms, and rejections of false, impure teaching (particularly in the
70 article concerning the Lord’s Supper), which had to be expressly and distinctly set forth in this
71 explanation and thorough settlement of the disputed articles so that all would be able to protect
72 themselves from them, and which can in no way be avoided for many other reasons: it is likewise not
73 our will or intention thereby to mean persons who err naively and do not blaspheme the truth of the
74 divine Word, much less whole churches, inside the Holy Empire of the German nation or out. Instead, it
75 is our will and intention thereby to condemn only the false and seductive teachings and the stiff-necked
76 teachers and blasphemers of the same.... (p. 20 of “Public Rebuke Public Sin”).

77 “The confessors’ approach here would seem to imply that not every expression of false belief is
78 automatically a candidate for public rebuke. Repeated expressions of false belief would certainly qualify
79 as sin that would warrant public rebuke. But in cases of human weakness and ignorance, Christian
80 charity would require private and personal discussion rather than public rebuke. The same point could
81 be made concerning sins of personal conduct, errors in pastoral judgment, and whatever else might
82 broadly be considered sin. Public rebuke should never be the first response in a situation where the one
83 rebuked has no history of erroneous belief or behavior, and has not persisted in the sin. When sin has
84 been committed there is the need for confession and repentance, and the pronouncement of absolution.”
85 (p. 25 of “Public Rebuke Public Sin”)

86 **Notably, The Scriptures note that God’s people need to be slow to call attention to the sins of**
87 **others and that ministers of the Gospel need to exhibit humility instead of arrogance:**

88 “Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
89 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your
90 own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the
91 speck out of your brother’s eye.” (Matthew 7:3-5).

92 “For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered
93 or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain.” (Titus 1:7).

94 **Also notably, The Confessions provide guidance regarding the active search for sinful situations:**

95 “As for the enumeration of sins in confession, we have said earlier (6-8) that we do not believe that it is
96 necessary by divine right. When someone objects that a judge must hear a case before pronouncing
97 sentence, that is irrelevant because the ministry of absolution is in the area of blessing or grace, not of
98 judgment or law. The ministers of the church, therefore, have the command to forgive sins; they do not
99 have the command to investigate secret sins. In addition, they absolve us of those which we do not
100 remember; therefore absolution, which is the voice of the Gospel forgiving sins and consoling
101 consciences, does not need an investigation.” (Apology XII, Penitence, Confession and Satisfaction, 102-
102 105)

103 **Finally, in his book “Pastoral Theology”, Rev. John H.C. Fritz reinforces the proper approach to**
104 **hearing confession rather than searching for outstanding sins:**

105 It is self-evident that a pastor should not use the opportunity afforded him by Communion registration
106 to search out secret sins or family affairs or in any way to encourage gossiping and tattling (p. 133 of
107 “Pastoral Theology”).

108 Says Luther, ‘If anyone comes to confession who is under suspicion, I must diligently inquire into the
109 circumstances. If the person denies that he is guilty, I must be satisfied to believe him rather than my
110 own conjecture in the matter’ (pgs. 133-134 of Pastoral Theology).

111 Therefore be it

112 *Resolved*, the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (hereafter, “FLGA
113 District”), give thanks to God for the wisdom written down in Scripture, the Confessions, and
114 elsewhere in dealing with our fellow believers when one believes that another has sinned; and be it
115 further,

116 *Resolved*, the FLGA District memorialize The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (hereafter, “Synod”) to
117 develop Guidelines for Ecclesiastical Supervision when the Internet has been used by one party to
118 accuse another of sin; and be it further

119 *Resolved*, That such guidelines would at minimum address:

- 120 1. The distinct responsibility of ecclesiastical oversight given to District Presidents in their
121 respective districts that no worker or lay person should usurp, but rather give aid to the District
122 President in his supervision responsibilities.
- 123 2. That ecclesiastical supervision “includes visitation, evangelical encouragement, and support,
124 care, protection, counsel, advice, admonition, and when necessary appropriate disciplinary
125 measures,” (LCMS Bylaws 1.2.1.j.) and does not include seeking out wrongdoing, namely, “the
126 responsibility to observe, monitor, control, or direct the day-to-day activities of individual
127 members of the Synod, whether in the conduct of their work or in their private lives,” (LCMS
128 Bylaws 1.2.1.j) by electronic or other means.
- 129 3. That profound difficulties result when calling out wrongdoing on the Internet or otherwise based
130 on online discoveries, “not the least of which is that there is nothing in Scripture or the

131 Confessions that justifies a public rebuke made unilaterally in the absence of conversation with
132 others who are aware of the public sin.” (“Public Rebuke of Public Sin,” CTCR p. 22)

133 4. “That Christian charity would require private and personal discussion rather than public rebuke
134 for wrongdoing or misunderstandings discovered online.” (“Public Rebuke of Public Sin,” CTCR
135 p. 25)

136 5. That “the ministers of the Church, therefore have the command to forgive sins; they do not have
137 the command to investigate secret sins.” (Apology XII, Penitence, Confession and Satisfaction)

138 6. And that if suspected wrongdoing is discovered online, the person discovering such wrongdoing
139 needs to follow Scriptural and Confessional principles regarding the offense, starting with
140 Matthew 18. If need be, the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor should be notified for
141 appropriate action.

142 and be it finally

143 *Resolved*, That such guidelines be produced in consultation with the Council of Presidents by the 2029
144 Synod Convention so that they may be reported upon at that meeting.

145
146 Submitted by Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the 2025
147 Florida-Georgia District Convention



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**
2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

3 **To Support and Clarify the Prior Approval Process**

4 WHEREAS, one of the expressed purposes of Synod is to “recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other
5 professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” (Art. III.3); and

6 WHEREAS, Synod has the responsibility to oversee that training; and

7 WHEREAS, Synod has designated that responsibility to the prior approval panels outlined in various
8 bylaws (3.6.6.1, 3.10.5.7.3, 3.10.6.8.2, 3.10.6.9.2); and

9 WHEREAS, those panels have a responsibility not only to work on behalf of the Synod but also are
10 responsible to the Synod; and

11 WHEREAS, those under consideration for theological professorships and other such positions as require
12 prior approval have ordinarily been ordained into the Office of Holy Ministry or have been
13 commissioned and/or consecrated into an auxiliary office of the Church; and

14 WHEREAS, those under consideration for aforementioned positions have also been examined and
15 approved for service on the roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and

16 WHEREAS, those individual members of Synod have, by virtue of their membership in the Synod, agreed
17 to the confessional basis as outlined in Art. II, as well as recognize and affirm the validity of Bylaws
18 1.6–1.8; therefore, be it

19 *Resolved*, That the District in convention give thanks to the Lord of the Church for using the Synod and
20 its agencies to preserve and enlarge the workers of the harvest; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That District in convention give thanks to those engaged in the various prior approval
22 processes for being engaged in difficult and important work; and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to do the same; and be it
24 further

25 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod to require that the process used by the
26 various panels to carry out the responsibility entrusted to it by the Synod be made transparent and
27 available to the candidate, the calling entity, and Ecclesiastical supervisor; and be it further

28 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod to stipulate that unless those under
29 consideration by the prior approval panels are found to be in violation of their ordination,
30 commissioning, consecration, or installation vows that their approval be assumed; and be it further

31 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to stipulate that if those
32 under consideration are thought to be in violation, that the candidate be given every opportunity to
33 clarify their position to the panel; and be it finally

34 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to stipulate that if such a
35 violation be found that the panel would, with the appropriate District President as that individual’s
36 ecclesiastical supervisor, engage in the appropriate processes to restore the erring brother or
37 sister so that one deemed unworthy to teach at one of the Synod’s institutions not be permitted to
38 remain on the roster or serve a congregation and thus lead that congregation to err or become out
39 of step with Synod.

40 Submitted by Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors for consideration and adoption at the 2025
41 Florida-Georgia District Convention

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**
2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

3 **Resolution Condemning Christian Zionism and Dual Covenant Theology**

- 4 WHEREAS, Since 1948, the percentage of Palestinian Christians in Palestine has significantly declined,
5 with estimates suggesting a decrease of over 80% in some areas. As of 2024, Christians make up less
6 than 2% of the population in the Palestinian territories. In 1948, Christians made up roughly 10% of
7 the total population in historic Palestine. In areas like Bethlehem, where Christians once constituted
8 around 80% of the population, they now make up less than 12%. Similarly, in Jerusalem, the
9 Christian population has dropped dramatically over the decades; and
- 10 WHEREAS, Today there are approximately 52,000 Christians spread across East Jerusalem (about
11 10,000), the West Bank (around 40,000), and Gaza (approximately 2,000). This marks a significant
12 decline, particularly in Gaza where the Christian population has drastically reduced in recent decade.
13 On average it is estimated that 1,000 to 3,000 Palestinian Christians emigrate from Palestine every
14 year in the midst of the daily occupation and genocide; and
- 15 WHEREAS, Recent data shows that approximately 3,000 to 4,000 Americans make aliyah (immigrate to
16 Israel under the Law of Return) each year. This number fluctuates slightly depending on broader
17 immigration trends and political conditions, but the U.S. remains one of the largest sources of Jewish
18 immigration to Israel; and
- 19 WHEREAS, There is a clear relationship between the ongoing settlements in Israel and the Christian
20 church in America. Christians United For Israel (CUFI) led by figures like John Hagee, promotes the
21 idea that supporting Israel brings divine blessings while fundraising for Israeli settlements. CUFI and
22 other groups raise significant amounts annually. CUFI alone reported having over 10 million
23 members globally, and its fundraising efforts have brought in millions to support Israeli settlements
24 and related projects. Precise figures for total funding from churches globally are hard to determine,
25 but CUFI's events and initiatives suggest substantial financial backing for Israeli causes; and
- 26 WHEREAS, These tendencies in the Christian church in America are due to deep theological
27 misconceptions born from broken theologies of eschatology and salvation often named "Christian
28 Zionism" and "Dual Covenant Theology" which are at home in many evangelical and some Lutheran
29 circles. These theologies distinguish between two covenants—one for Jews (descendants of Jacob)
30 and one for Gentiles (through faith in Jesus Christ). They are tied closely with dispensationalism,
31 which expects the restoration of Israel and temple worship as precursors to the second coming of
32 Christ, followed by tribulation and Christ's 1,000-year reign; and
- 33 WHEREAS, It is clear in all the scriptures that Christ, and his atoning sacrifice and death are the only means
34 by which we are saved, as clearly attested to in our Lord's own words, "Jesus said to him, "I am the
35 way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."" (John 14:6) As Peter
36 clearly confesses before the council, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name
37 under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) And which Paul confirms
38 "...so that he [Jesus] might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." (Romans 3:26);
39 and
- 40 WHEREAS, the confessions of the Lutheran Church confirm the clear teachings of scripture as stated in
41 both the Augsburg Confession and the Smalcald Articles, "Our Churches teach that people cannot be
42 justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works. People are freely justified for Christ's
43 sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are
44 forgiven for Christ's sake. By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins. God counts this faith

45 for righteousness in His sight. (AC IV) and again “He alone is the Lamb of God who takes away the
46 sins of the world, and God has laid upon Him the iniquities of us all. (SA, II, I, 2); and

47 WHEREAS, Christians of Palestine across denominational lines call for help in the midst of daily suffering
48 even as their brothers in Christ ignore the clear promises of Christ in favor of broken theologies.
49 These theologies not only lead to the suffering of Palestinians in general but to the body of Christ
50 specifically; therefore be it

51 *Resolved*, That The Florida-Georgia District of the LCMS (hereafter FLGA) condemn Christian Zionism
52 and Dual Covenant theology as a heretical theology that is leading to genocide and suffering among
53 Palestinians and against the Body of Christ; and be it finally

54 *Resolved*, That The FLGA memorialize Synod in convention to likewise condemn Christian Zionism and
55 Dual Covenant theology as a heretical theology that is leading to genocide and suffering among
56 Palestinians and against the Body of Christ.

57

58 Submitted by Atlanta North Circuit 2 for consideration and adoption at the 2025 Florida-Georgia
59 District Convention



Resolutions

Resolution: 1-01 - 2025

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**
2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

[Overture 1-01- 2025, CW (page 60)]

To Equip Disciples to Share Their Faith and Boldly Speak the Name of Jesus

4 WHEREAS, the risen Lord Jesus gives His followers the imperative to “make disciples of all nations”
5 (Matthew 28:18-20), and St. Peter encourages every believer to be ready “to give an answer to
6 everyone who asks you to give reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 3:15); and

7 WHEREAS, those whom the Holy Spirit has called to faith are also called and empowered to be
8 witnesses (Acts 1:8); and

9 WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit is the One who, by means of the spoken and written word of Christ, calls,
10 gathers, enlightens and sanctifies His church (Romans 10:17, Luther’s Explanation of the 3rd
11 Article); and

12 WHEREAS, the first LCMS President, Dr. C.F.W. Walther proclaimed it to be the holy desire and duty of
13 every Christian to “bring souls to Christ,” stating, “Through holy baptism, every Christian has
14 been consecrated, ordained and installed into the ministry to teach, admonish, and comfort his
15 neighbor. Through holy baptism each Christian has obtained not only the authority, power, and
16 right, but also the high, holy obligation... of rousing himself to care and to help so that
17 others may be brought to Christ,” and again, “Every Christian is a missionary, sent out by God
18 into his own circle to convert others to Christ...” (Sermon preached in 1842, “Bringing Souls to
19 Christ: Every Christian’s Desire and Duty”); and

20 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod seeks to “vigorously to make known the love of
21 Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world” (LCMS Mission
22 Statement); and

23 WHEREAS, our Florida-Georgia District calling is that we “are compelled by Christ’s love to connect the
24 lost, confused and hurting to Jesus, who is the true source of peace, hope, and life” and that “as
25 those saved by grace, we must share the message of salvation... so that all people experience
26 the life-changing love of Jesus” (Vivid Description of the FLGA Vision); therefore be it

27 *Resolved*, That congregations and schools of The Florida-Georgia District intentionally equip and
28 encourage their members and families to share their faith in ways appropriate to their station
29 in life and their contexts; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That the District assist congregations and schools to identify and utilize means to train and
31 equip their members and families to share the hope they have in Christ with confidence and
32 courage, making disciples who make disciple-makers; and be it finally

33 *Resolved*, That the people of The Florida-Georgia District join daily to pray for at least three
34 unchurched or unconnected people they know personally, while intentionally seeking
35 opportunities to make disciples by establishing relationships and speaking of Jesus with friends
36 and neighbors.

37



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**
2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

Resolution: 1-02 - 2025
[Overture 1-02 – 2025, CW (page 61)]

3 **To Encourage Church Multiplication as a Means of Making New Disciples**

- 4 WHEREAS, the number one imperative for disciples of Jesus is to make and multiply more disciples
5 (Matthew 28:18-20); and
- 6 WHEREAS, the book of Acts and the example of St. Paul and the early church describes church planting or
7 church multiplication as part of God’s strategy to make disciples; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Jesus Himself, as Lord of the Church, has promised to build His Church (Matthew 16:18); and
- 9 WHEREAS, the local church is God’s mission agency in its local context (Eph 3:10); and
- 10 WHEREAS, God has designed all healthy living things, including His Bride, the Church, to multiply (Genesis
11 1); and
- 12 WHEREAS, a plentiful harvest in the FLGA District demands aggressive disciple-making and church
13 multiplication to reach a diverse population (Matthew 9:37; John 4:35); and
- 14 WHEREAS, religious demographers note that in the US, approximately 86 congregations of all
15 denominations die each week while only 58 are started, and a District needs to plant the equivalent
16 of at least 4% of its congregations each year to thrive, which means the FLGA District should have
17 nearly 7 new church starts each year (Lifeway Research, “Church Life and Practice,” May 25, 2021);
18 and
- 19 WHEREAS, new churches re-energize and refocus existing congregations on the mission of God; and
- 20 WHEREAS, 42% of people attending new churches were previously unchurched (LifeWay Research, 2015),
21 and
- 22 WHEREAS, planting new churches is one of the Seven Mission Priorities of the LCMS, and
- 23 WHEREAS the FLGA District has established a goal of at least two new congregations each year for the next
24 five years; and
- 25 WHEREAS, resources and assistance for church multiplication are available from the FLGA District, the
26 LCMS, and other LCMS church planting networks; therefore be it
- 27 *Resolved*, That daily, congregation members and their leaders ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth
28 laborers into His harvest fields (Luke 10:2), especially asking that the Lord give them His vision to
29 seed the plentiful harvest fields around them; and be it further
- 30 *Resolved*, That congregations and their leaders be encouraged to plant new churches, and collaborate with
31 other congregations and their circuits to multiply churches locally; and be it further
- 32 *Resolved*, That congregations be encouraged to support the church multiplication efforts of the Florida-
33 Georgia District with their prayers, offerings, and other types of appropriate support for new starts
34 in the District; and be it finally
- 35 *Resolved*, That congregations explore and utilize the resources available from the District, the LCMS, and
36 other LCMS church planting networks in these multiplication efforts.



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Resolution: 1-03 – 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

[Overture 1-03 – 2025, CW (page 62)]

3

4

5 **To Celebrate, Support and Expand Lutheran Schools as Vital Means of Outreach**

6 WHEREAS the LCMS and our Florida-Georgia District are well known and respected for our Lutheran
7 Schools and Early Learning Centers which provide quality education for our own members, and

8 WHEREAS our Lutheran schools also serve as powerful Great Commission centers where disciples are
9 made and multiplied, and where children and their families are brought to Jesus; and

10 WHEREAS our population in the FLGA District continues to grow rapidly even as fewer people profess
11 faith in Christ; and

12 WHEREAS our schools not only meet educational needs of families and their children, but also are vital
13 tools for the expansion of Christ’s Kingdom, making disciples as Jesus commanded (Matthew
14 28:18-20); therefore be it

15 *Resolved*, That the Florida-Georgia District in convention give thanks to God for our District’s Lutheran
16 Schools and Early Learning Centers, and all who teach and serve in them; and be it further

17 *Resolved*, That congregations and circuits explore opportunities in partnership with the District to
18 start new Lutheran Schools while strengthening the mission action of our current schools; and
19 be it further

20 *Resolved* That the District equip and encourage our churches and schools to work together to be the
21 most effective and productive mission and outreach tools they can be; and be it finally

22 *Resolved*, That all the congregations of the Florida-Georgia District be encouraged to pray on a regular
23 basis for our Lutheran Schools and those who minister in them beginning at this Convention
24 immediately upon adoption of this Resolution.



1 **o the 35th Regular Convention**

Resolution: 1-04 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

[Overture 1-04 – 2025, CW (page 63)]

3

4

To Offer the National Synod Mission and Ministry Emphases

5 WHEREAS the District is responsible to submit triennial mission and ministry emphases for
6 consideration by the national convention (2023 LCMS Handbook, District Conventions
7 4.2.1.b,page 196); and

8 WHEREAS the FLGA District has identified primary mission emphases through overtures received
9 from the District, therefore be it

10 *Resolved* That the LCMS be encouraged to accept these three as primary mission emphases for the
11 Synod: Making Disciples who Make Disciple-Makers, Church Multiplication, and Lutheran
12 Schools as Vital Means of Outreach.



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Resolution: 1-05 - 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Missions & Outreach**

[Overture 1-05 – 2025, CW (page 64)]

3

4 **To Give Priority to the Kingdom of God Over Institutional Preservation**

5 WHEREAS, Jesus proclaimed the good news of God saying, “The kingdom of God is at hand,” and sent
6 His disciples “to proclaim the kingdom of God” (Mark 1:15; Luke 9:2); and

7 WHEREAS, the Kingdom of God is understood as the gracious reign of God in the hearts and lives of His
8 people and His active rule over all His creation; and

9 WHEREAS, Faithful disciples deny themselves and take up their cross to follow their Lord Christ
10 (Matthew 16:24); and

11 WHEREAS Faithful disciples lift high the cross, the love of Christ to proclaim (LSB 837); and

12 WHEREAS, Jesus warned us that the cares of this world potentially choke the Word so that it becomes
13 unfruitful (Matthew 13:22); and

14 WHEREAS, Jesus assures us that our heavenly Father knows what we need to sustain our earthly
15 constitution (Matthew 6:25); and

16 WHEREAS, Jesus urges his disciples to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matthew
17 6:33); and

18 WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated the reign of God not only through his miracles of
19 healing and casting out demons but also by going to the cross and dying according to the will of
20 the Father in self-giving love for the other; therefore be it,

21 *Resolved*, That we as the FLGA District repent where we have sought to preserve ourselves, failing to
22 put the kingdom of God and His righteousness first, and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That we prioritize seeking the kingdom of God and proclaiming the love of Christ over self-
24 interest and self-preservation, and be it further

25 *Resolved*, That we encourage the same repentance and prioritization from our brothers and sisters in
26 our LCMS; and be it further

27 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the Florida-District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
28 (hereafter District) focus on demonstrating faithful discipleship as those already living under
29 the gracious rule of our Lord Jesus; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That those in positions of leadership in the District focus on promoting this life lived under
31 the gracious rule of our Lord, Jesus, above preserving the institution of the District or that of the
32 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and be it further

33 *Resolved*, That the congregations of the District be encouraged to take up the cross of seeking first the
34 kingdom of God trusting that the Lord of the Church will continue to provide all that we need to
35 support the body and life of the congregation; and be it further

36 *Resolved*, That District entities faced with the same institutional pressures as congregations, model
37 what putting kingdom priorities above institutional needs looks like; and be it further,



38 *Resolved*, That those in District positions of leadership serve and assist the congregations of the
39 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod by promoting Bible studies to ground this kingdom
40 emphasis in God’s Word; and be it further

41 *Resolved*, That those in District leadership serve and assist the congregations of the Lutheran Church –
42 Missouri Synod by promoting available resources to congregations wherein the Lord of the
43 Church is already providing solutions to ease institutional related pressures; and be it finally,

44 *Resolved*, That the Convention of the District urge, by way of overture to the National Convention, the
45 leadership and membership of Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod to do the same.



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 2-01 - 2025**
2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership** **[Overture 2-01 – 2025, CW (page 65)]**

3
4 **Dedicating Time at the Annual FLGA District Pastors Conference to**
5 **Address the Pastoral Shortage**

6
7 WHEREAS, The 2023 LCMS Handbook requires the FLGA District to hold official conferences for the
8 spiritual and professional growth of pastors and church workers (2023 LCMS Handbook,
9 4.8.1), a responsibility the district has faithfully upheld; and

10
11 WHEREAS, The FLGA District is experiencing a growing pastoral shortage. By 2025, the average
12 pastor’s age will be 59, with many nearing retirement. The number of available pastors is
13 limited, and congregations face an average wait time of 24 months to complete the call process.
14 This challenge is expected to intensify in the coming years; and

15
16 WHEREAS, The 2023 LCMS Handbook allows official conferences to address broader concerns,
17 including matters affecting congregations, schools, and the work of the Synod (2023 LCMS
18 Handbook, 4.8.1b). This flexibility enables the district to allocate significant time at its annual
19 pastors conference to address the pastoral shortage and develop solutions; therefore, be it

20
21 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District dedicate time (at the discretion of the Pastoral Conference
22 Committee) at the annual pastors conference to discuss the pastoral shortage and develop
23 strategies to present at the 2028 District Convention; and be it further

24
25 *Resolved*, That this dedicated time be used to equip pastors in best practices for training lay leaders to
26 assist in ministry and ensuring that congregations remain strong and mission-focused despite the
27 fact that there is a pastoral shortage.

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 2-02 - 2025**
2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership** **[Overture 2-02 – 2025, CW (page 66)]**
3 **Ensuring Pastoral Ministry in the LCMS During Times of Shortage**

4 WHEREAS, 2023 Synod Convention Resolution 6-02A “...affirms the necessity and fruitfulness of
5 Synod-approved alternate routes to ministry to be used in appropriate ministry settings and
6 for appropriately qualified candidates (currently, the Specific Ministry Pastor program, the
7 Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology, the Center for Hispanic Studies, the Specific Ministry
8 Pastor - Espanol / English Program, the Cross-cultural Ministry Center, and the Residential
9 Alternate Route program; previously, DELTO)...” and “strongly encourage[s] [district
10 presidents and seminaries] to direct men to residential pastoral ministry routes [at our
11 Synod’s seminaries] as the preferred option (2019 Res. 6-02, Proceedings, 159)” as the way
12 that the church operates during normal circumstances; and

13
14 WHEREAS, The FLGA District faces a growing pastoral shortage, with the average pastor’s age
15 reaching 59 by 2025 and a significant number approaching retirement. The number of
16 available pastors is inadequate, and congregations often wait an average of 24 months to
17 complete the call process. This challenge is expected to intensify in the coming years; and

18
19 WHEREAS, Within 15 years, the average age of the current pastoral workforce will rise to 74,
20 leading to a critical shortage of pastors. This will impact not only small congregations that
21 cannot afford full-time pastors but also larger, well-resourced churches. Without
22 intervention, there will be too few pastors to serve even half of existing congregations, let
23 alone to support church planting and growth; therefore, be it

24
25 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District gives thanks to God for the faithfulness of our Synod in providing
26 this variety of scripturally and confessionally faithful pathways of pastoral formation to
27 fulfill the need for laborers for the Lord’s harvest; and be it further

28
29 *Resolved*, That to ensure the ongoing proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the
30 Sacraments, the FLGA District of the LCMS urges the 2026 Synod Convention to authorize
31 district presidents to utilize all existing Synod-approved pastoral formation programs at
32 their discretion, allowing them to determine the most suitable training pathway for
33 candidates in their district, be it finally

34
35 *Resolved*, That the Synod direct its seminaries to provide equal financial support for all approved
36 pastoral formation programs, removing financial barriers and expanding access to pastoral
37 training. By strengthening multiple formation pathways, the FLGA District will be better
38 equipped to meet the needs of congregations and to continue advancing the mission of the
39 Church.



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 2-03 - 2025**
2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership** **[Overture 2-03 – 2025, CW (page 67)]**

3
4 **To Continue and Establish New Ministry to Next Generation Leaders in the FLGA District**

5 WHEREAS, Our Lord encourages His disciples to "look, I tell you, lift up your eyes and see that the
6 fields are white for harvest," (John 4); and

7 WHEREAS, The average member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (hereafter LCMS) in 2015
8 was 47 years of age and "[c]ompared to U.S. Census estimates, our congregations are
9 disproportionately long on seniors 65 and older (they make up 24 percent of total baptized
10 membership) and short on young adults ages 18–34 (15 percent)." (LCMS Reporter "Annual
11 Statistic Reporting: Beyond the Numbers" November 18, 2016); and

12 WHEREAS, The Florida-Georgia District of the LCMS (hereafter "District"), has a long history of
13 supporting ministry to younger generations including the Middle School Gathering, High School
14 Youth programming, and support for campus ministries on the various campuses in the
15 District; and

16 WHEREAS, This ministry continues to be vital in the continued growth of the church and opening up
17 new avenues for the Gospel to be brought to those outside of the Body of Christ; therefore, be it

18 *Resolved*, That the District continues support of ministry to next generation leaders, especially those in
19 middle and high school as well as those in campus ministries, and be it finally

20 *Resolved*, That the District seek new ways to engage next generation leaders, for the sake of the growth
21 of the church.



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 2-04 - 2025**

2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership [Overture 2-04 – 2025, CW (page 68-69)]**

3
4 **To Encourage Ministry Sabbaticals for Church Workers**

5
6 WHEREAS, Ministry Sabbaticals serve to bless both the church worker and the ministry; and

7
8 WHEREAS, The Word of God points to the command for Sabbath rest, (Genesis 2:3, Exodus 20:8-11;
9 Leviticus 25:4ff); and

10
11 WHEREAS, Many Christian denominations strongly encourage pastors to take sabbaticals, recognizing
12 the importance of periodic rest and renewal for sustained ministry effectiveness; and

13 WHEREAS, A Ministry Sabbatical is a structured time for spiritual reflection, study, personal
14 development, and rest for church workers; and

15 WHEREAS, There is historical precedent in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod going back to the
16 first Synod President, C.F. W. Walther, who in 1859 took much needed ministry sabbatical to be
17 refreshed and renewed; and

18 WHEREAS, Walther’s example of returning with renewed energy and great productivity blessed the
19 LCMS; and

20 WHEREAS, Currently we are seeing a decrease of seminary graduates, DCE and Lutheran School
21 teachers available to fill a growing number of calls and a growing number of church workers
22 retiring; and

23 WHEREAS, A ministry sabbatical is an investment in a local ministry to reinvigorate the ministry and
24 the church worker, strengthening it for future ministry; and

25 WHEREAS, Ministry Sabbaticals can help church workers combat burnout, refresh their perspective,
26 and return to ministry with renewed energy and focus; and

27 WHEREAS, Even some in the business world have recognized the benefit of offering sabbaticals to
28 retain good workers. Sabbaticals can also enable retention and longer service in churches; and

29 WHEREAS, Since COVID in 2019 we have seen higher expectations placed on Church Workers with
30 decreased participation and a steady decline in many places, leading to discouragement and
31 burnout among current church workers; and

32 WHEREAS, The need to continually cultivate longevity among current church workers is beneficial to
33 the whole church; Therefore, be it

34 *Resolved*, That ministries study the benefits of ministry sabbaticals on their workers; and be it further

35 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District provides a template for a Ministry Sabbatical Policy Guideline for
36 ministries to adapt and adopt to their circumstances; and be it further

37 *Resolved*, That ministries be encouraged to set aside funding regularly to support their church workers
38 in taking a sabbatical; and be it further



39 *Resolved*, That the District works together with other districts to put together a list of available grants
40 and scholarships which help provide necessary funding for a Ministry Sabbatical; and be it
41 further

42 *Resolved*, That the District avails itself of available resources within the LCMS, including those
43 provided by Lutheran Church Extension Fund (through Grace Place Wellness), to explore and
44 promote healthier church workers and healthier ministries and be it finally resolved

45 *Resolved*, That the District memorializes this resolution to all districts of the LCMS at the 2026 LCMS
46 convention.

47



4 **To Reduce Restrictions On SMP Pastors**

5 WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ established the Office of Public Ministry by sending out His Apostles to
 6 preach, teach and baptize those they went to serve; and

7 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod since its inception has faithfully overseen and
 8 consistently provided for the education and placement of qualified men to serve in the Office of
 9 Public Ministry for local congregations; and

10 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod has established The Specific Ministry Pastor Program
 11 at the 2007 National Convention as a distance-based, specialized program of theological education
 12 available at both seminaries; and

13 WHEREAS, The Specific Ministry Pastor program is available to those selected by a congregation to serve
 14 as vicars for the first two years of the program; and

15 WHEREAS, Upon successful completion of the first two years and certification by the seminary faculty,
 16 these students are ordained and complete two additional years of instruction; and

17 WHEREAS, Participants have the approval and support of their home church, the faculty of the seminary at
 18 which they train, and the LCMS district they serve; and

19 WHEREAS, Each SMP is supervised by an experienced LCMS pastor during and after his program of study;
 20 and

21 WHEREAS, Ordained pastors trained via this program face restrictions concerning service in the pastoral
 22 ministry, including the restriction of certain voting rights and the inability to hold office at the
 23 Circuit and District level; and

24 WHEREAS, The roster distinction introduced for SMP graduates makes these pastors distinct from EIIT
 25 graduates, CHS graduates, and Residential Alternate Route graduates who also may be ordained
 26 without an academic degree and who have also received a lesser level of theological training than
 27 full Mdiv students; and

28 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Confessions in the Treatise of the Power and Primacy of the Pope state that
 29 before God there is no substantive difference between ordained pastors (paragraphs 60-65); and

30 WHEREAS, The difference in roster status for SMP pastors creates confusion among the pastorate and laity
 31 over their status as pastors, even though The Lutheran Confessions are clear that an ordained
 32 pastor is a full pastor; and

33 WHEREAS, All rostered LCMS pastors serve under ecclesiastical supervision and under the mutual
 34 admonition of their fellow pastors; therefore be it

35 *Resolved*, That restrictions on voting and holding office at the Circuit and District level be lifted upon
 36 completing the entire four year SMP course of study; and be it finally

37 *Resolved*, that we give thanks for the faithful and dedicated ministry of all Pastors of the Lutheran Church –
 38 Missouri Synod.



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 2-06 – 2025**

2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership** **[Overture 2-06 – 2025, CW (page 71)]**

3 **Convene a Florida-Georgia District Day of Prayer**

4 WHEREAS, The Lord Jesus promises to answer prayer and scripture encourages us to pray; and

5 WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ enters into prayer to seek the face of His Father before major events
6 in His life; and

7 WHEREAS, The early disciples in Acts 2:42 “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the
8 fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer”; and

9 WHEREAS, Our Mission Executive Rev. Dr. Peter Meier has imparted the value of prayer among us by
10 hosting monthly prayer for the members of our district and provided a guide for the same;
11 therefore be it

12 *Resolved*, That the members of the Florida-Georgia District set aside Ash Wednesday as a day of prayer,
13 and be it further,

14 *Resolved*, That the Mission Executive provide devotional assistance for the devotional watches of the
15 day at 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., and be it finally

16 *Resolved*, That this be established as an annual day of prayer through the coming Triennium.

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 2-07 – 2025**

2 **Floor Committee: Mercy/Life Together & Leadership** **[Overture 2-07 – 2025, CW (page 71)]**

3

4 **Giving Thanks for Ministry Partners**

5 WHEREAS, The Rev. Dr. Peter Meier has served the FLGA district with faithfulness, distinction and a
6 servant heart; and

7 WHEREAS, The FLGA District staff works as alongsiders to equip, empower and engage the ministries
8 of the FLGA District; and

9 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church Extension Fund and District VP Jay Wendland works to support the
10 ministries and disaster relief efforts in the FLGA District; therefore be it

11 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District in convention gives thanks for the gifts of God evidenced in their
12 ministry and service; and be it finally

13 *Resolved*, That the FLGA District in convention rise and sing the Doxology.

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 3-01 - 2025**
2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology** **[Overture 3-01 – 2025, CW (page 72-76)]**

3
4 **To Increase Clarity in the Charter and Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws**

5 WHEREAS, the Synod Handbook governs the Charter and Articles of Incorporation of the Florida-
6 Georgia District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; and

7 WHEREAS, Changes have been made to the Synod Handbook that require governance that differs from
8 the Charter and Articles of Incorporation (Charter and Articles) and Bylaws passed at the 2022
9 District Convention; and

10 WHEREAS, Clarity in the governing documents specific to the Florida-Georgia District helps the
11 members of the District exercise the expectations of the governing documents; and

12 WHEREAS, During the review of the Charter and Articles and Bylaws, additional editorial changes have
13 been proposed to provide further clarity to the documents; therefore be it

14 *Resolved*, That Charter and Articles Article V Section 2, 3, and 4 be amended as follows:

15 **~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING**

16 Section 2

17 All officers and members of the Board of Directors shall be members of a member congregation of
18 the District and when appropriate **members of member congregations** ~~residents~~ of appropriate
19 regions during the course of their tenure. The Board of Directors shall consist of the following:

20 g. *Elected at large from the roster of the **Synod District**:*

21 (i) *the President;*

22 b. **Elected at large from the roster of the District:**

23 ~~(ii)~~ (i) *the Secretary; and*

24 ~~(iii)~~ (ii) *three (3) ministers of religion, commissioned, who are members of the **District-Synod**.*

25 h. *Selected on a regional basis and elected by ratification by the District Convention:*

26 (i) *five (5) Vice-Presidents who are ministers of religion-ordained **and on the roster of the***
27 **District**.

28 (ii) *Ten (10) lay persons who shall serve as representatives of the region they represent within*
29 *the District.*

30 i. *Appointed by the Board of Directors, a Treasurer who shall be a layperson with knowledge and*
31 *experience in matters relating to corporate finance.*

32 Section 3

33 The officers and the Board of Directors shall be elected at a regular meeting of the District by the
34 delegates constituting the same as provided for in the bylaws, with the exception that the Treasurer
35 shall be appointed by the Board of Directors at its next regular meeting following the election meeting
36 of the District. All officers shall hold their respective offices for a term of three (3); years and shall
37 assume office at **within** the time specified in the bylaws.

38 Section 4

39 Whenever an officer or director shall cease to be a member of a member congregation of the
40 District, or, in the case of regional positions, ~~shall cease to reside within~~ of a member
41 congregation of the region he or she represents, he or she shall forthwith cease to be an officer or
42 a director of this corporation.

43 and be it further

44 *Resolved*, That Charter and Articles Article VI be amended as follows:

45

46 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

47 **Article VI**

48 The Constitution of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is the Constitution of the District and
49 the Bylaws of the Synod are primarily the bylaws of the District. Further ~~The~~ Bylaws of this
50 Corporation are to be made, altered, or rescinded by the members of the District in its District
51 Convention, provided the same have been reviewed and approved by the Synod’s Commission on
52 Constitutional Matters, have been found to be consistent with the then existing Constitution, Bylaws,
53 and resolutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and are not inconsistent with this Charter,
54 or with the laws of the land .

55 and be it finally

56 *Resolved*, That Bylaw D1.02, D1.05, D2.03f., D2.04, D2.13, D2.16b, D2.22b, D2.24k., D2.28b., D2.29,
57 D2.31a., D2.32, D2.34, D5.01, and D6.01 with relevant changes to affected enumeration be amended as
58 follows:

59

60 ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING

61

62 D1.02 ADVISORY DELEGATES

63 “Advisory delegates are all commissioned ministers, and those ordained ministers not
64 presently serving as voting representatives of congregations, who are members of the Synod
65 within the District. In addition, a congregation that is part of a multi-congregation parish, other
66 than the congregation supplying the voting lay delegate, may elect and depute an advisory lay
67 delegate.” ~~The following ministers of religion, ordained or commissioned, who hold membership in~~
68 ~~the Synod through the District shall be regarded as advisory members with full freedom of speech in~~
69 ~~District Conventions and may be called up to serve in an elected or appointed capacity by the District:~~

- 70 a.—~~Ministers of religion—ordained whose congregations do not hold membership in the Synod~~
71 ~~(i.e. mission congregations);~~
72 b.—~~Ministers of religion—ordained, not in charge of congregations (i.e. retired pastors, Specific~~
73 ~~Ministry Pastors);~~
74 c.—~~Ministers of religion—commissioned Ministers of religion—ordained who are on the roster~~
75 ~~of the District but are not voting delegates of congregations.~~
76 d.—~~Candidates for the ministry of religion, either ordained or commissioned.~~



77 D1.05 DELEGATES TO SYNODICAL CONVENTIONS

78 e. *Each electoral circuit of member congregations shall elect one (1) pastoral and one (1) lay*
79 *delegate. (Const. Art. XII 10b)*

80

81 D2.03 APPOINTIVE OFFICIALS AND COMMITTEES

82 The president may appoint the following officials and committees:

83 **f. Individual or committee responsible for stewardship promotion.**

84

85 D2.04 TERM OF OFFICE

86 The term of office for all officers and the Board of Directors shall be three (3) years. All officers and
87 the Board of Directors shall begin their term of office ~~at~~ within the time specified in these Bylaws. No
88 elected individual shall serve more than three (3) consecutive terms in any one (1) elective office,
89 except that the President and the district treasurer shall be eligible for four (4) consecutive terms of
90 office.

91

92 D2.13 DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

93

94 g. He shall function, if appropriate, as an administrator in the dispute resolution process
95 (Handbook of Synod [~~2016 edition, or its progeny~~] 2023 Bylaws 1.10.4a and 1.10.6 as may
96 hereafter be amended.)

97

98 h. He shall be responsible for carrying out the nomination procedures outlined in these bylaws
99 according to the appropriate Synodical Bylaws (Handbook of Synod [~~2023 2016 edition, or its~~
100 ~~progeny~~]. Bylaw 4.7. as may hereafter be amended). He shall cause the proceedings of the
101 conventions of the District to be published. He shall oversee the preparation of the
102 manuscripts, recording all resolutions in the wording in which they have been adopted, and
103 cause the proceedings to be published after the President of the District has approved.

104

105 **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

106

107 D2.16 MEMBERSHIP

108 f. Every member of the board shall be a member of a member congregation of the District and, if
109 an individual member of the Synod, on the district roster When a member of the board ceases
110 to be a member of a member congregation of the District or, if an individual member of the
111 Synod, ceases to be on the district roster, he/she shall automatically lose membership on the
112 board. Those members of the Board of Directors who are elected representatives for regions of
113 the District shall cease to be members of the board if they are no longer members of member
114 congregations of ~~residing in~~ the region which they represent.

115

116 D2.22 MEETINGS

- 117 c. The President **may** or, at the direction of at least one-third of the members of the Board of
118 Directors, **shall may** call other meetings, special or regular, as may be deemed necessary.
119

120 D2.24 DUTIES
121

122 **I. To appoint a governance committee as needed.**
123

124 D2.28 JUDGE OF ELECTIONS
125

- 126 c. The ballots shall designate the office to be filled and the number of candidates to be voted for.
127 The ballot shall list in alphabetical order the names of the candidates to be voted for in each
128 office or board. In the necessity of a second and subsequent ballot for president or vice
129 president, the candidate having the least number of votes shall be removed from the ballot. In
130 ballots for all other positions, **the candidate receiving the fewest votes and all any**
131 **candidates** receiving less than 15% of the vote shall **also** be removed from the ballot unless
132 fewer than two candidates receive 15 percent or more of the votes cast, in which case the three
133 highest candidates shall constitute the ballot. Balloting shall continue until a majority vote is
134 received.
135

136 D2. 29 MAJORITY OF VOTES

137 A majority of all votes cast shall be required for election to all elective offices and other elective
138 positions. ~~Candidates receiving a majority on the first ballot shall be declared elected. If no candidate~~
139 ~~receives a majority of the votes cast, balloting will proceed with the candidate receiving the smallest~~
140 ~~number of votes eliminated from consideration until one (1) candidate receives a majority of the votes~~
141 ~~cast, who shall be declared elected.~~

142
143 D2.31 PRIMARY ELECTION FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

144 Nominations

- 145 a. Nominations for regional Vice-President shall be made from the ordained roster of the District
146 by member congregations of each region within the District no later than ninety (90) days prior
147 to the beginning of the convention. Nominees must be **members of member congregations**
148 **residents** within the region they represent. The District Secretary shall call for nominations at
149 least 180 days prior to the convention.
150

151 D2.32 ELECTION AND RANKING OF VICE-PRESIDENTS

152 After the election of the vice-Presidents by ratification by the entire convention, they shall be
153 ranked (1st, . . . 5th) each by a separate ballot on which each delegate shall vote for one
154 candidate for each Vice Presidential office. The candidate in each ranking receiving the majority
155 vote shall be considered ranked in order of the ballot taking place. **In the event of no majority,**
156 **the ranking process will be the same as the election process as indicated in D2.28 (b)**



158 D2.34 SELECTION OF REGIONAL LAY REPRESENTATIVES ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
159 b. Any congregation within a region may nominate two (2) individuals to be regional lay
160 representative to the District Board of Directors. Congregations may nominate candidates
161 who are members of member congregations reside within in the region of the congregation.
162

163 **D5.01 DISTRICT STEWARDSHIP PROMOTION**

164 **The District President shall appoint individual or committee responsible for stewardship**
165 **promotion.**

166 **This individual or committee shall cooperate with the Synod's elected or appointed**
167 **person/persons responsible for stewardship and shall assist and advise local congregations in**
168 **the development and promotion of an adequate stewardship program.**

169 **D6.01 CONGREGATIONAL CONSTITUTION REVIEW**

170 **The District President shall appoint a constitution committee to review congregational**
171 **constitutions and bylaws of congregations seeking membership in the Synod within the District**
172 **and of District congregations amending their constitutions and bylaws. The review shall seek to**
173 **ensure the expectations of the current Synod Handbook relating to congregational**
174 **constitutions and bylaws are met. Once the congregation's governing documents fulfill**
175 **expectations, the constitution committee shall recommend approval to the District Board of**
176 **Directors for the Board's action as noted in the Synod Handbook.**



1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 3-02 - 2025**
2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology** **[Overture 3-02 – 2025, CW (page 77)]**
3 **To Clarify Transitions of Officer**

4
5 WHEREAS, The President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, the members of the Board of Directors (except
6 the Treasurer), and all members of elected committees need sufficient time to transition into
7 the positions to which they are elected; and

8 WHEREAS, Transitions need to take place quickly to allow the duly elected to serve as they have been
9 elected to do; and

10 WHEREAS, Clearly defined transition times provide clarity during transitions; therefore be it

11 *Resolved*, That the Florida-Georgia District Bylaw D2.05 be amended as follows:

12

13 D2.05 TRANSITION OF ADMINISTRATIONS

- 14 **b.** The President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, the members of the Board of Directors (except
15 the Treasurer), and all members of elected committees shall assume their respective duties
16 within ~~ninety (90)~~ sixty (60) days following the adjournment of the District Convention
17 following their election. **The outgoing executive committee shall work with the newly**
18 **elected to designate the official starting date for each position.**

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 3-03 - 2025**
2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology** **[Overture 3-03 – 2025, CW (page 78)]**

3 **To Provide Clarity About Amendments To Resolutions**

4 WHEREAS, the Apostle Paul proclaims that “For God is not a God of confusion but of peace...” (I
5 Corinthians 14:33) and;

6 WHEREAS, the current practice at the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod Convention (hereafter
7 “Synod Convention” is to show changes to resolutions only in their final form in the publication
8 of the “Today’s Business,” with no clear explanation of the changes to the resolutions (e.g.
9 7.1.a), and;

10 WHEREAS, many of the resolutions are significantly lengthy, especially those dealing with changes to
11 Bylaws, and;

12 WHEREAS, it is difficult for the delegates to the convention to understand the changes to these
13 amendments given the window between the publication of the “Today’s Business,” which is
14 often short, and;

15 WHEREAS, delegates who do not understand an amendment will not be able to vote in good
16 conscience on a given resolution, be it therefore:

17 *Resolved*, that Convention of the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
18 (hereafter “District Convention”) petition the Committee on the Handbook and other
19 appropriate parties to consider changes to the practice of bringing amendments to the floor to
20 include a complete verbal explanation of changes made in an amendment as well as a print
21 notation of changes made in an amendment, and be it finally

22 *Resolved*, that the District Convention petition the Convention to seek and bring more clarity to the
23 delegates who are voting upon the important matters considered.

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Resolution: 3-04- 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

[Overture 3-04 – 2025, CW (page 79)]

3 **Regional Vice President Selection**

4 Whereas the Synod utilizes entities within specific groupings to live out its life together as Synod in an
5 orderly way for the benefit of the Body;

6 Whereas districts are “the Synod itself performing the functions of Synod”; [4.1.1.1]

7 Whereas “[t]he district president shall represent the Synod in his district”; [4.4.2]

8 Whereas “[a] president shall be elected from the clergy roster of the Synod by each district”; [4.3.1]

9 Whereas “[a] visitation circuit is a network of congregations that “walks together” for mutual care,
10 support, advice, study, ecclesiastical encouragement, service, coordination, resources, and
11 counsel—all for the sake of greater congregational participation in God’s mission”; [5.1.1]

12 Whereas districts “establish visitation circuits according to geographical criteria”; [5.1.2]

13 Whereas “Each circuit visitor shall assist the district president within the circuit. (a) He shall serve
14 under the direction of and be accountable to the district president and shall serve as his
15 spokesman when so authorized and directed and shall assist him in doctrinal and spiritual
16 supervision.” [5.2.3; 5.2.3(a)]

17 Whereas “[t]he circuit visitor shall hold his position by virtue of his selection by the circuit forum and
18 ratification by the district convention” [5.2.2]

19 Whereas “The [Synod] vice-presidents shall be elected advisors of the President and, upon the
20 President’s request or as provided by the Synod, shall assist him in discharging his
21 responsibilities or represent him.”

22 Whereas the filling of a vacancy in a regional vice-presidency is only made “in consultation with the
23 district presidents within that region” [3.3.2.4]

24 Whereas five Synod vice-presidents are designated “regional vice-presidents”; [3.3.2.3]

25 Whereas selection by regional groupings is deemed appropriate for circuit visitor and district
26 president, both of whom serve under the direction of another, elected by a broader grouping;

27 Whereas circuit visitors are selected in their regional grouping and ratified by the district in
28 convention; therefore be it

29 *Resolved* that the office of the Secretary of Synod develop an overture to be submitted to the 2029
30 Convention that provides for the needed changes so that the
31 five regional vice-presidents would be selected by their respective regions and ratified by the
32 Synod in convention for the 2032 Convention.

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention**

Resolution: 3-05- 2025

2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology**

[Overture 3-05 – 2025, CW (page 80-83)]

3 **To Provide Guidelines for Ecclesiastical Supervision in an Internet Age**

4 **Preamble**

5 The Biblical and Confessional theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church address ecclesiastical
6 supervision clearly with a focus on Gospel-focused collegiality and accountability. A spirit of personal
7 interaction, trust, and restoration sets the tone for ecclesiastical supervision efforts with
8 congregations and pastors. “Spying,” “going after” erring constituents, and playing “gotcha!” with
9 pastors, congregations, or fellow district presidents runs counter to the clear teaching of the Scriptures
10 and Confessions and the spirit of ecclesiastical oversight. The use of the Internet to supplement
11 visitation and oversight must be consistent with the clear doctrinal and constitutional foundations of
12 the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

13 ***RATIONALE***

14 **The constitution of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod assigns the responsibility of**
15 **ecclesiastical supervision of congregations and church workers to district presidents as follows:**

16 LCMS Constitution XII, 7:

17 “The district presidents shall, moreover, especially exercise supervision over the doctrine, life, and
18 administration of office of the ordained and commissioned ministers of their district and acquaint
19 themselves with the religious conditions of the congregations of their district. To this end they shall visit
20 and, according as they deem it necessary, hold investigations in the congregations. Their assistants in
21 this work are the circuit visitors, who therefore shall regularly make their reports to the district
22 president.”

23 **Ecclesiastical Supervision is defined as follows in the LCMS bylaws:**

24 LCMS Bylaws 1.2.1.j

25 “Ecclesiastical supervision: The responsibility, primarily of the President of the Synod and district
26 presidents, to supervise on behalf of the Synod the doctrine, life, and administration of its members,
27 officers, and agencies. Such supervision, subject to the provisions of the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws,
28 and resolutions, includes visitation, evangelical encouragement and support, care, protection, counsel,
29 advice, admonition, and, when necessary, appropriate disciplinary measures to assure that the
30 Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod are followed and implemented. Thus, ecclesiastical
31 supervision is also the presenting, interpreting, and applying of the collective will of the Synod’s
32 congregations. Ecclesiastical supervision does not include the responsibility to observe, monitor,
33 control, or direct the day-to-day activities of individual members of the Synod, whether in the conduct
34 of their work or in their private lives (cf. Bylaw 2.14.1 [a]). Further, those constitutional articles and
35 bylaws pertaining to ecclesiastical supervision shall determine the full definition of ecclesiastical
36 supervision.”

37 **Additionally, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations noted complications in dealing**
38 **with supervision issues in an Internet age, noting in its document, “Public Rebuke of Public Sin”:**

39 As we reflect on the meaning of the term “public” in this present context in which we in the LCMS find
40 ourselves, we would do well to keep in mind the situation in the earlier years of our Synod. We may
41 note, for example, that the polity of the LCMS makes all of its members—pastors and congregations—
42 accountable to each other for their lives and teaching. When that polity was adopted in the nineteenth

43 century, communication was such that pastors and congregations that were not in close geographic
44 proximity would know very little about each other. Only the most serious cases would be found worthy
45 of being reported to synodical leadership, and only a very few would ever have been considered by the
46 Synod as a whole. Today that is simply not the case. No deliberation at the local level is needed, when
47 anyone can send an e-mail or post a rebuke on their Web site in response to a real or perceived sin. This
48 situation creates some profound difficulties—not the least of which is that there is nothing in Scripture
49 or the Confessions that justifies a public rebuke made unilaterally in the absence of conversation with
50 others who are aware of the public sin (cf. Acts 18:24–26). In the case of Paul rebuking Peter, Paul was
51 in conversation with the church in Antioch. Luther, too, could and did enlist the help and support of
52 others who recognized that the message of the Gospel had been obscured by the papacy.

53 Even if consultation should take place, however, modern methods of communication have added
54 another layer of complexity to the problem. Not only is it possible, but it is likely that a public rebuke
55 will receive a wider audience than the public sin that elicited it. In other words, the rebuke has the side
56 effect of publicizing the sin more widely, of making it known to an audience that had no prior knowledge
57 of it. We must recognize that the number of people directly affected by a public sin might be limited.
58 Although all members of the Synod are accountable to each other, in most cases it will only be necessary
59 to deal with public sin at the local level. Publicity beyond that level may serve to scandalize more than
60 to instruct. This observation should lead to a careful consideration of the audience for a public rebuke.
61 It is neither necessary nor beneficial to involve all members of the Synod in every case of public sin.
62 Those who would undertake a rebuke should take great care, therefore, in choosing their medium of
63 communication and in determining their audience. (pgs. 22-23 of “Public Rebuke of Public Sin”)

64 **Furthermore, this same CTCR document cites the Confessions in emphasizing the need for**
65 **Christian charity in addressing wrongdoing that becomes known by others:**

66 “In the matter of “public sin” it is also important to recognize that traditionally theologians have
67 distinguished between sins committed willfully and those committed out of ignorance. This distinction
68 is maintained, for example, in the Preface to The Book of Concord.

69 “In regard to the condemnations, criticisms, and rejections of false, impure teaching (particularly in the
70 article concerning the Lord’s Supper), which had to be expressly and distinctly set forth in this
71 explanation and thorough settlement of the disputed articles so that all would be able to protect
72 themselves from them, and which can in no way be avoided for many other reasons: it is likewise not
73 our will or intention thereby to mean persons who err naively and do not blaspheme the truth of the
74 divine Word, much less whole churches, inside the Holy Empire of the German nation or out. Instead, it
75 is our will and intention thereby to condemn only the false and seductive teachings and the stiff-necked
76 teachers and blasphemers of the same.... (p. 20 of “Public Rebuke Public Sin”).

77 “The confessors’ approach here would seem to imply that not every expression of false belief is
78 automatically a candidate for public rebuke. Repeated expressions of false belief would certainly qualify
79 as sin that would warrant public rebuke. But in cases of human weakness and ignorance, Christian
80 charity would require private and personal discussion rather than public rebuke. The same point could
81 be made concerning sins of personal conduct, errors in pastoral judgment, and whatever else might
82 broadly be considered sin. Public rebuke should never be the first response in a situation where the one
83 rebuked has no history of erroneous belief or behavior, and has not persisted in the sin. When sin has
84 been committed there is the need for confession and repentance, and the pronouncement of absolution.”
85 (p. 25 of “Public Rebuke Public Sin”)

86 **Notably, The Scriptures note that God’s people need to be slow to call attention to the sins of**
87 **others and that ministers of the Gospel need to exhibit humility instead of arrogance:**

88 “Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
89 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your
90 own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the
91 speck out of your brother’s eye.” (Matthew 7:3-5).

92 “For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered
93 or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain.” (Titus 1:7).

94 **Also notably, The Confessions provide guidance regarding the active search for sinful situations:**

95 “As for the enumeration of sins in confession, we have said earlier (6-8) that we do not believe that it is
96 necessary by divine right. When someone objects that a judge must hear a case before pronouncing
97 sentence, that is irrelevant because the ministry of absolution is in the area of blessing or grace, not of
98 judgment or law. The ministers of the church, therefore, have the command to forgive sins; they do not
99 have the command to investigate secret sins. In addition, they absolve us of those which we do not
100 remember; therefore absolution, which is the voice of the Gospel forgiving sins and consoling
101 consciences, does not need an investigation.” (Apology XII, Penitence, Confession and Satisfaction, 102-
102 105)

103 **Finally, in his book “Pastoral Theology”, Rev. John H.C. Fritz reinforces the proper approach to**
104 **hearing confession rather than searching for outstanding sins:**

105 It is self-evident that a pastor should not use the opportunity afforded him by Communion registration
106 to search out secret sins or family affairs or in any way to encourage gossiping and tattling (p. 133 of
107 “Pastoral Theology”).

108 Says Luther, ‘If anyone comes to confession who is under suspicion, I must diligently inquire into the
109 circumstances. If the person denies that he is guilty, I must be satisfied to believe him rather than my
110 own conjecture in the matter’ (pgs. 133-134 of Pastoral Theology).

111 Therefore be it

112 *Resolved*, the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (hereafter, “FLGA
113 District”), give thanks to God for the wisdom written down in Scripture, the Confessions, and
114 elsewhere in dealing with our fellow believers when one believes that another has sinned; and be it
115 further,

116 *Resolved*, the FLGA District memorialize The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (hereafter, “Synod”) to
117 develop Guidelines for Ecclesiastical Supervision when the Internet has been used by one party to
118 accuse another of sin; and be it further

119 *Resolved*, That such guidelines would at minimum address:

120 1. The distinct responsibility of ecclesiastical oversight given to District Presidents in their
121 respective districts that no worker or lay person should usurp, but rather give aid to the District
122 President in his supervision responsibilities.

123 2. That ecclesiastical supervision “includes visitation, evangelical encouragement, and support,
124 care, protection, counsel, advice, admonition, and when necessary appropriate disciplinary
125 measures,” (LCMS Bylaws 1.2.1.j.) and does not include seeking out wrongdoing, namely, “the
126 responsibility to observe, monitor, control, or direct the day-to-day activities of individual
127 members of the Synod, whether in the conduct of their work or in their private lives,” (LCMS
128 Bylaws 1.2.1.j) by electronic or other means.

129 3. That profound difficulties result when calling out wrongdoing on the Internet or otherwise based
130 on online discoveries, “not the least of which is that there is nothing in Scripture or the

131 Confessions that justifies a public rebuke made unilaterally in the absence of conversation with
132 others who are aware of the public sin.” (“Public Rebuke of Public Sin,” CTCR p. 22)

133 4. “That Christian charity would require private and personal discussion rather than public rebuke
134 for wrongdoing or misunderstandings discovered online.” (“Public Rebuke of Public Sin,” CTCR
135 p. 25)

136 5. That “the ministers of the Church, therefore have the command to forgive sins; they do not have
137 the command to investigate secret sins.” (Apology XII, Penitence, Confession and Satisfaction)

138 6. And that if suspected wrongdoing is discovered online, the person discovering such wrongdoing
139 needs to follow Scriptural and Confessional principles regarding the offense, starting with
140 Matthew 18. If need be, the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor should be notified for
141 appropriate action.

142 and be it finally

143 *Resolved*, That such guidelines be produced in consultation with the Council of Presidents by the 2029
144 Synod Convention so that they may be reported upon at that meeting.

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 3-06 2025**
2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology** **[Overture 3-06 – 2025, CW (page 84)]**

3 **To Support and Clarify the Prior Approval Process**

4 WHEREAS, one of the expressed purposes of Synod is to “recruit and train pastors, teachers, and other
5 professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth” (Art. III.3); and

6 WHEREAS, Synod has the responsibility to oversee that training; and

7 WHEREAS, Synod has designated that responsibility to the prior approval panels outlined in various
8 bylaws (3.6.6.1, 3.10.5.7.3, 3.10.6.8.2, 3.10.6.9.2); and

9 WHEREAS, those panels have a responsibility not only to work on behalf of the Synod but also are
10 responsible to the Synod; and

11 WHEREAS, those under consideration for theological professorships and other such positions as require
12 prior approval have ordinarily been ordained into the Office of Holy Ministry or have been
13 commissioned and/or consecrated into an auxiliary office of the Church; and

14 WHEREAS, those under consideration for aforementioned positions have also been examined and
15 approved for service on the roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and

16 WHEREAS, those individual members of Synod have, by virtue of their membership in the Synod, agreed
17 to the confessional basis as outlined in Art. II, as well as recognize and affirm the validity of Bylaws
18 1.6–1.8; therefore, be it

19 *Resolved*, That the District in convention give thanks to the Lord of the Church for using the Synod and
20 its agencies to preserve and enlarge the workers of the harvest; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That District in convention give thanks to those engaged in the various prior approval
22 processes for being engaged in difficult and important work; and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to do the same; and be it
24 further

25 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod to require that the process used by the
26 various panels to carry out the responsibility entrusted to it by the Synod be made transparent and
27 available to the candidate, the calling entity, and Ecclesiastical supervisor; and be it further

28 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod to stipulate that unless those under
29 consideration by the prior approval panels are found to be in violation of their ordination,
30 commissioning, consecration, or installation vows that their approval be assumed; and be it further

31 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to stipulate that if those
32 under consideration are thought to be in violation, that the candidate be given every opportunity to
33 clarify their position to the panel; and be it finally

34 *Resolved*, That District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to stipulate that if such a
35 violation be found that the panel would, with the appropriate District President as that individual’s
36 ecclesiastical supervisor, engage in the appropriate processes to restore the erring brother or
37 sister so that one deemed unworthy to teach at one of the Synod’s institutions not be permitted to
38 remain on the roster or serve a congregation and thus lead that congregation to err or become out
39 of step with Synod.

1 **To the 35th Regular Convention** **Resolution: 3-07 - 2025**
2 **Floor Committee: Administration & Theology** **[Overture 3-07 – 2025, CW (page 85-86)]**

3 **To Condemn Christian Zionism and Dual Covenant Theology**

4 WHEREAS, the war between Israel and Hamas has greatly reduced the Christian presence in all of
5 Israel thus surfacing the need to clarify theological issues and discern the proper distinction
6 between God’s work in the realms of state and church; and

7 WHEREAS, there is a broad and deeply rooted conviction originating from the belief of many of the
8 earliest immigrants coming to America to escape persecution in their homeland that America is
9 the New Israel; and

10 WHEREAS, among a significant percentage of the Christian population in the United States, there is a
11 deep-seated conviction that the success of America is connected to the well-being of the state of
12 Israel constituted after World War II, and

13 WHEREAS, these convictions become blinders to Israel’s perpetuating what many now describe as
14 genocide against the Palestinians living in Gaza and beyond; and

15 WHEREAS, the theologies of Christian Zionism and Dual Covenant that undergird the afore-mentioned
16 convictions distinguish between two covenants – one for the Jews (descendants of Jacob) and
17 one for Gentiles (through faith in Jesus Christ) and are tied closely to dispensationalism, which
18 expects the restoration of Israel and temple worship as precursors to the second coming of
19 Christ, followed by tribulation and Christ’s 1,000 year reign contrary to the clear teaching of
20 Scripture; and

21 WHEREAS these theologies find practical and popular expression in such movements as Christian
22 Nationalism and Christians United for Israel as well as the Evangelical Christian community and
23 increasingly among Lutherans influenced by political leanings that embrace these convictions;
24 therefore be it

25 *Resolved*, that the Florida-Georgia District encourage pastors to evaluate the extent these false
26 teachings influence the worldview of their people; and be it further

27 *Resolved*, that as needed pastors seek to educate their people via a Scriptural understanding of the
28 Church as the New Israel and the declining presence of the New Israel in the state of Israel and
29 surrounding lands; and be it further

30 Resolved, That pastors seek to help their parishioners be aware of various eschatological views
31 utilizing the existing CTCR resources entitled “The End Times” (September 1989) and “A
32 Lutheran Response to the Left Behind Series” (April 2004); and be it further

33 *Resolved*, That pastors be supported in equipping their parishioners so that they are better able to
34 communicate a reasonable, scripturally based response to the hope that is in us in the midst of a
35 hostile and polarized world; and be it finally

36 *Resolved*, that the Florida-Georgia District memorialize the Synod in Convention to instruct the
37 Commission on Theology and Church Relations to continue to provide timely aids to enable the



38 congregations of the Synod to discern and discuss these matters for the building up of the
39 Church and a sound engagement with the broader community, both Christian and secular.

Circuit Reports

Circuit 1 – Rev. Dave Wesche, Circuit Visitor

Christus Victor, Athens, GA (Rev. Dr. Greg Michael)

Over the past three years, we have enjoyed opportunities to share Christ's victory and the life He gives with the students on the campus of UGA and the greater Athens community. We have begun to utilize micro-groups as a way for students and congregants to grow in community that is centered in the Word and prayer. We give thanks for more time in the Word and as Christian community and the opportunities to bring others into the joy of life together. In the summer of 2022, we increased our onsite parking options by almost twenty percent (about five spots), but parking options continue to pose our greatest challenge as onsite parking is minimal and the spots proximal to our property have been disappearing around us this last triennium. In the coming years, we look to continue to expand our opportunity for growing in and sharing community in Christ's victory through the micro-groups as these opportunities can take place on campus and in the community and are not restricted by our space or parking limitations. In all of it, we give thanks for everything that God is doing among us and through us and look forward to His work here in the years to come.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Athens, GA (Rev. Tim Davis)

Celebrations:

- In 2022, we sent a team to the Dominican Republic to walk alongside their youth as they held their first youth conference.
- In 2024, we started our food trailer ministry with "A Cup of Cold Water" to serve volunteers in disaster relief situations.
- We opened up our Food Pantry for the staff and community.

Challenges:

- Overcoming the devastation left by a water break and subsequent flood of the Academy
- Overcoming staffing challenges and hiring a permanent director
- Navigating the Accreditation process for the Academy

Goals:

- Finalizing and deploying of the food trailer for disaster response
- By the grace of God, increasing enrollment for the academy
- Leading our youth to the NYG @ NOLA.

All Saints Lutheran Church, Blairsville, GA (Rev. Dave Wesche & Vicar Tim Handrick)

Celebrations:

- Attendance has slowly grown to return to pre-Covid numbers. Yet approximately 35-40% consist of people who have arrived since the Covid shutdown.
- Due to adjustments made during Covid, there are 6 opportunities to study the Word together and engage in faith conversation. We also have a monthly Fellowship meal for the congregation and as an avenue to invite into our congregation. In addition, we have 4 community AA groups utilizing our facilities.
- As Pastor Wesche was planning his retirement, God provided us with Vicar Tim Handrick and family to finish his Seminary formation alongside us, with the intention of being called and ordained as our next Pastor in July, 2025.

Challenges:

- With Vicar Handrick on board, we have reignited a ministry to children and families. We are slowly navigating these waters to include the congregation and create opportunities to engage the community.
- Completing the transitional hand-off of the Pastoral Office between Pastor Dave and soon-to-be Pastor Handrick while maintaining the forward movement of the congregation.

Goals:

- Three celebratory events in 2025: Pastor Dave's transition from 46 years of fulltime ministry in the District; the Ordination & Installation of Tim Handrick; the congregation's 35th Anniversary.
- Develop & Expand a Discipling Ministry among the Members while also including existing relationships that members have with the community.

St. John the Apostle Lutheran Church, Buford, GA (Rev. Brian Wachter)**Celebrations:**

- Ordination / Installation of Pastor Wachter in 2025
- New Members Joining
- Upcoming Baptisms

Challenges:

- Several Hospitalizations
- Not having our own Meeting Location
- Leadership changes

Plans & Goals:

- Initiating the work to apply for & secure a District Loan and/or Grant for Worship/Ministry Space

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Commerce, GA (Rev. Andy Schroeder)**Celebrations:**

- Worship is still central to the life of the congregation
- Good, biblical preaching
- We have a solid core of people to build from

Challenges:

- The age of the congregation is a concern
- Our numbers are a limiting factor
- Due to these limitations, questioning the ability to call a full-time pastor

Plans and Goals:

- It is vital to grow the congregation and attract a diversity of ages
- Going forward, having a more visible and permanent home to address any of the other concerns.



St. Peter Lutheran Church, Dahlonega, GA (Rev. C.J. Kanefke)

Celebrations:

- Rev. Dr. Gerhard Michael, Jr. retired in 2023 after serving St. Peter for 10 years, and we called Rev. Charles Kanefke as our first full-time pastor in June 2023.
- We completed our “Growing Together in Christ” Capital Campaign, yielding over \$860,120 for the building of our new Ministry Center.
- We broke ground on our new Ministry Center in March 2024 and held our service of dedication on February 23, 2025.

Challenges:

- We have been working to reconstitute our outreach to the college students at our local campus of the University of North Georgia.
- We have been working to improve our Sunday School and youth programs.

Plans & Goals:

- We have begun an intentional discipling effort and will launch our LIFE Groups in the coming months.
- With our new media equipment, we will work to improve our online presence and seek ways to provide useful digital content for our community.
- We will be looking for new opportunities to partner with local organizations and welcome them to utilize our facilities to expand our outreach.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gainesville, GA (Rev. Dan Sparling)

Celebrations:

- 3-year average of 20% growth per year in membership
- Launched a Sunday School for youth
- Fruitful partnership with local ministry called "Straight Street" resulting in an increased incidence of member participation in local charity work.

Challenges:

- Planning to repave and enlarge the parking lot
- Establishing a consistent ministry to a growing number of teenagers and youth
- Updating various internal systems (currently done "by hand") to more efficient and growth-resilient computerized systems (which are not quickly adopted).

Plans & Goals:

- Establish and seed a Facilities and Maintenance Endowment Fund
- Creation of a non-profit ministry endeavor to specifically address the expressed needs of the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population in Hall County (over 30% of Hall County)
- Studying the feasibility and practicality of adding a "contemporary worship" service.

Oak Road; Lilburn, GA (Rev. Andy Wrasman)

Celebrations:

- Started a partnership with a Mekane Yesus of North America congregation
- Two members ministered in India, sharing accounts of miraculous healings & demon exorcisms
- Multiple families with children, young adults, and retired adults have come into LCMS membership for the first time. In addition to the wide age spread of these members, they're also from a vast variety of ethnic backgrounds.

Challenges:

- Our financial giving was \$30k below expenses in 2024
- Members often times move away in retirement, many members are elderly and have 5-10 years of likely left, and our location is limited to draw LCMS members that move in from out-of-state. Living with this concern, we are beginning to break ground in new fields. This creates a sense that, as this happens, membership giving and membership numbers will sink too low to sustain our current facility and on-campus programs
- Our congregation's constituency does not match the culture. In addition, the current structure of operations and programming were established over 30 years ago when the congregation was 3 times its current size

Plans and Goals:

- Social ministries have been narrowed down with the goal of having more “on-the-ground” face-to-face interactions with the clients of one of our local food bank co-ops
- Our evangelism team is dedicated to intentional interactions and Gospel proclamations at every community event that we host

The pastor has trained our Elders to prepare and write sermons in case there is any last-minute emergency, and no pastor is available to preach and/or conduct worship on a Sunday. Sermons are approved by the pastor and kept in the Church Office for times of need.

Trinity; Toccoa, GA (Rev. Roland Vega)

Trinity has been meeting as a congregation since 1989. In 2024, we celebrated thirty-five years of gathering in the Lord's grace of Word and Sacrament. We worked with Good Shepherd, Gainesville in a joint Evangelism effort was undertaken with Good Shepherd, Gainesville to begin a Mission Church in Demorest, Georgia. Due to dwindling membership, Grace Mission Church was closed in 2021. Today, over fifty faithful and joyous souls attend Trinity. The majority of the Congregation are older adults. However, we have one faithful young family which has been in attendance for three years. Since their arrival, the wife has been catechized in the faith, along with the baptisms of their two-year-old and nine-month-old. Praise the Lord in Christ Jesus!

Circuit 2, - Rev. Jeffrey Jordan, Circuit Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church/Atlanta, GA (Rev. Adam Ellsworth)

Grace has spent a significant portion of our time reviewing, rewriting, and implementing our new bylaws and structures in hope that we can serve Christ and his church in more meaningful ways. We have expanded our face to face interactions with the poor.

Grace has been further engaging neighborhood groups civic association to better participate in the life of our neighborhood.

Savior of All Lutheran Church/Cartersville, GA (Rev. David Kruger)

December 31, 2022 – Pr. Mike Zwemke retired from pastoral ministry after serving Savior of All for 15 years.

June 1, 2023 – Rev. Dr. David F. Kruger began serving as the Intentional Interim Pastor to assist the congregation in reviewing the past, assessing the present, and looking to the future of Savior of All's ministry.



February 18, 2025 – In the past 20 months there has been a nearly 50% increase in Sunday worship attendance, the addition of 24 new members (3 adult baptisms and 2 infant baptisms), and the current process of calling a permanent pastor.

Living Faith Lutheran Church/Cumming, GA (Rev. Timothy Droegemueller)

Living Faith continues to stand on the changeless Word of God and proclaim Christ and Him crucified so that all people can hear of the truth and love of our gracious, giving God. The Lord's Word continues to achieve miracles in our midst and bring people from all walks of life into the full life and fellowship that we share in Christ our Lord.

The most significant shift for us has been our "In Christ, For All" Emphasis which has helped us to identify how we would like to grow in Biblical maturity as a congregation as our Lord continues to lead us in His Great Commission work.

Living Faith continues to support the Lutheran Confessional Church of Pakistan lead by Pastor Jay Dass, the Emmanuel Lutheran Church plant in Norcross, and the Blessed Saints ministry at the Oaks and Centerfield retirement centers.

Living Hope Lutheran Church/Acworth; Kennesaw, GA (Rev. John Schubert)

God has graciously given us a wonderful season of congregational health, unity, and vitality around our common mission to share the Gospel and make disciples. Over the three years we've had 9 adult baptisms, 4 youth and children, and 3 infants.

We have been blessed to see continued growth numerically (82 new members over the past 3 years), but more importantly spiritually. Growth in new leaders and people serving. Growth in discipleship-focused ministries.

Last year we set a goal to build a half a house for a needy family in Haiti. God graciously blessed our efforts and we were able to build four entire homes for four different families in need.

Faith Lutheran Church/Marietta, GA (Rev. Ken Wagener)

Since the retirement of Pastor Carl Schneider (June, 2022) Faith has been in the call process looking for God to provide their next pastor.

We thank God for the faithful support of Pastors Ken Wagener, Mark Buckert, and Greg Walton during this time.

We also praise God as He leads us through the challenges of congregational and school ministry.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church/Rome, GA (Vacant)

Pastor James Jennings has received and accepted a call to Gethsemane Lutheran Church/Houston, TX God continues to work in His people at Holy Trinity to understand the direction of their ministry in Rome and Northwest Georgia.

Rivercliff Lutheran Church/Sandy Springs, GA (Rev. Jeffery Jordan & Rev. Jacob Berlinski)

We have completed the remodeling of our campus with the completing of Community/Education building.

God has blessed us with tremendous growth in our community center use.

We have also seen God bless our efforts with Lutheran Braille Workers in the growth in our Love Works ministry (production and distribution of braille and large-print materials to the blind and the visually impaired).

We continue to exploring online ministries opportunities using podcasts and youtube.

King of Kings Lutheran Church/Talking Rock, GA (Rev. Jeffrey Jensen)

We started two new outreach ministries. We have a chapter of American Heritage Girls (AHG) and Buddy Break (BB). AHG is similar to the Girl Scouts, but it's distinctively Christian. BB is a ministry to families who have children with special needs.

We have invested substantial time and money in increasing our online presence. Based upon the metrics, we are seeing good results.

By the grace of God, we continue to grow in faith, love, service and numbers.

St. Mark Lutheran Church/Tucker, GA (Rev. Hiruy Gebremichael)

1. There have been 58 Eritrean Baptisms over the last 20 years.
2. This year marks the twenty-year anniversary of the St. Mark Multicultural Mission / Church with Eritreans. Celebrations are being planned.
3. Every Sunday the service is posted on Facebook giving 1,000 – 1,700 people opportunity to view the Eritrean service. 20,000 Eritreans, both international and nations watched the service during covid.
4. Summer of 2024 Pastor Gebremichael was invited by the Eritrean church after 20 years away to help train new pastors. Topics covered included infant baptism, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the doctrine of once saved always saved.
5. The Fellowship Hall roof collapsed and three air conditioning units failed that covered the Sunday School building, Fellowship Hall, and sanctuary were all renovated. The carpet for the congregation is next. \$27,000 is the estimate for carpet.

Timothy Lutheran Church/Woodstock, GA (Rev. Daniel Brammeier)

We made improvements to the physical property by building a utility storage facility, which wasn't cheap, and adding a sensory playground for preschool specifically designed for 2 to 4 year olds.

The congregation is stable. We've added new members and growth is happening albeit slow.

Our preschool celebrates its 40 year anniversary this year and continues to be one of the best ranked preschools in the Woodstock community.

Timothy's cupboard, our foodbank, has changed its food distribution times from twice a week to once a week, but still gives out over 150lbs of food, and sometimes double that, to clients once a month.

Circuit 3 – Rev. Dr. Wilton Heyliger, Circuit Visitor

Bethlehem Lutheran Church , Columbus , GA (Rev. Bradley Arnhold)

We congregation members continue to grow older and quite a number of our founding members were called to glory. Then on a trip to New York for a procedure for my son, two things happened: First, we flew over hurricane ravaged N.C. and the water was still remarkably high and second, we saw a post from that district asking for disaster relief. When we returned to Columbus, we embarked on several trips to that area, led by my son and supported by the congregation. A total of four different trips were made to bring relief to the area. At the same time, we began our own mission to reach out to the community around our church. We have been providing lunch one Saturday a month and have been averaging between 60 and 80 meals provided to community members. We have received three new military families with young children into membership, and that has brought life back to our little church. We are also embarking on a campaign to beautify our building which will mean a new roof, carpets, and pads.

We are looking toward the promise of the Gospel. That where we spread seeds, God's Word will not return to us empty.

The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Columbus, GA (Rev. John Bumgardner)

The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Columbus, GA has had an eventful three years. The congregation has received a new pastor and since then, the church has devoted itself to its identity in Christ. This has led to a return to what it means to be the church of Christ, a celebration of the fellowship we have as His body and reaching out to those who do not enjoy the grace of our Savior.

Peace Lutheran, Decatur GA (Rev. Terrell Davis, Sr.)

Worship - Over the past three years we have made significant changes in our "worship service order" bringing it more in line with that which is to be expected within the LCMS; Also, at the same time, I have utilized a period of time (during announcements prior to worship service), to define and explain the function of liturgical terms. Happily, our members have embraced these efforts and "are thankful".

Baptisms: 8 (4 children; 4 adults) **Confirmation:** 5 children; 3 adults. **New Memberships:** 11

Vast improvements have been made to both the exterior and interior portions of the church. The full exterior painted (2 times and new seamless gutters, interior flooring on narthex, hallway, altar, and kitchen area. The female restroom was remodeled with flooring, light fixtures, and furniture.

Leadership Adjustments - Major changes in leadership have occurred and were critical in doing so. A longtime senior officer was asked to step down based upon both performance and spiritual issues. Our hope and prayers are to have those who lead, do so in ways that benefit God's Kingdom, His church (which is His people), and not themselves.

Finally - There is much more to accomplish in every aspect of our church. The community that we serve has changed tremendously, bringing "increased" lifestyles and economic status to families. Our goal is to reach out and continue to improve upon the state of our house of worship and praise so that Peace Lutheran Decatur Georgia might meet the needs of and remain within this community for many decades to come.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Douglasville, GA (Rev. Timothy Faile)

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Douglasville, Georgia, called a new pastor in 2023 and continues to cultivate Word and Sacrament ministry in the suburbs west of Atlanta, preaching Christ crucified and living out our God-given vocations in our daily lives in many and various ways. Two quick examples: a) We continue to pour out the love of Christ in the Gospel to children in our preschool. b) We continue ministering to women in the midst of unplanned pregnancies (Embrace Grace).

Christ Lutheran Church, East Point, GA (Vacant)

Worship - Christ Lutheran Church, East Point has not been able to recover since covid. Our pastor took a call to another location and that has left the congregation without Sunday morning pulpit supply consequently our congregation has scattered and there are about eight members remaining. Christ Lutheran Church has experienced no new members or baptisms.

Bible Study - Christ Lutheran Church consistently conducted Bible Study virtually on Wednesday evenings using ZOOM. There are 8 - 10 people in attendance weekly. Some are members of Christ East Point and others join us from various other places. This is our primary source of spiritual nourishment.

Building Disposition - Because of debt incurred, Christ Lutheran Church has entered into a commercial lease agreement with a tenant for 38 months. The lease extends from 2.13.2023 -

4.30.2026. At that point the lessee intends to purchase the property. Proceeds will be used to pay off current and back debt.

Future Expectations - The leaders of Christ Lutheran Church are not sure what will occur in the future for the ministry but are willing to go forward in whatever way glorifies the Lord and advances His Kingdom.

Christ Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church, Griffin, GA (Rev. Joseph Warnke)

After our county was hit with 5 tornadoes on January 12, 2023 (insurance paid for the new roof on the church), we found multiple ways to reach out to our community. We collected and donated dry goods for the local distribution center (ad hoc food bank); we gave out 228 flood buckets (billed as "kits of cleaning supplies"); we assisted the Spalding County EMA with both volunteer coordination and the tornado relief hotline call center. Members cleared and removed fallen trees from roads and driveways throughout the area. We noticed that many people without transportation needed food but couldn't get to the distribution center. Working through the EMA, Christ Our Savior set up a food delivery service in order to fill this un-met need. The combined efforts of Christ Our Savior reached an estimated 400 people in our community, sharing and expressing the love of Jesus, in word and deed, as well as with literature and name recognition.

In 2024, we constructed and paved a parking lot for our church, which was a significant improvement of facilities. For the last three years, we have conducted a free one-day VBS, held offsite in a local neighborhood's pavilion, as an outreach to the community. In 2025, we will be transitioning to an onsite Summer Day Camp. On Reformation Sunday, 2024, we had our first ever Rite of First Communion, at which three children of the congregation were admitted to the Sacrament. The Holy Spirit is blessing our congregation with steady growth. Through Word and Sacrament, we are friends of Christ making friends for Christ!

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church, Lilburn, GA (Rev. Dr. Wilton Heyliger)

Incarnate Word Lutheran Church has recently transitioned to a new location as of August 2024, allowing us to hold our Sunday worship services at a more convenient time for our congregation. In response to the ongoing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have embraced digital outreach initiatives to connect with our members and the wider community. While our congregation continues to navigate the struggles of decreased attendance in the aftermath of the pandemic, we remain committed to reaching out to our community in person and through various digital platforms.

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Peachtree, GA (Rev. Mark Dahn & Rev. Dr. Joel Dietrich)

In the past 3 years, St. Paul Lutheran Church & School marked its 25th anniversary. The school continues to recover from Covid and is approaching its highest enrollment ever. Conceptual talks and feasibility studies about starting a Lutheran High School are in motion. To meet a need in the community, St. Paul started a Summer Camp program in which the attendance now exceeds school enrollment. Community relationships have also grown as several groups are increasingly using church facilities. Worship attendance has continued up for 4 consecutive years. They welcome a couple dozen new members annually. One significant challenge remains and is also increasing: that of finding and replacing Called church workers for both church and school.

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Stockbridge, GA (Rev. Khampheuy Munnicha)

Greetings from Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 3250 Mt Zion Rd., Stockbridge, GA. We currently have approximately 25 to 30 people in our congregation attending our services here at Holy Cross. Our doors are always open for new people to attend our Saturday 11 am worship in addition to our regular

Wednesday 10 AM bible study. This includes our Lent services now taking place after bible study. Worshipers are invited to join us for soup and sandwiches after Lenten service. God's peace and blessings be with you.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Stockbridge, GA (Rev. Carl Morten)

Over 1,000 new housing units have been built across the street from Lord of Life Lutheran Church in three different apartment complexes. The pastor has developed relationship with one of the senior, 55-plus units. There is weekly Bible Study and monthly worship. Pastor provides pastoral / chaplaincy care for the residents. Fifteen people visit the congregation weekly as a result of these efforts. The congregation is planning a parking lot worship for Easter Sunday as well as an Easter Egg Hunt.

Circuit 4 – Rev. Andrew Howe, Circuit Visitor

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Augusta, GA (Rev. Roger Schwartz)

Our Redeemer received 17 new members, conducted 2 baptisms and 2 adult baptisms in the first two months of 2025. The Lord our God be praised. He is good! We are working with a couple of local non-profits to share space and facilities to help provide opportunities for our members to assist and share Jesus with those in need in our community. Our Redeemer has transitioned into policy-based governance and we are praying that this shift will help us discover and deploy the gifts and skills of our members. We're experimenting with a program through Sylvan Institute to help non-traditional students by using our facility for fine arts training and tutoring.

Lake Oconee Lutheran Church in Eatonton, GA (Rev. Steven Hayden)

Lake Oconee continues to serve. Along with our "Little Free Pantry" where food is available in an outside cabinet 24/7 for those in need, we have begun a full-service drive-up food pantry called "The Bread of Life". This ministry provides 3 full meals per family plus breakfasts, snacks and paper products twice a month serving over 550 people per month. We have given a scholarship to a Concordia Seminary student from Georgia. In addition, working with the district and a local partner, we are in the process of opening a mission station in Milledgeville, GA on the campus of the now closed Hope Lutheran Church reaching out and providing for the community's physical and spiritual needs and the students in the area schools. We continue to live-stream worship and Bible classes in addition to in person attendance.

Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity in Macon GA (Rev. Laird Van Gorder)

This will be the 28th year of Trinity Woods Summer Day Camp which brings children of the area closer to their Creator through activities and devotions. The Georgia Wildlife has provided lectures with live reptiles and aviaries for the last three years. Registration begins on the 1st of March. We look forward to a challenging summer with some 100-120 campers weekly. The Congregation continues to increase with current confirmed members of 21 and 26 baptized. Our average attendance on any given Sunday ranges from 14-17. We started Sunday School in February 2024 with 7 in attendance. I began an Adult Confirmation class in October 2024 with 2 young adults. We now serve the Lord's Supper every Sunday serving the common cup and individual cup. The Congregation is extremely optimistic with families attending and traveling visitors have keep 'dropping in' to worship with us. We continue to be blessed!

Christ Lutheran Church in Perry, GA (Rev. Alan Mueller)

The members of Christ Lutheran Church in Perry, GA have had two momentous occasions in the last triennium. Our beloved pastor, Rev. John Lehenbauer retired and we had opportunity to celebrate his ministry among us. With the current paucity of clergy in our LCMS we were very blessed to welcome Rev. Alan Mueller to be our next consecrated, appointed, and anointed loving pastor. Our nursery and daycare continue to flourish and we look forward to adding new staff and grades in the coming years.

Trinity Lutheran Church in Savannah, GA (Rev. Jeffrey Webb)

Over the last Triennium Trinity Lutheran Church, Savannah, GA. Received 700 boxes (16,800 pairs) of Bombas socks that were distributed to those in need in our area as well as to other LC-MS congregations and other organizations. Our Hearts of Compassion Ministry continues to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the homeless and financially poor. We continue to Prayer Walk through the neighborhood and tell those that we meet the Gospel as well as pray with them. We have initiated a Discipleship program under the guidance of Rev. Dr. David Kim and Global Missions as well as "Following Jesus on His Mission". We are making Disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ within and outside of the Church. We have also begun using "Shepherding Our Strays" and "Everyone His Witness" to minister to those who are straying and have strayed away from the Church. We have added 27 new members to the Lord's congregation here in Savannah and baptized 5 infants.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Statesboro, GA (Rev. Samuel Clay)

There have been three new couples who have moved to the area and joined the congregation. There is property for sale and the congregation that will go through in the near future. Perhaps the congregation can consider a land lease and pay rent on the property. A drive through coffee shop is owner is interested in leasing the property. Pastor Clay had a few health challenges but seems to be past them. We hope to be more mission and outreach focused in the coming year by hosting an occasional trivia night or adult Vacation Bible School. Thank you for your prayers.

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church in Warner Robins, GA (Rev. Andrew Howe & Rev. Peter LeBorious)

Mount Calvary continues to serve God by "Connecting people to Jesus and to one another to serve the world." We continue to reach out into our community through community partnerships, Rebecca's Garden of Hope tutoring ministry, and through the efforts of our North Macon Outreach ministry. Griefshare is a new ministry we began in January and it has been a blessing to care for those in our congregation and greater community. Raising up church workers is still an important part of who we are. Our congregation has been assisting the Seminary and Synod in the Vicarage program for 25 years. This past year, we had our first DCE Intern, Trevor Hudlin, from Concordia Irvine. He is a son of the congregation and will be receiving his first call in the LCMS.

Circuit 5 – Rev. Bert Matlock Circuit Visitor

Trinity Lutheran, Albany GA (Rev. Gary Bowman)

Trinity Lutheran Church – Albany is located west of I-75. Trinity has suffered a pastoral vacancy for two years following the departure of their previous pastor. During the period of transition Trinity was blessed with two emeritus pastors, both from Tallahassee, Florida leading worship. Both pastors alternated Sundays to provide Word and Sacrament Ministry for God's people of Trinity. In October 2024 Trinity called and installed Reverend Gary Bowman as pastor. Pastor Bowman is a second career

pastor, his first career as an attorney in the Atlanta area for over forty years. He was colloquized at Concordia Seminary – St. Louis. Pastor Bowman has received new members, reached out to the US Marine Corp Community, the law enforcement communities, the local hospital, Albany State University, and joined the Kiwanis Club. Trinity – Albany spreads the Gospel of Jesus in the community.

Trinity Lutheran, Crawfordville/ Wakulla, FL (Rev. Bert Matlock)

For the three-year reporting period Wakulla County has seen a substantial growth of new businesses, new houses, and record home sales bringing new people into the area. In my 17 years of serving Trinity Lutheran of Wakulla, Trinity has had its ups and downs as the only liturgical church, exception of the Roman Catholic Church. In my first year as a vicar (2008) the Wakulla population was around 29,183 and the worship attendance was approximately 12-15. As pastor, in 2022 the census reported the population was 35,178, with a growth rate of 14.1%. In July 2023, the population was approximately 36,449. Average attendance is 35-40. Due to rapid growth in the county, Trinity Lutheran of Wakulla has seen membership rise as well. An adult Bible Study meets two times a week (Wednesday afternoon and Sunday morning) and junior confirmation on Sunday following worship. For the first time in years, most leadership positions have been filled. Trinity averages around 5 to 8 visitors a week with some returning and worshipping on a regular basis. Trinity has a few winter members returning each year. Struggles continue with being in a predominately Baptist, Church of God, and in a non-denominational location with large youth groups. With that in mind we lack younger members. God has truly blessed Trinity Lutheran Church of Wakulla for the past 44 years and we pray for His continued blessings.

Our Redeemer Lutheran, Lake City, GA (Rev. Stephen Fair)

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church was established in 1964 in Lake City proper and relocated to our current address outside the city in 1987. A new sanctuary was completed in 2008 and the previously used sanctuary is now our Fellowship Hall. We are a Confessional congregation of the Lutheran Church -Missouri Synod. Our register has remained steady in a population area that has remained steady, though with turnover. We preach Christ crucified, discerning both the Law which condemns us because we are all sinful and the Gospel of Jesus Christ who has saved the repentant through God's pure grace and mercy of our fallen condition. Over the past several years our church has reaffirmed the Faith which we believe, teach and confess and established the practices which Our Lord Himself established through the Holy Scriptures and which are in accord with the pure exposition of the Scriptures; in the Unaltered Lutheran Confessions. We seek the lost to give to them the true gifts, not through compromising the Faith or following after the false and condemned doctrines of the world, but by bringing them into faith and confidence in God's power and grace through the Word and Sacraments as Our Lord commands us to do. We did not close for the COVID pandemic but continued to serve God's people. We did not request any government subsidies, although our attendance was impacted. We serve our local community, involved with our local Pregnancy Care Center of Lake City and Live Oak. And we are contributors to the Christian Service Center which provides for the needy of our community. Our membership is about 85 strong and we worship between 40-50 members most Sundays. We serve Holy Communion each Sunday – as often as we meet. Being at the crossroads of US 75 and Florida State Road 47, we often have visitors especially in the winter months. We serve Communion to visiting LCMS members who are in good standing. Please join us in praying that our efforts to seek the lost and bring more people to His good gifts of salvation in Christ will bear much fruit in Columbia and Suwanee Counties in Florida.

Epiphany Lutheran, Tallahassee, FL (Rev. Timothy Barber)

Epiphany has been setting the foundation for the future years of ministry. In 2022, after a 5-year vacancy, Epiphany welcomed Rev. Tim Barber to serve as their pastor from the Concordia Seminary. The congregation continues to be steadfast in the word as the school continues to build upon its foundation to begin to build towards growth within the school and within the community. This has been a time of transition, but God has remained faithful to His flock. We ask that you join us praying that Epiphany will continue to serve the growing community of Northeast Tallahassee through Word and Sacrament and her beloved school ministry in new and fruitful ways!

University Lutheran Church and Student Center, Tallahassee, FL (Rev. Jay Winters)

University Lutheran thanks God for His grace in leading us to be His “Jesus-Centered Community of Scripture, Faith, and Grace” here in Tallahassee at our location on the campus of Florida State University. The past three years have seen great increases in our student activities and participation. Every year at University Lutheran, we have a year-long theme that we call our “annual focus”. These focuses tend to make for an interesting summation of our years: “True Presence” (2022-23) was our annual focus as we considered what it meant for us to continue to come back to more “in person” activities as a congregation. In 2023-24 our focus was “A Jesus Centered Community,” where we engaged in a huge push in the congregation to get most congregation members to read and study the four Gospels along with us. In 2024-2025 we have been engaging in the “A Community of Scripture” focus where we have been encouraging people to dig deep into the text of God’s word. We also celebrate this year sending three young men to the seminary. We pray that God continues to use us for His purposes and continues to shower His grace upon us and all people.

Peace Lutheran, Tifton, GA (Vacant)

We at Peace Lutheran Church (Tifton GA.) are celebrating a time of hope, due in part to our growth in membership. While we are still a very small congregation, God by His grace and mercy has provided key individuals in a timely manner as only He can. In the past 3 years we have been able to return to morning worship, and have added a service of Vespers that is well attended on Wednesday evenings. We have also added a study of the Lutheran Confessions following Vespers, and that has been a great blessing to all. We hope to begin a campus ministry in 2025 at our local college (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College) as a means to spread the Gospel of our Lord to the community. Please pray for us at Peace Lutheran as we work to share the Good News both on church grounds, and the community’s surrounding us over the next three years.

Messiah Lutheran, Valdosta, GA (Rev. Richard Lohmeyer)

The past three years have been a time of adjustments, advancements, and spiritual and numerical growth. Following the departure of its full-time pastor, the congregation called a Intentional Interim Pastor who continues to shepherd Messiah. Messiah has recovered from COV19 and continues to receive new members. Suffering from two major storms within two years, the first causing major damage to the education building, Messiah continued to gather around Word and Sacraments, and reaching out with new efforts to the VSU and Moody Air Force Base communities. The congregation has a new constitution, dedicated a new electronic sign, and remodeled the damaged education building. We give God thanks for His blessings every day and pray that He will provide us with a full-time shepherd in the near future.



Circuit 6 – Rev. Patrick McKenzie, Circuit Visitor

Messiah Lutheran, Brunswick GA (vacant)

Mentioned in the Holy Trinity, Kingsland GA report

Grace Lutheran Church, Jacksonville FL (Rev. Michael Popp, Rev. Haeselassi Gebrewold)

Grace Lutheran Church & School in Jacksonville has gone through a leadership transition in the last 3 years at both the pastor and principal positions and God continues to bless our ministry. Grace's ministry and attendance are rebounding post-pandemic, and our school continues to educate and share the Gospel. We have been revitalizing our campus and upgrading our early childhood and playground facilities while looking into possible expansion projects in the coming years. This summer we will be honoring our Pastor Emeritus, Rick Engel, with 30 years of service at Grace and his 80th birthday along with recognizing 20 years of service at Grace for Pastor Michael & Jessa Popp. God is good! May His steadfast love endure forever.

Holy Cross Lutheran – Jacksonville FL (Rev. Dr. Leon Roberts)

Holy Cross Lutheran Church has experienced some growth over the past year, had a baptism and gained five new members and our online audience has had as many as 11 viewers on a given Sunday. Our largest challenge presently is financial and the Council and congregation have elected to sell one of our rental properties to help. Property improvements continue and include a newly paved parking area, landscaping, new ceiling and flooring in the altar guild room, music room and counting room, upgraded (donated) paraments, New Air-Conditioning Units for the sanctuary and a new roof with numerous improvements to the parsonage. Thrivent projects, LCEF loans and volunteers made this happen. We are presently seeking to upgrade our audio-visual equipment for a better streaming service and some of the funds from the sale of the home and LCEF will go toward that. We have a new Funeral Pall that was donated by a former member and we have five members are signed up for our next Catechism Instruction Class which will begin on February 8, 2025.

Hope Lutheran Church – Jacksonville FL (Rev. Patrick McKenzie)

Hope Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, Florida is a warm, caring, and nurturing congregation that has the privilege of serving the Baymeadows Area and its surrounding neighborhoods. By God's grace, Hope has experienced some growth these past two years due to a couple of infant baptisms, two adult baptisms, three youth confirmations, and five adult confirmations. Not only has Hope experienced numerical and spiritual growth, but has also experienced ministry skill growth as well. Hope members and its community guests have learned how to be better listeners, personal need assessors of those experiencing stress and trauma, caregivers, and proclaimers of the Gospel through the training of "Spiritual First Aid" and "God Space." Hope continues to minister to its surrounding communities through the Celebrate Recover 12-Step Program and its involvement with the Mandarin Senior Center, Family Promise, and Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida. In 2025, Hope has celebrated the implementation of Sunday School for children and youth, its 10th anniversary as a chartered congregation, the 9th anniversary of Celebrate Recovery, and its development and implementation of a 5 year ministry plan for congregational in-reach, and community outreach. We thank God for his numerous blessings and the further privilege of serving him and our communities!

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church – Jacksonville FL (Rev. William Reister)

"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I will say, "Rejoice!" The members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, FL share in the joy expressed by St. Paul as the congregation celebrates 65 years of ministry in 2025. From its first service at Ray Greene Park in 1960 until the present, the church has enjoyed God's blessings and witnessed the significant growth of the city and surrounding

communities. The congregational ministry extends well beyond its Northside Jacksonville location to the adjacent communities of Callahan, Hilliard, Yulee, Fernandina Beach, Florida and on to Folkston and Kingland, GA. Through its Internet radio, Our Redeemer Lutheran Radio, and its Livestream ministry it reaches people throughout the United States and in foreign countries with the live-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. People in more than 20 countries have found the station at Live365.com or on the app by searching for “Lutheran”. The programs may also be heard on radio.net. These and other blessings will be celebrated at a 5PM service on Reformation Sunday October 26, 2025, to which the First Coast Circuit congregations, friends, and former members will be invited. The event will be a celebration of the Reformation Gospel and of God’s blessings on the 65 years in ministry by the congregation. More importantly, members and guests will look forward to the continued ministry of the church, led by Pastor Bill Reister since 1991, and blessed with members seeking additional ways to share the Gospel both locally and abroad.

St. Paul Lutheran Church – Jacksonville FL (Rev. Stephen Wiggins, Sr.)

St. Paul Lutheran Church continues to enjoy the blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the past two years the in-person worship numbers have increased from 35 to 45 weekly and our live stream numbers have increased from 35 to 58 weekly. This year’s activities like last year will include volunteering at different shelters and sharing in food distribution. Hosting our annual health fair and clothing giveaway, movie night, football game day and fish fry’s as an outreach activity. The Women’s ministry opened a Women’s clothing closet. We launched our brand new Prayer Ministry in January 2025 and this Summer both youth and adults will be attending the LCMS Black Ministry Family Convocation in Dallas, Texas and the LCMS National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, Louisiana. *To God Be The Glory For The Things He Has Done!*

Bethlehem Lutheran, Jacksonville Beach, FL (Rev. Dana Brones, Rev. Nathan McCarty, Rev. David Horn)

Bethlehem is a thriving, mission minded faith community. Bethlehem supports two missionaries through LCMS World Mission; provides direct support for widows and orphans at Nsonweni Lutheran church in South Africa as well as our seminary in Pretoria South Africa; provides financial support to a Lutheran hospital in Madagascar; provides support to Child Beyond (a RSO in the LCMS) in Guatemala; and supports one called traveling missionary/evangelist (Rev. Dave Horn) who travels throughout the U.S. and Canada. Mission trips to South Africa and Guatemala occur on an annual basis. Local missions are also a priority as we provide Christian care and education in our preschool (currently with 62 students) and as members serve our local homeless shelter, food bank, and regional servant events. In June of 2023 BLC celebrated the 40th ordination anniversary of her senior pastor, Rev. Dana Allen Brones, who has been at BLC since the year 2000. Bethlehem has also been blessed by the ministry of Rev. Nathan McCarty who has served as associate pastor since 2019. In October 2024, Bethlehem celebrated her 75th anniversary during a two-day celebration event which culminated in a festival worship service with the Rev. Dr. Glenn Nielsen as preacher from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. In 2025 BLC will embark on a major renovation and building campaign. Empowered by Word and Sacrament, Bethlehem continues to move forward in Witness, Mercy and Life Together.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Kingsland GA (Rev. Dr. Joel Meyer)

The southeast Georgia coastal region continues to see increased growth, and Holy Trinity is experiencing growth along with the region. Holy Trinity serves the area between Yulee/Fernandina, FL to Brunswick, GA. Our Sunday school, Family Nights, confirmation class and youth group have been effective in nurturing the faith of our families. Our men’s and women’s Bible studies are helping create community and fellowship in the gospel. And our community engagement is spearheaded by the

Lutheran Food Bank of Camden County. We have a bi-monthly Bible study in Fernandina/Yulee, FL led by SMP pastor Adam Gray, whom Holy Trinity will be calling as an associate pastor. Pastor Victor Belton is serving our satellite congregation, Messiah, in Brunswick. We give thanks to God for his work among us and pray for his continued guidance in serving this community with the good news of Jesus Christ.

St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Middleburg, FL (Rev. Logan Landes)

The past two years have been a mixture of rich blessing and trials to overcome in that we have welcomed many new members via birth, baptism, and confession of faith, but we have also had to overcome several facility issues such as air conditioners going out and a very costly break-in, and a number of deaths, yet the congregation remains steadfast in their faith and eager to praise God. The greatest trials we've had to overcome these last couple years as a congregation have been facility related as we've had to start addressing maintenance needs that have been neglected for nearly 40 years including replacing floors, roofs, painting, signage, and altar equipment. Please pray for us that our ongoing maintenance efforts would not create divisions or hardship within the congregation, but that the Lord would unite us to be of one mind and one will as we endeavor to beautify the Lord's House, make the property as safe as possible for all ages of people, and bring glory to the Lord by being good stewards of all that He has gifted us.

Christ Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Augustine FL (Rev. Mark Stirdivant)

Over the triennium the congregation at Christ Our Savior and Pastor Stirdivant have been getting to know each other. Some new members joined, a Sunday School was started, and Pastor began Catechism classes for what would become, by God's grace, our congregation's first Confirmation class in over a decade. Even though we find ourselves in a traveler/ snowbird rhythm through the year, we are challenged to reach out with the love of Christ our Savior both to our family of faith and to our broader community. As the ladies added a monthly social luncheon to their already successful Bible study, the men are now following suit, organizing in 2025 with a vision to support one another and serve the church and St. John's County. Please pray for God's Word to reach more people in our ever expanding population area!

Good Shepherd Lutheran , Starke FL (Rev. Alec Pueschel)

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Starke, Florida is a very small and intimate community of followers of Jesus the Christ, centered around Word and Sacrament ministry. It is a community that cares for one another, and has extended that care by financially assisting other sister LCMS congregations in Southwest Florida. These particular congregations continue to recover from the devastating effects of seasonal hurricanes. Good Shepherd continues to be faithfully served by Rev. Alec Pueschel, and other LCMS ministers. Since Good Shepherd is primarily a commuter congregation, it has the challenge of becoming better acquainted with its community. In order to fulfill this privilege, it has vowed to occasionally hold Sunday morning fellowship and Bible Class at neighboring restaurants. It hopes to form meaningful relationships with those in their community and to effectively serve some of those identified needs.

Circuit 7 – Rev. Jeffery Shanks, Circuit Visitor

Good Shepherd, Chiefland, FL (Rev. Dr. Larry Griffin)

Good Shepherd Lutheran in Chiefland currently has a membership of 52, with an average Sunday attendance of 40. Pastor Ron Mueller served as vacancy pastor for seven years, until February of

2024, when Rev. Larry Griffin was installed as (part time Pastor). While 70% of our members are 65 years of age plus, we have received ten new members in this past year, and several “younger” members have stepped into leadership positions. We have initiated an outreach program in partnership with Outreach.com and are currently revising our important documents, including Constitution, By-laws, and policies. Please join us in prayers for continued growth and reaching more people for Christ in the Tri-County area.

Peace Lutheran, Dunnellon FL (Rev. Terry McKee)

Peace in Dunnellon continues to grow as a family. We continue to serve between 120 and 180 at our free community meal each month. Our ladies of Peace have started a weekly women’s Bible study which continues to grow. And we celebrated our 35th Shrove Tuesday Potato Pancake Supper. As our congregation ages we have changed our mid-week worship time to 5 pm, which enables those who no longer drive after dark to attend. We have added a Thursday morning Yogurt (yoga) for seniors.

Abiding Savior, Gainesville, FL (Rev. Graham Glover, Sr.)

Abiding Savior Lutheran Church and School, Gainesville, FL has had several significant changes over the past three years. In August of 2022, we installed a new Senior Pastor, Rev. Graham Glover, a native of Gainesville. After nine years of a robust pumpkin patch on our campus, we also started our first Christmas tree lot in November of 2024 to expand outreach to our community. Additionally, Abiding Savior completed a major update to our congregation’s constitution and bylaws. As 2025 begins, we have initiated a search for a new Director of Music Ministry and continue to explore the possible expansion of our school to meet the educational and spiritual needs of our students and community.

First Lutheran Church, Gainesville FL (Rev. Christopher Kollmann)

First Lutheran Church, Gainesville, FL went through a pastoral vacancy and call process starting in the Fall of 2023. During that time, we have continued to share the love of Jesus through our campus ministry, our preschool, and through partnerships with many mission organizations, both local, and international. We started a “Raise the Roof” capital campaign to replace our roof, as well as several aging AC units. We have also started to see meaningful increase in attendance from our post-covid lows. Stephanie Smith started as our new music director in early 2024, and Pastor Chris Kollmann was installed as our new senior pastor in February 2025. We are optimistic about the future, and we are excited to see where God will lead us in the years to come.

First Lutheran, Inverness, FL (Rev. Thomas Beaverson)

We are growing and continue to outreach into the Citrus County Family! We serve a Weekly Hot Meals Program averaging 250-300 people weekly and we are one of only three church pantries in Citrus County open 3 days a week. Our worship has included new additions in worship including Choir, Bells and a Trumpeter. Our Annual Rummage sale still profits the church and others with 20% going to local non-profit charities. We have 4 Bible Study groups which are very active. We hold Worship services Sunday and Thursday morning. We are also a sponsor of High School ROTC and are Prayer Warriors for Citrus Commissioners.

Faith Lutheran Church, Lecanto FL (Rev. Patrick Galligar)

Faith Lutheran Church in Lecanto has been in transition since the retirement of long-time Pastor Stephen Lane. Following his retirement, Pastor Larry Griffin served 14 months as an interim pastor, leading the congregation through a revision of the Constitution and the call of our new pastor, Patrick Galligar, who began his service in October of 2023. Faith has been in the process of discerning God's purpose, mission, and vision for our church and the Citrus County community in which we serve. Several members have taken the lead and are walking us through the Synod's process of CADDs. As the

convention approaches this summer, we will be ending the definition phase, and beginning the "work" of the church. Please keep Faith in prayer as we begin to explore this new vision, and accomplishing these goals which we believe the Lord has prepared for us to do.

Our Redeemer, Ocala FL (Rev. Joseph Signore)

Our Redeemer, Ocala, FL has expanded its educational opportunities and community outreach in the past three years. We annually partner with Concordia Theological Seminary in hosting a continuing education class taught by a professor in the summer. We hold a week-long Adult Bible School in the fall. We established a Life Team that has been trained and certified by Lutherans for Life. We led a community effort opposing pro-abortion Amendment 4. In 2024 we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the mission that went on to become our congregation. We look forward to celebrating the 40th anniversary of our congregational charter in 2026.

St. John Lutheran Church, Ocala FL (Rev. Jeffrey Shanks & Rev. Timothy Mehl)

The last three years at St John Lutheran Church and School have been ones of steady growth. We have continued rebounding after COVID in a variety of ways. We'll include but a few:- We had a three year run of the Ocala Christmas Light Spectacular - a 1.8 Christmas Light drive through with Santaland and a walk through display which included a Christmas Labyrinth which wound people through telling the Christmas story and ended with a giant Nativity. We have since made the difficult decision to move the light show on campus with a walk through only, but still have nearly 4000 people who enjoyed our gift to the community. Our school ministry has continued to grow and now have over 500 students on campus each day of the school year. We have partnered with the school ministry to find creative ways to connect with those over 500 students in a variety of ways. We have continued to expand the number of outreach opportunities and partnerships we have to share the love of Christ and to demonstrate this, we hosted a Mission on the Move event which featured 29 different outreachers and partnerships we support either financially or with volunteers. We expanded our church ministry and school outreach by calling Pastor Tim Mehl as our associate pastor.

Amazing Grace Lutheran Church, Oxford FL (Rev. Dr. Paul Burtzlaff)

Amazing Grace Lutheran Church and Early Learning Center, located in Oxford, Florida, has experienced significant growth and transition in recent years. During the last triennium, our founding pastor, Rev. James Rockey, was elected District President of the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. From November 2022 to July 2024, Pastor John Mackowiak faithfully served as our intentional interim pastor, providing steady leadership during this period of change and the strong core of faithful volunteers ensured that all ministries thrived. Amid the pastoral transition, we successfully completed an expansion of our Early Learning Center—entirely debt-free. On July 28, 2024, we joyfully installed Paul Burtzlaff as our new pastor. Since then, we have embarked on a visioning process with Jim Miller to discern God's direction for our ministry and to accommodate our rapidly growing congregation.

Forest Lutheran Church, Silver Springs, FL (Vacant)

Forest Lutheran in the Forest continues to meet with a small group of dedicated and gifted leaders. After their former part-time pastor re-retired, they have been served by another retiree from a neighboring congregation 1-2 times a month for worship and communion. The other times of worship are split between one of their elders reading a sermon from the Concordia Pulpit or streaming the sermon from another circuit congregation. Speaking of this, they have upgraded their equipment to be able to stream as well as cleaning up the grounds, freshening the look on campus and

installing a beautiful new sign which is visible from Hwy 40. They continue to serve in this community with its high concentration of people with many human care needs.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Summerfield FL (Vacant)

The Lord of the Church has truly guided and blessed the ministry of Trinity Lutheran by the power of His Holy Spirit the past three years in our mission and ministry of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. One word alone summarizes our ministry season – transition. With the combined work of our Intentional Interim Minister, the Rev. Roger Schoolcraft teamed with our Associate Pastor Blair Clark, the congregation overwhelmingly approved the restructuring plan including the Accountable Leader Model of Policy-Based Management, District approval of our new Constitution and By-Laws, a redesign of our organizational operations, and the training of new Lay Leaders has positioned Trinity with a solid foundation for future growth and mission. We are currently working with the District to formulate plans for future mission development of land purchased in a rapidly growing area just south of The Villages. This all comes as a result of our focus on the power of Word and Sacrament ministry and renewal in faithful Christian discipleship. With the recent retirement of our Pastor Blair Clark, we're continuing the Calling process and praying for the next Pastor God has chosen to lead our ministry in advancing the Gospel and sharing the love of Jesus Christ not only in our community, but throughout the world.

Circuit 8 – Rev. Bruce Alberts, Circuit Visitor

Christ Lutheran Church, Cape Canaveral, FL (Rev. Greg Le Sieur)

The congregation continues to grow in faith and love. The church enjoys its congregational fellowship events, and youth and children's ministries as well its Sunday morning worship services and midweek worship on Wednesday evenings. Messages and sermons series are posted each week for members and guests to keep up with, especially for its many guests from the New England states and other parts of the country who visit. Christ continues to reach out to the community through its foodbank as well as its other evangelistic enterprises.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Holly Hill, FL (Rev. Russell Anderson)

In the last Triennium, the congregation has experienced change in the pastoral office. Rev. Paul Sizemore retired, Rev Jeff Moore began intentional Vacancy and in July 2024 Rev Russell A. Anderson took over the vacancy. A new Day Care began to rent the school rooms and have been open to try a few events with the church, such as a trunk-or-treat and participated in Christmas parade float. Periodically on the first Saturday of some months, a group of members host an event with Bible stories, fun and games, and food, for children in need from the Holly Hill community. During the vacancy, we had 2 adult confirmations, and we have gained about 12 new members. The LWML remains active and once a month about 10 men get together for breakfast and Bible Study.

Faith Lutheran Church and Preschool, Merritt Island, FL (Rev. Andy Schermbeck)

Coming out of COVID, Faith is growing in attendance. We have gone through a visioning process and are seeking to do ministry with its focus and outcomes in mind. Impacting young families through our early childhood program is one focus, which led to closing down the day care portion of our program and re-focusing on the preschool.

In addition to this, we added to our staff and called a DCE, Kylee Sullivan. Starting small group ministry has been one new initiative implemented alongside that. There is also a weekly on campus event for folks with developmental delays. Finally, we continue to do outreach events to meet needs in the community. We aim to do one of those events every other month.

Risen Savior Lutheran Church, Palm Bay, FL (Rev. Troy Curtis)

Zion Haitian Lutheran Church, Palm Bay, FL (Rev. Jean Parent)

Risen Savior is blessed to be served by SMP Pastor Troy Curtis and Zion Haitian by Rev. Jean Parent.

Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Rockledge, FL (Vacant)

Despite a prolonged pastoral vacancy, the congregation and school of Trinity Lutheran continues to persevere. The school ministry's participation in the state's step-up program has been vital. Pastors Ron Scheer and Clarence Rogers have been coordinating with other retired pastors to fill the pastoral vacancy. The church desires an undertaking to reinvigorate the congregation and connect in greater way with the community, but that undertaking has not yet been realized. With district leadership and reaching out to circuit congregations, several attempts to develop plans for the church and school to have a viable future together have been started, but an agreed upon plan has yet to be implemented. With the retirement of the principal, the school is being led by a new principal this Spring and the Church Council and School Board are continuing to work towards the future.

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, South Daytona, FL (Rev. David Schillinger & Rev. Brett Snider)

Holy Cross continues its vibrant ministry to the people of South Daytona under the leadership of Senior Pastor Dave Schillinger. The congregation has been excited about the addition of Associate Pastor Brett Snider. Pastor Snider is also involved with the Open Arms ministry for the visually impaired.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Titusville, FL (Rev. Bruce Alberts)

Multiple lay-led Bible studies have been contributing to the steady growth of the congregation.

Circuit 9 – Rev. Kenneth Green, II, Circuit Visitor

Ascension Lutheran Church, Casselberry, FL (Rev. Mark Mueller & Rev. Raleigh Sims)

This coming October, Ascension will celebrate our 65th anniversary – and we have much for which to give thanks: increased worship attendance over the last triennium, a balanced budget, we have welcomed new members each year, and people are in Bible Study at church and in our homes many days a week. We certainly have our challenges with an ever-aging facility and limited resources. But our anniversary is not a reason to look back or down, but to faithfully look forward and upward. We are intentionally asking what God would have us to be doing today and in the near future to continue to spread His Good News and bring more people into our “joyful community of the caring Christ.”

Lutheran Church of Providence, Deltona, FL (Vacant)

Rev. Dr. Robert Weikart serving in vacancy.

Hope Lutheran Church, Orlando, FL (Rev. Paul vonWerder)

No report received at time of publication.

Iglesia Luterana Esperanza Viva, Orlando, FL (Rev. Eduardo Martin Martínez)

Esperanza Viva (EV) was blessed as Rev. Eduardo Martinez was ordained and installed as pastor on December 18, 2021. EV is in a process transitioning to a new location. We are focusing on the new location. The people of EV are interested and enthusiastic in being able to spread the Word of God to the community of downtown Orlando. They are thankful for Trinity Downtown's partnership and



planning in working together to reach to Spanish community in their surrounding area. A number of adults and children have been baptized.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Príncipe de Paz, Orlando, FL (Rev. Kenneth Green II, Rev. Adolfo Borges)

Prince of Peace/Príncipe de Paz Lutheran Church and Preschool continues to reach out to our diverse, densely populated urban community. A hallmark of our multicultural ministry is our commitment to reflect the wholeness of our congregation in leadership composition, collaborative work, and celebrations. By grace, we are one united Prince of Peace/Príncipe de Paz Church and Preschool.

In 2022, Prince of Peace called Anne Dobbins as Preschool Director. Anne has built a strong, compassionate professional staff, and our NLSA/Gold Seal accredited Preschool has grown. In 2023, we welcomed David Ludwig, Jr., as our Director of Worship and Music—the first full-time worship director since 2019. David's leadership has been pivotal in increasing participation in our choirs, musicians, and worship teams, resulting in richer engagement in worship and growing attendance.

Many community-focused ministries now operate under our Peace Center for Life (Centro de Paz para la Vida), led by Deaconess Ligia Borges. Centro de Paz serves as a bridge from our neighborhood to our congregation's mission. It registered as a Florida LLC in 2022 and applied for 501(c)(3) status in 2024. Operating in collaboration with Prince of Peace, Centro de Paz serves our community through:

- A Food Pantry distributing over 92 tons of groceries annually, providing meals for over 21,000 people each year
- Immigrant support through English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Citizenship Classes
- Service to nearby public schools
- An annual back-to-school and health fair that reaches over 800 people
- Community health initiatives

Through Centro de Paz ministries, people experience God's love and our congregation's hospitality, resulting in new members through adult confirmations, affirmations of faith, and baptisms. (In terms of Spanish language outreach, 75% of the baptisms, first communions, and children's ministry contacts began with one or more Centro de Paz connections.)

DCE Eric Gerken continues to lead our ministries to families and youth. Our new PoP Kids ministry has built upon our Vacation Bible Camp success, attracting new families to the church, growing our Sunday School, and reaching Preschool families. Jim Essig, a retired LCMS principal, continues to serve our older adults through personal visitation and community-building events.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Downtown Orlando, FL (Rev. Douglas Kallesen, Rev. Eduardo Martinez & Rev. Jean Picard)

God has been good to Trinity rebuilding following Covid. We did not worship in person for almost two months but continued to worship online and offered drive through communion. Our school was considered an essential service and remained open throughout Covid but our numbers dropped to just over 60 whereas today our school enrollment is around 350. We added four new classrooms last year and we called an associate Pastor Eduardo Martinez who also serves Esperanza Viva (Spanish) and Trinity. Esperanza worships at Trinity Sundays at 12:30 pm.

I had an ankle fusion in May 2024 and had to re-learn how to walk again. I am getting around much better now. I even conducted worship services from my little red electric scooter for a few months. By God's grace, a great congregation, a loving wife and helpful associate I'm back! - Rev. Doug Kallesen

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Sanford, FL (Rev. Edward DeWitt)

With the assistance of Rev. Tom Eggebrecht from LCEF, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer finalized and unanimously adopted a vision for the future. We have been implementing that vision over the last two years. A major part of the vision was a revitalized outreach ministry using many of the tools and techniques taught in the Along Siders conference. We have hosted six workshops over a period of months to introduce and flesh out the materials which the participating members are using in their "neighborhoods" to come along side those they know who are unchurched or marginally churched. We are praying for God to bless the members with opportunities to speak the Gospel to ears made willing to hear by the Holy Spirit and that the Spirit work to convince them that God loves them as shown in his sending of his Son, Jesus.

While attendance in church bounced back quickly after COVID, COVID did have an impact on ministry at Redeemer. One of the greatest impacts was on the food pantry. During COVID many ministries in our area opened pantries which resulted in a substantial drop in clients. With the drop in numbers combined with a substantial increase in the cost of food from Second Harvest, the congregation made the heart wrenching decision to close the pantry. We still farm a section of the property where we raise fresh vegetables to share with the community. We are working now to distribute the vegetables through a "farmstand" as we harvest. At the moment, we have green beans, yellow squash, cucumbers, jalapeño peppers, and red bell peppers planted. Our hope is to "grow" relationships that result in the opportunity to share Jesus with those around us.

The members of Redeemer continue to support the women and babies at Redeeming Life Maternity Home. During worship and fellowship time, you will often find the babies from the home cradled in the arms of the members. The moms are all instructed in the Christian faith, where they discover or rediscover how much God loves them. The women attend class with others from our community. The bonds built during that time often endure beyond the mothers' time in residency. As this is being written, we are planning to baptize two of our residents at the Easter Vigil and then, when born, the babies of these moms.

Grace Lutheran Church, St. Cloud, FL (Rev. John Hohe)

Rev. John Hohe formerly of Ohio, was installed November 6, 2022. Prior to his arrival Rev. Gary Faith and Rev. Dr James Bollhagen served the church well and admirably during a two year vacancy. Average attendance has grown from 30ish to 90. The congregation is growing and as a result has added a second service on Sunday. A small Sunday school has resumed, and youth confirmation classes resumed a regular schedule and 5 were confirmed in May 2025.

"Connecting people to Jesus" is listed as their primary purpose and Rev. Hohe is teaching and leading the congregation in outreach. The congregation seeks to attract new visitors as well as get their members to be involved in the community. The pastor models outreach by his presence in the community. The number of visitors is increasing. The congregation is becoming more visitor sensitive in how it worships and speaks the Gospel. The pastor has contacts with Christian artists and the congregation has begun hosting Christian concerts. These concerts along with The Chosen and other Christian movie nights, Egg Hunts and Trunk or Treat serve as invite a friend events. The congregation is growing in its sense that "we exist for others". The church has an excellent learning

center with full enrollment of 85. Some steps have been taken by church and pastor towards linking the families served to the life and mission of the church. We are very open to learning how to do this better.

The congregation is more hopeful and positive of their future. An increased “morale” is evidenced by the congregation taking a bold step of raising \$70,000 towards a new roof and other measures that have resulted in making the building attractive. Numerical growth after Covid and the new pastor’s arrival was first almost entirely Lutheran transfers and some reclamation of in-actives. They are now experiencing growth also by way of adult baptisms and new members by instruction and profession of faith. The congregation is supportive and involved in local food insecurity ministries. They are supportive of the Redeeming Life Pro-Life ministry as well as orphanages in Vietnam. The pastor and congregation are thankful for the helpful attention and visits received from Rev. Rockey, Dr. Peter Meier and other District Staff that has helped shaped the church strengthen an outward focus and to improve communication internally and externally.

Circuit 10 – Rev. Marc Kappel, Circuit Visitor

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Apopka, FL (Rev. Donald Moore, Jr.)

We remain small but with hopeful activity with visitors and expanding construction near the parish, we are optimistic about the future. Hundreds of people attend through AA meetings. We are welcoming through people taking up ministries in small ways.

Faith Lutheran Church and School, Eustis, FL (Rev. Marc Kappel)

Faith is in a transition period with the principal of the school accepting a Call this Spring to Fort Wayne, Indiana. With a 3 years of economic upheaval, we have successfully managed the financial crisis. We have recaptured our historical giving to the district. We have had some additional success with post high school bible devotion led by Pastor Moore as our assisting pastor. Lay leadership has been critical in our administrative reformation and we have high hopes for the future of Gospel proclamation.

Bethany Lutheran Church, Leesburg, FL (Rev. Michael Hanel)

Bethany has experienced God’s blessings in membership growth continuing in the post-covid times. The expansion of The Villages has not really slowed down and the great northern migration has fueled this growth. This has led to additions to our staffing in the form of Ronnie Jones beginning SMP training in Fall 2024 and expanding the role of the Director of Music position. We have also begun work to keep up with space issues by purchasing a residence adjacent to the church which is in the process of being converted into our new administrative building which will allow former office space to become additional space for ministry. Congregational leaders have also been hard at work transitioning the governance and administrative roles of the Church Council to better lead a growing church. Mission and outreach in the community continue through church involvement in a community foodbank, pregnancy center, school partnership program, homeless sleeping mat program, vacation Bible school, and more. Though we have also experienced setbacks, deaths, departures, and other things that could slow us down, the Lord has blessed this congregation with resiliency and a friendly welcome to others. We pray that God will continue to lead and guide us into the future as He has brought us to this new day.

Woodlands Lutheran Church & Preschool, Montverde FL (Rev. Joshua Pettit & Rev. Dr. Robert Roegner)

Overall, After the retirement of Rev. Dr. Brian Kneser, Woodlands called their Associate Pastor, Rev. Joshua Pettit, to be Senior Pastor. Woodlands went through a change in their mission, vision and value statements. The new Mission Statement is “connecting people to Jesus”. The ELC has grown to over 100 students and in 2023-2024 school year will be opening for one- year-old children. The ELC will be working on more ways to grow as they connect children and their families to Jesus. Woodlands also celebrated 60 years of Ministry for Rev. Dr. Milan Weerts as he retired also for the 6th time. However, he continues to assist with ministry as needed.

In the area of staffing, Not only has Woodlands called a new Senior Pastor, they have brought on several new staff members. Rev. DR. Bob and Kristi Roegner have joined staff as assisting pastor and secretary. Andrea Bell (Andie) has joined the ministry team as the New ELC Director. Andie has 10 years of experience in early childhood. Betsy Burnham also has joined the ministry team as DCE with 13 years of experience. Woodlands continues to grow in its ministry.

In the area of special events, on May 4th, during a special baptism chapel service, Woodlands baptized several of the students and their siblings.

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Orlando, FL (Rev. Timothy Brown)

We continue in refocusing the ministry following COVID. Concentration on online ministry and spreading the Gospel though social media. We also are intentional in our outreach to community and around the world.

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Orlando, FL (Rev. Leo Luke)

We are in transition with membership stepping up. More Bible studies online are increasing with 4 youth bible studies with a young men’s study. After church music draws the parents in. Sanya Parsons was elected President and will continue the tradition of strong lay leadership.

Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Winter Garden, FL (Rev. Roberto Rojas, Jr.)

God has richly blessed Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church over the past three years. By God’s grace, we built and dedicated a traditional sanctuary, installed stained-glass windows, achieved debt-free status, and continue to grow, averaging 140 worshipers in weekly Divine Service. We’ve added many members through infant baptism and adult catechesis and received many converts through the class. We remain committed to reverent worship, continuing with the historic liturgy, One-Year Lectionary, and Confessional Lutheran doctrine. We’re also committed to the gift of godly patriarchy to raise men to be leaders through male-only acolytes, elders, deacons, and church leadership for the sake of protecting and serving women and children. Our mission support extends to Rev. James May (Kenya, Lutherans in Africa), Missionary Rev. David Preus (Romania), and Missionary Rev. Adam Lehman (Puerto Rico). We’ve also hosted a Lutherans for Life conference, The Maier Conference, and will hold a Continuing Education Class at the Office of the Ministry in May. We thank God for His provision and remain steadfast in our confession of the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic faith and the unwavering preaching of Christ and Him crucified to atone for the sins of the world.

Circuit # 11, the Winter Haven Circuit

Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bartow, FL (Rev. Jonathan Horsman)

Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bartow, FL, extended a call to Rev. Jonathan Horsman in February 2024. Redeemer continues to face the challenges of other smaller congregations. Word and sacrament ministry faithfully continues each week.

Lake Wales Lutheran Church, Lake Wales, FL (Rev. William Whitehead)

Over the past three years, Lake Wales Lutheran Church has been interacting in the community through outreach to the Canaan school on campus with events such as trunk r treats, Jesse Tree gift giving to the preschool students and other student who might not have Christmas.

There has also been fundraising and giving of assistance to families who have been struggling with food insecurity and bill paying.

Challenges include cost of new education building roofs, air conditioners, and other repairs, as well as remodeling of the church sanctuary and offices.

Events such as rummage sales and Christmas Caroling at local assisted living facilities have led to some opportunities for gospel outreach.

Have seen spiritual growth through prayer and bible study.

Christ Lutheran, Lakeland, FL (Rev. Christopher Hazzard)

Christ Lutheran Church is a growing family of believers who love, welcome, and accept all, so that we may share God's love in word and deed. LCEF has assisted us with developing a guiding statement and a vision for the next five years. We are unapologetically a Revelation 7:9 congregation, intentionally welcoming all to join us in the life of the congregation. To that end, we have partnered with the Dream Center of Lakeland to provide a weekly Adopt-a Block meal that has quickly grown to serve 75 neighbors who represent a good cross section of our neighborhood. In addition to the meal, neighbors and church members are welcome to take a variety of food, clothing, and household items. It has truly become a caring community, crossing bridges of culture to gather in Christ at a place with a good, Spirit filled vibe. Some of our neighbors who attend speak only Spanish, and we are grateful for our community volunteers who translate. We are also blessed to have volunteer ASL interpreters within the congregation who are able to sign for a deaf-mute woman who attends every week.

As an adjunct to the Adopt-a-Block meal, we have recently planted a community garden; the produce so far is used solely for the community meal, with the goal that there will eventually be enough abundance that neighbors can harvest what they need for use in their homes.

We also have become the donation sorting center for the Dream Center of Lakeland, with a dedicated crew from within and without the congregation processing donations from three area Walmart's, as well as from other businesses and individuals within the community. We studied and had a sermon series on The Great Sending and have used Lutheran Hour Ministries' The Eager Conversationalist/Spiritual Conversation Curve resources to equip ourselves to share Jesus. We've had a steady flow of first-time visitors who make their way into membership, as we have routinely been told that we are a friendly congregation. We host a Church of God in Christ congregation in our fellowship hall Sunday afternoons, allowing them to reach the Black community in a way that we perhaps cannot. We host the newly chartered Civitan Club of Lakeland-Polk, with several of our members providing leadership to the civic club that seeks to support those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as those who are neurodivergent.

We are currently offering Grief-Share for the first time, providing a much needed and appreciated forum for those in mourning. We continue to be blessed to be able to provide parking for Detroit Tigers Grapefruit League games, with the proceeds being used to support local charities, as well as the ministry of our congregation. Providing parking has also enabled us to foster a reciprocal relationship of goodwill with the City of Lakeland, since we are assisting in meeting one of their needs. Elena Miraztchiyska has been hired as our Director of Music, ushering in a renaissance in the quality of our choral and instrumental music program. We are grateful that emeritus pastor Thomas Block ministers to our shut-ins as he is uniquely qualified to do.

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School, Lakeland, FL (Rev. Andy Ritchie)

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Lakeland FL, over the last three years (2022-2024) have baptized 79 infants, youth, and adults. We have welcomed into membership in that time 144 people. Our average worship has remained stagnant at about 380 throughout our post-covid years, even though our baptized membership has increased. We have looked at the reasons for this flat trend, and we have found some known and admit there are likely some yet unknown reasons. Deaths of long-time members are up. Members have moved out of the area/ state (while new ones have come and are not engaged or have not been reached). Backdoor losses are an issue, as is the reality some members worship less frequently post-COVID. There is no "one thing" to point to for the stagnation.

School ministry is at maximum capacity for our facility, with about 520 students on campus. This is due to the population growth of Lakeland and the state's current policy of the Step-Up program, which makes private education more affordable for families. An expansion plan would mean a 3rd set of new classrooms for each grade (pre-2k-8), additional specialty classrooms, a greatly expanded cafeteria, and possibly another gym. The state's Step-Up program gives a sense of uncertainty as politics are always in flux, and there is no guarantee that a change in administration will not bring about a change in the Step-Up program.

In the last 4 years, we have hosted 3 DCE interns. The congregation has loved the opportunity to help raise up church workers. Additionally, we have added a Director of Spiritual Care (homegrown), SMP pastor Ken Sherman completed his training and was ordained this year and now serves as associate pastor. We have identified and are hiring a second DCE. The three hirings have brought us to full staff for the first time since pre-COVID days. We are sending one of our members who will graduate from Florida State University in the spring to make an application and be accepted into St. Louis Seminary. We have one, possibly two men interested in SMP training as we seek to see what and where God is leading St. Paul.

We worked a visioning process with Clarity Navigator, Pastor Jacob Hoyer for a 2030 goal and steps towards that time. Part of the process was reworking our mission, values, strategy, and outcomes. We spent last year in the visioning process of scaffolding towards the future with staff and programming and launching our Stepping-In and Stepping-Out opportunities to serve. We witnessed good results in getting people out of the building and engaged in ministry in the Lakeland area through our stepping-in and stepping-out opportunities, especially with our ministry partners. Giving to and onsite serving to our ministry partners has blessed the congregation and the city. We have applied for training and a financial grant from "Forge America" to develop an intentional outreach/evangelism mindset and plan to reach new people for Jesus. Pastor Ken Sherman and DCE, Nick Moss have been tasked with a more deliberate focus to reach unchurched school families as the post covid numbers of our school ministry



are: NO church affiliation (about 23%), Other church affiliation (about 56%) St. Paul Lutheran church affiliation (about 21%). The mission field is great! We pray for the harvest and the Holy Spirit to lead the way.

Hope Lutheran Church, Plant City, FL (Rev. Dean Pfeffer)

Hope, Plant City continues to rejoice in the blessings that God has given in her 68 years of mission and ministry within the Plant City community. We are a congregation dedicated to Connecting People to Jesus and look to the Holy Spirit to open those doors for us.

We thank God that in this post COVID world we live in, we have been able to bring back some community events that reach out with the purpose to Connect People to Jesus. Our Easter Egg-Stravaganza of past years has now become a "Road to the Resurrection" event for the community with games, lots and lots of Easter eggs, and most important a retelling of the Holy Week events in our Lord's life by members of the congregation. This is done throughout our campus with members in costume etc. Our Trunk or Treat this year will make the turn to a fall festival to get away from the "Halloween" idea. The event will be bigger and better with games and activities for the community including a hayride on our campus. Our annual Turkey Supper while it raises funds is also an outreach event. This past year all guests were given a "leaf" to write what they are thankful for. Those leaves were then hung on a fall designed backdrop and then placed in our sanctuary and expanded upon for our Thanksgiving worship. The dinner is so blessed to have amazing sponsors in our community that for the last few years has covered the cost of the dinner allowing us to use the funds raised for further outreach in our community, our District and Synod.

We are so grateful to our District and the LWML for the opportunity to have participated in the Rev. 7:9 program. To say we were blessed would be an understatement. The coaching, leading and guiding from our mentor and Peter Maier was a tremendous asset as we were enabled to fine tune our ethnic mission and ministry. Together with our Spanish congregation, our Christmas program is presented by the youth of both congregations in both English and Spanish and the order of worship for that evening is led by both Pastor Pfeffer and Pastor Cobos in both languages. There is a great sense of unity and friendship between Hope and Esperanza congregations.

Hope continues its partnership with the United Food Bank of Plant City and treasures the opportunities that have been presented as we also partner with Moving Hope, a ministry of our neighbor and sister congregation, St. Paul, Lakeland. Besides members of Hope and St. Paul's serving all guests, the Teen Leaders Club of the Plant City YMCA is also a part of the helping hands each month in our parking lot.

God continues to grant us a slow and steady growth and has led many wonderfully gifted and missional leaders our way who are more than willing and able to share their gifts in mission and ministry.

Grace Lutheran Church and School, Winter Haven, FL (Rev. Charles Reich)

Much progress towards the future has been made at Grace, Winter Haven, as well as much ministry in the process. We cast a new vision: "Rooted" 1. Making deep-rooted disciples who minister the love of Christ amidst turbulent times 2. being a church and school our community can count on long into the future. The first focus of "Rooted" has been to fully establish our "grove stock" and core values (roots). Several sermon series, large group Bible studies, and small group studies over the past two years have

emphasized our values. The next couple of years will focus on personal mission statements and bearing fruits from our roots, according to each person's ministry strengths and passions. Effectively ministering to multiple generations at the same time utilizing multiple approaches remains an intentional and challenging endeavor. To accomplish the "Rooted" vision, the congregation partnered with Generis and used a "one fund" approach for a capital campaign, combining ministry expenditures and capital improvement expenditures into a common budget with a goal to raise \$3.5 million dollars in two years. We are 90% there with a couple months to go.

We thank the Lord for wonderful staff and lay leadership. With a vacancy in the position of Associate Pastor, as well as vicar (not enough to be assigned one) we called Commissioned Minister Jessica Wittcop to serve as our Dir. of Church Ministry Programs. She works closely with two servants we have raised up in our congregation: Casey Billman, Coord. of Youth and children's ministry and enrolled in Concordia Irvine's online DCE program; and Michelle Reddick, Coord. of Outreach, Assimilation and Membership.

Our School Ministry continues to be our #1 mission to the community. Enrollment has increased more than 100 students since the last convention with the total at 454, 2 classes per grade K-8 and 5 PK classes. We increased administrative roles making Michael Rottmann the Exec. Dir. of School Ministry, Aleah Hearn the Principle K-5, and Jon Peterson the Principal 6-8. 15% of our enrolment are members and we work hard to involve as many school families and students in church sponsored events. We have enjoyed numerous baptisms of students as well as some adult baptisms. School families appreciate the devotion books and Facebook devotions we have provided with over 300 daily readers. Several staff are participating in the newly revised Colloquy program through CUS. The marriage of church and school ministries is something we work on consistently.

During our "Rooted" Campaign, participants enjoyed daily devotions written by staff, faculty and fellow church members, praying a daily prayer, and personally handing out approximately 10,000 cross-in-your-pockets to individuals in our community over several months. Capital Improvements on our campus included the construction of a new front parking lot with storm-tech chambers underneath and a \$3 million re-purchase of the educational building across the street to serve our Middle School students. (If we hadn't sold the building when we did 15 years before, we wouldn't have been in the position to buy it back now and fill it with students.) Also, without our "one fund" capital campaign, we wouldn't have been able to continue paying for property insurance with costs tripling the last couple of years. Celebrating our 80th birthday last March with inter-generational events, we set a 20-year goal, so that "by our Centennial Celebration (2044) we will raise up a new generation of deep-rooted disciples to offer Gospel-centered ministry to our community for the next 100 years." – *Rev. Charles Reich, Sr. Pastor*

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Zephyrhills, FL (Rev. Robert Steinke)

Our Savior Lutheran Church in Zephyrhills celebrated 75 years of bearing witness to the Lord with a yearlong celebration, culminating in a first time, for the congregation, celebration of the Circuit Wide Reformation Service in October of 2024.

The preparations began with a major renovation of the sanctuary, including new flooring and paneling, a new sound system and upgrades to the livestreaming capabilities, an unforeseen benefit from the pandemic years.



The celebration continued with a special kickoff service with President Rockey preaching in January, a community block party and a final dinner in April. 75 years down and only the Lord knows how many more to go.

Our Savior continued its outreach to the community with a new electronic sign, its ministry to veterans, to school children (providing back packs) and cooperating in a unique program called Caterpillars to Butterflies, encouraging the development of arts and crafts in young children. Pastor Tod Shous left Zephyrhills for the green hills of Wisconsin and is now serving in that chilly state and Pastor Robert Steinke is serving as an interim.

The congregation is very much aware of all the growth that is happening in the Central part of Florida and is anticipating the arrival of a new pastor to lead them into God's future.

Circuit 12 – Rev. Scott McLean Circuit Visitor

Dual Parish - Grace Lutheran Church, Arcadia & Peace Valley Wauchula (Rev. Anthony Arias)

For the last three years Peace valley Wauchula has been thriving. The snow birds fill our small church every winter, with our fulltime residents keeping the faith through the summer months. Peace Valley just had their annual spaghetti dinner....another great success, also we had the Garms Family come and give a free concert for the community which brought in people from around the whole county. We have been blessed with new members who have jumped right in to serve our church and the community. The challenges of our church is the normal ones for mainly "seasonal churches" and communities, hard to get things done in the summer due to the smaller number of congregants and residents but leaving us still viable. Grace Arcadia has been increasing in numbers every winter with more Lutherans finding our small community and its small town charm. Our summer numbers are small but we manage to keep the church providing Word and Sacrament to the faithful. Our plans for the future is to continue to reach the lost and provide Law and Gospel to all!

Christ Lutheran Church, Avon Park, FL (Rev. Scott McLean)

The past three years have been challenging with Covid-19 shutdown and the economic down turn in the country. These effected our Winter membership and stressed our regular members. Many of our Winter members have passed away or are no longer able to winter in Florida. New members both Winter and local have been slow in coming.

On the positive side, despite the challenges our people have faced they maintained their faithful tithing as well giving thankfully for Disaster Response and other District and Synod projects. Our people have been faithful in attendance and participation. The Sunday morning and Monday morning Adult Education and Bible Study are consistantly well attended.

We have started a Friday Men's breakfast at a local restaurant as a tool of fellowship and outreach. It is hoped to be a vehicle of Disciple Making. In addition our ladies have started an evening Fellowship and Bible Study group with the same dual purpose of outreach and disciple making.

We are preparing for new visitors and members with the Bible Study and prayer groups. We are actively learning about disciple making and being able to share the story of God's salvation plan for the world.



We are also aware that the people that God will send us may not look like us or sound like us or even know anything about Jesus or the Scriptures.

We look forward to what God will bring to us and where he will take us in the next three years.

Saint Peters Lutheran Church, Belle Glade, FL (Vacant)

Faith Lutheran Church, Clewiston FL (Rev. Seth DeBartolo)

Shortly before Pastor Seth DeBartolo's installation, we had the opportunity to become a dual calling parish joining the only 2 LCMS Churches in Hendry County, Florida (at the moment). We continue to do our annual outreach events, VBS and Sugar Festival booth.

Over the last few year our community relationships have grown as we have had the opportunity to expand our sights "...into all nations." This starts with our local neighborhood and county communities. We have identified one of the major need during our community outreach to be a sense of belonging in an aging community. We have partnered with local groups to ensure activities for the older population as well as not forgetting those in the aging facilities.

We have become more intentional on including them in church events and visitations. The Church also continues to be a participant in the town's Chamber functions for outreach and networking opportunities and we continue to invite our neighbors to fellowship. With its connections in Hendry County, Faith Lutheran assists the Emergency Management Department response as a drop off location for supplies and coordination of continued recovery efforts after natural disasters.

Our plan for the short term are still being worked on, but we do see our sights focusing in on education and child care. We have joined with other Lutheran church members and have formed a parent non-profit Concordia Christian High School and they along with the church are in the process of identifying the location and staffing. We pray God continues to bless the work The Church is doing through continued support and growth. Praise God!

A prayer from both churches is that the Lord of the harvest would allow the storehouses of heaven to shower upon them, so that the seeds planted in the hearts of the members would grow and multiply 100 fold and that support would be overflowing from the community as these schools take root. Praise God From Whom All Blessing Flow!

Trinity Lutheran Church, Lake Placid, FL (Rev. Richard Norris & Rev. James Olckers)

The past triennium has been a time of rebuilding, strengthening and positive change. The congregation has taken on some major infrastructure improvements. New roofs have been installed on all three of our structures here on our property. New windows have been installed in our primary Church/School building. The Pastor's office was remodeled, with new flooring, paint and desk appointments. Our leadership is in the process of updating our Constitution and Bylaws preparing them for submission to the Fl/Ga District Constitution Review Committee.

Trinity is also in the process of developing a new webpage to be more user friendly and up to date. The church is also changing internet providers and getting a whole new phone system.

Trinity Lutheran Church is currently going through a period of transition in leadership as new officers are sought and some boards will be reactivated into service. We have a temporary new President and Vice-President as we look towards the future. Another major development has been that

Pastor Norris has gone down to part time, receiving half salary from the congregation as well as health benefits. Pastor has also begun to collect retirement benefits and Social Security payments. This decision did not come lightly, but it relieved some financial concerns for the congregation being able to maintain current staffing.

Pastor Norris continues his Lead Volunteer Chaplaincy Role with the Highlands County Sheriff's Agency where he has served for 12 years. He also serves on the Highlands County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group.

Rev. James Olckers returned to Trinity after servicing Peace Lutheran Okeechobee for 2 ½ years as a pulpit supply Pastor serving their vacancy, willingly and faithfully. Rev. Olckers has become and continues to be an important part of our ministry serving as Visitation Pastor as well as regularly assisting on the Altar and preaching in my absence. Rev. Olckers lives in Arcadia, so unfortunately, he is not available here on site but is just a phone call away.

Trinity Tots Preschool under the Directorship of Susan Norris continues to prosper and flourish. We have a full school and an outstanding teaching staff. An Assistant Director was appointed at the beginning of this school year as Susan contemplates her eventual retirement. We are encouraged that the school will be left in good standing when that time comes. Trinity Tots continues to demonstrate outstanding results as it is consistently ranked as one of the top preschools in the county.

As the future unfolds before us Trinity Lutheran Church is poised to face the challenges ahead with determination and prayerful guidance. Lake Placid has once again started growing as a community with new housing and new businesses currently being constructed, including an Amazon Distribution center less than a mile from the church. Highlands County overall is seeing a resurgence of growth despite the diminishing "orange" producing industry. We are poised effective community ministry and overall effectiveness.

Peace Lutheran Church, Okeechobee, FL (Rev. Deon Hull)

At the beginning of the time frame under consideration the congregation was vacant. Pastor James Olckers was acting as the pulpit supply pastor.

Through God's guidance the congregation queried the Seminary at St. Louis concerning possible placement of a new graduate in Okeechobee. The person available was an older student with many years of ministry experience in various roles, who was being directed into a convertible vicarage situation. The congregation accepted him as a vicar hoping to discern his ability to lead the congregation should he receive the Call as Pastor at the conclusion of the vicarage.

On June 30th, 2024, after successfully completing the vicarage experience, Deon L. Hull was Called to serve as the Pastor of Peace Lutheran. He was Ordained and Installed at Peace.

The congregation had been hit hard by the COVID pandemic protocols and the loss of their long time pastor, who, after serving for 30 years, retired at the beginning of the pandemic. There was enough leadership to keep the congregation and the preschool functioning. The school enrollment continued to be high, yet the congregational attendance statistics showed stagnation at a low level.

In the last 6 months the congregational attendance has begun to rebound. New members through various channels have been outpacing the last several years. There have been 3 baptisms, one infant and 2 young adults who became acquainted with the congregation through the Youth Group. God is good. Losses through funerals have been unfortunately frequent. There have been 5 deaths in the congregation in the last year and a half.



The nominating committee is meeting for the first time in three years in order to recruit new leadership. The bulk of the efforts in evangelism are, to this point, continued work in the area of youth ministry, enhancing the senior ministry, and making disciples through the preschool.

We ask for continued prayer that our efforts in the harvest will be successful as God wills.

Faith Lutheran Church Sebring, FL (Rev. Robert Maulella)

Faith Sebring continues to grow in its outreach and influence in Highlands County. We maintain a strong Preschool for 0–5-year-olds. One family has donated a Large Shade Tarp for the Playground. Thanks to some government funding we have done some needed upgrading of the facilities. Faith's Food Pantry is self-supporting thanks to a very generous community. We continue to feed over 60 families a week, who also receive personal prayer and a devotion in Spanish/English written by the pastor. Many come back to volunteer assembling the food for the following week and some have joined the church. Last November we distributed over 100 turkey baskets to the community. Our church membership has also grown in these post-Covid years by over 50. And finally, after 30 years, our facilities no longer leak! We recently celebrated one year of our Spanish Ministry to over 30 families including children/youth who faithfully attend a Bilingual Service and a Midweek Bible Study. Baptisms are on the horizon for 3+ youth/adults. It is a joy to serve those who are hungry for God's Word. We distributed 10 Small Catechisms recently and the youth love them! We continue to do Annual Medical/Evangelical Mission Trips to Honduras, as well as support missionaries worldwide. As our Assistant Pastor retired April of 2024, we are assessing needs for the future. We are pushing through our financial challenges of rising costs and declining tithes. Pastor Rob & Linda Maulella celebrated 10 years at Faith in October 2024. Their daughter graduates this year from college. The Board has approved a Town Hall Vision Casting Gathering soon to discuss the details for adding a younger staff member (DCE, Vicar or Assistant Pastor) who will focus on growing our family ministry. As I always remind us, The Best Days of Faith Lutheran—Sebring are ahead of us!!

Circuit 13 – Rev. Paul Meseke Circuit Visitor

Christ Lutheran Church, Brooksville, FL (Rev. Paul Meseke)

2022 – We worked diligently with the Hernando County School District and the Title 1 events at many of the grade schools. We brought God's Clothes Closet to the schools via our trailers along with hot dogs, chips and water. It was received well by the schools that did ask us to be a part of their events. We began in earnest to look at much of the maintenance to be done on buildings and A/C due to age.

2023 – We were thrilled to be invited to even more schools in the Hernando County School District and were even asked to be involved with Math nights and Reading nights and ESOL nights, that many of the schools have during their school year. We also took part in our second year in Citrus County at their community help fair and the Clothing need was obvious and we are thankful to God for entrusting us with God's Clothes Closet located at CLC. We also held a golf benefit outing for the local fire department and it was a success. Our community breakfasts have averaged between 45-60 people weekly and God's Clothes Closet has averaged 65-80 people each week, and we praise God for His work among us.

2024 – God has blessed us with almost 7 years of broadcasting our services and Bible classes. We are amazed at the number of states and even other countries that have tuned in to our services throughout the years. God has blessed this congregation with many wonderful volunteers and giving hearts truly of time, talent and treasures. We are beginning to take steps toward a Spanish service and we truly pray that we might be a facilitator for those in our area that speak Spanish. Thanks to our association with the school district we see the need and we are prayerfully responding to God’s call in ministry. We are not done with our outreach and we pray that God continues missions and ministry through us in this area of Florida for many years to come.

Forest Oaks Lutheran Church (Forest Oaks, FL) - Pastor Glen Fischer

No Report

Hope Lutheran Church, Hudson, FL (Rev. James Zang)

After my installation on Good Shepherd Sunday, I began working to get to know God’s flock and love them. We were blessed with new members joining and increased bible study attendance. We began work on improving our technological infrastructure, so our services have less distractions. We started the process of thinking in teams.

2024

One of our neighbors is Fivay High School, a title one school. For several years, Hope has donated hygiene items and clothes to help the students. Since many of them could not afford graduation fees, we began to pay for almost seventy students to walk across the stage in their cap and gown. I joined the student advisory committee that opened other doors as well. These are foundational blocks with the end goal of sharing the Hope we have in Christ and a love that has eclipsed the ages. We continued our technological improvements as we rewired our aging system. We hired a sound technician and more volunteer servants to improve our services. We renovated our Parish Hall with a new roof, paint, and lights. We added new members and attendance increased. Every ministry has at least one team member.

2025

Our work has continued with Fivay High School. We started passing out free popcorn to the students once a month. The school welcomes and promotes these events. We rejoice because we partnered together with the school for a community engagement event where we cleaned the streets in our community. Afterwards, we served breakfast to eleven students and two assistant-principals. The school is looking forward to more community engagement events in the future. We started streaming our services through Boxcast and purchased new wireless microphones. We started an advanced class that teaches our members how to teach a bible study.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Lutz, FL (Rev. Justin Pahl)

The worker - priest model established by Pastor Justin Paul needs closer scrutiny as a model for other congregations experiencing financial hardship. Pastor Paul is considering a vocational change which will ensure he is home most all weekends. Pastor Gil Kuehn now assists with some needed calls when Pastor Paul is out of town on business. The congregation is experiencing healing and demonstrating a renewed zeal as they manifest the love and life of Christ. In 2023 we celebrated our 50th anniversary as we transitioned to the worker-priest model of ministry. The congregation continues to rebuild seeking to reap a harvest from the congregation’s preschool that is most certainly ripe for harvest to the praise of God’s glorious grace.

Holy Trinity Lutheran, Masaryktown, FL (Rev. Dr. David Brockhoff)

Holy Trinity continues to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord as the Holy Spirit works through Word and Sacrament to conform us to the image of Christ. Inspirational worship and effective discipleship equip God's people for every work service as Jesus reveals where we might join him in his mission. As Kingdom people we seek to give a world that is passing away a glimpse of life on the new earth as an open invitation for others to share in the rich fellowship of the redeemed.

We continue to feed 180 people a week in our food pantry ministry. We provide a drop off for clothing from the community and take what is needed for our local needs before passing it along to the wider community. We hosted a trunk or treat, and pre-resurrection Sunday celebration for the community providing a wonderful opportunity to make meaningful connections. We partner with New Beginners to give support to would-be single mothers as well as wholistic family support. We support 14 Garuna children and partner with Faith Comes by Hearing seeking to put into the hands of every language and derivative thereof the 4 Gospels recorded in that language so they might hear the Gospel since most of the world does not read. Faith Comes by Hearing provides these proclaimers free of charge where needed in the field and each proclaimer is able to accommodate up to 4 different languages/dialects. We supported the 75th anniversary of the Florida Georgia District and hope to contribute to the Lutheran Hour initiative in 2025. Sounding a discordant note, we had a 7% offering to District/Synod but after heart breaking discussion capped that offering at \$10,000 in 2025 – down from 18k in 2024. We look to the Lord of the harvest to have mercy on us that we may do far more than we think or even imagined to the praise of His glorious grace in years to come.

Faith Lutheran Church, New Port Richey, FL (Rev. Dr. Thomas “Kent” Fuqua)

With Faith Lutheran now only renters of their building and sanctuary, the church continues the process of working with an architect and contractor to have their facility across the street completely renovated for all-purpose use including worship in future years. The congregation hosted a concert with Mitch McVickers in 2024. In 2025 due to behavioral misconduct, Pastor Thomas Wenndt resigned his call. Nonetheless, the congregation hosted a VBS and moved forward with a back-to-school backpack give-away. Pastor Kent Fuqua will serve as their interim pastor. The congregation will move forward under Pastor Fuqua's leadership as they seek to reimagine their ministry as a whole new mission start in a whole new world – accurate description, difficult transition.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Trinity, FL (Rev. Marc Nauman)

Greetings from Trinity Lutheran Church in Trinity, FL! The past several years has brought many blessings and opportunities our way. We finally built our new sanctuary and have been worshipping in it since July of 2024. The construction process went relatively smoothly, praise God! Construction took less than a year, but the planning and permitting took several years. God was teaching us the value of patient persistence. Since finishing the new sanctuary, we've added several new families to our church family, we've baptized 4 children and recently began confirmation classes for 9 others. We've also implemented some new ministry opportunities (Sunday School, community engagement, monthly dinners and fellowship events, etc.) Additionally, we are in the beginning stages of developing a pre-K school in our back building (previous sanctuary.) Please keep Trinity in your prayers as we continue to press forward in ministry.

Circuit 14 – Rev. Pat O’Brien - Circuit Visitor

Bethel Lutheran Church, Clearwater, FL (Rev. Aaron Schnelle)

Over these three years Bethel Lutheran Church, Clearwater, FL., has experienced a change in Senior Pastor. It continues a number of well-organized events that have brought meaningful contact with the surrounding community. Bethel is blessed with faithful, dedicated staff and volunteers. The congregation is looking at ways to overcome challenges considered to be common to every congregation.

First Lutheran Church And School, Clearwater, FL (Rev. Andrew Apple)

Since the last FLGA District Convention, First Lutheran Church and School embarked on a three-part mission where we are seeking to be people engaged in the study of God’s Word, active in weekly Worship and participants in Witnessing our faith. Word, Worship and Witness is a multi-year intergenerational plan for community outreach and congregational engagement. In 2025, we also celebrate 50 years of Christ centered academic excellence at First Lutheran School. We thank the Lord for all He has done and continues to do at First Lutheran.

Faith Lutheran Church, Dunedin, FL (Rev. Andrew Sorenson)

Faith Lutheran Church came through the COVID era smaller yet doctrinally united and focused on sharing the beauty of the gospel. This new zeal began when church leaders chose to keep our doors open for weekly Divine Services throughout the pandemic--offering the medicine of immortality to any straight souls. The word was faithfully preached, taught, and sung, and each week we knelt at the rail together to receive the body and blood of our Lord. Not a single member or visitor fell sick from attending the divine service, or from sharing the chalice. This gave new meaning to the words, “What God ordains is always good: His loving thought attends me; No poison can be in the cup That my physician sends me. My God is true; Each morning new I trust His grace unending, My life to Him commending.” (LSB 760:3)

While the building was empty we began what has become a five year-long renovation project. In addition to deep cleaning, painting, and accomplishing overdue maintenance, we added new art work to our halls. We chose classical and contemporary art in a variety of styles that depict many of the stories of our faith. Our main hallway has become a mini-art gallery testifying to God’s mercy. Early in the pandemic we were blessed with new choir and music directors who challenged the congregation to commit to developing a traditional Lutheran music program. We’ve been blessed to once again hear the beautiful strains of our Lutheran chorales, Bach, and Praetorius in worship. This transformation led to our most ambitious goal--acquiring a pipe organ to accompany worship. The congregation began its fundraising efforts and had no sooner raised the first \$20,000 than a manual tracker organ, formerly used in Koberg Hall at Concordia St. Louis, became available and was purchased.

The dilemma then became raising more money to elevate the ceiling in the sanctuary to accommodate the organ.

In April of 2024, with the requisite funds raised, work began on the sanctuary. Having moved all of our chancel furnishings to our temporary sanctuary in the fellowship hall, we decided that it was the perfect time to carry out long overdue work in the chancel as well as the area for the organ.

The new chancel was designed to share many of the characteristics of historic Lutheran churches and chapels. The results have been astounding. A dark, rather ordinary space, has been brought to life--it is bright, acoustically vibrant, visually confessional, and by the time this is published it will be echoing with joyful hymns and psalms to the Lord who made it all possible.

With the beauty of the gospel message resonating in the preaching, teaching, worship, and throughout the building, we have begun to attract the attention of those in our community seeking to worship God.

Christ The King Lutheran Church, Largo, FL (Rev. Joseph Adams II & Rev. Mike Mast)

The Mission of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Largo (CTK) is to, "Excite people with hope and JOY in Jesus." This is pursued through building relationships with people on and away from our campus and sharing with them the love and Good News of Jesus. As the hands and feet of Jesus, we strive to be intentional neighbors to those we meet on a day to day basis. Our new school was dedicated in 2023. Our Principal, Nichole DuBois, and Pre-School Director, Austin Abrams, have fostered the process of building relationships with school families, as well as connecting the school and church into the CTK Family. We seek to avoid silos and do all we can to "encourage one another and build each other up," (1 Thessalonians 5) as a family that loves the Lord and one another. Our CTK Christian School is growing and will expand to the second grade this year. We also went through an extensive accreditation process and passed with an overall score of 96.

Another mission the Lord has given us is our Food Bank Ministry. It has grown to now serve 200+ families each week. Our mission is not only to serve them with food, but also to serve them Jesus (John 6) as the real Bread of Life. Again, we do this through building relationships with the people, listening to their stories, offering to either pray with them or pray for them, etc. Our purpose is to build relationships with people by being the hands and feet of Jesus . . . and by the way, we have free food to give you!

CTK also hosts the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. Again, we stay in close communication in order to build those relationships, coordinate events, and assist in special projects. We have hosted community events such as a Fall Festival, Strawberry Festival, Car shows, game night, Uganda Choir Concert, as well as special events through our school such as Family Fun Day (250+ people attended), Easter and Fall events, Christmas and graduation programs, etc.

CTK also sponsored and mentored a SMP (Specific Ministry Pastor Program) student. We also provided special assistance as this person worked on the program, developed their gifts, and explored their doctrinal beliefs. We believe we are a Lifesaving Station in our community doing all we can to let the Lord work through us as we live out and extend the love and Good News of Jesus our Savior to all people.

Grace Lutheran Church And School, St. Petersburg, FL (Rev. Kevin Loughran)

Since the last Florida-Georgia District Convention Grace has called two deaconesses, Deac. May Itzcovitch and Deac. Camille Cox, an Associate Pastor, Rev. Steve Massey and we have been a part of the Deaconess Intern and Vicarage program through the Fort Wayne Seminary. Under the leadership of principal Nicole Clifton our Day School census has swollen to over 300 scholars and we baptize 10 to 20 of them in one of our church or chapel services each year. We were in the process of considering adding classroom space as we have waiting lists when the majority of our campus was flooded by hurricane Milton. Through the generosity of numerous people, we have engaged in a building back

better campaign. In the past several months we have rebuilt nearly two thirds of our squarefootage and now have plans to add three new classrooms over the summer. In this next triennium we will be celebrating our 100 th anniversary as a congregation of the LCMS.

Our Savior Lutheran Church And School, St. Petersburg, FL (Rev. Daniel Ritter & Rev. Christopher Futch)

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School just celebrated its 70th anniversary. Over the past three years, we have striven to live out our mission to Live Love by Loving Jesus, Loving People, and Serving the World. This has included international missions to Cuba, Ukraine, and Colombia, as well as local missions focused on feeding elementary school students, providing food and clothing for immigrant families, and bringing the Gospel to children with special needs. We welcomed Pastor Dan Ritter to the Our Savior team, and members of the church began both a men's ministry and a women's ministry. We continue to grow in our church and school attendance, and we give thanks to God for the baptisms and confirmands each year. As we look to the future, we will continue to follow God's guidance in expanding opportunities and programs to share His Gospel with that Tampa Bay community and beyond.

Circuit 15 – Rev. Gil Kuehn Circuit Visitor

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Brandon, FL (Rev. Phil Ressler)

Immanuel Brandon has gone through a time of transition these last three years. We welcomed Pastor Phil Ressler and Principal Joni Davis in 2024 while Pastor Miguel Sanabria worked to develop our Hispanic Ministry. We are one church with two languages. Immanuel Lutheran School services more than 200 students from our community. Most of the school families are not members of the Church, providing a tremendous opportunity to share the gospel. Many of our recent baptisms have been Hispanic students in the school. Two goals for the ministry are the continued integration of our Spanish and English-speaking members along with the development of small group ministry.

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Riverview, FL (Rev. Kevin Yoakum)

Christ the King Lutheran Church in Riverview, FL seeks to connect people to Jesus Christ in our church, homes, community, and world, with truth, grace and passion. Since 2022, we have been blessed with the help of God to be able to pay off the church's mortgage, hire a church secretary, and make numerous improvements to our property and grounds thanks to many faithful volunteers. Within the congregation, more people are active in worship and Bible Study, and the Lord has blessed us with an increase in membership and love for one another. Outside of the congregation, we have increased our participation in community service efforts. We have the same struggles as every congregation, and we rejoice that our Lord is with us through every struggle and blessing.

Hispanic Lutheran Ministry, Tampa, FL (Rev. John Cobos)

The Hispanic community in Tampa is scattered geographically so weekly Spanish services and ministries presently take place at these locations; Messiah Lutheran (Tampa) and Hope Lutheran (Plant City). The congregations have been growing in attendance over the past three years.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Tampa, FL (Rev. Dan Prugh)

The church and school have a strong partnership reaching out with the Gospel. The church has increased average weekly worship attendance and people of all ages continue to be baptized and confirmed. The school has grown to an enrollment of 249 and now offers education for children 2 years through 7th grade (an 8th grade will be added in the fall of 2025). A middle school director and teaching team has been added. Also, teachers were added to the elementary school team including a called teacher from Concordia Nebraska. The campus has been painted, deferred maintenance completed, and the sanctuary renovated. The church successfully completed a capital campaign for a new education building and sport court on an adjacent lot off South Dale Mabry Highway. The building will house the middle school classrooms and allow for the church to have classroom space for ministry outreach. Construction will be completed in August of 2025. The church revised the constitution and by-laws for the next phase of ministry.

Messiah Lutheran Church, Tampa, FL (Rev. Mark Adrian & Rev. John Cobos)

In the past 3 years, by God's grace Messiah Lutheran has moved forward in ministry. They have expanded their preschool from a part day program to a full day program, calling a full-time director. They continue to view the preschool as a vital outreach ministry. They have worked to have more fellowship or "fun" events through that year to build community. Messiah Lutheran has been blessed with a large facility to serve the community. They have been working with a non-profit partner to open an Adult Day Care in an underutilized building. They hope to open the Adult Day Care within the next triennium.

Zion Lutheran Church, Tampa, FL (Vacant)

The second oldest LCMS congregation in the FLGA District continues to minister the gospel in the downtown area of Tampa. Their church structure has had a complete renovation. Having been erected in 1925, Zion will celebrate the structures 100 year anniversary in the fall of 2025. They are presently sharing the building with a neighboring congregation allowing both to do separate ministries.

Circuit 16 – Rev. Dr. Brian Stolarczyk, Circuit Visitor

Circuit 16, Sarasota, FL. – The sister congregations of the Sarasota Circuit are collaborating to share God's Word and the love of Christ with those in southwestern Florida. Despite the challenges of three hurricanes in recent years, God has sustained His churches, enabling them to proclaim the Gospel and administer His means of grace. We were blessed by the disaster support of our Lutheran Early Response Teams (LERT), led by Jay Wendland, and received generous financial and material aid from the synod through the LCMS Disaster Response Relief Funds, guided by Rev. Dr. Ross Johnson. Lakeside Lutheran has even emerged as a key staging point for ongoing relief efforts in the Sarasota community. Additionally, we held a circuit-wide mission conference to explore the potential for a new mission start in our region. As unchurched communities around us continue to grow, we pray that God will guide us in finding new ways to reach out and share His love.

Hope Lutheran Church, Bradenton, FL (Rev. Jame Krach)

No report at time of publication

Redeemer Lutheran Church, Englewood, FL (Rev. Criag Mathews)

Redeemer Lutheran Ministries is the unofficial name with which the people of Redeemer Lutheran identifies itself. It currently consists of three entities – the Church, Child Care, and School. Established in 1978 by 12 couples from Lakeside Lutheran in Venice, FL, Redeemer has grown through several phases: worship services beginning in 1979, building its first church in 1981 on a 10-acre donated site, expanding in 1985, and dedicating a new 400-seat sanctuary in 1997. The ministry expanded to include a Child Care Center in 2004, which grew to over 100 children within a decade. In 2016, a school was added at the request of Child Care parents seeking alternative education.

Current Ministry Status (2022-Present)

Leadership Transition: Since 2022, Redeemer has been served by Pastor Craig Mathews of Bradenton, who initially stepped in as vacancy Pastor after the sudden and unexpected resignation of the previous Pastor in July 2022. In 2023, Pastor Mathews officially began serving as Redeemer's Intentional Interim Pastor. His term will conclude on June 30, 2025.

Future Leadership Development: As of February 2025, Collins Sita, a longtime member who has served in various congregational roles, has been accepted into and begun the spring cohort of the Specific Ministry Program at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Collins will serve Redeemer as a part-time Bi-Vocational Pastor after ordination. Pastor Mathews will continue mentoring Collins throughout the entire four-year SMP program.

Strategic Planning: Pastor Mathews has been working with a Ministry Assessment Team to determine Redeemer's future ministry direction. While acknowledging God's significant blessings throughout Redeemer's history, the team is addressing substantial challenges that have developed over the past decade.

Current Challenges: Redeemer continues to feel the effects of a congregation split during 2014-2016, compounded by further losses following the former pastor's unexpected resignation in 2022. Current average worship attendance is approximately 30 from May to November, with a yearly average of about 40. Financial giving for 2024 totaled around \$100,000, supplemented by several generous gifts that increased church account deposits beyond that amount.

Growth Initiatives: The congregation recognizes its need for new and younger members but struggles with implementation. Despite some younger, non-school families visiting, retention has been difficult, with feedback indicating insufficient Sunday School and children's activities. A key insight emerging is the understanding that the connection between church and Child Care/School is more effective when church members actively engage with the Child Care and School families rather than expecting those families to initiate engagement with the church.

Faith Lutheran Church, Parrish, FL (Rev. Patrick Poock)

God continues to bless the ministry here at Faith. We continue to serve the Manatee county community with faithful, Confessional, Liturgical ministry. We have had the great privilege of a stable congregation that is getting slightly younger every year.

We have made a few physical changes to our church in the last few years. We put on a metal roof about a year ago. The old roof was nearing the end of its life and rather than replace the shingles we voted to put on a metal roof.

In April of this year we will be adding a corpus to our cross in the sanctuary. We are also in the process of updating our paraments. We have new Lenten ones and are now going to replace our Advent ones this year.

This year we have sponsored a small home-school co-op in our fellowship hall. There are around 18 students in 5-8th grade. Pastor Poock teaches a Bible class once a week.



We have confirmed 20-25 adults each year since 2022. We hold 2 classes a year and regularly have 10-15 adults in each class.

We have sponsored the publication of the Small Catechism in 5 languages through Lutheran Heritage Foundation.

We have two sessions of GriefShare every year with around 10-15 attendees each time.

Finally, after a year of discussion we have decided to apply for a Vicar.

Trinity Lutheran Church of Southwest Florida, Port Charlotte, FL (Rev. Brian Albrecht)

Trinity Lutheran Church (TLC) of SW Florida celebrates its 10th anniversary as a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod on October 15th of 2025. During these 10 years, the Lord has richly blessed us in Word and Sacrament, in brotherly love, and in continued growth in our numbers and our ministries, and our outreach. Up to now, that growth has been hindered somewhat by the limited worship and fellowship space in our original church building and available parking. After over 5 years of effort, permits for the construction of our new and larger church building were finally issued in early 2025, and ground was broken in worship on Sunday February 16th of 2025. These delays in an inflationary period have prompted the need to raise another \$500,000 to 800,000 to the already gathered \$2 million plus. We also have access to a \$1.5 million line of credit through the LCEF. The congregation has entered into Missional Lifestyle Training through Rev. Greg Finke's Dwelling 1:14 organization in order to "Join Jesus on His Mission" of reaching the lost with the love on God in Christ Jesus and watching for opportunities to share the message of the Gospel with our neighbors. We have already seen a transformation in how we as a congregation of saints, and as individuals, engage the people regularly around us and intentionally watch for what Jesus is up to in their lives, acting upon the opportunities that He puts before us.

Since the 2022 Florida-Georgia District convention Trinity has engaged in the support of two foreign mission outreaches. The first is Mifik Global Mission in Uganda, which is transforming the lives of the people, especially children, in Mitayana, Uganda through the building of a Christian school and church, and bringing clean water, electricity, and economic self-sufficiency to the entire village and surrounding area. In 2024 we also became a partner with La Iglesia Luterana Emanuel (Emmanuel Lutheran Church) of Sora' Panama, and their mission being established in the larger city of La Chorrera. We continue support Rev. Jerry Lawson and his Mission to Russia, along with a missionary vicary and family, Paul Mroczenski in Puerto Rico.

TLC will be in a period of transition, as Pastor Brian Albrecht announced his intentions to retire at the end of the calendar year 2025. The announcement was made in January so as to give the congregation time to initiate the call process for our next shepherd in hopes that a "seamless transition" might take place. We fervently pray that our Lord leads us to the man that He has already chosen to lead the flock here in northern Charlotte and southern Sarasota Counties, Florida into our 2nd decade and beyond.

Our number one priority remains being the presence of Jesus in the Gulf Cove, Placida, Port Charlotte, North Port, and Englewood, Florida area, and to the ends of the earth, remaining faithful in Word and Sacrament ministry, and caring for our community. The entire motivation for our building plans and project is to glorify God in expanding our base to provide greater ability to proclaim the Gospel and to love and serve our neighbors.

Faith Lutheran Church, Punta Gorda, FL (Rev. Dana Narring)

To begin with, although we took a direct hit from hurricane Ian in 2022 (*and incurred more than 1 million dollars of damage*), the repairs to our Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall were finally completed in August, 2024. Other major hurricanes to directly impact our community with either wind and/or flooding were; Idalia (8/23), Helene (9/24), and Milton (10/24). Repairs from all damage, (*except for our Sanctuary flooring*) are nearly complete. The 3-sided Trinity Tower mural (*completed 2013*) was also repaired/repainted and will be re-dedicated in 2025.

In 2023, for the first time ever, Faith Lutheran, Punta Gorda, was named a Finalist for the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce – Non-profit Business of the Year.

In 2024 we celebrated our 50th year by inviting Rev. James Rockey – FL/GA District to be part of our congregation’s worship and also our celebration meal. It was a joyous time for all!

Blessed and guided by God during the past Triennium, Faith Lutheran – Punta Gorda has seen growth in the following areas:

God’s Word and in Worship –

- We are blessed to have the addition of Pastor David Barber as Pastor Emeritus. His exceptional teaching skills, great support in worship and overall leadership are a blessing!
- In addition to our Saturday Light Contemporary Worship Service and Sunday Traditional Worship Service, our Facebook live coverage for all Saturday and Sunday worship services has grown steadily.
- Our Saturday Light Contemporary Worship Service has maintained a distinct word & sacrament, Lutheran identity. We continue to add additional musicians/singers and have enjoyed great congregational participation through top 100 CCLI Christian music.
- We’ve offered free-will soup suppers before our half-hour worship midweek Lenten and Advent services – these have positively impacted our mid-week worship attendance.
- We have offered a weekly Woman’s bible study, plus a monthly LWML Bible Study that utilizes the studies found in the LWML Quarterly.
- We have continued to emphasize that our congregation attend one of our weekly bible classes – attendance has grown nearly 25% over the past three years.

Stewardship –

- Our attendance at weekend worships is close to 2019 statistics. Although, (*due to hurricanes, advancing age of our members, and death*), we have decreased our membership by 31 people, our member’s stewardship response to God has continued to grow – 2024 being an all-time record year of giving to our Lord. Also, our members are utilizing their time and talents in an exceptional way and are connecting (*both in worship and online*) to proportionally share the treasure God has bless them.
- We have concentrated on encouraging Vanco online giving. We had fewer than 10 people using this service in 2021. Today online giving accounts for 23% of all weekly giving.

Missions –

We continue to support our members, community, and the world through:

- The annual LWML Flea Market and Cookie Walk have provided for local community needs, including: Backpack Kids, Charlotte County Care Center, Healthy Start, Valerie’s House, Jesus Loves You Ministry, C.A.R.E – local rape and crisis center, and have also supported a Concordia Seminary student and the Shepherds Canyon Retreat.
- In conjunction with our Board of Missions, the LWML has also raised more than \$14,000 in support of Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries. They have also provided 350+ quilts to LWR.

- Our annual “Advent Angel Tree” has provided annual support to Rev. Jerry and Patty Lawson – Theological Educator (*LCMS missionary serving in Latvia*).
- In 2022, Faith partnered with the local Kiwanis club and hosted several “Undie Sunday’s” – providing thousands of pairs of underwear for our local school children.
- We’ve continued to provide monthly support for our local food bank and shared special items for those who are connected with our Armed Forces.
- We’ve regularly reached-out to support Food for the Poor, hosted the gospel trio – The Sound (*Dove award winners in 2023*) who have been in-concert at Faith for the past 9 years. We’ve been blessed to share significant proceeds from Love Offerings with these groups.
- Annually we’ve hosted a summer congregational picnic and Christmas dinner. There have been several pizza and ice cream gatherings after our Saturday night worship service. We have begun a monthly Movie Matinee – with popcorn and a Christ-centered movie. We’ve also provided memorial and funeral meals in support of our members and their families.

Evangelism –

- We partner with LHM and reach out to our members and community through the Project Connect booklet ministry.
- We have used social media to promote God’s ministry at Faith – we have a presence on Instagram, X, and on Facebook we now have more than 750 followers.
- Our Christmas and Easter outreach has yielded much interest and several people attending worship.

FL/GA District –

- We’ve been blessed to provide an on-going gift to support the important Christ-centered work being accomplished by our District.

Our focus for the next Triennium will be to continue to, *‘Live in His Love . . . Share His Joy!’*

Lutheran Church of the Cross, Port Charlotte, FL (Rev. Dr. R. Brian Stolarczyk)

Early 2022: Strong Growth

LCC entered 2022 with ministry momentum and were gearing up for a season of growth. God had allowed us to increase our staff, including a new music director, established a year-round Emeritus Teaching Pastor role, and transitioned our 6-month Visitation Pastor to 12-month Emeritus Visitation Pastor. We made plans to upgrade our sanctuary A/V and begin the conversion of our unused parsonage into temporary offices and meeting spaces so that we can renovate the sanctuary. The goal of the expansion was to provide additional worship seating capacity and ministry gathering spaces. We continued to pray that God would unfold the unique ways that our congregation is called to use our lives and over 13 acres (over half is undeveloped) to declare and live out the gospel in Port Charlotte, FL.

Mid-2022 through Early 2023: Significant Challenges

Beginning in the summer of 2022 and continuing into 2023, LCC was hit with a number of hurricanes both physically and emotionally. We experienced the departure and death of multiple part-time staff, a 5-month pastoral leave of absence, and hurricane Ian which resulted in the gutting of all exterior rooms and offices surrounding our sanctuary.

2023-2024: Extensive Recovery

Since then our lay leadership, supported by a faithful congregation, navigated LCC through a two year process of stabilizing the campus, assessing the damage, and organizing repairs all while working with

FEMA and our insurance companies. With the help of a law firm, LCC secured a final payout in Q4 of 2024 for the remainder of the hurricane damage and have been able to replace the sanctuary roof while transitioning the pastor back into the sanctuary and moving our part time staff to semi-permanent arrangements in the former church office space.

2025 Vision: Rebuilding outreach & Strengthening Discipleship

As we enter 2025, we continue to investigate the goal of sanctuary expansion and ministry gathering spaces. Yet our priority is to restart our outreach ministry and our focus on discipling members into the abundant life found in Christ Jesus and rooted in word and sacraments.

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Sarasota, FL (Rev. Rossetter Leavitt & Rev. Todd Kuehn)

- Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church will celebrate its 40th Anniversary in 2026.
- The Sanctuary Project, which includes painting, installing new carpet, and replacing pew cushions, is scheduled for 2025 or 2026.
- The dedication of our new organ and piano will take place in 2025.
- Our youth will be attending The Youth Gathering in New Orleans in 2025.
- We have provided financial support for communities in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and California that are recovering from hurricanes, flooding, and fires.
- Weekend worship services are provided for both members and visitors, with two traditional and two contemporary service options.
- Our pastors lead four weekly Bible studies, one monthly Bible class, Junior Confirmation Class, and seasonal Adult Confirmation Classes in winter, spring, summer, and fall.
- We are blessed with faithful members who make up our church staff, including three pastors, an office manager, worship music leader, three organists, and a custodian.
- We look forward to reaching out to our community and world in the years to come with the love and saving work of our Savior.

Concordia Lutheran Church, Sarasota, FL (Vacant)

From 2021 to 2024, Concordia Sarasota's post-pandemic average worship attendance increased 26% (116 at worship rising to 146). Giving increased 29%. Her voters regularly sent a tithe of offerings to the FL-GA District. Concordia celebrated her 75th Anniversary in February 2022. Beyond-budget donors beautified Christ's bride in Sarasota, caring for the property. Funds that previous years had spent for wind-insurance in 2024 and 2025 paid for hurricane shutters. Our 2020 new member Euder Paul, a Haitian immigrant now on vicarage from Concordia St. Louis, serves at Our Savior LCMS, Lake Worth Beach, Florida. 2023 new member Ryan Hicks now completes his first year at out St. Louis seminary. We pray also for a 2024 new member considering pastoral ministry. Thank God! Deaconess Andra Gates served at Concordia half-year part-time from 2019 to 2023. Her work is continued in seasons 2023 to 2025 by retired Pastor Bob Smith, caring for homebound friends, inactive members and especially worship guests. Year after year Concordia welcomes about 80 homes at worship as first-time local guests. Even more families come vacationing. We beg Jesus to help his church hold on to those He's already led to His worship. The winter pastor resides seasonally in the former parsonage. The education building hosts a partner preschool and an Aphasia Center. The fellowship hall blesses 12-Step groups and other community groups. In March 2025 Pastor Stephen Gaulke retired, 40 years after ordination, rejoicing over 20 years with Concordia. With Pastor Smith, also Pastors Gary Hill and Ted Wuerffel, our retired snowbirds, plan to care for Jesus' Concordia people until the Lord provides an interim pastor. Concordia "shares Jesus' harmony (concord) with the heart of Sarasota," because Concordia delights that Jesus gives us harmony with one another, concord with Himself!

Good Shepherd, Lutheran Church, Sarasota, FL (Rev. Steven Anderson)

As the Sarasota community continues to grow, so does the mission and ministry of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and School. Our school is blessed to be one of the largest, if not the largest, early development childhood centers in the entire city. Our enrollment is around 150 to 160 children to whom we get to teach the good news of the Gospel on a regular basis alongside a quality secular education prior to kindergarten. Our school has grown so much that we have utilized all the space that is available... and we need even more! To that end, efforts have been taking place over the last year or two to break ground and build a new school building on our property. If everything continues to go according to the plan and as God wills it, we will break ground this coming October for a building that will accommodate 10 more classrooms along with offices for the staff and much needed storage space. We are working with The Foundry out of Orlando and LCEF to finance this ongoing project. We have been blessed incredibly in so many ways!

When Hurricane Milton hit in 2024, the Sarasota area suffered substantial damage and our campus was no different. We lost in excess of 60 large trees but, thankfully, none of them were a direct strike to one of our buildings...thanks be to God! We were blessed once again to have a group of LERT volunteers come and enable us to pile all of the debris on one side of the campus. There was some damage to our buildings, but all of it has now been repaired.

We continue to thank God for all that He has done for us and we ask that He would richly bless the mission and ministry of our church, school, and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod!

Lakeside Lutheran Church, Venice, FL (Rev. David Dahlke)

Lakeside continues to joyfully inspire more and stronger disciples through intentional loving sacrificial relationships. We seek to enhance our personal relationships with the Holy Trinity, God's redeemed people and those outside of grace with love and service. Over that past two years we have housed, on our campus, over 400 construction volunteers to work on broken homes and lives from hurricane Ian. Over 80 homes have been completed and now we look at the long-term recovery of hurricanes Milton, Helene and Debbie in Sarasota county. Our partnership with the construction agencies has blessed us, our community and the teams on our campus. Who knew such a chapter would exist in the life of a congregation.

Circuit 17 Rev. Richard Browning, Circuit Visitor

Hope Lutheran Church, Bonita Springs, FL (Rev. Richard Browning)

Hope Lutheran Church in Bonita Springs, Florida, has much to celebrate, including:

- A growing and thriving Early Learning Center that seeks to share the love of Jesus with children and families.
- An expanding partnership with The Bonita Springs Senior Center, which is currently housed on Hope's campus.
- A recently completed Fellowship Pavilion that will enhance Hope's ability to connect as a community of believers through additional fellowship events.

Some of the current ministry challenges include:

- Staffing to support ministry growth, as the church strives to meet the needs of its expanding ministries.

As we look to the future, our goals are to:

- Find new and unique ways to connect with the community and fulfill the words of the Great Commission to "go and make disciples."

Trinity Lutheran Church, Cape Coral, FL (Rev. Gary Koltz)

The congregation is moving forward with its mission and vision. They have a strong desire to grow, but realize they have some challenges ahead. With a small group they are planning various means to serve their neighbors. So far they have had Easter egg hunts, yards sales, trunk or treat, and few other things.

Looking ahead to capitalize on some opportunities within the congregation to restart a choir and build the music ministry even more.

Thrive Community Church, Estero, FL (Rev. John Roth)

No report received

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Fort Myers, FL (Rev. Karl Glander)

No report received

St Michael Lutheran Church, Fort Myers, FL (Rev. David Bass)

The Lord remains faithful to the Saints of St. Michael. The pastor transition from Pastor Jon Zehnder to Pastor David Bass went well and the congregation along with the school continues the faithful ministry of Teaching, preaching, serving and loving others in Jesus' name. Early in 2025 the principal of St. Michael stepped away from being principal in order to focus on her health. The Congregation and School has begun the Call process for our next principal. Katy Bass, Pastor Dave's wife, who is a DCE for children and family ministry was extended a Divine Call to serve in that capacity on behalf of the congregation and school. She, along with Lori Schwan, St. Michael's long serving DCE of twenty seven years look forward to welcoming a DCE intern for the 2025-26 year. The goal of the intern will be junior high and senior high school youth and young adults. DCE Lori will focus on our senior adult ministries. The congregation also looks forward to welcoming the Rev. Dr. Roy Peterson to join us as Associate Pastor and Director of Operations (CFO) in the near future. We pray that the Lord continue to guide and His Saints to the glory of His holy name.

Zion Lutheran Church, Fort Myers, FL (Rev. Curtis Deterding & Vicar Timothy Richter)

In 2023, Rev. Curtis Deterding and his wife Jo Ann went on sabbatical to Germany and Romania. The sabbatical took them to Germany and Romania. It was helpful for the congregation to learn about how they are starting congregations in that part of the world. LCEF and Grace Place promoted this sabbatical experience to recommend sabbaticals to other LCMS congregation's pastors.

Vicar Tim Richter will become the fulltime coordinator of the Oasis Worship Outreach. The purpose of the outreach is to provide an informal come-as-you-are environment for those looking for a small contemporary worship setting. The ministry is attracting many new people who would not have come to our church through the traditional worship setting.

Our Early Childhood Center was re-accredited, and Zion opened a new school offering Lutheran elementary education from grades K-8. Current enrollment suggests we will have 30-40 students through grade 4 next year. A new fence was put on the property to mark a play area for the school children. Many of our finished rooms have been converted into school classrooms. An entire unfinished area of classrooms located on the second floor of our Early Childhood Center will become part of the school expansion process in the future.

The congregation employed Rev. Jacob Hoyer from Clarity Navigators to lead them through a vision process in preparation for calling a new pastor when Pastor Deterding retires. The congregation plans on using a seamless transition from the current pastoral ministry to the installation of their next pastor.

Through the education of PLI and Multipli we have formed a new Discipleship Ministry that continually encourages the disciples of Zion to follow Christ Jesus' commission to go and make disciples of all nations. In addition, each year our Mission Ministry plans a VBS for a neighboring community called Harlem Heights. Through the leadership of Dr. Mary Manz we developed and distributed 1600 Advent/Christmas devotional books throughout the community.

Finally, we became the LCMS Disaster Response headquarters for extreme southwest Florida. We touched the lives of 104 households and over 400 people through the distribution center. Volunteers came from all over including the Concordia universities and one of the seminaries.

Christ the King Lutheran Church - Labelle FL (Rev. Seth DeBartolo)

Over the last few year we have had the opportunity to reevaluate our mission and focus more on expanding "...into all nations." This starts with our local neighborhood and county communities. We have identified a major need during our community outreach to have emergency food on hand as well as a place for the homeless to get warm during the colder months. The Church continues to be a regular participant in the town's Chamber functions for outreach and networking opportunities and we continue to invite our neighbors to fellowship with our annual Service of Lessons and Carols and other church/community events. Christ the King is a beacon of light and love during disasters with their assistance in the Emergency Management Department response as a location for supply drop off, showers and coordination of continued recovery efforts after natural disasters.

One of the biggest joys we have seen in the congregation is a desire for our two young adults showing a desire to serve as future pastors once they complete their schooling. The congregation has rallied around them to send them to Christ Academy for the last two years which has given hope and reinvigorated the congregation for outreach and service. Recently, we have requested to join the Heartland circuit so both parishes are in the same circuit. Our plan for the short term has been to focus on another opportunity in the community for outreach which is early childhood education and care center. We have joined with other Lutheran church members and have formed the parent non-profit Concordia Christian High School and they along with the church are in the process of identifying the location and staffing. We pray God continues to bless the work The Church is doing through continued support and growth. Praise God!

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, LeHigh Acres, FL (Vacant)

No Report Recieved

Marco Lutheran Church, Marco, FL (Rev. James Thelen)

By the grace of God, Marco Lutheran Church is celebrating 50 years of mission and ministry! While many events took place, one highlight includes the purchase of a new organ and a free concert featuring an internationally acclaimed organist, open to the community. Even during a pastoral vacancy, many of the faithful served to ensure that ministry continued. Fellowship events, Bible studies, the Visiting Scholar program, yoga, and our Seasonal Artist Series and more were done to build up the Body of Christ and to bless our community. To the glory of God, mission support remained strong, with over \$1,000,000 given out in the past three years. We have supported LCMS churches in Golden Gate and Immokalee, disaster relief efforts, Laces of Love, Camp Able, Our Daily Bread Food Pantry, St. Matthew's House, Meals of

Hope, and numerous missions through grants from the Women of Marco and our Foundation. On several occasions our members served in the community for meal packing, Christmas Parade, food pantry and other community events.

Building upon the past 50 years, and all who have served so faithfully, we are going to emphasize the importance of community within Marco Lutheran and into our community of Marco Island/Naples. We will focus on God's calling that we are to participate, serve, and share — all because of the love God has for us. We will be hosting a spiritual growth emphasis, whereby all people will be encouraged to join a small group for seven weeks. This will be done in hopes that more people will enjoy the blessing of participating, serving and sharing. We will move forward in confident hope, trusting that as we abide in God's love, He will bear much fruit in and through us (John 15:5).

Grace Lutheran Church, Naples, FL (Rev. Keith Lingsch)

First Celebrations: This is our 70th anniversary year. We were chartered in 1955 in a storefront in Naples. It is exciting to continue to take up our cross daily and follow Jesus. Our preschool continues to thrive and serve God's little lambs. The Preschool is 30 years old and going strong. A very exciting addition to our congregation is Grace Lutheran Academy. This is a Lutheran Classical Homeschool Hybrid model. We meet three days a week and our class is small right now but we are beginning to grow. Our hope is to max out at 40 students within the next 3 years. We added two new staff members. A teacher and a headmaster. Our headmaster is a wonderful young man, Patrick Steckbeck who is married to Alexa and they have a young son (1and1/2) Ryker. Our teacher is Sandy Birner the wife of Jonathan Birner our Director of Parish Music. All reasons to celebrate.

Challenges: Our DCE Kami Jo Mogelvang moved to Fort Wayne because her husband Chris started attending Concordia Seminary to become a pastor. We are so happy for them but sad for us. Now we need to examine our staffing model and see what we should do to fill the void that was left. We received a vicar this year and he has been wonderful. We may do a vicar and a deaconess intern next year. We wanted to wait a bit and take a breath. Kami had been with us for 18 years and we needed to mourn her departure. While we examine staffing possibilities life goes on which makes ministry challenging.

Future Plans: Maybe our challenges and future plans run together. All of the staff members at Grace have been here for a long time. In the not so distant future all of our staff will be changing. We will be working strategically to plan for new staff in almost every area at Grace.

Grace Lutheran Church and Preschool and now Academy is a wonderful congregation and by God's grace she will remain the gem that she is.

Iglesia Luterana Confesional Conexión Church, Naples, FL (Rev. Orlando Ramírez)

In recent times, the Confessional Lutheran Church has been greatly blessed by our Lord. With great joy, we announce that our pastor, Rev. Orlando Ramírez, was officially accepted into the roster of pastors of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod after successfully completing the Colloquy process. Likewise, our congregation was formally received into the District and the Synod during a special ceremony, after faithfully completing all the required steps. We also give thanks to God that we have been able to dedicate this period to studying the foundational documents of our Lutheran faith: the Small and Large Catechisms, the Ecumenical Creeds, the Augsburg Confession, and its Apology. In addition, we have enthusiastically begun Sunday School each week for both children and adults, strengthening our entire community in the Word of God. With reverence and joy, we are deepening our understanding and practice of the historic liturgy of the Church, rediscovering the spiritual richness it offers.

We are deeply moved and grateful for this new chapter in the life of our congregation. Our fervent desire is to faithfully share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the Hispanic community, bringing the

message of salvation to those who do not yet know it and building up those who have already been called by grace. We recognize that all of this has been made possible by the mercy of God and the loving support of our brothers and sisters in the District and the Synod. Therefore, we express our heartfelt gratitude to the District and to the entire Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for welcoming us as part of this faithful Christian confession. To God alone be the glory!

Peace Lutheran Church, Naples, FL (Rev. Dr. Richard Mokry)

Peace Lutheran Church in Naples, FL is grounded in Word and Sacrament ministry and exists to be a witness to Christ in our community and world. In 2022 we experienced a pastoral vacancy. Rev. Dr. Robert Scudieri aided the congregation with leadership and spiritual guidance. Hispanic and Haitian outreach was started in 2022 with help from Pelican Lutheran Ministries. The Hispanic outreach, which included an ESL program, survived for two years, when our leader moved away. Worship services in Creole began and are still continuing with Vicar Rochenel JeanJacques who is his final year of seminary in the EIIT program.

In cooperation with POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach) Vicar Timothy Abel arrived in October of 2023 to be future pastor at Peace and to advance Muslim outreach in the Naples-Fort Meyers area. Upon the departure of Pastor Scudieri, Rev. Dr. Rich Mokry was called in November of 2024 as Transitional Interim Minister. ESL outreach continues as an outreach to Hispanic and some Haitian people in the area.

The Pelican Lutheran Church, Naples, FL (Rev. Mark Eisold)

No report received

Siloe Haitian Church, Naples, FL (Rev. Saint Luc Charelus)

Siloe Haitian Church of Naples (L.C.M.S) as an embryo Foundation is dealing with three (2) different situations following each one each other.

1) As the most expensive city in Florida, Siloe Haitian Church of Naples where a considerable number of New arrivals(Humanitarian Parole) attended our congregation, and finally moved, or relocated to North for not being able to find jobs, including rental .

2)People are afraid to attend worship services due to the New Immigration Law which is an other obstacle for minority Churches included Siloe.

In Spite of that:

We Have our worship service from 7:00 AM -10:30 AM in the morning including Sunday School with around 10 attendees.

Our Bible Study from 6:00 PM- 7:45 Sunday Evening with around 5 or 6 attendees.

Beside of that, we have a door to door evangelization campaign in order to reach more people, and revitalize the group.

As perspective, were planning to have a revival service at the end of August which is the Church's anniversary, in that activity the majority of Churches in the Community would be invited, but we decided to hold it.

As we continue to pray, and go in order to harvest more souls for God ,may He empower us, and clear the way!

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, North Ft Myers, FL (Rev. Robert Davis)

Since the last District Convention, this past March, 2025 we at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd of North Fort Myers, Florida, celebrated our 60th Anniversary as a congregation in the FL/GA District. Like others in SW Florida, we went through the devastating storm- Hurricane Ian, which struck us on September 28th, 2022. But the Lord was merciful. By grace, we pushed through, working hard, and with the blessing of our Lord through our Synod and District, and the gifts of churches and schools across the nation, and we reopened. In the time since the last convention, we recently wrapped up the last of critical roof repairs from the storm and other tropical storms since Ian. Without "walking together" as a District and Synod with our sister congregations, our church and school may have been unable to reopen.

It is indeed truly miraculous how we have been blessed all of these years through struggle, challenges, and actually spiritually flourished. Our Good Shepherd has been faithful in his divine love, always bringing us through everything year after year for the last 60 years. And here we are. And we pray, trusting in his grace and steadfast love to serve him here another 60 years and longer. Christ our Good Shepherd is worthy of our trust in him.

Circuit 18 – Rev. Mark Stillman, Circuit Visitor

Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Ft. Pierce, FL (Vacant)

Celebrations: added modular classrooms to expand the school ministry

Challenges: Their pastor resigned suddenly in November due to personal issues.

Future: Have procured the services of an Intentional Interim Pastor who will lead them through the transition.

Bethel Lutheran Church, Hobe Sound, FL (Vacant)

Celebrations: Preschool remains a beacon of light in the community providing the love of Jesus to over 100 children. Welcomed Pastor Scott Jensen in November 2023.

Challenges: An aging congregation and lack of giving continues. Church continues to struggle with how it can keep a full time pastor.

Future: A focused effort on praying for the church has commenced seeking God's will and direction for His local church. Church is getting to a point where it will have some major decisions in the next year or so on how best to move forward with ministry in Hobe Sound.

Faith Lutheran Church, North Palm Beach, FL (Rev. Mark Stillman)

Celebrations: many renovations/updates to facilities, increased attendance, and some younger families with children

Challenges: aging leadership and staff, discipling younger leaders. Dealing with being a small congregation taking care of a large, aging facility.

Future: starting a Sunday School ministry in the spring, as well as a Confirmation Class. Have the mortgage paid off by 2028.

Grace Lutheran Church, Port St Lucie, FL (Rev. Christopher Escher)

Celebrations: have had some baptisms recently, and the Adult Day Care attached to the church is thriving. They are also debt-free, having just paid off their mortgage on the Adult Day Care building.

Challenges: Continuing out-reach to the community with an aging congregation. Adjusting governance for the new times we live in.

Future: What is the next project now that they are debt-free.

Redeemer Lutheran Church, Stuart, FL (Rev. Stanley Allen, Jr.)

Celebration: ministry continues through a rather lengthy vacancy, attendance has not dropped off drastically, and school ministry continues to thrive.

Challenges: the aforementioned vacancy, some needed renovations to an aging facility, and some issues within the staff.

Future: Have enlisted the services of an Interim Pastor (not Intentional) who will bring some leadership to the staff and day to day functioning, and are working through another list of names from the District President.

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Vero Beach, FL (Vacant)

Celebration: continued growth. Lots of new members who have little Lutheran background.

Challenges: Continued growth. Lots of new members who have little Lutheran background. And their pastor just recently accepted a call elsewhere so they are dealing with a vacancy as well.

Future: set up an Interim Pastoral Ministry and follow the Lord's leading to the next pastor.

Redeemer Lutheran Church, West Palm Beach, FL (Rev. Daniel McPherson)

Celebrations: completed some renovations to facilities, increased attendance.

Challenges: Continuing ministry to the community.

Future: Looking to possibly start a preschool.

New Alliance Haitian, West Palm Beach, FL (Rev. Michel Ovil)

No report received

Circuit 19, Rev. Jacob Roedsens, Circuit Visitor

St Paul Lutheran Church and School, Boca Raton, FL (Rev. Stephen Carretto)

Over the past 3 years, St. Paul Boca has seen steady growth in both Church and School ministries. They are in a call process for an Associate Pastor and DCE that will have the focus surrounding the education of the church (small groups, corporate bibles studies, school and church faith growth) and visitation of the congregation.

A campaign for facility upgrades with faith as the main focus, named - "Forward Together" has been acted upon in this past year of 2024. We have completed Phase 1 and have a new Athletic complex on the northside of campus. Future phases are being prayed over and designed for the future of St. Paul Boca's campus and ministry.

St. Paul church continues to harness the ministry of St. Paul Lutheran School as a major ministry and mission and seeing many baptisms, Bibles into family's homes and relationships from school and church

flourishing as we spend time with many unchurched families in our community in this way.

Son Life Lutheran Church, Boynton Beach, FL (Rev. Robert Leiste)

In the past 3-year cycle the major event that Son Life Lutheran Church is adjusting to is the retirement of Pastor John Johnson in April of 2024 after 30 years of service. In June of 2024, it was decided by the congregation to seek an interim pastor. The congregation called Pastor Robert Leiste, who accepted the call and began serving on August 1st, 2024, for one year. This presented the challenge of new pastor leadership and the changes that it would bring as well as rethinking the congregation's mission and ministry for the future, including looking at ways to reach west of the church to continue the mission of serving the needs of the greater Boynton Beach area.

We continue to see new faces and involvement in ministry opportunities. Our LWML is active and thriving and keeps the mission of the church in front of our eyes with quarterly projects to support our community and beyond. Mid-week Life Light Bible studies during the year are well-supported and enjoyed. The previous weekly Son Life yard sales unfortunately came to an end. Congregational fellowship events and youth get-togethers undergird a sense of belonging to the family of Christ Jesus. The youth group is meeting regularly and jointly with Our Savior Lutheran and Epiphany,

Emmanuel Haitian Lutheran Church, Delray Beach, FL (Rev. Daniel Bartley)

God is good all the time, all the time God is good. We thank God for the continuing ministry at Emmanuel. Emphasis has been put on social ministry, besides the ministry of Word and Sacraments, to meet the needs of the new immigrants from Haiti and Mexico with the humanitarian program put into place by the administration of President Biden. We are serving about 20 new comers with the translation of documents, immigration appointments, food and clothes distribution, transportation, job search, application for benefits such as cash and food stamps etc..

The membership has increased with new Haitians and the end of each year is also a busy one with Christmas celebrations, New Year's eve watch night services, and the renewal of the new covenant on the first Sunday of the new year. We thank God for continuing blessings.

Trinity Lutheran Church Delray Beach, FL (Rev. Gary Boye)

Trinity Delray continues to foster an inviting and welcoming community in line with our vision. Events such as Sunday Singers, where our school children participate in worship, have strengthened the connection between our school families and church members. We have seen significant growth in our outreach efforts, including the launch of our Foundations Class, designed to help new and existing members deepen their understanding of faith and become more engaged in the life of the church. Additionally, we have expanded benevolence initiatives such as funding Financial Peace University for church and school families.

We recently completed a significant building addition, constructing a two-story covered walkway to connect our gym building to the rest of the campus. This improvement enhances safety, accessibility, and overall campus cohesion for our students, staff, and church members. We've witnessed remarkable growth in lay leadership, with many members stepping up to take ownership of ministry areas. This organic development of leaders who deeply care for the congregation has been especially valuable during our pastoral transition period. Our school continues to be a vibrant mission field, with increasing numbers of school families participating in worship and church activities, creating a more unified Trinity community. While participation in ministries is strong, we continue to seek ways to encourage sustained involvement in leadership roles and service opportunities, particularly among

newer members. Discipleship opportunities have expanded through small groups, youth programs, and family engagement initiatives to nurture faith formation across all generations.

Trinity continues to pursue grants and funding opportunities to enhance our campus, including a comprehensive 5-year strategic plan to align our resources, ministries, and growth objectives once new pastoral leadership is in place. We are grateful for the Lord's continued blessings on our congregation and look forward to His guidance as we move forward in faith and service.

Epiphany Lutheran Church, Lake Worth, FL (Rev. Kyle Will)

Epiphany Lutheran Church and Early Learning Center in Lake Worth is continuing to find ways to connect our school, church, and the larger community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At the end of 2022, our long-time Preschool Director retired, and we have welcomed a new Director whose fresh insight and professional demeanor are an asset to our school.

The congregation has been working towards creating opportunities to bridge the gap between regularly attending members and families in search of a church home. This is being done through intentional pastoral and congregational presence during regular events in the school year creating opportunities to foster fellowship between school families and regularly attending church families, and through creating a welcoming atmosphere in the worship service for families with small children (reinstating Sunday School and creating a Children's Church program).

Epiphany Lutheran Church and Early Learning Center has school enrollment currently around 63. The church has hosted several on-campus events and programs to build connections between the congregation and families in our school and community. These include a beginning of the school year lunch called "Bounce into fall" and our regular "Trunk or Treat" event. And the congregation averages around 45-60 people. The church has begun a "Children's Church" during the service, which has led to a slight increase in attendance from families with young children. Pastoral and congregational presence during regular events during the school year continues to happen. Epiphany also partners with youth group events with Our Savior Lake Worth and Son Life.

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Lake Worth Beach, FL (Rev. Jacob Roedsens)

Over the past three years, Our Savior Lutheran Church has continued to serve the community and bring Jesus to the people through many community programs and church services, including a karate dojo, two Hispanic congregations, one Haitian, and one Indonesian. These congregations serve a population that worships our trinitarian God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in a way that would otherwise not be possible due to language and cultural barriers. Membership and baptisms have increased through these efforts.

We have made headway with our local public high school, Lake Worth Community High, by being invited to have an on-campus and off-campus overtly Christian club. We meet monthly on campus, sharing a meal and life with the students and staff by playing games, talking to one another, and sharing the gospel of the good news of Jesus Christ. Additionally, we meet with a teen mother group once a month to provide a Christian presence and to address any personal needs they might have.

A few new things we are trying is inviting the students with our public high school across the street to our church space to play games and share life and the Gospel. Pastor has joined their board of community partners looking for ways to serve the teens at the school along with other nonprofits in

the area and also now has a presence in the city as an appointed member of the Business Advisory Committee. We also working closely with one of the Hispanic congregations to regularly study Luther's Small Catechism. Our Savior joins Son Life and Epiphany for our youth group, and we have one teen attending the youth gathering with St. Paul's in Weston, FL.

Our food pantry ministry is still a large mission field serving around 80 family units per day, which is, unfortunately, only rising (When the people need more food, that means they are struggling more financially and with work). We received a Vicar, Euder Paul, in August of 2024, and his main focus has been serving this pantry as well as the members and congregation of Our Savior. He is quad lingual and has been a blessing in reaching our Spanish and Creole-speaking community members. We thank God for His continued provisions.

Salem Haitian Lutheran Mission, Lake Worth Beach, FL (Rev. Elie Louissaint)

Salem Haitian continues to be a blessing to those in the Lake Worth community. They serve many in the community with regular worship services as well as outreach to the community. They have partnered with a local organization, Healthier Lake Worth, assisting their growing food pantry mission needs; however, this came to a pause due to some local city ordinance concerns. They are working with the city to be allowed to continue operating this much-needed outreach. Pastor Louissaint continues to be a blessing to the people in Lake Worth Beach in his congregation and beyond.

Circuit 20 Rev. Scott Henze, Circuit Visitor

Circuit 20 (Fort Lauderdale area) continues to "fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith," and seek to faithfully give witness to our Gospel centered life. It is the gospel that guides our Lutheran light in a part of God's world where some people don't even know what a Lutheran is. We are blessed in The Journey!

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Davie, FL (Rev. George Poulos, Jr.)

Blessed in The Journey is Gloria Dei Church and Academy as they continue its long history of ministry in central Broward County. Pastor George Poulos guides their school's distinctively Christian curriculum and the congregation's distinctively Missouri Synod witness. In 2023, Gloria Dei celebrated their 50th anniversary. They like so many south Florida churches are challenged by numerous members that are moving out of the county and out of the state. The future continues to look bright as Gloria Dei seeks to grow the Pre-School, reach out to attract more members, and perhaps calling an Associate Pastor or Vicar.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Ft Lauderdale, FL (Vicar Sequincy Pratt)

Blessed in The Journey is Good Shepherd congregation under the leadership of Sequincy Pratt. With its history of strong lay leadership, Sequincy looks forward to opening the congregation up to new connections with its central Fort Lauderdale community.

Grace Tabernacle Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ft Lauderdale, FL (Rev. Bernard Julmiste)

No report received.

Mt Gerizim Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ft Lauderdale, FL (Rev. Oslet Maccenat)

Blessed in The Journey are Grace Tabernacle Haitian Lutheran Church and Mt. Gerizim Haitian Lutheran Church who all share the same facility. Each congregation has its own niche and arena of mission and witness. They continue to find a way to make it work to the Glory of God!

Shepherd of the Coast Lutheran Church, Ft Lauderdale, FL (Rev. Chad Czischke)

Blessed in The Journey is Shepherd of the Coast Lutheran Church in calling Pastor Chad Czischke to be the pastor since the last district convention. Shepherd of the coast is uniquely situated on one of the busiest thoroughfares in Broward County. With that in mind, they are striving to intentionally market the school and ECC in varied ways to increase enrollment.

Exciting times lay ahead for Shepherd of the Coast as they are in the early stages of kicking off a capital campaign to raise funds to update, repair, and replace certain aspects of their building over the next three years. God continues to provide for this congregation as they share His love with their families and community.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Ft Lauderdale, FL (Rev. Jeff Wilhelm & Rev. Josue Vilsaint)

Blessed in The Journey is Trinity Lutheran Church, who faithfully leads, serves and pushes this congregation by the shepherding of their intentional interim Pastor Jeff Wilhelm. It is exciting times for Trinity with Full-time ministry that includes weekly Worship, Bible studies, and Christian outreach. Pastor Jeff Wilhelm helps lead devotions for Murl Windsor Christian Academy on campus and seeks to connect with the 100+ students and staff. He also enjoys a weekly Bible time with the Learning Space Christian Child Care VPK class and frequently interacts with children and staff. Trinity also hosts the Kaizen Mixed Martial Arts Academy after-school and summer youth programs (pre-K thru 5th grade). 5000 postcards were recently printed and delivered to area mailboxes through bulk rate mailing to help increase local awareness of all activities on Trinity's campus, including the Haitian Lutheran Mission congregation, which is growing to nearly 80 weekly worship attendance under Pastor Josue Vilsaint's leadership.

As Trinity approaches her 100th Anniversary of ministry in Fort Lauderdale (2027), plans are underway to partner with Orphan Grain Train for a Regional Packing and Distribution Center to be located on Trinity's campus. Plans are also underway to restore and renew some areas on the campus. We seek to grow our monthly joint worship and fellowship gatherings taking place with our Haitian brothers and sisters. Trinity also seeks to partner with Hope South Florida to help meet the sanitation needs of temporarily displaced individuals and families. Trinity continues to be used transformatively in welcoming disciples of all nations together to celebrate the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Hollywood, FL (Rev. Eliexer Ramirez)

Blessed in The Journey is Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in calling Eliexer Ramirez to be the pastor since the last district convention. Prince of Peace is committed to the community and is working with a group of strategies that is focused on engaging those around them.

Since Pastor Eliexer arrival, Prince of Peace has had a facelift to the property. Plans are underway to remodeling a trailer that is in poor condition to start the Sunday school program and have a classroom for children and youth ministry. There are many blessings to celebrate one of which is the 4 new young people that have started catechism classes to receive Baptism.

Miramar Lutheran Church, Miramar, FL (Rev. Dr. James Tino)

Blessed in The Journey is Miramar Lutheran Church in the South Broward area that has become something of a “Lutheran desert.” Over half of a million people live in the southern part of our county. Miramar maintains a faithful Word and Sacrament ministry even as it seeks new, creative ways to connect the Gospel and their community. Rev. Jeff Johnson vacancy Pastor.

Our Savior Lutheran Church & School Plantation, FL (Rev. Kenneth “Tony” Durante)

Blessed in The Journey is Our Savior Lutheran Church shepherd by Tony Durante The school continues to be a primary multicultural ministry into an unchurched community. The school’s enrollment is high (around 200 students) and looks promising for next year. The addition of an assistant principal has been very positive. Our Savior is engaging the community in multiple ways. This past February they held a multicultural festival to celebrate their diversity in the school. On April 12, Our Savior is leading a morning of community service called, Bless Broward, where volunteers will serve simultaneously at multiple sites in the surrounding community that day.

St Paul Lutheran Church, Weston, FL (Rev. Scott Henze)

Blessed in The Journey is St. Paul Lutheran Church in Weston. New challenges and opportunities abound in Weston, one of the most culturally diverse areas of South Florida. St Paul’s campus has seen a mini face lift with additional changes to the expanding playground. The Preschool continues to be a blessing, and attendance is at capacity with many new families being connected to the church. St Paul has hired a new music/choir director and continues to grow its attendance in worship. A new adventure has begun with the launching of a capital campaign committee to begin the process of a final building phase: Fellowship / Worship arts center, kitchen, offices, church classrooms, and preschool classrooms.

Circuit 21 Rev. Anthony Mandile – Circuit Visitor**Faith Lutheran Church, Hialeah FL (Rev. Dr. James Tino)**

Celebrations in the congregation: The congregation is celebrating their school ministry. Under the leadership of principal Valdez, the school is once again drawing students from the community and teaching them about Jesus. With the help of the District, the school has also secured two grants – one for adding classroom space, and another for property improvements. The congregation is also celebrating the renewed participation and leadership of several young adults. Finally, the congregation celebrates that it is the process of calling a pastor.

Challenges in the congregation: The discontinuation of Spanish-language services due to a lengthy pastoral vacancy which caused the Spanish-language members to stop attending or to find other churches. Loss of members during covid and the lengthy pastoral vacancy which came afterwards. Long-time leaders facing age and health challenges.

Plans for the future: Re-start Spanish-language services if a bilingual pastor accepts the Call. Add church staff to connect with and evangelize the school families and the neighborhood.

St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Hialeah, FL (Rev. Enrique Orozco)

No report received

Hospital Del Alma Lutheran Church, Homestead, FL (Rev. Benito Perez-Lopez)

Hospital Del Alma is celebrating another year of ministry to the Spanish community. The congregation has a strong ministry using social media. The blessing is that all the media is done by volunteer talent from within the congregation. We have a presence on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Spotify, and WhatsApp. The Challenge: Though attendance is growing there are a number of people who streaming the worship services, the challenge is to bring these folks back to worship in person. Looking forward, the congregation has plans for a future Bible Story reading using WhatsApp. In one online study, sometimes 40 to 45 people attend discussing the faith together. We begin with a welcome, the invocation, then we read a passage from scripture and reflect on it. Then we have time for open questions. It is at this time that support or testimony may be given. We hope to increase our outreach which currently includes people from the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Spain, Mexico, Columbia, Ecuador, and yes even Florida!

Grace Lutheran Church & School, Key West, FL (Rev. Nathan LeGreco)

GLCS is blessed to continue the ministry of sharing the love of Jesus within our island community. The congregation is looking for ways to connect and engage with members and visitors to welcome people into worship. We are also working to build connections with community organizations by offering space for a local choir, orchestra, and offering ESL classes. The school continues to grow and thrive, and is working to increase classroom space to fit the needs of our students. Our plans for the future are to work on updating and maintaining our facilities to best serve the southernmost point.

Concordia Lutheran Church, Kendall, FL (Vacant)

Concordia continues to cultivate connections with the over 100 families in the pre-school. Next week will include Imposition of Ashes with the children and their parents. Last year we had a church full of school and congregation worshippers together for ashes. Challenges include that same cultivating process. Progress is slow. A young family joins. Another one moves out of the area. Planning has begun to take the "next steps" toward a mission restart. Funding options are being explored. In Christ, Vacancy Pastor Tim Hartner

Martin Luther Chapel, Marathon, FL (Rev. Anthony Mandile)

MLC is celebrating 5 recent baptisms and four new members. There is a family of three and a single adult currently worshipping with us and we look forward to welcoming them into our church family soon. Our challenges were mostly with the preschool. We had difficulty hiring people to work. The School was closed in March 2024. We met the challenge of creating new income by renting out space to the Early Learning Coalition of Monroe County FL. MLC plans to continue to reach out into the Marathon community sharing the Good News with friends, family, coworkers, inviting them into the life in Christ.

Bay Shore Evangelical Lutheran Church, Miami, FL (Rev. Erwin Perez-Arche)

just celebrated 80 years of ministry. We are grateful for our confirmation classes and new members. We also celebrate the regular attendance of their on-line services. A number of shut-ins from the community also attend. 20% of plate offerings are done electronically through Zelle. This is very convenient for the treasurer and creates consistent giving. A major challenge is that attendance has gone down. Many people are transient, they become integrated into the congregation but then they move away. The area is very expensive to live in. Sometimes it feels like we are in survival mode. We are working on re-starting a Sunday School and a regular Bible Study. We want to update the website and working on a digital front sign on the boulevard.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Miami, FL (Rev. Luis Santana)

The most joyous celebrations we had this past year were 7 children and two adult baptisms and our worship numbers remained pretty constant. We have three challenges. First, we need to recertify our old facilities which is still pending after spending over \$90,000 so far. Second, Our offering is considerably down and, Third, Pastor Santana's health continues to decline and a servant needs to replace him in the not distant future. The congregation is considering building/expanding the school to 600-800 students leaving the present sanctuary structure untouched. This will give St. Matthew permanence and financial security for many years to come. God bless.

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Miami, FL (Vacant)

Rev James Leggett was called to glory on April 3rd. Prayers for his wife Anna and his family.

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Miami, FL (Rev. William "Alan" Sielk)

Celebrations of baptisms, marriages, funerals and regular worshipping the Lord's Days and other holy days. We have celebrated community events like open air community garage sales. Participated in ribbon cutting of LSF opening of Miami Bridge youth housing. Going out to the Baynanza, which is the cleaning up of the beach areas of Miami. Combining with Hospital del Alma in a Thrivent event of purchasing and providing back pact for the community. In conjunction with HUD housing for the elderly we have had some special services at Trinity Lutheran Church and now at the chapel of Pinewood Villa Inc. We have offered communion class for the afterschool youth at our church.

San Pablo Apostol Lutheran Church, Miami, FL (Rev. William "Alan" Sielk)

Celebrations: Regular church celebrations. Challenges: Older controlling members making way for new blood. Newer community less interested in Christianity and younger folks moving out of the area due to economic issues. Less interest in Christian schools. Plans: Have us be more involved in the growing immigrant community. Offer more services that meet the community needs. Posadas, Vigils about community events. Community needs like use of property for garage sales etc...

Nassau Lutheran Church, Nassau Bahamas (Rev. Samuel Boodle, Sr.)

No report received

Holy Cross Lutheran Church of North Miami, FL (Vacant)

Holy Cross continues to serve the community. It's strength being the love of Jesus which binds this congregation together, a family that is made up of individuals from more than 19 different countries. The Christian Day School is blessed to have some 320 students and each day the love of Jesus is shared with them. Holy Cross is currently vacant but is being served by Pastor Emeritus Dennis Bartels. Holy Cross will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2026.

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tavernier, FL (Rev. Donald Stier)

Immanuel is celebrating that attendance is up. Snowbirds are back and it is exciting. Two new students in confirmation when usually we have no children. We are also celebrating the remodel of our church building and the new handicap accessibility ramp. Pulpit Supply when Pastor is away is always a challenge.



Circuit Visitors 2025-2028

*Incumbent

Circuit Name	#		Circuit Visitor	
Northeast Georgia	1	Rev.	Dave	Wesche*
Atlanta North	2	Rev.	Daniel	Brammeier
Atlanta South	3	Rev.	Wilton	Heyliger*
East Central GA	4	Rev.	Andrew	Howe*
Tallahassee	5	Rev.	Bert	Matlock*
First Coast	6	Rev.	Patrick	McKenzie*
North Central Florida	7	Rev.	Jeffrey	Shanks*
Space Coast	8	Rev.	Bruce	Alberts*
Orlando East	9	Rev.	John	Hohe
Orlando West	10	Rev.	Marc	Kappel*
Winter Haven	11	Rev.	Ron	Pennekamp*
Heartland	12	Rev.	Scott	McLean*
Suncoast	13	Rev.	James	Zang
St Petersburg	14	Rev.	Pat	O'Brien*
Tampa	15	Rev.	Kevin	Yoakum
Sarasota	16	Rev. Dr.	Brian	Stolarczyk*
Southwest	17	Rev.	Keith	Lingsch
Treasure Coast	18	Vacant		
South Palm Beach	19	Rev.	Jacob	Roedsens*
Gold Coast	20	Rev.	Scott	Henze*
Monroe-Miami-Dade	21	Rev.	Tony	Mandile*



Official Acts & Notices

The Official Acts of the Florida-Georgia District listed in the Convention Workbook are those that were processed prior to April 15, 2025. A complete list of all Official Acts of this Triennium will be listed in the Proceedings when they are published. If you notice an error in the listing, please contact Cindy Hammerstrom, chammerstrom@flgadistrict.org, and she will make the correction before the Proceedings are published.

Initial Placement of Rostered Workers as of 2025 District Convention

8/14/2022	Baroi, Vicar Isaac Concordia Seminary - EIIT	All Nation Society of Atlanta Atlanta, GA	Chaplain Ordained
10/1/2024	Bowman, Rev. Gary Colloquy - St. Louis	Trinity Lutheran Albany, GA	Sole Pastor Ordained
1/29/2023	Collard, Ms. Ann Marie Concordia Chicago	Good Shepherd North Fort Myers, FL	Principal Commissioned
8/11/2024	Courtney, Ms. Betsy Concordia Nebraska	St. Michael Fort Myers, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/13/2023	Cox, Dcs. Camille Fort Wayne Seminary	Grace Lutheran St. Petersburg, FL	Deaconess Commissioned
9/24/2024	Davidson, Ms. Perris Concordia Nebraska	St. Paul Lutheran Lakeland, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/7/2022	Fiala, Mr. Trevor Concordia Nebraska	St. Paul Lutheran City, GA	Peachtree DCE Commissioned
7/21/2024	Gebhardt, Ms. Macy Concordia Nebraska	Holy Trinity Tampa, FL	Teacher Commissioned
7/31/2022	Houston, Ms. Rebecca Concordia Nebraska	Trinity Lutheran Rockledge, FL	Teacher Commissioned
4/27/2025	Hudlin, Mr. Trevor Concordia Irvine	St. Paul Lutheran City, GA	Peachtree DCE Commissioned
6/30/2024	Hull, Vicar Deon Concordia Seminary	Peace Lutheran Okeechobee, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
6/9/2023	Itzcovitch, Dcs. May Fort Wayne Seminary	Grace Lutheran St. Petersburg, FL	Deaconess Commissioned
8/14/2022	Kroenke, Dcs. Marissa Concordia Theological Seminary	Grace Lutheran St. Petersburg, FL	Deaconess Commissioned
6/9/2024	Mehl, Vicar Timothy Concordia Seminary	St. John Ocala, FL	Pastor - Associate Ordained
8/3/2024	Nummela-Hanel, Mrs Bethany Concordia Nebraska	Faith Lutheran Eustis, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/14/2022	Oglialoro, Ms. Kelly Concordia Wisconsin	St. Paul Lutheran Lakeland, FL	Teacher Commissioned
7/30/2023	Prestwich, Ms. Becka Concordia Wisconsin	Our Redeemer Augusta, GA	Director of Church Ministries Commissioned
10/20/2024	Ramirez, Rev. Orlando Colloquy - St. Louis	Iglesia Luterana Confesional Conexion Naples, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
3/19/2023	Sabbides, Ms. Elizabeth Concordia Nebraska	Marco Lutheran FL	Marco Island, DCE Commissioned
6/23/2024	Schulteis, Mr. Thomas Concordia Nebraska	Grace Lutheran Winter Haven, FL	Director of Parish Music Commissioned
8/14/2022	Sherman, Ms. Katie Concordia Wisconsin	St. Paul Lutheran Lakeland, FL	Teacher Commissioned



11/13/2024	Sherman, Rev. Kenneth Concordia Seminary	St. Paul Lutheran Lakeland, FL	Associate Pastor - SMP Ordained
8/6/2022	Shick, Ms. Alexandria Concordia Seminary St. Louis	Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries Sanford, FL	Deaconess Commissioned
9/11/2022	Volz, Ms. Kristin Concordia Chicago	Our Savior Plantation, FL	Teacher Commissioned
9/11/2024	Wachter, Vicar Brian Concordia Theological Seminary	St. John the Apostle Lutheran Buford, GA	Pastor - SMP Ordained
3/25/2023	Yurk, Ms. Amanda Concordia Chicago	Faith Lutheran Eustis, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/6/2023	Zehnder, Mr. Jason Concordia Ann Arbor	St. Michael Fort Myers, FL	Teacher Commissioned

Rostered Workers Installed in the FLGA District as of 2025 District Convention

8/25/2024	Anderson, Rev. Russell	Trinity Holly Hill, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
3/5/2023	Andrada, Rev. Dr. Edward "Ted"	Redeemer Lutheran Stuart, FL	Sr Pastor - IIM Ordained
2/25/2024	Apple, Rev. Andrew	First Lutheran Clearwater, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
8/14/2022	Baroi, Rev. Isaac	All Nation Society of Atlanta Atlanta, GA	Pastor Ordained
3/30/2025	Bass, Mrs. Katy	St. Michael Fort Myers, FL	DCE Commissioned
9/10/2023	Bass, Rev. David	St. Michael Fort Myers, FL	Pastor - Sr Admin Ordained
12/18/2022	Bell, Ms. Andrea	Woodlands Lutheran Montverde, FL	Teacher Commissioned
6/12/2022	Boarts, Rev. Matthew	Christ Lutheran Perry, GA	Pastor - Associate Ordained
10/1/2024	Bowman, Rev. Gary	Trinity Lutheran Albany, GA	Sole Pastor Ordained
3/26/2025	Boye, Rev. Gary	Trinity Delray Beach, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
6/23/2024	Brekke, Ms. Tais	Our Savior St Petersburg, FL	DCE Commissioned
8/11/2024	Brock, Ms. Chloe	St. Michael Fort Myers, FL	Teacher Commissioned
7/23/2023	Bumgardner, Rev. John	Redeemer Lutheran Columbus, GA	Sole Pastor Ordained
1/8/2023	Burnham, Ms. Betsy	Woodlands Lutheran Montverde, FL	DCE Commissioned
7/28/2024	Burtzlaff, Rev. Dr. Paul	Amazing Grace Oxford, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
1/29/2023	Collard, Ms. Ann Marie	Good Shepherd N. Ft Myers	Principal Commissioned
8/7/2022	Cook (Wied), Ms. Kalli	St. John Ocala, FL	DCE Commissioned



8/11/2024	Courtney, Ms. Betsy	St. Michael Fort Myers, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/13/2023	Cox, Dcs. Camille	Grace Lutheran St. Petersburg, FL	Deaconess Commissioned
2/19/2023	Czischke, Rev. Chad	Shepherd of the Coast Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
9/24/2024	Davidson, Ms. Perris	St. Paul Lutheran Lakeland, FL	Teacher Commissioned
7/21/2024	Davis, Dr. Joan	Immanuel Brandon, FL	Principal Commissioned
10/29/2023	DeBartolo, Rev. Seth	Faith Lutheran Clewiston, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
8/14/2022	Dobbins, Ms. Anne	Prince of Peace Orlando, FL	EC Director Commissioned
3/17/2024	Eisold, Rev. Mark	Pelican Lutheran Naples, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
1/7/2024	Enko, Rev. Keith	Trinity Lutheran Delray Beach, FL	Pastor - vacancy Ordained
10/22/2023	Faile, Rev. Timothy	Prince of Peace Douglasville, GA	Sole Pastor Ordained
8/7/2022	Fiala, Mr. Trevor	St. Paul Peachtree City, GA	DCE Commissioned
9/1/2024	Fuqua, Rev. Dr. Thomas "Kent"	Faith Lutheran New Port Richey, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
10/8/2023	Galligar, Rev. Patrick	Faith Lutheran Lecanto, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
7/21/2024	Gebhardt, Ms. Macy	Holy Trinity Tampa, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/7/2022	Gierse, Ms. Emily	Our Savior St. Petersburg, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/7/2022	Glover, Sr., Rev. Graham	Abiding Savior Gainesville, FL	Pastor - Senior Ordained
1/8/2023	Glowinski, Mr. Michael	St. John Ocala, FL	Teacher Commissioned
5/7/2023	Goodwin, Ms. Amanda	St. Paul Lutheran Peachtree City, GA	Teacher Commissioned
5/18/2025	Gray, Rev. Adam	Holy Trinity Kingsland, GA	Sole Pastor Ordained
8/14/2022	Greinke, Ms. Ann	Faith Lutheran Marietta, GA	Teacher Commissioned
7/30/2022	Griffin, Rev. Larry	Faith Lutheran Lecanto, FL	Pastor - Sole IIM Ordained
2/18/2024	Griffin, Rev. Larry	Good Shepherd Lutheran Chiefland, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
7/17/2022	Hoag, Ms. Rachel	Grace Lutheran Winter Haven, FL	DCE Commissioned
11/6/2022	Hohe, Rev. John	Grace Lutheran St. Cloud, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained



2/19/2023	Horsman, Rev. Jonathan	Redeemer Lutheran Bartow, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
7/31/2022	Houston, Ms. Rebecca	Trinity Lutheran Rockledge, FL	Teacher Commissioned
4/27/2025	Hudlin, Mr. Trevor	St. Paul Peachtree City, GA	DCE Commissioned
6/30/2024	Hull, Rev. Deon	Peace Okeechobee FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
8/7/2022	Hundertmark, Ms. Jennifer	Redeemer Stuart, FL	Teacher Commissioned
6/9/2023	Itzcovitch, Dcs May	Grace Lutheran St. Petersburg, FL	Deaconess Commissioned
11/19/2023	Jensen, Rev. Scott	Bethel Lutheran Hobe Sound, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
6/4/2023	Kanefeke, Rev. Charles (C.J.)	St. Peter Dahlonoga, GA	Pastor Ordained
8/7/2022	Knoepfel, Mr. James	St. John Ocala, FL	Principal/Teacher Commissioned
3/5/2023	Koch, Rev. Alan	Risen Savior Palm Bay, FL	Sole Pastor - IIM Ordained
2/16/2025	Kollmann, Rev. Christopher	First Lutheran Gainesville, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
4/23/2023	Koltz, Rev. Gary	Marco Lutheran Marco Island, FL	Sr Pastor Ordained
10/20/2024	Koltz, Rev. Gary	Trinity Lutheran Cape Coral, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
8/6/2023	Krall, Mr. Robert	Faith Lutheran Eustis, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/14/2022	Kroenke, Dcs. Marissa	Grace Lutheran St. Petersburg, FL	Deaconess Commissioned
6/4/2023	Kruger, Rev David	Savior of All Cartersville, GA	Sole Pastor Ordained
12/18/2022	Landes, Rev. Logan	St. Peter Middleburg, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
8/4/2024	Leiste, Rev. Robert	Son Life Boynton Beach, FL	Pastor - T.I.M. Ordained
12/18/2022	Lohmeyer, Rev. Dr. Richard	Messiah Lutheran Valdosta, GA	Sole Pastor - IIP Ordained
10/30/2022	Mackowiak, Rev. John	Amazing Grace Oxford/The Villages	Sole Pastor - IIP Ordained
8/25/2024	Martinez, Rev. Eduardo	Trinity - Downtown Orlando, FL	Pastor - Associate Ordained
8/11/2024	Massey, Ms. Madison	St. Paul Lutheran Boca Raton, FL	Teacher Commissioned
5/18/2025	Massey, Rev. Steven	Grace St Petersburg, FL	Associate Pastor Ordained
2/23/2025	Mast, Rev. Michael	Christ the King Largo, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained



8/6/2023	Mathews, Rev. Craig	Redeemer Lutheran Englewood, FL	Sole Pastor, IIM Ordained
7/30/2023	McCormick, Ms. Jamie	Trinity Lutheran Delray Beach, FL	Teacher Commissioned
6/9/2024	Mehl, Rev. Timothy	St. John Ocala, FL	Pastor - Associate Ordained
12/8/2024	Mokry, Rev. Richard	Peace Lutheran Naples, FL	Pastor - Sole T.I.M. Ordained
5/7/2023	Moore, Rev. Dr. Jeffery	Trinity Lutheran Holly Hill, FL	Pastor - IIM Ordained
8/7/2022	Morris, Ms. Wendy	Our Savior St. Petersburg, FL	Principal Commissioned
1/19/2025	Mueller, Rev. Alan	Christ Lutheran Perry, GA	Sole Pastor Ordained
8/3/2024	Nummela-Hanel, Mrs Bethany	Faith Lutheran Eustis, FL	Teacher Commissioned
8/14/2022	Oglialoro, Ms. Kelly	St. Paul Lakeland, FL	EC Director Commissioned
9/10/2023	Pahl, Rev. Justin	Holy Trinity Lutz, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
7/23/2023	Patterson, Mrs. Judy	Messiah Lutheran Tampa, FL	Teacher Commissioned
9/1/2024	Peterson, Rev. Roy	Lutheran Hour Ministries St. Louis, MO	Sr. Ministry Advancement Officer Ordained
8/13/2023	Pitts, Ms. Michelle	Our Savior Plantation, FL	DCE Commissioned
7/30/2023	Prestwich, Ms. Becka	Our Redeemer Augusta, GA	Director of Church Ministries Commissioned
3/12/2023	Prohl, Ms. Ellen	Grace Lutheran St. Petersburg, FL	Director of Parish Music Commissioned
11/12/2023	Ramey, Rev. Dr. John	Trinity Lutheran Cape Coral, FL	Sole Pastor - IIP Ordained
5/12/2024	Ramirez, Rev. Eliexer	Prince of Peace Lutheran Hollywood, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
10/20/2024	Ramirez, Rev. Orlando	Iglesia Luterana Confesional Conexion Naples, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
7/21/2024	Ressler, Mrs. Christine	Immanuel Brandon, FL	Teacher Commissioned
2/10/2024	Ressler, Rev. Philip	Immanuel Brandon, FL	Pastor - Senior Ordained
7/14/2024	Ritter, Rev. Daniel	Our Savior St. Petersburg, FL	Pastor - Senior Ordained
6/18/2022	Rockey, Rev James	FLGA District, LCMS Orlando, FL	District President Ordained
8/7/2022	Rode, Ms. Mary	St. Paul	Teacher



		Peachtree City, GA	Commissioned
1/8/2023	Roegner, Rev. Dr. Robert	Woodlands Lutheran Montverde, FL	Pastor - Assistant Ordained
3/19/2023	Sabbides, Ms. Elizabeth	Marco Lutheran Marco Island, FL	DCE Commissioned
8/18/2024	Sado, Ms. Audrey	St. John Lutheran Ocala, FL	Teacher Commissioned
7/9/2022	Sanabria, Jr., Rev. Miguel	Immanuel Lutheran Brandon, FL	Pastor - Associate Ordained
11/20/2022	Schnelle, Rev. Aaron	Bethel Lutheran Clearwater, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
6/23/2024	Schulteis, Mr. Thomas	Grace Lutheran Winter Haven, FL	Director of Parish Music Commissioned
8/14/2022	Sherman, Ms. Katie	St. Paul Lutheran Lakeland, FL	Teacher Commissioned
2/2/2025	Sherman, Rev. Kenneth	St. Paul Lutheran Lakeland, FL	Associate Pastor - SMP Ordained
8/6/2022	Shick, Dcs. Alexandria	Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries Sanford, FL	Deaconess Commissioned
7/31/2022	Sielk, Rev William	San Pablo Apostol Miami, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
6/23/2024	Sparling, Rev. Daniel	Good Shepherd Gainesville, GA	Pastor - Sole Ordained
2/21/2024	Steinke, Rev. Robert	Our Savior Zephyrhills, FL	Pastor - T.I.M. Ordained
8/18/2024	Sullivan, Ms. Kylee	Faith Lutheran Merritt Island, FL	DCE Commissioned
7/21/2024	Thelen, Rev. James	Marco Lutheran Marco Island, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
8/4/2024	Timmerman, Mrs. Sonya	Grace Lutheran Jacksonville, FL	Principal Commissioned
5/4/2025	Tino, Rev. James	Faith Hialeah, FL	Sole Pastor Ordained
8/14/2022	Trzeciak, Ms. Lorie	Shepherd of the Coast Fort Lauderdale, FL	Principal Commissioned
9/11/2022	Volz, Ms. Kristin	Our Savior Plantation, FL	Teacher Commissioned
1/12/2025	Wachter, Rev. Brian	St. John the Apostle Lutheran Buford, GA	Pastor - SMP Ordained
8/14/2022	Wareham, Mr. Jon	Faith Lutheran Marietta, GA	Teacher Commissioned
6/12/2022	Wiggins, Sr, Rev. Stephen	St. Paul Jacksonville, FL	Pastor - Sole Ordained
8/4/2024	Wilhelm, Rev. Jeffrey	Trinity Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Pastor Sr. Ordained
3/25/2023	Yurk, Mrs. Amanda	Faith Lutheran Eustis, FL	Teacher Commissioned



4/30/2023	Zang III, Rev. James	Hope Lutheran Hudson, FL	Pastor Ordained
8/6/2023	Zehnder, Mr. Jason	St. Michael Fort Myers, FL	Teacher Commissioned

Workers transferred in from other Districts as reported to FLGA 2025 District Convention

Date	Name	District	Class
3/5/2023	Andrada, Rev. Dr. Edward "Ted"	Minnesota South	Ordained
9/1/2022	Barber, Ms. Anna	Northern Illinois	Commissioned
8/19/2022	Barber, Rev. David	Northern Illinois	Ordained
10/27/2022	Barreto, Ms. Blythe	Texas	Commissioned
1/1/2024	Bass, Mrs. Katy	Texas	Commissioned
8/14/2023	Bass, Rev. David	Texas	Ordained
6/11/2022	Boarts, Rev. Matthew	Texas	Ordained
4/15/2024	Boone, Rev. Arthur	Southeastern	Ordained
3/25/2025	Boye, Rev. Gary	Mid-South	Ordained
6/16/2024	Brekke, Ms. Tais	Nebraska	Commissioned
8/11/2024	Brock, Ms. Chloe	Texas	Commissioned
7/10/2023	Bumgardner, Ms. Rebecca	Minnesota North	Commissioned
7/23/2023	Bumgardner, Rev. John	South Wisconsin	Ordained
2/1/2023	Czischke, Rev. Chad	Minnesota South	Ordained
7/3/2024	Davis, Dr. Joan	Rocky Mountain	Commissioned
6/4/2023	Driller, Ms. Cathy	Rocky Mountain	Commissioned
10/6/2023	Eichberger, Rev. Timothy	Michigan	Ordained
6/30/2023	Eichert, Mr. Lawrence	Northern Illinois	Commissioned
10/16/2012	Eichert, Mrs. Carol	Northern Illinois	Commissioned
1/1/2024	Enko, Rev. Keith	MidSouth	Ordained
1/30/2023	Feickert, Rev. Roland	Eastern	Ordained
11/20/2024	Flenner, Ms. Lorraine	English	Commissioned
9/26/2022	Flory, Rev. Mark	Michigan	Ordained
6/29/2022	Fulmer, Rev. Daniel	Michigan	Ordained
10/1/2023	Galligar, Rev. Patrick	Northern Illinois	Ordained
7/30/2024	Goetz, Rev. Lawrence	Central Illinois	Ordained
5/3/2023	Goodwin, Ms. Amanda	California-Nevada Hawaii	Commissioned
4/16/2025	Gray, Rev. Adam	Southeastern	Ordained
7/31/2022	Greinke, Ms. Ann	English	Commissioned
11/18/2022	Hamilton, Rev. Morgan	Mid-South	Ordained
7/2/2022	Hoag, Ms. Rachel	Missouri	Commissioned
10/31/2022	Hohe, Rev. John	Ohio	Ordained
7/22/2022	Hundertmark, Ms. Jennifer	Southeastern	Commissioned
3/14/2023	Ikanih, Rev. Dr. Christian	South Wisconsin	Ordained



11/6/2023	Jensen, Rev. Scott	North Wisconsin	Ordained
6/1/2022	Johnstone, Rev. Douglas	Pacific Southwest	Ordained
5/22/2023	Keinbaum, Rev. Santiago	Kansas	Ordained
4/7/2023	Koltz, Rev. Gary	Michigan	Ordained
6/30/2023	Krall, Mr. Robert	Nebraska	Commissioned
7/6/2023	Krieger, Rev. Timothy	New England	Ordained
10/24/2023	Landes, Ms. Lydia	Southern	Commissioned
12/1/2022	Landes, Rev. Logan	Southern	Ordained
7/4/2024	Leiste, Rev. Robert	Kansas	Ordained
1/10/2024	Lindenmeyer, Rev. William	Pacific Southwest	Ordained
12/7/2022	Lohmeyer, Rev. Dr. Richard	Ohio	Ordained
9/1/2023	Luhman, Rev. Eric	Missouri	Ordained
5/15/2023	Lustilla, Mr. Gerald	Michigan	Commissioned
10/30/2023	Major, Ms. Cynthia	Michigan	Commissioned
12/2/2023	Massey, Rev. Steven	Kansas	Ordained
7/10/2023	McCormick, Ms. Jamie	Indiana	Commissioned
1/30/2025	McCoy, Rev. Shane	Southern	Ordained
7/11/2023	Menedo, Rev. Dr. Tilahun	Southern	Ordained
1/13/2025	Miller, Mr. James	Minnesota South	Commissioned
8/31/2023	Mokry, Rev. Dr. Richard	Eastern	Ordained
6/30/2022	Morris, Ms. Wendy	Missouri	Commissioned
3/13/2023	Neuman, Rev. Dr. Paul	Indiana	Ordained
7/1/2022	Pahl, Rev. Justin	Southeastern	Ordained
7/21/2024	Peterson, Rev. Dr. Roy	South Wisconsin	Ordained
2/16/2023	Porter, Rev. Arthur	Southern	Ordained
11/1/2023	Ramey, Rev. Dr. John	Southeastern	Ordained
2/1/2024	Ressler, Mrs. Christine	New Jersey	Commissioned
2/1/2024	Ressler, Rev. Philip	New Jersey	Ordained
7/11/2022	Roberts, Rev. Kenneth	Michigan	Ordained
7/1/2022	Rode, Ms. Mary	Pacific Southwest	Commissioned
3/15/2024	Rogers, Rev. Clarence	Central Illinois	Ordained
5/22/2023	Rojas De Robles, Dcs. Alejandra	Kansas	Commissioned
10/24/2022	Schnelle, Rev. Aaron	Kansas	Ordained
4/15/2024	Schroeder, Rev. Andrew	Central Illinois	Ordained
6/27/2023	Schroeder, Rev. Mark	Southeastern	Ordained
5/28/2024	Sipp, Ms. Gabriela	Pacific Southwest	Commissioned
12/19/2023	Sohl, Mr. James	South Wisconsin	Commissioned
1/20/2025	Starr, Ms. Dawn	Northern Illinois	Commissioned
6/6/2023	Steinke, Mrs. Laurie	English	Commissioned
11/8/2022	Strang, Mr. William	Michigan	Commissioned
11/8/2022	Strang, Mrs. Donna	Michigan	Commissioned
1/31/2023	Stringer, Rev. Gregory	California-Nevada-Hawaii	Ordained
7/11/2022	Thai, Rev. An	Pacific Southwest	Ordained
7/1/2024	Thelen, Rev. James	Nebraska	Ordained



6/19/2024	Timmerman, Mr. David	Missouri	Commissioned
6/1/2024	Timmerman, Mrs. Sonya	Missouri	Commissioned
4/10/2025	Tino, Rev. James	Michigan	Ordained
10/18/2023	Vaughn, Jr., Rev. John	Minnesota So	Ordained
7/15/2023	Wagener, Rev. Kenneth	Indiana	Ordained
7/29/2024	Wilhelm, Rev. Jeffrey	Michigan	Ordained
4/10/2023	Zang, Rev. James	Eastern	Ordained

Workers transferred to other Districts as reported to FLGA 2025 District Convention

Date	Name	District	Class
6/15/2024	Andrada, Rev. Dr. Edward "Ted"	Missouri	Ordained
12/1/2022	Bachmann, Ms. Lori	Texas	Commissioned
7/1/2024	Beck, Mr. Luke	Pacific Southwest	Commissioned
3/17/2023	Boeck, Rev. Thomas	Mid-South	Ordained
1/5/2023	Davis, Rev. Jeremy	Northwest	Ordained
9/13/2024	Drummond, Rev. James	Indiana	Ordained
7/5/2023	Duchene, Rev Michael	Michigan	Ordained
1/1/2024	Duffy, Ms. Sarah	Northern Illinois	Commissioned
8/1/2022	Eckstein, Mr. Joshua	Missouri	Commissioned
1/28/2025	Enko, Rev. Keith	Mid-South	Ordained
3/17/2025	Enko, Rev. Keith	Mid-South	Ordained
12/1/2023	Flamme, Rev. John	Rocky Mountain	Ordained
8/1/2023	Gates, Dcs. Andra	South Dakota District	Commissioned
9/26/2022	Heath, Rev. Timmothy	Kansas	Ordained
5/1/2024	Hoag, Ms. Rachel	Southeastern	Commissioned
5/5/2025	Jennings, Rev. James	Texas	Ordained
7/17/2022	Karolus, Ms. Stephanie	California-Nevada-Hawaii	Commissioned
10/5/2022	Kelm, Rev. Daniel	Southeastern	Ordained
10/24/2022	Kinast, Rev. Frank	Southeastern	Ordained
7/1/2024	Krall, Mr. Robert	Nebraska	Commissioned
10/1/2023	Kroenke, Dcs. Marissa	Missouri	Commissioned
1/1/2025	Kurtz, Ms. Amy	Mid-South	Commissioned
7/31/2022	LaMay, Rev. Colton	English	Ordained
7/8/2024	Moore, Rev. Brendon	Kansas	Ordained
10/5/2022	Murphy, Rev. William	Missouri	Ordained
8/1/2022	Onnen, Ms. Kathrine	Missouri	Commissioned
1/1/2024	Powers, Ms. Gwyn	Southeastern	Commissioned
8/16/2023	Putnam, Rev. Vince	South Wisconsin	Ordained
5/18/2023	Raabe, Mrs. Madison	Ohio	Commissioned
5/18/2023	Raabe, Mr. Tyler	Ohio	Commissioned



8/15/2023	Rallison, Rev. John	Northwest	Ordained
12/8/2022	Ramey, Rev. John	Southeastern	Ordained
10/20/2024	Ramey, Rev. John	Texas	Ordained
3/20/2023	Rau, Rev. Carl	Texas	Ordained
7/1/2022	Reistma, Ms. Joy	Central Illinois	Commissioned
5/1/2025	Roggow, Mr. Jacob	Michigan	Commissioned
7/1/2024	Rush, Ms. Angela	Central Illinois	Commissioned
9/5/2024	Schneider, Rev. Carl	Ohio	Ordained
1/14/2025	Schneider, Mrs. Patti	Ohio	Commissioned
6/23/2023	Seeliger, Ms. Allison	SELC	Commissioned
6/5/2024	Serness, Rev. Dr. Alemu	Ohio	Ordained
3/18/2024	Shouse, Rev. Tod	South Wisconsin	Ordained
7/24/2023	Sibley, Ms. Sandra	Oklahoma District	Commissioned
4/15/2025	Sipp, Ms. Gabriela	Pacific Southwest	Commissioned
7/16/2023	Skopak, Rev. Dr. Jeffrey	Southeastern	Ordained
7/31/2022	Strehlow, Ms. Kari	Texas	Commissioned
3/1/2024	Stuckert, Mr. Gordon	English	Commissioned
10/5/2022	Tegtmeier, Rev. Dennis	Texas	Ordained
6/1/2025	Will, Rev. Kyle	Southern	Ordained
5/5/2025	Wrasman, Rev. Andrew	Southeastern	Ordained

REMOVED FROM THE ROSTER - FLGA DISTRICT

Workers Called to Glory as reported to FLGA 2025 District Convention

10/9/2023	Barnette, Rev. Norman	Called to Glory	Ordained
11/7/2023	Besalski, Rev. Robert	Called to Glory	Ordained
4/17/2023	Bird, Rev. Geary	Called to Glory	Ordained
8/18/2022	Brockhoff, Rev. Daniel	Called to Glory	Ordained
6/29/2024	Collins, Rev. Jerrold	Called to Glory	Ordained
1/3/2025	Dede, Rev. John	Called to Glory	Ordained
12/27/2024	Dehnke, Rev. Gary	Called to Glory	Ordained
5/28/2024	Eichert, Mr. Lawrence	Called to Glory	Commissioned
9/3/2023	Elsner, Rev. Robert	Called to Glory	Ordained
6/4/2022	Farnsworth, Rev. Kenneth	Called to Glory	Ordained
6/18/2024	Flory, Rev. Mark	Called to Glory	Ordained
10/1/2024	Foelber, Rev. Dr. Paul	Called to Glory	Ordained
10/16/2023	Footlander, Ms. Sara	Called to Glory	Commissioned
8/22/2022	Geheb, Mr. Theodore	Called to Glory	Commissioned
11/1/2022	Glienke, Rev. Herman	Called to Glory	Ordained
11/12/2022	Hanus, Rev. Theodore	Called to Glory	Ordained
8/1/2024	Heintzen, Rev. Dr. Erich	Called to Glory	Ordained
1/29/2023	Jacques, Mr. Kenneth	Called to Glory	Commissioned



11/27/2024	Kolb, Rev. Peter	Called to Glory	Ordained
11/27/2022	Kroll, Mr. David	Called to Glory	Commissioned
4/3/2025	Leggett, Rev. James	Called to Glory	Ordained
6/28/2022	Lehenbauer, Rev. Dr. Osmar	Called to Glory	Ordained
1/27/2025	Lunick, Rev. Donald	Called to Glory	Ordained
2/5/2024	Miessler, Mr. Mark	Called to Glory	Commissioned
6/5/2023	Mueller, Rev. David	Called to Glory	Ordained
9/6/2024	Parsch, Rev. Dr. Timothy	Called to Glory	Ordained
9/27/2023	Poeppel, Rev. Manfred	Called to Glory	Ordained
9/30/2024	Raetz, Rev. David	Called to Glory	Ordained
12/30/2022	Ramsey, Rev. Thomas	Called to Glory	Ordained
9/2/2023	Renner, Rev. Martin	Called to Glory	Ordained
9/26/2024	Roberts, Rev. Donald	Called to Glory	Ordained
4/2/2023	Roehrs, Rev. Roland	Called to Glory	Ordained
10/16/2023	Ross, Mr. Donald	Called to Glory	Commissioned
3/1/2025	Schoolcraft, Rev. Roger	Called to Glory	Ordained
8/4/2023	Shaw, Rev Dr James	Called to Glory	Ordained
12/29/2023	Stilwell, Rev. Samuel	Called to Glory	Ordained
9/27/2024	Strickert, Rev. Robert	Called to Glory	Ordained
3/10/2025	Volz, Rev. Walter	Called to Glory	Ordained
3/27/2024	Wahner, Ms. Laurie	Called to Glory	Commissioned
5/27/2024	Weerts, Rev. Dr. Milan	Called to Glory	Ordained
6/4/2022	Wrase, Ms Dianne	Called to Glory	Commissioned
10/24/2022	Zerbe, Rev. Roy	Called to Glory	Ordained

Rostered Workers Removed from the LCMS Roster as reported to FLGA 2025 District Convention

8/1/2024	Bermudez, Dcs. Diana	Removed from the Roster-Resigned	Commissioned
7/15/2024	Hoffschneider, Mr. Steve	Removed from the Roster-Resigned	Commissioned
7/20/2022	Hussmann, Rev. Rudolf	Removed from the Roster-Resigned	Ordained
1/31/2023	Ramos-Ruiz, Rev. Angel	Removed from the Roster-Resigned	Ordained
7/25/2024	Wennndt, Rev. Thomas	Removed from the Roster-Resigned	Ordained

Changes in the Status of Rostered Workers as of 2025 District Convention

2/1/2023	Albers, Rev. David	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
7/7/2023	Bartels, Rev. Dennis	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
8/1/2022	Borth, Dcs. Elizabeth	Active	Candidate	Commissioned
3/10/2025	Clark, Rev. John	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
5/1/2025	Collard, Ms. Ann Marie	Active	Emeritus	Commissioned



12/1/2024	Cox, Rev. Richard	Active	Candidate	Ordained
1/1/2025	Enko, Rev. Keith	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
4/24/2024	Feickert, Rev. Roland	Candidate	Emeritus	Ordained
4/1/2024	Garazin, Rev. Kenneth	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
1/8/2023	Glowinski, Mr. Michael	Candidate	Active	Commissioned
12/1/2024	Gosch, Ms. Denise	Active	Candidate	Commissioned
7/1/2024	Gress, Rev. C.	Active	Candidate	Ordained
8/8/2023	Hoag, Ms. Rachel	Active	Candidate	Ordained
5/1/2024	Johnson, Rev. John	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
4/23/2025	Kim, Rev. Min	Active	Candidate	Ordained
1/1/2024	Knutson, Mr. Jeffrey	Candidate	Emeritus	Commissioned
1/1/2024	Knutson, Mrs. Francesca	Candidate	Emeritus	Commissioned
1/1/2024	Koch, Rev. Alan	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
1/12/2024	Kubowicz, Rev. Andrew	Active	Candidate	Ordained
7/1/2024	Kyle, Rev. John	Active	Candidate	Ordained
1/1/2025	Lehenbauer, Rev. John	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
7/1/2024	Mackowiak, Rev. John	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
2/23/2025	Mast, Rev. Micheal	Emeritus	Active	Ordained
4/1/2025	Mendedo, Rev. Dr. Tilahun	Active	Candidate	Ordained
6/4/2023	Michael, Rev. Dr. Gerhard	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
5/7/2023	Moore, Rev. Dr. Jeffery	Emeritus	Active	Ordained
7/1/2024	Moore, Rev. Dr. Jeffery	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
2/26/2024	O'Brien, Rev. Pat	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
6/20/2024	Pitts, Ms. Michelle	Active	Candidate	Commissioned
2/20/2023	Poeppel, Rev. Manfred	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
4/3/2023	Raabe, Mr. Tyler	Active	Candidate	Commissioned
3/2/2023	Raabe, Mrs. Madison	Active	Candidate	Commissioned
12/31/2022	Rahn, Mr. Kreighton	Active	Candidate	Commissioned
11/1/2024	Reinking, Rev. Aaron	Active	Candidate	Ordained
7/1/2024	Rivera, Sr., Rev. Wilfredo	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
4/24/2024	Roberts, Rev. Kenneth	Candidate	Emeritus	Ordained
5/1/2025	Roggow, Mr. Jacob	Active	Candidate	Ordained
1/1/2025	Sabbides, Ms. Betsy	Active	Candidate	Commissioned
7/1/2023	Schneider, Rev. Carl	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
3/15/2024	Shouse, Rev. Tod	Active	Candidate	Ordained
5/7/2023	Sizemore, Rev. Paul	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
5/1/2023	Steinke, Rev. Robert	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
2/21/2024	Steinke, Rev. Robert	Emeritus	Active	Ordained
1/16/2024	Stringer, Rev. Gregory	Active	Emeritus	Ordained
3/1/2024	Stuckert, Mr. Gordon	Active	Emeritus	Commissioned
3/19/2023	Tumminello, Ms. Janet	Active	Candidate	Commissioned
4/1/2023	Vonada, Ms. Sharon	Active	Emeritus	Commissioned
2/8/2023	Wessling, Mrs. Ruth	Active	Emeritus	Commissioned
12/31/2022	Zwemke, Rev. Michael	Active	Emeritus	Ordained



Changes in Status of FLGA Churches as reported to FLGA 2025 District Convention

8/29/2024	Atlanta Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus	Lilburn, GA	New Church Start
10/29/2023	Christ the King Lutheran	Labelle, FL	Dual Parish with Faith Clewiston
10/29/2023	Emmanuel Lutheran Church	Norcross, GA	New Church Start
1/15/2023	Faith Lutheran	Ft Lauderdale, FL	Closed
10/29/2023	Faith Lutheran	Clewiston, FL	Dual Parish with Christ the King Labelle
1/22/2023	Hope Lutheran	Milledgeville, GA	Closed
10/22/2024	Iglesia Luterana Confessional Conexion	Naples, FL	Initial Member
11/1/2023	Living Faith Korean	Cumming, GA	Merged with Living Faith
10/5/2023	Pelican Church of Immokalee	Immokalee, FL	New Church Start
2/1/2022	Primitive Lutheran Church	Boynton Beach, FL	Closed
7/15/2022	San Pablo Apostol Lutheran	Miami, FL	Dual Parish w/St. Paul, Miami
7/24/2024	Trinity Lutheran Church	Miami/Cutler Bay, FL	Closed

Changes in the Status of FLGA District Schools as of 2025 District Convention

6/1/2024	Marathon Lutheran School	Marathon, FL	School Closed
6/30/22	Trinity Lutheran Preschool	Cape Coral, FL	School Closed

No Reinstatements were granted in this triennium



Nominations For Office
Florida-Georgia District, LCMS
Board of Directors 2025 - 2028
(*Incumbent)

All names listed are those who are eligible and willing to let their names stand.

District President Nominee

*The Rev. James H. Rockey

Secretary Nominee

*The Rev. Dr. Gregory Michael

Region 1

Vice President Nominee

The Rev. Jeffrey Jordan

The Rev. Roger Schwartz

Lay Representative Nominees

*Mrs. Karen Cerny

Region 2

Vice President Nominee

*The Rev. Jay Winters

Lay Representative Nominees

*Mrs. Deborah Beck

*Mr. Tracy Cripe

Region 3

Vice President Nominee

*The Rev. Charles Reich

Lay Representative Nominees

*Mrs. Sheryl DeWitt

*Mrs. Becky Hartmann

Region 4

Vice President Nominee

*The Rev. Dr. David Brockhoff

Lay Representative Nominees

*Mr. Jon Boeche

Mr. Tim Gerken

Region 5

Vice President Nominee

The Rev. R. Scott Henze

The Rev. Richard Norris



Lay Representative Nominees

*Mr. Stephen Bradshaw

Commissioned Minister Representatives

Mrs. Ligia Borges

Mr. Eric Gerken

Ms. Jodi Tucker

*Mrs. Tamara "Tamie" Worthington

District Nominations Committee - Commissioned

Ms. Lori Lee Joerz (Region 3)

District Nominations Committee - Lay

Mr. Gary Engel (Region 1)

Mr. Joel Holcombe (Region 2)

Mrs. Magda McKay (Region 4)

Mrs. Sally Wesche (Region 1)

District Nominations Committee - Ordained

Rev. Timothy Barber (Region 2)

Rev. Jacob Berlinski (Region 1)

Rev. Stephen Carretto (Region 5)

Rev. Terrell Davis, Sr. (Region 1)

Rev. Dr. Joel Dietrich (Region 1)

Rev. Richard Norris (Region 5)

Rev. Dr. Anthony "Tony" Steinbronn (Region 3)



Biographical Information

(At time of publishing)

Rev. Timothy D. Barber

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 29

Present Congregation: Epiphany Lutheran Church, Tallahassee, FL

Years in District: 3

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Former Pastorates: None

Years in Ordained Office: 3

Additional Information: Emergent Leaders Training - 2023

Mrs. Deborah K. Beck

Nominated for: BOD - Region 2 Lay Representative

Age: 61

Present Congregation: Amazing Grace Lutheran Church, Oxford/The Villages, FL

Years in District: 4

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD Reg. 2 Lay Representative

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: Current BOD, Stewardship Chair, Endowment Fund Consultant

Formal Education: BS Degree

Business Occupation (past, present): Financial Consultant

Employment Status: Employed

Former Congregations and offices held there: Peace Lutheran BOD, Youth Director, SS Superintendent

Rev. Jacob Berlinski

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 33

Present Congregation: Rivercliff Lutheran Church, Sandy Springs, GA

Years in District: 7

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Former Pastorates: None

Years in Ordained Office: 7

Additional Information:

Mr. Jon Boeche

Nominated for: BOD Region 4 Lay Representative

Age: 60

Present Congregation: Christ The King Lutheran Church, Largo, FL

Years in District: 20

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD Region 4 Lay Representative

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Elder & Business Manager

Formal Education: BA Economics/Finance

Business Occupation (past, present): Dairy Queen Franchisee

Employment Status: Employed

Former Congregations and offices held there: Messiah Highland, CA - Elder

Dcs. Ligia Borges

Nominated for: BOD Commissioned Minister Representative

Age: 61

Present Congregation: Prince of Peace Lutheran Orlando, FL

Years in District: 15

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Years in Commissioned Office: 15

Former Services Rendered: Director of Community Ministry

Relevant Experience or Continuing Education: Deaconess; Center for Hispanic Studies-CSL-Adjunct St. National

Mr. Stephen Bradshaw

Nominated for: BOD Region 5 Lay Representative

Age: 73

Present Congregation: Trinity Lutheran Church, Lake Placid, FL 33852

Years in District: 36

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD Region 5 Lay Representative

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: President, School Board, Elder

Formal Education: Some College

Business Occupation (past, present): Aerial Operations Director, Florida Keys Mosquito Control Dist.

Employment Status: Retired

Former Congregations and offices held there: Martin Luther Chapel, Marathon, FL - President, Vice President, Elder, School Board

Rev. Dr. David Brockhoff

Nominated for: Region 4 Vice President

Age: 65

Present Congregation: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Years in District: 31

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD Vice President Region 4 2022 – 2025; Circuit Visitor

Former Pastorates: Living Christ, Ennis TX; Rivercliff, Dunwoody, GA; Church for All Nations, New York, NY

Years in Ordained Office: 39

Additional Information: Doctor of Ministry

Rev. Stephen Carretto

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 42

Present Congregation: St Paul Lutheran Church & School

Years in District: 15

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: Region 5 Vice President 2018 - 2025

Former Pastorates: None

Years in Ordained Office: 15

Additional Information:

Mrs. Karen Cerny

Nominated for: BOD Region 1 Lay Representative

Age: 69

Present Congregation: Faith Lutheran Church & School, Marietta, GA

Years in District: 56

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD Region 1 Lay Representative 2018-2025

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: Call Committee Chair, 50th Anniversary Committee Chair, Membership Secretary (current)

Formal Education: Bachelor of Science - Nursing

Business Occupation (past, present): Registered Nurse

Employment Status: Retired

Former Congregations and offices held there: First Lutheran Gainesville, FL – Treasurer, St Peters Belle Glade, FL, First English & St Paul, IA, Salem Lutheran, MO, Bethel Lutheran, WY

Mr. Tracy Cripe

Nominated for: BOD Region 2 Lay Representative

Age: 61

Present Congregation: Grae Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, FL

Years in District: 34

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD Region 2 Lay Representative 2022 - 2025

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: none currently

Formal Education: BS - Accounting

Business Occupation (past, present): CPA

Employment Status: Self-employed

Former Congregations and offices held there: Bethlehem Lutheran Jacksonville Beach, FL – President/VP, Elder/Dean of Elders

Rev. Terrell Davis, Sr.

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 64

Present Congregation: Peace Lutheran Church, Decatur, GA

Years in District: 5

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Former Pastorates: None

Years in Ordained Office: 3

Additional Information: Former AD Navy, Former DOD, Youth Director; Treasurer, Elder Chairman; Pastor; B.A. Sociology/Int; M.A. CTSFW

Mrs. Sheryl DeWitt

Nominated for: BOD Region 3 Lay Representative

Age: 62

Present Congregation: Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Sanford, FL

Years in District: 30

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD Region 3 Lay Representative 2018 - 2025

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: Director, Social Ministries

Formal Education: Studied Business at Valencia Community College; professional background in Insurance Industry

Business Occupation (past, present): Co-Founder & Executive Director Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries

Employment Status: Employed



Former Congregations and offices held there: Messiah Lutheran, Tampa FL, member; St. Luke's Lutheran Oviedo, FL, member; Our Savior Lutheran, St. Charles, MO, member

Rev. Dr. Joel Dietrich

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 50

Present Congregation: St Paul Lutheran Church & School, Peachtree City, GA

Years in District: 12

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Former Pastorates: None

Years in Ordained Office: 6

Additional Information: DCE for 22 years Masters in Family Life, DMiN in Church Leadership

Mr. Gary Engel

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 68

Present Congregation: King of Kings, Talking Rock, GA

Years in District: 25

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: BOD Region 1 Lay Representative (2018-2025)

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: President, Elder, Vice President

Formal Education: MA, National Security and Strategic Studies, US Naval War College

Business Occupation (past, present): Retired Colonel, U.S. Army, Own and Operates Engelheim Vineyards, Winery, and Venue in the Vines

Employment Status: Self Employed

Former Congregations and offices held there: St Paul, Peachtree City, GA. Elder, Vice President

Mr. Eric L. Gerken

Nominated for: BOD Commissioned Minister Representative

Age: 51

Present Congregation: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church & School, Orlando, FL

Years in District: 16

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Years in Commissioned Office: 28

Former Services Rendered: DCE at Churches in Florida & Nebraska, Program Director at LCMS Camp in So. Wisconsin

Relevant Experience or Continuing Education: Board of Directors at Camp Luther in Nebraska District.

Mr. Tim Gerken

Nominated for: BOD Region 4 Lay Representative

Age: 59

Present Congregation: Lakeside Lutheran Church, Venice, FL

Years in District: 4

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: Vice President

Formal Education: BS Computer Science – Pacific Lutheran University

Business Occupation (past, present): Software Engineer

Employment Status: Retired

Former Congregations and offices held there: Resurrection Lutheran Church, Des Moines, WA – Vice President, Elder, Treasurer

Mrs. Becky Hartmann

Nominated for: BOD Region 3 Lay Representative

Age: 61

Present Congregation: Hope Lutheran Church, Plant City, FL

Years in District: 51

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD Region 3 Lay Representative 2019-2025

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: Currently leading Missions & Outreach Ministry Team; previous: youth ministry team; Christian Growth team

Formal Education: BS in Education - Concordia Teachers' College, Seward, NE

Business Occupation (past, present): Christian education - art, English, theology

Employment Status: Retired

Former Congregations and offices held there: St John's Lutheran Church, Tampa, FL Led Outreach Ministry

Rev. R. Scott Henze

Nominated for: Region 5 Vice President

Age: 58

Present Congregation: St Paul Lutheran Church, Weston, FL

Years in District: 5

Incumbent: 58

District Offices Held: Circuit Visitor 2020 - present

Former Pastorates: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Clinton, MS

Years in Ordained Office: 10

Additional Information: PLI- Missional Leadership; Emergent Leader Training, Ambassadors of Reconciliation training, Circuit Visitor

Mrs. Lori Lee Joerz

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 57

Present Congregation: St Paul Lutheran Church & School, Lakeland, FL

Years in District: 11

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: Board of Directors 2022 - 2025

Years in Commissioned Office: 35

Former Services Rendered: Teacher, Principal, Director of Church Relations

Relevant Experience or Continuing Education: BA CCNY, MA SUNY Stony Brook, Emanuel Lutheran Church Patchogue NY, AD BOD, LSA NY Cluster Coordinator

Rev. Jeffrey Jordan

Nominated for: Region 1 Vice President

Age: 64

Present Congregation: Rivercliff Lutheran Church, Sandy Springs, GA

Years in District: 15

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: FLGA Circuit Visitor 2015 - 2025

Former Pastorates: Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Rocklin, CA

Years in Ordained Office: 23

Additional Information: Trained Reconciler

Mrs. Magda McKay

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 67

Present Congregation: Messiah Lutheran Church, Tampa, FL

Years in District: 24

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Congregational Offices held at current congregation: Secretary

Formal Education: High School

Business Occupation (past, present): 45 Year Banking Career, Multiple Branch and Administrative Roles

Employment Status: Retired

Former Congregations and offices held there: St Matthew Lutheran, Tampa, FL - Secretary, Faith Lutheran, Marietta, GA - Asst. Treasurer

Rev. Dr. Gregory Michael

Nominated for: District Secretary

Age: 48

Present Congregation: Christus Victor Lutheran Church, Athens, GA

Years in District: 20

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: District Secretary 2022-2025

Former Pastorates: None

Years in Ordained Office: 21

Additional Information: Res. 9-06A Task Force on Circuit Realignment; STM-Concordia Seminary (2009); PhD-University of Georgia (2024)

Rev. Richard Norris

Nominated for: Region 5 Vice President

Age: 68

Present Congregation: Trinity Lutheran Church, Lake Placid, FL

Years in District: 37

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: Pastor's Conference Board, Past Chair of Presidents Convocation, Circuit Visitor for 12 years. Past PALS Facilitator, Mentored 3 SMP students.

Former Pastorates: All Saints Lutheran Church, Billings, NY

Years in Ordained Office: 42

Additional Information: Lead Volunteer Chaplain for the Highlands County Sheriff's Office

Rev. Charles Reich

Nominated for: Region 3 Vice President

Age: 55

Present Congregation: Grace Lutheran Church & School, Winter Haven, FL

Years in District: 28

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: BOD, Vice President Region 3 (2018-2025); Chair, District Nominating Committee (2006-2009, 2012-2015); Secretary of District Pastors Conferences (2000-2006); District Outreach Council & Circuit Outreach Counselor (2000-2006) District Board of Stewardship, District Continuing Education Committee, Floor Committee member, Chair at numerous Conventions

Former Pastorates: Abiding Savior Lutheran Church & School, Gainesville, FL

Years in Ordained Office: 29

Additional Information: PLI Class of 2004, Vicarage Supervisor, DCE Intern and Deaconess Intern Supervisor, Emergent Leadership 2014 & 2021, Lutheran Early Response Teams Training 2013 & 2019, Christian Coaching 2021, Ambassadors of Reconciliation Coaching (2023) Leadership Winter Haven Class 42 (2022-2023)

Rev. James Rockey

Nominated for: President

Age: 62

Present Congregation: Amazing Grace Lutheran Church & School, Oxford, FL

Years in District: 21

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: District President, Vice President, Circuit Visitor, Pastoral Conference Committee, Lutheran Services FL BOD

Former Pastorates: Amazing Grace, Oxford/The Villages (2007-2022); Zion, Ft Myers, (2004-2007); Our Savior, Nashville (1998-2003)

Years in Ordained Office: 27

Additional Information: PLI, Biblical Counseling, Ambassadors of Reconciliation

Rev. Roger A. Schwartz

Nominated for: Region 1 Vice President

Age: 61

Present Congregation: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Augusta, GA

Years in District: 25

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: Circuit Visitor for ECGA Circuit #4 for 9 years; Stewardship Council 3 years

Former Pastorates: Trinity Lutheran, Toccoa GA

Years in Ordained Office: 25

Additional Information: Synod trained in reconciliation ministry, delegate to 4 synodical conventions

Rev. Dr. Anthony "Tony" Steinbronn

Nominated for: Nominations Committee

Age: 69

Present Congregation: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church & School, Orlando, FL

Years in District: 4

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: District Board of Evangelism, Nebraska District (1984-1986); Synodical Continuing Education Representative, Indiana District (1991-1994); District Mission Executive, New Jersey District (2003-2012); District President, New Jersey District (2012-2021)

Former Pastorates: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Albion, NE & Faith Lutheran Church, St. Edward, NE; Mission ; Pastor, Highlands Lutheran Church, Lincoln, NE; Associate Pastor, St. John Lutheran Church, Kendallville, IN; Overseas' Missionary and Theological Educator, Lutheran Church of Southern Africa; Immanuel Lutheran Church, Dimock, SD

Years in Ordained Office: 43

Additional Information: Master of Sacred Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN (1991); Doctor of Missiology, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN (1997)

Ms. Jodi Tucker

Nominated for: BOD – Commissioned Minister Representative

Age: 45

Present Congregation: St Paul Lutheran Church & School, Lakeland, FL

Years in District: 23

Incumbent: No

District Offices Held: None

Years in Commissioned Office: 23

Former Services Rendered: None

Relevant Experience or Continuing Education: MA Reading Ed; MA Elem Math; 24th year teaching; Adjunct Professor for CUW/CUAA

Rev. Jay A. Winters

Nominated for: Region 2 Vice President

Age: 47

Present Congregation: University Lutheran Church & Student Center, Tallahassee, FL

Years in District: 17

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: District Secretary 2015 – 2022; Region 1 Vice President 2022 - 2025

Former Pastorates: None

Years in Ordained Office: 18

Additional Information: Ambassadors of Reconciliation Conflict Resolution Training, Certified Christian Leadership Coach

Mrs. Tamara “Tamie” Worthington

Nominated for: BOD – Commissioned Minister Representative

Age: 61

Present Congregation: St Paul Lutheran Church & School, Peachtree City, GA

Years in District: 35

Incumbent: Yes

District Offices Held: Region 1 Commissioned Minister Representative (2017 – 2025)

Years in Commissioned Office: 23

Former Services Rendered: Teacher

Relevant Experience or Continuing Education: 30 years teaching experience, colloquy in 2002

Reports from Councils, Commissions and Partner Ministries

District Constitution Review Committee

The role of the Constitution Review Committee of the District is to review the governing documents (Constitutions and Bylaws) of congregations to assure that they “are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures, the Confessions, and the teachings and practices of Synod.” (Synod Bylaw 2.4.1.b). When a member congregation of the Florida Georgia District wishes to revise these important documents, they submit these documents and their changes to the District for review. Once the Constitution Review Committee has had an opportunity to review these documents, sometimes asking for further revisions in order to be in line with Synod’s practices, the Committee then approves the documents and sends them on to the Board of Directors who vote to officially approve the documents in good order.

Since the last convention, the Committee approved the revised governing documents of 30 congregations of the Florida Georgia District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. In addition to these, some congregations began the process and did not continue or the review is still in progress.

One notable change in the past three years has been Rev. Pat O’Brien stepping down from chairing this committee. Rev. O’Brien is to be commended for his service which he conducted with a humble heart. A longtime member of the committee, Rev. O’Brien’s knowledge of the task and organizational abilities allowed this committee to continue to function smoothly throughout these many years that he has served as chair. In August of 2024, Rev. Jay A. Winters took the position of interim chair of this committee while a permanent chair is sought. Members of this committee during this past triennium have been: Rev. Pat O’Brien, Rev. Jacob Roedsens, Rev. Dean Pfeffer, Rev. Jay A. Winters, Mr. William “Rusty” Huseman (advisory - legal), and Rev. Dr. Gregory Michael (advisory – District Secretary).

Since the 2022 Convention, the Committee recommended approval of the following revised constitutions and bylaws to the Board of Directors:

April 2022

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Trinity	Cape Coral, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Concordia	Kendall (Miami), FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Pelican	Naples, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

November 2022

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Trinity	Cape Coral, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Concordia	Kendall (Miami), FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Pelican	Naples, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

January 2023

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Beautiful Savior	Sarasota, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
First Lutheran	Gainesville, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

April 2023



Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Holy Cross	North Miami, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Epiphany	Tallahassee, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Faith	Lecanto, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

August 2023

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Hope	Hudson, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Christus Victor	Athens, GA	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Trinity	Summerfield, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Our Savior	Lake Worth, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Savior of All	Cartersville, GA	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

November 2023

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Messiah	Valdosta, GA	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Trinity	Fort Pierce, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

January 2024

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Our Redeemer	Augusta, GA	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Beautiful Savior	Sarasota, FL	Minor Bylaw revision
Holy Trinity	Masaryktown, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Our Redeemer	Lake City, FL	Bylaw revision

April 2024

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Epiphany	Tallahassee, FL	Bylaw revision
Holy Trinity	Macon, GA	Minor Bylaw revision
Amazing Grace	Oxford, FL	Minor Bylaw revision
Lake Wales	Lake Wales, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

November 2024

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Conexion	Naples, FL	New Documents for Chartering Church
Abiding Savior	Gainesville, FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

January 2025

Congregation	Location	Type of Change
Christ the King	Largo FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision
Our Savior	Zephyrhills FL	Constitution and Bylaw Revision

L3: A Ministry of Legal Service for the LCMS Community

In 2015, a group of Lutheran attorneys recognized a quiet but pressing need within the Church. Faithful, values-driven legal support was often difficult to find for LCMS churches, schools, ministries, and members. In response, the **Lutheran Legal League**, or “L3,” was formed. It was never intended to be a law firm or a referral company. It is a ministry built on connection and service.

L3 exists to connect LCMS entities and individuals with attorneys who actively worship in LCMS congregations. Our mission is to support the Church by providing legal guidance rooted in shared faith. There is no fee to be connected with an L3 attorney, and no referral or endorsement involved. We are simply a resource for our LCMS family.

Since its founding, L3 has assisted hundreds upon hundreds of LCMS members and ministries throughout the United States. We have helped churches form nonprofit corporations, guided schools through employment issues, supported families in civil disputes, and offered counsel on property, contracts, and governance. Our members have stepped in with both legal knowledge and Christian compassion during moments of need.

L3 currently includes nearly 120 practicing attorneys in 35 states and the District of Columbia. Each attorney is licensed to practice law, is an active member of an LCMS congregation, and desires to serve others through the gifts God has given. Many have provided pro bono service, but that is not a requirement. What matters most is the heart for helping.

L3 is not about growing anyone’s business. It is about strengthening the Body of Christ. Whether assisting a congregation navigating local regulations, advising a ministry on real estate matters, or helping an individual through personal legal difficulties, our members provide trusted and faith-aligned guidance. Because we worship together and believe together, we offer more than legal advice. We offer understanding and a shared commitment to Christ.

We also invite new attorneys to join us. If you are a lawyer who worships in an LCMS congregation and are willing to help when called, we welcome you. There are no membership fees or quotas. L3 simply asks that you be ready to serve when a need arises. Referrals of other LCMS attorneys are also appreciated and encouraged.

The need within our Church is great. Legal matters can be intimidating, and many do not know where to turn. L3 stands in the gap to offer clarity, confidence, and care. We exist to support God’s people by using our training and experience for His service.

If you or your ministry need legal help, or if you would like to become part of this ministry, please reach out. You can contact Rusty Huseman at RustyH@lutheranlegalleague.org.

The Lutheran Legal League is more than a directory of attorneys. It is a fellowship of believers who desire to serve the Church with integrity, humility, and faith. We are here to connect, to guide, and to serve. That is our calling, and it is our joy.

Respectfully Submitted,

William R. “Rusty” Huseman, P.A.

Founder of Lutheran Legal League/ District Legal Counsel





FLORIDA-GEORGIA LUTHERAN EARLY RESPONSE, INC.

Florida-Georgia Lutheran Early Response, Inc., or FGLER ("Flagler" as we call it) grew from conversations between some LERT volunteers and the Florida-Georgia District (FLGA) Disaster Response Coordinator, about what could be done to get our church members involved in LERT, and how the FLGA District could better support the disaster response ministry.

FGLER is a volunteer-run organization that seeks to provide an “umbrella” home to disaster response volunteers in Florida and Georgia. As such, every Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) volunteer is a “member” of FGLER, and is welcome to participate in training, disaster responses, and other events.

FGLER has LCMS Disaster Response trainers who are able to provide onsite training at your church. We also offer “regional” training opportunities, where volunteers can receive various types of disaster response training. Some training that we provide include:

- LERT (basic disaster volunteer training)
- LERT Chainsaw Safety
- Intermediate and Advanced Chainsaw
- Flood Response
- Bobcat Operation (MT100)
- First Aid
- CPR
- Stop The Bleed®

Our Mission: We are here to serve and assist pastors, congregations, the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS), and their communities throughout the Florida-Georgia area and beyond by preparing for, responding to, and managing disaster responses. We provide expertise, equipment and leadership so that individuals in our churches can assist with Disaster Relief.

Our Philosophy: FGLER follows the example Jesus established when He fed the 5,000 (Luke 9:10-17) and the 4,000, (Mark 8:1-13) where He had compassion for those in need, and in His teachings in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-40). Because He first loved us, we love others (I John 4:19).

As an organization, we encourage our volunteers to readily witness and share their faith in Christ Jesus with those we serve, and to show their love for Him by helping others. FGLER is Christian love in action. It is meeting the urgent needs of hurting humanity in crisis situations with loving care and a timely response, as James 2:14-17 instructs us to do. As Christians, we are called to not only have a relationship with Jesus Christ (spiritual), but to also put our faith into action by serving others as Christ served us (physical) (Matthew 25:40, John 13:14, James 2: 14-26)

FGLER Timeline and Key Highlights:

- **2022**
 - o FGLER incorporated
 - o Hurricane Ian response, Ft. Myers, FL
 - o First piece of equipment purchased (Bobcat MT85)
- **2023**
 - o Assist Mid-South District tornado response in Arkansas
 - o 501(c)(3) nonprofit status approved
 - o Second Bobcat purchased with LCMS grant, with FLGA, SELC, and donor support
 - o Hurricane Idalia response in Valdosta, GA, and North Florida
- **2024**
 - o LCMS Recognized Service Organization (RSO) status granted

- o Tallahassee tornado response
 - o Assist Mid-South District tornado response in Arkansas
 - o Purchased an enclosed cargo trailer with LCMS grant, with FLGA, SELC, and donor support
 - o Donation of disaster trailer and equipment from Messiah, Tampa
 - o Remodel project with LCMS RSO Steppingstone Ministry, Conyers, GA
 - o Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton responses in the Tampa/St. Petersburg/Sarasota, and north central Florida.
 - o Flood cleanup equipment to the Southeastern District for their Hurricane Helene response in North Carolina
 - o Grant from LCMS Disaster response to purchase a dump trailer, Bobcat MT100 mini-track loader, and a truck; assistance from FLGA District, SELC District, and donors
- **2025**
 - o Flood cleanup equipment sent to the Mid-South District to assist in floods in Kentucky

Since September 2022, FGLER has assisted volunteers with:

- 3 hurricane responses
- 3 tornado responses
- 2 rebuild projects
- More than 3,600 volunteer hours donated
- More than 1,600 equipment hours
- 12 LERT disaster volunteer trainings
- 4 LERT Chainsaw trainings

FGLER has been blessed with several pieces of equipment that is used by LERT volunteers in various disaster response cleanup:

- 2 Bobcat MT100 mini-track loaders (the MT85 was sold to a partner LCMS church in North Carolina)
- 2 enclosed cargo trailers – one outfitted for flood response, one to carry an MT100 and chainsaw equipment
- 1 dump trailer for hauling debris and a Bobcat
- 1 Chevrolet 3500 flatbed truck to pull our equipment trailers
- 7 chainsaws and 1 pole saw so volunteers can do tree debris cleanup
- 3 commercial dehumidifiers, 11 floor fans to dry out flooded churches and homes

FGLER is a 501c)(3) nonprofit and LCMS Recognized Service Organization. Donations are appreciated and are tax deductible. More information about FGLER can be found at www.fgler.org, or follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/FGLER).

Respectfully Submitted,
Mr. Joel Mathews, Chair



LutheranLife
FLGA NewsMagazine

Lutheran LIFE is the official newsmagazine of the Florida-Georgia (FLGA) District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The Mission of the FLGA District is to serve, assist, and encourage congregations in the ministry of Jesus Christ. People of the FLGA District are equipped, empowered, engaged in the Master’s business ... connecting people to Jesus.

Lutheran LIFE has been sharing District news for approximately 55 years — although not always in a magazine format. Originally *LIFE* was done as a mimeographed quarterly newsletter that became a monthly vehicle with the invention of the Xerox copy machine. At that time it only went to the rostered clergy of the District. In more recent years it evolved into a tabloid-sized newspaper in black and white with photos. Approximately 12 to 15 years ago the decision was made to create a bi-monthly color magazine that is the format of *Lutheran LIFE* today. With the invention of personal mobile phones with quality camera capabilities, subscribers throughout the District began to submit quality photos.

Lutheran LIFE is published five times annually. Approximately 25,000 copies are distributed within the FLGA District and to other districts and the synod of the LCMS. As part of the District Congregational Services, the magazine is mailed free to subscribers. To receive *Lutheran LIFE* readers may send a request to LutheranLife@aol.com or submit the request through the FLGA District. Congregations may also provide a mailing list of members to ensure each family receives a copy of the magazine.

Lutheran LIFE has a primary focus on Florida-Georgia District news and some national and international news with a goal of keeping our membership connected and engaged in a wide range of ministries taking place throughout the District, nationally and worldwide. Other articles discuss faith issues and highlight specific schools, ministries or congregation activities. *LutheranLife* is well respected throughout our Synod and often serves as an example of how other districts can share vital information and ideas among their constituency.

In addition to the printed magazine, it is available digitally on the FLGA District website and as a link on the weekly Friday newsletter, *Connections*.

News items and photos are encouraged. Please send digital photos as a .jpg, .png or .pdf attachment rather than embedded in emails to ensure we can size them to fit the magazine’s layout.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mr. John List, Editor

All Nations Cultural Commission

Greetings in the name of our Risen and Ascended Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from our District’s All Nations Cultural Commission.

We greet you with a new name but the same message of striving to bring diversity within our churches that they truly reflect the community in which each of us minister, proclaim the saving message of Jesus Christ and bring hope and healing to our members and those in our communities.

Since our Commission was established, it was under the name of the “Multicultural & Ethnic Diversity Task Force.” This name was changed in 2024 to what we are today, the All Nations Cultural Commission. As we realize, in today’s society, the term “diversity” has taken on very negative connotations and this

change was brought about under the direction and leadership of President Rockey to avoid such a backlash and negative understanding within our congregations and contexts of ministry.

Our membership is a cross section of our District as we strive to reflect the diversity of cultures and languages within our District. Special thanks go to Tony Durante who led this Commission from its inception under President Emeritus Greg Walton, and then under President James Rockey. I assumed the chairmanship following Tony Durante, then Verushka Garcia, led the Commission for a brief time until I returned to the Commission. It is my prayer that together as a Commission and District we will move forward over the next three years (and beyond) to bring a deepened awareness to the members of our congregations of the wealth of cultural diversity that exists right here in Florida and Georgia and how we can best integrate these people and cultures into our ministries. I can truly say, Hope, Plant City has been, is and will be further blessed as we join hands and hearts in ministry with our Spanish congregation led by Pastor John Cobos.

The Foci of our Commission is as follows:

- **Awareness:** of multicultural ministry and servants actively working to have an impact in their respective mission fields.
- **Celebrate:** those faithfully and fruitfully serving in our ever changing and more diverse communities. And that, the All Nations Cultural Commission would identify and honor those faithful servants who are living as “Along-siders” in their diverse/changing communities to have a Gospel impact.
- **Encourage & Inspire:** congregations to reach across the street to their neighbors and be a true reflection of the Gospel. And, to pray and encourage that the congregations of our District would not only reflect their respective communities but also be a reflection of what awaits us in heaven. (this is Rev. 7:9 in action).

The committee in carrying out its work, awarded *Holy Trinity, Tampa* its first “*Multicultural Award*” as they demonstrated a multicultural approach to mission and ministry in the following aspects of both in-reach and outreach: education; engagement; improvements; legacy. The winner received a trophy, \$500.00 cash prize: mention in district wide publications and distinction as a model, inspiration and resource to other congregations aspiring to be multicultural congregations. It is the hope and prayer that the ANCC will once again take up the task and call for submissions to award one of the congregations in our District.

We thank God for the leadership and direction of Tony Durante who led this Commission from the beginning and to Verushka Garcia who briefly led the commission. Thanks also to the servants of Christ who are a part of this vital ministry in the mission of our Florida Georgia District: *Rev. Dr. Victor Belton; Rev. Frank & Rebecca Marshall; Ligia Morales; Maria Vazquez; Naomi Mungin; President James Rockey; Kathy Keene and as an advisor Rev. Tony Durante.* THANK YOU to each of you for your ministry and hearts of mission!

If you would like further information about the ANCC or would like to be a part of this Commission, please do not hesitate to see me at the convention or contact me.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dean R. Pfeffer, Commission Chair

Lutheran Counseling Services

Lutheran Counseling Services (LCS) has been creating safe places for people to change their story for the past 34 years. We are motivated by the grace of God to serve all people that are seeking health and healing. LCS has grown into an independent nonprofit providing mental health counseling and training and consulting services to more than 12,000 clients in Central Florida, regionally and nationally to Lutherans, and all individuals regardless of their faith or ability to pay.

Since the inception of our partnership, Lutheran Counseling Services has experienced significant growth, with a notable increase in client load and program offerings in Central Florida. In 2024, we served over 1,500 clients and conducted over 11,000 sessions, compared to around 800 clients and 7,000 sessions four years ago. Our staff has expanded to over 30 therapists and office staff, and we now operate at 13 locations throughout Central Florida.

Like most things around us, the cost of mental health has gone up significantly over the past five years. Many mental health offices do not take insurance requiring the clients to pay out of pocket or they have a large set rate that can be unaffordable to many. Because of this, many people can be turned off to getting the help they need. At LCS, we want the people calling our office to receive the help they need regardless of their ability to pay so we not only take insurance, but we also offer a sliding scale to our clients paying out of pocket. We work with them to come up with a reasonable amount and use funds to cover the remainder of the cost. This allows our clients to feel hope when they schedule their appointments rather than another financial burden. It also helps them prioritize their mental health rather than ignore it because they have other bills to pay.

Programs:

Ministerial Assistance Program (MAP) - LCS has a long history of serving church workers; it is at the core of who we are. Clergy, teachers, DCE's, lay leaders, and their families all face unique challenges as their work and roles are tied so closely together. LCS currently has contracts with three different judicatories to provide assistance to church workers and their families free of charge. LCS also conducts psychological assessments for candidates for ministry in nine different synods across the United States. LCS is contracted to serve as the Crisis Team at the 2025 National Youth Gathering and we continue our contact with the Office of International Missions to support Missionaries overseas.

School Counseling Program- Launched in 2015, our School Counseling Program is a fee-for-service program with counselors placed on campus at eight private schools in Central Florida. Counselors provide individual and group therapy, classroom presentations, teacher consultations, and crisis response on campus. Throughout the COVID Pandemic, our School Counseling Program was able to expand via telehealth into schools that could not afford to have a therapist on-site. In the 2024-2025 School Year LCS was blessed to place counselors at 9 different schools across the state of Florida. As we head into the 25-26 school year we have been approached by several campuses to expand this program as the need for mental health in our schools continues to grow.

Aging Well Program - Our Aging Well Program offers free counseling for those 55; this is done through individual and support groups. Sessions can be done in one of our offices or in the Independent Facility where these clients live. The therapists working in our Aging Well Program have a passion for older adults and desire to help them live their best life. They understand the feelings and struggles that come with aging which allows the sessions to be catered around the individual and the needs they have. The support groups conducted at the facilities work around the overall experiences of aging adults - caregiving, loss of loved ones, medical health concerns, financial difficulties, fear of diminishing independence, and anxiety

that aging brings. The therapists respond to the diversity of needs depending on the needs of the facility. For example, at one facility, our therapist might conduct a caregiving group because this specific facility has a large number of couples that are aging and caregiving is commonly seen by one of the partners. At a facility where there are more single adults, a caregiving group is not as applicable. While each facility has the same population, they have different needs and LCS works hard to meet our clients where they are. The goal of Aging Well is to reduce the stigma around mental health for this age group, along with making it affordable and convenient.

Samaritan Resource Center (SRC) - LCS recognizes there are vulnerable groups that need mental health services. Regretfully, one of those vulnerable groups is the growing unhoused population in East Orange County. We partner with Samaritan Resource Center (SRC) to provide mental health counseling services to the unhoused in East Orange County. Located on East Colonial Drive at the corner of Dean Road, Samaritan Resource Center is a comprehensive drop-in center providing services to the East Orange County unhoused population to rehouse as many clients as possible. LCS has been providing mental health services at the SRC for the past several years helping individuals in crisis through the time that clients are rehoused.

The Village - In 2022, LCS established The Village at LCS, a program to serve the mental health needs in the LGBTQ+ community. As individuals struggle with their sexuality and gender, they face unique mental health needs and currently in Orlando there is a shortage of places to help in this specific situation. LCS has received several grants to run groups for the LGBTQ+ communities and their families. Now more than ever, the grace of God is needed in this community as we seek to help people address mental health needs that are ending so many lives when left untreated.

As we look toward the future of LCS, we have established several key goals to guide our growth and impact over the coming years.

- First, we are actively pursuing certification as Medicare providers. This important step will allow us to expand our Aging Well Program by increasing our presence and services in the Older Adult facilities where we already operate.
- Second, we envision the development of an interdisciplinary treatment center dedicated to supporting families with a member who has autism or a related neurodevelopmental disability. This center will integrate clinical care with social support services to provide holistic assistance.
- Third, we aim to enhance our visibility and engagement with churches throughout Florida. By increasing awareness of our services and broadening our donor base, we seek to further our mission of making mental health care financially accessible to all who need it.
- Lastly, we are committed to statewide expansion through new partnerships with churches and schools in cities where we currently do not operate. While telehealth has significantly broadened our reach, our long-term goal is to establish on-site offices in all major cities across Florida.

Respectfully Submitted,
Megan Miessler, Executive Director

Garuna Ministries

The mission of Garuna Ministries is to support and encourage the proclamation of the grace, mercy, and compassion (garuna) of Jesus Christ to the peoples of Thailand, Cambodia, and surrounding countries. This is accomplished through three ministry emphases: Luther Institute Southeast Asia (LISA), National Lutheran Churches, and Garuna Christian schools.

Garuna's LISA Bible classes have been taught in this region for over 20 years. LISA is focused on training indigenous Church leaders, pastors, deaconesses, and lay leaders for the emerging Lutheran Churches in the region. These Bible classes are now being taught by the indigenous leaders who are training the next generation of teachers. The recent New Testament cohort had 50 student who met in March. In 2025, we plan to add a new LISA building in Chiang Mai, Thailand which will serve both Thailand and Cambodia.

Garuna Christian Schools provide a daily, year-round opportunity for children to learn about Jesus, while also studying Khmer (Cambodian) reading/writing, math and basic English. Some of our important Garuna Schools updates for this year include:

- There are now 10 Garuna Christian Schools (GCS) operating in Cambodia, with a total of 2,060 students enrolled in grades K-6.
- The schools are funded by donations from individuals, congregations, and the Garuna Kids and Garuna Teachers sponsorship programs.
- So far this year, there have been more than 90 baptisms among the 10 Garuna Christian Schools, Sunday Schools, and at Garuna's Luther Institute-Cambodia Center
- In 2025, we plan to construct GCS #11 and GCS #12 thanks to gifts from donors and churches in the USA who want to make a significant impact through Christian school ministry!
- Our new Garuna School Teacher aide program for Garuna Kid graduates has created a lot of excitement as we continue to train and connect with our 6th grade grads. We have 107 aides now and plan to add more each year who will be future Garuna teachers and Cambodian leaders!
- We continue to baptize students and teachers who come to faith thanks to hearing the Gospel through the Garuna school ministry!
- We are blessed with 70 Garuna employees in Cambodia, and 7 more sharing Jesus in the Thailand/hilltribe area. All are faithful, hard-working, & collaborative!

By God's grace we have seen great openness to the gospel. It is true that the harvest is plentiful, and we pray God provides indigenous workers for this Asian harvest.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tamie Worthington, Garuna Sponsorship Program Coordinator

www.garuna.org

Inspiritus

I don't know about you, but 2024 feels like ancient history to me. January 2025 ushered in rapid changes across our country. These changes have required many Americans, including those of us at Inspiritus, to adapt quickly to new realities. For Inspiritus the changes required have been painful, and at times, all-consuming, making 2024 feel like a distant memory.

However, looking back can be an important exercise. In this case, it's not merely a trip down memory lane. The past holds important lessons for the future when we choose to see it that way. As you join me on this quick journey back through time, I invite you 1) to see God's providential hand in our ministry and 2) join me in giving thanks to our God, from whom all blessings flow.

In 2024 Inspiritus accompanied a record number of individuals and families as our staff and budget swelled to record sizes as well. We welcomed 1,340 refugees and walked together with their families on their odyssey to start new lives in America. Our pantry program in Nashville provided a record number of meals to food insecure families while serving up hope that affordable housing was on its way to the community.

You and I know that "big" isn't always "better". So let me share with you a few quality metrics. Our **specialized foster care program** that accompanies medically fragile children received an A+ rating from the State of Georgia. Our **disability services program** has done such a beautiful job of helping adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities thrive while living in community settings that the State of Alabama invited Inspiritus to bring the program to their state, which we did in 2024. Working as one team to address the specific needs of youth with an IDD/DD diagnosis transitioning from foster care to adulthood these two Inspiritus teams innovated together in 2024 to create the "**Bridge Program**", which allows a young person to stay with the same family while transitioning from foster care to an adult host home program.

Our **Disaster Services** team have done such a great job in extreme south Florida helping Hurricane Ian survivors who were languishing that they have attracted millions of dollars in support from the State of Florida, churches and foundations that we continue today rebuilding entire communities inundated by Hurricane Ian back in 2022.

I'm pleased to report that our newest initiative, **Thrive Community Lending**, hired its first ever Executive Director and the program received its first 6 figure financial award in 2024.

Speaking of financial awards, our **Inspiritus Senior Housing** project (an 80-unit apartment building for low-income seniors with integrated services for residents and the community) in Nashville, secured enough funding to break ground and begin construction in the Spring of 2025.

I bet you join me in being struck by all that has been accomplished in 2024 to help accompany individuals and families on their journeys toward thriving. I praise God and thank you, our brothers and sisters in the **Lutheran Church Missouri Synod** for your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness in support of our life-giving work in Jesus Christ. Thanks to your investment, the movement we call Inspiritus is building momentum. I can't wait to see what impact we will make together in 2025.

In service to Jesus and His church,

Sincerely,
John R. Moeller, Jr., President & CEO





IRIS LENDING LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND, INC.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ of the LCMS FL-GA District,

It is with great rejoicing, praise, and thanksgiving that we share the good news that God is “moving mountains” to further the kingdom work of supplying Christian media **FREE of CHARGE** to Visually Impaired and Blind individuals throughout the United States, Canada, and beyond that began at our Missouri Synod headquarters in Saint Louis, Missouri nearly a century ago. In wondrous ways, God orchestrated the relocation and resurrection of the **Lutheran Library for The Blind** as **IRIS (I Read I See...Jesus) LENDING LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND, INC.** (IRIS library) in a permanent building located at 5543 Fort Caroline Road, Jacksonville, Florida 32277. IRIS Library is the largest known Christian library of its kind and its mission operations are solely accomplished by volunteer efforts. You are invited to come along side the volunteers to assist in accomplishing the Great Commission in this very unique manner which God has entrusted to our Florida-Georgia District as one of our Synod’s Recognized Service Organizations. Here is what has been accomplished as well as what is yet to be accomplished with our collective, volunteer efforts:

- Library Audio Department 2024 expansion of nearly 11,000 audio books received from Unshackled Ministries and Spoken Word Ministries. The library volunteers welcome help with sorting, labeling, entering data into the library’s database, and shelving the additional audio books. All of the above plus the current Cassette tape audio books (around 15,000) need to be converted into digital format. This is a process that will take several years to accomplish. Additional volunteers needed to accomplish this monumental task.
- Donated 1,745 Christian Braille books to a blind school in a third world country for establishment of a library in the school. Currently in the process of purging an additional 2,000 Braille books to package and donate to the same library for distribution throughout their country. (Country and school name withheld as country is not Christian friendly.) Volunteers needed to assist with this effort.
- Have transcribed well over 1,200 new, Christian book titles into Braille and added to our library. More Braille transcribers are needed. If interested in learning how to become a Braille transcriber, please contact the IRIS library and we’ll let you know how to get started.
- IRIS Library hosts Braille Work Center #59 for Lutheran Braille Workers, Inc. that volunteers emboss, bind, and package well over 1,000 Braille Books of The Bible each year, **FREE of CHARGE**, that are sent to individuals throughout the world. Groups of 6 or more (up to 25) are invited to come and assist in this outreach effort.
- In the process of receiving the gift of the closing Braille Circulating Library’s (BCL) inventory and servicing their blind patrons. BCL is located in Richmond, Virginia. Volunteers are welcome in assisting with the work involved in unpacking, data processing the additional inventory, and readying the books for checkout.
- Purchased a building at 5543 Fort Caroline Road in Jacksonville, Florida and moved from our previous, rental location within the recently sold Regency Square Mall in Jacksonville, Florida. There is still unpacking to be completed, ground work of mowing, hedge trimming, edging, floors that need mopped and waxed, and the like to be done. Youth Groups, LWML groups, and the like are most welcome.

The volunteers have accomplished a mountain's worth of work with the help of God in a short period of time. With God's continued help and provision, the IRIS Library aspires to accomplish the tasks required to provide the Blind and Visually Impaired with Christian books in formats they can read and study, thereby developing a closer relationship with their Lord. Our goal is to thus motivate those we serve to develop a hunger for His Word, and to grow in faith.

Thank you for your prayers and support of this mission set before us. It is all most sincerely appreciated!

In His Service,
Julia Neimes, President
5543 Fort Caroline Road
Jacksonville, Florida 32277
Email: info@irisllb.org
Website: info@irisllb.org
Phone: (904)404-8504 or Toll Free: 1-888-215-2455



Lutheran Services Florida

Over 40 years ago, Lutheran Services Florida, guided by hearts for Jesus and hands to serve, came together to care for vulnerable children, teens and families across the state. Today, we are a nationally accredited Recognized Service Organization whose services impact 1 in 50 Floridians each year. While our ministry has grown, our mission remains the same: *Bringing God's healing, hope, and help to people in need, in the name of Jesus Christ.*

As a Recognized Service Organization of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Lutheran Services Florida rests on a foundation of Christian faith, mercy, and the Lutheran tradition of love and serving our neighbors. These principles are shaped by our close supportive relationship with the Florida-Georgia District, congregations, individuals, and the communities we serve.

In Matthew 25, Jesus taught us to serve the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the poor and give generously to those in need. In 2024, Florida faced two back-to-back hurricanes, impacting the west coast and big bend regions of the state. While Hurricane Helene and Milton had lingering impacts on our staff and the people we serve, we're proud to say we found strength and resilience in the community. Thanks to the generosity of our RSO partner, Lutheran World Relief, we were able to distribute 52 pallets of hurricane relief supplies along Florida's gulf coast. The donations made by Lutheran World Relief resulted in the following impact for Florida residents:

- \$700,000 in hurricane relief supplies (including quilts, baby kits, personal care kits, and school kits) – we recorded in-kind contributions to the programs that received the materials, amounting to a total of 21,558 items. They also paid the full costs of distributing the items to the pick-up locations throughout the west coast of Florida.
- Five pallets of water, totaling nearly \$4,400 of in-kind contribution.
- \$75,000 in cash assistance (awarded via Walmart and Uber gift cards) for clients impacted by the hurricanes. These funds are still being actively distributed.

Since 2022, LSF has expanded its reach and impact.

- **2022, Miami Bridge** – The acquisition of Miami Bridge added two established youth shelters to LSF. Miami Bridge has a long-standing history of serving youth in Miami-Dade County dating back to its inception in 1974. LSF Miami Bridge continues this legacy by serving children aged 10-17 who are seeking nonresidential or residential emergency shelter placement. In 2025, LSF celebrated the reopening of the boys' dormitory, giving boys' at Miami Bridge a space that feels like a home.
- **2022, Polk CMO** – LSF's Polk Case Management Organization (CMO) supports children and families in the child welfare system by providing personalized case management, advocacy and holistic care. With the addition of Polk County, LSF now operates 7 CMOs across the state.
- **2023, Shareet's Oasis** - Our teen drop-in center, Shareet's Oasis, serves youth in the Fort Myers community while working to get homeless teens off the streets. From counseling to homework help, this center acts as an extension of Oasis Youth Shelter, serving an additional population of teens and helping to alleviate the homeless youth crisis in the state of Florida. This beautiful space is able to stand as a result of funding through the Shareet Cares Prevention Project, a federal grant.
- **2024, Hands of Mercy Everywhere (H.O.M.E.)** – Hands of Mercy Everywhere Founder, Diane Schofield, entrusted her homes for unwed teen mothers to LSF. Since 2004, Hands of Mercy Everywhere provided teen mothers and girls at risk of sex trafficking with needed resources including education, parenting classes, life skills, career development, counseling and other means of evidenced-based programs to support and transition them into adulthood.
- **2024, Okaloosa Head Start** – As a successful Head Start operator in five other Florida counties, LSF successfully won a bid to operate Okaloosa County's four Head Start centers. This addition allowed LSF to serve 148 children and their families in the Northwest Florida community.
- **2024, LSF H.O.M.E. Lakeside Learning Center** – Through a State of Florida appropriations grant totaling \$594,900, LSF H.O.M.E. opened the Lakeside Learning Center. This fully renovated stand-alone building on the Hands of Mercy campus supports the many teen mothers served daily by offering vocational classes to ensure they find success and stability as adults.
- **2025, Bridge and Beyond** – Our newest emergency shelter opened in Fort Myers will serve youth in Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee county. This temporary home will be a safe haven for children who have been removed from their homes due to concerns of abuse, neglect or abandonment. Bridge and Beyond is a temporary place for these kids to call home until a suitable permanent placement is found.

In the past three years our development team has continued to build relationships with communities across the state, ensuring we unify churches and our communities to reach a common goal – giving back to the people who need it most. Currently, we are creating and empowering local Ambassador Boards in Sarasota, Fort Myers, Palm Beach, Miami, Tampa and Ft Lauderdale. By bringing together key community leaders and Pastors, we believe we strengthen our reach and impact.

Through donation drives like Baskets of Love, School Supplies and Christmas Angels – we provide children and their families the supplies and support they need to thrive. Through our Christmas Angels drive, we brought in \$160,000 in donations for foster children in Pinellas and Lake Sumpter. Churches are the backbone of these donation drives, offering unyielding support and going above and

beyond to provide requested items. Together, with the Church, its pastors and parishioners, we serve Jesus by serving the least of these.

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” - Matthew 2:40

Lutheran Haven Report for the Florida-Georgia District Convention

Greetings from our ministry to older adults in Oviedo, Florida!

“And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for the good, for those who are called according to His purpose.” – Romans 8:28

This verse beautifully captures the history of Lutheran Haven. What began as an idea rooted in gratitude has grown into a thriving community, built on a foundation of faith and service. Over the past 77 years, the Haven has remained steadfast in its mission to care for residents, staff, and our broader Lutheran family.

Today, our ministry serves over three hundred independent residents and fifty assisted living and memory care residents, with a dedicated team of over 130 staff members. Many of our residents are retired Lutheran pastors, teachers, and church workers, continuing the Haven's legacy as a spiritual and supportive community. We also provide private duty companion care and outpatient therapy services, benefiting both our residents and non-residents in the greater Oviedo area.

In January 2022, our Board of Trustees approved a multi-year Repositioning Plan to ensure the Haven continues to thrive. Since then, we have been and continue to diligently work to implement the plan which focuses on:

- Providing services and environments that allow residents to age healthily in place.
- Strengthening the fiscal sustainability of our mission.

It is important to note, as has been the case throughout our history, when changes such as these are necessary, we do not change our mission, we change how we accomplish it. Key elements of the plan include:

- The opening of a new Aquatic Center and the addition of outpatient therapy and health concierge services.
- Renovations to our Assisted Living building to enhance capacity and modernize space.
- Expansion of our Wellness Program to offer more spiritual care, fitness classes, travel opportunities, and vibrant campus community events.

The results are evident. Participation in our on-campus Sunday services and in Bible studies have both grown substantially and this year saw our first men's and women's retreats. Residents have participated in memorable trips to Savannah, The Ark Encounter, Nashville, and the Smoky Mountains, with more adventures planned. Our outpatient therapy services have supported over 50% of our residents, and more than 20% actively use our health concierge services. Participation in campus activities has increased dramatically, creating a positive energy that reflects Christ's presence in our community.



This vitality extends beyond our borders. Annual flea markets hosted by the Lutheran Haven Auxiliary and other events sponsored by the Oviedo Rotary Club have brought over 1,000 visitors to our campus, offering a unique opportunity to share our mission with the broader community.

As we look ahead, there is still much work to be done. However, we remain excited about the opportunities and mindful of the challenges we face. Our success is a testament to God's grace and the unwavering commitment of the SELC District, the Florida-Georgia District, our Board, staff, and our residents. Thank you for being a vital part of our journey in ministry.

In Christ's Service,
The Lutheran Haven Team

Lutheran Women in Mission

Thousands of women in Florida and Georgia share the Gospel of God's love for all people through the LWML, a.k.a. Lutheran Women in Mission. Spending personal time and treasure they insure Seminary students are prepared to disciple; children throughout the world can hear how amazing King Jesus is without their stomachs growling or their bodies hurting; people despite imperfections in their body see the love of Christ in action and read the Word of God in their own language. The LWML women in our District truly believe every person is valuable and precious to God.

The LWML is a structured business and the official women's organization of the LCMS for over 82 years. What began in one LCMS church in 1850 when a group of women met the physical and spiritual needs in their community, spread to the formal declaration of LWML as the official auxiliary of the LCMS. Since 1942, women in our congregations recognize they are a valued part of Jesus' command to make disciples, spread His teaching, and go into the entire world with the invaluable message that every person is a child of God.

In Florida and Georgia, nothing stops the 2000 active women of the LWML!! Hurricanes, epidemics, floods, discouraging words, patronizing actions, sickness and death have not had a negative effect on the LWML mission to show all women their value to Christ Jesus and to build relationships with Him and each other. Weekly and monthly gatherings centered in Bible study build new friendships. Semi-annual Circuit or Zone gatherings firm the foundation of worship and sacrament as well as fellowship and fun together. Dedication to connecting people to Jesus is visible with cases of personal care items, quilts and blankets, food, scholarships for Lutheran teachers and future pastors, medical equipment, and so much more. Always, the local recipients of the Gifts from the Heart donations tearfully realize the need for a bigger truck to transport these donations. Our women travel to Kenya each summer to relieve physical needs and share words of care and God's love through Jesus with children and families.. We have gathered in Milwaukee and this year in Omaha to recognize the power of God working in the whole nation through the LWML National. Florida-Georgia District women have bi-annual conventions and the newly elected one-half of our leadership guarantees a smooth flow of our purpose. We also gather together bi-annually to retreat from social and personal pressure for spiritual renewal. In our District, 60% of the churches support a LWML Group. In the next three years our goal is to increase this number by 10%. Praise be to God for sustaining His church through the dedication of women who see God's mission as a personal connection to Him and to each other.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deaconess Elizabeth Borth, President
FLGA - LWML

Operation Barnabas (OB)

Currently, the FLGA District has 10 active OB chapters meeting on a regular basis and 52 congregations in support of OB ministry that offer annual worship events in the recognition and honoring of our nation's veterans. (*Nationwide, OB supports 130 chapters and 506 Veteran service congregations through our Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces, St. Louis, Missouri. Director: Chaplain Craig Muehler.*)

Since its foundation in 2007 Operation Barnabas has supported the following three major goals:



1. Care for Reserve chaplains and their families and congregations.
2. Train and assist local congregations in the care, support and outreach to all military connected people in their congregations and their communities.
3. Serve as a resource to other organizations that provide care to military connected people.

Congregations willing to support veterans and their families in their midst are limited only by their imagination, energy and the grace of God in this outreach evangelistic effort. Recognition events for our veterans at Shepherd of the Coast, Palm Coast where we have established an OB chapter since 2015 include: Veteran of the month prayer cards, Adopt a chaplain, annual community outreach patriotic events, memorial brick paver walkway, and a special meeting room for veterans decorated with military memorabilia. Every year since the creation of our OB chapter, SOTC has held an annual community Memorial Day Service and a Veteran Day service. The Veteran Day service is held on the Sunday nearest to November 11th and includes the *Rite of Healing and Purification* for all veterans suffering issues of conscience after war. The service is supported by our local police/fire department with an Honor Guard and Service Flags. First Responders and EMTs are also invited. The community service concludes with a Memorial Brick dedication following the service and lunch for all.

The national suicide rate for veterans from all wars after combat continues to hover around 20 per day. Despite the best efforts of the VA and new counseling techniques developed over the past decade slight progress has been made in reducing the suicide rate. Moral injury is a definite factor. My book: *Nailed! Moral Injury: A Response from the Cross of Christ for the Combat Veteran* (available on Amazon.com) offers a detailed Christ-centered remedy defining the mission of God to the military. I am available for church and/or circuit wide presentations throughout the FLGA District any time of the year, (First presentation, Griffen, Georgia, 11/5/22). In support of establishing OB ministry, I have served as guest preacher: Trinity Lutheran Church Sommerfield, FL (11/11/22) and Woodlands Lutheran Church (5/28/23).

In addition, congregations can serve as a resource for veterans (#3 above) in many ways. Veterans Heritage Project is an excellent way for any congregation to honor their Vets. VHP trains members of the congregation to interview any veteran in the congregation to tell their story. The veteran's story is then transcribed and submitted to the Library of Congress for a permanent record.

For all retired pastors who have served as chaplains, your local chapter of DAV (Disabled American Veterans) along with the VFW and American Legion offers many exciting possibilities for ministry. I joined the local DAV as their chaplain, February 2024, which has now become a special venue for speaking engagements on moral injury, invocations for local events, funerals for veterans and visitation of local nursing homes where a group of our DAV Vets give special recognition to a veteran resident through the "Quilt of Honor" program.

These are just a few of the opportunities available for our congregations and pastors to support, honor and recognized our service men and women. If the church is willing to send off our sons and daughters to war, we should be more than willing to take care of them when they return. The love of Christ not only constrains us but inspires us to do so. God bless your efforts!

Respectfully Submitted by:
Rev. Dr. Mark J. Schreiber
CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.)



Rebecca's Garden of Hope

Rebecca's Garden of Hope is a faith-based organization that focuses on community outreach, support, and empowerment, for underserved youth, ages 4-18. These youth are included in God's command to, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Mathew 28:19-20). The mission of **Rebecca's Garden of Hope** is articulated through specific targets and goals that align with our overall purpose of connecting youth, to Jesus, promoting holistic well-being, and empowering individuals in their personal and spiritual growth. The (4) targets mentioned below help guide the ministry's efforts in creating positive change within the community and beyond. Each targeted effort includes a primary focus on spiritual growth and discipleship where youth from all walks of life can find spiritual nourishment, healing, and belonging, and where they can grow in their faith and have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Rebecca's Garden of Hope's outreach focus includes the following (4) ministry targets:

- 1-Afterschool Tutoring and Mentoring
- 2-Next Level You College Prep Program
- 3-Healthy Lifestyles Summer Program
- 4-Plumbing Trade Internship Program

The **vision of Rebecca's Garden of Hope** focuses on creating a vibrant, Christ-centered community that serves as a beacon of hope, healing, and empowerment for youth of all ages. We accomplish that goal with the support of others from the community by offering practical solutions, meeting specific needs with Christ- like compassion, and sharing the gospel and bringing the love of Christ to those who are often most vulnerable. We also empower youth through discipleship and mentorship by supporting and equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to become faithful disciples and leaders who live out their faith and impact their communities for Christ. Included are more details about our (4) core targets:

The **Rebecca's Garden of Hope Tutoring and Mentoring Program** focuses on providing academic support and life guidance to youth, ages 4-18 in communities around the country. Academic Tutoring includes mostly one-on-one tutoring sessions to help students struggling with specific subjects, such

as math, reading, science, language arts and spelling. The goal of each session is to also help youth understand course materials, complete homework, and improve their overall grades. Mentors also guide students in exploring career paths, introduce them to various professions, and help them establish realistic goals for their future. Additionally, life skills such as time management, conflict resolution, and communication are also emphasized in a variety of different ways.

Rebecca's Garden of Hope's Next Level You College Prep Program is designed to help high school students prepare for success in college and beyond. The program's goals focus on academic readiness, personal growth, and providing the necessary tools and resources for students to navigate the college application process and succeed in higher education. The program seeks to develop well-rounded individuals who are academically prepared, emotionally resilient, and spiritually equipped with the skills to succeed in their journey beyond high school.

The **Rebecca's Garden of Hope Plumbing Internship Program** is designed to offer young adults, ages 17-24, valuable hands-on experience, mentorship, and industry insights. The program aims to equip participants with essential plumbing and life skills, as well as certifications, setting the foundation for future employment or career growth in the plumbing field. By blending practical experience with mentorship, certification opportunities, and professional development, the program prepares participants for successful careers in the trades, and beyond.

The **Healthy Lifestyles Summer Program** at **Rebecca's Garden of Hope** is designed to promote physical health, spiritual, emotional well-being, and overall wellness for youth in the community. The 4-6-week summer program offers a mix of educational workshops, physical activities, and nutrition guidance to help participants build habits for a daily healthier lifestyle. The program culminates with an in-person **cooking demonstration** that teaches participants how to prepare healthy, easy, affordable meals.

The vision for the future of **Rebecca's Garden of Hope**, as it connects people to Jesus, is focused on creating a transformative, Christ-centered community that offers spiritual, emotional, and desperately needed practical support to individuals and families in settings with specific challenges. Rebecca's Garden of Hope embodies the love, grace, and teachings of Jesus Christ while empowering people to live out their faith in meaningful ways. As we continue to move into the future **Rebecca's Garden of Hope** will be known as a vibrant, Christ-centered, Holy Spirit led ministry that serves as a beacon of hope, love, and healing for individuals and families. By connecting people to Jesus, the ministry will continue to empower youth to live transformed lives, grounded in faith, and equipped to serve others in Jesus' name. Through outreach, discipleship, education, and service, **Rebecca's Garden of Hope** will continue to grow as a place of spiritual renewal, community connection, and ultimately have an impact, reaching people wherever they are with the message of Christ's love and grace.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sanya Parsons, Executive Director





Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries

Dear Friends in Christ,

We are profoundly grateful for your steadfast support of Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries, a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Your partnership has been a lifeline, empowering us to expand our Gospel-driven mission to serve single pregnant and postpartum women in crisis. As we reflect on God’s faithfulness, we are humbled by the growth and impact of this ministry.

Ministry Updates and Impact

Redeeming Life continues to raise awareness of our services across FLGA congregations, whose support is vital to sustaining our programs. Since our founding, we have welcomed over 100 new residents into our residential programs in Sanford, Florida while serving hundreds more through referral services. Our residents receive comprehensive support, including GED preparation, life skills training (budgeting, homemaking, time management), and spiritual nurturing through weekly Bible studies, worship, and case management. We are blessed to share the love of Christ through instruction in the Christian faith, baptizing mothers and babies, and demonstrating His grace in action and truth.

Key Milestones and Expansion

In late spring 2024, Redeeming Life celebrated a historic milestone with the opening of our first maternity home expansion in East Dundee, Illinois, in partnership with Immanuel Lutheran Church and the Northern Illinois District. This new home, made possible through the dedication of many supporters and the leadership of NID District President Allan Buss, extends our mission to the Chicagoland area, providing a safe, faith-based haven for women in crisis pregnancies. The Northern Illinois District’s congregations have contributed financial support, volunteer hours, and furnishings, enabling this home to begin transforming lives. We praise God for His provision as this home serves its first residents.

Our Transitional Home in Sanford, launched in 2018, continues to thrive, offering graduates increased independence while maintaining critical support. We are prayerfully exploring the expansion of a similar transitional home ministry in Illinois, with encouragement from President Buss and Northern Illinois District congregations, to further empower women for long-term success.

Events and Community Engagement

Redeeming Life remains committed to proclaiming the sanctity of life. In 2023 and 2024, we participated in the National Walk for Life in Washington, D.C., joined by Northern Illinois District representatives, joyfully declaring Jesus as the Lord and giver of LIFE. We continue to engage with the Seminole County Sheriff Faith Community meetings in Florida, fostering local connections. In Illinois, we are forging exciting new relationships with TLC Pregnancy Network, local hospitals, and other life-affirming agencies.

In 2024, we joined Heartbeat International, a national association for pregnancy centers and maternity homes, enhancing our resources and network to better serve women in both Florida and Illinois. Our ministry maintains a strong presence at events, including Veterans of the Cross, LWML conventions (district and national), FLGA and Northern Illinois District pastors’ conferences, and their respective district conventions, sharing our mission and building partnerships. The Northern Illinois District invited us to present at their 2025 convention, where President Buss and congregational leaders expressed enthusiastic support for the East Dundee home.

In October 2024, we hosted our 7th Annual Hearts in Mission Gala in Sanford, our largest to date with 150 guests, including Northern Illinois District representatives. The event featured tours of The

Southward House, a silent auction, and inspiring resident testimonies. We are planning a similar fundraising event in Illinois for 2025, with Northern Illinois District congregations eager to participate.

Digital Outreach

Our website, relaunched in 2019, continues to serve as an accessible resource for prospective residents and supporters. Designed for ease of navigation, it allows women to learn about our programs and apply online. Visit us at rlom.org to explore our mission and impact.

Gratitude and Vision

Through recent challenges, God has faithfully provided for Redeeming Life's every need. The unwavering support of FLGA district churches, under the leadership of President James Rockey, has been instrumental in keeping our doors open and expanding our reach. We are deeply grateful for President Rockey's bold advocacy for the sanctity of all human life and for the FLGA congregations that stand with us. Similarly, President Buss's leadership and the Northern Illinois District's generous contributions of time, resources, and prayers have made the East Dundee expansion a reality. As we look ahead, we are prayerfully pursuing new opportunities to serve more women and babies in Florida, Illinois, and beyond, guided by our love for Jesus and His call to offer hope and practical support. Thank you for your prayers, generosity, and partnership in this life-affirming work. Together, with the FLGA and Northern Illinois Districts, we continue to transform lives through the Gospel.

In Christ's Service,
Sheryl W. DeWitt, Executive Director

Stepping Stone Mission, Inc.

The Stepping Stone Mission, Inc. started in July of 2009 in response to God's call to serve the homeless. We are servants of our Lord Jesus Christ operating through a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Stepping Stone is a Recognized Service Organization of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Our mission is to share the good news of Jesus Christ's mercy and grace for us sinners with our brothers and sisters experiencing homelessness. We provide our brothers and sisters with food and life necessities, and help along the way toward rehabilitation, the healing of one's life, and stability. Praise God! The Lord has been using the Stepping Stone Mission to help brothers receive a new life in Christ Jesus since He began His work through this ministry over 15 years ago.



Our regular study of God's Word, discipleship training, one-on-one mentoring, and other ministerial support serve as 'stepping stones' toward rehabilitation for our brothers as they receive reconciliation with God and mend broken relationships with loved ones. With God-healed hearts, they can live out their faith in Christ and become the Lord's servants for blessing others.

As our vision is to be a caring, loving, growing community of Christians who preach the Gospel, teach God's Word and extend the compassion of Christ to our homeless brothers and sisters in Atlanta so that they can be identified, built up and unified in the Body of Christ - we felt led to launch our New Life Gardens Project in 2020 to provide our brothers with stronger support toward rehabilitation while providing them meaningful part-time work opportunities. Through the New Life Gardens



Project, our goal is to create a village for our brothers experiencing homelessness where they can worship, live, learn, recreate, and serve together as a Christian, no longer homeless, community.

In the past three years, our ministry team has experienced some key challenges associated with a severe freezing weather event in December 2022 that rendered our New Life Gardens House unusable just a couple months after our first open house. Thankfully, through support from the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, the LCMS Florida-Georgia District Office, the Florida-Georgia Lutheran Early Response Team, and the LCMS National Office, the house was rebuilt and restored and became available once again for mission use in November 2024. Located in rural Rockdale County, the New Life Gardens House is an ideal setting for achieving our project goals and for helping our brothers realize the work of faith, labor of love, and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Project plans include (1) developing a working farm, (2) creating housing opportunities for our brothers, and (3) building beautiful community gardens which can be maintained by our brothers.

Beyond New Life Gardens, our ministry has continued to focus on serving our brothers and sisters experiencing homelessness in the Atlanta area through our sharing and caring ministries, leadership training and education, and Saturday worship services. Here are some ministry highlights:

- Stepping Stone Mission partnered with the Atlanta Mission to host in-person Bible studies every week. These Bible studies are led by pastors and other ministers entrusted to deliver God's Word and facilitate a heart-to-heart conversation with God through a time of prayer. The Bible studies always begin with an opening message from Rev. Joseph Song and a time of praise worship led by Sharon Song. Many of the brothers joining our weekly Bible studies have been recruited to join our Stepping Stone Choir Team.
- Stepping Stone Choir Team shared the Gospel through their gift of voice visiting with several churches including All Saints Lutheran Church (Blairsville, GA), Ascension Lutheran Church (Atlanta, GA), Christ the Shepherd Lutheran Church (Alpharetta, GA), Grace Lutheran Church (Atlanta, GA), New Church of Atlanta (Atlanta, GA), and Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (Johns Creek, GA).
- Stepping Stone Mission hosted a few youth mission groups at our New Life Gardens property who contributed their talents to make the property ready for missional use. Rehabilitation and Spiritual Leadership Retreats were held with brothers experiencing homelessness in November 2022 (prior to the disaster event damaging our house) and November 2024 (after our house was restored).
- Stepping Stone Mission hosted annual Sharing & Caring Festivals in partnership with area churches at Eastertime, during the Fall season with the Lutheran Outreach Partnership, at Thanksgiving, and at Christmastime. Our Lord's disciples met with an estimated 300 to 500 brothers and sisters experiencing homelessness during each of these events, sharing the love of God, the good news of Jesus Christ, and His gifts of grace, mercy, and peace.
- Our Saturday Worship Service graciously held at one of our partner church sites, Ponce Church, grew back to pre-pandemic attendance levels. A faithful group of 20-30 brothers gather each week, reminding us of Jesus' promises of when two or more of us are gathered. Several brothers consider this time of worship and fellowship to be their most important time of the week. To God be the Glory!



Exhibitors

Please take some time to visit the Exhibit Hall and explore the various ministry Partners of the Florida-Georgia District and the Synod, and a special thank you to our Premiere Sponsors listed below.



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