

2017



**Report of the
100th Annual Convention
of the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod**

Mankato, Minnesota
June 18–21, 2017



**REPORT OF THE
100TH REGULAR CONVENTION
OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**

and the

**61ST ANNUAL MEETING
OF
BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE, INC.**

and the

**2ND ANNUAL MEETING
OF
LUTHERAN SCHOOLS OF AMERICA, INC.**

Convention Theme:

**Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done:
Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide**

Essayists:

Timothy Schmeling, Tony Pittenger, Jerome Gernander

Compiled by

Rev. Craig A. Ferkenstad, Secretary

Held at

BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE

Mankato, Minnesota

June 18–21, 2017

Artwork by Paul Fries

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Convention Day by Day	
Day by Day	6
Roll Call of Permanent Members	11
2017 Representatives Eligible to Vote.	13
Convention Committees	17
President's Message and Report	
President's Message.	22
President's Report.	26
Convention Essays	
Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: Sola Scriptura	38
Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: Sola Gratia	52
Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: Sola Fide	67
Reports and Action	
Doctrine Committee	83
Bethany Lutheran College	87
Board of Regents	92
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary	94
Board for Home Outreach	101
Board for World Outreach	107
Board for Education	118
Board for Youth Outreach	123
Board for Christian Service.	124
Committee on Worship	128
Equalization Committee	132
Anniversary Offering Committee	133
Planning and Coordinating Committee	135
Board of Trustees	138
Centennial Committee.	145
Synod Review Committee	147
Financial Statements	
Consolidated Financial Statements and Supplementary Information	171
Treasurer's Financial Statements & Supplemental Information	201
Statistics	
Statistical Report for the Year 2016	226
Directories	
Church Bodies in Fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod	234
Evangelical Lutheran Synod	236
Addresses of Board and Committee Members	241
World Outreach	245
Other Addresses	248
Area High Schools	248

Bethany Lutheran College 249

Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary 254

Lutheran Elementary Schools, Preschools & Early Childhood Centers. 255

Directory of Lutheran Elementary School and Preschool Teachers 258

Congregations 266

Clergy Roster 278

Periodicals 290

Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation 290



THE CONVENTION DAY BY DAY

THE CONVENTION DAY BY DAY

SYNOD SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 2017

The 100th Regular Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the 61st Annual Meeting of the Bethany Lutheran College Corporation, and the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Lutheran Schools of America began with a festival Synod Sunday Service in Trinity Chapel beginning at 3:00 p.m. ELS President John Moldstad preached the sermon based on Galatians 1:1–10, using as his theme “Believing and Proclaiming the Gospel of Christ.” Martin Luther highly esteemed this epistle from the Apostle Paul and wrote extensively on Law and Gospel as set forth in the book of Galatians. Noting blessings as heirs of the Lutheran Reformation, we can do no better than have our focus on believing clearly that we are saved by grace alone through faith in Christ. But we also know this exclusive message of grace alone through Christ alone is also inclusive: we want to share this wonderful truth so that all who hear it will personally believe it and be rescued from eternal condemnation. The very Gospel that Paul presents and defends, and Luther championed, is therefore to be preached and proclaimed. May God help us to do so for the glory of his holy name and for the salvation of many souls! Pastor



Samuel Gullixson (Tacoma, Washington) served as the liturgist. The Service also included the Installation of the Rev. Timothy Schmeling as a professor for Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. The Rite of Installation was performed by the Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch (Kissimmee, Florida), chairman of the Board of Regents.



MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2017

The first working day of the 100th Regular Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the 61st Annual Meeting of the Bethany Lutheran College Corporation, and the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Lutheran Schools of America was opened with a devotion conducted at 9:00 a.m. in Trinity Chapel. The chaplain, the Rev. Daniel Hartwig (Okauchee, Wisconsin) preached the opening sermon based on Ephesians 1:13 under with theme “Proclaim Your Ignorance.” Tying in with the day’s theme of *Sola Scriptura*, he emphasized how Luther’s brilliance was not in his own intelligence, but in his acknowledgment of his own spiritual ignorance because of his sinful flesh. This drove him to God’s Word alone where he received the true knowledge of Christ as the sole Savior from sin. In order to “Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done” today, we must also start by “Proclaiming Our Ignorance” in ourselves, and instead rely completely on God’s Word as the power source of our salvation. The service followed the Order of Matins, including Psalms 14 and 119 and the hymn, “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word.”

After those in attendance assembled in the convention auditorium, Secretary Ferkenstad announced that the roll had been gathered at the credentials desk. Eighty-nine permanent voting members and thirty permanent advisory members responded to the initial gathering of the roll; ninety-one voting members and thirty-four permanent advisory members were present by the end of the first working day. By the conclusion of the convention, 131 permanent members and 117 delegates registered their attendance.

At 10:03 a.m. President Moldstad declared the 100th Regular Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the 61st Annual Meeting of the Bethany Lutheran College Corporation and the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Lutheran Schools of America to be in session “In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.” He also led the assembly in prayer.



President Moldstad then read the President’s Message asking “How can we do justice in celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation?” He answered by saying “Our convention theme and the three essays this year are meant to assist us in responding to what it really means to be a Lutheran. For our three days here together, we will observe the benefits of the Reformation by focusing on what is known as the ‘three great *solas*.’” We carry on the legacy of Luther and the reformers as we continue in the clear teachings of God’s Word as it is set forth in Luther’s small and large catechisms and by bringing the greatest Good News ever recorded to all people. He concluded by saying, “Let us also trust God to give us the necessary conviction to ‘contend for the faith once delivered to the saints’ (Jude 3).”

During this 500th anniversary year of the Lutheran Reformation, three special essays were presented. The first essayist was the Rev. Timothy Schmeling (Mankato, Minnesota) who read the essay, *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: Sola Scriptura*.

The afternoon session began with a devotion in remembrance of the faithful departed during this past year. Obituaries were summarized by the president after which the chaplain read Luke 8:4–15 and the led the assembly in prayer. Selected verses of Luther’s hymn, “Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice” were sung. This is the hymn from which the convention and anniversary theme was selected.

Committee assignments were then made and committee meetings took place during the afternoon and evening.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2017

The Tuesday morning devotion was conducted by Rev. Matthew Moldstad (North Mankato, Minnesota). The sermon was based upon Ephesians 2:4–5 with the theme “Proclaim Your Punishment.” We often are not desiring to tell others of the punishments we deserve. However, in the case of what we deserve for our sin, how important it is to do so, to reveal our depravity as well as to emphasize the works of Christ in paying our punishment. Our punishment of even hell itself has been paid in full by Christ’s perfect life and innocent death on the cross, therefore the divine judge must declare of us, “You are free to go.” We have been rescued from the fires of hell by God’s grace alone in Christ! Proclaim your punishment, which has been



paid in Christ. The service followed the Order of Matins including Psalm 119, and the hymns, “May God Bestow on Us His Grace” and “Salvation Unto Us Is Come.”

Following the normal preliminaries, the Synodical Membership Committee reported. Two congregations, nine pastors, and one teacher were received into membership. Fellowship also was acknowledge with an additional congregation. The new members were invited to the stage and welcomed by the president. Comments spoke of the “unity of the spirit in the bond of peace” and included a “thank you for the loving spirit with which you have received us back.”

The convention continued with a presentation by the Centennial Committee. The Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, Centennial Committee chairman, spoke about the synod’s dual anniversary observances of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the 100th anniversary of the reorganization of the synod. He also introduced the Rev. John Braun, chairman of the WELS Reformation Anniversary Committee who showed a clip from the movie, “A Return to Grace: Luther’s Life and Legacy.”

The remainder of the morning was devoted to the essay. The second Reformation essayist was the Rev. Tony Pittenger (Port Orchard, Washington) who read the essay, *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: Sola Gratia*.

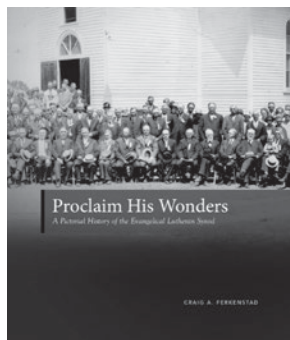
The afternoon session began at 1:00 pm with a devotion led by the chaplain. The devotion included the reading of Luke 15:11–24, prayer and the singing of selected verses of Luther’s hymn, “Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice.”

President Moldstad then briefly spoke about the synod’s centennial anniversary after which the printed centennial history, *Proclaim His Wonders*, was distributed. The author, the Rev. Craig A. Ferkenstad, also addressed the convention saying that it is the goal that we may proclaim the wonders God has done among us in the past and also proclaim the wonders God has done to a generation yet to come.

Greetings were brought by the Rev. Steven Lange on behalf of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The Rev. Tor Jakob Wilde also brought greetings from the brothers “in the old country” on behalf of the Lutheran Confessional Church of Norway (LBK).

The remainder of the afternoon session was filled with the reports from the committees on Doctrine, Presidents Message & Report, Higher Education, and World Outreach. Presentations also were made by President Gaylin Schmeling on behalf of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary and President Gene Pfeifer on behalf of Bethany Lutheran College.

Speaking during the World Outreach presentation were the Rev. Steve Petersen, Missionary Tim Erickson, and the Rev. Thomas Heyn. A video of the May 28, 2017 ordination of the Rev. Mario Galvez was shown to the assembly. At the conclusion of the presentation, President Moldstad asked Steve & Kathy Petersen to come forward as they were presented with a print of the William Bukowski painting of the “Oaks” at Koshkonong in thanksgiving for his





years of service as World Outreach Administrator. S.Petersen then addressed the convention with thanks as he urged the continued support of the work of world outreach.

A special Reformation Hymn Festival was conducted for a capacity crowd in Trinity Chapel at 7:30 p.m. This ninety-minute program was sponsored by the Centennial Committee and included works for organ, brass, percussion, choir and congregation. Jacob B. Weber was the organist and featured composer. The settings for the hymns

“Lord Jesus Christ, My Savior Blest,” “God’s Own Child I Gladly Say It,” and “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” were composed for the hymn festival and dedicated to the 2017 ELS Convention in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2017

The Wednesday morning devotion was conducted by the Rev. P.Heyn (Deshler, Ohio). The sermon was based on Ephesians 2:8–9 with the theme “Proclaim Your Laziness.” Instinctively we want to put our own efforts into anything we do.



But in our sin, we can produce “works” about which we could “boast” in God’s sight. Our salvation can’t come from “works,” but through “faith” which is a “gift of God.” Therefore, as we go out into all the world we “Proclaim our Laziness” because we know none of our works can ever be enough. We’ll let God give us the gift of faith instead. The service followed the Order of Matins including Psalm 119, and the hymns, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” and “Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart.”

After the normal preliminaries, the convention turned its attention to the report of the Parish Services committee which included a resolution to seek non-budget funding for a military monument to be erected in a yet-to-be-determined location on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College.

Before the noon recess, the third Reformation essayist was introduced and the Rev. Jerome Gernander (Princeton, Minnesota) read the essay, *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: Sola Fide*.

The afternoon session began with a reading from scripture, prayer, and a selection by the Bethany Lutheran College Honor Choir.

A *Picture Directory of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod* was then distributed and thanks was expressed to Daniel Hartwig and Elsa Ferkenstad.

A presentation was made on behalf of the Anniversary Offering which has current receipts of \$564,000. A presentation also was made on behalf of the Board for Home Outreach after which the convention considered the reports of the committees on Home Outreach and Finances. The convention adopted a unified 2018 budget of \$3,186,095 which includes expenses and

receipts that previously had been covered by various sources. The need of \$770,000 from congregations remains the largest source of income.

The synod's Giving Counselor, the Rev. D. Basel, then addressed the convention after which a promotional video was shown about the 2017 LYA convention.

Following the afternoon recess, anniversaries of ordination were acknowledge and the honorees were asked to rise. The chaplain also led the assembly in prayer.

The final committee reports were then considered which consisted of Pastoral Conference Records & Resolutions, Miscellaneous, Elementary Education, and Credentials. In Miscellaneous convention action, the synod's bylaws were amended stating that congregations may not elect pastors emeriti as convention delegates; new guidelines were adopted for the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. Congregations also were urged to note the special observances being planned for June 16, 2018, to celebrate the re-organization of the synod, and October 14, 2018, the date observed as "Founders Day" by the old Norwegian Synod.

In closing remarks, President Moldstad reminded the assembly that as we recall the Lutheran Reformation we also remember that June 25 will mark the 487th anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession. At that time, it was a laymen who said that this confession shall prevail against the gates of hell. May God keep us true to this confession because we know that it expresses God's holy word. This week's emphasis has been on justification as we have considered the three solas. The assembly rose and confessed Article IV of the Augsburg Confession:

It is also taught among us that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us. For God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness, as Paul says in Romans 3:21–26 and 4:5.

At 5:02 p.m. the president declared the 100th Regular Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the 61st Annual Meeting of the Bethany Lutheran College Corporation, and the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Lutheran Schools of America of to be closed "In the Name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The convention was closed, by the chaplain, with prayer after which the assembly sang selected verses from the hymn, "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice."

Following the adjournment of the convention, the Communion Service was conducted in Trinity Chapel beginning at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. Mark Bartels (Madison, Wisconsin) preached the sermon based upon 1 Corinthians 11:23–29 with the theme "This is My Body." The Rev. Ben Wiechmann (Golden Valley, Minnesota) served as the liturgist for the service.

Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done
Soli Deo Gloria

ROLL CALL OF PERMANENT MEMBERS

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

1. Pastors serving member congregations:

Members having the right to vote

Present: H.Abrahamson, J.Abrahamson, N.Abrahamson, K.Anderson, M.Bartels, T.Bartels, M.Behmer, J.Braun, M.Brooks, S.Brockdorf, E.Bryant, T.Buelow, J.Burkhardt, A.Burmeister, M.Crick, C.Dale, M.Dale, J.Dalke, J.DeDeyne, C.Eisenbeis, E.Ekhoff, D.Emmons, M.Ernst, M.Faugstad, P.Faugstad, R.Flohr, R.Fyffe, J.Gernander, W.Grimm, S.Gullixson, C.Hahnke, W.Halvorson, A.Hamilton, R.Harting, D.Hartwig, T.Hartwig, G.Haugen, J.Hendrix, P.Heyn, T.Heyn, E.Hoeft, M.Hoesch, J.Jacobsen, D.Jaech, J.Kassera, S.Kauffeld, C.Keeler, B.Kerkow, K.Kluge, F.Lams, P.Lange, R.Lawson, P.Lepak, M.Lilienthal, D.Locklair, J.Luplow, M.Luttman, J.Madson, K.Madson, J.Mayer, D.McQuality, K.Mellon, J.Merseth, J.Merseth, M.Moldstad, M.Muehlenhardt, G.Obenberger, D.Oberer, R.Otto, A.Palmquist, R.Pederson, J.Petersen, A.Pittenger, T.Rank, D.Ruiz, S.Schmeling, G.Schmidt, P.Schneider, J.Skogen, G.Smith, T.Smuda, A.Soule, S.Sparley, S.Stafford, P.Sullivan, D.Thompson, B.Tweit, L.Ulrich, S.P.VanKampen, D.J.Webber, P.Webber, B.Wiechmann, L.Willitz, P.Zager, T.Zenda

Excused: T.Fox, H.Mosley, A.Ring, M.Rogers, T.Saari, J.Wilson

Absent: F.Fiedler, N.Krause, B.Leonatti, G.Lilienthal, W.Stehr, R.Tragasz, R.VanMehren

2. Pastors serving non-member Lutheran congregations which are, nevertheless, in fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote

Absent: D.Finn, D.Larson

3. Pastors serving independent congregations whose confessions and teachings are in agreement with those of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote

Present: R.Lawson

4. Ordained clergymen serving as professors in educational institutions of the synod or a sister synod or as teachers in schools of member congregations:

Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote

Present: D.Holbird, D.Moldstad, N.Proksch, G.Schmeling, T.Schmeling, A.Schmidt, M.Smith

Excused: S.Reagles

Absent: M.DeGarmeaux, B.Klebig, D.Marzolf

5. Ordained clergymen serving in administrative offices of the synod:

Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote

Present: D.Basel, P.Fries, J.Moldstad, S.Petersen, L.Wentzlaff

6. Ordained clergymen serving in home and foreign mission fields or in church-related organizations:

Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote

Present: T.Erickson

Absent: D.Haeuser, Y.Kim, T.Schultz

7. Pastors emeriti:

Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote

Present: D.Faugstad, C.Ferkenstad, E.Geistfeld, T.Gullixson, R.Holtz, H.Huhnerkoch, T.Kuster, N.Madson, P.Madson, N.Merseth, J.Olsen, T.Skaaland, J.Smith, J.K.Smith, E.Teigen, R.Wiechmann, C.Wosje

Excused: H.Bartels, M.Doepel

Absent: P.Anderson, D.Bakke, K.Brumble, R.Carter, A.Harstad, D.Lillegard, H.B.Longshore, M.Marozick, J.Moldstad, G.Orvick, W.Petersen, K.Schmidt, F.Schmugge, E.Stubenvoll, F.Theiste, L.Vinton, R.Waters, T.Zeller

8. Teachers serving in schools of member congregations:

Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote

Present: K.Klug, S.Lai, L.Rude

Excused: A.Labitzky, J.Young

Absent: S.Beilke, J.Gregovich, A.Pavelchik, T.Schubkegel, C.Zibrowski

Inactive Membership

Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote

Present: G.Sahlstrom

Absent: A.Dethlefsen, E.Gernander, B.Homan, D.Meyer

Individuals

Present: M.Meyer, G.Pfeifer

Absent: S.Born, D.Bruss

2017 REPRESENTATIVES ELIGIBLE TO VOTE

Congregation	Address	Delegate
Abiding Shepherd	Cottage Grove, WI	
Abiding Word	Bowling Green, OH	Daniel English Graham Parsons
Ascension	St. Helens, OR	
Ascension	Eau Claire, WI	
Bethany	Ames, IA	Jode Edwards Joel Franzen David Arends Roger Erickson Glen Hansen Herbert Klaviter Chris Denney Henry Shadbolt
Bethany	Luverne, MN	
Bethany	Princeton, MN	
Bethany	The Dalles, OR	
Bethany	Port Orchard, WA	
Calvary	Ulen, MN	
Center	Scarville, IA	
Christ	Windsor, CA	
Christ	Port St. Lucie, FL	David Clark Keith Duin Nick Tousey
Christ	Klamath Falls, OR	
Christ	Sutherlin, OR	
Christ the King	Bell Gardens, CA	Philip Remelle David Diestler Paul Koch Victor Settje Gary Peterson Duane Steinhauer Lewis Sulzle John Schreiber Shawn Boyum Robert Fenger
Christ the King	Green Bay, WI	
Concordia	Hood River, OR	
Concordia	Eau Claire, WI	
Divine Mercy	Hudson Oaks, TX	
English	Cottonwood, MN	
Faith	Irvine, CA	
Faith	Parkersburg, IA	Steve Pavelec Marlin Goebel Wayne Spieker Carl Wosje Charles Krummel Fred Waldbuesser
Faith	Hillman, MI	
Faith	Clara City, MN	
Faith	Carthage, MO	
Faith	Medford, OR	
Faith	San Antonio, TX	Curtis Bull Jody Welchans Jeff John Steven Rehborg
Faith	Oregon, WI	
Family of God	Fort Mohave, AZ	
First	Suttons Bay, MI	
First Shell Rock	Northwood, IA	Dale Songstad Chase Brumm Gary Johnston
First Trinity	Marinette, WI	

Forest	Forest City, IA	
Gloria Dei	Saginaw, MI	
Gloria Dei	Cold Spring, MN	Roger Dohrmann
		Arnie Hamann
Good Shepherd	Indianola, IA	Robert Goodrich
		Loren Meyer
Good Shepherd	Bloomer, WI	William Anderson
Grace	Vero Beach, FL	
Grace	Lincoln, IL	
Grace	Hobart, IN	
Grace	Piedmont, MO	
Grace	Weston, OH	Daniel Weaver
Grace	Redmond, OR	
Grace	Madison, WI	Rodney Arneson
		Steven Kamp
Hartland	Hartland, MN	William Robran
		Raymond Toot
Heritage	Apple Valley, MN	Steve Cook
		Lyle Fahning
		Robert Smith (alt.)
Holton	Holton, MI	Jeff Tillman
Holy Cross	Madison, WI	Matt Banbury
		Chris Poetter
Holy Scripture	Midland, MI	
Holy Trinity	Okauchee, WI	Patrick Beaver
		Daniel Neumann
Hope	Portage, IN	
Hope	Farmington, MN	
Hope	Leander, TX	Jeffrey Smith
		Benjamin Wolff
Hope	West Jordan, UT	
Immanuel	Riceville, IA	
Immanuel	Audubon, MN	Marty Wolbaum
Jerico	New Hampton, IA	Jim Costello
King of Grace	Waukon, IA	Dennis Benzing
		Greg Gilbertson
King of Grace	Golden Valley, MN	Jim Minor
		Norman Werner
Lake Mills	Lake Mills, IA	William Humphrey
		Harlan Levorson
Lakewood	Lakewood, WA	
Lime Creek	Lake Mills, IA	Gary Honsey
Lord of Life	Holland, MI	
Manchester	Manchester, MN	
Messiah	Omro, WI	Michael Buchanan
Mt. Olive	Mankato, MN	Gerald Hansen
		Paul Tweit
Mt. Olive	Trail, MN	
Nazareth	Trail, MN	
New Life	Sebring, FL	

Newport Norseland	Wisconsin Dells, WI St. Peter, MN	Shawn Anderson Allen Quist Howard Swenson
Norwegian Grove	Gaylord, MN	James Flantz Bob Reid
Oak Park	Oklee, MN	
Our Redeemer	Yelm, WA	
Our Savior	Bishop, CA	
Our Savior	Lakeland, FL	
Our Savior	Naples, FL	
Our Savior	Grants Pass, OR	
Our Savior's	Albert Lea, MN	Lonny Hagen James Schnieder
Our Savior's	Bagley, MN	
Our Savior's	Belview, MN	
Our Savior's	Princeton, MN	Randall Wise Robert Soule
Our Savior's	Amherst Jct., WI	
Our Savior's	Elderon, WI	
Our Saviour	Lake Havasu City, AZ	Roger Duberowski James Gregory Peter Reinhold Todd Knutson Michael O'Neill Adam Pavelchik Kenneth Meyer William Dumke Robert Paulsen Kincaid Smith Todd Linhardt Tim Avery James Beach, Sr. Mark Perlwitz Tim Strauss
Our Saviour's Parkland	Madison, WI Tacoma, WA	
Peace	Kissimmee, FL	
Peace	Lakeland, FL	
Peace	North Mankato, MN	
Peace	Jefferson City, MO	
Peace	Deshler, OH	
Pilgrim	Waterloo, IA	
Pinehurst	Eau Claire, WI	
Pinewood	Burlington, MA	
Redeemer	Scottsdale, AZ	Norman Hartigan Wallace Knutson Derwin Robinson
Redeemer	New Hampton, IA	
Redeemer	Iola, WI	
Redeeming Grace	Rogers, MN	Ronald Menough Alan Whitford Richard Maginnis
Reformation	Hillsboro, OR	
Resurrection	Winter Haven, FL	
Resurrection	North Bend, OR	
Richland	Thornton, IA	Glenn Frederick
River Heights	East Grand Forks, MN	
Rock Dell	Belview, MN	Milo Knutson
Saude	Lawler, IA	Randy Anderson
Saved by Grace	Gresham, OR	Kirk Campbell

Scarville	Scarville, IA	Karl Bloedel Benjamin Faugstad
Scriptural Somber	Cape Girardeau, MO Northwood, IA	Matthew Levorson Joseph Holt Thomas Conzelmann Rodger Grulke
St. John's	Frankenmuth, MI	
St. Katherine's	Menomonie, WI	
St. Luke	Mt. Vernon, WA	
St. Martin	Shawano, WI	Glenn Van der Linden Howard Waldschmidt
St. Matthew	Myrtle Creek, OR	
St. Paul	Escondido, CA	Scott Markel
St. Paul	Lengby, MN	Luverne Lomen
St. Paul's	Portage, WI	
St. Timothy	Lombard, IL	Gary Weimer Robert Wentzlaff
Trinity	Calmar, IA	
Trinity	Brewster, MA	Paul T Chamberlin
Trinity	Rogers City, MI	
Trinity	West Bend, WI	Dennis Leckwee Ralph Seidensticker Alfred Kroll
Western Koshkonong	Cottage Grove, WI	
Zion	Thompson, IA	
Zion	Tracy, MN	Dennis Hayes
Zion	Irwin, PA	

CONVENTION COMMITTEES

1. President's Message and Report

Mr. Matt Banbury
Rev. Mark F. Bartels
Rev. James Braun
Mr. Jim Flantz
Mr. Marlin Goebel
Rev. Aaron Hamilton
Mr. Gary Honsey
Rev. Charles J. Keeler

2. Committee on Nominations

Dr. Joshua Mears
Rev. Alex Ring
Rev. Paul Schneider
Mr. LeRoy Sundbom
Mr. Paul Tweit
Rev. Luke Ulrich
Rev. David J. Webber
Mr. Paul Wold

3. Credentials

Rev. Andrew Palmquist
Rev. Samuel Schmeling

4. Program

Rev. Paul Lange
Rev. Jonathan Madson

5. Minutes

Rev. Joseph Burkhardt
Rev. David Emmons
Mr. Mark Perlwitz

6. Doctrine

Mr. Silas Born
Rev. Matthew Brooks
Mr. Paul Chamberlin
Mr. David Clark
Rev. Wayne L.M. Halvorson
Mr. Norman Hartigan
Rev. Peter Heyn
Rev. Erich J. Hoeft
Mr. Steven Kamp
Mr. Todd Knutson
Mr. Wallace Knutson
Mr. Luverne Lomen
Rev. Kyle Madson
Rev. Paul Madson
Rev. Kenneth Mellon
Rev. John E. Merseth Sr.

Rev. Donald Moldstad
Mr. Steve Pavelec
Mr. Peter Reinhold
Rev. J. Kincaid Smith
Rev. Andrew Soule
Mr. Robert Soule
Rev. Shawn Stafford
Mr. Glenn Van der Linden
Mr. Robert Wentzlaff
Mr. Norman Werner

7. Finances

Mr. Randy Anderson
Rev. Matthew Behmer
Mr. Dennis Benzing
Rev. Joseph Burkhardt
Mr. Roger Dohrmann
Mr. Robert Fenger
Mr. Rodger Grulke
Mr. Glen Hansen
Rev. Gregory J. Haugen
Rev. Jesse Jacobsen
Mr. Gary Johnston
Rev. James Kassera
Rev. Matthew Moldstad
Rev. John Petersen
Mr. Ralph Seidensticker
Rev. Tosten Skaaland
Mr. Dale Songstad
Mr. Tim Strauss
Rev. Paul Sullivan
Mr. Howard Swenson
Rev. Luke Ulrich
Mr. Jody Welchans
Rev. Luke Willitz

8. Higher Education

Rev. Joseph Abrahamson
Mr. Tim Avery
Mr. Karl Bloedel
Mr. Chase Brumm
Rev. Jesse DeDeyne
Rev. Christian Eisenbeis
Rev. David Emmons
Mr. Joel Franzen
Rev. Bradley Kerkow
Mr. Paul Koch
Rev. Paul Lange
Mr. Matthew Levorson

Mr. Dick Maginnis
Dr. Scott Markel
Rev. Jeffery Merseeth
Rev. Ronald Pederson
Rev. Steven Petersen
Mr. Allen Quist
Mr. John Schreiber
Mr. Duane Steinhauer
Mr. Lewis Sulzle
Mr. Gary Weimer
Rev. Lawrence Wentzlaff
Mr. Alan Whitford
Rev. Benjamin Wiechmann
Mr. Ben Wolff

9. Home Outreach

Mr. Shawn Anderson
Mr. James Beach, Sr.
Mr. Patrick Beaver
Rev. Edward Bryant
Mr. William Dumke
Mr. Lyle Fahning
Mr. Benjamin Faugstad
Rev. Peter Faugstad
Rev. Samuel Gullixson
Mr. Gerald Hansen
Rev. Daniel Hartwig
Mr. Joseph Holt
Mr. Kevin Klug
Mr. Shu-Ting Lai
Rev. Michael Lilienthal
Rev. David Locklair
Mr. Jim Minor
Mr. Steven Rehborg
Mr. Bob Reid
Mr. William Robran
Mr. Larry Rude
Rev. Gaylin Schmeling

10. World Outreach

Rev. Nathanael Abrahamson
Rev. Karl J. Anderson
Rev. Timothy Bartels
Mr. Keith Duin
Rev. Erwin Ekhoﬀ
Mr. Daniel English
Mr. Glenn Frederick
Mr. James Gregory
Rev. William Grimm
Rev. Cory Hahnke
Rev. Jeffrey Hendrix

Rev. Robert A. Harting
Mr. Jeff John
Rev. Robert Lawson
Mr. Todd Linhardt
Rev. Jonathan Madson
Rev. Norman A. Madson
Rev. Joshua Mayer
Rev. Daniel McQuality
Mr. Loren Meyer
Mr. Daniel Neumann
Rev. Glenn Obenberger
Rev. James Olsen
Mr. Graham Parsons
Rev. Nicholas Proksch
Rev. Andrew Schmidt
Rev. Paul Schneider
Mr. Victor Settje
Rev. Joshua Skogen
Rev. Jeffrey Smith
Mr. Jeff Tillman
Mr. Howard Waldschmidt
Rev. David J. Webber
Rev. Carl R. Wosje

11. Elementary Education

Rev. Daniel A. Basel
Rev. Steven Brockdorf
Mr. Curtis Bull
Mr. Kirk Campbell
Mr. Steve Cook
Mr. Chris Denney
Mr. David Diestler
Mr. Roger Erickson
Mr. Greg Gilbertson
Mr. Lonny Hagen
Rev. Thomas Heyn
Rev. Martin K. Hoesch
Rev. Roger Holtz
Mr. William Humphrey
Rev. Robert Lawson Jr.
Pres. Em. Marvin Meyer
Mr. Robert Paulsen
Mr. Chris Poetter
Dr. Timothy Schmeling
Rev. Glenn Smith
Rev. John E. Smith
Rev. Thomas Smuda
Mr. Nick Tousey
Mr. Daniel Weaver

12. Parish Services

Mr. David Arends
Mr. Michael Buchanan
Rev. Timothy Buelow
Mr. Thomas Conzelmann
Mr. Jim Costello
Rev. Matthew Crick
Rev. Christopher Dale
Rev. Michael A. Dale
Mr. Roger Duberowski
Mr. Jode Edwards
Mr. Arnie Hamann
Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch
Rev. Dale Jaech
Rev. Shawn Kauffeld
Mr. Harlan Levorson
Rev. Matthew Luttman
Rev. Andrew Palmquist
Mr. Mark Perlwitz
Mr. Gary Peterson
Mr. Philip Remmele
Mr. James Schnieder
Mr. Henry Shadbolt
Rev. Dr. Michael K. Smith
Mr. Raymond Toot
Rev. S. Piet Van Kampen
Mr. Fred Waldbuesser
Mr. Marty Wolbaum

13. Synodical Membership

Mr. William Anderson
Rev. Jerrold Dalke
Rev. Timothy Erickson
Mr. Herb Klaviter
Rev. Kurt Kluge
Mr. Al Kroll
Mr. Charles Krummel
Dr. Thomas A. Kuster
Rev. Philip K. Lepak
Rev. Anthony Pittenger
Mr. Derwin Robinson
Mr. Wayne Spieker

14. Miscellaneous

Mr. Rod Arneson
Mr. Shawn Boyum
Rev. Mark Faugstad
Rev. Rodney A. Flohr
Rev. Jerome Gernander
Rev. Timothy A. Hartwig
Rev. Jeff Luplow

Mr. Ken Meyer
Rev. Michael Muehlenhardt
Mr. Adam Pavelchik
Rev. Thomas L. Rank
Rev. Daniel Ruiz
Rev. Greg L. Sahlstrom
Rev. Steven Sparley
Mr. Paul Tweit
Mr. Randall Wise
Rev. Paul Zager
Rev. Timothy Zenda

15. Pastoral Conference Records & Resolutions

Rev. Robert Otto
Rev. Richard Fyffe
Rev. Ernest B. Geistfeld

16. Tellers

Joshua Mayer
Matthew Behmer
Aaron Ferkenstad
Jeffrey Hendrix
Daniel Ruiz
Andrew Soule

17. Chaplain

Rev. Daniel Hartwig

18. Head Ushers

Rev. Micah Ernst
Rev. Kurt Kluge

19. Parliamentarians

Rev. T. Kuster
Rev. E. Teigen

20. Assistant Secretary

Dr. Michael Smith

21. Convention Manger

Mr. Greg Costello

22. Convention Organist

Mr. John Baumann



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE AND REPORT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

How can we do justice to celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation? This question is before us as we gather for our synod's 100th annual convention. It is a question our congregations are asking as they arrange their area worship services this coming October. When our synod's Centennial Committee looked at appropriate ways to honor back-to-back anniversaries (the 500th now and in 2018 the ELS 100th), it felt a significant way to wed the two was to implement a synod-wide Bible study. We are happy to say the project has come to fruition and is ready to be rolled out in our congregations this coming fall. The Bible study, *Proclaiming God's Truth*, has been authored by members of our synod's Doctrine Committee. The study includes a teacher's guide and covers seven topics central to Lutheranism and to the history of our church body. The doctrines treated in the study are these: *Objective Justification and Absolution, The Election of Grace and Conversion, The Divine Call, Church Fellowship, Adiaphora and Ceremonies, Mission Work, and Christian Education*. It is our hope that each congregation plans to use these lessons, hopefully beginning this fall. Certainly, this is a way for us as a synod to express gratitude to God and to grow in our faith and understanding of his precious Word. The psalmist has written, "I will sing to the Lord all my life... May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the Lord" (Psalm 104:33, 34).

"So...you're a Lutheran... Well, *what's* a Lutheran?" How do you respond? You wonder what people are expecting for an answer. That can vary by our regions of residence. In the south and out west more explanation probably is necessary. In Minnesota and the Midwest people may expect you even to differentiate between the familiar acronyms—ELS, WELS, LCMS, ELCA, etc. Then, on the other hand, a person who asks could just be looking for a chance to have a little fun about potlucks and funeral Jello! But, in all seriousness, to confess "I'm a Lutheran" demands more attention than simply, "Well, I'm ELS... so check us out at *els.org*!"

Our convention theme and the three essays this year are meant to assist us in responding to what it really means to be a Lutheran. For our three days here together, we will observe the benefits of the Reformation by focusing on what is known as the "three great *solas*"—**Scripture alone, Grace alone, and Faith alone**. Simply put, we can say:

A true Lutheran confesses and teaches only what is clearly taught in Scripture, not looking for spiritual strength beyond it and not being content with anything less for establishing and confessing doctrinal truth. The teachings set forth in God's Word present the heart and center of our faith: Jesus Christ is our God and Savior who gives us forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. We sinners—all of us, including those who are not of the faith but need to be brought into the fold—have been declared acquitted of sin's guilt and punishment freely by the work and grace of Christ alone. In fact, his resurrection from the dead is the proof we have been declared righteous in God's sight. This great news is received by faith alone, worked only by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of sinners through Word and Sacrament. By this faith we obtain the glorious bodily resurrection and life everlasting in heaven.

It is a sad and sorry reality that, because of today's widely acclaimed brand of Lutheranism with its constant drift and rift away from Scripture, we find ourselves almost apologetically stating we are members of what is known as THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH. Dr. Martin Luther could never have imagined just how far afield much of the church bearing his name has now abandoned so many truths of the Christian faith, the faith for which he resolutely put his life on the line. Yet this should never diminish our desire and commitment to confess the Lutheran doctrine and even the name, not in a self-aggrandizing and boastful manner but solely by the grace of God and only to his glory. As one Luther scholar of the late

1800s properly stated: “Let her consent to be called THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, to testify, if God so please, to the end of time, that she is neither ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, nor of Christ’s servant who, in the presence of earth and of hell, restored that Gospel, preached it, lived it, and died in the triumphs of its faith.”¹

But what are we doing with it all? Absorbing the *Lutheran doctrine* for ourselves and for our family members is, of course, essential. Where would we be without the clear teachings God has set forth in his Word, and as they are so plainly presented in Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms and as further expounded in the Lutheran Confessions? Yet this body of great teaching is not intended to be simply boxed up and opened in the confines of our own homes or in the perimeters of our own church walls. Others desperately need to hear what we have been privileged to know and believe. So many people—ones even quite unlike us in background, nationality and skin color—have souls just like ours that require the connection to our Lord Jesus Christ and to his work of redemption presented in Word and Sacrament.

We may falsely imagine the Lutheran Church as being noticeably static and lacking in its emphasis on missions. I remember back in the 1970s when a strong push for evangelism programs was in vogue, some were unduly critical of Lutherans for not being so involved in the mission movements. Many contended that the Lutheran fathers did not have a real concern for the spread of the gospel in any concerted or organized manner. But one of our ELS fathers, Dr. B. W. Teigen, prudently offered this reaction in his popular *I Believe* series, published during the decade of the “Kennedy questions”:

A little thoughtful reflection will reveal that our forefathers were “mission-minded.” They were zealous in proclaiming the saving Gospel of the free forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ. But they wanted to preach only Christ’s Gospel, revealed in the Scriptures. Any other Gospel would not be the Gospel that saves (Gal. 1:6–9). Despite the adverse political, economic and religious situations that existed from 1517 to 1577, one can only wonder at the rapid spread of the Gospel. In 1517 there were indeed some who found their only hope for salvation in the merits of Christ, but a far greater number pinned their hopes of gaining God’s favor and the forgiveness of sins on their own work-righteousness. The over 8,000 who subscribed to the Formula [of Concord] in 1577 are a great testimony to the efforts of the Reformers to carry out the mission command of Christ to preach the Gospel to all nations.²

Can we carry the legacy of Luther and the Reformers to many more souls in our own corners of the world, especially through home missions while not neglecting in any way our efforts in world outreach? Our synod recently came through a five-year mission plan that intended to have every one of our 130 congregations see itself as a “mission congregation.” We urged each church to view itself strategically in its respective locale as a catalyst for reaching people who do not yet know Christ. Through our Board for Home Outreach, we as a synod extended a call for an Evangelism-Missions Counselor. The counselor has a two-fold task: assisting our home missionaries and also lending counsel and aid to established churches. If any of our congregations has not used the services of Pastor Wentzlaff and the resources available (<http://els.org/resources/evangelism/>), we encourage you to be in touch with him for a visit. This can generate good and practical ideas on how best to fulfill the Lord’s great commission right in our own backyards. The words of the apostle Peter, underscored often by Luther, remind us as fellow redeemed children of God that we are “a chosen people, a royal

1 Charles Porterfield Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology* (reprint ed., Fortress Press, Philadelphia, PA: 1963), 122.

2 Bjarne W. Teigen, “I Believe: A Study of the Formula of Concord,” (Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, MN, 1977), 3–4.

priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God.” And for what purpose? In order that we might “declare the praises of him who called [us] out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).

By the way, it is interesting to note that the “Daily Luther Quote,” posted by Northwestern Publishing House as #170 for this very day—the 19th of June—contains a great mission emphasis. The citation is taken from Luther’s Large Catechism. We reference it here:

The work is done and accomplished, for Christ has acquired and gained the treasure for us by his suffering, death, resurrection, etc. But if the work remained concealed so that no one knew of it, then it would be in vain and lost. So that this treasure, therefore, might not lie buried but be appropriated and enjoyed, God has caused the Word to go forth and be proclaimed, in which he gives the Holy Spirit to bring this treasure home and appropriate it to us (*LC, Creed, 38–39*).

So, we say: We want to get the Word out! Our existence as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod is for this purpose. May we always keep before us, in our collective windshield, the driving mission of our Lord. Our synod’s agencies—Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary; Bethany Lutheran College; our seven sponsored foreign mission fields; our boards and committees through which we carry out the work of our church body; the schools and congregations served by our teachers and pastors; the youth leaders and our young people who plan and carry out Christ-centered activities; and, yes, even our many meetings like this one—all are intended for the purpose of bringing the Greatest News ever recorded to all people, young and old, wherever we are given opportunity to influence. We desire to point sinners to the Savior, for “in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Ephesians 1:7).

With this in mind, it is fitting to express sincere thanks to the congregations, pastors, teachers and individual members of our synod for their prayers and contributions this past year. The year of 2016 is the first time in almost a decade where we exceeded the adopted congregational-giving portion of our budget. Truly this is something for which we give special thanks to God! We pray the same generosity will continue overflowing with thanksgiving as we strive to carry out the goal of our Anniversary Offering. The goal is three-fold. The synod’s Board for Home Outreach proposes to use the proceeds 1) to fund new missions, 2) to fund the Vicar-in-Mission program, and 3) to support and encourage opportunities for cross-cultural mission projects. If our churches have not yet presented the materials for this offering drive, we urge them to do so. Pastor Dan Basel, our Giving Counselor and chairman of the Anniversary Offering Committee, is eager to provide assistance (507-344-7311 or danbasel@blc.edu).

Oh, there are obvious challenges. Our society’s ever-increasing secularism with its changing mores makes the whole idea of church-going seem quite anachronistic, if not an outright “unnecessary distraction.” Statistically we can see a slide in church attendance, not atypical to that experienced in other church bodies. Yet the stats serve as a sober reminder of the reality our ELS encounters in its places of worship dotted throughout seventeen states. Half of the congregations in our synod (65 of 130) have an average attendance on Sunday morning that is 38 or below.³ A number of these congregations are rural and, in many cases, are found in a combined parish setting.⁴ While it is true, with no surprise, that our smaller congregations (e.g., the 65 churches) are more likely to face significant loss in average attendance over a 10-year span, among the ten largest congregations in our synod there were six in the past decade that also saw a decrease in average Sunday attendance (ranging between 26 less in the pews to 5 less). Without consulting any necessary demographic study (including less children in our

3 From a comprehensive 2015 statistical analysis compiled by Elsa Ferkenstad.

4 Among these 65 churches: 28 of these are located in Minnesota & Iowa; 12 in Washington and Oregon; 10 in Wisconsin.

church families), the statistics seem to show that much work can be done not only to reach the unchurched in our communities but to reengage rostered members who have withdrawn from attending.

However, three significant facts give us great optimism, strength and comfort as we move forward with our endeavors to proclaim God's Word when and where we are able. In fact, while these three are well-known, they bear repeating since the devil, the world and our own flesh strive to suck the life out of our mission efforts. To God's solid statements we flee, as we consider these three:

- **We have God's assurance that he has us believers remain on this earth—even now in our set locations—for the purpose of serving the overall growth of his kingdom.** "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). "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" (Matthew 24:14).
- **We, within our varied vocations in life, are merely *servants* of the Lord as we support (whether clergy or lay) the advance of his gospel. It is our gracious and mighty Lord alone who works the results.** The apostle Paul wrote: "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow" (1 Corinthians 3:6, 7).
- **We have the most potent weapon to combat every enemy of the Christian faith, and yet this same antidote is the most soothing balm for every sin-laden conscience: the saving gospel of Christ!** "By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you" (1 Corinthians 15:2). "God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has given to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:19).

The Lutheran Reformation has had a profound impact. That impact can be seen also in the secular realm, e.g., elevating the education of children, expressing appreciation for a wide range of vocations, and differentiating the spheres of the Two Kingdoms (secular and spiritual). In the church, the Reformation brought to the fore the clear answer from God's Word to life's most important question—how a sinner is justified in the presence of a holy God. We are justified freely by God's grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ alone (Romans 3). But the powerful impression left by the Lutheran Reformation is not only theoretical or dogmatic. It is *personal*. It is our *life-blood*. For, the Lutheran doctrine is the true confession of what already was once delivered to our world in the writings of the Lord's prophets, apostles and evangelists. "In our office, wherever it may be, we bear the responsibility for maintaining the Lutheran church and her doctrine. But we can only do this if we confess this doctrine ourselves. May God grant us all the strength and fortitude for such confessing, without which no true theology exists."⁵

Let our convention ring with praise for the great blessings we have received! Let us go forth from this hall to our parishes with renewed zeal to teach the simple truths of Luther's Catechism. Let us also trust God to give us the necessary conviction to "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

To God alone be the glory!

John A. Moldstad, president

5 H. Sasse, *Letter to Lutheran Pastors, Volume 2*. M. Harrison transl. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House 2014), 261.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATIONS

Candidate of Theology Joshua Mayer was ordained and installed at Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church in Rogers, Minnesota, on June 26, 2016. Dr. Michael Smith preached the sermon and the Rev. Erwin Ekhoﬀ served as liturgist and performed the rite of ordination.

Candidate of Theology Andrew Soule was ordained at Rock Dell Lutheran Church on July 17, 2016, and installed as pastor of Rock Dell and Our Savior's in Belview, Minnesota. The Rev. David Jay Webber preached the sermon, the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad served as liturgist, the Rev. Timothy Zenda served as lector, and the Rev. Timothy Hartwig performed the rites of ordination and installation.

Candidate of Theology Daniel Ruiz was ordained and installed at Hope Lutheran Church in Leander, Texas, on July 17, 2016. The Rev. David Thompson preached the sermon, and the Rev. Micah Ernst, Circuit 10 Visitor, performed the rites of ordination and installation. Pastors participating in the service were: Benjamin Ehlers, Micah Ernst, Bradley Kerkow, Daniel Laitinen, Kyle Madson, Dave Schneider, Jeff Smith, Michael Smith, John Sullivan, David Thompson, and Larry Wentzlaff.

Candidate of Theology Jeffrey Hendrix was ordained and installed at Grace and Calvary Lutheran Churches in Crookston and Ulen, Minnesota, on August 14, 2016. The Rev. Mathew Pfeifer preached the sermon, the Rev. Nathan Brenner served as the lector, the Rev. John Merseeth, Sr., served as the liturgist, and Pres. John Moldstad performed the rites of ordination and installation.

The Rev. Thomas Heyn was installed as part-time administrator for the Board for World Outreach on October 5, 2016.

The Rev. Jesse DeDeyne was installed as pastor of Bethany and Concordia Lutheran Churches in The Dalles and Hood River, Oregon, on October 23, 2016.

Candidate of Theology Matthew Behmer was ordained and installed at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Bell Gardens, California, on November 27, 2016.

The Rev. Dale Jaech was installed as pastor of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Bishop, California on May 8, 2017. Circuit Visitor David J. Webber performed the rite of installation.

The Rev. Matthew Moldstad was installed as pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in North Mankato, Minnesota on June 4, 2017.

DEDICATIONS, ANNIVERSARIES, AND GROUNDBREAKING

Faith Lutheran Church in Clara City, Minnesota, dedicated a church addition, including an office and multipurpose room, on August 28, 2016.

Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church, Rogers, Minnesota, celebrated its tenth year as a mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod on September 25, 2016. Both morning and afternoon services were held. In view of God's abundant blessings, a special thankoffering was gathered for the Evangelical Lutheran Synod for its ten years of faithful support.

King of Grace Lutheran Church, Golden Valley, Minnesota, celebrated her 100th anniversary on October 8–9, 2016. President John Moldstad preached for the Sunday morning service. The congregation today is a combination of the old Fairview church and the Emmaus church of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Western Koshkonong Lutheran Church, Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, celebrated 125 years of God's blessings on October 9, 2016 beginning at 9:30 a.m. A special worship service was held followed by a luncheon and afternoon program.



*Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church
Rogers, Minnesota*



*King of Grace Lutheran Church
Golden Valley, Minnesota*



*Trinity Lutheran Church
West Bend, Wisconsin*



*Hope Lutheran Church
Farmington, Minnesota*



*Peace Lutheran Church
Kissimmee, Florida*



*Jerico Lutheran Church
New Hampton, Iowa*

Trinity Lutheran Church, West Bend, Wisconsin, celebrated her 160th anniversary on October 23, 2016. President Moldstad preached for the festive services and brought greetings at a special noon luncheon.

Hope Lutheran Church in Farmington, Minnesota, dedicated its church building on October 30, 2016. President Moldstad preached for the occasion.

Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Amherst Junction, Wisconsin, began the celebration of the ninety-fifth anniversary of its foundation and the ninetieth anniversary of its church building on November 7, 2016. The congregation's pastor, the Rev. Greg Haugen, preached the sermon.

Redeemer Lutheran Church in New Hampton, Iowa, celebrated her seventy-fifth anniversary in November 2016.

Hope Lutheran Church in Leander, Texas, held a groundbreaking ceremony on January 8, 2017.

Peace Lutheran Church in Lakeland, Florida, celebrated her 25th anniversary on January 22, 2017. President Moldstad was the guest preacher.

Grace Lutheran Church in Vero Beach, Florida, celebrated her 100th anniversary on February 26, 2017. Former pastor John Petersen preached at the morning service, and President Moldstad was the guest preacher for the afternoon worship. Grace Lutheran joined the ELS in 1976, after being a founding member congregation of the Federation of Authentic Lutherans (FAL), a confessional break-away organization from the Missouri Synod.

Peace Lutheran Church in North Mankato, Minnesota, held a groundbreaking ceremony on March 26, 2017. The congregation is building an addition including classroom space, fellowship hall, and narthex, which will also her to also expand the sanctuary in the existing space.

Peace Lutheran Church in Kissimmee, Florida celebrated her 25th anniversary on April 2, 2017.

Jerico Evangelical Lutheran Church, rural New Hampton, Iowa, will celebrate its 150th anniversary on June 25, 2017. The Rev. U. V. Koren was the founding pastor of this congregation. A number of former pastors will participate in the anniversary observance with the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad preaching.

MEMBERSHIP REQUESTS

Reformation Lutheran Church in Hillsboro, Oregon, has applied for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The congregation is served by the Rev. Steven Brockdorf. The proper documents have been submitted.

St. Paul Lutheran Church in Escondido, California, has applied for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The congregation is served by the Rev. Robert Lawson, Jr. The proper documents have been submitted.

The following individuals have applied for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

The Rev. Matthew Behmer, pastor of Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bell Gardens, California.

The Rev. Steven Brockdorf, pastor of Reformation Lutheran Church, Hillsboro, Oregon, by colloquy completed March 16, 2017.

The Rev. Jeffrey Hendrix, pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church, Ulen, and Grace Lutheran Church, Crookston, Minnesota.

The Rev. Robert Lawson, Sr., pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Princeton, Minnesota, by colloquy completed December 15, 2016.

The Rev. Robert Lawson, Jr., pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Escondido, California, by colloquy completed February 1, 2017.

The Rev. Joshua Mayer, pastor of Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church, Rogers, Minnesota.

The Rev. Daniel Ruiz, pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, Leander, Texas.

The Rev. Andrew Schmidt, Dean of Students of Bethany Lutheran College, by transfer from WELS.

The Rev. Andrew Soule, pastor of Our Savior's and Rock Dell Lutheran Churches, Belview, Minnesota.

Mr. Kevin Klug, teacher at Holy Trinity Lutheran School, Okauchee, Wisconsin.

COLLOQUIES

The Rev. Robert Lawson, Sr., who serves as pastor of Christ Lutheran Church in Princeton, Minnesota, met with the Colloquy Committee on September 22 and December 15, 2016. The

committee recommends Pastor Lawson for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Members of the Colloquy Committee were: the Rev. G. Obenberger, the Rev. G. Schmeling, the Rev. E. Ekhoﬀ, the Rev. E. Teigen, the Rev. T. Hartwig, G. Costello, and Pres. Moldstad.

The Rev. Robert Lawson, Jr., who serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Escondido, California, met with the Colloquy Committee on January 22, 2016 and February 1, 2017. The committee recommends Pastor Lawson for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Members of the Colloquy Committee were: the Rev. G. Obenberger, the Rev. G. Schmeling, the Rev. E. Ekhoﬀ, the Rev. E. Teigen, G. Costello, R. Younge, and Pres. Moldstad.

The Rev. Steven Brockdorf, who serves as pastor of Reformation Lutheran Church in Hillsboro, Oregon, met with the Colloquy Committee on March 15, 2016 and March 16, 2017. On March 20, the committee recommended Pastor Brockdorf for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Members of the Colloquy Committee were: the Rev. G. Obenberger, the Rev. G. Schmeling, the Rev. K. Anderson, the Rev. J. Petersen, A. Quist, R. Younge, and Pres. Moldstad.

FELLOWSHIP REQUESTED

Christ Lutheran Church in Princeton, Minnesota, is seeking fellowship with the ELS. The congregation is an independent congregation that has declared itself in agreement with the doctrine of the ELS. This occurred oﬃcially at a meeting at Christ Lutheran on November 30, 2016.

ANNIVERSARIES OF ORDINATION

The following anniversaries of ordination are being observed this year:

Herbert Huhnerkoch – 40 years

Charles Keeler – 40 years

Nile Merseth – 40 years

Steven Petersen – 40 years

Kenneth Schmidt – 40 years

David Meyer – 25 years

Alex Ring – 25 years

Mark Rogers – 25 years

TRANSFERS, RETIREMENTS, AND CLOSING

The Rev. David Russow was transferred to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod on July 1, 2016.

The Rev. Craig Ferkenstad retired from the parish ministry on April 30, 2017.

Prof. Adolph Harstad retired from the seminary at the close of the 2016–2017 school year.

Princeton Ev. Lutheran School closed in June 2017. Bethany and Our Savior's Lutheran Churches in Princeton, Minnesota jointly operated the school for many years.

Missionary David Haeuser retired from the pastoral ministry on June 30, 2017. Missionary Haeuser served in Peru since 1988, including a number of years as the president of the seminary in Lima.

The Rev. Thomas Westendorf was transferred to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod on June 14, 2017.

RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Our bylaws state that it is the duty of the president “to appoint replacements to the synod's boards and committees when vacancies occur unless excepted by these bylaws; which

appointees shall serve until the next regular convention” (Bylaws VII.1.c). Therefore the following appointments have been made as resignations were received:

The Rev. Thomas Heyn resigned from the Board for World Outreach on August 19, 2016. The Rev. Wayne Halvorson was appointed to fill the vacancy.

The Rev. Jerry Gernander resigned from the Board for Education on October 3, 2016. The Rev. Joshua Skogen was appointed to fill the vacancy.

Mr. Timothy Schubkegel resigned from the Board for Education in October 2016.

Mr. Silas Born resigned from the Board for World Outreach on November 15, 2016. Mr. Rodney Rivera was appointed to fill the vacancy.

Upon acceptance of a call to professorship at Bethany Lutheran College, the Rev. Nicholas Proksch resigned on March 22, 2017 from the Board of Regents and as Visitor of Circuit 8.

The Rev. Alexander Ring resigned from the position of Alternate Circuit Visitor for Circuit 12 effective June 24, 2017.

CONSTITUTION REVISION

A revised constitution has been received from Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota. The Committee on Synodical Membership is asked to review the constitution.

CIRCUIT REASSIGNMENT

Upon the request of Hope Lutheran Church (West Jordan, Utah), the synod’s secretary has reassigned the congregation to Circuit 11.

DEATHS

Mrs. Loretta Behrens, widow of Pastor Howard Behrens, died on September 20, 2016.

The Rev. E.C.F. Stubenvoll, Sr., died on October 16, 2016.

Mrs. Doris Schmugge, wife of the Rev. Fred Schmugge, died on October 25, 2016.

The Rev. Karl Hermanson died on May 8, 2017.

Prof. Rudolph E. Honsey died on May 11, 2017.

SYNOD OFFERINGS FOR 2016

We have good news to report! We exceeded our Congregational Contribution Budget for 2016. The total from our synod congregations came to \$763,315. The adopted congregational funding budget for 2016 was \$760,000, with anything over \$725,000 going to the work of our Board for Home Outreach (cf. *Synod Report* 2015, p. 116). We rejoice and give thanks to God for the generosity of our people in supporting the Gospel work of our church body.

O Father, whence all blessings come;

O Son, Dispenser of God’s store;

O Spirit, bear our offerings home;

Lord, make them Thine forevermore. (ELH 447:5)

BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE’S NURSING PROGRAM

The Minnesota Board of Nursing officially granted permission for Bethany to offer a bachelor of science in nursing (BSN). This program was approved last August. As a result, the first cohort of nursing at BLC will begin their studies in the fall of 2017. The pre-nursing courses already are in place. Dr. Sara Traylor serves as the director of the nursing program.

LUTHER FILM

In this celebratory year of the Lutheran Reformation, we are pleased to draw attention to a new feature-length film exploring the life of Dr. Luther and his efforts to contend for the truth of God's holy Word. One of our synod's congregations, Peace Lutheran in North Mankato, Minnesota, has served as a pilot location for the showing of "A Return to Grace: Luther's Life and Legacy." The film will be available as an evangelism tool <wels.net/reformation500>, and a similar version of the film is scheduled for primetime viewing on PBS later this fall.

REFORMATION HYMNS

Our synod's Committee on Worship has listed a number of hymns that can be used in our worship services and in our homes for the 500th anniversary. These hymns are selected in keeping with the Church Year. You may access the list by visiting our ELS webpage <http://els.org/download/worship_committee/17-Reformation-Anniversary-Reformation-Era-hymns-2.pdf>.

A STUDY ON THE VIABILITY OF A VETERANS' MONUMENT

On November 9, 2015, upon the recommendation of the Board for Christian Service, the synod president appointed an *ad hoc* committee to pursue a feasibility study for commissioning the creation of a military monument: the potential design, the cost (to be covered by private donations, not impacting the synod's budget), and the location. Appointees to the Veterans Memorial Subcommittee are: Mr. Brad Wosmek, Prof. William Bukowski, and Mr. Bruce Gratz. The subcommittee is reporting its findings through the Board for Christian Service. While there has been no resolution from the synod approving the establishment of a monument, convention resolutions from 2012 (*Synod Report* 2012: 151) and 2013 (*Synod Report* 2013: 119–120) have encouraged further study of the project.

PRACTICE OF CLOSED COMMUNION

In response to a memorial received last year, the synod president and the 2016 Circuit Visitors' Conference studied our synod's policy of closed communion in relation to seasonal visitors. A report produced by the president on the subject was given to the General Pastoral Conference, October 5, 2016. The same is appended here, per last year's convention resolution.

ANNIVERSARY OFFERING

We continue to gather a thankoffering celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017 and the 100th anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in 2018. The offering is taken for the purpose of assisting the development of our home missions and the training of seminary vicars-in-mission. It is our sincere hope that each congregation is presented with an opportunity to be a part of this offering as a way of expressing gratitude to our Lord for his many blessings upon our church body throughout its history.

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

It is appropriate for us to convey our congratulations and to wish God's richest blessings upon our USA sister church body, WELS. In this year of 2017 the WELS is marking the 100th anniversary of the time when four midwestern synods merged into what was known in 1917 as "The Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Other States. The Michigan, Minnesota and Nebraska synods became districts in WELS, while the original Wisconsin Synod was divided into three districts.

Ever since the formation of the Synodical Conference in 1872, our ELS has enjoyed fellowship with WELS. During the difficult years when it became necessary to take a stand on the doctrine and practice of church over against the Missouri Synod, both ELS and WELS

stood side by side. In the year of 1967 when the Synodical Conference officially disbanded, our synod (suspending fellowship with Missouri in 1955) and WELS (suspending fellowship with Missouri in 1961), initiated the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Forum. The forum gathers twenty leaders from each of our two church bodies to meet biennially for discussing seven areas of work: administration, doctrine, higher education, elementary education, missions, stewardship and communication.

CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

Representatives of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC), the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), and the ELS met on August 26, 2016. At the 2016 convention, the ELS accepted the “Joint Statement on the Termination of Fellowship.” The statement was presented to the district conventions of the WELS last summer and will be considered by the 2017 WELS convention. The CLC also considered the statement at its 2016 convention and directed it to the CLC pastoral conferences for further study. The next biennial convention of the CLC will occur in the summer of 2018.

LUTHERAN CHURCH–MISSOURI SYNOD

Representatives of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), WELS, and ELS met November 29 through December 1, 2016 in Jacksonville, Florida. The meeting was the fifth in a series of annual informal discussions intended to improve mutual understanding of the respective doctrinal positions of the three synods, to clarify matters of doctrine and practice, and to establish and maintain lines of communication.

This year’s meetings focused on the efforts of each of the synods to help and encourage Lutheran church groups around the world to move toward stronger confessional Lutheran doctrine and practice. Another major topic of discussion was the role of men and women in the church. Participants reviewed written statements of the three synods and discussed the doctrinal positions of each synod in the areas of women teaching men in the church, the proper exercise of authority, and the biblical prohibition of the ordination of women. While many areas of agreement were identified, it was also clear that significant differences remain.

The informal meetings have proven to be a blessing in many ways. Another meeting has been planned at the end of 2017. The discussions remain *informal*, however, since all parties involved realize that *formal* doctrinal discussions with the aim of re-establishing fellowship are not possible at this time.

NEW BOOK ON HISTORY OF SYNOD

We are rolling out at our convention the new publication, *Proclaim His Wonders*. The volume is authored by the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad and includes 400 photos—many shown for the first time—within the book’s 300 pages. We thank Pastor Ferkenstad for his excellent work on this project as he clearly explains the history and purpose of our Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The book was commissioned in preparation for our ELS centennial to be observed in 2018. Complimentary copies will be provided for each pastor. The price of the book has been set at \$20.00, but during the convention week purchases can be made at \$15.00 per copy.

COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATION

The Committee for Communication is composed of the Rev. Daniel Hartwig (chair), Mr. Lance Schwartz (secretary), Mr. David Gruen, and Mr. Andrew Overn. We met this year remotely, using digital video conferencing software. In addition to some regular housekeeping, the main item discussed was the synodical anniversary picture directory being compiled and edited by the Rev. Daniel Hartwig with assistance from Elsa Ferkenstad. The process has been

slow, but is beginning to bear fruit. In addition, the Rev. Hartwig has been in contact with the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad to ensure that there is some graphical consistency for all the various printed material the synod is producing in view of the important anniversaries during 2017–2018. The committee encouraged the synod's Communication Director, the Rev. Paul Fries, to continue producing video updates for informing our congregations of our important work together.

Rev. Daniel J. Hartwig, chairman

CONGREGATIONS VISITED DURING THE PAST YEAR

Forest, Forest City, Iowa; Zion, Thompson, Iowa; Faith, Carthage, Missouri; Calvary, Ulen, Minnesota; Richland, Thornton, Iowa; Prince of Peace (WELS), Mason City, Iowa; Bethel (WELS), Sioux Falls, South Dakota; King of Grace, Golden Valley, Minnesota; Norseland, Saint Peter, Minnesota; Norwegian Grove, Gaylord, Minnesota; Trinity, West Bend, Wisconsin; Hope, Farmington, Minnesota; Peace, Deshler, Ohio; Grace, Weston, Ohio; Christ (Indep.), Princeton, MN; Good Shepherd, Indianola, Iowa; Peace, Lakeland, Florida; Grace, Vero Beach, Florida; Immanuel, Audubon, Minnesota; Saved By Grace, Gresham, Oregon.

PASTORAL CONFERENCES ATTENDED

Circuit 9 Winkel; General Pastoral Conference; Circuit 7 Winkel; Circuit 1 Winkel; Circuit 8 Winkel; Great Lakes Pastoral Conference; West Coast Conference; Great Plains Pastoral Conference.

INACTIVE MEMBERS

The Guidelines for the Clergy Roster (III.A) read: "An ordained clergyman who does not have a current call but desires to remain on the clergy roster and is eligible to perform the duties of the office of ministry described in Article II., and who is not emeritus may, by action of the president and secretary, be continued on the Clergy Roster for a period not to exceed three years from the beginning of the period of inactivity. Upon the application of the individual and the recommendation of the president and secretary for an extension of such classification, the convention shall determine in each instance, on written ballot, whether the request shall be honored for an additional three-year period."

For the past three years the following names have been on our inactive list: Bradley Homan and David Meyer. At their request and with the approval of the president and the secretary, the convention is being asked to extend the clergy roster status for Bradley Homan and David Meyer.

John A. Moldstad, president

AGREEMENT IN OUR PRACTICE OF CLOSED COMMUNION

1. The confessional Lutheran church always has taught and practiced, and will teach and practice, what is known as closed communion. By closed communion we are indicating that the administration and reception of the Lord's Supper at a given altar is to occur only with those who profess the same doctrine.
2. This practice of closed communion is derived from Scripture itself (1 Corinthians 10:17, 11:17–18, 11:23–32; also Ephesians 4:3, 1 Corinthians 1:10, Romans 16:17–18).
3. This practice is furthermore derived, in a secondary manner, from our Lutheran Confessions. Here we refer especially to FC SD VII: 88–90 and FC SD VII: 123.

4. The main reason for practicing closed communion is out of concern for those who commune to procure the *benefits* from the Sacrament of the Altar and not to partake of the Supper to one's *harm*. In 1 Corinthians 11:29, the apostle Paul warns of a person receiving the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Supper as a "judgment on himself." Pastors of congregations, as gatekeepers of a proper administration of the sacrament, are especially concerned about proper reception at the Supper. Therefore, in love, they admit only those who are properly trained and able to examine themselves accordingly.
5. The unity in confession is also of great concern for the celebration of Holy Communion. As the word "communing" implies, the Supper also serves as a testimony of fellowship in doctrine with fellow communicants at a particular altar and, by extension, altars inside the larger fellowship.
6. Our practice of fellowship is of great concern especially because of the paramount nature of the chief article of the Christian faith (*Hauptartikel*, the doctrine of justification), and also out of conscientious commitment to *all* of the teachings in the Word of God (1 Corinthians 1:10, Romans 16:17; FC X:31).
7. Our 2001 ELS *Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism* contains the question:
 Whom should we not admit to the Lord's Supper?⁶
 We should not admit to the Lord's Supper
 those who do not believe in the Real Presence of Christ's body and blood,
 those who are known to be ungodly and impenitent,
 those who have given offense and have not removed it,
 those who are not able to examine themselves, or
 those who are of a different confession, since the Lord's Supper is a testimony
 of the unity of faith. (Q 330)
 The matter of confessional unity is addressed in the fifth point.
8. A person's membership in a church body means something. In general, we must say that one has not self-examined properly when there is disregard for the way church membership has a bearing on one's public confession of the Christian faith.
9. It is our practice to commune at our altars only those who agree with us in doctrine. That agreement readily shows itself by publicly aligning their communicant membership with church bodies with whom we are in fellowship (e.g., churches that comprise the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference [CELC]).
10. A necessary custom for our synod's congregations is the inclusion of regular announcements on closed communion in Sunday bulletins. It also is wise for pastors to mention the practice orally just prior to the first table being communed. ("The communicants of our doctrinal fellowship—members of the ELS and the WELS—are now invited to come forward to the altar.")
11. In a rare exception where one is admitted to the Lord's Supper who *formally* is not a member of the ELS/WELS/CELC but whose informal confession of faith is taken into consideration, this is not to be seen as setting aside the rule of closed communion.⁷ In

6 We also draw attention here to the 20 questions of Dr. Luther: "Christian Questions and Answers," p. 30–32 in the 2001 ELS *Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism*. The correct answers to these questions are seen as basic for a proper reception of the Sacrament of the Altar.

7 We note here, "A Reply of the WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations and the ELS Board for Theology and Church Relations," issued in November of 1975:

Do we hold that the exercise of church fellowship, especially prayer and altar fellowship, can be decided in every instance solely on the basis of formal church membership, that is, on whether or not the person belongs to a congregation or synod in affiliation with us?

No. Ordinarily this is the basis on which such a question is decided since church fellowship is exercised on the basis of one's confession to the pure marks of the church, and ordinarily

fact, whenever a private, pastoral judgment is made in a special case, where also the elders are informed, the “exception to the rule” should not be widely publicized lest undue offense be given.

12. When such an exception might be made,⁸ our confessional Lutheran pastors will do all that they can to lead those for whom they have permanent or temporary oversight responsibility toward a greater understanding of God’s word and consistency of practice.
13. Care must be taken that we do not quickly pass judgment on a fellow pastor when we hear of a particular case of casuistry and how it was handled in a sister congregation. We must admit that we do not know all the circumstances leading to the rare exception. We should content ourselves that we are, however, agreed in the scriptural principles.

we express our confession by our church membership. There may be cases in the exercise of church fellowship where a person’s informal confession of faith must also be considered. This is especially true regarding the weak. But whether one is guided by a person’s formal or informal confession of faith, in either instance it must in principle be a confession to the full truth of God’s Word. In addition, special care must be exercised so as not to cause offense to others or to interfere with another man’s ministry. Further, we are not to judge harshly concerning the manner in which a brother pastor after much agonizing handles such difficult cases. (*Lutheran Sentinel* 59, no. 14 [July 22, 1976]: 220–221; Evangelical Lutheran Synod, *Synod Report*, 1976: 65).

8 Two examples of exceptions may be offered:

- a. “One Sunday the young pastor is in the church sacristy minutes before the worship service (with the Lord’s Supper) is to begin. An elderly couple in their 80s, long-time members of the congregation, enters. A third person is with them, another elderly woman who was a visitor that morning. The woman who was a member of the church said with some emotion, ‘Pastor, this is my sister Edith. She has been visiting for the last two weeks. It’s the first time we have seen each other in nearly 20 years. She lives in western Canada. She is a member of the Lutheran Church of Canada, but only because there are no Wisconsin Synod churches nearby. I know that she believes exactly as she always did and exactly as I do. This afternoon she will be going back home, and I know that today is the last time we will ever see each other again. Pastor, could she please take Communion with us today?’ The pastor saw the tears in both of their eyes and heard the quiver in the voice. He knew that to say ‘no’ would be devastating to the faith of these two believers. He also knew that there was little, if any, possibility of public offense. The service was about to begin in moments. He said yes, she was welcome to share in Communion. The young pastor felt strongly that he did the right thing, but doubts about his decision kept arising. So later that week, he shared the incident and his decision with his church council and said, ‘I am fully committed to our synod’s teachings on fellowship and I am fully convinced that the practice of closed Communion is a correct one. But I felt that this case was an exception, and to do otherwise would not have been loving or God-pleasing. If I made the wrong decision, please correct me.’ To a man they told their pastor he had done the right thing. Still not fully assured, the young pastor went to his next pastors’ conference – known at the time as one of the most conservative and traditional in the synod. He did the same thing as he did with his council, and asked the same question. ‘Brothers, did I do the right thing?’ Every pastor assured the young man that his decision was correct...” (Emmaus Conference essay, May 6, 2011, Rev. Mark G. Schroeder).
- b. When a pastor arrived at his third parish, he asked to see the membership roster. He noticed that the name of a certain elderly lady was listed with an asterisk next to her name. She was a shut-in and had been so for years. The pastor was informed as to the reason for the asterisk: Technically she had never taken her membership out of a non-fellowship Lutheran church about 50 miles away. She owned a burial plot at that church’s cemetery. The council let the new pastor know she was regarded by all as a “communicant” of the congregation; she identified completely with the congregation at hand on all points of doctrine, had been ministered to regularly by former pastors, and did not attend or commune at her former church. She had been considered for years to be a rostered “member” of our synod’s congregation. The newly arriving pastor, understanding the situation, naturally continued to acknowledge the shut-in as a proper communicant of Faith Lutheran.

14. It should go without saying, but for clarity here needs to be said, that any “exception to the rule” in admitting a certain individual at a given altar, when reflectively permitted, does not constitute what is called “selective fellowship.” Selective fellowship is an expression used for situations where *congregations* from church bodies not in fellowship with each other, but who assume they are, proceed with their own local fellowship arrangements, e.g., exchanging of pulpits, joint worship services, and indiscriminate communing.
15. Non-fellowship Lutheran guests who regularly or seasonally attend our synod’s congregations are not normally invited to commune at our altars. Yet they are in need of conscientious pastoral care and instruction. Such pastoral care includes—among other things—sharing pertinent information concerning doctrinal differences, explaining fully our practice of closed communion, and working toward securing true unity in the confession of the faith. The pastor necessarily will explain that, if in his judgment an exception to the rule is made, this indicates they do not intend to commune at heterodox altars.
16. Finally, may our healthy discussion on this matter serve to refresh us in a renewed appreciation for the extreme value of the Supper. For in Holy Communion we receive Christ’s true body and true blood (real presence), whereby the gracious forgiveness of sins is offered and received by faith for the strengthening of souls!
17. May the careful practice we observe in administering the Holy Supper also serve as a wonderful “teaching moment” for all that is encompassed in a blessed communing.⁹ Thereby souls are edified and God truly is glorified.

September 2016

⁹ The Circuit Visitors at its annual conference, September 15–16, 2016, expressed the continual need to encourage all of our pastors and congregations to adhere to our synod’s scriptural doctrine and practice of closed Communion.



CONVENTION ESSAYS

PROCLAIM THE WONDERS GOD HAS DONE: SOLA SCRIPTURA

Rev. Dr. Timothy Schmeling

We believe, teach, and confess that for the retention of the pure teaching concerning the righteousness of faith before God, it is particularly important to hold steadfastly to the *particulæ exclusivæ*....

—Formula of Concord, Epitome, III, 10¹



Rev. Dr. Timothy Schmeling

As the five hundredth-anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation (October 31, 2017) brings the Luther Decade (2008–17) to its long-awaited culmination,² it is quite fitting that the Evangelical Lutheran Synod reflects on the three Latin *solae* (anglicized *solas*) “By Scripture Alone, By Grace Alone, and By Faith Alone” (*Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, et Sola Fide*). Even though these “Reformation Principles” (*Prinzipien der Reformation*) or the “Exclusive Particles” (*Ausschließlichkeitsformeln*) do not represent the sum totality of the Christian faith, they have long helped Lutherans confess Holy Scripture’s inner core. It is no less fitting that the faithful remnant of the Norwegian Synod also reflects upon the three *solas* in anticipation of the synod’s centennial next year. In the wake of the Election Controversy and the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (1917), Justin A. Petersen, J. B. Unseth, and Christian Anderson once proclaimed just how vital the *solas* were for making a faithful Christian confession at the twentieth-fifth anniversary of the reorganized synod (1943).³

HISTORY OF SOLA SCRIPTURA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SOLAS

Before this essay can proceed any further, one needs to understand the history of the oft-dubbed Reformation Principles. Unless this is clarified, their true significance will not be fully realized. It may come as a surprise to hear that the three Latin *solas* were not coined by Lutheranism. After explaining why these ecclesial terms or phrases aptly captured Pauline theology in his *Loci Theologici*, Martin Chemnitz (1522–86), a Formulator of the *Formula of Concord*, demonstrated that the early church fathers used the exclusive particles, and what is more, they often used them in their correct Biblical sense.⁴ However, the contemporary

¹ FC, Ep, III, 10 (BSELK 1238–39; BC 496). See also FC, SD, III, 36 (BSELK 1400–1403; BC 568–69) on the Pauline origin of the exclusive particles. *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche*, ed. Irene Dingel, Bastian Basse, Marion Bechtold-Mayer, Klaus Breuer, Johannes Hund, Robert Kolb, Rafael Kuhnert, Volker Leppin, Christian Peters, Adolf Martin Ritter, and Hans-Otto Schneider, 1st ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014); *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, trans. Charles Arand, Eric Gritsch, Robert Kolb, William Russell, James Schaaf, Jane Strohl, and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000).

² For an English overview of past Reformation celebrations (*Reformationsjubiläen*), see Thomas Albert Howard, *Remembering the Reformation: An Inquiry into the Meaning of the Protestantism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

³ Justin A. Petersen, J. B. Unseth, and Christian Anderson, “Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, and Sola Fide,” *Report of the Twenty-sixth Regular Convention of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church* 43 (1943): 18–41.

⁴ Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*. ed. Polykarp Leyser the Elder (Frankfurt and Wittenberg: Mevius and Schumacher, 1653), 2:304–9; Martin Chemnitz, *Chemnitz’s Works*, trans. Fred Kramer, Luther Poellet, Georg Williams, J. A. O. Preus, Matthew Harrison, Jacob Corzine, and Andrew Smith (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008–15), 8:1006–18.

Tübingen church history professor Volker Leppin shows that the Latin *solas* can even be found in the theology of the High and Late Middle Ages.⁵ Thomas Bradwardine (ca. 1300–49), the Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote, “Man is made righteous by faith alone apart from preceding works.”⁶ The greatest Scholastic and Dominican Friar Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) employed *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Gratia*, and *Solo Christo* in his writings.⁷ If this were not interesting enough, even the average medieval Christian could at least encounter the theology of the three *solas* in the *propers* (variable parts of the liturgy) of *Gesimatide* (*Septuagesima*, *Sexagesima*, and *Quinquagesima*), that is, the three Pre-Lent Sundays Lutherans inherited from the Latin Church.

The fact that the three Latin *solas* did not originate in the Lutheran Reformation is quite significant. Even if the medieval use of them lacked a good deal of Biblical precision, their medieval presence shows that Martin Luther (1483–1546) was not a revolutionary, but rather a reformer *par excellence* who reasserted the catholic (universal) faith of the Sacred Scriptures. At the same time, the theological confusion of the Late Middle Ages testifies to the importance of the Lutheran Reformation. It was not until the advent of the Lutheran Reformation that the proper Biblical meaning of three *solas* would be fully restored and their hermeneutical (interpretative) significance be elevated.

But are the Latin phrases, *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Gratia*, and *Sola Fide*, genuinely Reformation Principles? The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia church historian, Timothy Wengert, writes, “Using the critical Weimar edition of Luther’s works online and its search engine, one can now determine how often Luther used these phrases in all their permutations in his Latin works. The results? *Sola gratia*: two hundred times; *sola fide*: twelve hundred times; *sola Scriptura*: twenty times. Twenty times!”⁸ Wengert then attempts to show that some of these twenty *Sola Scriptura* references do not actually support the *Sola Scriptura* concept. Nevertheless, all three Latin *solas* are attested in Luther’s writings and can be found in his

⁵ *Das Luther-Lexikon*, s.v., “Ausschließlichkeitsformeln.” See also *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, s.v. “Reformation Principles”; Volker Leppin, “Luther’s Transformation of Medieval Thought: Continuity and Discontinuity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther’s Theology*, ed. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and Lubomír Batka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 115–24; Heiko A. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*, 3rd. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2001); Stephan H. Pfürntner, “Das reformatorische ‘Sola Scriptura’—theologischer Auslegungsgrund des Thoma von Aquin?” in *Sola Scriptura*, ed. C. H. Ratschow (Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1977), 48–80; Per Erik Perrson, *Sacra Doctrina: Reason and Revelation in Aquinas*, trans. Ross Mackenzie (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970).

⁶ “Sola fide sine operibus praecedentibus fit homo iustus.” Thomas Bradwardine, *De Causa Dei Contra Pelagium Et De Virtute Causarum* (London: Ex Officina Nortoniana, 1618), I, 1, c. 43 (394B).

⁷ “Notandum autem, quod cum multi scriberent de Catholica veritate, haec est differentia, quia illi, qui scripserunt canonicam Scripturam, sicut Evangelistae et apostoli, et alii huiusmodi, ita constanter eam asserunt quod nihil dubitandum relinquunt. Et ideo dicit et scimus quia verum est testimonium eius; Gal I, 9: si quis vobis evangelizaverit praeter id quod accepistis, anathema sit. Cuius ratio est, quia sola canonica Scriptura est regula fidei.” *Super Ioannem*, c. 21, 1, 6. “Ad tertium dicendum, quod si accipiatur gratia operans secundum primam acceptionem, tunc planum est quod effectus quos operator formaliter, ipsa sola operator: sicut enim sola albedo formaliter facit album parietem, ita sola gratia formaliter gratum facit.” *Scriptum super Sententiis*, II, d. 26, q. 1, a. 5. “Interior autem effluxus gratiae non est ab aliquo nisi a solo Christo, cuius humanitas, ex hoc quod est divinitati adiuncta, habet virtutem iustificandi.” *Summa Theologiae*, III, q. 8, a. 6 (11:134). Thomas Aquinas, *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Doctoris Angelici Opera Omnia Iussu Impensaque Leonis XIII. P. M.*, ed. Order of Preachers (Rome: Ex Typographia Polyglotta S. C. De Propaganda Fide, 1882–).

⁸ Timothy J. Wengert, *Reading the Bible with Martin Luther* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 16. See also Timothy J. Wengert, “A Note on ‘Sola Scriptura’ in Martin Luther’s Writings,” *Luther-Bulletin Tijdschrift voor interconfessioneel Lutheronderzoek* 20 (2011): 21–31.

contemporaries.⁹ Wengert, moreover, does not account for Luther's use of Latin or German equivalents for the *solas*, like "The Word Alone" (*Solum Verbum*) or "The Scripture alone" (*Die Schrift allein*).¹⁰ Even though the actual Latin phrases, *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Gratia*, and *Sola Fide*, are not equally represented in the Luther's *corpus*, the concepts underlying them certainly permeate Luther's thought. Some scholars have similarly argued that the Latin phrase *Sola Scriptura* cannot be found in the Lutheran Confessions.¹¹ All three Latin *solas*, their German equivalents, and underlying concepts can be found in the *Book of Concord* as well.¹² However, it must be pointed out that the three Latin *solas* do not seem to have ever appeared as a collected unit for summarizing Lutheranism in the early modern period. Rather the convergence of the three Latin *solas* as a Lutheran Shibboleth or a popular shorthand for Lutheranism seems to be a nineteenth-century phenomenon.¹³ After a by no means exhaustive investigation, the first place this essayist found the three Latin *solas* as collective unit in American Lutheranism was the cornerstone of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod's seminary in Wauwatosa, WI. The cornerstone was laid by the WELS Synod President Philipp von Rohr (1843–1908) on October 13, 1892 and was later moved to the current Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.¹⁴

⁹ In the "Vindication of All Articles of Luther Condemned by the Recent Bull of Leo X, 1521," Luther writes, "I do not wish to be deemed more learned than all, but I wish for Scripture alone (*solum scripturam*) to reign; nor do I wish it be interpreted by my spirit or that of any other man, but I wish it to be understood through itself and by its own spirit." Luther, WA, 7:98–99. See also Luther, WA, 30/3:153 (LW, 38:76); Luther, WA, 50:359. In the "Lectures on Galatians, 1535," Luther writes, "I declare that they do not become righteous by works or by circumcision but solely by grace and by faith in Christ (*sola gratia et fide in Christum*)." Luther, WA, 40/1:74 (LW, 26:59). In "On Translating: An Open Letter, 1530," Luther writes, "To you and to our people, however, I shall show why I chose to use the word *sola*—though in Romans 3[28] it was not *sola*, but *solum* or *tantum* that I used, so sharply do the asses look at my text! Nevertheless I have used *sola fide* elsewhere, and I want both: *solum* and *sola*." Luther, WA, 30/2:636 (LW, 35:188). Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. J. K. F. Knaake et al. (Weimar: Böhlau, 1883–1993); Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Briefwechsel* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1930–85); Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Tischreden* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1912–21); Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Bibel* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1906–61). Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut Lehmann, and Christopher Brown (St. Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia Publishing House and Fortress Publishing House, 1955–).

¹⁰ Wengert, "A Note," 21.

¹¹ Philip J. Secker, introduction to *The Sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions: Selected Writings of Arthur Carl Piepkorn, Volume Two*, ed. Philip J. Secker (Mansfield: CEC Press, 2007), xxviii.

¹² "In this way the distinction between the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments and all other writings is preserved, and Holy Scripture alone remains the only judge rule, and guiding principle (*sola sacra scriptura iudex, norma et regula*), according to which, as the only touchstone, all teachings should and must be recognized and judged, whether they are good and evil, correct or incorrect." FC, Ep, Rule and Norm, 7 (BSELK 1219; BC 487). See also FC, SD, I, 60 (BSELK 1345; BC 542). "In this Word the Holy Spirit is present and opens hearts that they may, like Lydia in Acts 16[14], listen to it and thus be converted, solely through the grace (*sola gratia*) and power of the Holy Spirit, who alone accomplishes the conversion of the human being." FC, Ep, II, 6 (BSELK 1231; BC 492), etc. "We Obtain the Forgiveness of Sins Only (*sola fide*) by Faith in Christ." Ap, IV, 74–75 (BSELK 299; BC 133), etc.

¹³ Scholars generally claim that it is nineteenth century, but only provide early twentieth-century evidence. Jacob Corzine, "The Source of the Solas: On the Question of Which Are the Original *Solas*," in *Theology is Eminently Practical: Essays in Honor of John T. Pless*, ed. Jacob Corzine and Bryan Wolffmueller (Fort Wayne: Lutheran Legacy, 2012), 51–71; Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Biblical Authority After Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2016), 26–27; Wengert, *Reading*, 16; Wengert, "A Note," 21.

¹⁴ Edward C. Fredrich, *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992), 95, 278n4; J. P. Koehler, "Rede bei der Eröffnung des Theologischen Seminars in Wauwatosa, Wis., am 5. September 1928," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 25, no. 4 (October 1928): 225–30. See also the treatment of the three *solas* in *Unser Erbe: eine Gedächtnisschrift aus das 400jährige Reformationsjubiläum*

In the twentieth century, the three Latin solas were sometimes expanded into a fivefold unit, which added “Christ Alone” and “To God Alone be the Glory” (*Solus Christus et Soli Deo Gloria*) or an eightfold unit that added “God Alone,” “By Word Alone,” and even “By Experience Alone” (*Solus Deus, Solo Verbo, et Sola Experientia*).¹⁵ Like their three counterparts, these too have a Pre-Reformation and Lutheran pedigree.¹⁶ For Luther, *Solus Christus* was the foundation of the solas.¹⁷ Luther, theologians, and church musicians have long concluded their works with *Soli Deo Gloria* (e.g. J. S. Bach [1685–1750]), but C. F. W. Walther (1811–87) may be the only one to build dogmatic lectures around this theme.¹⁸ Unfortunately, just as Luther’s *Soli Deo Gloria* has been misused to foster a Calvinist interpretation of him, so too Luther’s use of *Solo Verbo* and *Sola Experientia* have been misused to argue for a Neo-Orthodox understanding of his theology. In a somewhat related matter, Jena theology professor Johann Gerhard (1582–1637) seems to have been the first to refer to Holy Scripture as “the only and proper principle of theology” (*unicum et proprium theologiae principium*).¹⁹ Yet, it was the Rationalist Lutheran theologian Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider (1776–1848) who first coined the distinction between the material (reconciliation/ justification) and formal (Scripture) principles of church dogmatics.²⁰

Since the three Latin solas are used to define all Protestants and Modern Evangelicals today, it is vitally important that the original Lutheran understanding of the solas be properly clarified. The solas have often been misunderstood in a reductionist or bumper sticker-like fashion. To be sure, medieval Latin theology once confounded their meaning due in part to theological, philological, and historical deficiencies. Roman Catholics went so far as to publically condemn the theology of the solas.²¹ Yet the non-Lutheran Protestant and Modern

den 31. Oktober 1917 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1916), 137–59; Theo. Engelder, “The Three Principles of the Reformation: Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fides,” in *The Four Hundred Years: Commemorative Essays on the Reformation of Dr. Martin Luther and Its Blessed Results*, ed. W. H. T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1916), 97–109; Herman Bavinck, “De Hervorming en ons nationale eleven,” in *Ter herdenking der Hervorming, 1517–1917: Twee redevoeringen, uitgesproken in de openbare zitting van den senaat der Vrije Universiteit op 31 October 1917*, ed. H. Bavinck and H. H. Keyper (Kampen: Kok, 1917), 7; Daniel Harmelink, ed. *The Reformation Coin and Medal Collection of Concordia Historical Institute* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), xxxvff.

¹⁵ Eberhard Jüngel, “The Justification of Sinners: The Meaning of the Exclusive Formula Used by the Reformers,” in *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, ed. Eberhard Jüngel (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2014), 147–259; Michael Beintker, “Was ist das Reformatorische? Einige systematisch-theologische Erwägungen,” *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 100 (2003): 44–63; Albrecht Beutel, “Lutherische Theologie in den Unübersichtlichkeiten unserer Zeit: Ein Vorschlag zur Orientierung,” *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 103 (2006): 344–61.

¹⁶ Luther, WA, 8:669 (LW, 44:400); Luther, WA, 40/1:131 (LW, 26:55); Luther, WA, 2:460 (LW, 27:176); Luther, WA, 7:51 (LW, 31:346); Luther, WA TR, 1:16 (*Sola autem experientia facit theologum*). FC, Ep, III, 1 (BSELK 1235; BC 494); LC I, 4 (BSELK 933; BC 387), and FC, Ep, VII, 42 (BSELK 1267; BC 508). *Sola Experientia* and *Soli Deo Gloria*, conversely, are not found in the *Book of Concord*.

¹⁷ *Das Luther-Lexikon*, s.v., “Ausschließlichkeitsformeln.”

¹⁸ C. F. W. Walther, *All Glory to God* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016).

¹⁹ Gerhard, *Loci*, Locus 1, Par. 1. Johann Gerhard, *Loci theologici cum pro abstruenda veritate tum pro destruenda quorumvis contradicentium falsitate per theses nervose solide et copiose explicate*, ed. Ed. Preuss (Berlin: Gust. Schlawitz, 1863–85). Johann Gerhard, *Theological Commonplaces*, trans. Richard Dinda (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006–).

²⁰ Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider’s *Handbuch der Dogmatik der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche ... hat*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1828), 1:46–47, which was originally published in 1814. See also Jan Rohls, *Protestantische Theologie der Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 1:390–91.

²¹ Council of Trent, Session 4 (*Decrees*, 2:663–64); Council of Trent, Session VI (*Decrees*, 2:679–81). *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. N. P. Tanner, G. Albergo, J. A. Dossetti, P. P. Joannou, C. Leonardi, P. Prodi, and H. Jedin (London and Washington: Sheed & Ward and Georgetown University Press, 1990).

Evangelical articulation of the three solas is in many ways no less problematic. They have long vested the phrases with new and foreign meanings, all the while maintaining the theologically disingenuous, but often politically necessary subterfuge that they are the true heirs of Luther. In contrast to Lutherans, whom they dismiss as “Formulists” or “New” and “Fake-Lutherans,” they have often claimed that they are merely attempting to complete Luther’s Reformation.²² Lest one assume this notion has been scraped in the dustbin of history, R. Kent Hughes, the College Church of Wheaton, IL Senior Pastor, subtly softens the idea for a twenty-first century audience in the forward to the *Grace Alone* volume of Zondervan’s new *The 5 Solas Series*:

This tour includes ... the theological development of Martin Luther midst the arcane currents of his late medieval environment and his mature understanding of justification by grace through faith, wherein the act of faith must necessarily, be an act of sovereign grace; (d) though Luther firmly held to predestination, division among the Lutherans over the doctrine meant that theological reflection passed to the Reformed and became identified with John Calvin, who though he offered no innovations, adorned it with clarity, maintaining that election, predestination, and grace must only be contemplated in Christ.²³

MARTIN LUTHER’S CONCEPT OF SOLA SCRIPTURA

The remainder of this essay will turn its attention to an analysis of Luther’s concept of *Sola Scriptura*.²⁴ It argues that his *Sola Scriptura* rediscovery was not limited to the reassertion of the final sole authority of Scripture, but also the sole re-creative (performative) power of Scripture. As the world takes note of the five-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, it is just as important for Lutherans to confess this so-called performative understanding of God’s Word as it is the sole authority of Scripture because the former is even less understood by the twenty-first century than the latter. For instance, many today defend the inerrancy of the Bible as a channel of sacred information (e.g. the veracity of the six-day creation), but far fewer believe that the same Word that brought forth the creation has the same power to create faith (regeneration) in a child’s heart.

It should not go unnoticed that the Lutheran Reformation rose from the work of a professor of Biblical theology. God’s Word was the very pulse of the Reformation. Luther made a number of interconnected Reformation rediscoveries, the most important of which was passive righteousness (i.e., the imputation [crediting] of Christ’s holiness to the believer *Sola Fide*, *Sola Gratia*, and *Sola Scriptura*). This rediscovery was essentially a new definition of what it meant to be Christian, that is, what it meant to be truly human.²⁵ The medieval mind

²² Bodo Nischan, “Reformation or Deformation? Lutheran and Reformed Views of Martin Luther in Brandenburg’s ‘Second Reformation,’” in *Lutherans and Calvinists in the Age of Confessionalism* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1999), I:203–15. See also Alec Ryrie, “The Afterlife of Lutheran England,” in *Sister Reformations in Germany and England*, ed. Dorothea Wendebourg (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 213–34.

²³ R. Kent Hughes, forward to *Grace Alone Salvation as a Gift of God: What the Reformers Taught ... and Why It Still Matters*, by Carl R. Trueman, The 5 Solas Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017).

²⁴ For an overview of *Sola Scriptura* research, see *Das Luther-Lexikon*, s.v., “Autorität”; *Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Religion and Theology*, 4th ed., s.v. “Scriptural Principle”; *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, s.v., “Scriptural Proof”; *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, s.v. “Autorität”; *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, s.v. “Scripture.” See also H. H. Schmid and J. Mehlhausen, *Sola Scriptura. Das reformatorische Schriftprinzip in der säkularen Welt* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag Gerd Mohn, 1991); Carl-Heinz Ratschow, ed. *Sola Scriptura* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1977).

²⁵ The essayist is indebted to the work of Robert Kolb for showing the nexus between Luther’s two kinds of righteousness and the performative Word. See Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther and the Enduring Word of God: The Wittenberg School and Its Scripture-Centered Proclamation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic,

understood man's relationship with God in terms of man continually climbing his way closer to God through the performance of good works and ritual, albeit facilitated by grace.²⁶ This attempt to achieve salvation through what Luther called active (proper) righteousness sent him in a tailspin in search of a merciful God. Gradually Luther came to the realization through prayer, meditation on the Scripture, and the cross that God was an engaged personal God, who alone could recreate the relationship that man lost in the fall. After all, man was God's greatest creation, but he remained completely dependent on his creator even before the fall for everything that he possessed. What is worse, man lost the image of God in the fall, becoming completely curved in on himself and enslaved to sin, death, and the devil.

Recalling Christ's words that a bad tree cannot become a good tree by trying harder to bear good fruit,²⁷ Luther rediscovered in Roman 1:17 that only the imputation of Christ's passive (alien) righteousness could recreate our lost relationship with God. For only passive righteousness could restore man's humanity and make him genuinely free.²⁸ The true purpose of active righteousness, conversely, was to thank God by serving one's neighbor and caring for the creation through vocations in the home, church, and society/state.²⁹ This new relationship with God, Luther further rediscovered, was only re-created through God's very same Word that once had the power to bring the universe into being and the same Word that

2016). See also Robert Kolb, "Luther's Hermeneutics of Distinctions: Law and Gospel, Two Kinds of Righteousness, Two Realms, Freedom and Bondage," in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*, ed. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and Lubomír Batka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 168–84; Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther: Confessor of the Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arands, *The Genius of Luther's Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).

²⁶ Luther, "Magnificat, 1521," in WA, 7:596 (LW, 21:350). For another example, the Semi-Pelagian Ockhamist school's view (that Luther was reared in) went so far to claim man actually had to start out his conversion by reaching out to God with a half-merit (*meritum congrui*) in hope that God would bless it with grace. Only then could salvation be acquired via a faith formed by love (i.e., by full-merits [*meritum condigni*] or good works).

²⁷ "The following statements are therefore true: 'Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works; evil works do not make a wicked man, but a wicked man does evil works.' Consequently it is always necessary that the substance or person himself be good before there can be any good works, and that good works follow and proceed from the good person, as Christ also says, 'A good tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit....' But as faith makes a man a believer and righteous, so faith does good works. Since, then, works justify no one, and a man must be righteous before he does a good work, it is very evident that it is faith alone which, because of the mercy of God through Christ and in his Word, worthily and sufficiently justifies and saves the person. A Christian has no need of any work or law in order to be saved since through faith he is free from every law and does everything out of pure liberty and freely.... Furthermore, no good work helps justify or save an unbeliever. On the other hand, no evil work makes him wicked or damns him; but the unbelief which makes the person and the tree evil does the evil and damnable works. Hence when a man is good or evil, this is effected not by the works, but by faith or unbelief...." Luther, "Freedom of a Christian, 1520" in WA, 7:61–62 (LW, 31:361–62). See also Luther, "Disputation on Scholastic Theology, 1517" in WA, 1:224 (LW, 31:9).

²⁸ "But up to then it was not the cold blood about the heart, but a single word in [Romans] Chapter 1[:17], 'in it the righteousness of God is revealed,' that had stood in my way. For I hated that word 'righteousness of God,' which according the use and custom of all the teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically regarding the formal or active righteousness, as they call it, with which God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner.... At least, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, 'In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live.' There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith...." Luther, "The Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Writings, 1545" in WA, 54:185–186 (LW, 34:336–37).

²⁹ See also 1519 Luther, "Two Kinds of Righteousness, 1519" in WA, 2:145–52 (LW, 31:293–306).

assumes oral, written, and sacramental forms today.³⁰ As the passive righteousness bestowed by God's performative Word was challenged by pope, magisterium, tradition, and finally by church council, Luther declared that the Scripture alone was the final arbitrator of truth. Not surprisingly, the Lutheran princes made 1 Peter 1:25 the first battle cry of the Lutheran Reformation: "The Word of the Lord remains eternal" (*Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum*) and quite literally placed it on just about everything.³¹

On the one hand, the Bible was far from absent in the late medieval world of the young Martin Luther, pious Protestant fictions aside.³² In 1450s, the invention of moveable type made book printing more accessible than ever before, albeit large Latin Bibles were still too expensive to leave unchained and the population was largely illiterate.³³ Luther encountered the Bible in the readings at mass, in Latin School, as well as in a purchased postil (model sermons) and other devotional literature.³⁴ Ever since the High Middle Ages, the mendicant movement (e.g. Franciscans and Dominicans [Order of Preachers]) had been trying to meet the need for vernacular preaching. Merchant families and the guilds began endowing preaching positions in the cities by the Late Middle Ages.³⁵ The university, religious life, and a doctorate in Sacred Scripture afforded Luther the opportunity to hear the Bible read daily, to sing the Bible in the canonical hours, to possess a red leather Bible of his own, and to master the Biblical texts along with their traditional glosses (marginal commentary). The *Via moderna* (e.g. Ockhamism)

³⁰ Oswald Bayer zeros on Luther's conception of a speech-act promise that "actually constitutes a reality" for the believer as Luther's real Reformation turning point. "The *signum* itself is already the *res*," that is "the linguistic sign is already the matter itself." He locates the beginnings of this new performative understanding of God's Word in Luther's view of absolution as found in "On Seeking out Truth and Comforting Terrified Consciences, 1518" in WA, 1:630–33. In 1520, Luther writes, "Following upon this comes the other Word, the divine assurance and promise, which says: If you want to fulfill all the commandments, if you want to be free of your evil desires and sins, as the commandments pressure and demand, look here, believe in Christ, through whom I promise you all grace, righteousness, peace, and freedom. If you believe, you have it; if you do not believe, you do not have it: For what is impossible for you, by means of all the works of the commandments, which are many and which still cannot be of any value, is made simple and easy for you through faith. For God has made all things depend on faith, so that whoever has it shall have all things and be joyful; whoever does not have it shall have nothing. This is what the promises of God provide, what the commandments demand; they fulfill what the commandments demand, so that everything is from God himself, both commandments and fulfillment. He alone commands; he alone also fulfills." Luther, "Freedom of a Christian, 1520" in WA, 7:23–24, translated in Bayer, *Martin*, 60. Later Luther wrote, "See, he is now born of God through the Gospel, in which he remains and abandons his light and opinion, as St. Paul says, 'I begot you in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.... Likewise for this reason the Gospel is called God's womb, in which we are conceived, carried, and born.'" Luther, "Church Postil, 1522" in WA, 10/1.1:232 (LW, 75:308).

³¹ See also Harmelink, *The Reformation*, xxxiv.

³² Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1952); Susan Boynton and Diane J. Reilly, eds., *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages: Production, Reception, and Performance in Western Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

³³ Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

³⁴ Joachim Ringleben, *Gott im Wort: Luthers Theologie von der Sprache her* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); Willem Jan Kooiman, *Luther and the Bible*, trans. John Schmidt (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1961); M. Reu, *Luther and the Scriptures* (Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1944); M. Reu, *Luther's German Bible: An Historical Presentation Together with a Collection of Sources* (Columbus: The Lutheran Book Concern, 1934).

³⁵ Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, *Preachers, Florilegia, and Sermons: Studies on the Manipulus florum of Thomas of Ireland* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979); H. Leith Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Larissa Taylor, ed., *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001).

school of theology that Luther was trained in, moreover, was critical of the *Via Antiqua* school's (e.g. Thomism) confidence in reason and stressed authority (e.g. Scripture) instead.

On the other hand, the Bible was also carefully regulated in the late medieval world because genuine heretics had long attempted to support their teachings on the basis of misreadings of Scripture.³⁶ Thus, Latin served as check on private interpretations of Scripture, though German Bible translations existed, provided they had episcopal authorization.³⁷ The Bible was delivered to the laity in selections, mediated through the authorized preachers (who had limited impact in the countryside) or accompanied with glosses and tales of the saints that often stressed ritual and good works. Assuming that only churchmen had vocations and that the catechism/sacraments were sufficient for the laity, the Late Medieval Church did not equip the average Christian with a humanities education necessary to move beyond the milk of fundamental doctrine and live out Scripture-informed vocations.³⁸ While medieval theologians assumed the inspiration of Scripture and many recognized that popes/magisterium could and had erred,³⁹ none had yet recognized that tradition/councils had ever erred or could depart from Holy Scripture.

In the wake of the abuses of the Avignon Papacy (1309–77) and the Western Schism (1378–1415), the Conciliar movement-driven Council of Constance (1414–18), went so far as to decree that councils (not popes) were the final interpreter of Scripture.

The holy synod of Constance ... declares, that legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, constituting a general council and representing the catholic church militant, it has the power immediately from Christ; and that everyone of whatever state or dignity, even papal, is bound to obey it [council] in those matters which pertains to the faith, the eradication of the said schism and the general reform of the said church of God in head and members.⁴⁰

However, at least two basic concepts of tradition had already developed by this time: The first conception was an older one-source theory that predominated in the fathers, monastics, and even the scholastics. It viewed tradition as the authoritative and faithful interpretation of a materially-sufficient Scripture within the historical continuity of the church. The second conception was a later two-source theory popularized by the canonists. It viewed tradition as a distinct source of doctrine independent of Scripture.⁴¹ By the Eve of the Reformation, the popes had dramatically turned the situation around, for the papal-controlled Lateran V Council (1512–17) decreed that the pope had oversight over all councils and only he could convene, move, and conclude a council. In short, Lateran V shut down Conciliarism.⁴² Ironically, those who were sympathetic to Conciliarism but found Luther's call to return to the sole final authority of Scripture too jarring had to capitulate to the emerging Roman Catholicism of the

³⁶ Kolb, *Martin Luther and the Enduring*, 19–34.

³⁷ "The Edict of Berthhold, Archbishop of Mainz (March 22, 1485) Concerning Translations from the Greek, Latin, or Any other Language," quoted in Reu, *Luther's German*, * 93–* 94. This edict prohibited unauthorized translations of foreign language books, including the Bible. See also Reu's source material for examples of Pre-Reformation German Bibles and German devotional writings.

³⁸ Luther, "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, 1520" in WA, 6:404–69 (LW, 44:115–217).

³⁹ Robert D. Preus, "The View of the Bible Held by the Church: The Early Church through Luther" in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman L. Geisler (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), 357–82.

⁴⁰ Council of Constance, Session 5 (*Decrees*, 1:408–9).

⁴¹ Heiko Oberman in his *Forerunners of the Reformation: The Shape of the Late Medieval Thought Illustrated by Key Documents* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 53–65. Some scholars have suggested that Oberman's distinctions are problematic.

⁴² Fifth Lateran Council, Session 11 (*Decrees*, 1:642).

Council of Trent (1545–63), which permitted the second of the aforementioned conceptions of tradition and even left the papal supremacy claims of Lateran V stand.⁴³

As Luther zeroed in on his great rediscovery of passive righteousness through God's performative Word, he was opposed by pope, magisterium, tradition, and even councils. What would make Luther so controversial after the 1519 Leipzig Colloquy was not that he asserted *Sola Scriptura*, but that he would show that even tradition and council had at times actually departed from Scripture and therefore Scripture is the final arbitrator of truth. Note further that Luther never argued that all tradition needed to be rejected. For instance, he recognized that the church fathers had often helped exegetes avoid contextually unjustified private interpretations of the Bible. Rather he merely insisted on Scripture's sole ability to define doctrine and ultimately interpret itself. Luther's exposure to Nominalism, Renaissance humanism, German mysticism, as well as his hermeneutical development all coalesced to facilitate this rediscovery. Nevertheless, Luther never presumed to assume the mantle of self-imposed Reformer like many of the Radical and Reformed enthusiasts (*Schwärmer*). He countered the imperial edict against him by reminding all that the church made him obtain a doctorate in theology, the oaths of which obliged him to faithfully teach the Sacred Scriptures to the church.⁴⁴

Since God's Word is a manifestation of the Eternal Word (Christ), God's Word is not only the sole means of regeneration, but it is also solely authoritative, sufficient, perfect, and true.⁴⁵ This is why for Luther *Sola Scriptura* is inextricably bound with *Solus Christus*. After all, the fundamental canonical test for Luther was "what drives Christ" (*was Christum treibet*), although he never understood this in a Gospel reductionist fashion.⁴⁶ "It was not until the last

⁴³ Council of Trent, Session IV (*Decrees*, 2:663–65); January 26, 1564 Bull of Confirmation (Denzinger, *Compendium*, [no. 1847–50]) 431–33). Heinrich Denzinger, *Compendium of Creeds, Definition, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Peter Hünemann, Robert Fastiggi, and Anne Englund Nash, 43rd ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012).

⁴⁴ "However, I, Dr. Martinus, have been called to this work and was compelled to become a doctor, without any initiative on my own, but out of pure obedience. Then I had to accept the office of doctor and swear a vow to my most beloved Holy Scriptures that I would preach and teach them faithfully and purely. While engaged in this kind of teaching, the papacy crossed my path and wanted to hinder me in it. How it has fared is obvious to all, and it will fare still worse. It shall not hinder me. In God's name and call I shall walk on the lion and the adder, and tread on the young lion and the dragon with my feet. And this which has been begun during my lifetime will be completed after my death. St. John Huss prophesied of me when he wrote from his prison in Bohemia, 'They will roast a goose now (for 'Huss' means 'a goose'), but after a hundred years they will hear a swan sing, and him they will endure.' And this is the way it will be, if God wills." Luther, "Commentary on the Alleged Imperial Edict, 1531" in WA, 30/3:386–87 (LW, 34:103).

⁴⁵ "Thus, God, too, from all eternity has a Word, a speech, a thought, or a conversation with Himself in his divine heart, unknown to the angels and human beings. This is called His Word. From eternity He was within God's paternal heart, and through him God resolved to create heaven and earth." Luther, "Sermons on John 1 and 2, 1537–38" in WA, 46:544 (LW, 22:9). "Today Christ is still present to some, but to others He is still to come. To believers He is present and has come; to unbelievers He has not yet come and does not help them. But if they hear His Word and believe, Christ becomes present to them, justifies and saves them." Luther, "Lectures on Galatians, 1535" WA, 40/1:379 (LW, 26:240). "Not only the words, but also the expression is divine which the Holy Spirit and Scripture employ." Luther, "Commentary on the Psalms of Degrees, 1540" in WA, 40/3:254.

⁴⁶ Luther, "Prefaces to the New Testament, 1546 (1522)," in WA DB, 7:384 (LW, 35:396). See also David W. Lotz, "Luther and *Sola Scriptura*" in *And Every Tongue Confess: Essays in Honor of Norman Nagel on the Occasion of His Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Gerald S. Krispin and Jon D. Vieker (Dearborn: The Nagel Festschrift Committee, 1990), 25–63; David W. Lotz, "The Proclamation of the Word in Luther's Thought" *Word & World* 3 (Fall 1983): 344–54; David W. Lotz, "Sola Scriptura: Luther on Biblical Authority" *Interpretation* 35, no. 3 (1981): 258–73; Lewis Spitz, "Luther's *Sola Scriptura*," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 31, no. 12 (1960): 740–45.

half of 1519 and early 1520, in connection with his debate at Leipzig with Johann Eck and its immediate aftermath, that Luther first arrived at his *sola scriptura*; and it was not until late 1520 and early 1521 that he articulated this position in detail and depth.⁴⁷ In his 1513–15 *Lectures on the Psalms*, Professor Luther insisted, “She [church] is captive to the authority of Scripture and does not teach anything but the Word of God.”⁴⁸ In contrast to the 1517 *Disputation on Scholastic Theology*, the much milder 1517 *Ninety-Five Theses*, which catapulted Luther on the world stage and struck at an expanding means of papal revenue, really only questioned the pope’s pastoral prudence. The theology of indulgences was still unclear and indulgences had not yet become dogma.⁴⁹ Still well within the norms of the day, Luther remarks in a May 9, 1518 letter to his Erfurt arts professor Jodokus Trutfetter (d. 1519) that it was his former Ockhamist teacher who first taught him “the canonical books alone deserve faith” (*solis canonicis deberi fidem*) and that all others only merit “opinion” (*iudicium*), as Augustine, Paul, and John prescribe.⁵⁰

His 1518 *Explanation of the Ninety-Five Theses* would begin to question papal infallibility and the historicity of primacy, but not the authority of the church itself.⁵¹ When a somewhat sympathetic Dominican Cardinal Cajetan (1480–1547) pressed Luther at Augsburg on the subject of papal authority, Luther retorted, “Panormitanus, too, in his edition of the *Decretals*, shows that in matters of faith not only is a general council above the pope, but also any believer, provided he used better authority or reason than the pope just as Paul does with Peter in Gal. 2[:14].”⁵² The papal court theologian and Dominican Sylvester Prierias (1456–1523) attacked the *Ninety-Five Theses* in 1518. Luther opens this rebuttal with Galatians 1:8: “But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed” (ESV). He supports the catholicity of Scripture’s sufficiency with Augustine’s (354–430) letter to Jerome (347–419), stating, “I only appeal to these books which are called canonical, I give these honor because I most firmly believe none of their authors have erred.” He even posits “pope and council could err,” but he still maintains that the Roman church “has never contradicted the true faith by any of its decrees.”⁵³

Already by this time a former friend of Luther’s, the Ingolstadt theology professor Johann Eck (1486–1543), had concluded that Luther was a Bohemian heretic (Hussite). Eck set out to expose Luther as a Hussite in the city whose university was founded as an anti-Hussite school. He claimed victory at the 1519 Leipzig Debate when he got Luther to confess that the Council of Constance had erred when it condemned many of the teachings of Jan Hus (1370/71–1415).

⁴⁷ Lotz, “Luther and *Sola Scriptura*,” 251.

⁴⁸ Luther, WA, 3:261 (LW, 10:219).

⁴⁹ Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 43. Luther did not believe that his rejection of scholasticism and emerging two kinds of righteousness contradicted the consensus of the catholic church or its teachers in his “Disputation on Scholastic Theology, 1517” in WA, 1:228 (LW, 31:16).

⁵⁰ Luther, WA BR, 1:171.

⁵¹ “It makes no difference to me what pleases or displeases the pope. He is a human being just like the rest of us. There have been many popes who have been pleased not only with errors and vices, but even with horrible things. I listen to the pope as pope, that is, when he speaks in and according to canons, or when he makes a decision in accordance with a general council. I do not listen to him, however, when he speaks his own mind. In this way I am not compelled to say with certain people who hardly know the teachings of Christ that the horrible murders committed by Julius II among Christians might have been blessings by which he demonstrated to the flock of Christ that he was a true shepherd.” Luther, WA, 1:582 (LW, 31:171). See also Luther, WA, 1:571, 529–30 (LW, 31:152, 83).

⁵² Luther, Proceedings at Augsburg, 1518” in WA, 2:10 (LW, 31:265–66).

⁵³ Luther, “Dialogue on the Authority of the Pope, 1518,” in WA, 1:647, 656, 662.

In rebuttal I [Luther] brought up the Greek Christians during the past thousand years, and also the ancient church fathers, who had not been under the authority of the Roman pontiff, although I did not deny the primacy of honor due to the pope. Finally we also debated the authority of a council. I publically acknowledge that some articles had been wrongly condemned [by the Council of Constance], articles which had been taught in plain and clear words by Paul, Augustine, and even Christ himself. At this point the adder swelled up, exaggerated my crime, and nearly went insane in his adulation of the Leipzig audience. I proved by the words of the council itself that not all the articles which it condemned were actually heretical and erroneous.⁵⁴

At that moment, Luther's *Sola Scriptura* had finally moved beyond the norms of the medieval Latin church. This admission was so decisive for the Gospel because it meant that neither pope, magisterium, tradition, nor council could overturn the rediscovery of passive righteousness.

The 1520 programmatic writings, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, the *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, and the *Freedom of a Christian*, soon followed, laying out his early program for reforming the church. Next, Luther crowned his rediscovered *Sola Scriptura* with a decisive refutation of the subjugation of Scripture to any interpreter following the arrival of the bull of excommunication.

The judgments of Scripture must decide the issue, and this cannot be done unless we accord Scripture the first place (*principem locum*) in everything concerning the fathers, so that Scripture itself might be through itself the most certain, the most accessible, the most clear, serving as its own interpreter, (*per se certissima, apertissima, sui ipsius interpretis*), testing, judging, and illuminating every word of everyone.... I do not wish to be deemed more learned than all, but I wish for Scripture alone to reign (*solam scripturam regnare*); nor do I wish it be interpreted by my spirit or that of any other man, but I wish it to be understood through itself and by its own spirit (*per seipsam et suo spiritu*).⁵⁵

All of this prepared Luther for the moment when his commitment to *Sola Scriptura* would really be put to the test. At the 1521 Diet of Worms, he did not back down, he did not recant. Rather he boldly confessed:

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscious in captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. "I cannot do otherwise, here I stand, may God help me, Amen."⁵⁶

Yet Luther had hardly begun translating the Bible from his Patmos at Wartburg when the emerging Radical and Reformed movements began to twist *Sola Scriptura*, but still claimed to adhere to it. His colleague Andreas Karlstadt (ca. 1477–1541) disturbed the Wittenbergers by advancing liturgical reforms that forbade any traditions and practices that were not expressly found in Scripture. This regulative principle of worship,⁵⁷ a mark of the Radical and Reformed

⁵⁴ Luther, "The Leipzig Debate, 1519" in WA BR, 420–24 (LW, 31:322)

⁵⁵ Luther, "Vindication of All Articles of Luther Condemned by the Recent Bull of Leo X, 1521" in Luther, WA, 7:97–99. See also Luther's "Response to the Book of Ambrosius Catharinus Defending Silvester Prierias, 1521" in WA, 7:722, on the Gospel bearing and rearing the church.

⁵⁶ Luther, "Luther at the Diet of Worms, 1521" in WA, 7:838 (LW, 32:112).

⁵⁷ John Calvin later articulated the concept as follows: "I know how difficult it is to persuade the world that God disapproves of all modes of worship not expressly sanctioned by his Word. The opposite

Reformations, undermined Christian freedom and reinterpreted *Sola Scriptura* as a prohibition of the use of even good church traditions that supported the Gospel. This misunderstanding of *Sola Scriptura* meant that crosses, images, vestments, chant, etc., all had to go. Luther brought calm to the situation by articulating a key Pauline distinction in his famous 1522 *Invocavit Sermons*.

Here one can see that you do not have the Spirit, even though you have a deep knowledge of the Scriptures. Take note of these two things, “must” and “free.” The “must” is that which necessity requires, and which must ever be unyielding; as, for instance, the faith, which I shall never permit any one to take away from me, but must always keep in my heart and freely confess before every one. But “free” is that in which I have a choice, and may use or not, yet in such a way that it profit my brother and not me. Now do not make a “must” out of what is “free,” as you have done, so that you may not be called to account for those who were led astray by your loveless exercise of liberty.⁵⁸

The Radical and Reformed misconstruing of such fundamental hermeneutical distinctions as faith and reason, spirit and letter, spirit and flesh, natural and mosaic law, Law and Gospel, passive and active righteousness, the freedom and servitude of the Christian, two kingdoms, etc. all illustrated why Luther did not “wish [Scripture] be interpreted by [his] spirit or that of any other man, but [he] wish[ed] it to be understood through itself and by its own spirit (*per seipsam et suo spiritu*).”⁵⁹ Of all of these interpretative disagreements between them and Luther, it may surprise one to see him charge the Radicals and the Reformed with erring on the relationship between faith and reason. They shared many of Luther’s criticisms of the scholastics. Still Luther and Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531), a Swiss Reformed theologian, reached an impasse on the real presence at the 1529 Marburg Colloquy. Since Zwingli had reasoned that a finite body could not be present in more than one place, he refused to accept Scripture’s teaching that Christ’s body and blood are truly present in the Lord’s Supper. Never lacking in rhetorical know-how, Luther drove home the point that Scripture’s own hermeneutics decide doctrine (not human reason): “At this point Luther removed the velvet cloth and showed him the passage, ‘This is my body,’ which he had written for himself on the table with chalk, and said: ‘Here is our Scripture passage. You have not yet wrestled it away from us, as you volunteered to do. We have no need of another passage.’”⁶⁰

The last way that Luther’s opponents misconstrued *Sola Scriptura* was the old notion that the external Word was merely a springboard to some ever-expanding and new revelation of the inner Word. Some even thought that the Spirit could be obtained apart from God’s Word altogether. Luther flat out rejected such a cabalistic view. Just as God’s Word in oral, written, and sacramental forms was the sole means of the Spirit’s re-creative passive righteousness, so too there is no revelation beyond that expressed in the external Word.

persuasion which cleaves to them, being seated, as it were, in their bones and marrow, is, that whatever they do has in itself a sufficient sanction, provided it exhibits some kind of zeal for the honour of God. But since God not only regards as fruitless, but also plainly abominates, whatever we undertake from zeal to His worship, if at variance with His command, what do we gain by a contrary course?” John Calvin, “The Necessity of Reforming the Church, 1543” in *Ioannis Calvini Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, ed. Guilielmus Baum et al. (Braunschweig: C.A. Schwetschke, 1863–1900), 6:461; Calvin, *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, ed. Henry Beveridge and Jules Bonnet, trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2009), 1:198.

⁵⁸ Luther, “Eight Sermons at Wittenberg, 1522” in Luther WA, 10/3:10–11 (LW, 51:74).

⁵⁹ Luther, WA, 7:97–99.

⁶⁰ Luther, “Marburg Colloquy and Marburg Articles, 1529” in WA, 30/3:145 (LW, 38:67).

In these matters, which concern the spoken, external Word, it must be firmly maintained that God gives no one his Spirit or grace apart from the external Word which goes before. We say this to protect ourselves from the enthusiasts, that is, “the spirits,” who boast they have the Spirit apart from and before contact with the Word. On this basis, they judge, interpret, and twist the Scriptures or oral Word according to their pleasure. Müntzer did this, and there are still many doing this today, who set themselves up as shrewd judges between the spirit and the letter without knowing what they say or teach. The papacy is also purely religious raving in that the pope boasts that “all laws are in the shrine of his heart,” and that what he decides and commands in his churches is supposed to be Spirit and law—even when it is above and contrary to the Scriptures or spoken Word.... Everything that boast of being from the Spirit apart from such a Word and Sacrament is of the devil.⁶¹

Despite the manifold misunderstandings of *Sola Scriptura*, Luther’s confidence in the power of God’s Word to accomplish what God’s desires (Isaiah 55:11) only grew. This never found more humorous expression than in 1522 *Sermon on Monday after Invocavit*: “I simply taught, preached, and wrote God’s Word, otherwise I did nothing. And while I slept [cf. Mark 4:26–29], or drank Wittenberg beer with my friends Philip and Amsdorf, the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that no prince or emperor ever inflicted such losses upon it. I did nothing; the Word did everything.”⁶² In the remaining years of his life, Luther had the opportunity to unpack the significance of the performative nature of God’s Word that he rediscovered in the pivotal years of his Reformation breakthrough.

To start, Luther recognized that God’s Word is the life-creating manifestation of the Eternal Word, Jesus Christ. “Thus we see that the Holy Spirit also has His own language and way of expression, namely, that God, by speaking, created all things and worked through his Word, and that all His works are some words of God, created by the uncreated Word.”⁶³ This divine language did not merely describe reality, it brought forth all things forensically, that is, God’s declaration constituted all things out of nothing. “‘Let there be light’ are the words of God, not Moses; this means that they are realities. For God calls into existence the things which do not exist (Rom. 4:17). He does not speak grammatical words; He speaks true and existent realities. Accordingly, that which among us has the sound of a word is a reality with God. Thus sun, moon, heaven, earth, Peter, Paul, I, you, etc.—we are all words of God....”⁶⁴

Luther explains the nature of divine language further, indicating that in God’s Word the linguistic sign/utterance bestows that which it expresses.⁶⁵ “Here we must observe the Hebrew way of expression. For when Scripture says that God speaks, it understands a word related to a real thing (*verbum reale*) or action, not just a sound, as ours is.”⁶⁶ He goes on to stress how important an understanding of the performative nature of God’s Word is for a proper understanding of Scripture. “This manner of speaking, however, is to be found only in the sacred language. I often admonish the youth to learn it (though almost in vain), for a knowledge

⁶¹ SA, III, VIII, 3–5, 10 (BSELK 770–73; BC 322–23). See also Luther, WA, 36:500–501 (LW, 28:76–77).

⁶² Luther, WA, 10/3:18–19 (LW, 51:77).

⁶³ Luther, “Lectures on Genesis, 1535–45” in WA, 42:35 (LW, 1:47).

⁶⁴ Luther, “Lectures on Genesis, 1535–45” in WA, 42:17 (LW, 1:21–22).

⁶⁵ For studies on Luther and language, see Johannes von Lüpke, “Luther’s Use of Language,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther’s Theology*, ed. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and Lubomír Batka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 143–55; Birgit Stolt, *Martin Luthers Rhetorik des Herzens* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).

⁶⁶ Luther, “Lecture on Psalm 2, 1532” in WA, 40/2:230 (LW, 12:32). See also Luther, WA TR, 4:666.

of it adds remarkably to the ability of explaining the Scriptures. It was taken from Moses; in the first chapter of Genesis, when he refers to establishing all things out of nothing....”⁶⁷

Luther emphasizes the importance of understanding the performative nature of God’s Word not only so that pastors have confidence that God’s Word does what it says, but also so that hearers can rest assured of the reality of their salvation.

In Holy Scripture, however, there are real blessings. They are more than mere wishes. They state facts and are effective. They actually bestow and bring what the words say. We also have blessings of this kind in the New Testament through Christ’s priesthood, which is our blessing, when I say: “Receive the absolution of your sins.” If I said: “Would that your sins were forgiven you; would that you were pious and in God’s grace!” or “I wish you grace, mercy, the eternal kingdom, and deliverance from your sins,” this could be called a blessing of love. But the blessing of a promise, of faith, and of a gift that is at hand is this: “I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; that is, I reconcile your soul to God, remove from you God’s wrath and displeasure, put you in His grace, and give you the inheritance of eternal life and the kingdom of heaven.” All of these things have the power to grant you forgiveness immediately and truly if you believe, for they are not our works; they are God’s works through our ministry. Accordingly, they are not blessings that express wishes; they are blessings that have the power to bestow. When I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, it is just as if I were saying: “I am snatching you from the hands of the devil and bringing you to God, and I am doing this truly and in fact.”⁶⁸

In his *Lectures on Jonah*, Luther calls his reader to reflect on the turn of events that God’s Word brought about. If God’s Word had such power and effect in pagan Nineveh, it will certainly do no less today. “We are taught in this account how powerful, active, and effective God’s Word is. It cannot be preached in vain so that it fails to produce, and that in plain sight. If we will think about this account in terms of the power and effect of the Word, the story becomes wonderful and full of comfort”⁶⁹

It is clear that Luther’s insights into God’s Word are no less exciting today than they were five hundred years ago. There is certainly many more facets of this doctrine that a twenty-first century Lutheran could elucidate, but a fuller analysis of *Sola Scriptura* is beyond the scope of this essay. Hopefully, the essay has peaked interest and provided a foundation for further study. We close with the words from U. V. Koren’s *Church Factions among Our People in America* (1877).

Still, what indescribable glory there is in faith’s childlike and invincible assurance about “*what God said*.” We have [the task] of stirring up our congregations sincerely and joyfully to apply to themselves our Synod’s [Synod of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America] motto: GEGRAPTAI, that is, “*It is written*” (*GEGRAPTAI, d. e. “Der er skrevet”*). The history of the Lutheran church will come to our aid here, and God be praised, the history of our own little church body also gives us proofs of the blessings of not tolerating any concession in doctrine even if we also should suffer because of it.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Luther, “Lecture on Psalm 2, 1532” in WA, 40/2:231 (LW, 12:32–33).

⁶⁸ Luther, “Lectures on Genesis, 1535–45” in WA, 42:525 (LW, 5:140).

⁶⁹ Luther, “Lectures on Jonah, 1525” in WA, 13:242 (LW, 19:4).

⁷⁰ U. V. Koren, *Samlede Skrifter*, ed. Paul Koren (Decorah: Lutheran Publishing House, 1911–12), 2:148; U. V. Koren, *U. V. Koren’s Works*, ed. Mark DeGarmeaux, trans. Mark Degarmeaux et al. (Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 2013–17), 2:167–68.

PROCLAIM THE WONDERS GOD HAS DONE: SOLA GRATIA

Rev. Tony Pittenger

Convention Pages:

President Moldstad asked if I'd start things off with a question or two specifically for you. (Because the subject of this talk is very specifically for you.) So here is my question: When you think of what you know about God's grace, which Marvel or D.C. superhero might best represent you?

Batman? Captain America? The Hulk?



Rev. Tony Pittenger

— "Tales of Suspense", Issue #39, March 1963

As we begin in this way I should also formally introduce myself. My name is Tony Stark, yes; Tony Stark.

Tony Stark was made famous first through Marvel comic books and more recently through the Marvel Movie franchise.

An explosion has embedded shrapnel in Tony's chest, inches, possibly millimeters, from slicing his heart to bits. And that shrapnel is moving closer. A fraction of space or time is all that stands between him and death.

A cough may do it. A trip and fall could finish him off. A rush of adrenalin, joy, laughter, pleasure—these things could do it as well.

I know what you're thinking; just get it removed; no, it is too close to the heart. The world's best doctors have looked and x-rayed and researched and consulted ... there is nothing they can do.

Again Dear Members and Friends of our dear ELS, I am Tony Stark except I have a condition worse than the one described in comic lore. For me it's not metal. (Would that it were!) Would that my condition were only shrapnel seeking out my heart!

For me it's far worse. For me it's sin. Sin is embedded within me, that is within my flesh. My story is nowhere near as exciting as an explosion. For me it was just a piece of fruit hanging from a tree, one tree forbidden where millions were created for the eating.

But they took the forbidden one, and while that is a story you all know, that's how sin became embedded within me. Is it entwined in my DNA? Faultily coded and replicated in my genes? Those things are beyond me, but this I know: *A failing breath and I, in death's strong grasp may lie.*

That sin is always there. Sometimes it whispers to me and sometimes it shouts at me. It cozies up beside me pretending to be my friend and other times it roars at me to frighten me into compliance.

Genesis 2:16–17, 3:6, 3:17, 3:19 (ESV)

⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

³⁴ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate

³¹⁷ And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life ¹⁹ By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Genesis 5:3 (ESV)

³ When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

Psalms 51:5 (ESV)

⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

ELH 252:3

Death doth pursue me all the way; Nowhere I rest securely. He comes by night, he comes by day, and takes his prey most surely. *A failing breath and I, in death's strong grasp may lie, to face eternity for aye. Death doth pursue me all the way.*

No matter how, it is always there, only millimeters and seconds away from finishing me off and it draws closer with each passing day.

I might slip on the ice, a twister from a summer storm might reach down and do it. I might be a victim of a violent crime or it might be the consequence of my cholesterol laden snacks. It could happen in perhaps a billion different ways but in the end how won't really matter. That sin, embedded in my flesh, has doomed me.

Death doth pursue me all the way.

And don't even suggest operating on it. It won't work. It isn't in my hand or foot where I could lop off an appendage and be clean. Again, would that it were! Right?! Would that I could undergo some drastic surgical procedure and though I be lame or halt or stumble without depth perception at least I could be free of this curse to enter eternal life!

Because I'd do it! I am a coward at heart but still I'd do this. I'd work my tail off and save my money and after I'd recovered I'd go back to school and get my medical degree so that I could open a shop for salvation-surgery. You and I, we could go in as partners! Think of the millions we'd make! Filthy rich! Have anything we wanted...

And there you see for yourself, greed is just one of the many sins so deeply embedded that I naturally "go there." That enmeshed sin makes my heart evil from youth.

My sin's inoperable. There is absolutely nothing I nor any other person can do. I am Tony Stark.

But you've no doubt noticed that while sin has rendered me a wretched man and while my condition is terminal, I am standing before you alive! And if you grew up reading the comics, or more recently watching the movies, you know that Tony Stark is not dead either. Even though by all rights he and I should be, we're not.

Tony's got this thing. It was called a "magnetic field generator." As of late it's been called an "arc reactor." No matter. It's this thing which is also embedded in his chest. And this outside, alien, external thing has stopped the progression of that shrapnel. Stopped it in its tracks.

Tony Stark should be dead and he would be dead if not for that external thing. That thing is the only reason he is alive. Remove it, break it, run it out of power, tamper with it, and he is dead; those shards

Ecclesiastes 3:19–20 (ESV)

⁹ For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity.²⁰ All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return.

ELH 252:3

Death doth pursue me all the way; Nowhere I rest securely. He comes by night, he comes by day, and takes his prey most surely. *A failing breath and I, in death's strong grasp may lie, to face eternity for aye. Death doth pursue me all the way.*

Matthew 18:8–9 (ESV)

⁸ And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. ⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

Matthew 19:16 (ESV)

⁶ And behold, a man came up to him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"

Acts 8:18–19 (ESV)

⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ⁹ saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

Genesis 8:21 (ESV)

²¹ And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done.

Romans 7:18 (ESV)

⁸ For I know that *nothing* good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.

Romans 7:24 (ESV)

² *Wretched man that I am!* Who will deliver me from this body of death?

of metal shred his heart and he is dead before he hits the floor.

But so long as that thing remains he does not die. His impending death is held in suspension even if just a hair's breadth remains between him and his doom. With that thing the shrapnel does not do what shrapnel is intended to do.

And now that I've properly introduced myself we have finally arrived at the subject for today. Because just as for me it's not shrapnel but rather sin—neither for me is it a magnetic field generator or arc reactor.

For me it is grace. By grace I have been saved and it is the only thing keeping me alive. The only thing—grace alone—*sola gratia*. Separate me from grace, remove grace, mingle grace with anything else—anything else—with my works, with my efforts, with my goodness, my wishes, my intentions, my promises to be a better person tomorrow... tamper with grace, by adding any of my contributions or any of yours, or take away from grace—and grace does not work as designed. Instead, my sin does what Satan intended it to do; damning me to hell.

To face eternity for aye, death doth pursue me all the way.

But here I stand (after all, I can do no other). Here I stand not dead and not damned; I woke this morning and I stand here because of grace. Incredible as this sounds, it is what Scripture teaches on the matter concerning me.

Grace alone. *Sola gratia*. *Sola scriptura*. *Sola fide*. These three go hand-in-hand-in-hand.

"Grace alone." Simple right? "Yes," but "no." *Sola gratia* quickly becomes complex stuff. Our reason is what complicates it; our own pride, our own confidence in ourselves and in our potential... Or it might be fear—fear that someone might misuse this grace. No matter how, man naturally takes grace and lays almost anything on hand alongside it. We lay claim to merit by clinging firmly to the law. The people in Galatia weren't unique.

These *solas* are the three rallying cries from Luther's "uncovering" of Scripture and what Scripture teaches. And you know his struggles prior to finding these three gems lying there in Scripture's pages. You know his guilt, his fear, his toil and labor, his resentment toward God, and then "Uh oh!" more guilt, more fear, more toil. Resentment grew into anger and even into hatred...

Ephesians 2:5 (ESV)

⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.

Romans 5:15 (ESV)

⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.

Romans 11:6 (ESV)

⁶ But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

ELH 252:3

Death doth pursue me all the way; Nowhere I rest securely. He comes by night, he comes by day, and takes his prey most surely. A failing breath and I, in death's strong grasp may lie, to face eternity for aye. Death doth pursue me all the way.

ELH 226:1

By grace I'm saved, grace free and boundless; My soul, believe and doubt it not. Why stagger at this word of promise? Hath Scripture ever falsehood taught? Nay; then this word must true remain; By grace thou, too, shalt heav'n obtain.

ELH 226:2

By grace! None dare lay claim to merit; Our works and conduct have no worth. God in His love sent our Redeemer, Christ Jesus, to this sinful earth; His death did for our sins atone, And we are saved by grace alone.

Galatians 2:21 (ESV)

²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Galatians 5:4 (ESV)

You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

For we are so far from having merited anything that even before this time we hated God. For all our efforts, especially those with which we strive to merit grace, are inadequate and amount to nothing.

Luther, M. (1999). *Luther's works, vol. 30: The Catholic Epistles*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 30, pp. 294–295). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

What Luther found in Scripture was simple when contrasted with what he had been taught about grace. To the right is the subject of “grace” from the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. First is their own definition, the subsequent outline is taken from the twenty pages following.

As we scratch the surface let me call attention to two things which should help understand Luther’s predicament and should keep us on our task of *sola gratia*.

First look at *I. Actual Grace, B. Properties, 2. Gratuity*. When they speak and teach of merit, they mean exactly what it sounds like: some people have earned or deserved more of God’s grace than others. So too prayer. You should expect to receive more grace if you pray more than others. Again with preparation; you can prepare yourself to receive God’s grace by doing your own housecleaning. You could clean up your language, stop looking at other women (or other men), and you could give more to charity. Do these things and you can expect to receive Actual Grace in the same way the attentive and cheerful waitress expects a big tip (gratuity) from her patrons.

Luther was far too honest for this. He knew his preparatory efforts, prayers, and merit weren’t from the heart. In his conscience he knew that his smile and sugary talk toward God were fake. Luther was the crabby waitress who seems pleasant to your face but then goes into the back and complains about you (or God), the demanding customers at Table 5.

Now look at *II. Sanctifying Grace, C. Characteristics of Sanctifying Grace*. This is the grace that actually saves a person but you see that it is uncertain. This account referenced in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* lays it out clearly:

Pope Gregory the Great was asked by a pious lady of the court, named Georgia, to say what was the state of her soul. He replied that she was putting to him a difficult and useless question, which he could not answer. Because God had not vouchsafed to him any revelation concerning the state of her soul, and only after death could she have any certain knowledge of the forgiveness of her sins.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol VI Fathers—Gregory, “GRACE” (pg. 708) Robert Appleton Company 1909

Gregory’s answer contrasts sharply with what Paul and Silas told a pagan jailer one shaky night.

THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA:

grace— /grās/ “in general, a supernatural gift of God to intellectual creatures (men, angels) for their salutary acts or a state of holiness.”

I. Actual Grace

A. Kinds

1. Graces of the Intellect
2. Graces of the Will
 - a. Preventing Grace and Cooperating Grace
 - b. Efficacious Grace and Merely Sufficient Grace
3. Graces of the Sensitive Faculties

B. Properties

1. Necessity. Defended against:
 - a. Protestantism and Jansenism
 - b. Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism

2. Gratuity

- a. Merit
- b. Prayer
- c. Preparation

3. Universality

- a. Antecedent Will
- b. Sufficient Grace for:
 - i. Just
 - ii. Sinners
 - iii. Infidels

II. Sanctifying Grace

A. Preparation for Sanctifying Grace / Justification

1. Conflict of Fiduciary Faith of Protestants
2. Conflict of Sola Fides Doctrine of Protestants
3. Non-Imputation Theory of Protestants
4. Imputation Theory of Protestants

B. Nature of Sanctifying Grace

1. Inner Nature of Sanctifying Grace
2. Formal Operations of Sanctifying Grace
3. Supernatural Retinue of Sanctifying Grace

C. Characteristics of Sanctifying Grace

1. Catholic
 - a. Uncertainty
 - b. Inequality
 - c. Amissibility
2. Protestant
 - a. Absolute Certainty
 - b. Complete Equality of All Justified
 - c. Unforfeiteableness

The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol VI Fathers—Gregory, “GRACE” (pp. 689–709) Robert Appleton Company 1909

Acts 16:30–31 (ESV)

³⁰ Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

“What must I do?”

“Believe in the Lord Jesus.”

Grace alone is Christ alone. His work. His substitution. His resurrection. *Favor Dei propter Christum*.

The outline also teaches that Sanctifying Grace (saving grace) is distributed with inequality. This is explained because Rome realizes that the only other alternative is “that we are all equal to Mary the Mother of God and just as holy as she.” Remember: This is their quote, their fear.

Admissibility is the thought that grace can be lost; you might just wake up tomorrow and find that it is gone.

This was the “grace” Luther was raised with (or lack of it), though it hadn’t been systematized in this kind of detail. What we find in the Catholic Encyclopedia is largely the Council of Trent’s response to Luther.

In Scripture (alone) Luther found that even Mary had to be saved by grace. Therefore you and the Blessed Virgin are equal in God’s eyes!

Grace. It is taught in Scripture, but not in a clinical sense. Rather it is something “seen” in Scriptural accounts and something known in Scripture’s declarations. First, I’ll get some of that “clinical” material out of the way, then I hope to show you what I mean about “seeing/known” grace in Scripture’s declarations...

In the Old Testament we usually find it as the translation of the Hebrew word חֵן.

In the New Testament it is often the Greek word χάρις.

When, in both Old and New, these words are not translated as “grace” they are often: “love, favor, kindness, goodness, goodwill, gift”.

Saint Paul uses some form of the word χάρις more than 70 times in his writings, more than 20 times he uses the word along with the word “give, gave”, or “given.” “Grace given to me” seems to be a particular favorite of his. (No surprise when we remember that he’s the guy who woke up one morning planning on persecuting the Church of Christ and grace had “everything” to do with how differently that day ended.)

God’s love because of Christ

“If man, as the Protestant theory of justification teaches, is justified by faith alone, by the external justice of Christ, or God, the conclusion which Martin Luther (*Sermo de Nat. Mariae*) drew must follow, namely that ‘we are all equal to Mary the Mother of God and just as holy as she.’”

The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol VI Fathers—
Gregory: “GRACE” (pg. 708) Robert
Appleton Company 1909

“But, in consequence of modern controversies regarding grace, it has become usual and necessary in theology to draw a sharper distinction between the transient help to act (actual grace) and the permanent state of grace (sanctifying grace).”

The Catholic Encyclopedia Vol VI Fathers—
Gregory: “GRACE” (pg. 689) Robert Appleton
Company 1909

Romans 3:23–24 (ESV)

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Esther 2:17 (ESV)

⁷ the king loved Esther more than all the women, and she won grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Psalms 45:2 (ESV)

² You are the most handsome of the sons of men; grace is poured upon your lips; therefore God has blessed you forever.

Psalms 86:6 (ESV)

⁶ Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; listen to my plea for grace.

Jeremiah 31:2 (ESV)

² Thus says the Lord: “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest.

Zechariah 4:7 (ESV)

⁷ Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’

χάριτος τῆς δοθείσης μοι
 χάριν τὴν δοθείσάν μοι
 χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθείσάν μοι
 =

Even you who do not read Greek can see the consistency. *δοθείσης*, *δοθείσάν* is “give”. It’s not “won”, not “earned”, not “deserved, merited, owed,” or any other such personal involvement. “Give”, the recipient remains passive; he/they/we, only receiving the gift.

Don’t fail to see what is, and what isn’t, happening. The Bible is not a dictionary we open to find the precise definition of the word. We come to know grace through Scripture’s declarations about it and through its stories which display it.

(Think of the family dog. The zoologist could dissect him, measure his cranial capacity, ascertain the mass of his heart, etc. You, on the other hand, have hunted pheasant with him, scratched behind his ears with his head plopped in your lap, and slept soundly all night because he remained alert for intruders. You know this dog best. That is the sense of how we “know” grace...

- God calls to the sinners cowering behind their fig leaves, not to give them what they deserve, but to tell them about the Seed Born of Woman who would crush the serpent’s head.
- God makes a blood covenant with Abraham but it is a one-sided covenant. Father Abraham is a passive recipient/observer.
- The Shepherd simply searches for His lamb until He finds it and on the way home the only talk heard is talk of celebrating and rejoicing. He has no lecture about what a stupid lamb she was to wander so far off in the first place and how He hopes she’s really learned a lesson *this* time because this was a real inconvenience for Him.
- Jesus looks up into the sycamore tree and simply tells Zacchaeus, “I must stay at your house today.”
- The Lost-and-Dead Son returns home to find his Father had been scanning the horizon lo these many weeks/months/years simply because the Father longed for at least one more chance to show love to His child.
- And when that Father won’t even hear the foolish plans the son has for working and earning his keep, but rushes to restore the

Romans 12:3 (ESV)

³ For by the *grace* given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

Galatians 2:9 (ESV)

⁹ and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the *grace* that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

I Corinthians 3:10 (ESV)

⁰ According to the *grace* of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it.

Genesis 3

Genesis 15

Luke 15:1–7

Luke 19:1–10

Luke 15:1–2, 11–20

Luke 15:1–2, 21–24

son to his place and to dress him in Dad's best, we see what grace looks like in a home and in a family.

- And because Saul woke up one morning on the road to Damascus breathing out threats against God's Church with every intention of that day being another day of persecuting Christ, but because that day ended oh so differently than he intended and oh so graciously different than Saul deserved, St. Paul is well-qualified to tell us that grace is a gift given and unearned so that none of us can boast about ourselves.

That's just a small sampling of Scripture's presentation of grace. Our confessions too speak of it often. What follows are just a few instances:

- "It is also taught among us that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith."
- "All ordinances and traditions instituted by men for the purpose of propitiating God and earning grace are contrary to the Gospel."
- "Without the grace, help, and activity of the Holy Spirit man is not capable of making himself acceptable to God."

Acts 9:1–19

Ephesians 2:4–9 (ESV)

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Tappert, T. G. (Ed.). (1959). *The Book of Concord the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. (Augsburg Confession, Article IV: Justification p. 30). Philadelphia: Mühlenberg Press.

Moreover it is taught that all ordinances and traditions instituted by men for the purpose of propitiating God and earning grace are contrary to the Gospel and the teaching about faith in Christ.

Tappert, T. G. (Ed.). (1959). *The Book of Concord the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. (Augsburg Confession, Article XV: Ecclesiastical Rites p. 36). Philadelphia: Mühlenberg Press.

But without the grace, help, and activity of the Holy Spirit man is not capable of making himself acceptable to God, of fearing God and believing in God with his whole heart, or of expelling inborn evil lusts from his heart.

Tappert, T. G. (Ed.). (1959). *The Book of Concord the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. (Augsburg Confession, Article XVIII: Free Will p. 39). Philadelphia: Mühlenberg Press.

And because grace is given through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ and because Grace is Christ, it should not surprise us that there is no end to Luther's comments about it.

- "Forget about cowl, tonsure, rope, etc., and consider grace alone."
- "Christ has regard for no one because of his pile of guldens, his beauty, his wisdom, his golden hair, or because he wears a garment embroidered in gold or silver, or a gray coat. No, it is grace alone that counts."
- "These two words, "grace" and "peace," contain a summary of all of Christianity. Grace contains the forgiveness of sins, a joyful peace, and a quiet conscience. But peace is impossible unless sin has first been forgiven, for the Law accuses and terrifies the conscience on account of sin. And the sin that the conscience feels cannot be removed by pilgrimages, vigils, labors, efforts, vows, or any other works; in fact, sin is increased by works. The more we work and sweat to extricate ourselves from sin, the worse off we are. For *there is no way to remove sin except by grace. This deserves careful notice. For the words are easy; but in temptation it is the hardest thing possible to be surely persuaded in our hearts that we have the forgiveness of sins and peace with God by grace alone, entirely apart from any other means* in heaven or on earth.

Luther, M. (1999). *Luther's works, vol. 26: Lectures on Galatians, 1535, Chapters 1-4*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 26, pp. 26-27). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

- "In all the indulgence bulls he promises forgiveness of sins to all those who have repented and confessed. This is the worst poison and most harmful seduction emanating from that supreme seducer, the pope, and from his masks. Christ, Matthew 9[2], did not say to the paralytic, "If you put money in the box your sins are forgiven...The accursed pretension of such bulls is abominable beyond imagining, because it condemns and destroys God's first and foremost commandment, namely, the commandment which teaches trust in God's grace alone."

This is the Word of grace and promise, which does not demand anything of us as in the Law, but offers *plenary satisfaction through the perfect victim, Christ, the victim* who put an end to Moses and the whole Law. Therefore David so freely rejects the imperfect sprinkling of the Law and asks to be sprinkled not by the Levitical priest, but by God the Redeemer Himself so that his conscience might be cleansed with a cleanness that is whiter than snow.

Luther, M. (1999). *Luther's works, vol. 12: Selected Psalms I*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 12, p. 366). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

Forget about cowl, tonsure, rope, etc., and consider grace alone. The ungodly go their way and make a bewitched god out of a girdle, something sealed with a bull, or something placed into a shrine. A barefoot monk's god is the contemplation of God in heaven who might have regard for his rope. Another does something else, and each one fashions God according to his own ideas. I therefore admonish you that in all such places of idolatry you pay close attention, because all religion that is the product of one's thought arises from this ungodliness. Before God this alone is religion: the forgiveness of sins.

Luther, M. (1999). *Luther's works, vol. 17: Lectures on Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 17, pp. 112-113). Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

Christ has regard for no one because of his pile of guldens, his beauty, his wisdom, his golden hair, or because he wears a garment embroidered in gold or silver, or a gray coat. No, it is grace alone that counts. His is to be a kingdom of grace, belonging to those who are wretched and poor, whether they be men or women, rich or poor.

Luther, M. (1999). *Luther's works, vol. 22: Sermons on the Gospel of St. John: Chapters 1-4*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 22, pp. 190-191). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

In all the indulgence bulls he promises forgiveness of sins to all those who have repented and confessed. This is the worst poison and most harmful seduction emanating from that supreme seducer, the pope, and from his masks. Christ, Matthew 9[2], did not say to the paralytic, "If you put money in the box your sins are forgiven." Rather, he said, "Be of good courage," or, "Trust firmly and your sins are forgiven." These wolves and damned masks tear people away from this blessed faith and trust in God's sheer grace which alone grants forgiveness of sins. Instead, they lead people to put their trust in bulls, paper, and money so that simple minds learn to rely on their own works and not on God's grace. *The accursed pretension of such bulls is abominable beyond imagining, because it condemns and destroys God's first and foremost commandment, namely, the commandment which teaches trust in God's grace alone.* They teach trust in paper and wax, that is, in their invalid and accursed lies.

Luther, M. (1999). *Luther's works, vol. 39: Church and Ministry I*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 39, pp. 275-276). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

- “By grace alone are we saved. God doesn’t want to be obligated to anybody.”

Luther, M. (1999). *Luther’s works*, vol. 54: *Table Talk*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 54, p. 91). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Luther even sees a shocking lesson on grace in the expulsion of Abraham’s first son, Ishmael. (Remember, Ishmael was conceived in faithless sin and naturally born.)

Our own Norwegian father, U.V. Koren, speaks well of grace. In his 1890 essay he says, *“the only reason we can hope to be saved is because salvation from the very first to the very last is an entirely free and unmerited gift merely and solely by grace alone.”*

C.F.W. Walther also has plenty to say on the subject. So closely connected are grace and the Gospel that in his *Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel* you can hardly turn a page without finding something. Here is one of my favorites: *Yonder we shall see—and marvel—that there has not been an hour when God did not work in us to save us, and that there has not been an hour when we wanted to be saved. Indeed, we are forced to say to God: “Thou alone hast redeemed me; Thou alone dost save me.”*

Walther, C Th D. (1991) *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel* (pp.40-41) Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing Company.

Alone. Thou alone. Grace and grace alone. I’ll share one more quote from one more Lutheran patriarch and then try to speak less theoretically.

If, then, you realize that there are times in your Christian life when the inner corruption of the heart silences the voice of Christ, then remember that the disciples had the same experience, in spite of the fact that He spoke to them as being “clean.” Herein lies the whole force of our text. Consider: It is He who calls them clean, whose eyes are as flames of fire, who one day shall judge the quick and the dead. He designates them as “clean” at the moment when He foretells their defection and disloyalty. That same evening on the road to Gethsemane together with the Master, they quarreled as to who should be the greatest among them; when in His agony He sweat great drops of blood, they could not watch with Him, however much He begged them to do so; when He

There was no other remedy for crushing the pride in merits and prestige unless Ishmael, together with his mother, were cast out of the holy church of God, which was in the house of Abraham. But if this did not take place without great grief and many tears, yet the fruit which resulted was far greater; for in this way they attain grace and are saved.

This is the purpose of such a pitiful expulsion: God wants to teach us that we are saved by grace alone or by faith alone. Faith takes hold of the grace that is set before us in the promise. For the natural children are to be regarded as equal with those who are not natural children and yet believe. So there is one God of the Jews and of the Gentiles. The Jews should not boast of their prerogative according to the flesh, and the Gentiles should not despair because of their sins.

Luther, M. (1999). *Luther’s works*, vol. 4: *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 21–25*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 4, p. 60). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

“We, least of all men, can endure to have anyone deny the universality of grace—we who have learned to know that we can do absolutely nothing, absolutely nothing, to obtain salvation, so that *the only reason we can hope to be saved is because salvation from the very first to the very last is an entirely free and unmerited gift merely and solely by grace alone*. He who believes that he himself can help, even ever so little, by his acceptance of grace or by his non-resistance, etc.;—that he consequently in some way or other is not quite as great a sinner as others,—he may yet think that he has hope—for he has still a little in himself on which to base his hope; but he who with Paul has acknowledged (not only said) that he is the greatest of all sinners would have to despair if the radiant glory of the Gospel,—this, that it is for all, for all sinners,—did not disperse the darkness and draw and beckon him along the way to God.”

Koren, U,Th D. (1953) *Faith of our Fathers: Doctrinal Articles:What the Norwegian Synod Has Wanted and Still Wants:The Doctrine of God’s Grace*. (pp. 68–69) Frederic,Wisconsin: Lutheran Synod Book Company

was arrested, they fled; when He made a “good confession,” Peter denied His Lord. Now note, that of these weak disciples the Lord said that they were clean through the Word which He had spoken to them.

Those bumbling fools were clean through the Word which He had spoken to them. That’s grace alone; it had nothing to do with what they did or didn’t do that night. It’s *favor Dei*, the favor of God.

Grace alone—grace in Christ, for Scripture teaches that it is found in nothing else: not in my parents, my ancestors, or in me; not in the good I do or in the evil I don’t do. Not in any of our externals, no it is free. Freely and equally given to the Blessed Virgin, to cowardly deniers and escapees; even to me. Our grace; our holiness is in Christ, even Christ alone. (Call it *sola Christus* if you like.)

Grace then became who these people were: Peter and the other disciples, Paul, Luther, and the rest. Men and women not dead in spite of themselves; men and women who were alive only because of God’s grace toward them, pre-comic book versions of Tony Stark.

And Convention Pages, here I’ll propose to explain the answer to the superhero question I posed some 30 minutes ago. Do you know why Batman isn’t a good analogy of who you are by grace? Because Bruce Wayne made the Batman. He studied and trained for years; his discipline, his time in the weight room and in the dojo, his ingenuity in the R&D department at Wayne Industries.

No, Batman is self-made. That’s not you and that’s not me. And Captain America was already a good guy at heart. That serum certainly amplifies his strength and his resolve but Steve Rogers started off as a gentleman and a patriot. Not me.

And not the Hulk either. It’s true you wouldn’t like me when I’m angry (my wife and kids sure don’t) but my rage can’t be used for any good. When I’m mad I’m just an angry, petty, selfish, and destructive weakling, I’m no David Banner.

I really think it’s Tony Stark, a self-centered arrogant jerk who’s supposed to be dead but isn’t. But before I go any further in telling you about people who are not just “not-dead” but who are actually alive, I must say something about the other side of grace alone.

(Rosenius continues)

Oh, let me never forget this blessed fact! Here I see the very heart of the Gospel, its great central doctrine—justification by faith alone. Here I see the whole import of the heavenly message, “The blood of Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth from all sin.” It runs counter to all reason, that unclean and sinful creatures such as we all are should nevertheless be clean before God. In the presence of this stupendous fact, I begin to realize that the blood of Jesus means more to God than it does to us, more to the angels of heaven than to us sinners on earth. We have not the eyes to see its overwhelming power. We despise and reject Him. We esteem Him not. But God esteems Him who shed His blood for the sin of the world, and has given Him all power and dominion.

Rosenius, C.O. (1923) *A Faithful Guide to Peace with God—Excerpts from the Writings of C.O. Rosenius with the Assistance of Bishop N.J. Laache—Reproduced by George Taylor Rygh* (pp. 312–313) Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House

“Our holiness is in Heaven, where Christ is—not in the world before the eyes of everybody, like a piece of goods in the marketplace. All this simply means: “*Our life is hid with Christ in God.*” It is in the nature of man to look only at externals, at those things which may be seen with the physical eyes. That alone which is the greatest treasure of our hearts, the heavenly and external, can not be seen—it remains hidden. There are times when this fact becomes an ordeal to us. It is necessary that we keep in our hearts these words of the apostle: “Your life is hid with Christ in God.” *Ibid* (pg. 354)

Romans 5:15 (ESV)

⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.

2 Corinthians 8:9 (ESV)

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV)

⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

Titus 2:11 (ESV)

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.

John 1:16–17 (ESV)

⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Because I've found that there are two. Grace alone for me must also mean grace alone for the people in my life—the people who sin against me—even all people. It is universal and the mark of the Lutheran Church. But *sola gratia* for others is hard, just ask Jonah, he will gladly tell you that they rarely deserve it.

Why do we forgive? The last time you said, "I forgive you," why did you? Did the word "forgive" come out of your mouth because somewhere, deep down, you were hoping, even expecting, that your words of forgiveness would compel them into behaving better? Were you expecting that your grace would induce a sense of guilt to motivate him to shape up? That's just selfish!

Selfish but natural. It is natural to see grace the way Rome does, something earned and deserved, something that *darn-well had better make some changes around here, and soon!* But there is a difference between telling the broken one "I forgive you" because you just found yourself in the position of the Prodigal's father and there may be no more divine position to be in, and between telling that same broken one "I forgive you" because you just want them to treat you better.

Forgiveness must have no strings attached. None for me and none for anyone else. Alone means alone. What we find in Scripture is a God who forgives because it is a divine thing to do. He shows love and gives grace just for Jesus' sake, not because He's sick and tired of your antics this is His secret way of getting you to step into line.

(Don't get me wrong, grace has something to do with behavior change, just not the way we naturally think.)

Grace in Christ is for all people. It is a mark of the Lutheran church to confess that God's saving grace for sinners is universal (John 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:4). The whole world's debt of sin was once for all covered and cancelled because of the all-sufficient work of Jesus Christ. Not all people personally believe this and unfortunately are therefore lost. Yet, the debt of sin for every person has been declared forgiven in the hall of God's justice and is truly offered freely for every person to hold as one's own.

Moldstad Pres. J Jr. comments to author
re: Formula of Concord, Article XI: Eternal
Foreknowledge and Divine Election, para 28.

Jonah 4:1–3 (ESV)

¹ But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. ² And he prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. ³ Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."

In the process of justification we must distinguish two periods: first, the preparatory acts or disposition (faith, fear, hope, etc.); then the last, decisive moment of the transformation of the sinner from the state of sin to that of justification or sanctifying grace with this the real process comes to an end, and the state of habitual holiness or sonship of God begins. The Church teaches that justification consists of an actual obliteration of sin and an interior sanctification.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol VI Fathers—
Gregory. "GRACE" (pg. 701) Robert
Appleton Company 1909

In active justification an actual and real forgiveness takes place to that the sin is really removed from the soul and it is repugnant that God should declare any one free from sin to whom sin is still actually cleaving.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol VI Fathers—
Gregory. "GRACE" (pg. 703) Robert
Appleton Company 1909

"The grace according to which God is mercifully minded toward sinful mankind is according to Scripture not absolute grace, that is, grace independent of any cause, resting simply on God's omnipotence. By grace God resolved to send His only begotten Son to be the substitute of sinful men and that He in our stead should fulfill that righteousness which God demanded from us (Gal. 4:4–5). By His life, suffering and death Christ has appeased God's wrath, and everlasting justice is satisfied by His intervention. (2 Cor. 5:21) (Rom. 5:18–19). When God raised Christ from the dead, He absolved the world of its sin and guilt and declared that He was no longer at odds with the sinful race of man. That is His grace" (Lutheran Synod Quarterly, vol. 43:2&3, p. 244).

Grace is not a spiritual muscle God's blessed you with. Evangelical America can illustrate what I mean for they imagine grace to be something given by God but something which you must now tone and firm. After all, can't you do all things through Christ who strengthens you and didn't God promise you a victory through Jesus?

Reformed America don't wear a monk's cowl or tonsure. They wear the lycra and spandex of the athletic club, but the error remains. "Grace" was a thing given to you so that you can perform at a higher level than before. The Reformed do this to themselves; I do it to my kids. Christ is no longer the angry judge He was in medieval days, now He is an annoyingly energetic life-coach or accountability partner, but the underlying expectation is the same. "Grace" is all about you and about your performance and it has nothing to do with Christ crucified.

These souls are no more certain about their salvation than the woman who walked away from Pope Gregory. They cower in the same fear as Luther did back in that summer storm of 1505 making promises in exchange for a clear conscience. No matter how fashionably the Law is dressed, it is still the Law and the Law kills sinners.

Dr. Rod Rosenblatt speaks about these souls in his essay: *The Gospel for Those Broken by the Church*. He calls these people "the sad alumni of Christianity." They are people who were saved by grace alone but who imagine—or *who have been told*—that they remain saved by their own works.

Leaving the gym for the creek we find something different. God's people are better compared to trees. Trees and other plants thrive on light and on water. And if Jesus is the Light of the World and if He is the Water of Life, then God's people will thrive and grow when they are rooted in Him—the Word made flesh. Yes, walking in the counsel of the wicked, standing alongside sinners, and sitting with scoffers is detrimental and deadly to our salvation but at the same time salvation is not a muscle that you can tone and firm.

God's children are trees, not gym rats.

Grace and grace alone. Christ. The Gospel. This is how God's new creations grow. God just forgives. God just shows love. God gives grace for Jesus' sake, not mine. His grace is not a sacred Archimedian lever to manipulate people—or ourselves—into behaving better, if we can just exert the right amount of force.

Philippians 4:13 (ESV)

³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

I Corinthians 15:57 (ESV)

⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"We are pretty sure that unbelievers who come to believe this are instantly justified in God's sight, declared as if innocent, adopted as sons or daughters, forgiven of all sin, given eternal life, etc. But are *Christians* still saved that freely? Or are we not? We are pretty clear that imputed righteousness saves sinners. But can the imputed righteousness of Christ save a Christian? And can it save him or her all by itself? Or no? I think the way we answer this question determines whether we have anything at all to say to the "sad alumni" of Christianity."

Rosenblatt, R. Ph T. *The Gospel for Those Broken by the Church* (pg. 10)

<<https://www.1517legacy.com/freebies/Rosenblatt-The%20Gospel%20For%20Those%20Broken%20By%20The%20Church.pdf>>

Psalms 1 (ESV)

¹ Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;² but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;⁶ for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

John 1:4 & 9 (ESV)

In him was life, and the life was the light of men ⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

John 4:14 (ESV)

¹ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Grace is the tattered lamb being carried back to the fold. It is the son collapsing in his father's arms while Dad's calling for a celebration. Grace is Jesus who eats and drinks with sinners and tax collectors.

Contrary to popular (and past) opinion, grace alone isn't given with the ulterior motive of behavior modification. That being stated and restated, we find in Scripture that in reality grace does produce behavior.

The freedom of *sola gratia* does, in fact, produce fruit. This fruit is not compelled or forced; it isn't the so called "Franken-Fruit", produce grown artificially and out of season, fruit grown for fear or grown for bragging rights. No, this is no such mealy paltry crop. This is 100% natural fruit of the sweetest kind because while fruit isn't grace's purpose—this fruit is grace's by-product.

Remember, my alter-ego is Tony Stark, a man who should be dead but isn't, a man whose sin should have already damned me but didn't. Here I stand because of grace alone.

If you know Tony Stark, you know he goes by another name. He is also called Iron Man because here's the thing: that same device which is preventing his death is also empowering him, empowering him to do things plain-old Tony Stark never would and never could do. On his own Tony's not a nice person to be around or to be in a relationship with. But with that external thing preventing his death he becomes a hero. He becomes noble, even sacrificial, all because of that thing outside himself.

Scripture says it's like that with me too. Not only does God's grace prevent my doom; it also enlivens and empowers me to do things I simply would not and could not do as plain old(natural) Tony Pittenger. I am of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, part of a holy nation. I am a saint. Clean because Christ declares me clean and alive because the Spirit gives birth to spirit. I am Iron Man.

The grace of who we are and how we live in Christ is a recurring theme in the liturgy of Church.

- We hear of it in Matins & Vespers: *grace for true repentance and amendment of life.*
- We pray concerning it in Rite I (Bugenhagen's order): *and to grow day by day in grace and holiness.*

Yes, by grace I can love. Oh it might still be clumsy and rudimentary and it may not appear to be much by the world's standards but by grace none of

Luke 15:1-4 (ESV)

¹ Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." ³ So he told them this parable: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep

1 Corinthians 15:10 (ESV)

⁹ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

2 Corinthians 6:1 (ESV)

¹ Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

2 Corinthians 8:7 (ESV)

⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

2 Timothy 1:9 (ESV)

⁹ who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,

1 Peter 2:9-10 (ESV)

⁹ But you are a *chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession*, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

P: The almighty and merciful Lord has granted us pardon and forgiveness of all our sins, *grace for true repentance and amendment of life*, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

P: O Lord, our Maker, Redeemer and Comforter, we are assembled in Your presence to hear Your holy Word. We pray You to open our hearts by Your Holy Spirit, that through the preaching of Your Word we may be taught to repent of our sins, to believe on Jesus in life and death, and to grow day by day in *grace and holiness*. Hear us for Christ's sake. Amen.

Ephesians 3:7-9 (ESV)

⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,

my failures are being tracked, logged, and counted against me. I'm completely free to try to love like that father in Luke 15, to be good for goodness' sake, and I can turn to my fellow man (or my kid) and just love them. Not in hopes of guiltily turning them into being more lovable but simply because I am free to love them and because who knows; they might be thirsty or naked or sick or in prison. Remember, I'm saved by grace alone, not by my works. While I can't boast of them neither is God tracking and tallying my works toward some annual quota.

In truth and in fact the lives of grace which Rome and Geneva (and we by nature) are so obsessed with work very differently than expected. It works like this—We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19 (ESV)

WE.

For if you are Tony Stark, if your body and your soul and your life and your behavior are hopelessly embedded with sin, and if *death doth pursue you all the way*, then hear this Tony: You are Iron Man as well. Not only has God's grace prevented your doom, your life has been saved to be lived! You are alive again to live in the Father's house and you are alive to live here on the face of the Father's creation.

Grace empowers you! Not only does Paul's phrase "by the grace given me" tell us that he contributed nothing, it goes on to tell us what God's grace is doing through him. It is the source of gifts such as serving, teaching, and leading, and if you really want to talk about work that appears to be super and heroic Paul tells us that grace is how and why he is a minister to the Gentiles where he endured beatings, imprisonments, shipwrecks; even snake bite!

And so we take on a third personality, the flesh and blood boy named Pinocchio. For we are alive; not made of wood. Our Father is not a master puppeteer controlling our actions. Under the Law it was like that, I had strings, but now I'm free, there are no strings on me. No, we live and move by grace. The strings are cut and life has been breathed back into us; we are free and freed children of the Heavenly Father.

And here's something else: As those flesh-and-blood children, our nose won't grow for every lie nor will our Savior punish us for our failures. We are saved by grace alone, not works; don't boast and don't despair.

Matthew 25:35–36 (ESV)

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

Ephesians 2:1–10 (ESV)

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

1 Corinthians 15:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

I've got no strings, to hold me down, to make me fret, or make me frown. I had strings, but now I'm free, there are no strings on me.

Pinocchio, (1940) Walt Disney Studios,
based on: *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, (1880)
Carlo Collodi

Because you will still sin. *Simul iustus et peccator* remains true so long as you remain in the flesh but Jesus declares that the Spirit gives birth to spirit and you are already clean because of the Word He has spoken.

Grace alone. Nothing earned or needing to be earned. Nothing added or in need of adding. Not me, my past or my promised future. Just Christ. Just grace.

By grace! On this I'll rest when dying; In Jesus' promise I rejoice; For though I know my heart's condition, I also know my Savior's voice. My heart is glad, all grief has flown, Since I am saved by grace alone.

Abide with us Lord, for it is evening and the day is far spent. Abide with us and with Your whole Church. Abide with us in the end of the day, in the end of our life, and in the end of the world. Abide with us with Your grace and goodness, with Your holy Word and Sacrament, with Your strength and blessing. Abide with us when the night of affliction and temptation comes upon us, the night of fear and despair when death shall come. Abide with us and with all the faithful through time and eternity.

ELH 226:9

Soli Deo Gloria

PROCLAIM THE WONDERS GOD HAS DONE: SOLA FIDE

Rev. Jerome Gernander



Rev. Jerome Gernander

“What if this were not in Scripture? What if God had not chosen to reveal this? What if this were left out or omitted?” These are questions I often ask myself when studying the Bible or preparing a sermon. Sometimes I ask the Bible class: “What if these words of Jesus were not in the Bible? What if St. Paul had not written this? What would we not know? About what important truths might we be ignorant and in the dark?”

Applying such questions to *sola fide*, “by faith alone,” demonstrates why this *sola* is so essential and really an abridged version of the entire doctrine

of justification; it summarizes this entire teaching. In the Lutheran Confessions, the doctrine of justification is referred to as “the doctrine about faith” (Augsburg Confession XX).¹ Luther is speaking of the entire doctrine of justification when he says in the Large Catechism that “faith was entirely put under the bench” by the papacy. The longest article in the Lutheran Confessions, “On Justification” (Article IV of the Apology of the Augsburg Confession), centers on *sola fide*. In the Augsburg Confession, after Article IV (also titled “On Justification”) the phrase “this faith” comes up again and again in the other articles. “Justifying faith” is a synonym for justification.

I learned the singular importance of *sola fide* in a memorable way from a Roman Catholic layman. Shortly after I arrived at the congregation I serve, a St. Cloud (Minnesota) man began calling me on the phone periodically. On Scripture and tradition, we sparred agreeably. On the definition of grace we had amiable discussions. But when we came to the Epistle of James on faith and the role of good works in salvation (passages expounded in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article IV, para. 247–253), his friendliness came to an abrupt end. Suddenly he launched into an angry tirade, telling me that if I did not believe good works necessary for salvation, I would go to hell.²

This is attempting to deprive someone of *sola fide*. What is lost when this is missing? Everything in Christianity! To put it mildly, this was a major obsession of Martin Luther and the first Lutherans: to prevent people from being deprived of the only true comfort and confidence that a sinner has before God. It is a pastoral concern. This reveals that this is not simply a classroom doctrinal issue. It is a *pastoral* issue. Depriving someone of *sola fide* is nothing less than depriving one of the Gospel.

This came out of Luther’s own experience, recounted by him a year before his death:

It was a single word in [Romans 1:17], “In it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed,” that had stood in my way. For I hated that word “righteousness of God,” which I had been taught to understand philosophically regarding the formal or active righteousness, with which God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner. Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely

¹ Quotations from the Lutheran Confessions are from *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord*, 2nd ed. Concordia Publishing House, 2006.

² Evidently he forgot the advice of his beloved St. Augustine: “He is an enemy to righteousness who refrains from sin only through fear of punishment ... For the man who only fears the flames of hell is afraid not of sinning, but of being burned.” Letter 145.4 in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers I*, ed. Philip Schaff, 496.

disturbed conscience. I could not believe that He was placated by my satisfaction. I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly I was angry with God and said, “As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the decalogue, without having God add pain to pain by the gospel and also by the gospel threatening us with His righteousness and wrath!” Thus I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience. Nevertheless, I beat importunately upon Paul at that place, most ardently desiring to know what St. Paul wanted. At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, “In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith’ ” [NKJV]. There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates.³

It would be tempting for someone cynically to respond: “Well, that was just Luther. He was super-sensitive.” Luther would disagree. This is a universal concern, which is borne out by the entire book of Galatians (as shown by Luther in his Galatians lectures).

Luther shows that this is a pastoral issue in his only comment (as far as I could find) in which he uses the *sola* terminology. In a sense Luther started this when he inserted the German word *allein* into his translation of Romans 3:28 (“we are justified by faith *alone* apart from the works of the law”). He was criticized for adding a word to Scripture, a criticism he addressed at another time;⁴ evidently his opponents fastened on the Latin word in their intended insult, as we see in this comment by Luther on Galatians 2:16 in his 1535 Lectures on Galatians: “Hence faith alone justifies ... Here we are perfectly willing to have ourselves called ‘solafide-ists’⁵ by our opponents, who do not understand anything of Paul’s argument. You who are to be the consolers of consciences that are afflicted, should teach this doctrine diligently, study it continually, and defend it vigorously against the abominations of the papists, Jews, Turks, and all the rest.”⁶

This comment has a lot to offer us. It shows that this teaching results in aggressive attacks. Far from being left vulnerable, we are given weapons for this spiritual battle. Luther was speaking to future pastors and theologians. He frames this argument in a pastoral context, he does not shy away from the conflict, and he arms them with *sola fide* precisely to be “consolers of consciences that are afflicted.” They are to think of themselves, and the use of *sola fide*,

³ “Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther’s Latin Writings” (1545) in *Luther’s Works* 34:336–337.

⁴ “... In Romans 3[:28] I inserted the word *solum* [alone]. Actually the text itself and the meaning of St. Paul urgently require and demand it. For in that very passage he is dealing with the main point of Christian doctrine, namely, that we are justified by faith in Christ without any works of the law. And Paul cuts away all works so completely, as even to say that the works of the law – though it is God’s law and word – do not help us for justification. ... The matter itself in its very core demands that we say, ‘Faith alone justifies.’ And the danger of the people also compels it, so that they may not continue to hang upon works and wander away from faith and lose Christ, especially in these days, for they have been accustomed to works so long they have to be torn away from them by force. For these reasons it is not only right but also highly necessary to speak it out as plainly and fully as possible, ‘Faith alone saves, without works.’ I am only sorry that I did not also add the words *alle* and *aller*, and say, ‘without *any* works or *any* laws.’ ” From “On Translating: An Open Letter” (1530) in *Luther’s Works* 35:195–198, emphasis added.

⁵ Luther actually said “solarii” – sola-ists – but Jaroslav Pelikan put this into English as “solafide-ists,” likely because of what is said above, that the shorthand of this doctrine of justification is *sola fide*.

⁶ *Luther’s Works* 26:138.

precisely in this way: its chief benefit is in bringing consolation to consciences afflicted by the burdens of the Law.

As we study this doctrine, it is unavoidable to speak of the doctrinal errors of other churches. We speak of the opponents of this doctrine, both crass (Roman Catholic) and subtle (Evangelical Protestant). But truly there is only one enemy of the Truth: Satan. He is the adversary and opponent who seduces and leads astray those who would be our allies, who comes and takes away the Word out of their hearts lest they believe (Parable of the Sower). The faith-alone doctrine is a pastoral issue because the devil is the chief preacher of misbelief, despair and shame (Small Catechism, 6th Petition). Our goal is for consciences—both ours and others’—which are afflicted by sin and shame, and lied to by the devil, to receive abundant consolation and sure confidence.

FAITH ALONE: THE CLEAR TEACHING OF THE BIBLE

The correct teaching of justification by faith alone is so obvious that not only the apostles, but Christians in the early church and in the medieval period prior to Luther believed, taught and confessed this clearly and correctly. (This is harder to find in medieval Christianity with its system of man-made satisfactions for sin, but it is there too.) Luther and the Confessions make the case against Roman error in part with quotations from St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, in support of the Lutherans’ public teaching.⁷

The doctrine of justification by faith alone is the clear teaching of the Bible. It is the central theme that runs throughout all of Scripture.

The “faith alone” doctrine is based on clear Bible passages, of which these are a handful:

*Abraham believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. [Gen 15:6; fully expounded in Rom 4:3–4, 22–25]*⁸

The just shall live by his faith. [Habakkuk 2:4; fully expounded in Rom 1:16–17]

“To Him all the prophets bear witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.” [Acts 10:43]

“By Him [this Man ... Jesus] everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.” [Acts 13:39]

... That He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. [Rom 3:26]

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. [Rom 3:28]

⁷ Augsburg Confession, Article VI: “Ambrose says, ‘It is ordained of God that he who believes in Christ is saved, freely receiving forgiveness of sins, without works, through faith alone.’” In his comments on the translation of Romans 3:28 in “On Translating: An Open Letter” (partially quoted above), Luther also said: “Moreover I am not the only one, or even the first, to say that faith alone justifies. Ambrose said it before me, and Augustine and many others.” *Luther’s Works* 35:197.

⁸ All Scripture citations are © New King James Version of the Holy Bible 1982, by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. [Rom 4:5]

“... Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.” [Gal 2:16]

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. [Eph 2:8–9]

... Not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith ... [Phi 3:9]

Whether it is “by faith,” or “through faith,” as the means of receiving the promise of the Gospel this *completes* the picture of God’s justification of a sinner. Faith is the means by which Christ (through the Spirit) presents the person to God reconciled, clean and holy, blameless and without blemish, without fault and above reproach in the sight of God, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. The presentation of the sinner to God as a saint, the culmination of which a Christian is waiting for in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting, occurs already by means of faith every day of a Christian’s life.

This aspect of *sola fide* completing the picture of justification parallels the work of the Holy Spirit, the Person of the Holy Trinity who gives faith (Eph 2:8; 1 Cor 12:3; Rom 8:14–15). He completes the work of salvation: what was planned and prepared by God the Father in the eternal heavenly council (Isa 42:1–7, 49:5–7; 2 Tim 1:9), and carried out by His Son in the work of redemption (John 19:30; Phi 2:5–11; Rev 1:18), is completed as the Spirit creates faith in Holy Baptism and in conversion through preaching and teaching of the Word (Mat 28:19, Tit 3:5), and both gives and strengthens faith through the preached Word (by and through which the Holy Spirit works repentance and faith, Luke 24:47) and receiving of the Sacrament of the Altar (Rom 10:13–17, 1 Cor 2:9–14).

“By *faith* alone” speaks of the subjective, personal part of justification. “By *grace* alone” speaks directly to “objective justification”—the objectively true work of Christ. Regardless of faith, this is always true. Everyone’s sins are forgiven, the ransom price paid in full, by grace alone. This is the objective aspect of justification. But the only way to benefit from it is by faith. To say the *subjective* or “faith” part is the personal part is not to say the *objective* aspect of justification is *impersonal*; it concerns every person in the world. But subjective justification is personal *in this way*: the individual actually receives the blessings won by Christ. U.V. Koren said in a Pentecost sermon: “Faith is a certainty in your heart that Jesus is not just someone else’s Savior, but yours in particular.”⁹

This is what it means to say “justified by faith.” The word *alone* is added to exclude works from the basis for confidence before God. *Sola fide* keeps one from thinking of God’s forgiveness and acceptance in a conditional way. The sinful heart either will boast that God must be pleased with him based on his good conduct, or will be filled with anxiety that God will not be pleased with him based on his bad conduct. “By faith alone” says God is pleased with you not because you did anything well but since Christ did all things well, and you hold onto Christ to benefit from His work by faith. Alone.

It is good to be reminded of some basic elements of Scripture’s teaching on faith:

⁹ U.V. Koren’s Works, Vol. 1: Sermons, 253.

- Faith is “receiving.” It is simply the instrument or channel of receiving the gift, compared to an empty hand into which is placed the treasures of salvation.¹⁰ Although “I believe” feels like something I do, faith is passive. “It is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Eph. 2:8–9). When a person has faith, trusts the word of promise, and keeps this faith, it is due to God alone.

We are surrounded by Christians who claim to believe in justification by faith alone; but they do not believe faith is passive (Roman Catholics’ belief that faith is a good quality in man; Protestants’ belief that man is able to come to faith by his own free will). This appeals to the Old Adam, but it also puts the burden on you: if you lack faith, it is because you are not working hard enough.

In the Small Catechism we confess: “I cannot by my own reason or strength believe ... but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.” Not only is God alone responsible for a person coming to faith in Jesus; also God alone is responsible for a person remaining a believer, or returning to faith (Luke 22:32). Luther cites John 6:44: “Whence this faith comes (for no one has this faith of himself) Christ teaches, when He says: ‘No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw Him.’”¹¹

No determination, commitment or effort on the part of man can produce faith. In fact, Satan *uses* one’s determination, commitment and effort to discourage him when faith falters! (See Simon Peter, post-denial). It is comforting to know the keeping of faith is all in God’s hands: “Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. ... I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.” (Phi 1:6, 2 Tim 1:12).

- Faith is trust. Although the Bible speaks of faith as “knowing,” it is not mere intellectual knowledge or Bible knowledge (Augsburg Confession XX, Apology IV.48, 50).¹² Faith is believing God’s promise of forgiveness, trusting that what God says about me in Christ is true. Although faith is passive and is worked by God, the way we experience faith is as an activity: believing what is not seen—God’s promises; relying on God and His Word; clinging to Christ; seeking His grace; beholding the Lamb of God on whom our sins are laid.

Faith is not always even called faith in the Bible. Some of the best pictures of faith may surprise us: Job struggling against himself not to judge God’s ways, a contrite tax collector looking down, a woman weeping over her sins, a poor father whimpering: “Lord, help my unbelief!” Weak faith is still justifying faith.

Faith is laying hold on Christ, however hesitantly. In this respect, the emphasis on “having faith” is not always helpful. It leads the natural pietist living inside us to measure faith, ask if I have enough faith, if it is strong enough or too weak, etc. The issue is really what a person’s confidence before God is. The next two bullet points that we consider will explore where this is found. For now, it is important to see that an accurate picture of faith begins with a person wanting to look away from himself and his sins, praying God not to look upon our sins (Small Catechism, Fifth Petition),

¹⁰ “Instruments or channels”: *Formula of Concord (Solid Declaration)*, Article III “The Righteousness of Faith Before God,” para. 38. Or, if you prefer the illustration from *Out in Right Field*, popularized by Peter, Paul, and Mary: “... They point at the sky and I look up above And a baseball falls into my glove!”

¹¹ Quoted in Franz Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* II, 442.

¹² Hereafter the Lutheran Confessions are abbreviated as AC (Augsburg Confession), Ap (Apology), and FC (Formula of Concord).

and—like the sheep in the last judgment (Matt 25)—knowing only what he has *not* done rather than boast of his faithfulness.

“Then He will summon us. ‘You too come forth,’ He will say, ‘Come forth ye drunkards, come forth ye weak ones, come forth, ye children of shame!’ And we shall all come forth without shame and shall stand before Him. And He will say unto us, ‘Ye are swine, made in the image of the Beast and with his mark; but come ye also!’ And the wise ones and those of understanding will say, ‘O Lord, why dost Thou receive these men?’ And He will say, ‘This is why I receive them, O ye wise, this is why I receive them, O ye of understanding, that not one of them believed himself to be worthy of this.’ And He will hold out His hands to us and we shall fall down before Him ... and we shall weep ... and we shall understand all things! Then we shall understand all! ... and all will understand ... Lord, Thy kingdom come!”¹³

- Faith is connected to the object of faith, what it believes in: Christ and His saving work. “Whenever we speak about faith, we want an object of faith to be understood. ... To believe is to trust in Christ’s merits” (Ap IV:55, 67). This truth prevents faith from being an introspective act. Rather than asking: “Do I have faith?” and looking inward – thus playing into the devil’s hands who wants the Christian to look away from Christ and instead idolatrously look to himself, his faithfulness, his quality of faith, and for evidence of love and godliness—the Christian asks: “Did Christ die for me?” and looks to the cross. This is about “whether confidence is to be placed in Christ or in our works” (Ap IV:156).

Faith can only depend on the objective fact of Christ’s finished work and the objectively true promise in the words of absolution: “In the name and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sin”—or in the objectively true words of Jesus in His Supper: “for you, for the remission of sins.” The atoning work of Christ is the foundation upon which faith rests. Therefore, faith—the subjective aspect of justification—cannot exist without the objective aspect of justification. Christ’s righteousness is imputed, or credited, to the Christian by means of faith. “His obedience is credited to us for righteousness” (FC III.9).

It is a common misbelief that “as soon as you believe, God will forgive you.” This turns faith into the *cause* of justification, whereas faith can only *receive* God’s “forgiven” verdict. During a well-attended funeral service in our city after a tragic accidental shooting death of a youth, I heard an evangelical preacher tell the assembly: “If you believe, at that moment God will take away all your sins!” This error is not only found among the Baptists. The late Gerhard Forde, a popular writer among certain Lutherans today, wrote: “When faith is created, when we actually believe God’s unconditional forgiveness, then God can say, ‘Now I am satisfied!’ God’s wrath ends actually when we believe him, not abstractly because of a payment to God ‘once upon a time.’”¹⁴ This separates faith from Christ as the object of faith and directs faith inward, a form of self-idolatry. To separate faith from Christ’s redeeming work ends in just having faith in faith.

If faith is severed from the specific promise of Christ, from His words, and becomes a “general faith,” it is on shaky ground. Then a person is tempted to doubt God’s love

¹³ Excerpt from *Crime and Punishment in The Gospel in Dostoyevsky*, Orbis Books, 163–164.

¹⁴ Forde, “The Work of Christ,” quoted in *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 76:3–4, “Gerhard Forde’s Theology of Atonement and Justification: A Confessional Lutheran Response” by Jack Kilcrease, 282.

for Him, whether God is forgiving, whether God cares, or whether there is a God. “I am known by My own ... My sheep hear My voice” (John 10). The Confessions say: “We must always run back to the promise” (Ap IV:165).

- Faith comes only from hearing the Word; it is produced by the Holy Spirit working through His Word and Sacraments. “Justification happens through the Word,” the Lutheran Confessions say (Ap IV:67), citing Romans 1:16: “the Gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,” and Romans 10:17: “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

This truth applies not only in Baptism, where a baby first hears the Word of God and believes it; but every time a Christian hears the Gospel – in the sermon, the Scripture lessons, the absolution, benediction, and the Lord’s Supper where “the main thing in the Sacrament ... are the words” (Small Catechism VI:3), faith is created “when and where it pleases God *in those who hear the Gospel*” (AC V; John 3:7). It is specifically the word of promise, the forgiveness, the absolving word, that creates the faith that justifies.¹⁵ So it is essential that the sermon be an absolution, for as Luther says in the Large Catechism (highlight this in your copy!):

Everything in the Christian Church is ordered toward this goal: we shall daily receive in the Church nothing but the forgiveness of sin through the Word and signs [sacraments], to comfort and encourage our consciences as long as we live here. So even though we have sins, the grace of the Holy Spirit does not allow them to harm us. For we are in the Christian Church, where there is nothing but continuous, uninterrupted forgiveness of sins.

The means of grace, the Word and Sacraments, are not only for delivering the Gospel of forgiveness; through the words of the Gospel faith is given, produced, by the Holy Spirit. “*That we may obtain this faith*, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted” (AC V.1). So when people keep away from Word and Sacrament, they make themselves vulnerable to losing the faith; their faith is not being formed by God’s Word and they open themselves to being formed by messages that contradict God in His Word.

I cling to what my Savior taught/And trust it, whether felt or not. (ELH 226:10)

- Faith produces fruits or good works, which are necessary but not necessary *for salvation* (FC IV:1–2), meaning they belong outside the question of how a person is righteous before God. Faith *alone* excludes human merit from justification. “The term *alone [sola]* offends some people ... It is, however, the notion of merit that we exclude. Love and works must *follow* faith” (Ap IV:73).

What the Lutherans react to in the Confessions is the Roman Catholic belief that grace is a process—a lifelong process of self-improvement—in which faith is a virtue, a good quality in man, that begins the process. It “makes” a person righteous, that is, empowers a person to become better. Lutherans confess that justification is God’s declaration which forgives your sins wholly and entirely.¹⁶

What does this have to do with good works? Allow an example from (somewhat) recent history: On November 19, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI said to the crowd gathered in St. Peter’s Square: “Luther’s phrase: ‘faith alone,’ is true.” Was he turning his back on

¹⁵ Gottfried Martens, “Certainty of Salvation,” *Logia* XIV:2, Easter 2005, 17ff.

¹⁶ David Maxwell, “Luther’s Augustinian Understanding of Justification in the Lectures on Romans,” *Logia* V:4, Reformation 1996, 13–14.

the Council of Trent: “If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification let him be anathema [accursed]?”¹⁷ No; the pope immediately added a condition that doomed any hope of Luther’s doctrine being honored: “... *if* it is not opposed to faith in charity, in love” (emphasis added). The *if* is the problem. “*To believe is to conform to Christ and to enter into his love. ... In a faith that creates charity, the entire Law is fulfilled ... Thus justice is decided in charity. ... We can only pray the Lord that he help us to believe. Believing thus becomes life, unity with Christ, the transformation of our life.* And thus, transformed by his love, by the love of God and neighbor, we can truly be just in God’s eyes.”¹⁸ In the Roman view, faith is not complete as a justifying factor unless and until it expresses itself in love. Faith only begins a process of improvement and is focused not outwardly (Christ for you), but inwardly on the transformation of one’s life and being conformed to Christ (Christ in you), as seen outwardly in charity and other expressions of love. In other words, you evaluate that you are justified before God by looking at your works of love, not at Christ.

In contrast to this, we confess that God’s wrath cannot be appeased by human works but only by Christ’s merit and atoning sacrifice; that without faith it is impossible to love God and perform good works; and that love follows faith. In the Lutheran Confessions we confess that works of love are necessary, that our works are pleasing to God because of faith, but that our love does not justify (Ap IV:218–287, where 1 Corinthians 13 and James 2 especially are dealt with).

To be clear: It *is* God’s will that we use the moral law as a guide to do His will with the help of God; but it is the Gospel that frees us not only from the curse of sin but also from the rule of sin, giving us strength to live according to His will (FC IV:9–15, 38–40). “The Holy Spirit renews us, so that we are able to keep the Law, to love God and God’s Word, to be submissive to God in afflictions, to be chaste, to love our neighbor, and so on. Even though these works are far from the perfection of the Law, on account of faith they please God” (Ap IV:293).

FAITH ALONE: FINDING A CONTEXT

It is one thing to “have faith” or to have the right doctrine of faith. But it is another thing to use it. The devil has temptations specific to confessional Lutherans. He delights in leading them to take sinful pride in their doctrinal stance or their doctrinal heritage. *Sola fide* becomes a slogan to boast in, and ceases being used. So “faith alone” needs a context. We have to learn once again why Luther considered it so essential. If justifying faith is specific faith, it needs to be specific to the daily attacks of Satan.

How we see ourselves, and what we want to do about it.

You say you have faith, and yet you feel guilty or you feel worthless. This is where we must learn again what justifying faith is. It is not simply: “Do you believe all the articles of faith are true?” It is about having confidence before God. It is about having a good conscience. Too often, our confidence is based not upon the solid foundation of Jesus’ work for us, but upon our own achievements, progress, or recognition from others.

What we want to do about it is usually to work harder, try harder, or find measurable improvement. A troubled conscience is knowing we have failed. A terrified conscience is

¹⁷ www.ewtn.com/library/COUNCILS/TRENT6.HTM (accessed 04 June 2017)

¹⁸ w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2008/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20081119.html (accessed 14 Feb 2017)

knowing that we will be judged by God to be lacking. Yet it seems we hardly ever seek rest for our conscience in God's promises. We seek everywhere else.

The fundamental doctrine of our sinful flesh is this lie: if God is mad at me because of my sin, then He will be happy with me because of my good works. The old theologians named this doctrine the *opinio legis* ... This is a deceived conscience abiding in the false comfort of our good works. The falsely comforted conscience is at the root of every idolatry and ideology, every false religion, false god and false Gospel. It is the "peace" that the world gives, a false peace.¹⁹

The article on Justification in the Apology addresses the solution repeatedly:

Consciences cannot be set at rest through any works, but only by faith, when they take the sure ground that for Christ's sake they have a gracious God. This whole doctrine can only be understood in the conflict of the terrified conscience. (AC XX:15, 17)

Consciences never are at rest unless they hear God's voice clearly promising the forgiveness of sins. (Ap IV:257)

A terrified conscience is eventually quieted when it takes hold of Christ as Mediator and believes the promises given for His sake. (Ap XII:64)

This is an issue for our youth, who often receive their image of self worth from many sources that just plain lie to them, beginning with the changing standards of their peers, and involving social media comments, opinions of popular celebrities, etc. Their self image easily can be negative. There are a host of potential bad outcomes from what amounts to a distorted self-perception based not on the reality God creates but on unfounded judgments (which may come from very real words and real exclusion by others). The task of the church with its youth is to teach them how to have a good conscience, to impart to them the clear message that they are so important that Christ came down from heaven for them; they are of great value and worth to God and pleasing to Him for Jesus' sake. This is the reason for them to come to church: for a good conscience to be delivered to them as Jesus' blood is sprinkled on them through the Gospel.

Pastors are not masters when it comes to this. Their sense of guilt and unworthiness can be acute, partly because they judge themselves harshly for their stewardship of God's people and especially because it is a challenge for them actually to be on the receiving end of the Gospel. In a time of need I received this helpful communication in a personal e-mail from a brother pastor of our synod: *"It's pretty amazing to think that God sees such immense worthiness in you that He gave His dearest Treasure to make sure you could be in His presence forever. It's a bit ironic that—due to our weakness and sin—we can at times struggle with a sense of worthiness, when from God's perspective the entire plan of salvation is all about our great value to God. I remember Mark Harstad saying to us in seminary (I paraphrase): 'Creation is not primarily about the power of God, but rather we should view creation through the cross. God has always wanted Man to be in communion with Him. The sending of Christ is all about restoring Man to his proper place of tremendous value to God.'"*²⁰

Sola fide in this context—to see ourselves by faith alone—is to see that God accepts and approves of us for Jesus' sake. The one who judges us is the Lord (1 Cor 4:3–4), and He judges

¹⁹ Bryan Wolfmueller, "Teaching the Conscience to the Youth," in *Seelsorger: A journal for the Contemporary Cure of Souls II*, 25.

²⁰ Shared with permission.

us righteous, holy and innocent. He is pleased with you! We are not to judge ourselves by our successes *or* failures, but listen to His declaration of His favor upon us.

How we see others, and how we see the church.

To see others *sola fide* is not to judge with our eyes but with the eyes of faith. We judge others by their words and actions, and we might say: “What else do we have to go on?” But we do have something else to go on. Christ died for them. He even died for the sins they do against us. His blood cleanses us of all sin—the sins we commit as well as the sins done against us. To see them redeemed by the blood of Jesus is living *sola fide*.

This is also a protection against one of the devil’s weapons against the church. The church on earth is often a culture of criticism, whereas Christ instituted it to be a place where His blessing and peace are freely dispensed. We enjoy receiving—inhaling—the Gospel but struggle to actually exhale the Gospel, breathe it out and give it to one another in word and deed. The devil’s backdoor attack upon Christians is to highlight in your mind a perceived offense from someone, to brood over it, to judge them guilty, and sabotage the life of the Church by increasing criticism and condemnation, and simultaneously diminishing prayer and compassion.²¹ We live *sola fide* in this context by turning to prayer and joining our intercessions with Jesus, who intercedes for us. As we pray “Our Father,” we are reminded that *sola fide* is not only about individual faith but the Holy Spirit *gathers* His Church. I am part of a “we,” and I *believe in* one holy Christian Church. It is not based on what I see in others, but what they are by faith in Jesus. *Sola fide*—especially as I kneel with the saints at the Lord’s Table—helps me to see this Church and not abandon anyone, as Christ effects solidarity at His Table.

How we see trials and suffering.

We believe that God sends crosses in order to test our faith in order to strengthen it, as with Abraham (Gen 22:1). “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 1:6–7).

But what if your faith does not *feel* stronger but only weaker? What then? How do we live *sola fide* in trials and suffering? We often feel this as condemnation. There are unlimited afflictions which we could discuss at this point, all of which the devil uses for condemnation and accusation. Employment reverses. Financial distress. Getting bullied in school. Loneliness. Lack of friends. Infertility. Death of a child. Death of a spouse or parent. Relatives leaving the faith. Critical or terminal illness. A friend or loved one moving away. Abuse. Divorce. Separation during wartime. A catastrophe or natural disaster. Lack of communication from family members. Persistent grief.

Let us take as an example one of the afflictions which often is suffered in silence: the scourge of depression, living under a cloud of despair. A person who is afflicted by depression may be unable to find joy, and the Gospel may seem to “bounce off him.” Does such a person conclude he has no faith, or very little? How does a congregation view depression? Unfortunately the church too often has treated it as a faith problem, almost a sin. It is also a common reaction of the church to introverted people. “You have no idea how many people I treat clinically who cannot and who will not go to church because they tell me that they would have to ‘fake being happy’ and explain to everyone who *is* happy why they are not happy,”²² says Dr. Beverly Yahnke, a Christian psychologist (a co-director of *Doxology: The Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel*).

²¹ John Kleinig, *Grace Upon Grace*, 201–202, 234–236.

²² “When God’s Good Gifts Are Defiled: The Sinner and the Sinned Against,” quoted in *Seelsorger I*, 51.

This counsel of the late Robert Preus concerning pastors who suffer depression (but which he applies to all Christians) is welcome:

Pastors who suffer stress and affliction, like any Christian in similar circumstances, may be tempted to look to their faith as a reason for self-esteem and assurance, rather than to the only object of faith, Christ and His pardoning Word. They conclude that failure and inability to cope are due to weak faith or the lack of faith altogether. They are viewing faith as their act rather than as their reception of God's mercy.²³

This is consistent with the Lutheran Confessions: "This faith—that confidence lies in the forgiveness of sins freely for Christ's sake—sustains and enlivens hearts in the most violent conflict with despair" (Ap XX:85). C.F.W. Walther says: "Do not forget that the blessedness of Christians is not based on pleasant feelings but on the assurance that, despite the bitterest feelings imaginable, Christians are accepted by God"²⁴ for Jesus' sake.

The crosses and trials endured by the Christian are where *sola fide* is lived. Living *sola fide* in trials and suffering is when the crosses draw a person more and more to Christ Crucified. Their sufferings bring them closer to the Suffering Servant. They walk by faith, not by sight. *Sola fide* views affliction through Christ's compassion demonstrated on the cross and delivered in the means of grace. This is true confidence – not the *feeling* of confidence, but concentrating upon the blessed *fact* of God's favor that is delivered in the means of grace, the unchanging word of the Gospel (Absolution) and the Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper) that declares God's unbounded love for you.

Sola fide is not a slogan. It is a lifeline.

²³ "Clergy Mental Health and the Doctrine of Justification," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 48 (2 & 3); quoted in *I Trust When Dark My Road: A Lutheran View of Depression* by Todd Peperkorn (LCMS World Relief and Human Care, 2009), 37.

²⁴ Walther, 347.



REPORTS AND ACTION

SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Membership Applications of Congregations

WHEREAS, Reformation Lutheran Church, Hillsboro, Oregon, and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Escondido, California, have applied for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and have submitted their constitutions and bylaws for approval, and,

WHEREAS, The Committee on Synodical Membership has reviewed their constitutions and bylaws and found them to meet the requirements of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That Reformation Lutheran Church, Hillsboro, Oregon, be accepted into membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That St. Paul Lutheran Church, Escondido, California, be accepted into membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Resolution 2: Membership Application of Pastors

WHEREAS, The following pastors have been recommended by the seminary faculty and approved by the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, and,

WHEREAS, It has been established in their applications for synodical membership that the requirements of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod have been met, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the following pastors be received into permanent membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

1. The Rev. Matthew Behmer, pastor of Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bell Gardens, California.
2. The Rev. Jeffrey Hendrix, pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church, Ulen, and Grace Lutheran Church, Crookston, Minnesota.
3. The Rev. Joshua Mayer, pastor of Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church, Rogers, Minnesota.
4. The Rev. Daniel Ruiz, pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, Leander, Texas.
5. The Rev. Andrew Soule, pastor of Our Savior's and Rock Dell Lutheran Churches, Belview, Minnesota.

Resolution 3: Membership Application of Pastors by Colloquy

WHEREAS, The Colloquy Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod has approved the following pastors for permanent membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, It has been established in their applications for synodical membership that the requirements of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod have been met, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the following pastors be received into permanent membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

1. The Rev. Steven Brockdorf, pastor of Reformation Lutheran Church, Hillsboro, Oregon.
2. The Rev. Robert Lawson, Sr., pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Princeton, Minnesota.
3. The Rev. Robert Lawson, Jr., pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Escondido, California.

Resolution 4: Membership Application of Pastor by Transfer from WELS

WHEREAS, The Rev. Andrew Schmidt, Dean of Students of Bethany Lutheran College has requested transfer from membership and the clergy roster of the WELS to membership and inclusion on the clergy roster of the ELS, and,

WHEREAS, He has been transferred to the ELS by the officials of the WELS, and,

WHEREAS, His request for transfer meets the requirements of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Rev. Andrew Schmidt be received into permanent membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Resolution 5: Membership Application of Teacher

WHEREAS, Kevin L. Klug, Principal at Holy Trinity Lutheran School, Okauchee, Wisconsin, has requested membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,
WHEREAS, The Committee on Synodical Membership, having examined his application for synodical membership, has found that it meets the requirements of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That Kevin L. Klug, Principal at Holy Trinity Lutheran School, Okauchee, Wisconsin, be received into permanent membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Resolution 6: Fellowship Acknowledgment of a Congregation

WHEREAS, Christ Lutheran Church, Princeton, Minnesota, is an independent congregation that desires to be in fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,
WHEREAS, Christ Lutheran Church has submitted a letter declaring such agreement in doctrine and practice with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and has also submitted their constitution for review, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod acknowledge the fellowship that exists between Christ Lutheran Church, Princeton, Minnesota, and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Resolution 7: Application of Pastors to Continue on the Clergy Roster

WHEREAS, The Guidelines for the Clergy Roster (III.A) read: “An ordained clergyman who does not have a current call but desires to remain on the clergy roster and is eligible to perform the duties of the office of the ministry described in Article II., and who is not emeritus may, by action of the president and secretary, be continued on the Clergy Roster for a period not to exceed three years from the beginning of the period of inactivity. Upon the application of the individual and the recommendation of the president and secretary for an extension of such classification, the convention shall determine in each instance, on written ballot, whether the request shall be honored for an additional three year period”, and,
WHEREAS, For the past three years the following names have been on the inactive list: the Rev. Bradley Homan and the Rev. David Meyer, and,
WHEREAS, at the request of the Rev. Bradley Homan and the Rev. David Meyer; and with the approval of the president and the secretary, the convention is being asked to extend the clergy roster status for the Rev. Bradley Homan and the Rev. David Meyer, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod extend the clergy roster status for the Rev. Bradley Homan and the Rev. David Meyer.

Resolution 8: Congregation Constitution Revisions

WHEREAS, The *Handbook* of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod encourages congregations to submit their revised constitution for synodical review, and,
WHEREAS, Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota, has submitted their revised constitution for synodical review, and,
WHEREAS, The Committee on Synodical Membership has found that their constitution meets the requirements of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the constitution of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota, be approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Resolution 9: Congregation Constitution Revisions

WHEREAS, the 2015 Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod resolved in Resolution 1: Congregation Constitution Revision of the Synodical Membership Action of the Synod: “B. BE IT RESOLVED, That congregations submitting their constitutions for review be encouraged to list the specific revisions that relate to their previous constitution” (*Synod Report* 2015: 62), and,

WHEREAS, This has not yet become common practice, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the congregations submitting changes to Articles of Incorporation, Constitution or Bylaws be urged to list the specific revisions that relate to their previous document(s).

CREDENTIALS—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Excuses of permanent members: non-attendance

WHEREAS, Excuses for absence from the 2017 Synod Convention have been received from the following permanent members of the synod: Harry Bartels, Martin Doepel, Thomas Fox, Allen Labitzky, Homer Mosley, Steve Reagles, Alex Ring, Mark Rogers, Trent Saari, Jim Wilson, Jim Young, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That they be excused.

Resolution 2: Excuse of congregation: non-attendance

WHEREAS, An excuse for absence from the 2017 Synod Convention has been received from Resurrection Lutheran (North Bend, Oregon), therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That she be excused.

Resolution 3: Excuse of pastor: late arrival

WHEREAS, Excuses for late arrival at the 2017 Synod Convention have been received from Fred Lams and Bernt Tweit, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That he be excused.

Resolution 4: Excuse of pastors: early departure

WHEREAS, Excuses for early departure from the 2017 Synod Convention have been received from the following pastors: Greg Haugen, Erich Hoeft, Matthew Luttman, and Michael Smith, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That they be excused.

Resolution 5: Excuse of delegates: early departure

WHEREAS, Excuses for early departure from the 2017 Synod Convention have been received from the following delegates: Greg Gilbertson and Gary Honsey, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That they be excused.

REPORT OF THE DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

The year 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. The year 1517 and the resulting Lutheran Reformation is of vital importance to confessional Lutheranism. Here God through His servant Martin Luther restored true biblical doctrine which had long been a hidden treasure. The biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone is the central article of the faith. We are declared righteous by nothing we do or accomplish, but alone on the basis of Christ's redemptive work which is counted as ours through faith in the Savior. He accomplished salvation for all on the cross and announced it to all by His resurrection declaring the whole world righteous. This treasure is brought to us personally through the means of grace and is received by faith alone in the Savior which is worked through those very means of grace.

This truth, the central article of the faith, is revealed to us in God's inerrant and life-giving Word. It is our purpose as a synod and as a Doctrine Committee to continue in that Word so that we are indeed His disciples (John 8:31). We make our stand on the inspired, inerrant Scriptures, the only source of faith, doctrine, and life, and we subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions because they are a clear exposition of the doctrines of the Scriptures.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Since the last convention, the committee consisted of the Rev. Karl Anderson, Mr. Gregory Costello, Mr. Allen Quist, the Rev. Thomas Rank, Prof. Gaylin Schmeling, Prof. Erling Teigen, and the Rev. David Jay Webber. President John Moldstad serves ex officio, and Vice President Glenn Obenberger is an advisory member. The Doctrine Committee's three meetings were devoted to the consideration of questions and other matters referred to it by the synod convention, the synodical president, the chairman of the committee, and groups or other individuals within the synod.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONFESSIONAL FORUM

The biennial meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Forum (ELCF) was held on October 17–18, 2016, in Mankato, Minnesota. The forum, consisting of eleven representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) and eleven representatives of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), is intended to express the fellowship enjoyed by the two synods. The forum meetings are divided into the administration division, mission division, doctrine division, higher education division, Lutheran elementary schools division, and stewardship division. The doctrinal division of the forum (consisting of two members from each synod) naturally discusses primarily doctrinal matters in its divisional session, and then joins the other divisions in a plenary session that gives attention to reports from all the divisions of the forum. A paper, entitled "Witnessing in the Workplace," was presented by Thomas Heyn at the forum. Also there was a general discussion of congregational and synodical facility use in view of the LGBT issues.

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

The 64th biennial convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) will be held on the campus of Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wisconsin, July 31–August 3, 2017. The theme for the convention will be "Our Great Heritage," reflecting on the blessings of the Reformation in this anniversary year. Representatives of the Doctrine Committee plan to attend the convention.

In the years when the ELCF does not meet, as is the case in 2017, there is a meeting of the Doctrine Committee and the WELS CICR. This meeting will occur September 29 in Waukesha, Wisconsin.

In the course of the past year there were two meetings between the ELS Doctrine Committee and the Doctrine Committee of the WELS Conference of Presidents, in which there was a discussion of the 2014 WELS “General Guidelines in Applying Scripture’s Doctrine of Fellowship” especially as it applies to area Lutheran high schools.

FORMAL MEETINGS WITH THE CLC

A joint statement regarding the termination of fellowship was formulated by representatives of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC), WELS, and ELS. This document is entitled “Joint Statement Regarding Termination of Fellowship” (see *Synod Report* 2016, p. 74–77). The 2016 ELS convention approved this statement “as a correct presentation regarding the biblical doctrine on the termination of fellowship” (*Synod Report* 2016, p. 79–80). The WELS presented the statement to the conventions of its twelve districts. The statement will be acted upon by the biennial WELS convention in 2017. The statement was presented to the CLC convention in June 2016. There was considerable discussion of the statement, and it was resolved that its Board of Doctrine prepare an evaluation of the joint statement for discussion at the CLC fall 2016 regional pastoral conferences and the 2017 CLC General Pastoral Conference. It was further resolved that the 2017 CLC General Pastoral Conference make a recommendation to the 2018 CLC Convention on how to proceed regarding the joint statement.

Representatives of CLC, ELS, and WELS met August 26, 2016. The main portion of this meeting was set aside to discuss how the biblical fellowship principles impact participation in various organizations that may have religious elements in their governing documents or in how the organizations function. Another meeting is scheduled for August 17, 2017, in Waukesha, Wisconsin.

INFORMAL MEETING WITH THE LUTHERAN CHURCH–MISSOURI SYNOD

For the past five years, representatives from our synod and from WELS have been meeting for informal discussions with counterparts from the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS). The most recent meeting occurred November 29–December 1, 2016, in Jacksonville, Florida. The two main topics of this meeting were cooperation in externals and the role of men and women in the church. Information concerning the respective church bodies was shared. Expenditures for these sessions have been covered outside the ELS budget.

BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

The committee has continued its study of Bible translations. It intends to produce a guide for Bible translations which will be of benefit for congregations. This study is being led by the Rev. Thomas Rank.

BIBLE STUDY FOR REFORMATION AND SYNOD ANNIVERSARY

The Doctrine Committee was asked by the synod president and the Centennial Committee to produce a Bible study for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the 100th anniversary of the reorganization of the synod for use in the fall of 2017. The Bible study, “Proclaiming God’s Truth,” has been prepared and consists of seven segments. These segments compare the history and theology of the Reformation with the history and doctrinal issues that helped shape the synod. The topics of the segments include the following: 1. Objective Justification and Absolution, 2. Election of Grace and Conversion, 3. The Divine Call, 4. Church Fellowship, 5. Adiaaphora and Ceremonies, 6. Mission Work, and 7. Christian Education.

CONFESSIONAL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

The 2017 Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) convention, which occurs at the time of the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, will be held in Germany.

This will be the ninth triennial convention of the CELC. The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church (Germany; ELFK) is planning to hold the convention at the Gymnasium St. Augustin in Grimma on June 29–July 2, 2017. This is one of the places where Paul Gerhardt went to school, and the city is located close to Wittenberg and other Luther and ELFK sites. The theme of the convention will be “Reformation: Then and Now.” The essays will be as follows:

Essay 1: The Lutheran Reformation Then and Now — essayist: Rev. Holger Weiß

Essay 2: The Reformed Reformation Then and Now — essayist: Rev. Sam Choi

Essay 3: The Radical Reformation Then and Now — essayist: Rev. Julio Ascarrunz Martinez

Essay 4: The Catholic Reformation Then and Now — essayist: Rev. Timothy Schmeling

A special CELC committee has produced “Ninety-five Theses for the 21st Century” as an anniversary project. These theses present all the Lutheran fundamentals but also include topics that need to be addressed in our contemporary society. This idea follows in the tradition of the 95 theses of Claus Harms in 1817. The co-chairmen of this committee are the Rev. Thomas Nass and the Rev. John Moldstad.

The officers of the CELC are: president, the Rev. Daniel Koelpin; vice-president, Prof. Gaylin Schmeling; secretary, the Rev. Timothy Buelow; treasurer, Mr. Mark Schulz; planning committee, the Rev. Michael Duncan and the Rev. Larry Schlomer.

The Theological Commission of the CELC continues to produce *The Eternal Word: A Lutheran Confession for the Twenty-First Century*. Article I is a study of the doctrine of Holy Scripture, Article II of the doctrine of justification, Article III of the work of the Holy Spirit, Article IV of the person and work of Christ, Article V of the doctrine of eschatology, and Article VI of the church’s mission. These statements may be found in PDF form on the CELC website under the heading “Eternal Word: A Lutheran Confession” <www.celc.info>.

THEOLOGICAL TRENDS

The Doctrine Committee desires to keep abreast of doctrinal trends and issues within the church at large (e.g., objective justification, homosexuality, same sex marriage, feminism, the “church growth” movement, the “emergent church” phenomenon, “contemporary worship” practices, modern Gnostic influence, government encroachment on religious liberty, etc.). Therefore each member of the committee is assigned certain magazines, periodicals, and theological essays which he is to monitor for the committee and keep it informed concerning developments within the various church bodies. In addition to this, Mr. Allen Quist is leading the committee in its study of postmodernism in society.

The Lord’s directive is that we build up the walls of Zion through mission work employing Law and Gospel. We will strengthen ourselves and those around us through Word and Sacrament by which the Lord gives the power to do all things through Him, the power to overcome our foes and obtain the victory. At the same time we will stand ready with the sword of defense prepared to face false doctrine as it arises on every side. On this, the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, may we always remember Luther’s thoughts concerning the sword and trowel, *Luthers Schwert und Kelle. Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr vergehet nun und nimmermehr! God’s Word and Luther’s doctrine pure now and forever!*

*The Rev. Gaylin Schmeling, chairman
The Rev. Thomas Rank, secretary*

DOCTRINE—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Worldwide Fellowship

WHEREAS, 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation and the blessings that come through justification by faith alone on the basis of Christ's redemptive work, and, WHEREAS, We enjoy a worldwide fellowship as is found in the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC), and specifically our American sister synod the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), each of which also prize this doctrine of justification by grace through faith, and,

WHEREAS, This fellowship is a blessing to our ELS, and,

WHEREAS, This fellowship is also a blessing to our brothers and sisters throughout the world, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank God for the many blessings that we have in this worldwide fellowship, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the Doctrine Committee for the continued discussions that foster such fellowship.

Resolution 2: Formal Meetings with Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC)

WHEREAS, Representatives of the ELS have again held formal meetings with the CLC, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we pray God's blessings on the continuation of these formal meetings, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage our representatives to continue to report on these formal meetings, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage our representatives to continue to give clear expression of the confession to which we hold fast by God's grace.

Resolution 3: Informal Meetings with Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS)

WHEREAS, Representatives of the ELS have again met informally with representatives of the LCMS, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we pray God's blessings on the continuation of these informal meetings, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage our representatives to continue to report on these informal meetings, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage our representatives to continue to give clear expression of the confession to which we hold fast by God's grace.

Resolution 4: Translations, Bible Study, Theological trends

WHEREAS, The Doctrine Committee has continued its study of Bible translations and is in the process of producing a guide for Bible translations to benefit our congregations, and,

WHEREAS, The Doctrine Committee has produced a Bible Study for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the 100th anniversary of the reorganization of our synod for congregational use, and,

WHEREAS, The Doctrine Committee continues to keep abreast of doctrinal trends and issues within the church at large, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the Doctrine Committee for its work on the Bible translation guide, the anniversary Bible study, as well as other resources, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage our pastors and member congregations to make thorough use of these resources as made available in print and through our synod website.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS AND BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE

BOARD OF REGENTS

Members of the board during the past year: The Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch, Kissimmee, Florida, chairman; Harold Theiste, Pinehurst, North Carolina, vice-chairman; Paul T. Chamberlin, South Chatham, Massachusetts, secretary; Dr. Willis Anthony, St. Peter, Minnesota; The Rev. Mark Bartels, Madison, Wisconsin; The Rev. Edward Bryant, Lombard, Illinois; The Rev. Erwin Ekhoﬀ, Golden Valley, Minnesota; Lyle Fahning, Prior Lake, Minnesota; Dr. Joshua Mears, Lakeville, Minnesota; James Minor, Danbury, Wisconsin; The Rev. Nicholas Proksch, East Grand Forks, Minnesota; and The Rev. David Thompson, San Antonio, Texas.

Advisory Members: Bruce Gratz, Mankato, Minnesota; The Rev. John A. Moldstad, Mankato, Minnesota, President of the ELS; and Gene R. Pfeifer, Mankato, Minnesota, President of Bethany Lutheran College.

The board at its November 2016 meeting, elected Bruce Gratz for a three-year term as a type “B” member beginning in June 2017. The synod is asked to ratify that election at the 2017 convention.

THE FACULTY AND STAFF

Bethany Lutheran College and Theological Seminary are thankful that the Lord continues to provide talented and committed men and women who embrace the mission of the college and seminary and serve as faculty and staff. We praise God for sending us these dedicated workers. During a special service on February 13, 2017, the college and seminary observed the following anniversaries:

BLC FACULTY ANNIVERSARY OBSERVED 2017

Sarah Harstad, Assistant Professor, Business Administration	10 years
Doyle Holbird, Professor, Biology	10 years
Christopher Kind, Director of Development.....	10 years
Derick Lyngholm, Assistant Professor, Communication	10 years
John Merseth, Jr., Adjunct, Theatre	10 years
Juel Merseth, Director of Facilities.....	10 years
Paul Osterman, Head Athletic Trainer.....	10 years
Jake Yenish, Adjunct, Theatre	10 years
Ryan Kragh, Assistant Director of Athletics.....	15 years
Jackie Lemmermann, Housekeeping Technician.....	15 years
Timothy Tollefson, Assistant Professor, Music	15 years
Denice Woller, Adjunct, Art/Communication	15 years
Connie Meyer, Advancement, Office Assistant	20 years
Eric Woller, Vice President of Academic Affairs	20 years
John Sehloff, Director of Information Technology Services.....	30 years
Erling Teigen, Adjunct, Religion and College Archivist	40 years

BLTS FACULTY ANNIVERSARY OBSERVED 2017

Gaylin Schmeling, President.....	20 years
Michael Smith, Faculty, Greek and New Testament Studies.....	15 years

This past academic year we had the following new faculty and professional personnel join our staff: Matthew N. Fletcher, Head Coach-Men's Basketball and Women's Golf; Elizabeth M. Horneber, Assistant Professor, English; Peter M. Kjeer, Professor, Engineering and Physics; Alanna M. Lienig, Assistant Professor, Education; and Kevin S. Zimmerman, Director of Online Learning.

GRADUATES

On December 17, 2015, 36 students graduated and on May 13, 2016, 76 students graduated for a total of 112 graduates receiving the baccalaureate degree as part of the 17th four-year graduating class. These graduates represented 16 of the 21 majors.

ENROLLMENT

10-year BLC Fall Report on Attendance Statistics

	FA2007	FA2008	FA2009	FA2010	FA2011
Full Time	576	585	607	575	572
FTE	590	590	611	591	587
ELS	21%	18%	18%	17%	16%

10-year BLC Fall Report on Attendance Statistics

	FA2012	FA2013	FA2014	FA2015	FA2016
Full Time	558	534	488	490	514
FTE	577	558	507	500	537
ELS	16%	16%	16%	15%	15%

We continue to give thanks to the Lord to have the opportunity to provide Christ-centered education for our students. The above enrollment data indicates a slight recovery in the fall of 2016 from our recent downward trend in enrollment. Increased enrollment can be attributed to factors such as expanded marketing, the offering of dual credit online courses for high school students, renewed outreach within WELS area Lutheran high schools, growth of our international program, and the addition of much anticipated majors such as nursing.

We are thankful to observe a return to our more normal market share from area Lutheran high schools this past year (39 first-year students from a Lutheran high school background vs. 20 the year prior), and anticipate that number to continue to move in a positive direction. We also observed a slight increase in the number of ELS students attending Bethany this past fall (87 in fall 2016, vs. 79 in fall 2015). This translates into 15% of the Bethany student body coming from within our ELS. We also noted an increase in the percentage of students attending Bethany from within our ELS/WELS fellowship from 36% in fall 2015, to 39% in fall 2016. This is mainly due to the launch of our dual credit online courses for high school students. We continue to encourage congregation leaders to take advantage of the Bethany ELS Youth Grant. In this program, pastors and youth group leaders can bring high school juniors and seniors to visit Bethany and the costs will be covered by the college. We remain confident of God's blessings upon Bethany Lutheran College and its mission to engage and strengthen students in their relationship with their Savior, and in equipping them for lives of Christian vocation.

One other significant enrollment trend we wish to note is the fact that the international population of students at Bethany has more than doubled in the past year. In the fall of 2015, 17 international students studied at Bethany. In the fall of 2016, 38 international students

were enrolled at Bethany. The largest group of students from any country is the Congo. 15 Congolese students were enrolled at the college this past fall. We thank God for the opportunity to share the Gospel message with these students while they attend Bethany.

Bethany experienced record retention of first-year students from the fall of 2015 who returned to campus for their sophomore year the fall of 2016. While the ten-year average has been 71% of students returning for their sophomore year, this past year 82% returned for their second year. This increase in retention was recognized in all other cohorts of students as well, and was attributed to a number of initiatives and factors including the following: restructuring new student orientation, relocating freshman men to Gullixson Hall, increased attention on academically at-risk students through the Academic Resource Center, remodeling the Viking Village, enhanced school spirit through initiatives such as the new Viking logo, enhancing the early alert system for students of concern, alumni spotlight campaign that highlighted Bethany graduates and where they went next, and offering an unlimited access meal plan, to name a few.

BETHANY FINANCES

As strange as this may seem, for the first time in perhaps twenty or more years, Bethany experienced a balanced budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016. Operational revenue this past year was \$11,546,773 and expenses were \$11,522,950. This resulted in a small surplus of approximately \$23,000 that was attributed to several cost saving measures and the fact the college took a larger draw from its endowment. Typically, Bethany spends down its contingency fund to cover year-end deficits. That current fund now is at the point it can only cover the college for perhaps two more years of deficit spending. To ensure responsible endowment spending, the Board of Regents voted to cut their endowment spending from 7% on scholarships and 8% for operations to a more market appropriate 3.5% spending rate. At the same time, they decided to offset that decline in endowment revenue by spending down college savings held in short-term investments that yield smaller returns.

Due to the college investing in several programs that are hoped to bring future returns in greater student enrollment, the outlook for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2017, is that the college will face a deficit of approximately \$500,000 that will once again be covered by spending down the contingency fund.

The need for continued financial support from Bethany constituents and the ELS continues to be great. Such continued support coupled with increased student enrollment will continue to enable Bethany to fulfill its mission as a Christ-centered liberal arts college. We remain confident that God's blessings upon the college and its mission will continue to prosper Bethany so that it may continue to be an instrument used by God for His purpose.

CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR PROJECTS

Development of the nursing program continues. Following the submission of our Letter of Intent and a site visit, the Minnesota Board of Nursing granted initial approval to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing on August 4, 2016. In September of 2016 the Minnesota Office of Higher Education approved the application to add a Bachelor of Science degree. The first full-time faculty member was added in March 2017, when Deborah Matzke-Lewis was hired. Curriculum materials will continue to be developed through the summer, and the first cohort of students will enroll in nursing classes in the fall of 2017.

At their November 2016 meeting, the Board of Regents approved three new majors: biochemistry, graphic design, and engineering science. These major will go into effect in the fall of 2017.

For the first time in 2016–17, ten Bethany general education courses were offered online as dual credit courses offered to high school students. In total, 76 high school students participated in the program this past academic year. In summer, 2017, online courses are being offered to both high school and Bethany college students, and in 2017–18 plans are underway to offer additional online courses, bringing the total to sixteen courses offered in an online format.

Also new in 2016–17 was the addition of a new beginner religious studies curriculum for first-year students who enter Bethany with less Bible background. This past year, Director of Campus Spiritual Life Don Moldstad taught the course “Essentials of Christianity” to approximately 50 first-year students in two sections.

At their February 2017 meeting, the Board of Regents extended a divine call to Pastor Nicholas Proksch to teach full-time in our Religion Division. We are pleased that the Holy Spirit guided Pastor Proksch to accept the call. He will begin teaching in the fall. At the same meeting the board extended a divine call to Pastor Andrew Schmidt to serve as the Dean of Students and teach in the Religion Division. We are pleased that the Holy Spirit guided Pastor Schmidt to accept the call.

In January 2017, the Minnesota Board of Teaching approved our proposal to offer licensure in secondary math education. Bethany currently offers secondary teaching licensure in the areas of broad field social studies, English, and studio art.

Data collected from the annual survey of Bethany alumni indicates that of those who sought employment, 77% of recent graduates were employed within three months, and over 90% within six months of graduation. Of those who went on to graduate school, alumni indicated being well prepared for the rigors of graduate school and that they experienced a high success rate (95%) of getting into their first graduate program of choice. Over 92% of Bethany graduates indicated that if they were to start college completely over, they would still choose to attend Bethany.

PROFESSOR PETER KJEER PASSES AWAY

Bethany Lutheran College sadly reports the passing of Professor of Engineering Peter Kjeer the morning of December 3, 2016, while working on the job site of a home he was building.

Peter Kjeer taught physics part-time at Bethany between the years of 2000 and 2010 while he worked as a practicing engineer for Kato Engineering and Johnson Outdoors. Kjeer was also an adjunct instructor in the mechanical engineering program for Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Kjeer moved to Vermont in 2011 to teach on the engineering faculty at Norwich University. In 2012, he moved to Massachusetts where he taught physics and engineering at Harvard University and attended Harvard’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Kjeer returned to Bethany during the summer of 2016 to establish an engineering program at the college. He held the Lester Goetzke Endowed Chair of Engineering Science.

Bethany Lutheran College President Gene Pfeifer said in a prepared statement to the students, faculty, staff, and regents of the college, “The days ahead will be challenging for the entire Bethany family as we mourn the loss of a popular and gifted professor who just this semester led the faculty in developing a new major in engineering science. Just as we can be assured of God’s grace in sending each of us a Savior from sin in His Son, Jesus, we can also be assured of God’s promise that He will never leave us or forsake us. God assures us in His word, “I know the plans I have for you ... plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11).

The Bethany Lutheran College Board of Regents, at their November 2016 meeting, approved the new engineering program. In the documentation that Peter Kjeer prepared for the board he wrote the following. “We see in Hebrews 11:10, ‘For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.’ Bethany is equipped to provide our students

a path on which to pursue the engineering profession under the protective embrace of the One Thing Needful.”

Peter Kjeer is survived by his wife, Julie, and daughters, Katherine and Emily (a member of the BLC Class of 2020).

PHYSICAL PLANT

During the summer of 2016, the college undertook an extensive remodeling project in the Viking Village. The goal was to give students a fresh new look in appearance and functionality. Dart machines, billiard tables, wall mounted television sets and a new popcorn machine were added. These changes have been well received by the students.

Upgrades in Anderson Hall bathrooms and lounges took place as well. Modern sinks and vanity tops were placed in the bathrooms, and the kitchenettes in lounge areas were improved as well. In Teigen Hall, the residential manager's bathroom and first floor bathroom were remodeled.

GRANTS

Financial support from a variety of grants continues to provide assistance to carry out the mission of Bethany Lutheran College. We received a generous grant from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation to continue to enhance our programmatic offerings and physical facilities. We are thankful for their generous support.

Bethany Lutheran College is thankful for the continued support of Thrivent Financial. During calendar year 2016, the college received \$15,035 as a result of the Thrivent Choice program where Thrivent members direct funds to organizations and charities of their choosing.

Bethany is also thankful for the support received from the National Bethany Auxiliary. The National Auxiliary meets annually on the fourth Monday of September. During the auxiliary's annual meeting in 2016, several projects were approved for support including items for the Biology Department, Education Department, Memorial Library, Nursing Department, Media Arts Department, Theatre Department, and the Vocal Music Department totaling \$7,000. The Auxiliary also contributed \$5,000 towards the Dorothy Theiste Memorial Auxiliary Scholarship Fund.

ESTATES

The college gratefully acknowledges the receipt of the following estates received through December 31, 2016:

Donna M. Black
Stephen Casai
Wayne A. Dalchow
Lester E. Goetzke
Jeanette R. Gulbrandson
Georgianne F. Jaeger
Ida R. Meyer
Bertha A. Schiller

CONCLUSION

The Lord has richly blessed Bethany Lutheran College during the past year. We are humbled by the generous financial support, prayers and words of encouragement of alumni and friends.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to provide a Christ-centered education to give our students the foundation needed as they leave campus to pursue their vocation of choice.

Herbert Huhnerkoch, Chairman
Paul Chamberlin, Secretary
Gene R. Pfeifer, President

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE AND BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BOARD OF REGENTS

Type A Members of the board during the past fiscal year:

The Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch, Kissimmee, Florida (chairman); Paul T. Chamberlin, South Chatham, Massachusetts (secretary). Dr. Willis Anthony, St. Peter, Minnesota; the Rev. Edward Bryant, Lombard Illinois; the Rev. Erwin Ekhoﬀ, Golden Valley, Minnesota; Lyle Fahning, Prior Lake, Minnesota; Joshua Mears, Lakeville, Minnesota; James Minor, Danbury, Wisconsin; the Rev. David Thompson, San Antonio, Texas.

Type B Members of the board during the past fiscal year:

Harold Theiste, Pinehurst, North Carolina (vice-chairman); the Rev. Mark Bartels, Madison, Wisconsin; the Rev. Nicholas Proksch, East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

Advisory Members:

The Rev. John A. Moldstad, Mankato, Minnesota, President of the ELS; (*ex officio*), Gene R. Pfeifer, Mankato, Minnesota (President of Bethany Lutheran College), the Rev. Gaylin Schmeling (President of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary), Bruce Gratz, Mankato Minnesota (appointed as an advisory member of the regents' finance and investment committees.)

ACTION TAKEN IN FISCAL 2017 BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE

- A. Adopted the "BLC Mission/Vision Statement" first as a "working document," allowing the administration to use the vision portions in developing promotional materials, and subsequently as a completed document which was submitted to the Synod Review Committee.
- B. Appointed a subcommittee of the Rev. Ed Bryant, Lyle Fahning, and the Rev. Nicholas Proksch to review the Synod Review Committee handbook revisions for Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.
- C. Adopted the 2016–17 proposed budget for the college.
- D. Approved the college president and cabinet goals for 2016–2017.
- E. Reduced the endowment spending rate to 4% from the previous 7% for 2017–2018, in order to assure sustainability of the funds.
- F. Continued the board review of a five-year strategic plan.
- G. Expressed gratitude to the college president, his cabinet, and the faculty and staff for working diligently to finish fiscal 2016 in the black; and to Dr. Carrie Pfeifer and all who worked with her to develop on-line courses.

- H Established the Lester Goetzke Chair in Engineering and endowed it with \$600,000 from his estate.
- I. Approved the BA degree in Engineering Sciences, a new major in Graphic Design, and a BA degree in Biochemistry.
- J. Authorized the administration to offer the position of Assistant Professor of Education to Dr. Alanna Lienig and Assistant Professor of Media Arts to Amanda Quist.
- K. Called the Rev. Nicholas Proksch to a religious studies professorship (accepted).
- L. Called the Rev. Andrew Schmidt to a religious studies professorship and to serve as the Dean of Students (accepted).
- M. Authorized the administration to hire Deborah Matzke-Lewis to a faculty position in nursing.
- N. Appointed Joshua Mears and the Rev. David Thompson to join Bethany Lutheran College staff members on a Title IX Review Committee. Sent a request to the Doctrine Committee of the synod to consider studying and clarifying the ELS stance on issues related to: transgender, sexual identification, gender assignment, etc.
- O. Approved fund raising efforts, architectural design firm search, and development of a complete funding method for a new Student Activities Center.
- P. Adopted a revised college facility naming policy for campus buildings and facilities allowing not only significant service as a basis for naming, but also a substantial philanthropic contribution.
- Q. Approved guidelines for the G. A. Gullixson Memorial Archives Fund.

ACTION TAKEN IN FISCAL 2017 BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR BLTS

- A. Approved for graduation seminary students Matthew Behmer, Sung Gyu Choi, Jeffrey Hendrix, Joshua Mayer, Daniel Ruiz, and Andrew Soule for Master of Divinity, and Elizabeth Urtel for Master of Arts.
- B. Declared all those holding Master of Divinity degrees as eligible for calls into the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
- C. Determined to use the majority of the Marguerite Ylvisaker legacy to fund the 2016 deficit.
- D. Adopted the 2016–17 proposed budget for the seminary.
- E. Approved President Schmeling's proposed goals and objectives for 2016–2017.
- F. Made our regent nominations for the seminary professorship vacancy as reported in the *Lutheran Sentinel*.
- G. Called Dr. Timothy Schmeling to the professorship of Old Testament and Church History at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary (accepted).

ACTION REQUIRED AT THE SYNOD CONVENTION.

- A. The Board of Regents appointed Bruce Gratz to an expired type B member term and seeks ratification of this action at the 2017 synod convention.
- B. At its May meeting, the Board of Regents appointed Mr. Tim Thiele to serve out the final year of a Type B position which became vacant when the Rev. Nicholas Proksch accepted a call to Bethany Lutheran College and subsequently resigned from the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents seeks ratification of this appointment by the synod at its 2017 convention.

CONCLUSION

The Lord has richly blessed Bethany Lutheran College and Theological Seminary during the past year. At the college admissions are up and retention rates are as high as they have

ever been. Clearly this is due to the blessing of the Lord upon the extra effort of the college to give attention to these matters. At the seminary young men are still well trained to enter the pastoral ministry. We are grateful to have the privilege of governing these great institutions on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod so that there may be laymen and pastors who go out into the world as Christ's servants in whatever their vocation.

The Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch, chairman
Mr. Paul Chamberlin, secretary

BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE, INC.
Mankato, Minnesota
Consolidating Statement of Activities
Year Ended June 30, 2016

	<u>College</u>	<u>Seminary</u>	<u>2016 Total</u>	<u>2015 Total</u>
REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT				
Tuition and general fees	11,856,754	327,850	12,184,604	12,053,908
Less: Scholarships and grants	<u>(5,648,130)</u>	<u>(324,525)</u>	<u>(5,972,655)</u>	<u>(5,791,292)</u>
Net Tuition and Fees	6,208,624	3,325	6,211,949	6,262,616
Government Grants	136,786	-	136,786	146,015
Contributions	3,828,909	685,270	4,514,179	5,571,106
Endowment income	481,637	99,524	581,161	746,096
Endowment gains (losses)	(1,221,717)	(462,629)	(1,684,346)	128,006
Gains (losses) on beneficial interest in funds held in trust	(7,823)	(5,262)	(13,085)	1,019
Gain (loss) on beneficial interest in perpetual trust	(22,287)	(22,287)	(44,574)	7,202
Sales and services of student activities	65,946	-	65,946	68,693
Gain on sale of property	92,023	-	92,023	-
Other sources	841,523	105,307	946,830	637,810
Auxiliary services	3,115,832	-	3,115,832	3,056,294
Adjustment of actuarial liability	<u>40,072</u>	<u>(12,863)</u>	<u>27,209</u>	<u>(64,671)</u>
Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support	13,559,525	390,385	13,949,910	16,560,186
EXPENSES				
Program expenses				
Instruction	6,202,886	553,421	6,756,307	6,814,995
Academic Support	556,575	-	556,575	555,467
Student services	3,999,695	182,920	4,182,615	4,195,689
Auxiliary	2,720,370	7,763	2,728,133	2,582,674
Support expenses				
Institutional Support	3,373,238	54,214	3,427,452	3,660,593
Allocable expenses				
Operation and maintenance of plant	1,609,069	44,086	1,653,155	1,680,910
Depreciation	1,945,593	70,575	2,016,168	1,998,154
Interest	438,227	-	438,227	455,452
Less: Allocated expenses	(3,992,889)	(114,661)	(4,107,550)	(4,134,516)
Contributions receivable written-off	<u>22,400</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>22,400</u>	<u>8,900</u>
Total expenses	16,875,164	798,318	17,673,482	17,818,138
Change in Net Assets	<u>(3,315,639)</u>	<u>(407,933)</u>	<u>(3,723,572)</u>	<u>(1,258,132)</u>
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	<u>70,451,616</u>	<u>11,181,086</u>	<u>81,632,702</u>	<u>82,890,864</u>
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	<u>67,135,977</u>	<u>10,773,153</u>	<u>77,909,130</u>	<u>81,632,732</u>

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The year 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. The year 1517 and the resulting Lutheran Reformation is of vital importance to confessional Lutheranism. Here God through His servant Martin Luther restored true biblical doctrine which had long been a hidden treasure. The biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone is the central article of the faith. It alone can give the poor, lost sinner comfort now and at the hour of our death. On

our own we are hopelessly lost. We daily sin much and can do nothing to save ourselves. The doctrine of justification, however, shows us that our gracious God has done all for our salvation and that this salvation is offered to us as a free gift. We are declared righteous freely for Christ's sake through faith in Him as our Savior. This alone can give us peace and purpose in this life and the confident hope for the life to come.

Our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary continues to play a vital role in preparing men to go forth to proclaim the saving message of the Reformation, justification by faith alone. Each year we continue to send forth more workers who have been trained to proclaim the life-giving Word in its truth and purity and to administer the Sacraments in accord with Christ's command. The Lord has permitted us to complete another school year where men were trained for this blessed ministry. May our gracious Lord continue to bless our seminary to the glory of His name and the welfare of precious blood-bought souls.

BOARD OF REGENTS

The Board of Regents is responsible for overseeing and governing the operations of the seminary. The board met quarterly during the year and the president of the seminary submitted a report to each meeting. The members of the board are: The Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch, Kissimmee, Florida, chairman; Mr. Harold Theiste, Pinehurst, North Carolina, vice-chairman; Mr. Paul Chamberlin, South Chatham, Massachusetts, secretary; the Rev. Mark Bartels, Madison, Wisconsin; the Rev. Edward Bryant, Lombard, Illinois; the Rev. Erwin Ekhoﬀ, Golden Valley, Minnesota; the Rev. Nicholas Proksch, East Grand Forks, Minnesota; the Rev. David Thompson, San Antonio, Texas; Dr. Willis Anthony, St. Peter, Minnesota; Mr. Lyle Fahning, Prior Lake, Minnesota; Dr. Joshua Mears, Lakeville, Minnesota; and Mr. James Minor, Danbury, Wisconsin. By virtue of office, the president of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., the Rev. John Moldstad, Mankato, Minnesota, serves as a member of the Board of Regents.

FACULTY

The following professors taught in the seminary during the 2016–17 school year: Adolph Harstad, Michael Smith, Thomas Kuster, Allen Quist, Timothy Schmeling, and Gaylin Schmeling. Professor Harstad led our Old Testament studies and teaches Church History, Homiletics, and other practical courses. Professor Smith taught our New Testament courses, Symbolics, Homiletics and other practical courses. Professor Kuster taught Communication, Professor Quist taught apologetics, and Professor T. Schmeling taught dogmatics. President Schmeling taught Church History, Pastoral Theology, Homiletics, and other practical courses.

At the seminary commencement service, Professor Harstad was honored at his retirement from the seminary after twenty-six years of faithful service. Professor Harstad has distinguished himself as an author producing two excellent commentaries on the book of Joshua, one over 800 pages. Recently he completed a new commentary on Deuteronomy, which will be his third commentary. These commentaries are a wonderful blessing to confessional Lutheranism. We thank the Lord for the wonderful blessings He has bestowed upon our seminary through Professor Harstad.

On November 14, 2016, the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary called Timothy Schmeling as professor of Old Testament, Symbolics, and Church History. We pray that God blesses him in this new role as he prepares for teaching seminary classes next fall.

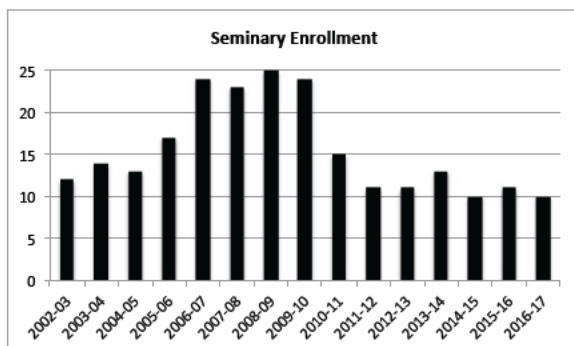
ENROLLMENT

There were ten students enrolled at the seminary in the 2016–17 academic year. It breaks down as follows: 5 juniors, 1 middler, 2 seniors, and 2 vicars. The vicars were Aaron Ferkenstad

at St. John's Lutheran Church (Frankenmuth, Michigan); and Kurtis Freimuth at Grace Lutheran Church (Vero Beach, Florida).

This is the history of the seminary enrollment in the past fifteen years:

	<u>Juniors</u>	<u>Middlers</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Vicars</u>	<u>M.A.</u>	<u>Total</u>
2002-03	2	2	4	3	1	12
2003-04	4	2	3	4	1	14
2004-05	4	4	1	3	1	13
2005-06	7	3	4	1	2	17
2006-07	10	5	3	4	2	24
2007-08	5	9	4	3	2	23
2008-09	6	4	9	4	2	25
2009-10	4	5	4	9	2	24
2010-11	0	5	5	5		15
2011-12	2	0	3	6		11
2012-13	5	2	1	3		11
2013-14	3	5	3	1	1	13
2014-15	1	2	5	1	1	10
2015-16	1	2	2	5	1	11
2016-17	5	1	2	2		10



RECRUITMENT

Although our synod is blessed with few vacancies at present, new pastors will be needed in the coming years. Our synod desires to begin new missions and to continue serving our present congregations. Therefore, the seminary continues to encourage men to consider the pastoral ministry but the support of our congregations and pastors is needed.

We urge pastors and laity to be recruiters for the seminary by encouraging promising young men, and those not so young, to study for the pastoral ministry. St. Paul reminds us, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" (Romans 10:14-15). The gracious Savior who

laid down His life for our salvation is calling for pastors to shepherd and nurture the flock purchased with His own blood.

ACTIVITIES

Annual Pastors' Institute: The annual Pastors' Institute of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary has been held in various locations throughout the country in order to make it possible for more of our pastors to attend. This year the institute took place at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary in Mankato, Minnesota, on July 6–7, 2016. The first portion of the institute was a presentation entitled “Concordia, Discordia, Et Irenicum: The Reception of the Book of Concord in Seventeenth Century Braunschweig Lutheranism.” This presentation demonstrated how the Book of Concord was received in the northern German states. It explains some of the conflicts involved in the acceptance of the Book of Concord in Lutheran lands and helps explain the genesis of the Syncretistic Controversy (ca. 1645–86) of the seventeenth century. It was given by Dr. Timothy Schmeling of Bethany Lutheran College. The second segment of the institute was entitled “Church of the Lutheran Confession: Then and Now,” centering on the origin and recent history of the CLC. This presentation was given by President Gaylin Schmeling.

Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures: The annual Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures were October 27–28, 2016. This year the theme was **The Cost of Confessing: Luther and the Three Princes**. Lecture One: *Luther and Frederick the Wise* by Dr. Roland Ziegler; Lecture Two: *Luther and John the Constant* by Dr. Charles Cortright; Lecture Three: *Luther and John Frederick* by Dr. David Lumppp.

Mission and Ministry: An invitation was extended to our students to attend the annual Mission and Ministry Seminar at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin, on February 7–9, 2017. The theme of the seminar was “Plant the Enduring Word.”

Seminary Marriage Workshop: On February 18, 2017, Dr. Michael and Anita Smith led the annual marriage seminar for the students and their wives/fiancées, entitled, “Tightropes, Time, and Talking.” The seminar focused on time management and communication in the parsonage. After the seminar, the group enjoyed lunch together.

Seminary Wives: The seminary wives have regular monthly meetings where important issues concerning the pastor's family, finances, and parish life are discussed. This program is led by President Gaylin and Rebecca Schmeling.

Senior Recognition Dinner: This event was held on the evening of April 24, 2017. This is always a pleasant and relaxing evening for the students and staff.

Vicar Workshop: Our annual vicar workshop was held on Wednesday, May 10, 2017. The returning vicars reported on certain phases of their vicarages. President John Moldstad spoke to the student body concerning the pastor and his relationship to the synod. President Schmeling spoke to the student body concerning the various responsibilities of a vicar. Brief presentations were also given on our synod's retirement plan, insurance plan, and deferred giving.

Commencement Service: The seminary commencement service was held on Wednesday, May 10, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. in Trinity Chapel. Professor Adolph Harstad was the preacher, President Gaylin Schmeling served as liturgist, and the Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch represented the Board of Regents. The following graduated from the seminary with a Master of Divinity degree: Aaron Ferkenstad and Kurtis Friemuth.

LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

The *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* is the theological journal of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. It is issued by Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary as a testimony of its theological convictions, as a witness to the saving truths of the inerrant Scripture and the

Lutheran Confessions, and in the interest of theological growth for the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The subscription price is \$25.00 per year and can be obtained by writing to Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, 6 Browns Court, Mankato, MN 56001. If you would prefer to receive the *Quarterly* in PDF format, rather than a printed copy, please contact the seminary office. Past issues of the *Quarterly* are to be found on the Bethany Seminary website <www.blts.edu/lsq>.

GRANTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT

We are grateful to the individuals supporting the seminary through the Thrivent Choice program of Thrivent Financial.

Each year there are corporations that match their employees' contributions to the seminary through their foundations. We are thankful for this added support.

Members of the ELS ladies' organizations have given support to the Seminary Fund, Scholarship Fund and Student Support Fund. This has been a wonderful blessing for our students. Thank you for all your help.

The Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation supports the seminary in a significant way. Grants from the foundation have provided support for the seminary operations and for our seminarians and their families.

LEGACIES AND GIFT ANNUITIES

The following legacies were received in fiscal year July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016:

Jeanette Gulbrandson	\$ 57,500.00
Merrill Rope	167,328.85
Bertha Schiller	15,000.00
Marguerite Ylvisaker	125,165.58

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

The Scholarship Endowment Funds continue to be a blessing to the seminary students. Several scholarship funds have been set up in memory of individuals and the annual dividends are used to help students with their tuition costs. The students are most appreciative of this financial assistance as they pursue their theological education. It is our concern that no one desiring to study for the ministry be denied a theological education for lack of funds. The present Scholarship Endowment Funds are:

Rev. Theodore and Melvina Aaberg; Merle Aasen; Otto & Dorothy Abrams; Herman & Evelyn Anderson; Joey & Trisha Anderson; Keith G. Anderson; John, Ethel & Rodney Arends; Robert, Flora & Charlotte F. Becker; Edmund Bolstad; Kenneth & Audrey Bolstad; Gregory C. and Susan D. Bovid; Bruss Family; Nora Buffington Support; Larry & Jane Carlovsky; Arthur O. Carlsen; Glenn & Dorothy Collins; Mabel Dahlgren; Allen & Susan Daniels; Davis-Nelson; Robert & Betty Diesing; Roger & Lois Dohrmann; Stuart Dorr; John Dukleth Memorial; Keith & Claudia Eisberg; George & Dorothy Feil; Ole Martin Fjar; Howard and Jeanette (Hovland) Gulbrandson; Donald & Opal Hackbarth; Albert S. Hammer; Paul & Cordia Hasz Support; Hoiland Family; Lyle & Debby Hoverson; Lenwick & Glenna Hoyord; Brian Koch; Ewald & Verda Kohlmeyer; Jens, Jerome & Laverne Kvam; Ernest W. Larsen; Albin Levorson; George O. Lillegard; Harold & Ellen Loe; Lorentz Book; Gwenn & Sigfred Lysne; Juul B. Madson Memorial Fund for Excellence in New Testament Greek; Norman A. Madson Sr.; Rev. William & Jean McMurdie; Clarence E. and June Labb Miller; Joe & Peggy Moll; Julius F. Mundschen; Rev. Richard & Hazel Newgard; George Nygaard; Arleta M. Olson; Ordal; George & Ruth Orvick; Kenneth & Violet Peter; Pres. Wilhelm and Naomi Petersen; Emil & Martha Peterson; Timothy & Gail Peterson; Richard & Florence Rado;

Chauncey & Enanda Reinertson; Roland & Lois Reinholtz; Richland Lutheran Church; Merrill and Dorothy Rope; Ronald & Gay Rose; Herbert, Linette & Grace Sahnaw; Edna May Scherzer-Getz; Eugene & Bertha Schiller; Gaylin & Rebecca Schmeling; John and DeLores Seime Memorial; Robert and Madelyn Soule; St. Mark's Lutheran Memorial; Rev. Alhert & Clara Strand; Thomas Stueck Seminary Support; Calhoun & Jean Sumrall; Timothy & Nancy Thiele; Gerald and Gwen Tjernagel; Milton E. Tweit Student Support; Jim and Juanita Walberg; Walker-Schneider; William & Eunice Wehrenberg; Gerhard and Lois Weseloh; Patty Jo Weseloh; Whipple; Wayne and Esther Wiechmann Memorial; James & Carol Williams.

There is also a General Scholarship Fund to which individuals and organizations donate during the year and which is also used to render assistance to students in need.

SEMINARY ENDOWMENT FUND

A Seminary Endowment Fund has been established to be used for seminary needs. We want this fund to grow over the years and therefore we encourage our people to remember it. A bequest would certainly be an appropriate way to perpetuate the work of the seminary as it carries out its task of training pastors to proclaim the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Gaylin Schmeling, president
The Rev. Herbert Huhnertkoch, chairman
Mr. Paul Chamberlin, secretary

HIGHER EDUCATION—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Type “B” Election to Board of Regents

WHEREAS, At its November 2016 meeting, the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary elected Mr. Bruce Gratz to a three-year term as a Type “B” member of the Board of Regents, and,
WHEREAS, The Board of Regents seeks ratification of this action at the 2017 synod convention, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the convention ratify the board's action.

Resolution 2: Expanded Recruitment and Retention Efforts at Bethany Lutheran College

WHEREAS, The recent downward trend in enrollment at Bethany Lutheran College has begun to recover, and,
WHEREAS, This recovery can be attributed to several factors: offering dual credit online courses; renewed outreach to WELS area Lutheran high schools; growth in the international student program; and the addition of the nursing major, and,
WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College experienced record retention of first-year students from the fall of 2015, and,
WHEREAS, 82% of students returned for their sophomore year, an increase from the ten-year average of 71%, and,
WHEREAS, This increase in retention can be attributed to several initiatives, including improvements to the physical plant; providing additional attention to students with academic concerns; and the alumni spotlight campaign, therefore,
A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we commend the college for expanding its efforts in recruitment and retention, and,
B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage the college to continue in its fruitful work.

Resolution 3: Future Teachers in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College continues to solidify its secondary teaching licensure fields, and,

WHEREAS, Several incoming students display an interest in the teaching profession, and,

WHEREAS, There is a need for more students to display a passion for the teaching ministry; specifically, in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, There are schools in our synod that are experiencing difficulties obtaining teachers, and,

WHEREAS, The Lord Jesus has commissioned His Church to “feed His lambs” (John 21:15), therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the college continue to make every effort to promote the teaching ministry to students enrolled in its education program; e.g. through post-graduation incentives for those teaching in ELS schools, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That our pastors, parents, and congregations also make every effort to promote the teaching ministry to their youth.

Resolution 4: New Faculty in the Religion Division at Bethany Lutheran College

WHEREAS, The 2016 synod convention passed a resolution for higher education, which read:

“BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Regents and the leadership of Bethany Lutheran College continue to place a high priority on the calling, from the ELS clergy roster, of full-time ordained professors for religion classes to the faculty” (*Synod Report* 2016: 91), and,

WHEREAS, At its February 2017 meeting, the Board of Regents extended a divine call to the Rev. Nicholas Proksch to teach full-time in the Religion Division, and,

WHEREAS, At the same meeting, the Board of Regents extended a divine call to the Rev. Andrew Schmidt (BLTS graduate) to serve as the Dean of Students and teach in the Religion Division, and,

WHEREAS, Pastor Proksch and Pastor Schmidt have accepted their calls, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Regents be commended for their prioritization in this calling process.

Resolution 5: Death of Professor Peter Kjeer

WHEREAS, Professor Peter Kjeer entered the kingdom of heaven on December 3, 2016, and,

WHEREAS, Professor Kjeer had taught physics at the college from 2000 to 2010, and,

WHEREAS, Professor Kjeer had returned to Bethany to establish an engineering program at the college, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the Lord for the years of Professor Kjeer’s faithful service, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage the college in achieving Professor Kjeer’s vision for an engineering program.

Resolution 6: Grants, Estates, Legacies, Scholarships, and Endowment Funds

WHEREAS, Financial support through a variety of grants continues to provide assistance to carry on the mission of Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, and,

WHEREAS, Generous donations have in particular been received from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation, Thrivent Financial, and National Bethany Auxiliary, and,

WHEREAS, Estates and legacies have been received from Donna M. Black, Stephen Casai, Wayne A. Dalchow, Lester E. Goetzke, Jeanette R. Gulbrandson, Georgianne F. Jaeger, Ida R. Meyer, Bertha A. Schiller, Merrill Rope, and Marguerite Ylvissaker, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank the Lord for the generosity of these and other donors, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod express its gratitude to organizations and individuals who continue to offer their support for the college and seminary, and,
- C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod encourage others to remember the college and seminary in their wills and financial planning.

Resolution 7: Retirement of Professor Adolph Harstad

WHEREAS, Professor Adolph Harstad faithfully served on the faculty of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary for twenty-six years, and,

WHEREAS, Professor Harstad has contributed greatly to confessional Lutheranism through his commentaries on the Books of Joshua and Deuteronomy, and,

WHEREAS, Professor Harstad retired from the seminary at the conclusion of the 2016-17 school year, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank Professor Harstad for his dedicated work, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the Lord of the harvest for equipping His laborers through such faithful instructors.

Resolution 8: Type “B” Appointment to the Board of Regents

WHEREAS, The Rev. Nicholas Proksch had been serving on the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, and,

WHEREAS, Pastor Proksch accepted a call to teach in the Religion Division at the college, and

WHEREAS, Pastor Proksch subsequently resigned from the Board of Regents, and,

WHEREAS, At its May meeting, the Board of Regents appointed Mr. Tim Thiele to serve out the final year of a Type “B” position on the Board of Regents, and,

WHEREAS, The Board of Regents seeks ratification of this action at the 2017 synod convention, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank Pastor Proksch for his service on the Board of Regents and encourage him in his new position, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the convention ratify the board’s action.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR HOME OUTREACH

Recently the subsidy for one of the congregations the Board for Home Outreach had been supporting for a number of years came to an end. In his final report to the board, the pastor stated, “We have come to the close as a ‘mission church,’ so to speak. But we will remain a mission church; otherwise we are not church.” *This* is the sort of mindset about which we on the Board for Home Outreach get excited! Does your congregation have a similar mindset? If it doesn’t, what can be done to foster it? We are here to help you work toward and maintain a mission mindset as you continue to gather around God’s precious Word and his sacraments and seek more to join you in your gatherings.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

The following members comprise the board: Prof. Michael K. Smith,* chairman; the Rev. Timothy Hartwig, vice chairman and chaplain; the Rev. Rodney Flohr, secretary; Mr. Keith Duin,* Financial Coordinator; the Rev. Aaron Hamilton, Outreach Strategist; Mr. Mark Perlwitz, Site Selection Coordinator; the Rev. Gregory Schmidt, Resource Coordinator; Mr. Channing Smith,* Property Management Coordinator; and Mr. David

Sparley, Missionary Care Coordinator. Members marked with an asterisk also serve on the Trustees/Home Outreach Subcommittee. The Rev. Larry Wentzlaff serves as the Evangelism-Missions Counselor (EMC) for the board and synod. Mr. Keith Wiederhoeft serves as an advisory member to the board.

LONG-RANGE PLANNING

As part of its ongoing long-range planning, the board continues to work on a list of items to accomplish: (1) developing educational packages for equipping congregations (e.g., for leadership), (2) sharing what “works” with the synod via the synod web site, (3) establishing home missions and providing appropriate training, and (4) equipping congregation members for outreach through various strategies and resources.

EVANGELISM-MISSIONS COUNSELOR

The Rev. Larry Wentzlaff serves as the Evangelism-Missions Counselor. He continues to visit our home missions on a regular basis. He also visits our other congregations, averaging three congregations per month. The purpose of these visits is to encourage and assist the pastor, congregational leadership, and members with their outreach and evangelism efforts. The Rev. Wentzlaff's overall work includes: 1) promoting and offering resources available to assist congregations with outreach and evangelism, 2) assistance with prospect list management, 3) assistance with strategic planning, 4) assistance with Facebook ads and website design and updating, 5) promoting and facilitating live streaming of worship services on the Internet, 6) making use of ministry area demographic studies, 7) researching and implementing ministry area digital advertising, 8) facilitating the annual Christmas and Easter season postcard mailing, 9) studying and tracking current religious trends in the US, and 10) managing and assisting congregations with a Board of Trustees financial grant. Any congregation of the synod looking for assistance with its outreach and evangelism efforts is encouraged to contact the Rev. Wentzlaff.

BUILDING PROJECTS

Hope – Farmington, Minnesota dedicated a new worship facility on October 30, 2016. The facility, located on Highway 3 on the north side of Farmington, comprises approximately 9,000 square feet and has a sanctuary that seats 180 worshippers.

On January 8, 2017, Hope – Leander, Texas broke ground for a new worship facility. The new facility will comprise approximately 10,000 square feet and the sanctuary will seat 250 worshippers. The congregation hopes to begin worshipping in the new building in the fall of 2017.

SPECIAL OFFERING

The board is grateful to the synod that the proceeds from the special anniversary offering that began at last year's convention have been designated for use by the board to start new home missions (*Synod Report* 2014, p. 112). The board plans to use the initial funds of the offering for cross-cultural ministry, followed by the vicar-in-mission program, followed by new mission starts.

HOME MISSION SEMINAR

On January 22–25, 2017, home missionaries and board members gathered at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Naples, Florida, for the biennial home mission seminar. The purpose of this gathering is to learn more about outreach and home mission work, to encourage one another in our respective vocations, and to give the opportunity for missionaries and board

members to communicate directly. The Rev. Keith Free, administrator for Home Missions of the WELS, was the featured guest speaker. A few pastors and a vicar of the circuit were also able to attend. Funding for this gathering was provided primarily through a grant from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation.

APPOINTMENT OF TYPE B MEMBER

The Rev. Timothy Hartwig has served two terms as a type-B member of the board and is ineligible to be re-appointed. The board has appointed the Rev. Benjamin Wiechmann to a three-year term as a type-B member. The board seeks ratification of this appointment at the 2017 synod convention.

HOME MISSION UPDATES

Cristo Rey/Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bell Gardens, California: The Rev. Matthew Behmer was ordained and installed as pastor of Cristo Rey/Christ the King on Sunday, November 27, 2016. For four months prior to that, the Rev. Behmer and his wife, Beth, worked in and completed an intensive Spanish immersion program in Puebla, Mexico. In addition to serving the existing members of Christ the King, the Rev. Behmer is reaching out especially to the Hispanic community of Bell Gardens. Spanish worship services began on February 18, 2017, and are live-streamed. (These services are also among those featured through WELS Multi-Language Publications at <iglesialuteranacristo.com>.)

Divine Mercy Lutheran Church, Weatherford/Hudson Oaks, Texas: Divine Mercy is served by the Rev. Kyle Madson and is located just west of Ft. Worth. Leasing space in a retail center along a busy east-west thoroughfare, the congregation also reaches out to the community with its “Loving Life” program. This outreach opportunity focuses on providing various basic necessities to families with infants and toddlers. On periodic “shopping” days, area residents are welcome to come and receive these items at no cost. The congregation numbers 44 baptized and 27 communicant members.

Hope Lutheran Church, Cedar Park/Leander, Texas: The Rev. Brad Kerkow continues to serve Hope, located in the northwest part of the Austin, Texas metro area. On July 17, 2016, Candidate Dan Ruiz was ordained and installed as the second pastor of Hope. The Rev. Ruiz, who had served Hope as a vicar in the Vicar in Mission program, focuses his work on outreach and youth. The congregation numbers 87 baptized and 50 communicant members. (See above for information regarding Hope’s building project.)

Hope Lutheran Church, Farmington, Minnesota: Just south of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area, Hope is served by the Rev. Dan Oberer. The congregation numbers 86 baptized and 53 communicant members. As mentioned above, Hope is now worshipping in its new facility and enjoying increased numbers of visitors. The congregation is also now live-streaming its worship services.

Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church, Rogers, Minnesota: Redeeming Grace is served by the Rev. Joshua Mayer and is located on the northwest side of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area. The Rev. Mayer had served Redeeming Grace as a vicar in the Vicar in Mission program. He was ordained and installed as pastor of the congregation on June 26, 2016. The congregation numbers 164 baptized and 126 communicant members. Redeeming Grace also has a preschool with 13 students enrolled. The congregation continues to reach out to its community through the preschool, hosting a booth at the local farmers’ market, participation in various community events, and providing worship services at a local senior care facility.

Faith Lutheran Church, San Antonio, Texas: Faith is located on the northeast side of San Antonio and numbered 68 baptized and 53 communicant members at the end of 2016. The Rev. David Thompson serves Faith as its pastor. The congregation reaches out to its community

through personal evangelism of members and special events such as the Worldview Conference held in February 2017. Subsidy to the congregation came to a close at the end of 2016.

Grace Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Illinois: The Rev. Dan McQuality serves this central Illinois congregation. The board is providing a limited subsidy to Faith through June 2017. Grace meets in a former supper club on the south side of town. The congregation numbers 42 baptized and 19 communicant members.

SALARY SCALE FOR 2018

In addition to the following scale, a housing and utilities allowance for home missionaries is determined using 135% of the three-bedroom fair market value within a specific county according to the most recent survey of the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (Federal Register, Part III, 24 CFR Part 888). If the house is to also serve as the office for the mission, the scale may increase to include a four-bedroom fair market value using the HUD figures. Increment for years of service and education allowance is provided within the salary scale and allowance for additional pay for continued education or other factors is contained in the 5% and 10% columns. Car allowance is paid per mile for actual miles driven based on the Internal Revenue Service rate for mileage. Health insurance is provided at the \$2600 deductible level. The board approves an annual contribution of \$2600 to a Health Savings Account (HSA) of the called worker. Pension is 6% of base salary with up to an additional 2% employee contribution match. Vacation time allotted: 0–5 years: 2 Sundays plus 20 days; 6–15 years: 3 Sundays plus 25 days; 16+ years: 4 Sundays plus 30 days.

2018 Salary Schedule				
<i>Years of Service</i>	<i>Home Mission Salary</i>	<i>Increment Increase</i>	<i>*5%</i>	<i>*10%</i>
0	32,986	250	34,635	36,285
1	33,236		34,898	36,560
2	33,486		35,160	36,835
3	33,736		35,423	37,110
4	33,986		35,685	37,385
5	34,236		35,948	37,660
6	34,561	325	36,289	38,017
7	34,886		36,630	38,375
8	35,211		36,972	38,732
9	35,536		37,313	39,090
10	35,861		37,654	39,447

11	36,261	400	38,074	39,887
12	36,661		38,494	40,327
13	37,061		38,914	40,767
14	37,461		39,334	41,207
15	37,861		39,754	41,647
16	38,336	475	40,253	42,170
17	38,811		40,752	42,692
18	39,286		41,250	43,215
19	39,761		41,749	43,737
20	40,236		42,248	44,260
21	40,786	550	42,825	44,865
22	41,336		43,403	45,470
23	41,886		43,980	46,075
24	42,436		44,558	46,680
25	42,986		45,135	47,285
26	43,611	625	45,792	47,972
27	44,236		46,448	48,660
28	44,861		47,104	49,347
29	45,486		47,760	50,035
30	46,111		48,417	50,722
31-W	46,111		48,417	50,722

OPERATING BUDGET – 2017

Please refer to the audited financial report submitted by the synod treasurer for actual home outreach expenditures for 2016.

ANTICIPATED INCOME \$460,700

SUBSIDY — HOME MISSIONS

Divine Mercy, Weatherford/Hudson Oaks	\$ 90,000
Hope, Cedar Park	\$216,000
Hope, Farmington	131,000
Redeeming Grace, Rogers	44,000

SUBSIDY — CONGREGATIONS RECEIVING SUPPORT

Grace, Lincoln	6,000
Christ the King, Bell Gardens	100,000

BOARD/EMC EXPENSES	
EMC	\$ 93,883
Board meeting travel expense	10,000
Vicarage support	13,000
<u>Other travel and expenses</u>	<u>21,117</u>
Total Expected Expenditures 2017	\$725,000
Budget Shortage	\$264,300

THANK YOU

We are quite pleased that various individuals, congregations, and other organizations continue to contribute special gifts toward our home outreach efforts. We also thank Thrivent Financial for their organizational grants directed toward helping various aspects of our outreach and missions. Thanks are also extended to Cross-stitch for its generous support of home outreach efforts. In 2016 the synod budgeted \$165,106 of congregational contributions for the home outreach program. The remainder of the money needed to fund the program came from special gifts, Thrivent Financial, the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation (home outreach portion: \$156,161), estates, earned and accumulated interest, and home outreach reserve funds.

God grant us his blessings as we continue to engage others with Jesus.

The Rev. Michael K. Smith, chairman

HOME OUTREACH—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: 2018 Benefits and Salary Scale

WHEREAS, The Board for Home Outreach had proposed the 2018 benefits and salary scale for home missionaries, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod approve this salary scale for home missionaries for the 2018 fiscal year.

Resolution 2: Appointment of a Type B Member

WHEREAS, The Rev. Timothy Hartwig is ineligible to be reappointed as a type-B member of the Board for Home Outreach, and,

WHEREAS, The board has appointed the Rev. Benjamin Wiechmann to a three-year term, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Rev. Benjamin Wiechmann be ratified as a type-B member of the Board for Home Outreach for a three-year term.

Resolution 3: Reports of Evangelism-Missions Counselor

WHEREAS, The Evangelism-Missions Counselor has outlined his work in providing services to congregations to foster evangelism, and,

WHEREAS, These services include those like the following: 1) promoting and offering resources available to assist congregations with outreach and evangelism, 2) assisting with prospect list management, 3) assistance with strategic planning, 4) assistance with Facebook ads and website design and updating, 5) promoting and facilitating live streaming of worship services, 6) making use of ministry and demographic studies, 7) researching and implementing ministry area digital advertising, 8) facilitating the annual Christmas and

Easter season postcard mailing, 9) studying and tracking current religious trends in the US, and 10) managing and assisting congregations with a Board of Trustees financial grant, and, WHEREAS, Individual pastors and congregations may not be aware of the services available, or how the work of the gospel may be fostered by them, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Evangelism-Missions Counselor provide a survey to all congregations that will

1) Make available services known,

2) Suggest how these services may support gospel outreach in the congregation, and

3) Enable the congregations to assess how these evangelism initiatives are currently implemented in the congregation, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Evangelism-Missions Counselor report annually the number of such services requested, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Evangelism-Missions Counselor report annually the number of such services provided.

Resolution 4: Board for Home Outreach Report

WHEREAS, The action of the synod (*Synod Report* 2016: 98, Resolution 4) requested cost of building projects and associated member statistics, mission context, facilities makeup and amount of land, and,

WHEREAS, This information was not provided in the 2017 Report of the Board for Home Outreach, but is available and was provided verbally to the floor committee, and

WHEREAS, home mission development is dynamic and involves unforeseen expenses and variations in costs, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board for Home Outreach report to the convention annually outlining general strategies (personnel, building, land acquisition, etc.), and,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the report include costs, personnel, assets, congregation size and conditions, mission properties and facilities with regard to home mission building projects.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR WORLD OUTREACH

Angels announced that the birth of Jesus was news of *great joy* for our sin-saddened world (Luke 2:10). Luke also records that those *scattered* from Jerusalem by persecution *preached the Word wherever they went*. Philip *proclaimed Christ* to a city in Samaria. His hearers *paid close attention* to the preaching, no doubt drawn by the miracles which accompanied his message. *So there was great joy in that city* (Acts 8:4–8). When the seventy-two messengers sent by Christ into the harvest field, they *returned with joy* having announced that the Kingdom of God was near (Luke 10:17).

It is the privilege of the Board for World Outreach to promote the gospel in seven fields and share its joy with many souls. Certainly Satan challenges this work, but we are heartened by the blessings God grants to the work we share with affiliates in Asia, South America and Europe. Their faithfulness to Lutheran theology and witness under sometimes difficult circumstances provides a ministry model for us all. We pray God's continuing blessing on our entire fellowship worldwide!

BOARD ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL

The Board for World Outreach (BWO) is comprised of three committees: Asia, responsible for ELS-sponsored work in Korea and India (Mr. Dan Browning [Chair], the Rev. Brad Kerkow, the Rev. Steven Sparley); Europe, responsible for ELS-sponsored work in Latvia, Czech Republic and Ukraine (the Rev. Timothy Buelow, Mr. Tom Conzelman, the Rev. John

Petersen [Chair]); South America, responsible for ELS-sponsored work in Peru and Chile (the Rev. Matt Behmer, the Rev. Wayne Halvorson [Chair], Mr. Rodney Rivera). We thank Prof. Silas Born for many years of faithful service to our synod's world outreach program. Mr. Born resigned last year and was replaced by Mr. Rodney Rivera, a Spanish speaker.

The Rev. Steven Petersen serves as BWO Administrator, Mrs. Denise Luehmann is the Financial Assistant. Mr. Dan Browning serves as BWO Chairman. The Rev. Petersen retires in June 2017. The Rev. Thomas Heyn was Called to serve as half-time BWO Administrator with specific field responsibilities in India and Korea. The Europe and South America Committees will manage the BWO's future relationships with those fields.

The BWO meets in plenary session in April to review the previous year's work and in November to plan the following year's work. Chairs of committees meet in August for budgeting purposes. The committees meet by teleconference between plenary sessions.

COMMUNICATIONS, FUND RAISING AND AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Mission News & Helping Hands focuses on ELS mission work in Asia and South America. The publication is provided bi-monthly to all ELS congregations for distribution at the worship services. Each issue presents news on a single field and a single subject providing in-depth information about our work together.

Thoughts of Faith's *Newsletter* is published bi-monthly with news about affiliate churches in Latvia, Ukraine and Czech Republic. We ask all pastors and congregations to assist us in distributing news about our world outreach program.

The BWO Communication Committee coordinates the various media used by BWO to share information with constituents, including those noted above and also the *Lutheran Sentinel*.

Cross-stitch is the network of ELS Women's Mission Societies. Regional gatherings are held for worship, fellowship and information about ELS missions. Annually Cross-stitch generously raises funds for extra-budgetary projects, such as educational needs, care for orphans, etc.

Visit the BWO websites at <www.elsworldoutreach.org> and <www.tof.org> and find updates on Facebook at <facebook.com/ELSWorldOutreach>.

THANK YOU

During the past year many donors have supported the ELS world outreach efforts. Individuals, congregations and foundations (The Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation) have provided much-needed support. Thanks to all donors for their generous gifts!

May God continue to grant his blessings on our efforts to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ world-wide, bringing eternal joy to many souls!

The Rev. Steven Petersen, BWO Administrator

ASIA COMMITTEE

India

The Lutheran Mission of Salvation—India (LMSI) is a mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and funded through the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation along with many ELS donors. We are thankful that the Women's Mission Societies have also shown a special love for the work of LMSI, and has made many generous contributions to that work over the years.

LMSI's 22,000+ members are served by ten national pastors and a group of about 250 Gospel Workers. Gospel Workers are laymen in various stages of theological training who tend to pastoral duties for congregations of many sizes. Pastor Solomon Mamidi serves as

president of the Hyderabad District, while Pastor G. J. Ananda Raju serves as president of the Rajahmundry District. Mr. Vijay Sidney, a layman with some seminary training, serves as president of the smaller Jabalpur District to the north of India.

The primary focus of the ELS Board for World Outreach for India is the training of national pastors. Monthly workshops teach the Gospel Workers Luther's catechism, liturgics, homiletics and other practical courses. LMSI seminary classes for a new group of students working towards ordination began in late 2016, and will be taught by three ordained LMSI pastors.

Over 300 children (orphans, semi-orphans or children from poverty-stricken families) are cared for in twenty orphanages operated by LMSI. With little or no social security or welfare programs in India, many widows in congregations also receive support, and sometimes housing.

Over 350 Indian children are hearing the word of God taught daily at three LMSI-operated schools.

Simeon Mamidi, the gifted son of President/Pastor Solomon Mamidi is pursuing seminary training through the Asia Lutheran Seminary (WELS) in Hong Kong and Beijing; and also taking courses at Seoul Theological Institute in Korea. BWO assists Simeon in the expenses associated with this ambitious plan to become a fully ordained pastor, like his father. We invite prayers and financial support for Simeon as he diligently pursues his courses to become a servant of the Word in his India homeland.

Grace and Truth Lutheran School with some 140 students operates on the second floor of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Rajahmundry. It is another major accomplishment made possible by the generosity of ELS givers and the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation. To God be the glory that this church and school now play such a vital role in Rajahmundry. It is also the much-used site for the monthly instruction of Gospel Workers.

Education of children in Sunday Schools and Christian day school operations is of paramount importance to LMSI. Last year nearly 10,000 children heard the gospel message and of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sakes. God be praised!

BWO Administrator, the Rev. Steven Petersen, meets with the LMSI presidents and other leaders annually to review the work of the mission, discuss issues and opportunities and to make joint plans for the coming year. This past February, the last visit for retiring BWO Administrator Steve Petersen also saw the first visit for new administrator, the Rev. Thomas Heyn, as well as new BWO member, Pastor Steven Sparley.

LMSI has adjusted fairly well to major funding declines of the past recent years, and are by ingenuity and frugal decision-making, managing to carry on the important work of LMSI. Donations from ELS individuals and congregations are ever-the-more important in light of these reductions in overall funding. The generosity of individual and congregational givers is gratefully received then divided among the districts, schools and orphan homes on a *pro rata* basis. The LMSI leadership has expressed sincere gratitude for ELS support for special projects such as school and church construction, medical assistance, and disaster relief. Our brothers managing the affairs of the ELS Board for Christian Service have been particularly generous in times of dire needs in India.

South Korea

In 2016 great strides were made by BWO and the South Korea leadership in defining the focus and programs needed to allow our mission to flourish in Korea itself, but also to be the springboard from which ELS/BWO might cultivate confessional Lutheran teaching and congregations of believers in neighboring greater Asia. Should the hostile and challenging situation in North Korea ever allow, the same foundation built in South Korea could also be used to bring the gospel message to the repressed souls of that dark nation. Development of ministries in greater Asia and elsewhere will be a long-term BWO strategy and goal, built upon

a strong and flourishing ministry in South Korea. As far as BWO can determine, the ELS is in a favorable and unique position to advance confessional Lutheran teaching and preaching in South Korea, and from there, into other Asia fields of potential. May God direct our efforts to wisely and effectively do His will.

The ministry teaching goals of Seoul Lutheran Theological Institute (SLTI) began to take shape and bear initial fruits in 2016. SLTI was created to assist in the vital first steps of training qualified pastors and Gospel-workers to advance the vision now taking form for BWO in South Korea. SLTI was fashioned after the successful program in place within the WELS called PSI—Pastoral Studies Institute. PSI and SLTI are designed to teach high potential students for Pastoral and pastoral-like functions through a series of progressively thorough theology, doctrine and practical curriculum. For these early and formative years of creating SLTI, we have had the ongoing blessing of relying upon our trusted friend and BWO/Thoughts of Faith alumnus, the Rev. John Vogt (WELS). The Rev. Vogt taught a series of courses in Seoul to students in April and September of 2016. Those same students will gather again in April 2017 to be taught a few more SLTI courses by pastors Steve Petersen and Tom Heyn. This will be the farewell visit to our South Korea mission for Steve as longtime BWO Administrator, and the first one for Tom Heyn as he assumes those duties as the half-time BWO Administrator with management emphasis on Korea, India and greater Asia mission fields.

While there in April 2017, it is planned that Pastors Petersen and Heyn will ordain Jae Woong Kim, who has successfully completed the requirements for the Pastor-track at SLTI. Equally exciting and evidence that God is blessing our efforts on His behalf in South Korea and Seoul, BWO has agreed to fund the establishment of a daughter congregation of SLC in a western Seoul suburban location. God willing, the newly ordained Pastor JW Kim, with assistance from Pastors Young Ha Kim and Sam Choi, will be installed as the as-yet un-named congregation. God be praised for His abundant blessings to bring even more South Koreans to the salvation message of the gospel.

Seoul Lutheran Church is now served by Pastor Young Ha Kim, and Pastor Sam Choi. BWO is pleased with Pastor Choi's leadership of the SLTI organization in Seoul. While performing the duties on the pastoral staff at SLC, Pastor Choi has taken on the role of Administrator and primary professor for SLTI. The progress towards creating pastors and teachers for work in Korea will be significantly accelerated once we have a Korean-speaking professor (Choi) teaching the Korean SLTI students, without the need and expense of providing a translator.

Pastor Choi was ordained by Steve Petersen in April 2016. The ELS prayers and financial support are welcomed for the very important establishment of SLTI and for the ultimate goal of spreading the Gospel throughout Korea and greater Asia.

Seoul Lutheran Church continues to be the thriving anchor of our South Korea outreach efforts. Under the capable and enthusiastic leadership of Pastors Kim and Choi this congregation continues to inspire us all with emphasis on learning Lutheran doctrine and teachings, using well-attended Bible Studies and elder and deacon/deaconess programs of study to solidify and enhance the congregation of approximately 285 baptized members.

English as a second language (ESL) is offered at SLC through an affiliated program named Canaan Lutheran Academy. This program, successful in teaching English to high school aged students headed toward placement in WELS high schools in the United States, is managed by Mrs. Margaret Kim.

In 2016 we continued to see evidence of the modest success of Pastor Kyun (Ken) Chung working within a mission congregation in a large university area of north Seoul. After years of theological training in the United States, including the successful completion of the WELS PSI program, Pastor Chung was ordained in September 2014. At present, the Rev. Chung is a pastor of our fellowship serving the independent Yesunim (Jesus is Lord) Lutheran

congregation. When the congregation is fully organized, we pray that it, and Pastor Chung, will become more fully integrated with the master plan for Korean ministry anchored by SLC.

Mr. Dan Browning, Asia Committee Chair

EUROPE COMMITTEE

In 2009 our Evangelical Lutheran Synod assumed responsibility for the mission fields operated by Thoughts of Faith, Inc. Since that time the BWO has overseen mission work conducted in the Czech Republic, Latvia, and Ukraine. We remain grateful for the opportunity to share the gospel and assist our brothers and sisters in Christ who live in countries formerly under the direct control of the Soviet Empire. We pray that God will continue to bless our efforts during these uncertain times in Europe as we hold out the sure hope we have in our Savior Jesus Christ.

We would like to express our deep appreciation for all who again this past year faithfully and generously supported these special ministries in the Czech Republic, Latvia and Ukraine. In particular, the Europe Committee offers gratitude for the major funding which is provided by the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation, and the support and friendship of its representatives who assist us in our mission of grace and mercy.

Czech Republic (now Czechia)

Pastors Petr Krakora and Martin Vrsecky serve St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Plzen, St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Tlucna and Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Horni Briza. Both pastors continue in bi-vocational ministries, supplementing their income with secular employment. Part of the BWO's support includes providing the pastors with study and fellowship opportunities through participation at CELC gatherings in Europe. It remains our goal that eventually the pastors will be able to be fully supported locally for their daily service to the church and its mission.

Martin Luther School in Plzen continues to grow, serving nearly 300 children from pre-school through eighth grade. Milos Vrsecky is the school's director, but as he faces serious health problems, others may need to accept increased responsibilities. The BWO plays an active role in assisting the school through the Supervisory Board which meets on a regular basis. Ever-changing government policies and regulations demand watchfulness by the Czech staff and BWO, so that the mission's goal of serving the students and congregants is not jeopardized.

The opportunity to learn American English remains a strong out-reach tool in the Czech Republic. The mission has been blessed over the years by the service of volunteers from the United States who have assisted in teaching English as a Second Language for both the MLS students and others in the community. The BWO encourages any who might be interested in serving in this capacity to contact the BWO Administrator for more information.

Latvia

The Confessional Lutheran Church of Latvia (CLCL) consists of six congregations served by eight pastors, serving an estimated 800 baptized members. Due to funding constraints, six of the national pastors are serving in bi-vocational settings and receive only modest financial support from BWO through general or Latvia-specific donations. More fully supported ministry is occurring in the Latvian cities of Kekava (Pastor Ilars Plume) and Ozolneicki (Pastor Uldis Fandjevs). Both places are blessed with larger congregations worshipping in newer and fully-functioning church buildings, and both congregations have undertaken programs to reach out to their un-churched neighbors.

The BWO continues to request prayer and encouragement on behalf of all the Latvian pastors and their congregants as they face economic and cultural challenges and uncertainty in the Baltic region of Europe.

In addition to its pastoral and congregational assistance, the BWO provides limited support for the online publication of the *Latvian Lutheran*, a well-regarded and valuable means of presenting the Confessional Lutheran perspective to the Latvian public. Locate it at <<http://www.latvijasluteranis.lv>>.

The Rev. John J. Petersen, Europe Committee Chair

Ukraine – the International Charitable Fund “Gift of Life”

Gift of Life (GoL) had another productive year in 2016. Client numbers were good at the clinics and life centers. The material aid program is gaining more and more participants stateside and is greatly appreciated by the Ukrainians who benefit from it. Donations to GoL were again, very generous and several important capital improvements were made. The Lutheran faith is promoted as the gospel message is proclaimed. The mobile clinics are requested in all four corners of Ukraine during 2017.

Medical Clinic on Wheels (MCOW): MCOW traveled to and located in fourteen different destinations in 2016. The medical bus had 5,199 visits (staff of four). The dental bus had 5,319 visits (staffed by four dentists). More than 80% of the visits served needy children. GoL skilled driver/mechanics upgrade and repair the buses which are in very good condition. Two new tires and an RV furnace were installed. The buses are still using a few tires that are twenty five years old. These will be replaced in 2017.

Lutheran Pro Life Centers (LPLC): 12,702 people attended pro-life presentations by GoL at various institutions throughout Ukraine. GoL is blessed to have the opportunity to give presentations in government and private facilities. 4,528 attended programs conducted in the life centers; 1,020 individual counseling sessions were given; in addition 1,736 attended group counseling sessions. Not all of the women with crisis pregnancies saved their babies but GoL does know dozens of them did. 102 babies were counted as baptized, some in the Lutheran faith. Bible studies were provided at the LC's by three Ukrainian Lutheran Church pastors.

Material Aid: The aid is dispersed at MCOW and LPLC—most of it to the centers. As in 2015, the largest donors in 2016 were: Trinity Ev. Lutheran, Saline, Michigan and Hustisford, Wisconsin Quilting Guild. Awareness of the GoL material aid program stateside continues to increase. Trinity, Thornton, Iowa; Abiding Shepherd, Stoughton Wisconsin; and First Trinity, Marinette, Wisconsin recently sent large shipments.

Capital donations allowed for needed improvements: VW Caravelle Transport Van, kitchenette and new office chairs Kyiv Right Bank, new windows, water heater, closet and shelving Ternopil LC, air conditioner for Kyiv Left Bank, new staff kitchenette and plumbing, replacement electric cables for the garage Repina Street. Also, a new automatic blood pressure machine, power surge units and hard drives for all Life Centers are appreciated. Capital donations are a real help for GoL as it moves forward unencumbered by financial pressure.

New Receptionist and Traveling Deaconess: Ludmyla Voichunas (Deaconess) is now employed by GoL (in the past by the Ukrainian Lutheran Church) as the MCOW receptionist. When MCOW is traveling, Ludmyla accompanies the staff. MCOW Evangelism/Greeting Program involves Lutheran Church members and makes for a welcoming environment. The first week in February, Roger Kovociny began teaching a course in basic Lutheran doctrine to all Ternopil staff. He also began Bible studies every week at the Ternopil life center.

The Russian occupation in the East continues. President Poroshenko has a very low approval rating. Ukraine's economy suffers even more due to extremely high gas prices.

Gift of Life saved its usual hundreds of children from abortion and improved the lives of thousands of others through dental and medical services—all the while proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We thank the many who contribute financially and pray for this extraordinary mission which we are privileged to be a part of. A special thank you from us to the administration and board of Thoughts of Faith for your leadership and support.

Nicholas and Kerry Laper, Gift of Life Administrators

SOUTH AMERICA COMMITTEE

Peru

The Peruvian Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Church is approaching a milestone. In 2018 it will have been in existence for fifty years. The Lord of the Church has granted a blessing to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod to be able to proclaim the good news of Jesus to thousands in Peru. In all those years the training of pastors from the national church has been a priority. At present there are about fifty-eight congregations around Lima and in the Andes Mountains and upper Amazon Basin. The average attendance at these worship sites is 1,370. We pray that the national church will be able to continue the leadership and further training of the next generation of pastors and leaders.

The headquarters of the Peruvian Church is at the seminary building in the Santa Beatriz district of Lima. The building houses a congregation, seminary classrooms, offices, library and dormitory as well as synodical offices. At present Segundo Gutierrez is the president of the seminary. Missionary David Haeuser continues to be a seminary professor, and mentor for the Peruvian church. Missionary Haeuser is also guiding the Peruvian leadership in their management of the affairs of the mission. The seminary has seventeen students in various levels of their training and expects to graduate three men for the ministry in Peru this year.

Two elementary schools continue to train the youth in Lima. *Jesus Redentor* (58* students) is located in Año Nuevo. That school has experienced a change in school director a year ago. It also received some upgrading and remodeling. The other school *Martin Lutero* (190 students) in Reynoso is continuing to grow and educate the youth. This school has nearly reached its capacity.

A bright spot again this year has been the continued outreach into the Shawi Tribes in the Amazon Jungle region. The extension Seminary in Terrapoto trains pastors, vicars and evangelists to organize and conduct worship in many villages and form twenty-seven congregations. Likewise, there are two elementary schools (twenty and twenty-four students) and a high school (fifteen students) in the Amazon region. Those schools are reaching many souls with the message of Jesus. Hopefully this high school will help direct some of the students to enter seminary training, or become teachers in the Christian schools.

A major objective of the Board for World Outreach is to enable the Peruvian church to become independent very soon. That will mean that the officers of the church and congregations will become legally registered with the government of Peru and be run by the Peruvian national leaders. Likely we will need to continue to assist them and perhaps support some of their workers for a time yet. It is worth noting that the national church at present is conducting its own mission program in the upper Amazon Basin.

Chile

The Board for World Outreach continues to focus outreach to the middle class of Chilean society. This has resulted in the relocation of some properties and allocation of funds from some of the properties to become the operating budget for recent years. The La Cisterna

church has been sold in anticipation of the day when Chileans must maintain their own properties. A search for a newer, more manageable facility in Santiago has begun. We hope to locate a headquarters nearer public transportation and new housing which would accommodate an English program in conjunction with congregational ministry. Membership in the four churches in Santiago and Linares is about 150. The national church is taking greater responsibility for its affairs. Three seminary students and recently two laymen are studying for ministry. Missionary Timothy Erickson has in recent years been focusing on training of pastors and vicars. God willing there will be an ordination in this coming year.

The congregation in Linares (about five hours south of Santiago) is building a larger worship facility to accommodate the growth of the congregation. The membership of the Linares congregation and other donors have supplied funds and materials. The membership is also assisting in the construction.

Chelsea Deitsche has conducted the English as a Foreign Language program in Linares for several years. The program has been successful in reaching many students (present enrolment is seventy-five students) who become acquainted with church members and in some cases begin adult instruction classes. In fact, the EFL program is likely to be expanded to more than one location in the country. A partnership has been established with the Kingdom Workers (WELS) to place American teachers in the schools in the town of Longavi and other communities in Chile. These teachers support our mission by inviting friends and neighbors to our church and by conducting Bible study classes.

2017 is the 25th anniversary of our Mission outreach to Chile. We thank God for his blessing in these years and plan to highlight the Chile work at this year's convention.

Rev. Wayne Halvorson, South America Committee Chair

APOLOGETICS PROPOSAL

The 2016 Annual Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod directed the Board for World Outreach to propose a program “for the purpose of equipping the membership of the ELS with a working knowledge of Christian apologetics” (*Synod Report* 2016, page 106).

Apologetics is one part of what may be viewed as a three-part approach to spreading the gospel. As one engages friends, neighbors, co-workers, other family members who may be struggling with certain aspects of the Christian faith, or perhaps are antagonistic toward, or even quite hostile to the Christian faith, one wonders how to approach such a person. One approach would be: 1) to understand where the person is coming from (his worldview), 2) to consider and question the person's assumptions and objections, pointing out their inconsistencies, implications, incongruities, etc. and correcting them where possible (apologetics) and 3) to present him with the gospel message in which God reveals a consistent, defensible worldview and his response to the basic human problem of sin and the need for forgiveness and love—God's love (evangelism).

The assignment given to the BWO was to address the second part: apologetics. The question is: How can the synod help its pastors and congregations to better understand how to attack the lies and deceptions which Satan foists upon this world, how to discredit the deceptions, how to demonstrate that the Bible is a reliable resource—the only reliable resource—to consider for a response to false and deceptive worldviews that leave people feeling empty, confused, conflicted or disenchanted.

Various people contributed to the discussions in meetings and by email. Initially, the proposals were simple and modest. With time, and as others became involved, more ambitious ideas came forward. Some of the ideas are things that can be undertaken simply and quickly. Other ideas will take more time, planning and commitment of resources, both human and financial.

Although all ideas were considered, some of them should be further considered by future conventions or committees specifically assigned to study and further develop these ideas. Accordingly, the following is proposed:

Proposal for near-term implementation

1. WHEREAS, A primary focus of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod is “Engaging Others with Jesus,” and,
 2. WHEREAS, It is important that all synodical members, including pastors, teachers, missionaries both home and abroad, and laymen, be well-equipped for such work, and,
 3. WHEREAS, Many individuals here and throughout the world wrongly believe that the Bible is untrustworthy, and,
 4. WHEREAS, A significant number of people here at home as well as in other nations of the world do not share the basic assumptions of biblical theism, and,
 5. WHEREAS, “[T]he term worldview refers to any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement, or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man’s relations to God and the world” (David Noebel, *Understanding the Times*; cf. David Thompson, *What in the World Is Going On?*), and,
 6. WHEREAS, Every worldview (whether in affirmation, denial, or confusion) addresses matters pertaining to the meaning and purpose of life, including where we have come from (Creation), what has happened to this world (Fall), and what’s the answer to all of this (Redemption), and,
 7. WHEREAS, Many persons have adopted worldviews and religions that present significant obstacles to the Bible’s gospel message, including Darwinism, Secular Humanism, Postmodernism, Pantheism, skepticism, atheism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other world religions, and,
 8. WHEREAS, The purposes of teaching Christian worldview, apologetics and evangelism include providing people with information that can help them effectively deal with obstacles to considering the Christian gospel message, and,
 9. WHEREAS, The primary purpose of teaching Christian worldview, apologetics and evangelism is winning lost sinners for Christ, not winning arguments, and,
 10. WHEREAS, There are highly competent scholars, both within our fellowship circles and beyond, who have the ability to provide engaging and practical information in the areas of Christian worldview, apologetics, and evangelism, and,
 11. WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College (BLC) and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary (BLTS) are already offering courses in apologetics, and,
 12. WHEREAS, The audience served by teaching Christian worldview, apologetics and evangelism should include ELS pastors and laymen, BLC and BLTS faculty, BLC and BLTS students and alumni, faculty and students of area Lutheran high schools, prospective students, homeschoolers, persons belonging to other orthodox Lutheran church bodies, and, when appropriate, other interested persons, whether Lutheran or not, and,
 13. WHEREAS, America is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of culture, race and ethnicity, and the ELS sponsors world missions with diverse cultures, and,
 14. WHEREAS, God promised to bless all the families of the earth through Abraham’s Seed (Genesis 12); and Christ, the fulfillment of that promise, commissioned the Church to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28), sending His disciples to the ends of the earth (Acts 1); and John’s beatific vision reveals that heaven will be populated by persons of “all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues” (Revelation 7), therefore,
- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the following activities continue:
- (1) Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary offering a course (and developing additional courses) in apologetics in its curriculum, and,

- (2) Bethany Lutheran College offering a course (and developing additional courses) on apologetics in its religion curriculum, and,
 - (3) The ELS Doctrine Committee making available its materials on apologetics on the synod's website (and developing additional materials), and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod provide information to its members and other interested parties by various activities that may include:
- (1) Hosting seminars, conferences and workshops, such as a lecture series structured in a manner similar to the Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures and the Biblical Worldview Conference held in San Antonio, Texas; and
 - (2). Hosting an annual workshop on worldview, apologetics, and/or evangelism at Bethany Lutheran College scheduled in coordination with the synod convention. Invitees could include all members of our synod, clergy and laity of confessional Lutheran churches worldwide, teachers and students from all WELS/ELS area high schools, and others, and,
 - (3). The *Lutheran Sentinel* and *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* soliciting the submission of articles related to worldview, apologetics and evangelism, and,
 - (4). An upcoming Fall General Pastoral Conference being largely devoted to apologetics, and,
 - (5). The synod convention essay for 2019 being devoted to apologetics, and,
 - (6). Pastors being encouraged to produce videos (YouTube or Vimeo) related to worldview, apologetics and evangelism, making them available online, and,
 - (7). The Christ in Media Institute being encouraged to assist or promote online outreach, and,
 - (8). The Board for World Outreach being encouraged to develop worldview, apologetics, and evangelism resources for the church bodies affiliated with the ELS through its world mission efforts, and,
 - (9). All ELS churches being encouraged, in their Bible studies, to make use of the new book on apologetics being published by Concordia Publishing House in the fall of 2017 written by Professor Allen Quist, and,
 - (10). The synod making available, on its web page, the six part Bible study, conducted at Peace Lutheran Church in the Fall of 2015.

Proposal for future implementation

1. WHEREAS, The ELS Doctrine Committee has in recent years underscored the importance of pursuing biblical apologetics in a manner consistent with confessional Lutheran theology, and,
 2. WHEREAS, Confessional Lutheranism, due to its unique theology with respect to the Third Article, the Theology of the Cross, and the Distinction between Church and State, offers an important corrective to contrary tendencies among Reformed apologists, and,
 3. WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College can play an important role in providing continuing education for the members of our synod especially as it relates to engaging other with Jesus, and the college also can play an important role in providing Christian educational opportunities for a large audience especially in bringing the gospel message to others, and,
 4. WHEREAS, It is highly desirable that Bethany Lutheran College become a center for scholarship and dissemination of vital information in the areas of Christian worldview, apologetics, and evangelism, therefore,
- BE IT RESOLVED, That the president of Bethany Lutheran College appoint a study committee of not less than five, nor more than nine, members, that may include the ELS Evangelism-Missions Counselor, the ELS Administrator for World Outreach, the

BLC chaplain, regents, faculty from the college and seminary, and others to study the feasibility of establishing a center for Christian outreach that would emphasize three areas: the discernment of worldviews, compassionate apologetics, and cross-cultural evangelism. (*Note: If such a center were to be created, many of the programs and activities listed in Resolutions A and B could fall under the direction of this center.*)

The Rev. Thomas A. Heyn, Administrator for the BWO

WORLD OUTREACH—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Thanking Donors

WHEREAS, Funding has been received from several donors, including the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation, and various Women's Mission Societies, individuals, and congregations, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Evangelical Lutheran Synod thank them for their support.

Resolution 2: Encouragement and Support

WHEREAS, The Rev. David and Mrs. Ruth Haeuser, Mr. Nicholas and Mrs. Kerry Laper, Miss Chelsea Dietsche, and the Rev. Tim and Mrs. Ellen Erickson have been faithfully serving abroad, navigating challenges while promoting the Lord's work, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That they be encouraged in their work and we pray for them.

Resolution 3: Transitions

WHEREAS, Rev. Steven Petersen is retiring after providing twenty years of faithful service to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and its missions, and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Silas Born has resigned after providing many years of faithful service to our synod's Board for World Outreach, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Evangelical Lutheran Synod thank the Rev. Steven Petersen and Mr. Silas Born for their many years of service, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we pray for their successors, the Rev. Thomas Heyn and Mr. Rodney Rivera, as they continue in that work.

Resolution 4: Prayer Requests

WHEREAS, Dr. Laryssa Chorna, lead physician for the Medical Clinic on Wheels in Ukraine, has recently suffered a stroke, and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Milos Vrsecky, former director of the Martin Luther School in Plzen, Czechia has recently passed away and joined the church triumphant in heaven, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Evangelical Lutheran Synod pray for Dr. Chorna, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Evangelical Lutheran Synod pray for and express sympathy to the family of Mr. Milos Vrsecky in these difficult times.

Resolution 5: Apologetics Proposals

WHEREAS, the Doctrine Committee has produced a helpful study document concerning the nature of Lutheran apologetics, which was approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, the Board for World Outreach has presented two proposals to promote the use of apologetics among us, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Evangelical Lutheran Synod adopt the proposal for near-term implementation, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the proposal for future implementation be adopted, except that the committee shall be appointed by the synod president and the president of Bethany Lutheran College could be appointed as a potential committee member.

**REPORT OF THE
BOARD FOR EDUCATION**

BOARD MEMBERS

The board serves to support the schools of the ELS using the insights of pastors, professional educators, and laymen from the various geographical areas of the synod. Currently the board is served by the following members: the Rev. Chris Dale (chair), the Rev. Michael Dale (secretary), Mr. Ken Meyer (Treasurer), the Rev. Josh Skogen, the Rev. Trent Saari, Mr. Nathan Rovey, Mr. ShuTing Lai and Mr. Todd Knutson. In addition, the Rev. Alexander Ring (ELS Secretary of School) serves the board as an advisory member.

MEETINGS

The board met April 4–5, 2016 at Parkland Lutheran Church, Parkland, Washington and October 3–4, 2017 in Mankato, Minnesota.

WORK OF THE BOARD IN THE PAST YEAR

Grant Disbursement

Lutheran School Subsidy Grants were distributed as follows:

Columbia Lutheran School, The Dalles, OR	\$20,000
Holy Cross Lutheran School, Madison, WI	\$15,000
Peace Lutheran Church (preschool), North Mankato, MN	\$15,000

In addition, smaller School Marketing Grants were approved and disbursed as follows:

Columbia Lutheran School, The Dalles, OR	\$1,300	
Holy Cross Lutheran School, Madison, WI	\$2,440	
Peace Lutheran School, Kissimmee, FL	\$3,360	
Lakewood Lutheran School, Lakewood, WA	\$2,000	} Combined Video Marketing Project for ELS Washington schools
Bethany Lutheran School, Port Orchard, WA	\$2,000	
Parkland Lutheran School, Parkland, WA	\$2,000	

Secretary of Schools Position

The Rev. Alexander Ring has taken over the role of ELS Secretary of Schools. Included in his work is the preparing of call lists for ELS schools needing teachers. Please direct all inquiries related to teacher call lists to <akring@mac.com>.

ELS Teacher Conference 2018

An ELS Teacher Conference was planned for July 2017, to be held in Boston, Massachusetts. Unfortunately, circumstances demanded that the conference be postponed until July 2018. Information regarding the 2018 conference will be to distributed to school principals this June at the synod convention. The board is actively seeking grant monies to supplement costs related to the conference and encourages individual congregations and schools to the same. The board wishes to express thanks to Mr. Adam Pavelchik, Principal at Peace Lutheran School in Kissimmee, Florida, for his excellent work planning and coordinating the conference.

School Visitation

The Board for Education encourages every ELS school to authorize a visit from the Secretary of Schools or other outside visitor.

Principal Meeting

There will be a meeting for all ELS principals on Monday, June 19, during the synod convention lunch recess. Principals who received grant money from the Board for Education are asked to report on progress of granted projects. Information related to the 2018 ELS Teacher Conference will also be distributed and discussed at this meeting.

Continuing Education Grants for Teachers

The Board for Education is pleased to offer grants in the amount of \$450.00/year to teachers serving ELS schools. These grants are intended to help defray costs associated with continuing education. Teachers need only submit receipts for continuing education to the board through its chair at <chrisdale@christportstlucie.org>.

Philosophy of Education

The board is working on a philosophy of education, the current draft of which appears below:

The schools of the ELS aspire to assist families in bringing up their children “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph 6:4). To this end we serve to produce students with clear understandings of both their citizenship in heaven and on earth. We want our students to know Jesus as their savior from sin and death, and as the lens through which all of Scripture is to be understood. And we want them to understand Christian Vocation, that God calls us to make use of our talents in whatever walk of life we pursue. We believe an education founded in the liberal arts is best suited to help students discover and explore their talents and how they can best use those talents in service to the world around them.

Alternate Funding for ELS Schools

The ELS in its June 2016 convention, assigned to the board the work of researching and identifying programs similar to Florida’s Step Up For Students scholarship, which allows qualifying students to receive tuition assistance for private schools.

The board researched the topic and directs those interested to the website <www.edchoice.org>. On the site those interested will see all of the various programs for tuition assistance within each of the United States. It is likely that programs will expand over the next several years and the board will make ELS schools aware of any new programs that will be of benefit to them.

Classical Education

The board continues to oversee and encourage the development of LSA model schools and promote the use of Classical Education within our synod and its schools. This continues to be a touch point for us with those outside the synod. The Rev. Alexander Ring continues to act as administrator for this.

Homeschooling

The board continues to pursue ways to support families in the ELS that have chosen to homeschool. On Wednesday, April 19 the board sponsored a forum at Heritage Lutheran Church to discuss Classical Education and its application to homeschooling, as well as a sharing time for the parents and homeschoolers there to share ideas and ask questions. The

forum was led by the Rev. Alexander Ring, and was attended by about fifty people. It was also decided this is something they would like to schedule regularly as a way to help and support each other.

TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE

Years of Service	ELS Bachelor of Science Salary 2015/16	Increment Increase	ELS Bachelor of Science Salary proposal 2016/17	ELS Bachelor of Science Salary proposal 2017/18
			2%	2%
0	\$29,280	\$250	\$29,866	\$30,463
1	\$29,530		\$30,116	\$30,713
2	\$29,780		\$30,366	\$30,963
3	\$30,030		\$30,616	\$31,213
4	\$30,280		\$30,866	\$31,463
5	\$30,530		\$31,116	\$31,713
6	\$30,855	\$325	\$31,441	\$32,038
7	\$31,180		\$31,766	\$32,363
8	\$31,505		\$32,091	\$32,688
9	\$31,830		\$32,416	\$33,013
10	\$32,155		\$32,741	\$33,338
11	\$32,555	\$400	\$33,141	\$33,738
12	\$32,955		\$33,541	\$34,138
13	\$33,355		\$33,941	\$34,538
14	\$33,755		\$34,341	\$34,938
15	\$34,155		\$34,741	\$35,338
16	\$34,630	\$475	\$35,216	\$35,813
17	\$35,105		\$35,691	\$36,288
18	\$35,580		\$36,166	\$36,763
19	\$36,055		\$36,641	\$37,238
20	\$36,530		\$37,116	\$37,713
21	\$37,080	\$550	\$37,666	\$38,263
22	\$37,630		\$38,216	\$38,813
23	\$38,180		\$38,766	\$39,363
24	\$38,730		\$39,316	\$39,913
25	\$39,280		\$39,866	\$40,463

26	\$39,905	\$625	\$40,491	\$41,088
27	\$40,530		\$41,116	\$41,713
28	\$41,155		\$41,741	\$42,338
29	\$41,780		\$42,366	\$42,963
30	\$42,405		\$42,991	\$43,588

Years of Service	ELS Masters Degree Salaries for 2015/16	Increment Increase	ELS Masters Degree Proposed Salaries for 2016/17	ELS Masters Degree Proposed Salaries for 2017/18
			2%	2%
0	\$31,274	\$250	\$31,899	\$32,537
1	\$31,524		\$32,149	\$32,787
2	\$31,774		\$32,399	\$33,037
3	\$32,024		\$32,649	\$33,287
4	\$32,274		\$32,899	\$33,537
5	\$32,524		\$33,149	\$33,787
6	\$32,849	\$325	\$33,474	\$34,112
7	\$33,174		\$33,799	\$34,437
8	\$33,499		\$34,124	\$34,762
9	\$33,824		\$34,449	\$35,087
10	\$34,149		\$34,774	\$35,412
11	\$34,549	\$400	\$35,174	\$35,812
12	\$34,949		\$35,574	\$36,212
13	\$35,349		\$35,974	\$36,612
14	\$35,749		\$36,374	\$37,012
15	\$36,149		\$36,774	\$37,412
16	\$36,624	\$475	\$37,249	\$37,887
17	\$37,099		\$37,724	\$38,362
18	\$37,574		\$38,199	\$38,837
19	\$38,049		\$38,674	\$39,312
20	\$38,524		\$39,149	\$39,787
21	\$39,074	\$550	\$39,699	\$40,337
22	\$39,624		\$40,249	\$40,887
23	\$40,174		\$40,799	\$41,437
24	\$40,724		\$41,349	\$41,987
25	\$41,274		\$41,899	\$42,537

26	\$41,899	\$625	\$42,524	\$43,162
27	\$42,524		\$43,149	\$43,787
28	\$43,149		\$43,774	\$44,412
29	\$43,774		\$44,399	\$45,037
30	\$44,399		\$45,024	\$45,662

In determining the appropriate salary and benefits package for full-time ELS teachers, LSA strongly encourages congregational representatives to account for the following considerations.

1. Duties as principal are to be remunerated at 10% of the base salary. Other duties assigned to a teacher, but not those expected because of regular congregational membership, should also be adequately remunerated.
2. Congregations are encouraged to provide financial support for the teachers' continuing education. Teachers should be encouraged to take a minimum of three credit hours of graduate or undergraduate work during each three-year period. Congregations may also wish to establish a salary incentive program to encourage teachers to take additional coursework by providing incremental increases based upon additional credits.
3. The congregation should insist that the teachers attend the annual teachers' conference and should provide ways and means to do so.
4. The congregation should encourage all male teachers to attend the synod convention and become permanent advisory members to the synod. Congregations should assist these teachers by providing ways and means to attend.
5. A sick leave of five days shall be granted each year. These shall be accumulated to a maximum of fifty days. For any sick leave beyond the accumulated amount, the substitute teaching may be deducted from the salary of the teacher who is absent.
6. Personal leaves are not to exceed five days each year. The cost of substitute teaching is to be deducted from the teacher's salary for all days over five days. In the event of a death or serious illness in the immediate family, an additional leave shall be considered. The extent of this leave is to be determined by the congregational Board for Christian Education based upon distance and circumstances.
7. In addition, we recommend that teachers receive: a) housing based upon family need or a housing allowance equivalent to 135% of the HUD rental value of a three-bedroom home in their community; b) family health insurance; and c) a pension set at 6% of the teacher's salary.

The Rev. Chris Dale, chairman

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1 : Continuing Education Grants for Teachers

WHEREAS, The current offer of \$450.00/year for continuing education is considerate, and,
 WHEREAS, Actual college and continuing education costs are increasing annually, and,
 WHEREAS, In additional percentage may increase participation, therefore,
 BE IT RESOLVED, That the board be encouraged to consider raising the annual amount by adding a percentage of the teacher's base salary as listed in the "Teacher Salary Schedule".

Resolution 2 : Teacher Salary Schedule

WHEREAS. The 2017–18 salaries for teachers have been prayerfully considered and proposed by the Board for Education, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod approve this salary scale for teachers for the 2017–18 fiscal year, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That all congregations of the synod with schools consider this *minimum* salary scale when determining their teacher's salary.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR YOUTH OUTREACH

The Board for Youth Outreach has met twice since the ELS Convention in June 2016. The board continues to serve the synod in the area of youth work. The board seeks to help in making Bible study materials available, conduct youth conventions and provide help for regional youth retreats, camps, and much more. The board is continually thankful to the Lord at the continued financial blessings from the synod-wide thankoffering taken several years ago, *His Truth for Our Youth*. The money which the Lord has provided is helping us carry out projects that would otherwise not be possible.

The officers of the BYO include Pastor Bernt Tweit as chairman and Pastor Matthew Brooks as recording secretary. The other members of the board include Mr. Ben Faugstad, Prof. Pete Bloedel, Mr. Chris Hoffman, the Rev. Kyle Madson, and the Rev. Tony Pittenger. The board would like to thank Dr. Josh Mears for his dedicated years of service. Dr. Mears resigned from the board in the summer of 2016 when he was elected to the Board of Regents.

In 2014 the board was asked to begin maintaining a record of youth summer camps held for the youth of the synod. What follows is the planned summer camps for 2017.

2017 CAMPS AND INFORMATION

- Camp Indianhead, Minnesota: July 9–14, Lutheran Island Camp, Henning, Minnesota, \$275.
- Camp Indianhead, Wisconsin: July 16–21, “Simple Christianity: Sharing Life,” Pine Lake Camp, Waupaca, Wisconsin <www.CampIndianheadWI.com>, \$300.
- Camp Lor-Ray, Michigan: K–3, July 5–7, 4–6th grade: July 9–14; 7–9th grade: July 16–21 “The Word of the Lord Endures Forever” Twin Lake, Michigan, \$255.
- Camp Olympic Lutherhaven, Washington, August 5–10, Wildcat Lake, Bremerton, Washington, \$160.
- Camp 4 Star, near Olympia, Washington, July 9–15, \$200.
- The City Camp, Orlando, FL, June 5–9, \$80.

The 2016 Lutheran Youth Association (LYA) Convention was held on the campus of the University of Texas–Dallas, July 28–31, under the direction of the Rev. Kyle Madson. Prof. Wade Johnston from Wisconsin Lutheran College was the keynote speaker. The youth had the privilege to go to the George W. Bush Presidential Library in Dallas, as well as attend a rodeo Saturday night at the world-famous Ft. Worth Stockyards. Approximately 200 youth and chaperones from throughout the synod attended the convention. Once again, we thank the many counselors and pastors who helped make the convention run so smoothly.

The LYA Convention for 2017 will be held on the campus of Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, July 27–30. The theme will be *Saved Through Water*. This theme was chosen since the youth will be going to *Ark Encounter* in Williamstown, Kentucky. Many thanks to Communications Director, the Rev. Paul Fries for giving us the ability to do 100% online registration. In 2017, \$50 will be refunded to all first-time LYA registrants, in an effort to encourage all ELS youth *and friends* to attend. Thanks also to the Rev. Jeff Hendrix for producing the artwork and promotional video for the 2017 convention. Besides subsidizing

many of the costs of an LYA Convention, the board provides travel subsidy to help bring youth to the convention. In 2016 the amount of travel subsidy increased from \$10,000 to \$12,000.

Future LYA conventions are due to be held in the state of Washington, and then back in Mankato, as it is our custom to hold the LYA convention on the campus of BLC once every four years. In 2018 the board is planning a very special convention to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the ELS. The 2018 theme will be *Even When Steeples Are Falling*, and the dates will be July 26–29. The BYO is considering making a request for a grant from the synod for the 2018 LYA. The board may also consider requesting a project grant in order to train youth leaders—something in our guidelines that we just have not had time or money to do.

There were some youth retreats held throughout the synod during the year. We continue to encourage area youth retreats that include at least two or more ELS churches. The BYO does provide financial help for these retreats.

In its fall 2016 meeting the board voted to give \$2000 for the 2017 Youth Honor Choir Camp, which is held each year during synod convention.

On the agenda for the board to discuss at its October, 2017 meeting is whether the BYO can perhaps offer a scholarship to Bethany. The board will attempt to be of assistance to Pastor Jeff Hendrix who is working on a Camp Hymnal project. The BYO also approved at its October meeting to give \$500 for Pastor Sam Gullixson to produce bulletin inserts that fit with the content of *Color the Catechism* and *Color the Liturgy*.

At its January 2017 meeting the BYO agreed to oversee funds that would be donated to the ELS Foundation by Pastor Matthew and Rebecca Brooks. The stated purpose of these funds is to help ELS youth do mission work within our fellowship, most likely through WELS Kingdom Worker projects. In March, 2017 the ELS received a gift of \$18,900 in memory of Hugh Brooks, infant son of Matt and Rebecca, who died in 2005. The BYO hopes to disperse almost \$1,000 annually as a result of this gift. The board further asks that pastors and laymen promote the availability of these funds to youth in their congregations.

The BYO reminds the pastors of the synod to distribute free materials to youth confirmation students that have been produced by the board in years past. These include *Cling to the Cross* and *Cling to the Cross II*.

The Rev. Matthew Brooks, secretary

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

The ELS Board for Christian Service currently consists of the following personnel: Mr. Denny Behr, Veterans Services Coordinator; the Rev. Erich Hoeft, chairman of the board, Active Duty Ministry Coordinator and our board's current representative to the synod's Planning and Coordinating Committee; the Rev. James Kassera, Clergy Assistance Program Coordinator; Mr. Michael O'Neill, Retired Benefit Coordinator; and Mr. Brad Wozmek, secretary and Widows and Retired Workers Special Needs Coordinator. The board met four times in the past year, with regular meetings in June, October, and February and a special meeting in May.

TERM LIFE INSURANCE

The synod carries a \$50,000 term life insurance policy for all of its pastors and called workers. Currently our congregations reimburse the premium costs of that term life insurance to the synod.

HEALTH INSURANCE

The Board for Christian Service has the charge of assisting congregations in conjunction with health insurance benefits and ways of possibly saving premium dollars. One option available to consider is the use of a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) in conjunction with your current health insurance coverage.

By combining an HRA with a higher deductible insurance plan, you significantly lower your premiums while still providing large claim protection. The opportunity for savings comes about by paying for coverage of a high deductible insurance plan and then self-insuring the difference between that deductible and a lower deductible plan. Under an HRA the coverage for the employee remains the same at the lower deductible level. Small claims are paid through the HRA and funded with the premium savings of the higher deductible plan. The advantages of an HRA are evident especially in larger congregations where there is more than one full time called worker to be insured. The more called workers there are, the greater the opportunity for savings.

A Health Savings Account (HSA) is an account created for individuals who are covered under high-deductible health plans (HDHPs) to save for medical expenses that HDHPs do not cover. Contributions are made into the account by the individual or the individual's employer and are limited by law to a maximum amount each year. The contributions are invested over time and can be used to pay for qualified medical expenses, which include most medical care such as dental, vision, and over-the-counter drugs.

There are a number of companies that will administer Health Reimbursement Accounts as well as Health Saving Accounts. The synod is currently using Averill Anderson, LLC, of West Bend, Wisconsin, to administer our HRA. If your congregation feels they may benefit from a plan like this or you might be interested in looking at the potential savings of an HRA or HSA, feel free to contact Mark Anderson or Tim Hussey of Averill Anderson, LLC at (262) 338-8588.

WORLD NEEDS FUND

The balance of the World Needs Fund as of December 31, 2016 is \$29,298.74. Through the Mother's Day offering and other donation the fund receives gifts from individuals and congregations. The World Needs Fund received donations totaling \$10,236.63 for the year 2016.

In 2016, the synod sent \$14,000 in relief funds to these four World Needs projects: Hurricane Relief for Haiti, Jabalpur Flooding Relief, Louisiana Flooding Relief, and Rajahmundry Flooding Relief.

In addition to providing relief to those suffering from those catastrophic natural disasters, the board has given additional special offerings of \$11,000 to help individual need cases.

The board thanks all the individuals and congregations who donate toward relief in these areas for their generosity and encourage them to continue to do so. We praise our heavenly Father for the blessings He has showered on His people!

If anyone knows of any person or organization that the ELS Board for Christian Service can help, they can let the board know by filling out the board's application for assistance. The form is available online in PDF format at <<http://www.els.org>>. Note that the rest of the board's guidelines for assistance can be found there as well.

The board follows these recommended limits on assistance, as published in the 2008 *Synod Report*:

\$0 – \$2,000	Individuals
\$5,000 – \$10,000	Congregations and organizations
\$5,000 – \$10,000	World relief

Please note that the Board for Christian Service can adjust these amounts as need and situations arise.

PENSION PLAN/RETIREMENT BENEFITS

In order to address the future retirement needs of our synod's called workers, the synod has set up an IRS-compliant, third-party-administered 403(b) plan. Together with the WELS, the ELS participates in the Shepherd Plan Solution through the Hahn Financial Group, Inc. and Retirement Plan Consultants, LLC. In addition to encouraging called workers to plan for their retirements, the board strongly encourages the pastors and teachers of our synod to enroll in the Shepherd Plan.

In 2016 the synod matched congregational funding of pastors' and teachers' pensions up to \$220 for all pastors and full time teachers and \$110 for part time teachers. Total support payments were \$22,880 for the year. In 2017 the amount has been increased to \$500 for pastor and full time teachers and \$250 for part time teachers.

WIDOWS' SUBSIDIES

In 2015, the board increased the amount of subsidy from \$310 per month to \$320 per month. Total support payments for 2016 were \$34,220 for the year. The board has not planned any further changes to this amount for the immediate future.

CALLED WORKER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CWAP)

The synod renewed its contract with Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services, a church-related organization of the WELS, to offer internet-based or phone-based counseling services to the pastors and teachers of our clergy roster. For seventy dollars per session, the synod agreed to prepay for ten counseling sessions (\$700) to be used by our pastors, teachers and their immediate families. The sessions must be purchased in clusters of ten, but the prepaid sessions never expire from year to year. While all information about clients is kept confidential, the board was informed that since its inception in 2010, a total of twenty-four cases were opened.

This service is not meant to replace the circuit visitor in his capacity as counselor, but rather to supplement the circuit visitor. In fact, for most matters, the board still encourages the pastors of the ELS to make use of their circuit visitor in this area. At the same time, the board realizes that there may be some non-ministry, family-related issues that are better handled by a counselor than by a circuit visitor. Also, a circuit visitor may, after meeting with an individual, feel the need to refer him or her to a professional counselor. Now the circuit visitor can refer people in the certain knowledge that he is referring to counselors who are of the same Christian fellowship and who share a Christian, confessional Lutheran worldview.

The board would also like to encourage individual ELS congregations to examine the practical costs and benefits of the Member Assistance Program from WLCFS for their own use. Every congregation at some point will have a family in crisis or an individual who has gone through a traumatic event. For a relatively small cost, a church can offer professional, Christian counseling to all of its members. For more information, please search online at the WLCFS web site <<http://www.wlcsf.org>> or call WLCFS at 1-800-438-1772.

SERVING OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL

The board maintains a list of deployed active duty personnel in need of spiritual care. Currently there are three names on that list. If you or someone you know is going to be deployed in service overseas or will be stationed far from a church of our fellowship and

would like to receive devotions, sermons, etc. please send an email to the Rev. Erich Hoeft at <pastorehoeft@gmail.com>.

The board also has taken on the duty of providing spiritual care for veterans and their families. To that end, the board has added a page to the synod's website <els.org/resources/military>. Also, board member Denny Behr is serving as a liaison to the Lutheran Military Support Group (LMSG), an organization of ELS and WELS veterans who have come together to aid ministry to those who are serving actively as well as veterans of our armed forces. Currently the LMSG is seeking congregations and individuals to help support their cause. Visit their website <lutheranmilitary.org> or you can find them on Facebook.

MILITARY MONUMENT PROPOSAL

The military monument plans are progressing. Our *ad hoc* committee, Prof. William Bukowski, Mr. Bruce Gratz, and Mr. Brad Wosmek, have been hard at work researching and studying the feasibility of a military monument. Some of the work done includes location suggestion, monument design, and funding options.

APPROVED EXPENDITURES FOR 2017 BUDGET

Widow support	\$34,560
Board expenses	6,800
Pastor Retirement support (Schwan Foundation grant)	<u>50,000</u>
Total	\$91,360

VETERANS' MONUMENT PROPOSED

The Board for Christian Service is bringing the following proposal for adoption to the 2017 convention. If the resolution is adopted, it enables the committee, along with the appointed subcommittee, to move forward with the design and plans (including site selection) once the non-budgetary funding is secured.

Whereas, Convention resolutions from 2012 (*Synod Report* 2012: 151) and 2013 (*Synod Report* 2013: 119–120) have encouraged the Board for Christian Service to study the feasibility of a monument honoring the men and women of our synod who are currently serving or have served in our country's Armed Forces, and,

Whereas, The president of the synod, with the approval of the Board for Christian Service and in consultation with the Board of Trustees, appointed in 2015 an *ad hoc* committee for this purpose, and,

Whereas, The committee recently presented its findings and proposal to the Board for Christian Service, and,

Whereas, The Board for Christian Service at its May 1, 2017, meeting has accepted the design and has approved a cost estimate for a commissioned monument to be erected in a yet-to-be determined location on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary, and,

Whereas, The estimated expenditures for the monument are in the range of \$150,000 to \$185,000, and,

Whereas, The funding will need to be raised from interested individuals, families, and other agencies, apart from any synodical funding, and,

Whereas, Such funding will need to be secured in advance before erecting any monument, and,

Whereas, The board recommends that local artist and sculptor Jason Jaspersen (a BLC alum) be commissioned to undertake the project once the funding becomes available, therefore,

Be it resolved, That the synod adopt the monument proposal (a model has been provided for display), enabling the board to seek the funding necessary to begin and to complete the project.

The Rev. Erich Hoeft, chairman

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members of the committee during the past year were Mr. James Baxter, the Rev. James Braun (secretary), the Rev. Peter Faugstad (chair), the Rev. Dennis Marzolf, and Mr. James Olson. This convention marks the conclusion of five consecutive terms served by Mr. James Baxter, who is now stepping off the committee. We thank him for his many years of service!

ANNIVERSARY PROJECTS

To assist with the synod's celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, the committee members produced worship resources which may be accessed at <els.org/lutheran-500>:

- *Choral & Organ Music* suggestions for Reformation observances
- *Luther Services* for four Sundays in 2017 (Feb. 19, June 25, Sept. 17, Oct. 29)
- *Reformation Era Hymns* for each Sunday and Festival day of the Church Year
- *Lenten Series* based on Luther's last written words, "We are beggars, this is true."

A Reformation Hymn Festival program has also been produced by the committee (special thanks to Pastor Braun). Copies of this program are available for circuit Reformation festivals in the coming months.

Worship resources for the centennial of our synod's reorganization will also be produced for use in 2018. When ready, these will be available at <els.org/els-100>

MULTI-LANGUAGE RESOURCES

A braille version of the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (ELH) was completed last fall. A generous donor has offered to cover the cost of each eight-volume set (unbound or bound) for any ELS individual or congregation. Contact <patrick@braillemusicandmore.com> or 216-785-6833 to order. This project was initially requested by Bob Herman, a member of Bethany Lutheran in Port Orchard, Washington. Just before the project was completed, Bob died unexpectedly. The committee is grateful for his interest in getting this done.

With the expansion of ELS outreach to Spanish speakers, the committee has begun to look into Spanish-language liturgical resources coinciding with the ELH. Services matching Rite II, Matins, and Vespers in the ELH are already available. A translation of Rite I in the ELH ("the Bugenhagen Order") is planned in the future.

HYMNARY REPRINT

The ELH was first printed in 1996 before the book publishing process was exclusively digital. Reprints using the original "slides" were completed in 2001 and 2007. In order to replenish the hymnbook supply, the committee learned that a digital copy of the book would have to be produced. Using original text and music files provided by Prof. Mark DeGarmeaux and filling in the blanks wherever needed, a digital copy was completed. The committee thanks Danny

Burleson, a member of Bethany Lutheran in Port Orchard, Washington, for carrying out this work. Hymnbooks are available for purchase in any quantity from the Bethany Bookstore.

WORSHIP ACCOMPANIMENT

For congregations without an organist or pianist, the committee again recommends the “Substitute Organist Service” from Church Music Solutions. More information about this program can be accessed at <www.churchmusicsolutions.net>. A per-service fee is required but is negotiable for smaller congregations. Contact Roland Kreke at <rolandk@churchmusicsolutions.com> or 618-975-8435 for help with set up. Church Music Solutions is offering two complimentary services to any ELS congregation that signs up this year.

Recordings of melodies from *The Lutheran Hymnal* of 1941 are also available online, many of which coincide with the melodies of the ELH. Websites with these recordings include:

- <www.lutherantacoma.com/hymns>
- <www.lutheran-hymnal.com>
- <www.smallchurchmusic3.com>

ONLINE RESOURCES

Many worship resources are available on the “Worship” page of the ELS website: <els.org/resources/worship>. Within the past year, a worship guide, a preaching series coinciding with the Catechism, and ten hymn settings for brass and woodwind instruments were added.

FUTURE PROJECTS

Besides working on materials for the synod’s centennial in 2018, the committee plans to produce other confessional Lutheran worship resources for our pastors and congregations. Preliminary work is being done on agenda and altar books and on a collection of psalms to complete what is printed in the ELH. Ideas for other resources can be directed to any member of the committee.

The Rev. Peter Faugstad, chairman

PARISH SERVICES—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Opportunities for Sanctification for Our Youth

WHEREAS, Our youth camps, conventions, honor choir and retreats have gathered and connected our youth, instructing them in the Scriptural teachings and in our confessions, giving them opportunities to grasp, experience and appreciate the confessional Lutheran worship heritage and music, and are assisting in their preparation to be future ministers, parents, and active laity of our fellowship, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank the Board for Youth Outreach for its work, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the board continue to encourage the congregations and youth to make use of these opportunities.

Resolution 2: Camp Information

WHEREAS, The City Camp, Orlando, Florida was not mentioned in the listing of camps for 2017, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the report of the Board for Youth Outreach include: “The City Camp, Orlando, FL, June 5–9, \$80.”

Resolution 3: Camp Hymnal

WHEREAS, The Board for Youth Outreach has stated that they are attempting to assist in the production of a Camp Hymnal Project, and,
WHEREAS, Some regional youth camps have already produced their own versions of a camp hymnal, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the board familiarize itself with those camp hymnals that have been produced.

Resolution 4: Apologetics Materials for Youth

WHEREAS, In the past the Board for Youth Outreach has produced free materials for youth that are still in use, and,
WHEREAS, The synod has encouraged us, which includes our youth, to be familiar with apologetics in the work of evangelism, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board for Youth Outreach produce age-appropriate apologetics material for our youth.

Resolution 5: Retreats

WHEREAS, The Board for Youth Outreach provides funds for youth retreats involving at two or more ELS congregations, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the board and the synod publicize the availability of these funds to encourage such retreats.

Resolution 6: Hugh Brooks Memorial Fund

WHEREAS, The Board for Youth Outreach has agreed to oversee funds donated to the ELS Foundation by the Rev. Matthew and Rebecca Brooks in memory of their late infant son, Hugh Brooks, for helping ELS youth participate in mission work projects, and,
WHEREAS, The board hopes to disperse almost \$1,000 annually of an \$18,900 gift, therefore,
A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank the donors for their generosity, and,
B. BE IT RESOLVED, That pastors and laymen promote the availability of these funds.

Resolution 7: Health Insurance Alternatives, HRAs and HSAs

WHEREAS, The cost of health insurance is ever-increasing, and,
WHEREAS, Opening a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) or Health Savings Account (HSA) coupled with a higher deductible health plan may be an effective cost-saving measure for congregations under certain circumstances, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board for Christian Service develop and distribute an understandable description of HRAs and HSAs, and,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board for Christian Service actively contact those congregations who would benefit from said programs and encourage them to look into this matter further.

Resolution 8: World Needs Fund

WHEREAS, The balance of the World Needs Fund as of December, 2016 was \$29,298.74 (down from \$46,000 in 2015), and,
WHEREAS, The Board for Christian Service in 2016 sent \$14,000 to various relief funds and \$11,000 in assistance to cases of individual need, therefore,
A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank the board for their work in promoting the Mother's Day Offering and for their dedication in disbursing these funds as needed, and,
B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank God for the generosity of those who donated, through which He provided relief to those in need, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the board encourage congregations and their members to remember this important Mother's Day Offering and that contributions to this fund are welcome at any time of the year.

Resolution 9: Called Worker Assistance Program

WHEREAS, The synod renewed its contract with WLCFS to offer counseling services to its rostered pastors, teachers, and their families, and,

WHEREAS, The service has had only twenty-four cases since it began in 2010, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board for Christian Service remind the synod's called workers of the availability of this service.

Resolution 10: WLCFS Member Assistance Program

WHEREAS, The WLCFS Member Assistance Program can be of great value to congregations in providing counseling services to members who would otherwise be unable to afford them, and,

WHEREAS, Congregations ought to consider participating in the WLCFS Member Assistance Program, and,

WHEREAS, Counseling sessions are required to be purchased in blocks of ten, making the cost of these services impractical for smaller congregations individually, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That congregations in the same geographical area or circuit consider purchasing these services jointly.

Resolution 11: Veterans Monument Proposal

WHEREAS, Convention resolutions from 2012 (*Synod Report* 2012: 151) and 2013 (*Synod Report* 2013: 119–120) have encouraged the Board for Christian Service to study the feasibility of a monument honoring the men and women of our synod who are currently serving or have served in our country's Armed Forces, and,

WHEREAS, The president of the synod, with the approval of the Board for Christian Service and in consultation with the Board of Trustees, appointed in 2015 an *ad hoc* committee for this purpose, and,

WHEREAS, The committee recently presented its findings and proposal to the Board for Christian Service, and,

WHEREAS, The Board for Christian Service at its May 1, 2017, meeting has accepted the design and has approved a cost estimate for a commissioned monument to be erected in a yet-to-be determined location on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary, and,

WHEREAS, The estimated expenditures for the monument are in the range of \$150,000 to \$185,000, and,

WHEREAS, The funding will need to be raised from interested individuals, families, and other agencies, apart from any synodical funding, and,

WHEREAS, Such funding will need to be secured in advance before erecting any monument, and,

WHEREAS, The board recommends that local artist and sculptor Jason Jaspersen (a Bethany Lutheran College alumnus) be commissioned to undertake the project once the funding becomes available, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod adopt the monument proposal (a model has been provided for display), enabling the board to seek the funding necessary to begin and to complete the project.

Resolution 12: James Baxter's Years of Service

WHEREAS, James Baxter, having faithfully served fifteen years on the Committee on Worship, is now stepping down from the committee, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank James Baxter for his years of service.

Resolution 13: Worship Committee Anniversary Projects

WHEREAS, The Committee on Worship has prepared numerous resources to help congregations celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, and,
WHEREAS, These resources are readily available online through the web site of the synod, and,

WHEREAS, The committee has planned a Reformation Hymn Festival program to be used at area circuit Reformation festivals this year, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank the Committee on Worship for their efforts, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That pastors and delegates encourage their congregations to attend their local circuit hymn festival.

Resolution 14: Hymnary Reprint

WHEREAS, A digital copy of the Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary (ELH) was completed this past year, and,

WHEREAS, Digital copies of liturgies and hymns would be useful to local congregations, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Committee on Worship explore the feasibility of making the digital copy of the ELH available to congregations in compliance with copyright law.

Resolution 15: Thanks to the Committee on Worship

WHEREAS, The Committee on Worship has produced a variety of materials and resources over a relatively short period of time, contributing to the reverent worship of our Triune God, and,

WHEREAS, The committee is also working on a number of future projects, including an agenda, an altar book, and a collection of Psalms to complete the remainder of the Psalter found in the Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank the committee for its work and encourage the committee to continue to provide Scriptural, confessional, Christ-centered worship resources to its pastors and congregations.

**REPORT OF THE
EQUALIZATION COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Laymen's Delegates Equalization Fund is to help defray the transportation costs of the laymen delegates. Each congregation needs to carry out its responsibility by responding with a check to the fund, after being invoiced, so that the committee may provide the best possible service to the laymen delegates.

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS – 2017 CONVENTION

Cash Balance on Hand 4/1/2016 \$ 6,871.28

Receipts 4/1/2016 through 3/31/2017:

Church Assessments Received	\$16,150.00	
Interest Income	<u>\$ 1.32</u>	
Total Receipts		<u>\$16,151.32</u>
Total Cash Available		\$23,022.62

Disbursements 4/1/2016 through 3/31/2017:

Air Fares and Mileage	\$ 21,532.14	
Printing, Postage, checks, etc.	<u>\$ 47.89</u>	
Total Disbursements		<u>\$ 21,580.03</u>

Cash Balance on Hand 4/1/2017 \$ 1,442.59

1. Delegates that register at the convention and turn in airfare expenses and/or trip mileage are reimbursed for those expenses. (If flying please turn in airfare expenses and not round trip mileage.)
2. Delegates are encouraged to ride together, whenever possible to reduce the travel costs.
3. Mileage payments are made at the rate of \$.25 per mile for **one** round trip to any layman delegate who drives his own car or \$.40 per mile if accompanied by a second delegate or a pastor. Bus fares and shuttle services are also acceptable. Car rental costs are not reimbursed but mileage to or from the airport are reimbursable. Mileage from the point of departure are reimbursed at the lesser of the mileage rate or the cost of an airline ticket, up to a maximum of \$600.00 per delegate, as determined by the Equalization Committee.
4. The Chairman was to receive \$.25 per mile or actual expenses; whichever was less, out of the fund to cover his costs of attending the convention. (Note: If chairman was a delegate he is reimbursed according to rules for delegates.)

Keith Wiederhoeft, treasurer

REPORT OF THE ANNIVERSARY OFFERING COMMITTEE

Committee Members: the Rev. Dan Basel, Prof. Michael K. Smith, the Rev. Tim Zenda, Mr. Dan Neumann, and Mr. David Ewert

The Anniversary Thankoffering Committee met two times in 2016 prior to the presentation of the offering at synod convention on June 23, 2016. The committee met five times over the past few years planning the publication of the offering materials, filming and editing of the Anniversary Offering video, laying out the details on the presentation procedures and implementation at convention.

In addition to these committee meetings the chairman or a representative made presentations on the offering at various pastors' conferences, including regional pastors' conferences as well

as the General Pastoral Conference. These served to prepare our pastors for the offering event and to help them prepare for their own congregational rollouts.

An offering webpage was also established to help our pastors and congregations with the offering. It contains all the materials necessary for a presentation to congregations and individuals, downloadable inserts, and other materials to introduce and promote the offering. The webpage also has the downloadable files containing the sermons and Bible studies that accompany the offering. The webpage also presents the latest news about the offering, displaying the latest graphic of the offering's progress. Finally, this webpage will be a resource for additional inserts and updated newsletters as they become available.

In addition to the rollout and the materials provided by the committee, regular articles are being featured in the *Lutheran Sentinel* with an encouragement to support the offering. Our synod's financial administrators also provide updated information including the tracking of individual commitments to the offering. Reminders of commitments by our supporters are then sent out quarterly. The chairman also sends out a quarterly letter with updates on home missions which include a solicitation to support the offering from individuals and groups. If you want to receive these mailings, be sure to send your request and address information to Chairman Dan Basel <danbasel@blc.edu> or Denise Luehmann <dluehmann@blc.edu> at the business office. You may also call 507-469-9656 to reach Chairman Basel.

President Moldstad has also been very helpful in promoting the offering through his monthly newsletter and through his reports to our pastors and members around our synod. We thank him for his willingness to support the missions and ministries of our synod.

A special thanks goes to our Anniversary Offering Committee members who have taken time away from their busy schedules to help over the past three years. Their work with much of the planning and coordination of the rollout of the offering is greatly appreciated. Special thanks goes to our synod communication director, the Rev. Paul Fries. He helped extensively with the layouts and printing of materials as well as doing extensive work in filming, editing, and producing the offering video. The committee also thanks the Rev. Matthew Behmer and the Bethany Lutheran College studio staff for their help in filming and producing the video.

With the rollout of the offering at last summer's convention we were blessed with a nice response from our pastors, delegates, and visitors. By the end of June we received over \$19,557 in cash gifts and \$11,950 in commitment payments. Total promises came to \$64,000 in June. July also saw a total of \$19,222 in cash gifts and commitment payments. We are thankful for the grace of our Lord God who has moved hearts to give generously.

Our stated goal for the offering has been set at \$1,500,000. While we have a long way to go to reach this goal, it is still very much achievable and gifts continue to flow into the fund. Our cash gifts and pledges given through December 31, 2016 totaled \$295,295. While we are not officially entering the deferred gifts as part of the campaign (i.e., they are not included in the monthly graphs in the President's Newsletter), deferred gifts slated to benefit the offering can also be included (using standard development guidelines for these gifts). If we include these gifts in hand we have an additional \$95,500 for the offering as of December 31, 2016.

Thanks also goes to our pastors and congregations who have shared the offering materials and video at their churches. While we realize many of our churches have their own special needs, they shared the offering and materials with their members, providing their members with the opportunity to make their own choices as to where to give their **"thanks - giving"** support.

While many of our congregations were able to use the materials to roll out the offering in September, others chose to rollout the offering at a later date or when a speaker from the committee became available. It should also be noted that multiple congregations are in the midst of their own fundraising campaigns for home congregational purposes. It goes without saying: opportunities to give generously of our Lord's gifts are truly abundant. At the same

time, we should all rejoice in the fact that Christian giving has been a major focus in 2016 and will continue to be a major focus in 2017 as we celebrate the 500th year of the Reformation.

Special thanks also goes to the following foundations who have helped us in our celebration.

- Lutheran Association for Church Extension (L.A.C.E): \$10,000
- Antioch Foundation: \$5,000
- Thrivent Financial: Special grants and other financial support from their membership (Action Teams, Choice Dollars, etc.).

REACHING OUR GOAL: The Anniversary Offering Committee continues its work and asks that our delegates, pastors, church leaders, and especially our member congregations **please continue to promote the offering, *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done!*** over the next year and a half. If you have yet to share the information, please do so. Would you like to have a special promotion Sunday? Please feel free to ask one of our committee members to make a presentation or preach for you.

Please note that our offering's goals remain the same. We seek to continue to start and sustain new missions, help our churches prepare future pastors by providing mission experience (vicars-in-mission), as well as seeking out cross-cultural projects to support. (Note: your church could be the ideal place for such a project.)

Please make sure you have an Anniversary Offering poster(s) on display in your church in order to keep the offering before your congregation. Continue to make the offering booklets available (keep copies in your narthex). Use the inserts at least once every quarter. Give local updates in your newsletters and bulletins. Purposefully track your congregation's giving to the offering and to synod and as you report it, rejoice that you are able to support the work we do together.

The Rev. Daniel Basel, chairman

REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND COORDINATING COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

The Planning and Coordinating Committee consists of the three officers of the synod, the chairmen of the Board for Christian Service, the Doctrine Committee, the Board for Education, the Board for Home Outreach, the Board of Regents, the Board for World Outreach, the Committee on Worship, the Board for Youth Outreach, and three (3) laymen elected by the synod at its convention. The president and the secretary of the synod serve as the chairman and secretary of the committee. The treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod serves as an advisor.

MEETING

Since the last convention, the committee met on January 17, 2017.

BUDGET

In 2016 congregation contributions to the synod's budget exceeded \$760,000 for the first time since 2005. Last year's adopted budget of \$760,000 included a challenge that congregation contributions in excess of \$735,000 would be allocated to the Board for Home Outreach (*Synod Report*, 2016, page 135). We thank God that He has so blessed us and opened hearts to the needs of His kingdom! Once again, in 2017, contributions in excess of \$735,000 will be allocated to the Board for Home Outreach.

In recent years, funding for the synod's work has come from several sources: congregation contributions, the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation, Mission Advancement Project, Helping Hands, Cross-stitch, endowments, and other sources. Details for such receipt can be found in the treasurer's report. In order to provide a more clear representation of the budget activity of the synod, the Planning and Coordinating Committee is proposing a unified 2018 budget for consideration.

It is important to realize that congregation contributions are very important to the work of the synod and its various board and committees. Congregations contributions are the largest single source of receipts for the work of the synod. Without the prayerful support of congregations and individuals, the synod's work would lag and the gospel kingdom suffer.

A unified 2018 budget of \$3,186,095 is being proposed. This budget anticipates congregation contributions of \$770,000 which is only a slight increase over the actual congregation receipts in 2016. Once again, this proposed budget includes a challenge to the synod that all contributions above \$740,000 will be allocated to the Board for Education. It is with such understanding that the Planning and Committee recommends the following 2018 expenditure budget along with sources of anticipated income:

2018 Anticipated Expenditures:

Bethany Lutheran College	\$150,000
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary	31,000
Board for Home Outreach	812,537
Board for World Outreach	1,147,187
Board for Youth Outreach	82,700
Board for Education	77,750
Communications/Publications	59,853
Christian Service	91,360
Synod Fund	683,708
Special Projects	<u>50,000</u>
Total anticipated expenses	\$3,186,095

2018 Anticipated Income:

Congregations--Budget	\$770,000
Congregations--Non Budget	15,000
Individual gifts	161,000
Organization Giving	40,000
Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation	500,000
Mission Advancement Project	386,000
Endowments	345,690
Registration/Fees	50,000
Subscriptions	25,000
Helping Hands/Faith Mission Society	45,000
Cross-stitch	27,500
Investments	67,500
Publication Sales	14,500
Salary Reimbursement	25,000
Fund Balance/Reserves	693,652
Miscellaneous	<u>20,253</u>
Total anticipated income	\$3,186,095

PLANNING

The Planning and Coordinating Committee has considered the strategic work of the synod. In 2011, the synod adopted the strategic plan “In the next five years we will learn to engage others more faithfully with Jesus.” A summary of the results of that plan is found in the 2014 and 2015 synod reports with items that currently are in place. A major component of that strategic plan was the engaging of a full-time Evangelism-Mission Counselor. The Rev. Larry Wentzlaff accepted a call to this position in 2014 and has served for two and one-half years. At this time, it is felt important to allow time for him to develop his programs.

We now have entered into the next two anniversary years under the theme “Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done.” Anniversary years are wonderful times to reflect, not only on our identity, but also on our future. This is important not only on a synodical level, but also on a congregational level. The time of the Reformation was not a reform of the church resulting from a decrees of a church council but rather by the uprising of local leaders and congregation members. Likewise, the reorganization of the synod in 1918 was because individual members and congregations saw the pressing need and took action. During these anniversary years, what better way is there for us to proclaim the wonders God has done than for congregations to undertake local planning and identify their one individual strength by which they might reach out into the community. Every congregation needs to have its own plan and the synod’s Evangelism-Mission Counselor is ready to assist.

Strategic planning and communication on the congregation level is influenced by

- Pastors and teachers
- Church office secretary
- Church Council (especially the president)
- Ladies Aid and women leaders
- Circuit Visitor
- Evangelism Mission Counselor
- Synod president and other officials
- Local winkels and pastoral conferences
- Synod conventions
- Synod planning

Have all our congregations begun to study the recommendations made at the 2016 convention (*Synod Report*, 2016, page 127)? We reprint them here:

- Inreach:
Every congregation is encouraged to
 - 1) make use of the seven Bible studies being prepared by the Doctrine Committee for use in the fall of 2017,
 - 2) consider making use of other Bible studies pertaining to outreach/mission work,
 - 3) promote and implement the Anniversary Thankoffering (2016–18), and
 - 4) make use of the resources available at <<http://els.org/resources/evangelism>>.
- Outreach:
Every congregation is encouraged to
 - 1) consider making use of the Evangelism-Missions Counselor (The Rev. Larry Wentzlaff) for outreach planning to identify at least one congregational strength to foster,
 - 2) create an annual plan of outreach events/activities, and
 - 3) make use of the resources available at <<http://els.org/resources/evangelism>>.

The synod is only as strong as it is at a local level.

CONCLUSION

During the coming two years, it is the goal of our synod and congregations to *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done*. May those words be our banner during these anniversary years as we remember the Lord has done great things for us (Psalm 126:2). May those words also fill us with joy and encourage us to proclaim the wonder of His salvation in Christ to all who will hear.

*The Rev. John Moldstad, chairman
The Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, secretary*

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MEMBERSHIP

During the past year, the Board of Trustees of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod consisted of nine trustees: Mr. Dennis Behr, Mr. Robert Brown, Mr. David Ewert, the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, the Rev. Phillip Lepak, Mr. Paul Mielbrecht the Rev. Jonathan Madson, the Rev. John A. Moldstad, and the Rev. Paul Schneider. The Rev. Glenn Obenberger serves as an advisory member to the board. The Rev. Keith Boheim represents the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation as an advisory consultant.

Mr. Robert Brown is completing his service on the board with this convention. Having been first elected to the board in 1991, he is completing twenty-six years of service on the board. We thank the Lord for this faithful worker and commend him to God's continued care.

MEETINGS

The Board of Trustees of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod has met since the last convention for regular quarterly meetings on August 25, November 1, 2016 and February 14, 2017.

The president of the synod, the Rev. John A. Moldstad, and the secretary of the synod, the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, also serve as the chairman and secretary of the Board of Trustees.

Members serving on the Board of Regents-Board of Trustees Subcommittee are Mr. David Ewert, the Rev. Jonathan Madson, and Mr. Paul Mielbrecht. Members serving on the Board of Trustees-Home Outreach Subcommittee are Mr. Dennis Behr, Mr. David Ewert, and the Rev. Paul Schneider. Members serving on the Board of Trustees-Word Outreach Subcommittee, which was established by last year's convention, are the Rev. Jonathan Madson and the Rev. Phillip Lepak.

STAFF

The Giving Counselor, the Rev. Daniel Basel, and the Business Administrator, Mr. Keith Wiederhoeft, serve under the direction of the board and report regularly. Mr. Keith Wiederhoeft is appointed, by the board, as the treasurer of the synod and reports regularly. The Communication Director reports directly to the synod's president. The Evangelism-Missions Counselor is accountable to the Board for Home Outreach and the World Outreach Administrator is accountable to the Board for World Outreach.

TRUSTEES

The board serves as trustees for the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation and the Lutheran Schools of America, Inc. The board also serves as the Board of Directors for Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.

Lutheran Schools of America, Inc. (LSA)

Membership in the LSA, Inc. is identical to membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The revised bylaws for the Lutheran Schools of America, Inc., which were adopted at the 2016 convention, call for an annual meeting of the corporation which shall be held “at the same time as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod” (*Bylaws for the Lutheran Schools of America, Inc.*, Article II.A). The year’s convention also serves as the second annual meeting of the Lutheran Schools of America, Inc. The Board of Trustees is no longer expected to be involved in the day-to-day operation of the LSA, Inc. The sole duty of the Board of Trustees is to manage the Lutheran Schools of America Fund.

Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation Committee meets concurrently with the quarterly meetings of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Board of Trustees.

The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod serve as the officers of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation.

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation Investment Committee consists of four members each elected to two-year terms. During this past year, the committee has consisted of: Mr. Robert Brown, Mr. David Ewert, Mr. Bruce Gratz, and Mr. Richard Wiechmann. Mr. Gratz has resigned from the committee due to his appointment as a Type-B member to the Board of Regents. This position on the investment committee is yet to be appointed by the Board of Trustees. This committee considers and makes recommendations regarding the investment of its assets and the use of the income from those investments. The rate of return for all investments for the calendar year 2016 was 6.96%. For the year 2016, the distribution percentage from the endowments will be 3.25% of a three year rolling average of 2013-14-15. An accounting is found in the “Financial Statements and Supplementary information.”

Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.

Since the Board of Trustees and the officers of the synod also are the Board of Directors and the officers of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., they regularly receive quarterly reports concerning the finances of Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. An attempt is made to conduct one face-to-face meeting each year with the Board of Regents for the purpose of joint planning and communication. Such a meeting was held on February 14, 2017.

During the past fiscal year, Bethany Lutheran College had expenditures of \$16,875,164. During this same period, Bethany Lutheran Seminary had expenditures of \$798,318.

PROPERTIES

The board serves as custodians of the synod’s property and is responsible for any financial obligations of the synod.

Loans

During this past year, the board has continued to consult with the Board for Home Outreach concerning the building program in Leander, Texas. Loans also were arranged with LACE for the congregations in Kissimmee, Florida and Fort Mohave, Arizona.

Approval was given for the sale of a portion of the property in Winter Haven, Florida.

The congregation of Hope Lutheran Church (West Jordan, Utah) has completed their loan payments to the synod.

Archives and Museum

The Committee for Archives and History functions under the direction of the Board of Trustees who elects members to the committee. The following report is provided by the Rev. Shawn Stafford, committee secretary:

Functioning under the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees, “The Committee for Archives and History collects and maintains documents and artifacts connected with the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and its predecessor and, more broadly, Lutheranism in America, provides for the use and exhibit of these items, and develops programs to stimulate interest in the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod” (Guidelines for the Committee for Archives and History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod). Committee members include the Rev. John Petersen (chairman), the Rev. Shawn Stafford (secretary), Mr. Sigurd Lee, the Rev. Mike Muehlenhardt, and the Rev. Norman Madson. The Committee for Archives and History oversees the work of the Ottesen Museum, the Synod Archives, and ELS Historical Society. The committee regularly hears reports from ELS Archivist Theodore Gullixson and Ottesen Museum Director Becky DeGarmeaux.

The ELS Ottesen Museum Director reports: The goal of the ELS Ottesen Museum is to continue to educate the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and others about the history of the synod through tours and presentations.

Several confirmation classes and church groups came to the museum in the past year for Synod History tours. In addition, Museum Director Rebecca DeGarmeaux has given presentations at three congregations introducing a new booklet titled *Preserving Your Heritage: A Handbook for Congregations*. Put together by the director with the aid of the synod’s Committee for Archives and History, the booklet is intended to be a practical guide for answering the questions of Why? What? and How? in regards to the care and preservation of congregational papers and historical artifacts. She also gave a presentation on ELS history at the Luther Days event in Somers, Wisconsin.

The museum collection continues to grow with donations mainly from private individuals. A long term goal is to catalog the entire collection in both hard copy and digital formats. The process is on-going. Almost all materials donated since the museum moved to its current location in 2003 have been cataloged. Processing of the rest of the collection is under way. It is hoped that this will be one more aid in preserving the collection for future generations.

The biggest event of the year for the museum is its annual Christmas Open House. This event continues to grow. Last December eighty-seven guests visited the museum over a period of four hours. Themes for the Open House change from year to year covering a variety of topics connected to synod and Lutheran history. This past year’s theme was “A Norwegian-American Pioneer Christmas”.

The museum also maintains a Facebook page. Currently it mainly highlights the births and deaths of prominent figures in synod history. The hope is to expand posts to include more articles about museum artifacts and congregational anniversaries.

The ELS Archivist reports: In August 2016, the Rev. Theodore Gullixson was asked to become the ELS Archivist, replacing the Rev. Rev. Paul Madson. Paul Madson continues to volunteer his time and help in the archives.

The archivist has catalogued the books, pamphlets, and some photos in the archive collection. The information gathered has been put into lists of categories by subject to identify what materials are available in the archives.

Presentations on the ELS archives were made to the General Pastoral Conference, a history class from Bethany Lutheran College, and an archivist group from Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota. The presentation emphasized four areas of archival work: Acquisition, Identification, Preservation, and Dissemination. ELS pastors were urged to send in information about their ministry and special events for the congregation(s) they are serving. Synod board

and committee members and circuit secretaries were encouraged to regularly send minutes to the archives.

The ELS Archives has received materials from St. Luke's Lutheran Church (Chicago, Illinois) which had been disbanded. King of Grace Lutheran Church (Golden Valley, Minnesota) provided materials from its 100th anniversary, as well as the contents from their cornerstone. Several congregations contacted the archives for information and photos in preparation for their anniversaries. One parish placed its older congregation registers in the archives.

The ELS Archives plans in the future to make available some of its photo resources on the internet, to keep current information about pastors and congregations, and to provide articles for the Oak Leaves.

FINANCES

The Board of Trustees oversees the operation of the synodical budget.

Congregation Funding

We are pleased to report that our congregations submitted offerings for our synod work this past year in excess of \$760,000. We give thanks to the Lord for opening hearts of many that we may continue to proclaim the wonders God has done.

Missions Advancement Project, Inc.

Missions Advancement Project (MAP) provides financial support for the synod. It operates under the auspices of the Board of Trustees which appoints the Board of Directors: the Rev. Michael Smith (chairman), Mr. David Ewert (treasurer), Mr. Marlin Goebel, Mr. Ronald Younge, and the Rev. Richard Wiechmann.

For the year 2017, MAP made a funding request of \$440,000 to the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation. Approval has been received for the following funding:

South America	\$ 40,000
India	157,500
Europe	162,500
Administration	<u>60,000</u>
Total	\$420,000

Program Funds

The synod continues to be grateful to the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation for its level of support. This funding is important to the continued work of the synod. For 2017, the foundation is providing a grant of \$425,000. This will be distributed as approved by the 2016 convention. The Board of Trustees will request \$450,000 from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation to supplement the 2018 proposed budget which is recommended by the Planning and Coordinating Committee.

Project Grants

Grants are awarded by the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation for special projects. Application for such grants are made to the synod's Board for Trustees for review and recommendation and are awarded upon approval of the foundation. For 2016, the following projects received approval and funding.

Home Mission Seminar	\$17,000	Board for Home Outreach
Lutheran Mission of Salvation—India	6,000	Board for World Outreach
Media/Video Streaming	10,000	Board for Home Outreach
Media/Video Streaming	9,000	Board for Home Outreach

International Student Support (Bethany Seminary)	<u>3,000</u>	Board for World Outreach
Total	\$45,000	

Wills and Estates

The synod gratefully acknowledges the receipt of proceeds from the following estates during the period March 1, 2016–February 28, 2017:

Martin A. Robinson Trust	\$ 30,100.00 (Synod)
Lorraine Mueller Estate	27,243.96 (Synod)
Sharon Klaviter Estate from CGA	8,511.03 (Synod)
Jeanette Gulbrandson	37,500.00 (Synod)
Lucille Ingebretson	10,023.01 (Synod)
Donald Heiliger	10,000.00 (Synod)
Bernell I Doschadis	7,727.65 (Synod/TOF)
Lawrence Tyler Estate	1,334.00 (Synod)
Hans Ostrand	210.16 (Synod)

Estates received by the college or the seminary are acknowledged within their respective reports.

Expenditures

Audited numbers were not available at the time this report but the “actual expenditures” will be included in the Consolidated Financial Statement of the synod audit and the Supplemental information presented during the synod convention.

STEWARDSHIP

The Giving Counselor, under the direction of the Board of Trustees and supervision of the synod’s president, has the general responsibility of promoting stewardship throughout the synod. The following is a report by the ELS Giving Counselor, the Rev. Daniel Basel:

While the giving counselor works to teach and encourage generous giving in our synod, the primary responsibility for the teaching and preaching on the important doctrine of stewardship rests more fully on the shoulders of our synod’s pastors and teachers. What an honor it is for each of us to share God’s Word as we teach this important doctrine of the church!

Our Lord’s discussions on earthly wealth as well as general health moves us to integrate stewardship into all we do. Christian giving involves faithful volunteers who give of their time and talent as well as their monetary gifts. As we seek to proclaim and teach God’s Word to our families and church members we need to teach these principles to young and old alike. At the same time, our parents need to be encouraged to work with their children and “...bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4b) which includes nurturing them in earthly stewardship and generous giving and this should continue as they enter the work force. At the same time we should not be afraid as parents and/or pastors to be a good examples to our children and the youth under our care as we encourage generosity among them. Even as we give in humility, may we prayerfully and willingly reflect our Savior’s love in supporting Gospel ministry at home as well as through the missions of our synod.

One goal of the giving counselor’s stewardship duties is to highlight the importance of understanding that Christian giving is an act of worship. It is a vital that we as both laymen and pastors do all we can to be sure that our offering and giving practices reflect this truth. As we plan our weekly service we are encouraged to ask this question regularly of ourselves.

Another ongoing goal of the giving counselor is to encourage stewardship throughout the synod and gather useful materials that can help the pastors in their work of teaching stewardship. That is why the Giving Counselor’s page on the synod’s website has a list of

resources available for download and use by our pastors. We also encourage pastors to share materials they find helpful with the giving counselor so that they might be shared and so others may benefit.

This past year, 2016, a series of three sermons and Bible study materials were offered in connection with the anniversary offering (still downloadable at www.els.org/offering). These sermons and studies also emphasized Gospel motivation in Christian giving along with keeping a mission mindset as we do. We thank both our pastors and their parishes for making use of these materials this past year. These materials present not only an opportunity to teach about our home missions programs but also serve as a framework for reflecting on Christian giving in general. If you and your congregation haven't done so yet, please do study and use the 2016 synod essay, "Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done, Give Thanks to His Name" as a Bible study resource on stewardship. Read it together. Study it. Formulate your own Bible Study questions using its detailed references and compelling questions.

Note that the giving counselor continues to offer assistance in teaching and preaching on this topic of Christian giving as well as presenting the blessings and challenges of our churches' missions. Many have taken advantage of this opportunity with the giving counselor being allowed to speak or preach at twenty of our congregations around the synod in 2016.

In addition to the above, monthly reports are given both by our synod's administrator, Keith Wiederhoeft through monthly emailed reports to our pastors and also through our synod *President's Newsletter*. Monthly updates on the anniversary offering are also reported in the *President's Newsletter* and on the offering webpage at www.els.org/offering.

We should rejoice that our congregations gave generously this past year and we surpassed our budget for the first time in over ten years. We gave \$763,315 surpassing our budget for the first time since 2005. We are very thankful for the support our members and their congregations give. Note that all gifts over the \$735,000 base budget flowed to home mission support. Praise the Lord for his people and their generosity in sharing our Lord's gifts!

In addition, we thank the individual donors of our ELS who gave over \$315,611 directly to various ELS ministries and missions. (This does not include legacies or deferred gifts or Bethany Lutheran College or Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary.) On top of that, generous individuals and groups from both the ELS and the WELS gave another \$249,688 in support of Thoughts of Faith in 2016.

How vital it is to continue to encourage our members and students to trust in God's divine providence and to give generously! As we continue to join together as a synod to "Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done" through our synod, may we generously support both the outreach efforts at our own congregations as well as our work together through our home and foreign missions.

In addition to the above we also send out a end of year offering encouragement. The Giving Counselor sends out both an insert as well as a special giving envelope for insertion into the congregation's bulletin. We then ask our pastors and their congregations to have a special "Synod Sunday (or even Sundays) offering" and encourage members to support the synod's budget through their congregations.

On the congregational stewardship level, one of the best tools to encourage giving locally is the promotion of congregational planned giving through a local stewardship chairman or committee. Materials continue to undergo transformation in this area of stewardship with the goal of helping to strengthen the planned giving and "stewardship" teaching available to our churches. A manual for setting up and promoting local planned giving is from the giving counselor.

Are we seeing improvement in estate gifts to congregations in our synod? I think we can all agree, we still have much to do. We still are seeing less than one in seven estates naming their church or missions as a beneficiary. Please be sure to encourage your members to remember

your church. Developing a “giving culture” doesn’t just happen. It takes effort, repeated efforts, before blessings to a congregation are fully realized. At the same time, may we truly rejoice in the Lord when gifts are given.

Once again, in this tenth year of service as your giving counselor, I want to thank the pastors and congregations of our synod who have graciously extending invitations or accepting offers to preach and talk about planned giving in their churches. Also, a special thanks to numerous families and pastors who have given gifts of lodging and meal support to cover the cost of the giving counselor’s travel expenses. It continues to be a joy to know and work with you, the pastors and members of our synod around the country. Generosity abounds in our midst. As it does may it be all to the glory of God.

*The Rev. John Moldstad, chairman
The Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, secretary*

FINANCES—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Report of the Equalization Committee

WHEREAS, The Laymen’s Delegate Equalization Fund has provided its report on the cash receipts and disbursements for the 2016 convention period, and,

WHEREAS, The convention Committee on Finances has reviewed it and found it to be in proper order, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the report of the Equalization Committee be accepted.

Resolution 2: Report of the Anniversary Offering Committee

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) is observing the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, and,

WHEREAS, In 2018 the ELS will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the reorganization of the synod, and,

WHEREAS, According to the resolutions of the 2014 and 2015 conventions (*Synod Report* 2014: 112 and *Synod Report* 2015: 115) the Board for Home Outreach will use the funds received for home mission work, and,

WHEREAS, The committee began the offering in the summer of 2016, and,

WHEREAS, The stated goal of the Anniversary Offering is \$1,500,000, and as of December 31, 2016, the total of cash gifts and pledges totaled \$295,295, not including \$95,500 in deferred gifts, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the report of the Anniversary Offering Committee be accepted, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the committee be encouraged to continue implementing the offering utilizing accepted effective capital campaign strategies, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the congregations of the ELS continue to promote the Anniversary Offering.

Resolution 3: Report of the Planning and Coordinating Committee—2018 Budget

WHEREAS, The Planning and Coordinating Committee has provided its report on the proposed unified budget for 2018, and,

WHEREAS, The 2016 congregational contributions toward the synod budget exceeded \$760,000 for the first time since 2005, and,

WHEREAS, The Planning and Coordinating Committee, as part of the proposed budget, has stipulated that congregational giving in excess of \$740,000 will be designated for the Board for Education, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod adopt the proposed unified budget of \$3,186,095, which includes a congregational funding budget of \$770,000 for the year 2018, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That with thanks to God, the congregations of the ELS be commended for exceeding the budgeted congregational contributions of \$760,000 in 2016, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod communicate to the congregations that any funding received in excess of \$740,000 in the 2018 budget will be allocated to the Board for Education.

Resolution 4: Report of the Planning and Coordinating Committee

WHEREAS, The report of the Planning and Coordinating Committee has provided its report on its activities, and,

WHEREAS, The convention Committee on Finances has reviewed the report and found it to be in order, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the report of the Planning and Coordinating Committee be accepted.

Resolution 5: Report of the Board of Trustees

WHEREAS, The Board of Trustees has provided its report on its activities, and,

WHEREAS, The convention Committee on Finances has reviewed the report and found it to be in order, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the report of the Board of Trustees be accepted.

Resolution 6: Trustee Membership

WHEREAS, Mr. Robert Brown is completing his time of service on the board, having faithfully served for twenty-six years, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank God for his years of service.

Resolution 7: Synod Treasurer's Report and Independent Accountants' Review

WHEREAS, The treasurer has provided the independent accountants' review entitled, "Evangelical Lutheran Synod Consolidated Financial Statements and Supplementary Information" years ended December 31, 2016 and 2015, and he has provided the "Treasurer's Financial Statements and Supplemental Information" for year ended December 31, 2016, and,

WHEREAS, The convention Committee on Finances has reviewed them and found them to be in proper order, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the treasurer's report and the independent accountants' review be accepted.

REPORT OF THE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

The anniversary years have arrived! Our synod's anniversary theme to encompass these two anniversaries is comes from the hymn text of Martin Luther, *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done*.

A special observance has been planned for the two concurrent events of the 500th anniversary of the start of the Lutheran Reformation and the 100th anniversary of the reorganization of

the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. It is the intent to observe these anniversaries beginning with the 2017 synod convention and continuing for 500 days, concluding with congregation observances in October 2018. It is expected that these 500 days will become a time to *Proclaim God's Wonders* and give thanks for all *God Has Done*.

The synod's anniversary logo bears the dates 1517–2017 and, on the left side, a representation of the hammer and nails with which Martin Luther posted the 95 Theses on October 31, 1517. The 500th anniversary of this momentous event is being observed at this year's convention with three special essays and a Reformation Hymn Festival. This will be followed by regional hymn festivals which are being planned by the synod's Committee on Worship. Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* has been reprinted and is available at no cost, at the Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore, to be widely distributed within our congregations and elsewhere. Links to other Reformation resources are available through the synod's web-site <els.org>.

One hundred years ago, during the 400th anniversary of the Reformation, the Norwegian Synod entered into a merger and the following year a few faithful members and congregations reorganized the synod. The 100th anniversary of this reorganization will be observed at next year's convention with a special essay, choral union concert, anniversary video, and anniversary program and reception. This will be followed by local congregation observances on October 14, 2018. This date has been selected because October 14 was the date observed as "Founders Day" by the old Norwegian Synod.

Two special issues of the *Lutheran Sentinel* are being published as commemorative issues. The May–June 2017 issue will highlight the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the May–June 2018 issue will highlight the 100th anniversary of the synod's reorganization.

A Bible study also has been prepared to connect these two anniversaries. The study is entitled *Proclaiming God's Truth* and has been prepared by the synod's Doctrine Committee. This seven-part study focuses on issues which define both the Reformation and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Introductory copies were distributed to the pastors this spring and bulletin inserts and posters are being provided. We hope this study will be taught in all of our congregations.

A major publication is the synod's centennial history, *Proclaim His Wonders*. This serves as a major component of synod's centennial and is the first book publication of the synod since the *Catechism/Explanation* in 2001. The volume is authored by the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad and will be available for sale at this convention at a reduced cost of \$15 (following the convention, the book be available through the bookstore for \$20). With 300 pages and more than 400 illustrations, it hopefully will find a place in many homes of our synod.

The ELS Historical Society has commissioned a commemorative medallion/ornament which also will be available at this year's convention. This is a reproduction of the synod's anniversary logo and serves as a fitting commemorative of the two anniversary years. The Historical Society also is planning a special observance on June 16, 2018 which is the day prior to next year's synod convention. Plans include an event at Lime Creek Lutheran Church where the synod was reorganized in 1918. Can our congregations make special arrangements to allow all of our synod's pastors to attend this historic event without having to take a vacation Sunday?

The Centennial Committee has met three times since the 2016 convention. Members of the committee are the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad (Chairman), Prof. Don Moldstad (Program Coordinator), the Rev. Peter Faugstad (Congregation Coordinator), Mrs. Lois Jaeger (Event Coordinator), and President John Moldstad (Theological Coordinator).

It is the committee's desire that this convention's 500th anniversary observance and the ensuing 500 days may serve to heighten our thanksgiving and awareness of the blessings of the Lutheran Reformation which have been upheld within the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. We sing with Martin Luther:

*Dear Christians, one and all, rejoice,
With exaltation springing,
And, with united heart and voice
And holy rapture singing,
Proclaim the wonders God hath done,
How His right arm the vict'ry won;
Right dearly it hath cost Him. [ELH 378].*

The Rev. Craig A. Ferkenstad, chairman

REPORT OF THE SYNOD REVIEW COMMITTEE

The members of the Synod Review Committee are Professor Erling Teigen, chairman; the Rev. Theodore Gullixson, secretary; Mr. Herman Harstad, the Rev. S. Piet Van Kampen and Mr. Norman Werner. President John Moldstad serves as an advisory member. The committee met nine times since the last convention. The 2017 report represents another installment of the assignment responding to the direction of the 96th Evangelical Lutheran Synod convention to “conduct [a] review of the *Handbook* and to report” (*Synod Report* 2013, Res. 3, pp. 114–115). All research by the committee and recommendations to the synod convention are based on this assignment. The committee thanks Mr. Robert Brown for his faithful service on the Self Study/ Synod Review Committee since 1996, a total of twenty years. The committee also thanks Mr. Norman Werner for his faithful work as the secretary of the committee. In January 2000, he became acting secretary and was elected as secretary from 2003 to 2016.

In doing its work of revising the *Synod Handbook*, the Synod Review Committee has operated under the following understandings of how the synod works:

1. The Synod Review Committee worked to align the provisions of the various bylaws and guidelines to reflect the current practices of the synod's boards and committees, without becoming a legislative body, yet maintaining certain principles of the synod as noted below.
2. The synod meeting in convention is the final authority for all work being done by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and its partner institutions. Therefore, it is important that synod conventions meet annually to oversee and guide this work.
3. The boards and committees of the synod carry out the work assigned by the synod in convention and the duties assigned by the governing bylaws and guidelines.
4. Between conventions of the synod, the president and the committees responsible to him (visitors, Doctrine Committee, Committee for Communication, etc.) deal with the spiritual leadership in the work of God's kingdom, while the ELS Board of Trustees deals with the financial and secular activities of the synod.
5. Apart from the synod in convention, there is no governing body authorized to make decisions independent of the convention, unless such authority is explicitly granted in the synod's constitution, bylaws and guidelines.
6. The boards and committees of the synod report to the annual synod convention of their activities and their plans for future work, and carry out the work authorized by the synod in convention and by the *Synod Handbook*.
7. The synod has established five corporations to further its work in accordance with existing laws of the state. The governing body [i.e., synod convention] of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod is the same for the Wisconsin corporation; Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.; the Lutheran Schools of America, Inc.; and the ELS Foundation. The members of the Mission Advancement Project, Inc., are appointed by the ELS Board of Trustees.

8. The members, officers, and Trustees of ELS and BLC Inc. are identical, but operate under different articles of incorporation. The areas for which each of these boards is responsible are carefully delineated in the constitution, bylaws, and guidelines (rules of operation).
9. The Board of Trustees is the Board of Trustees of ELS and of BLC Inc. It is given responsibility for the acquisition and disposition of property, and authorizing capital improvements over a financial limit set from time to time, presently \$500,000.
10. The Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., is first of all a board of the synod, whose members are elected in convention and which reports its activities and decisions to the synod in convention.
11. The Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., is the governing body of the college and seminary. This means that it sets policies for those institutions, calls professors and presidents to serve these institutions, and oversees how those institutions serve the needs of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
12. The presidents of the college and seminary maintain the daily operations of their respective institutions, and report to and are governed by the ELS Board of Regents.

Proposed new guidelines, additions and amendments are underlined and deletions are shown as ~~strikethroughs~~. It should be kept in mind that all proposed amendments to Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, require a “two-thirds majority vote” of the convention (Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Article VIII).

1. BYLAWS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD, CHAPTER IV:

To clarify the status of the pastor emeritus in relation to synod conventions.

PARAGRAPH 2

Member congregations should make every effort to be represented at the synodical conventions by their pastor(s) and by two duly elected delegates. These delegates shall be elected by the congregations and shall present their credentials to the convention for action. The pastors serving member congregations who are in attendance at the convention and the properly seated delegates constitute the voting membership of the convention. ~~A quorum, a~~ majority of the voting members, shall be necessary for conducting business. ~~The president shall have the right to vote only to break a tie:~~

- a) A clergy member with emeritus status, who is serving a vacancy at the time of a convention, shall have the right to vote at the synod convention, with the vacancy congregation(s) providing convention fees and expenses.
- b) Pastors emeriti are not to be elected as lay delegates.
- c) A quorum, a majority of the voting members, shall be necessary for conducting business.
- d) The president shall have the right to vote only to break a tie.

2. BYLAWS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD, CHAPTER VII:

To clarify the relationship between the synod and its circuits, the following is revised:

PARAGRAPH 4: CIRCUITS AND CIRCUIT VISITORS

- a) The synod is divided into circuits, which are not governing divisions (i.e., districts) of the synod, for the purpose of carrying out the work of the synod president (see Guidelines for the Circuit Visitors and Visitations).
- b) Circuit visitors are responsible to the synod president to assist him in his supervisory work with the clergy and congregations (see Guidelines for Circuit Visitors and Visitations, Article II, A.) There shall be a visitor and an alternate visitor elected to two-year terms for each circuit (See Paragraph 1).

3. GUIDELINES FOR SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP, ARTICLES I AND II:

To clarify the wording.

ARTICLE I: Acceptance Into Membership

All membership applications of pastors, and congregations, and clergymen not serving congregations are expected to go before the synod in convention for final action. In the intervals between conventions, the synod president, in consultation with the vice president and/or the Doctrine Committee, may under special circumstances receive provisionally into membership congregations, and pastors, and clergymen not serving congregations (through colloquy or through transfer) in anticipation of ratification by the synod. The Synodical Membership Committee appointed and approved by each convention shall receive the required information/ documents pertaining to membership applicants. On the morning of the second working day of convention week, the Synodical Membership Committee is expected to prepare appropriate resolutions for action by the convention.

Article II: Removal from Membership

Subsections A and B remain the same.

- C. In the event that a suspended congregation and/or pastor clergyman chooses to appeal, the matter of the suspension shall not be reviewed by the synod in convention but only by the specially selected Commission on Appeals (see Guidelines for Synodical Discipline and Appeals).

4. GUIDELINES FOR THE BOARD FOR WORLD OUTREACH

To clarify the wording to existing guidelines regarding the responsibilities of each board:

Article V: The Relationship Between the Board for World Outreach and the Board of Trustees.

- B. The Board of Trustees has the responsibility and authority to make the final decision in all matters involving financial obligations. (See Articles of Incorporation of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Article VIII and Article IX; Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Chapter V, Paragraph 1.)
- C. The Board of Trustees shall have the final determination on the disposition of any property:
- B. Upon the recommendation of the Board for World Outreach, the Board of Trustees shall have the final determination on regarding the disposition of any property.

5. GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

To reconsider a provision regarding editorship of the "Lutheran Sentinel."

Article II:

- C. The president of the synod shall appoint as Editor-in-Chief editor of the *Lutheran Sentinel* an ordained member of the clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The appointment shall be ratified by the Committee for Communication. The editor shall serve under the direction of the president. He shall be paid a stipend approved by the Board of Trustees. The removal of an editor shall be for cause and by a three-fourths majority of the voting members of the Committee for Communication. The Communication Director (see Article III.A) of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod serves under the direction of the synod President and is responsible for the oversight of the Lutheran Sentinel.

6. GUIDELINES FOR THE ELS BOARD OF REGENTS

The Synod Review Committee recommends adding the following Guidelines for the ELS Board of Regents that establishes the Board of Regents as a board of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Guidelines for the ELS Board of Regents

Article I: Membership

Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. meets concurrently with the convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod the members of which are also members of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod at its annual meeting elects men from its membership to serve on the Board of Regents (see Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article I and Guidelines for the ELS Board of Regents, Article II). The Board of Regents is the governing board of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the Board of Regents is to govern and set policies for both Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Mankato, Minnesota (educational institutions of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.).

Article III: Relationships

- A. The members of the Board of Regents are elected by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (see Articles I and II) and the board reports to its annual meeting. Because the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (synod president) shall “supervise the work of the synod and its elected boards and committees” (Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Chapter VII, Paragraph 1, b), he is also responsible to see that the Board of Regents upholds the doctrinal, biblical and confessional standards of the synod. Therefore, the president of the synod, by virtue of his office as president of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., serves as a voting member of the Board of Regents.
- B. The Board of Regents also selects members of its board to be on the joint Regents/ Trustees subcommittee (see Guidelines for the Board of Trustees of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article III).
- C. The synod Board of Trustees govern Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary with respect to the property (See Articles of Incorporation of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article VI and Guidelines for the Board of Trustees of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article I). All other matters of trusteeship and governance are assigned to the Board of Regents

7. BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE, INC.

The Synod Review Committee recommends that the following be adopted and substituted in the Handbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.

Preamble

Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., a corporation owned by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, is a corporation with the same personnel for officers and for the Board of Trustees as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. holds title to the Bethany Lutheran College property (see Report of the 97th Annual Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (2014), pp. 107–108, 114).

Article I: Corporate Membership Meetings

- A. The annual meeting of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. shall be held at such time as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, a Minnesota corporation, holds its annual meeting. The secretary shall give written notice thereof to each congregation from which the membership of this corporation is drawn stating the time and place of the meeting, which notice may either be addressed according to the last available corporate records and mailed, not less than ten or more than thirty days before the date of said meeting, or published in an official publication of the synod which is regularly circulated to all such congregations within the sixty days of the date of the meeting.
- B. The Board of Regents may request that a special meeting of the corporation be called by the president of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. according to Chapter IV, Paragraph 3 of the Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
- C. Meetings may be held at any place specified in the notice thereof.
- D. The quorum necessary to transact business at any regular or special membership meeting of the corporation shall be a majority of the voting members as defined in the Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Chapter IV, Paragraph 2.
- E. *Roberts Rules of Order* shall govern the conduct of all meetings unless modified by the Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. or the corporation's guidelines.
- F. The right to vote in corporate affairs shall be limited to voting members as defined in Article VII:B. of the Articles of Incorporation. Each voting member shall have one vote.
- G. A member must be personally present at a meeting to validly cast his vote. Neither proxy voting nor voting by mail shall be permitted. Cumulative voting shall not be permitted.

Article II: Board of Regents

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod in convention elects members to the Board of Regents for the purpose of governing Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. (see Guidelines for the ELS Board of Regents). As its operational governing body, the board supervises the president of Bethany Lutheran College and the president of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary and reports its work to the synod.

Article III: Student Admissions Policy

It is the policy of Bethany Lutheran College to admit students without restrictions for denominational or religious affiliations; nevertheless it is expected that they accept the program of required religious instruction, and conduct themselves according to biblical standards.

Article IV: Attendance at Synodical Conventions and Conferences

The ordained professors of the institutions of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. are expected to be in attendance at conventions and conferences. Those not present have the responsibility of providing an excuse to the assembly through its officer. All ordained professors, whether present or not, are to be included in the equalization. Professors of a synodical institution, active or retired, shall be paid by that institution (see Guidelines for Equalization of Expenses for the Annual Convention and General Pastoral Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Article II. B. 3).

Article V: Emeritus Titles

The Board of Regents may grant the emeritus title to presidents and members of the faculty and staff of the institutions. (This title is not to be confused with the emeritus award conferred by the synod.)

Article VI: Discipline

See Guidelines for Synodical Discipline and Appeals, Article IV: Synodical Educational Institutions.

Guidelines for the ELS Board of Regents

[Much of the material in this new section comes from old Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.]

Preamble

Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. meets concurrently with the convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, whose membership is the same as Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod at its annual meeting elects men from its membership to serve on the Board of Regents. The board maintains the educational institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod for its members, upholding the doctrinal, biblical and confessional standards of the synod. The purpose of this governing board is to set policies for both Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Mankato, Minnesota, (educational institutions of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.).

Article I: Membership

- A. The Board of Regents shall consist of individuals elected at the regular meeting of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. (Type A), those individuals appointed by the board and ratified by the convention (Type B), and the president of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., (synodical president) an ex officio member (General Synodical Guidelines, Article IV, C.).
- B. The board shall consist of twelve members—nine Type A and three Type B. Type A members shall consist of not more than five nor less than three clergymen. Type B members shall consist of not more than two nor less than one clergymen.
- C. Each member of the board, whether Type A or Type, B shall be a male member in good standing of the corporation according to Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Chapter II. Upon termination of membership in said corporation, his membership on the board shall automatically cease.

Article II: Election and Term of Office

- A. Type A members shall be elected by the voting members of the corporation of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod at an annual meeting for a term of three years.
- B. Type B members shall be appointed by the board for a term of three years. Appointees shall be ratified at the next annual convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and shall begin to serve upon such ratification. Type B nominees who are selected for ratification must be presented in the *Book of Reports and Memorials* including the same information as is required of nominated candidates for other offices. The Type B member shall be considered an advisory member of the board (without the right to vote) until the ratification. No Type B member shall serve more than two consecutive full terms as a Type B member.

Article III: Meetings

- A. The Board of Regents shall ordinarily meet quarterly. Meetings by conference call or other technical means are allowable according to rules established by the board.
- B. Special meetings may be called by the chairman of the board or the president of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. A majority of the board shall also have the authority to call a special meeting. Each member of said majority shall record his request with both the chairman and secretary of the board. Should the chairman fail to call a meeting on the

request of a majority, the secretary must call a special meeting and record the names of the regents making the request. However, the board shall not meet on less than two days' notice, oral or written, without the unanimous consent of the board.

C. A majority of the voting members of the board shall constitute a quorum.

D. The authority of the board resides only in the board as a whole. An individual board member, as such, shall have no authority to act in the affairs of the institutions except as such authority may have been specifically delegated to him by the whole board.

Article IV: Officers of the Board of Regents and Their Duties

A. A chairman and secretary shall be elected annually from the board's membership. Since the person in the chair must deal with matters that require theological training or experience, the chairman shall be an ordained clergyman. The board may elect other officers as it determines.

B. The chairman shall preside at meetings of the board and cause notices of these meetings to be given as herein provided. He shall have a vote in all matters before the board. He shall represent the board on ceremonial occasions. He shall sign all vouchers for the board expenses and present them to the treasurer of the college for payment.

C. Separate written reports shall be given to the convention by the Board of Regents, by the president of Bethany Lutheran College and the president of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary.

D. The secretary shall keep the records. He shall record all resolutions of the board and make such notes as may be pertinent to the business of the board. He shall supply copies of the minutes to the members of the board, to the officers of the corporation and others authorized by the board. On behalf of the board, he shall prepare its report for the annual meeting of the corporation. In addition, he shall be responsible for depositing annually with the archivist of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod copies of minutes and such other material as is pertinent.

Article V: Subcommittees

A. The board may establish such subcommittees as needed to carry out its work, with officers and duties consistent with the board's guidelines and duties. (See General Synodical Guidelines, Article III, E.)

B. The board shall have at least one subcommittee specializing in matters concerning Bethany Lutheran College and at least one subcommittee specializing in matters concerning Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. The subcommittees shall meet concurrently with scheduled board meetings. Subcommittee chairmen may call additional meetings as required to fulfill the duties of the board.

Article VI: Duties

A. The board shall govern the affairs of the institutions of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., namely, Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary (hereafter referred to as "the institutions").

B. The following, among others, shall be the duties of the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.:

1. To bear the responsibility and authority in all aspects of the institutions' operation, subject to the final authority of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.
2. To determine the spiritual and educational needs and desires of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod with regard to the institutions and to bring to the attention of its members the problems, needs, accomplishments, and objectives of the institutions.

3. To establish the general policies for the administration and operation of the institutions.
 4. To accredit all candidates for graduation from the institutions, to award degrees, and to approve seminary graduates for calls into the public ministry of the Word.
 5. To elect appoint the presidents of the institutions as provided in the guidelines (Guidelines for the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article II and Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Article II, A., 1) of the respective institutions and to ~~call or~~ appoint faculty or staff members to the institutions upon the recommendation of the presidents.
 6. To supervise the presidents of the institutions and, through the presidents, the professors and staff. To this end the board shall:
 - a. Bolster the morale and provide for the welfare, sense of accomplishment, encouragement and inspiration for the presidents, professors, and staff, with care not to circumvent the above-mentioned chain of command.
 - b. Contribute to, review and approve the goals and objectives by which the presidents judge the members of the staff, measure their accomplishments and failures, and exercise all appropriate personnel actions based on their performance.
 7. To govern the management, maintenance and insurance of the physical properties of the institutions. In this connection, the board is specifically authorized to acquire from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, by lease or otherwise, the necessary capital assets and physical plant for the operation of the institutions. (See Guidelines for the Board of Trustees of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article III).
 8. To provide facilities and support services for the work of the institutions that are conducive to their work.
 9. To provide for those auxiliary enterprises which it determines are necessary for the efficient, effective, and beneficial operation of the institutions.
 10. To ensure that there is coordination of the facilities, services and administration of the seminary and the college.
 11. To approve the annual budget for the operation of each institution. A summary of the budget together with a summary of the financial condition of each institution shall be presented to the synod's Planning and Coordinating Committee annually in support of each institution's request for a portion of the synodical budget.
 12. To control the assets of the institutions and to secure funds for their proper operation within the limits authorized by law and by the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws of this corporation.
 13. To fix the compensation of the institutions' presidents. Compensation ranges for other officers, faculty and staff shall be approved by the board.
 14. To act as a court of appeals in all matters which are properly referred to it.
- C. With respect to Bethany Lutheran College, the duties of the board shall be:
1. To provide for those auxiliary enterprises which it determines are necessary for the efficient, effective, and beneficial operation of the college, such as, but not limited to, food service, dormitories, and the Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore. The bookstore shall be a marketing agent also for publications of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (see Guidelines for the Committee for Communications, Article III., B.).
 2. To establish the scales of tuition, fees, requirements for admission, schedule of studies and curricula, matters of accreditation, extra-curricular activities, standards of discipline, standards and requirements for graduation, salary scales, promotions

- and retirements, plans for the physical development of the institutional plant, and all other matters incident to the proper operations of an institution of learning.
3. To administer special purpose funds created for the furtherance of the college program. If special funds are to be raised through the synod, refer to Guidelines for the Board of Trustees, Article V: C.
 4. To carry out the discipline of faculty and staff (see Guidelines for Synodical Discipline and Appeals, Article IV).
- D. With respect to Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, the duties of the board shall be:
1. To elect an ordained minister who is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod to serve as president of the seminary.
 2. To call other professors as necessary who are members of, or in fellowship with, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
 3. To provide for the exchange of faculty members between the seminary and the college and coordinate such exchange on the basis of standing rules established by the board.
 4. To accredit all candidates for graduation from the seminary and approve them for calls into the public ministry of the Word.
 5. To establish scholarship and aid funds for the students.
 6. To provide facilities for the seminary conducive to the seminary's work.
 7. To provide the necessary support services.
 8. To have the ultimate responsibility for the content, format and publication of the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*.

Guidelines for the Board of Trustees of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.

Article I: Governance

The trustees shall have the general management and control of all secular business and temporal affairs of said corporation. All such business and affairs they shall conduct in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation, bylaws, rules and resolutions of the synod and of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.

Article II: Duties

- A. As custodian of corporate properties, it shall be the board's duty to hold all properties of the corporation in the name of the synod or in the name of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., and represent the corporation in legal matters. It shall be authorized to act as the agent of the corporation in the procurement of property or the sale of property upon the recommendation of the Board of Regents and with its approval. It shall carry out the resolutions of the conventions of the synod. It shall report all such transactions to the regular conventions of the synod.
- B. The Board of Trustees and/or the Board of Regents shall acknowledge receipt of all legacies in their respective annual reports to the synod.

Article III: The Relationship Between the Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees and the Establishment of a Trustees/Regent Subcommittee

(cf. Guidelines for the Board of Trustees, Article X)

Preamble

The Board of Trustees govern Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary with respect to the property. All other matters of trusteeship and governance are assigned to the regents.

- A. The Board of Trustees, serving as the agent of the synod in financial transactions, has the responsibility and authority to make the final decision on all building projects,

land purchases and those capital improvements which exceed an agreed upon and reviewable dollar amount (see C., 3. below) affecting the institutions of Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. (see Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Chapter V, Paragraph 1; and Articles of Incorporation of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Article VIII.)

- B. The Board of Regents and Board of Trustees shall endeavor to hold at least one joint meeting each year for the purpose of joint planning and communication. Under unusual circumstances, during the joint Regents/Trustees meeting, the Board of Trustees may take action on a given proposal.
- C. The Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees shall establish a joint subcommittee (Regents–Trustees Subcommittee). The purpose of the subcommittee is to provide a vehicle for communications between the Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees in all matters pertaining to the operation and planning for Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, especially, but not limited to, those matters involving land purchases, building projects and capital expenditures in support of the development of the institutions. The subcommittee is expected to meet on an as needed basis.
 - 1. The subcommittee shall consist of three members from each board, with the president of the synod and the chairman of the Board of Regents serving in an advisory capacity. It shall organize itself, including the election of a chairman and a secretary. These officers shall be elected each year. The chairman and the secretary shall not be representatives of the same board.
 - 2. When proposing any building project, land purchase, or capital improvement on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College or Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, the Board of Regents shall first inform the subcommittee of its intentions. While developing proposals, the Board of Regents shall communicate with the subcommittee. The Board of Regents, together with the respective administration, shall do its own thorough planning, including the method of financing for the project.
 - 3. The subcommittee representatives of each board shall be responsible to convey accurately information from the subcommittee to the full board. The boards' subcommittee representatives shall inform the full subcommittee of the concerns raised by their respective boards.
 - 4. After the approval of a project/plan by the Board of Regents, the plans and the method of financing will then be submitted to the subcommittee. If the cost of the project/plan is larger than the threshold amount (periodically set by the Board of Trustees), the subcommittee shall recommend approval or disapproval of the additional expenditures. The Board of Trustees shall make the final decision.
 - 5. Building project recommendations from the joint subcommittee to the Board of Trustees shall include the total ("all-in") cost and an updated report on the impact the new project will have on the debt load for the respective educational institution and for the synod.
 - 6. Upon the project's approval and its implementation, should the anticipated cost of completion of the project exceed 102% of the originally approved sum of the "all-in" cost, the subcommittee is expected to make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for further action.
 - 7. The subcommittee shall not serve as the on-site building committee.
 - 8. The subcommittee may prepare guidelines for its own operation which shall be approved by the Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents.

- D. For the purpose of approving the above projects, it is understood that plenary sessions of the Board of Trustees (a quorum is needed) can take place via teleconferencing upon two days notice (see Guidelines for the Board of Trustees, Article VI).
- E. Once the project is approved in its final form by the Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees, implementation shall involve only the Board of Regents in conjunction with the administration of the college or seminary.
- F. The Board of Regents has the sole responsibility to govern the management, maintenance and insurance of all acquired properties used by the institutions. The Board of Regents also sets the priorities for capital improvements for the institutions. It also will be responsible for including any new capital projects in its respective reports (college and seminary) to the next annual synod convention.
- G. Any land or building sale proposed by the Board of Regents must be approved by the Board of Trustees (see Guidelines for the Board of Trustees, Article III., A., 1).

Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran College

Article I: Mission, Philosophy and Objectives

(as adopted by the Board of Regents, November 2016 and amended by the Synod Review Committee, December 14, 2016)

- A. Introduction: Bethany Lutheran College is a Christian liberal arts college owned and operated by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and committed to the teachings of the Bible as expressed in the statements of faith known as the Lutheran Confessions. The college also functions as the synod's visible center and exists to provide all appropriate services to the synod that can be expected from such a reservoir of skills and talents associated with a capable institution of higher learning.
- B. Mission: Bethany Lutheran College provides Christian higher education in a challenging academic environment where personal mentoring guides students to pursue knowledge, truth, and discernment for productive and fulfilling lives.
- C. Purpose: Bethany Lutheran College engages students with the saving knowledge of Christ and assists them in developing their God-given talents and abilities for meaningful lives of service in the family, church, and society. A program of study grounded in the liberal arts and taught through the discerning lens of a Christian worldview equips students with knowledge, understanding, and adaptable skills.
- D. Statement of Faith: Bethany Lutheran College is a Christian liberal arts college. The College and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod are committed to the teachings of the Bible as the inerrant Word of God—the only authority for faith and life. The statements of faith known as the Lutheran Confessions are accepted as the correct understanding of the teachings of the Bible.
 This commitment to the Confessions is summarized by the principles of the Lutheran Reformation: Grace Alone, Faith Alone, and Scripture Alone. Specifically, the College confesses that salvation is a free gift from God's grace alone, not dependent upon our works. We receive forgiveness for our sins through faith in Christ alone, which is produced in the individual's heart by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God and the Sacraments. Scripture alone is the standard by which all teachings and practices ultimately are evaluated.
- E. Philosophy of Christian Education: The Christian faith governs the entire educational process at Bethany. Christian education implies a unique perspective on the past, present, and future, shaping a specific view of people and their relationships both to God and to others. These relationships are understood in light of the knowledge that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, and that He is true God and Lord of the

universe through time and eternity. Bethany's philosophy views knowledge and truth across the entire curriculum through the discerning lens of God's Word.

Article II: Responsibilities of the Board of Regents

- A. The Board of Regents shall elect to the presidency of the college a man who shall be a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod or of its fellowship. (If he is not already a member of the synod, he shall make application for membership as soon as possible.) He shall subscribe to the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Constitution, the Bylaws and confessional principles of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and shall so declare at the time of his installation, and shall be elected in the following manner:
1. When the board determines that it is necessary to seek a candidate for president, it shall publish an announcement from the synodical administration in electronic or printed media that are distributed to all members of the synod the general qualifications for this office. It shall ask the congregations of the synod through its official representatives (signed by the president/chairman and secretary) to submit nominations for the office. Members of the board may nominate additional candidates. It shall announce a final date for the submission of nominees which shall be at least thirty days from its published call for nominations.
 2. The names of the candidates, together with the names of those who nominate them, shall be published by the synodical administration in electronic or printed media that are distributed to all member congregations of the synod at least thirty days prior to election. Comments may be submitted to the secretary of the Board of Regents by a specific date that will be not earlier than thirty days following the distribution of the names of the nominees.
 3. The board shall elect the candidate from the nominations presented (such election implies a call to a professorship in the college).
 4. Approval by a three-fourths majority of the full membership of the board shall be required for election.
 5. A professor serving as president or other officer of the college shall serve in that administrative capacity at the pleasure of the board. Termination of his call to the faculty shall be only for cause (see Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article VI) and by a three-fourths majority of the full board.
- B. The Board of Regents shall call candidates of theology or ordained pastors, who are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod or are in fellowship, to teach the required religion courses and to preach in the chapel. (If he is not already a member of the synod, he shall make application for membership as soon as possible.)
- C. The treasurer shall be elected as the board sees fit and shall serve as official treasurer of the college.
- D. The board may establish or abolish administrative offices as it deems necessary. It shall not abolish the offices of president and of treasurer.

Article III: Duties of Officers

- A. College President
1. He shall be the chief administrative officer. He shall, under the supervision of the board, submit a report to the annual meeting of the corporation covering the college's operation for the previous fiscal year, showing the condition of the college at the close of that fiscal year, and reporting on the affairs of the college for the current academic year.

2. He shall make sure that the goals and objectives of the college are carried out, and that the business affairs, academic affairs and other assigned affairs are in order at all times.
 3. He is accountable to the board for the performance of the faculty. He shall analyze the staffing needs and the efficiency and competency of the faculty members in their assigned tasks and shall report such to the board. He shall recommend the establishment of new or amended positions. He shall analyze and make recommendations concerning candidates for positions when so directed by the board. He shall make sure that all other positions necessary for the functioning of the college are adequately staffed.
 4. He shall supervise the work of the faculty and staff and shall provide the proper environment for its morale, cooperation, communication and sense of accomplishment.
 5. He shall provide for the spiritual counseling and well-being of the students.
 6. He is accountable for the development and upgrading of the curriculum and shall submit changes in the curriculum to the board for approval.
 7. He shall communicate with other colleges in order to maintain a knowledge of the trends in college education.
 8. He shall be responsible for depositing documents and other pertinent materials with the archivists of the college and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
- B. College Treasurer: The treasurer shall have the custody of all monies and securities of the college. He shall keep regular financial records. All monies of the college shall be deposited in such depositories as the board may select. In addition, the treasurer shall perform all duties which usually pertain to that office.

Article IV: Student Admissions Policy

It is the policy of Bethany Lutheran College to admit students without restrictions for denominational or religious affiliations; nevertheless it is expected that they accept the program of required religious instruction, and conduct themselves according to biblical standards.

Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary

Preamble

The seminary is committed to the Holy Scriptures as the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of God. The Bible is the sole authority for faith and life. The Lutheran Confessions are the correct understanding and exposition of the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. All teaching and training in the seminary, as well as approval and recommendation of graduates for the office of the public ministry of the Word, is therefore based on God's Word, with the doctrine of justification as the heart and center of the seminary's existence and work.

Article I: Objectives

Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary has two principle objectives:

- A. To train pastors primarily for the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
 1. The goals for this pastoral training are:
 - a. To impart to the student a thorough knowledge of the skills and disciplines of biblical study and interpretation, especially as they are related to the use of the original languages of the Bible;
 - b. To impart a thorough knowledge of, and an ability to work with, the systematic biblical and theological disciplines, the Lutheran Confessions and Church history;
 - c. To impart high standards of academic excellence in these disciplines;

- d. To impart a proficiency in the use of these skills for properly distinguishing between law and gospel as well as for judging and refuting error and false doctrine;
 - e. Especially to impart a proficiency in the application of these disciplines to preaching, teaching, worship, theological study and pastoral care.
 - f. To instill in the student both the zeal and the skill
 - (1) to impart high standards of moral character and of personal and devotional life and prayer in his own family and in his congregation;
 - (2) to impart the principles of evangelical pastoral theology and counseling and methods of preaching and teaching;
 - (3) to serve God's people as a shepherd of the flock ("Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28, NKJV);
 - (4) to prepare God's people for service and the work of the ministry ("And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Ephesians 4:11–12, NKJV);
 - (5) to lead his members to cooperate with fellow believers in sister congregations in the work of the church at large;
 - (6) to keep the Great Commission central in congregational life ("Then Jesus came and spoke to them saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'" Matthew 28:18–20, NKJV);
 - (7) to impart a proper understanding and practice of the ethical and fraternal relationships and responsibilities toward the brethren in the synod with whom they have joined forces in order the better to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord.
 2. To achieve these goals the Board of Regents shall provide professors to teach effectively the disciplines of research, communication, persuasion, motivation, and encouragement, both by example and proven classroom methods.
- B. To serve the synod's theological needs. The seminary shall:
1. Train an adequate supply of pastors well versed in the many skills required in today's complex environment who shall be well grounded in knowledge of the Scriptures and of the Lutheran Confessions, and well skilled in the disciplines required to apply Scripture as the ultimate authority in all questions of doctrine and life;
 2. Uphold the image of the public ministry among the synodical membership and the community at large, and actively to recruit young men into the seminary;
 3. Function as a theological resource for the synod, and to provide services and scholarship appropriate to that function;
 4. Maintain a theological library and media center adequate to the total needs of the synod.
 5. Be responsible for the editing and financing of the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*.

Article II: Responsibilities of the Board of Regents

The Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. shall be the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. The board shall be responsible for the oversight and the administration of the seminary.

A. Faculty

1. The board shall elect an ordained minister who is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod to serve as president of the seminary. As president he shall serve at the pleasure of the board. The president shall also be called as a professor of the seminary if he is not such already.
 - a. When the board determines that it is necessary to seek a candidate for president, it shall publish an announcement from the synodical administration in electronic or printed media that are distributed to all members of the synod the general qualifications for this office. It shall ask the congregations of the synod through its official representatives (signed by the president/chairman and secretary) to submit nominations for the office. Members of the board may nominate additional candidates. It shall announce a final date for the submission of nominees which shall be at least thirty days from its published call for nominations.
 - b. The names of the candidates, together with the names of those who nominate them, shall be published by the synodical administration in electronic or printed media that are distributed to all member congregations of the synod at least thirty days prior to election. Comments may be submitted to the secretary of the Board of Regents by a specific date that will be not earlier than thirty days following the distribution of the names of the nominees.
 - c. The board shall then elect the candidate from the nominations presented.
 - d. A three-fourths majority of the full membership of the board shall be required for election.
 - e. The president in his administrative capacity shall serve at the pleasure of the board. Termination of his call as professor shall be only for cause (see Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article VI) and by a three-fourths majority of the full board.
2. The board shall call other professors as necessary who are ordained members of, or in fellowship with, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. If the one called is not already a member of the synod, he shall make application as soon as possible.
 - a. When the board determines that it is necessary to seek a candidate for professor, it shall publish in the *Lutheran Sentinel* and in other appropriate media circulated to all the member congregations of the synod the general qualifications for this office as well as the field in which he is to instruct. It shall ask the Voters' Assembly of the congregations of the synod to submit nominations for the office. Members of the board may nominate additional candidates. It shall announce a final date for the submission of nominees which shall be at least thirty days from its published call for nominations.
 - b. The names of the candidates, together with the names of those who nominate them, shall be published in the *Lutheran Sentinel* and in other appropriate media circulated to all the member congregations of the synod at least 30 days prior to election. Comments may be submitted to the secretary of the Board of Regents by a specified date that will be not earlier than twenty days following the distribution of the names of the nominees.
 - c. The board shall call the candidate from the nominees presented.
 - d. A majority of the full membership of the board shall be required for election.

- e. The termination of any professor's call to the faculty shall be only for cause (see Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Article VI) and by a three-fourths majority of the full board.
3. The board shall provide for the exchange of faculty members between the seminary and the college and coordinate such exchange on the basis of standing rules established by the board.

B. Students

1. The board shall accredit all candidates for graduation from the seminary (M.Div. and Master of Arts).
2. The board shall approve them for calls into the public ministry of the Word.
3. The board shall establish scholarship and aid funds for the students.

C. Facilities and Services

The board shall ensure that through the seminary president and Bethany Lutheran College administration adequate facilities, necessary support services, and other resources as required are available for the seminary's work.

Article III: Seminary Administration

A. The Seminary President

1. Qualifications

- a. A man shall be chosen for this position because of a demonstrated ability in theological scholarship and leadership. He must be ordained and have served as parish pastor.
- b. He should have demonstrated an administrative ability to the extent determined to be necessary for the circumstances of the seminary at the time.
- c. He should have obtained an advanced degree in a theological or related discipline or should be in the process of obtaining one at the time of his call, or he shall agree at the time of his call to devote himself to the securing of an earned advanced degree. This requirement may be waived if, in the judgment of the board, the candidate possesses valid equivalent qualifications.
- d. He shall subscribe to the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Constitution, the Bylaws and confessional principles of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and shall so declare at the time of his installation.

2. Accountabilities and Duties of the President

- a. He shall manage the affairs of the seminary as the chief administrative officer with authority over all of its affairs in compliance with the resolutions of the board. He shall, under the supervision of the board, cause reports to be submitted to the annual meeting of the corporation covering the seminary's operation for the previous fiscal year, showing the condition of the seminary at the close of the fiscal year and reporting on the affairs of the seminary for the current academic year.
- b. He shall make sure that the goals and objectives of the seminary are carried out, and that the business affairs, academic affairs and other assigned affairs are in order at all times.
- c. He is accountable to the Board of Regents for the performance of the faculty by analyzing the staffing needs and the efficiency and competency of the faculty members in their assigned tasks and shall report such to the board. He shall analyze and make recommendations concerning candidates for seminary positions when so directed by the board.
- d. He shall make sure that all other positions necessary for the functioning of the seminary are adequately staffed.

- e. He shall supervise the work of the faculty and staff and shall provide the proper environment for its morale, cooperation, communication and sense of accomplishment.
- f. He shall provide for the spiritual counseling and well-being of the students.
- g. He is accountable for the development and upgrading of the curriculum and shall submit changes in the curriculum to the board for approval.
- h. He shall make available seminary staff to congregations of the synod in order to give information regarding seminary training, and for continued advising of ministerial candidates preparatory to their entrance into the seminary.
- i. He shall communicate with other theological seminaries, especially those in fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, in order to maintain a knowledge of theological trends and the trends in theological education. He shall advise the Doctrine Committee and the president of the synod of such communications.
- j. He shall instruct one or more courses in the seminary classroom every year.
- k. As president, he shall be a member of the Colloquy Committee and of the Assignment Committee.
- l. As president, he shall be a member of the synod's Doctrine Committee.
- m. The president shall be responsible for depositing documents and other pertinent materials with the archivist of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

B. Other Officers

1. The treasurer for the seminary shall be the treasurer of the college and shall have the custody of all monies and securities of the seminary. He shall keep regular financial records. All monies of the seminary shall be deposited in such depositories as the board may select. In addition, the treasurer shall perform all duties which usually pertain to that office. (see Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran College, Article III., B)
2. The board shall appoint from among the faculty any other officers deemed necessary for the efficient and orderly operation of the seminary.

Article IV: Student Admission Policy

It is the policy of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary to admit students who are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod or of a congregation in fellowship with the ELS. Since it is the religious conviction and doctrinal position of the ELS that the Holy Scriptures do not allow women to function in the pastoral ministry, the seminary does not admit women to the M.Div. program (1 Corinthians 14:34, 1 Timothy 2:12).

Article V: Lutheran Synod Quarterly

- A. In carrying out the following objectives, the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* is committed to speaking as the oracles of God which are revealed in the inspired Scriptures, and in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions which are a correct exposition of these inerrant Scriptures.
 1. The *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* is the official journal of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Mankato, Minnesota, and of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
 2. It is the purpose of the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* to give expression to the theological position of the synod and its institutions through the material that is published, and to disseminate articles of a theological nature to clergy, laity and institutions within and without the synod. To that end the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* strives to publish material that reflects theological maturity in regard to the trends and issues of the day.

- B. As the publisher of the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*, the Board of Regents has ultimate responsibility for its content, format and publication.
- C. The Editor-in-Chief shall be appointed annually by the theological faculty of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary.
- D. The Board of Regents shall be responsible for the business affairs and the distribution of the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*.
- E. The duties and responsibilities of the Editor-in-Chief:
 1. Together with the faculty, he shall organize an annual plan. He shall be responsible for planning and implementing the layout.
 2. He shall be responsible for soliciting and providing materials for publication.
 3. He has the responsibility to reject any material which is at variance with the doctrine and accepted principles and practices of the synod, and any material which he believes to be of inferior literary value or of an untimely nature.
 4. He will be responsible to the Board of Regents for the discharge of his duties and shall meet with the board at its request.

Prof. Erling Teigen, chairman
The Rev. Theodore Gullixson, secretary

[Secretary's note: The report of the Synod Review Committee has been regarded as a working document and modified to correspond with the convention resolutions.]

MISCELLANEOUS—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Report of the Centennial Committee

WHEREAS, The Synod's Centennial Committee has been making preparations to celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, and the 100th anniversary of the re-organization of the Norwegian Synod in 2018, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the local congregations take note of the special observances being planned for June 16, 2018, to celebrate the re-organization of the synod, and October 14, 2018, the date observed as "Founders Day" by the old Norwegian Synod, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad for his dedicated efforts producing the centennial history, *Proclaim His Wonders*, and encourage congregations to promote this book among their members, and,
- C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the report of the Centennial Committee be accepted, and that the committee be encouraged in their work.

Resolution 2: Report of the Synod Review Committee

WHEREAS, The Synod Review Committee's detailed report has made numerous proposed updates and amendments to the *Handbook* of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, The floor committee recommends certain changes, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That 1. Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Chapter IV and 2. Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Chapter VII, Paragraph 2 be adopted, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That 3. Guidelines for Synodical Membership, Articles I and II be adopted, and,
- C. BE IT RESOLVED, That 4. Guidelines for the Board for World Outreach, 5. Guidelines for the Committee for Communication, 6. Guidelines for the ELS Board of Regents be adopted, and,

- D. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., the Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran College (The Institution), and the Guidelines of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary be deleted, and,
- E. BE IT RESOLVED, That the following sections be adopted: Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Guidelines for the ELS Board of Regents, Guidelines for the Board of Trustees of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran College, Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, and,
- F. BE IT RESOLVED, That Article III: Student Admissions Policy be adopted, and,
- G. BE IT RESOLVED, That the remainder of the committee's report be adopted.

Resolution 3: Recognition of faithful service:

WHEREAS, Robert Brown has served faithfully on the Synod Review Committee for twenty years and Norman Werner has served faithfully as secretary for the committee for sixteen years, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank Robert Brown for his many years of dedicated service, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank Norman Werner for his many years of dedicated service.

Resolution 4: Dates for the 2018 Synod Convention:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the next Synod Convention be held June 17–June 21, 2018, with the convention ending at noon on Thursday.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE AND REPORT—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: President's Message and Report

WHEREAS, President Moldstad's message outlined the blessings of our Lutheran heritage as we celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation and the 100th Anniversary of the ELS, and,

WHEREAS, President Moldstad has encouraged renewed faithfulness to the doctrines of the Lutheran Reformation and the fulfilling of the Great Commission, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the convention approve the Presidents Message and Report and receive it with gratitude to God.

Resolution 2: Anniversary Materials

WHEREAS, We are observing the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation and the 100th Anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, President Moldstad's report encourages the use of the Luther film "A Return to Grace: Luther's Life and Legacy" as a tool for evangelism, and,

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Synod's Committee on Worship has made a list of a number of hymns that can be used in our worship services and in our homes which have been selected in keeping with the Church year, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend Craig Ferkenstad has authored the new volume *Proclaim His Wonders* written in observance of the 100th anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the various committee members and volunteers for their faithful work, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the congregations of the synod be encouraged to make use of these resources.

Resolution 3: Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

WHEREAS, Our sister synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is observing its 100th anniversary of the merger of four midwestern synods in 1917 into the Evangelical Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Other States, and,

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Synod is blessed by its continued full fellowship and fraternal association with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod throughout the past 100 years, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we join the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in giving thanks to God for one hundred years of grace and continued fellowship.

Resolution 4: Practice of Closed Communion

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Circuit Visitors' Conference accepted the President's report regarding our practice of Closed Communion, and,

WHEREAS, This report has been presented to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod General Pastoral Conference in October of 2016, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod in convention accept the President's Report "Agreement in Our Practice of Closed Communion" as the answer to the 2016 memorial (cf. *Synod Report* 2016: 153).

MINUTES—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Secretary's Minutes

WHEREAS, The Minutes Committee has heard the minutes of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod for the activities held on Synod Sunday, June 18, 2017, as well as the Monday business session, June 19, 2017, and found them to be correct, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod adopt the minutes as read.

Resolution 2: Secretary's Minutes

WHEREAS, The Minutes Committee has heard the minutes of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod for the Tuesday morning and afternoon business sessions, June 20, 2017, and found them to be correct, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod adopt the minutes as read.

Resolution 3: Secretary's Minutes

BE IT RESOLVED, That the president and vice president of the synod be instructed to read and approve the secretary's minutes for Wednesday, June 21, 2017, morning and afternoon sessions.

Resolution 4: Thanks

WHEREAS, Elsa Ferkenstad has faithfully compiled the annual reports for the synod for many years, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank Elsa for her tireless devotion to the task of this project, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That Elsa be encouraged in her work.

PASTORAL CONFERENCE RECORDS AND RESOLUTIONS—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

Resolution 1: Minutes

WHEREAS, The Book of Reports and Memorials clearly states, “Secretaries of the circuit pastoral conferences are reminded to hand in their respective reports to the floor committee on the first day of the convention,” and,

WHEREAS, The words “and winkels” have in the past been erroneously added to that statement, and,

WHEREAS, This addition has made it appear that winkel secretaries are obligated to submit winkel minutes and papers to the floor committee for review, and,

WHEREAS, It is in truth not necessary for winkel secretaries to submit winkel records to the floor committee, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod in convention firmly establish for all winkel secretaries that they are not obligated to submit winkel minutes or papers to the floor committee on Pastoral Conference Records and Resolutions, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we commend those conference secretaries for their diligence in maintaining those minutes and thank them for submitting their conference documents for review, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod in convention urge the conference chairmen to remind their secretaries of this important function of their office.

Resolution 2: Anniversaries of Ordination

WHEREAS, The Reverend Herbert Huhnerkoch is observing the fortieth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend Charles Keeler is observing the fortieth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend Nile Merseth is observing the fortieth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend Steven Petersen is observing the fortieth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend Kenneth Schmidt is observing the fortieth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend David Meyer is observing the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend Alex Ring is observing the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend Mark Rogers is observing the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That letters of congratulation be sent to these pastors as they celebrate this blessed occasion, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod in convention take this opportunity to acknowledge their service to the LORD and publicly congratulate them for their years of service to His kingdom.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AND SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
TABLE OF CONTENTS
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015**

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT	1
CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION	3
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES	4
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS	6
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	7
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION	
CONSOLIDATING SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL POSITION	23
CONSOLIDATING SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	24
COMBINING SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL POSITION	26

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT

Board of Trustees
Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Mankato, Minnesota

Report on the Financial Statements

We have reviewed the accompanying consolidated financial statements of Evangelical Lutheran Synod (the Synod), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as of December 31, 2016 and 2015, and the related consolidated statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements. A review includes primarily applying analytical procedures to management's financial data and making inquiries of management. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the consolidated financial statements as a whole. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.

Accountants' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to conduct the review engagements in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the AICPA. Those standards require us to perform procedures to obtain limited assurance as a basis for reporting whether we are aware of any material modifications that should be made to the consolidated financial statements for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We believe that the results of our procedures provide a reasonable basis for our conclusion.

Accountants' Conclusions

Based on our reviews, with the exception of the matters described in the following paragraph, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying consolidated financial statements in order for them to be in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Board of Trustees
Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Known Departure from Accounting Principles Generally Accepted in the United States of America

As disclosed in Note 1 to the consolidated financial statements generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America require that controlled entities be included within the consolidated financial statements of the Synod. Management has informed us that certain controlled entities; Bethany Lutheran College, Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gift of Life, Faith in Action, School of Martin Luther, and other foreign mission corporations have not been included in the consolidated financial statements of the Synod. Management has not determined the effects of this departure from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America on financial position, changes in net assets and cash flows of the consolidated financial statements.

Supplementary Information

The accompanying schedules of financial position-operating divisions, activities-operating divisions, and combining schedule of financial position, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management. We have not audited or reviewed such information and we do not express an opinion, a conclusion, nor provide any assurance on it.


CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

Austin, Minnesota
April 25, 2017

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	2016	2015
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 974,066	\$ 735,526
Accounts Receivable	1,013,948	487,802
Interest Receivable	97,258	70,040
Inventory of Publications	46,601	50,472
Prepaid Expenses	28,356	26,087
Other Assets	3,940	1,970
Loans Receivable	2,028,527	2,039,471
Mission Deposits	388,543	406,800
Investments	18,107,578	17,757,722
Property Held for Resale	922,897	922,897
Property, Plant, and Equipment, Net	850,103	859,856
Total Assets	<u>\$ 24,461,817</u>	<u>\$ 23,358,643</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$ 365,668	\$ 268,508
Interest Payable	60	54
Other Liabilities	4,988	4,172
Notes Payable	48,914	83,830
Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements	931,752	904,100
Total Liabilities	1,351,382	1,260,664
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted:		
Designated	3,731,580	3,609,150
Undesignated	4,271,122	3,726,388
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	8,002,702	7,335,538
Temporarily Restricted	8,406,162	8,060,870
Permanently Restricted	6,701,571	6,701,571
Total Net Assets	23,110,435	22,097,979
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 24,461,817</u>	<u>\$ 23,358,643</u>

See accompanying Notes to Consolidated financial Statements.

(3)

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
REVENUES, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT				
Contributions:				
Congregations/Organizations/Individuals	\$ 1,391,480	\$ 121,394	\$ -	\$ 1,512,874
Estate, Trusts, and Memorials	165,641	27,244	-	192,885
Thrivent	8,200	-	-	8,200
Helping Hands	66,506	-	-	66,506
Mission Advancement Project	392,250	-	-	392,250
Schwan Funds	500,000	-	-	500,000
Others	53,340	-	-	53,340
Interest	421	95,713	-	96,134
Investment Income	161,457	274,099	-	435,556
Rent and Royalties	76	-	-	76
Publications	13,961	-	-	13,961
Services Provided	(6,962)	-	-	(6,962)
Registration Fees	47,750	-	-	47,750
Subscriptions	39,199	-	-	39,199
Realized and Unrealized Loss on				
Long-Term Investments	233,125	462,589	-	695,714
Gain on the Sale of Property	432,382	-	-	432,382
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	635,747	(635,747)	-	-
Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support	4,134,573	345,292	-	4,479,865
EXPENSES				
Bethany Lutheran College	150,225	-	-	150,225
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary	31,820	-	-	31,820
Lutheran Schools of America	62,543	-	-	62,543
Thoughts of Faith	365,177	-	-	365,177
Christian Services	90,197	-	-	90,197
Church Extension	7,066	-	-	7,066
Youth Outreach	73,905	-	-	73,905
World Outreach	884,833	-	-	884,833
Home Missions/Evangelism	637,794	-	-	637,794
Publications	78,249	-	-	78,249
Synod Fund	667,140	-	-	667,140
Other Programs and Costs	404,681	-	-	404,681
Depreciation	13,779	-	-	13,779
Total Expenses	3,467,409	-	-	3,467,409
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	667,164	345,292	-	1,012,456
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	7 335 538	8 060 870	6 701 571	22 097 979
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 8,002,702</u>	<u>\$ 8,406,162</u>	<u>\$ 6,701,571</u>	<u>\$ 23,110,435</u>

See accompanying Notes to Consolidated financial Statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
REVENUES, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT				
Contributions:				
Congregations/Organizations/Individuals	\$ 1,288,954	\$ 93,087	\$ -	\$ 1,382,041
Estate, Trusts, and Memorials	521,648	451,256	-	972,904
Thrivent	500	-	-	500
Helping Hands	57,735	-	-	57,735
Mission Advancement Project	402,500	-	-	402,500
Schwan Funds	492,500	-	-	492,500
Others	114,350	-	-	114,350
Interest	392	90,529	-	90,921
Investment Income	166,557	272,959	-	439,516
Rent and Royalties	303	-	-	303
Publications	14,028	-	-	14,028
Services Provided	-	-	-	-
Registration Fees	42,880	-	-	42,880
Subscriptions	33,401	-	-	33,401
Realized and Unrealized Gain on				
Long-Term Investments	(297,135)	(549,420)	-	(846,555)
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	485,886	(485,886)	-	-
Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support	3,324,499	(127,475)	-	3,197,024
EXPENSES				
Bethany Lutheran College	150,225	-	-	150,225
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary	31,820	-	-	31,820
Lutheran Schools of America	70,456	-	-	70,456
Thoughts of Faith	364,464	-	-	364,464
Christian Services	86,587	-	-	86,587
Church Extension	4,686	-	-	4,686
Youth Outreach	48,591	-	-	48,591
World Outreach	872,027	-	-	872,027
Home Missions/Evangelism	566,575	-	-	566,575
Publications	65,409	-	-	65,409
Synod Fund	691,117	-	-	691,117
Other Programs and Costs	283,832	-	-	283,832
Depreciation	12,730	-	-	12,730
Total Expenses	3,248,519	-	-	3,248,519
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	75,980	(127,475)	-	(51,495)
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	7,259,558	8,188,345	6,701,571	22,149,474
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 7,335,538</u>	<u>\$ 8,060,870</u>	<u>\$ 6,701,571</u>	<u>\$ 22,097,979</u>

See accompanying Notes to Consolidated financial Statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENT FLOWS FROM		
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Change in Net Assets	\$ 1,012,456	\$ (51,495)
Adjustments to Reconcile Change in Net Assets to Net		
Cash Provided (Used) by Operating Activities:		
Depreciation	13,779	12,730
Decrease in Liability for Charitable Gift Annuity and		
Trust Agreements	27,652	(62,201)
Realized and Unrealized Losses (Gains) on Investments	(695,714)	846,555
(Increase) Decrease in:		
Accounts Receivable	(526,146)	(395,192)
Interest Receivable	(27,218)	(10,085)
Inventory of Publications	3,871	5,644
Prepaid Expenses	(2,269)	41
Other Assets	(1,970)	8,030
Property Held for Resale	-	(316,487)
Mission Deposits	18,257	12,000
Increase (Decrease) in:		
Accounts Payable	97,160	173,541
Interest Payable	6	(1,239)
Other Liabilities	816	(25,224)
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Operating Activities	<u>(79,320)</u>	<u>196,618</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENT FLOWS FROM		
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from Investments	1,190,105	2,179,591
Purchases of Investments	(844,247)	(1,272,793)
Issuance of Loans Receivable	(31,438)	(1,106,280)
Collections of Loans Receivable	42,382	27,415
Purchase of Equipment	(4,026)	(6,099)
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Investing Activities	<u>352,776</u>	<u>(178,166)</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENT FLOWS FROM		
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Payment of Notes Payable	<u>(34,916)</u>	<u>(27,422)</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	<u>238,540</u>	<u>(8,970)</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Beginning of Year	<u>735,526</u>	<u>744,496</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR	<u><u>\$ 974,066</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 735,526</u></u>
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION		
Cash Paid for Interest	<u><u>\$ 274</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 323</u></u>

See accompanying Notes to Consolidated financial Statements.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 1 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Organization

Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Synod) is a national nonprofit organization of Lutheran congregations. The Synod exists to carry out the command of Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:19-20), to contend for the faith (Jude 3), and to promote the development of Christian life (Galatians 5:22-25) within its membership. This is accomplished by providing programs and support for various church purposes and responsibilities such as evangelism, foreign and home missions, education, Bethany Lutheran College, and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary.

Lutheran Schools of America is a non-profit organization controlled by the Synod whose mission is to support and encourage new and existing Lutheran Schools within churches of the Synod.

Thoughts of Faith, Inc. is a religious non-profit organization The Evangelical Lutheran Synod is the sole member of Thoughts of Faith, Inc., whose primary purpose is to provide Lutheran ministry to the Ukraine, Czech Republic, and Latvia through radio broadcasting, literature and missionaries. Gift of Life and School of Martin Luther are all subsidiaries of Thoughts of Faith, Inc. These three subsidiaries are not included within the scope of these financial statements. The effects of this departure from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America on the financial statements have not been determined.

Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary are also subsidiaries of the Synod that are not included within the scope of these financial statements. The effects of this departure from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America on the financial statements have not been determined.

Principles of Consolidation

The consolidated financial statements include the accounts of Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Synod), Lutheran Schools of America and Thoughts of Faith, Inc. except as noted above. All significant intercompany accounts and transactions have been eliminated in the consolidation.

Basis of Accounting

The consolidated financial statements of the Synod have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting conforming to accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America applicable to not-for-profit organizations except for the following:

The board of trustees of the Synod has majority control over Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. The board of trustees of the Synod also has majority control over Gift of Life, School of Martin Luther, and other foreign mission corporations. Therefore, the financial statements of the three subsidiaries should be consolidated into the consolidated financial statements of the Synod. The Board has elected not to present these subsidiaries.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 1 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Basis of Presentation

Net assets and revenues, gains, and losses are classified based on donor imposed restrictions. Accordingly, net assets of the Synod and changes therein are classified and reported as follows:

Unrestricted net assets represent the portion of expendable funds that are not subject to donor-imposed stipulations and are available for support of operations of the Synod.

Temporarily restricted net assets are subject to donor-imposed stipulations that may or will be met, either by actions of the Synod and/or the passage of time when a restriction expires. Temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the consolidated statements of activities as net assets are released from restrictions.

Permanently restricted net assets consist of contributions that have been restricted by the donor that stipulate the resources be maintained permanently by the Synod. Generally, the donor's permit the Synod to use all or part of the income derived from the donated assets for either specified or unspecified purposes.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

For purposes of the consolidated statement of cash flows, the Synod considers all highly liquid investments with an initial maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents. The Synod had cash deposits in excess of federal insurance limits as of December 31, 2016 and 2015.

Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements

The Synod has agreements with donors classified as charitable gift annuities. Under these agreements the Synod agrees to pay the donor stipulated amounts over the donor's life. The Synod records an unrestricted contribution upon receipt of the gift as the difference between the fair value of the amounts received and the actuarially determined present value of future payments to the donor. On an annual basis, the Synod revalues the liability to annuitants based on actuarial assumptions. The present value of the estimated future payments is calculated using a discount rate established at the date of the gift and applicable mortality tables and amounted to \$226,512 and \$210,611 at December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively, and is included in annuities payable on the consolidated statements of financial position. Also included in annuities payable at December 31, 2016 and 2015 is \$-0- and \$30, respectively, which represents the fair value amount of the charitable gift annuity agreements that is to be distributed to others at the time of the donor's death.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 1 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements (Continued)

The Synod administers various charitable remainder unitrusts that provide, among other matters, that the Synod, as trustee shall pay to the donors an annual income payment over the life of the beneficiary. At the time of the donor's death, the trust is to terminate and the remaining trust assets are to be distributed to others or retained by the Synod. The present value of the future benefit to be received by the Synod is recorded in the consolidated statements of activities as a temporarily restricted contribution. The Synod records an agency obligation for those charitable remainder unitrusts that are to be distributed to others. These agency obligations amounted to \$401,441 at December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively. The liability for the charitable remainder unitrust that is designated to beneficiaries of the trust agreement and retained by the Synod is revalued on an annual basis based on actuarial assumptions. The present value of the estimated future payments is calculated using a discount rate established at the data of the gift and applicable mortality tables and amounted to \$303,799 and \$292,018 at December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

Assets held by the Synod under Trust agreements are reported at fair value based on quoted market prices and amounted to \$736,147 and \$721,185 at December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively, and are included in investments.

Income Tax Status

The Synod, Bethany Lutheran College, and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary are exempt from federal and state income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, no provision for income taxes has been recorded at December 31, 2016.

The Synod, Bethany Lutheran College, and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary evaluated their tax positions and determined that it has no uncertain tax positions as of December 31, 2016.

Accounts Receivable

Accounts receivables are unsecured and are shown net of an allowance for doubtful accounts. The allowance for doubtful accounts is determined based on management's judgment, considering factors such as historical bad debt experience and an evaluation of account aging. No allowance was required at December 31, 2016 and 2015.

Mission Deposits

The deposits are rental deposits for the Pastor's apartments and a local Synod church in South Korea. In South Korea it is required to put a large amount down and then the monthly payments are less based on the deposit. The Synod will get their money back either by the church paying the Synod back the deposit or the mission is pulled out of South Korea.

Inventory

Inventories consist of publications held for sale and are reported at lower of cost or market. A reserve for discontinued inventory is determined based on management's judgment. No reserve was required as of December 31, 2016 and 2015.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 1 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Investments

Generally, marketable securities and fixed rate investments are recorded at fair value. Lutheran Association for Church Extension, Inc. certificates are stated at cost as market value is not determinable. Unrealized gains and losses are included in the change in net assets in the accompanying consolidated statements of activities.

Certain investment accounts are pooled and maintained by the Synod. Realized and unrealized gains and losses from securities in the pooled investment accounts are allocated annually to the individual funds based on the relationship of the market value of each individual investment account to the total market value of the pooled investment accounts.

Property Held for Resale

Property held for resale consists of property that the Synod holds for resale. Property held for resale is recorded at cost.

Property, Plant, and Equipment

Acquisitions of property, equipment, and improvements over \$500 that materially prolong the useful lives of assets are capitalized and carried at cost. Depreciation is computed using primarily the straight-line method, over estimated useful lives as follows: buildings (40 years) and equipment (5 to 7 years).

The Synod has vested ownership rights in the real estate held by Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. For a nominal fee, the Synod leases the real estate to Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary under a long-term capital lease with initial duration of 99 years which is not reflected in the financial statement.

Functional Expenses

Expenses are allocated directly whenever directly identifiable. Expenses which are not directly identifiable by program or support service are allocated based on the best estimates of management.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of consolidated financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 1 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Fair Value

The Synod categorizes its assets and liabilities measured at fair value into a three-level hierarchy based on the priority of the inputs to the valuation technique used to determine fair value. The fair value hierarchy gives the highest priority to quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3). If the inputs used in the determination of the fair value measurement fall within different levels of the hierarchy, the categorization is based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Assets and liabilities valued at fair value are categorized based on the inputs to the valuation techniques as follows:

Level 1 – Inputs that utilize quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the Synod has the ability to access.

Level 2 – Inputs that include quoted prices for similar assets and liabilities in active markets and inputs that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly, for substantially the full term of the consolidated financial instrument. Fair values for these instruments are estimated using pricing models, quoted prices of securities with similar characteristics, or discounted cash flows.

Level 3 – Inputs that are unobservable inputs for the asset or liability, which are typically based on an entity's own assumptions, as there is little, if any, related market activity.

In instances where the determination of the fair value measurement is based on inputs from different levels of the fair value hierarchy, the level in the fair value hierarchy within which the entire fair value measurement falls is based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement in its entirety.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the Synod may remeasure the carrying value of assets and liabilities measured on a nonrecurring basis to fair value. Adjustments to fair value usually result when certain assets are impaired. Such assets are written down from their carrying amounts to their fair value.

Professional standards allow entities the irrevocable option to elect to measure certain financial instruments and other items at fair value for the initial and subsequent measurement on an instrument-by-instrument basis. The Synod has not elected to measure any existing financial instruments at fair value. However, it may elect to measure newly acquired financial instruments at fair value in the future.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 1 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Fair Value (Continued)

Financial instruments carried at fair value on a recurring basis at December 31, 2016 and 2015 are as follows:

December 31, 2016				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Investments:				
Equity Mutual Funds	\$ 1,816,004	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,816,004
Equities	9,771,094	-	-	9,771,094
Alternative Investments	1,936,358	-	-	1,936,358
Real Estate and Specialty Assets	2,135,011	-	-	2,135,011
Government Obligations	913,532	-	-	913,532
Municipal Bonds	157,255	-	-	157,255
Corporate Obligations	1,173,324	-	-	1,173,324
Total	<u>\$ 17,902,578</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 17,902,578</u>

December 31, 2015				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Investments:				
Equity Mutual Funds	\$ 1,781,720	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,781,720
Equities	9,688,079	-	-	9,688,079
Alternative Investments	1,781,001	-	-	1,781,001
Real Estate and Specialty Assets	2,238,084	-	-	2,238,084
Government Obligations	374,960	-	-	374,960
Municipal Bonds	151,321	-	-	151,321
Corporate Obligations	1,332,690	-	-	1,332,690
Total	<u>\$ 17,347,855</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 17,347,855</u>

Subsequent Events

In preparing these consolidated financial statements, the Synod has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through April 25, 2017, the date the consolidated financial statements were available to be issued.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 2 INVESTMENTS

Investments consist of the following at December 31, 2016 and 2015:

	2016	2015
Equity Mutual Funds	\$ 1,816,004	\$ 1,781,720
Equities	9,771,094	9,688,079
Alternative Investments	1,936,358	1,781,001
Real Estate and Specialty Assets	2,135,011	2,238,084
Government Obligations	913,532	374,960
Municipal Bonds	157,255	151,321
Corporate Obligations	1,173,324	1,332,690
Subtotal	<u>17,902,578</u>	<u>17,347,855</u>
Certificates of Deposit	-	204,867
Lutheran Association for Church Extension, Inc., Certificates	205,000	205,000
Total Investments	<u><u>\$ 18,107,578</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 17,757,722</u></u>

Assets held by the Synod under the charitable remainder unitrust agreements as of December 31, 2016 and 2015 totaled \$736,147 and \$721,185, respectively. They are included in the various investment categories.

	2016	2015
Investment Return is Summarized as Follows:		
Interest Income	\$ 96,134	\$ 90,921
Investment Income	435,556	439,516
Realized and Unrealized Gains (Losses)	695,714	(846,555)
Total	<u><u>\$ 1,227,404</u></u>	<u><u>\$ (316,118)</u></u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 3 LOANS RECEIVABLE

Loans receivable consist of various secured and unsecured loans advanced to member congregations and others primarily for land, construction, or building purchase. The Synod subsidized 50% to 90% of the interest on loans to mission congregations for up to 10 years. Interest receivable as of December 31, 2016 and 2015 totaled \$92,105 and \$64,818, respectively.

	Interest Rate	Maturity	2016	2015
Congregational Loans:				
Hope, West Jordan, UT	3.25%	December 1, 2022	\$ 142,330	\$ 151,595
Lakewood, WA	3.25%	N/A	118,068	118,068
Peace, Lakeland, FL	3.25%	N/A	17,557	21,212
Redeemer, Scottsdale, AZ	3.25%	February 1, 2012	249,365	265,765
Resurrection, FL	3.25%	November 1, 2020	182,403	182,403
Family of God, Fort Mohave, AZ	5.75%	June 15, 2024	207,062	175,624
Gloria Dei, Cold Spring, MN	0.00%	September 1, 2020	22,294	27,794
Redeeming Grace, Rogers, MN	4.88%	April 5, 2022	529,348	529,348
Holy Cross, Madison	0.00%	March 1, 2016	280,000	280,000
Jesus Lutheran, Seoul, South Korea	0.00%	N/A	115,000	115,000
Jesus Lutheran, Seoul, South Korea	0.00%	N/A	150,000	150,000
Other Loan:				
Christian Service Loan to Individual	0.00%	December 1, 2021	15,100	22,662
Total Loans Receivable			<u>\$ 2,028,527</u>	<u>\$ 2,039,471</u>

Maturities of the notes receivable for the year ending December 31 are as follows:

<u>Year Ending December 31,</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2017	\$ 32,990
2018	33,546
2019	34,134
2020	33,053
2021	29,419
Thereafter	1,865,385
Total	<u>\$ 2,028,527</u>

The following table presents the aging of past due loans by loan segment as of December 31, 2016 and 2015:

<u>As of December 31, 2016</u>	Current	31 - 90 Days Past Due	90+ Days Past Due	Total	Nonaccruing Loans
Congregational Loans	\$ 1,096,642	\$ -	\$ 916,785	\$ 2,013,427	\$ -
Loan to Individuals	15,100	-	-	15,100	-
Total	<u>\$ 1,111,742</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 916,785</u>	<u>\$ 2,028,527</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
<u>As of December 31, 2015</u>	Current	31 - 60 Days Past Due	90+ Days Past Due	Total	Nonaccruing Loans
Congregational Loans	\$ 1,102,142	\$ -	\$ 914,667	\$ 2,016,809	\$ -
Loan to Individuals	22,662	-	-	22,662	-
Total	<u>\$ 1,124,804</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 914,667</u>	<u>\$ 2,039,471</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 3 LOANS RECEIVABLE (CONTINUED)

The Synod evaluates each loan for credit risk which includes the ability of the congregation or other party to pay as well as the availability and value of collateral to support the loan amount. The Synod may extend payments on loans when consistent with the overall mission of the Synod. Loan credit risks are reviewed periodically but no less than annually and at any time there is a significant change, positive or negative, in the borrower's operations or valuation of collateral.

The loans are grouped as current, watch, or past due. Current loans are being paid in accordance with the loan terms. Watch loans have payments being made but at amounts reduced from the original loan terms. Past due loan are loan where there is no current interest or principal payments being made and it is probable the Synod will recover from the loan collateral.

<u>As of December 31, 2016</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Watch</u>	<u>Past Due</u>	<u>Doubtful</u>	<u>Total</u>
Congregational Loans	\$ 1,096,642	\$ -	\$ 916,785	\$ -	\$ 2,013,427
Loan to Individuals	15,100	-	-	-	15,100
Total	<u>\$ 1,111,742</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 916,785</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 2,028,527</u>

<u>As of December 31, 2015</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Watch</u>	<u>Past Due</u>	<u>Doubtful</u>	<u>Total</u>
Congregational Loans	\$ 1,102,142	\$ -	\$ 914,667	\$ -	\$ 2,016,809
Loan to Individuals	22,662	-	-	-	22,662
Total	<u>\$ 1,124,804</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 914,667</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 2,039,471</u>

Allowance for loan losses: An allowance for loan losses (loan loss reserve) is established as losses are estimated to have occurred through a provision for loan losses charged to earnings. Loans are charged against the loan loss reserve when management confirms that the principal will not be collected. Subsequent recoveries, if any, are credited to the allowance. The allowance for loan losses is estimated by management based on an assessment of receivable aging, credit worthiness of customers, and historical bad debts. However, if the financial condition of any customer was to deteriorate and their ability to make required payments is impaired, increases in the allowance may be required. As of December 31, 2016 and 2015, there was no allowance for uncollectible accounts.

NOTE 4 PROPERTY, PLANT, AND EQUIPMENT

	<u>December 31,</u> <u>2015</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Disposals</u>	<u>December 31,</u> <u>2016</u>
Land	\$ 710,536	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 710,536
Buildings	197,842	-	-	197,842
Equipment	106,227	4,026	-	110,253
Subtotal	1,014,605	4,026	-	1,018,631
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	154,749	13,779	-	168,528
Total	<u>\$ 859,856</u>	<u>\$ (9,753)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 850,103</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 4 PROPERTY, PLANT, AND EQUIPMENT (CONTINUED)

	December 31, 2014	Additions	Disposals	December 31, 2015
Land	\$ 710,536	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 710,536
Buildings	197,842	-	-	197,842
Equipment	100,128	6,099	-	106,227
Subtotal	1,008,506	6,099	-	1,014,605
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	142,019	12,730	-	154,749
Total	<u>\$ 866,487</u>	<u>\$ (6,631)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 859,856</u>

NOTE 5 NOTES PAYABLE

Notes payable at December 31, 2016 and 2015 consists of the following:

<u>Description</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Investment program notes, unsecured, amounts loaned by individuals, congregations, and organizations for periods less than one year; interest rates at 0% - 2.15% per annum	\$ 20,884	\$ 30,884
Life Loan Plan notes, unsecured, amounts loaned by individuals at interest rates from 5% to 6% per annum	3,030	2,946
Unsecured working capital demand loan from Helping Hands; payment terms variable	25,000	50,000
Total	<u>\$ 48,914</u>	<u>\$ 83,830</u>

Principal payments due for the years ending December 31 are listed below. It is expected that many of the amounts due in the next year will be renewed for an additional one year term.

<u>Year Ending December 31,</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2017	\$ 45,884
2018	-
2019	-
2020	-
2021	-
Thereafter	3,030
Total	<u>\$ 48,914</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 6 CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY AND TRUST AGREEMENTS

Obligations under charitable gift annuity and trust agreements at December 31, 2016 and 2015 consist of the following:

	2016	2015
Charitable Gift Annuities - Due to Donors	\$ 226,512	\$ 210,611
Charitable Gift Annuities - Agency Obligations	-	30
Charitable Gift Annuities - Due to Others Upon Death of the Donor	303,799	292,018
Agency Obligations (Unitrusts)	401,441	401,441
Total	<u>\$ 931,752</u>	<u>\$ 904,100</u>

NOTE 7 DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN

The Organization has a retirement plan qualifying under the Internal Revenue Code 403(b) for the benefit of all employees at Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The Organization's annual and maximum contribution is based on 8% for office employees and 6% for missionaries.

Organization contribution for the years ended December 31, 2016, and 2015 was approximately \$43,500 and \$43,300, respectively. The related employee contributions were \$74,924 and \$85,024 for the years ended December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

NOTE 8 FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

The Synod provides programs and support for various churches for the purposes and responsibilities such as evangelism, foreign and home missions, education, Bethany Lutheran College, and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. Functional expenses for the years ended December 31, 2016 and 2015 is as follows:

	2016	2015
Program	\$ 2,792,534	\$ 2,582,832
General and Administrative	674,875	665,687
Total	<u>\$ 3,467,409</u>	<u>\$ 3,248,519</u>

NOTE 9 RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

Related Organizations to the Synod are Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gift of Life, Faith in Action, School of Martin Luther, and other foreign mission corporations. The Synod provided \$150,225 and \$150,225 on December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively, to Bethany Lutheran College and \$31,820 and \$31,820 on December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively, to Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. The funds provided are used for operating support.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 9 RELATED ORGANIZATIONS (CONTINUED)

As of December 31, 2016 and 2015, the amounts included in accounts payable for Bethany Lutheran College were \$-0- and \$41,337, respectively, and for Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary the amounts were \$2,084 and \$27,950, respectively.

In 2016 the Synod received funds of \$432,382, from the Chile Foreign Mission Corporation for the sale of one of their properties. The Synod contributed funds in the past to help fund the purchase of this property.

NOTE 10 CONTINGENCIES

As of December 31, 2016 and 2015, the Synod is contingently liable to the extent of approximately \$2,898,000 and \$2,991,00, respectively, as guarantor of the indebtedness for the following congregations: Family of God - Ft. Mohave, Arizona; Redeeming Grace – Rogers, Minnesota.; Faith - San Antonio, Texas; and Peace – Kissimmee, Florida. As of December 31, 2016, congregations were current with their loan payments. The Synod is making payments for the Family of God - Ft. Mohave for defaulting on their loan, which amounted to approximately \$32,000 in 2016 and 2015.

NOTE 11 UNRESTRICTED DESIGNATED, TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSET BALANCES

Unrestricted board designated net assets consist of the following at December 31, 2016 and 2015:

	2016	2015
World Outreach	\$ 787,327	\$ 737,392
Home Missions/Evangelism	68,462	74,075
Lutheran Schools of America	48,414	75,644
Projects and Grants	54,330	54,340
Publica ions	79,383	82,640
You h Outreach	126,291	127,910
World Needs	29,299	45,949
Book of Family Prayer	11,491	12,532
Christian Service	14,826	20,336
Pension Plan	6,535	4,665
Health Reimbursement	14,000	14,000
Thoughts of Fai h	5,809	5,809
Energy Echo	8,834	8,592
Donor Advised Funds	169,910	15,594
Military Tribute	1,540	-
ELS Foundation:		
Donated	739,824	738,430
Board of Trustees	1,565,305	1,592,389
75th Anniversary / His Truth for Our Youth	-	(1,147)
Total	<u>\$ 3,731,580</u>	<u>\$ 3,609,150</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 11 UNRESTRICTED DESIGNATED, TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSET BALANCES (CONTINUED)

Temporarily restricted net assets consist of the following at December 31, 2016 and 2015:

	2016	2015
Home Mission Expansion/Evangelism	\$ 3,291,403	\$ 3,229,277
World Outreach	490,614	641,331
General World Outreach	506,311	515,087
Church Extension	2,124,687	1,992,633
Home Mission/Evangelism Reserve	226,838	221,493
Thoughts of Faith	267,141	257,295
Robert & Madelyn Soule Endowment Fund	198,117	204,457
Partners in the Gospel	389,130	348,811
World Outreach Mission Seminary	135,859	109,383
President's Office	149,515	131,846
Charitable Gift Annuity	156,008	175,782
Marvin and Delores Schwan	69,937	54,076
Soule President Endowment	133,631	71,381
Anniversary Offering	232,138	90,436
Steen Endowment	7,729	3,256
75th Anniversary / His Truth for Our Youth	9,160	-
St. Martin Lu heran Church - Shawano, WI	3,225	2,674
Whipple-Olson-Wilson Endowment	11,990	9,459
ELS Schools	2,729	2,193
Total	<u>\$ 8,406,162</u>	<u>\$ 8,060,870</u>

Temporarily restricted net assets were released during the years ended December 31, 2016 and 2015 for as qualifying expenditures were made by the Synod.

Permanently restricted net assets are restricted for the following purposes at December 31, 2016 and 2015:

	2016	2015
Partners in the Gospel	\$ 1,755,977	\$ 1,755,977
World Outreach Mission Seminary	1,000,000	1,000,000
Soule President Endowment	1,000,000	1,000,000
President's Office	600,000	600,000
Marvin and Delores Schwan	600,000	600,000
75th Anniversary / His Truth for Our Youth	410,000	410,000
Whipple-Olson-Wilson Endowment	100,000	100,000
Robert & Madelyn Soule Endowment Fund	1,000,000	1,000,000
ELS Schools	20,000	20,000
Steen Endowment	195,447	195,447
St. Martin Lu heran Church - Shawano, WI	20,147	20,147
Total	<u>\$ 6,701,571</u>	<u>\$ 6,701,571</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 12 ENDOWMENT

The Synod's endowment consists of donor-restricted endowment funds. As required by GAAP, net assets associated with endowment funds are classified and reported based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions.

Interpretation of Relevant Law

The board of directors of the Synod has interpreted the Minnesota Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the gift date of the donor-restricted endowment fund absent explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. As a result of this interpretation, the Synod classifies as permanently restricted net assets the original value of the gifts to the permanent endowment and the value of subsequent gifts to the permanent endowment. The remaining portion of donor-restricted endowment funds, if any that is not classified as permanently restricted net assets is classified as temporarily restricted net assets until those amounts are appropriated for expenditure by the Synod. In accordance with UPMIFA, the Synod considers the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

- (1) The duration and preservation of the fund
- (2) The purposes of the local synod and the endowment fund
- (3) General economic conditions
- (4) The possible effect of inflation or deflation
- (5) The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments
- (6) Other resources of the local synod
- (7) The investment policies of the local synod

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 12 ENDOWMENT (CONTINUED)

Interpretation of Relevant Law (Continued)

The following is a summary of endowment funds for the years ended December 31, 2016 and 2015:

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
Endowment Net Assets, December 31, 2014	\$ -	\$ 1,267,859	\$ 6,701,571	\$ 7,969,430
Investment Return:				
Investment Income	-	181,861	-	181,861
Net Realized and Unrealized Gains	-	(298,011)	-	(298,011)
Total Investment Return	-	(116,150)	-	(116,150)
Contributions	-	-	-	-
Appropriations and Release of Endowment Assets for Expenditure	(1,147)	(214,173)	-	(215,320)
Endowment Net Assets, December 31, 2015	(1,147)	937,536	6,701,571	7,637,960
Investment Return:				
Investment Income	-	171,034	-	171,034
Net Realized and Unrealized Losses	-	246,954	-	246,954
Total Investment Return	-	417,988	-	417,988
Contributions	-	-	-	-
Appropriations/Transfers of Endowment Assets for Expenditure	1,147	(244,503)	-	(243,356)
Endowment Net Assets, December 31, 2016	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,111,021</u>	<u>\$ 6,701,571</u>	<u>\$ 7,812,592</u>

Funds with Deficiencies

From time to time, the fair value of assets associated with individual donor-restricted endowment funds may fall below the level that the donor requires the Synod to retain as a fund of perpetual duration. In accordance with GAAP, deficiencies of this nature, related to temporarily restricted net assets, that are reported in unrestricted net assets were \$-0- and \$1,147 at December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

NOTE 12 ENDOWMENT (CONTINUED)

Investment Objectives and Strategies

The Synod has adopted an investment policy to provide guidelines for investing endowment assets. Under this policy, as approved by the Investment Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the endowment assets are invested in a manner that is intended to:

- Achieve a balanced return of current income and modest growth of principal.
- To minimize the probability of loss of principal over the investment horizon. Emphasis is placed on minimizing return volatility rather than maximizing return.
- To emphasize long-term growth of principal while avoiding excessive risk. Short-term volatility will be tolerated in as much as it is consistent with the volatility of a comparable market index.

Spending Policy

The Investment Committee will attempt to balance the shorter-term grant making obligations with its goal to provide grants into perpetuity, and therefore design a spending policy which is flexible. Since expected investment returns from "riskier" portfolios are not consistent and predictable, the Investment Committee feels that shorter-term spending in dollar terms must be flexible enough to endure periods of underperformance without excessive deterioration of real principal. Therefore, this endowment may tend toward a more "aggressive" investment strategy seeking higher long-term investment returns than would be the case if grant making from year to year were less flexible. The total annual distribution shall not exceed 6% nor be less than 2% of the three-year moving average market value of the fund. The Investment Committee expects that annual contributions to the endowment will remain relatively consistent and will increase somewhat over time.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
CONSOLIDATING SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2016
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Evangelical Lutheran Synod	Lutheran Schools of America	Thoughts of Faith, Inc.	Total
ASSETS				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 974,066	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 974,066
Accounts Receivable	977,164	-	36,784	1,013,948
Interest Receivable	97,258	-	-	97,258
Inventory of Publications	46,601	-	-	46,601
Prepaid Expenses	28,356	-	-	28,356
Other Assets	3,940	-	-	3,940
Loans Receivable	2,028,527	-	-	2,028,527
Mission Deposits	388,543	-	-	388,543
Investments	17,241,227	143,480	722,871	18,107,578
Property Held for Resale	922,897	-	-	922,897
Property, Plant, and Equipment, Net	850,103	-	-	850,103
Total Assets	<u>\$ 23,558,682</u>	<u>\$ 143,480</u>	<u>\$ 759,655</u>	<u>\$ 24,461,817</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS				
LIABILITIES				
Accounts Payable	\$ 283,797	\$ -	\$ 81,871	\$ 365,668
Interest Payable	60	-	-	60
Other Liabilities	4,988	-	-	4,988
Notes Payable	23,914	-	25,000	48,914
Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements	931,752	-	-	931,752
Total Liabilities	<u>1,244,511</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>106,871</u>	<u>1,351,382</u>
NET ASSETS				
Unrestricted:				
Designated	3,677,357	48,414	5,809	3,731,580
Undesignated	3,796,222	95,066	379,834	4,271,122
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>7,473,579</u>	<u>143,480</u>	<u>385,643</u>	<u>8,002,702</u>
Temporarily Restricted	8,139,021	-	267,141	8,406,162
Permanently Restricted	6,701,571	-	-	6,701,571
Total Net Assets	<u>22,314,171</u>	<u>143,480</u>	<u>652,784</u>	<u>23,110,435</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 23,558,682</u>	<u>\$ 143,480</u>	<u>\$ 759,655</u>	<u>\$ 24,461,817</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
CONSOLIDATING SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Evangelical Lutheran Synod	Lutheran Schools of America	Thoughts of Faith, Inc.	Total
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS				
Revenues, Gains, and Other Support:				
Congregations/Organizations/Individuals	\$ 1,150,571	\$ 3,396	\$ 237,513	\$ 1,391,480
Estate, Trusts, and Memorials	147,316	20	18,305	165,641
Thrivent	8,200	-	-	8,200
Helping Hands	66,506	-	-	66,506
Mission Advancement Project	222,250	-	170,000	392,250
Schwan Funds	484,173	15,827	-	500,000
Others	53,340	-	-	53,340
Interest	421	-	-	421
Investment Income	139,389	4,046	18,022	161,457
Rent and Royalties	76	-	-	76
Publications	13,961	-	-	13,961
Services Provided	(6,962)	-	-	(6,962)
Registration Fees	47,750	-	-	47,750
Subscriptions	39,199	-	-	39,199
Realized and Unrealized Losses on				
Long-Term Investments	201,263	5,843	26,019	233,125
Gain on the Sale of Property	432,382	-	-	432,382
Transfers	(25,000)	25,000	-	-
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	635,747	-	-	635,747
Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support	3,610,582	54,132	469,859	4,134,573
EXPENSES				
Bethany Lutheran College	150,225	-	-	150,225
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary	31,820	-	-	31,820
Lutheran Schools of America	-	62,543	-	62,543
Thoughts of Faith	-	-	365,177	365,177
Christian Services	90,197	-	-	90,197
Church Extension	7,066	-	-	7,066
Youth Outreach	73,905	-	-	73,905
World Outreach	884,833	-	-	884,833
Home Missions/Evangelism	637,794	-	-	637,794
Publications	78,249	-	-	78,249
Synod Fund	667,140	-	-	667,140
Other Programs and Costs	404,681	-	-	404,681
Depreciation	13,779	-	-	13,779
Total Expenses	3 039 689	62 543	365 177	3 467 409
CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	570,893	(8,411)	104,682	667,164

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
CONSOLIDATING SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Evangelical Lutheran Synod	Lutheran Schools of America	Thoughts of Faith, Inc.	Total
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS				
Support:				
Congregations, Organizations, and Individuals	\$ 111,548	\$ -	\$ 9,846	\$ 121,394
Estate, Trusts, and Memorials	27,244	-	-	27,244
Interest	95,713	-	-	95,713
Investment Income	274,099	-	-	274,099
Realized and Unrealized Losses on				
Long-Term Investments	462,589	-	-	462,589
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	(635,747)	-	-	(635,747)
CHANGE IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>335,446</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,846</u>	<u>345,292</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (DEFICIT)	<u>\$ 906,339</u>	<u>\$ (8,411)</u>	<u>\$ 114,528</u>	<u>\$ 1,012,456</u>

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
COMBINING SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2016
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Evangelical Lutheran Synod December 31, 2016	Bethany Lutheran College June 30, 2016	Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary June 30, 2016	Total
ASSETS				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 974,066	\$ 281,785	\$ 51,805	\$ 1,307,656
Inter-Company Receivable (Payable)	-	(84,917)	84,917	-
Accounts Receivable	1,013,948	-	-	1,013,948
Student Accounts Receivable, Net of Allowance for Doubtful Accounts of \$65,000	-	64,390	1,460	65,850
Contributions Receivable	-	99,310	-	99,310
Interest Receivable	97,258	-	-	97,258
Other Receivables, Net of Allowance for Doubtful Accounts of \$2,000	-	152,811	5,194	158,005
Inventory	46,601	231,296	-	277,897
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	420,839	23,600	8,175	452,614
Student Notes Receivable, Net of Allowance for Doubtful Notes of \$40,000	-	418,408	-	418,408
Loans Receivable	2,028,527	-	-	2,028,527
Investments	18,107,578	33,272,037	9,173,886	60,553,501
Deferred Debt Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Beneficial Interest in Funds Held in Trust	-	136,160	90,340	226,500
Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trust	-	401,486	401,486	802,972
Land Held for Resale	922,897	-	-	922,897
Property, Plant, and Equipment, Net	850,103	46,990,365	1,326,462	49,166,930
Total Assets	<u>\$ 24,461,817</u>	<u>\$ 81,986,731</u>	<u>\$ 11,143,725</u>	<u>\$ 117,592,273</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS				
LIABILITIES				
Accounts Payable	\$ 365,668	\$ 349,468	\$ 17,700	\$ 732,836
Interest Payable	60	-	-	60
Other Liabilities	4,988	-	-	4,988
Accrued Liabilities	-	668,579	3,878	672,457
Deposit Accounts	-	141,074	-	141,074
Line of Credit Payable	-	-	-	-
Long-Term Debt and Notes Payable	48,914	12,381,734	-	12,430,648
Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements	931,752	701,367	340,344	1,973,463
Deposits Held in Custody for Others	-	158,622	8,650	167,272
U.S. Government Grants Refundable	-	449,910	-	449,910
Total Liabilities	1,351,382	14,850,754	370,572	16,572,708
NET ASSETS				
Unrestricted:				
Designated	3,731,580	-	-	3,731,580
Undesignated	4,271,122	12,648,837	1,426,030	18,345,989
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	8,002,702	12,648,837	1,426,030	22,077,569
Temporarily Restricted	8,406,162	29,602,630	580,184	38,588,976
Permanently Restricted	6,701,571	24,884,510	8,766,939	40,353,020
Total Net Assets	23,110,435	67,135,977	10,773,153	101,019,565
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 24,461,817</u>	<u>\$ 81,986,731</u>	<u>\$ 11,143,725</u>	<u>\$ 117,592,273</u>

TREASURER'S
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
MANKATO, MINNESOTA**

C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
Balance Sheet (Exhibit I)	1
Statement of Changes in Fund Balance -Operating Funds (Exhibit II)	2
Fund Descriptions for ELS Foundation (Exhibit III)	3 - 4
Balance Sheet & Changes in Fund Balance -Foundation Funds (Exhibit IV)	5 - 6
Summary of Financial Activities by Fund (Exhibit V)	7-14
Notes to Financial Statements (Exhibit VI)	15-19
Loans Receivable (Schedule A)	20
Mortgages Payable (Schedule B)	21

BALANCE SHEET

Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Menkafo, Minnesota
December 31, 2016

EXHIBIT I

EXHIBIT L

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Menkafo, Minnesota
December 31, 2016

	CHURCH		RESIDENCES		HOME	WORLD		TRUST	DONOR		ELEMENTARY THOUGHTS		EVANGELICAL	
	GENERAL	EXTENSION AND	AND REAL	ESTATE	OUTREACH	OUTREACH	FUND 7	FUND 8	ADVISED	FUND 9	OF	FAITH	LUTHERAN	ALL
	FUND 1	FUND 2	FUND 3	FUND 4	FUND 5	FUND 6	FUND 7	FUND 8	FUND 9	FUND 10	FUND 11	FUND 12	FUND 13	FUND 14
Balance 12/31/2015														
Unrestricted - Designated														
Unrestricted	262,918.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	74,075.15	737,391.85	0.00	24,185.01	75,949.69	35,669.00	32,528,568.55	63,629,988.11	
Permanently Restricted	\$1,508,360.66	\$0.00	\$325,351.11	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,204,966.00	\$335,351.11	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$79,424.24	\$27,131,464.00	\$0.00	\$3,779,566.87	
Temporarily Restricted	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,701,570.82	
TOTAL FUND BALANCES 12/31/2015	\$1,770,552.53	\$1,922,632.49	\$325,351.11	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,770,552.49	\$1,072,742.96	\$0.00	\$24,185.01	\$151,388.93	\$58,256.67	\$5,741,988.52	\$73,961,916.68	
ADD:														
Investment Portfolio Income	\$43,752.11	\$35,458.61	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$24,254.73	\$24,622.42	\$0.00	\$2,364.10	\$4,049.75	\$16,020.27	\$283,035.05	\$435,554.04	
Investment Services	(9,683.35)	(7,037.31)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	(4,813.73)	(4,686.70)	\$0.00	(469.19)	(803.14)	(33,576.40)	(88,164.07)	(388,434.73)	
Change in Salt Interest Agreements	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	(105,534.62)	(315,634.92)	
Annuity/Trust Amortization	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Distributions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Interest on Loans (Interest)	63,173.15	51,168.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	35,021.11	35,552.00	0.00	3,413.49	5,843.06	\$26,019.24	475,482.59	\$695,712.88	
Interest on Loans (Principal)	(52,658.01)	(52,434.53)	(13,778.71)	(47,020.32)	(47,020.32)	(47,020.32)	(47,020.32)	0.00	149,260.00	(17,485.62)	74,064.16	78,315.99	\$599,458.45	
Excess of Income Over Expenditures	\$45,551.98	\$132,054.07	\$13,778.71	\$7,441.79	\$401,695.45	\$0.00	\$154,559.45	\$0.00	\$154,559.45	(89,409.23)	\$114,627.27	\$247,905.97	\$1,091,416.95	
TOTAL ADDITIONS	\$1,816,104.42	\$2,124,886.65	\$311,679.39	\$1,388,503.68	\$1,475,421.01	\$0.00	\$178,744.41	\$0.00	\$178,744.41	\$143,479.58	\$655,783.94	\$1,501,034.37	\$23,110,437.43	
SUBTOTAL	\$3,586,656.95	\$4,047,519.14	\$636,970.50	\$1,388,503.68	\$1,475,421.01	\$0.00	\$1,251,487.43	\$0.00	\$362,929.41	\$304,868.53	\$763,810.21	\$7,243,022.89	\$97,072,354.11	
Balance 12/31/2016														
Unrestricted - Designated (Note D)														
Unrestricted (Note E)	\$337,033.16	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$65,462.16	\$757,587.74	\$0.00	\$178,744.41	\$48,413.23	\$5,809.00	\$2,305,126.09	\$3,731,577.79	
Unrestricted (Note F)	\$1,579,071.33	\$0.00	\$311,679.39	\$1,215,041.52	\$937,433.27	\$1,215,041.52	\$937,433.27	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$55,066.35	\$379,833.98	\$0.00	\$4,271,125.24	
Permanently Restricted (Note G)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,701,570.82	
Temporarily Restricted (Note H)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,014,335.46	
TOTAL FUND BALANCES 12/31/2016	\$1,916,104.49	\$2,124,886.65	\$311,679.39	\$1,388,503.68	\$1,475,421.01	\$0.00	\$1,251,487.43	\$0.00	\$362,929.41	\$304,868.53	\$763,810.21	\$7,243,022.89	\$97,072,354.11	

Descriptions of ELS Foundation Funds

Fund Number	Title	Description
18	Robert & Madelyn Soule President's Office Endowment \$1,000,000 Permanently Restricted	Principal donated by Robert & Madelyn Soule. Income only available. To be used in support of a full-time synod president.
19	Dorothy Arbury President's Office Endowment \$600,000 Permanently Restricted	Principal donated by Dorothy Arbury. Income only available. To be used in support of a full-time synod president.
20	Marvin & Delores Schwan Mission Trust Endowment \$600,000 Permanently Restricted	First funds received by Synod from Marvin Schwan. Income only Available. To be used to support the Helping Hand's Programs – Income limited to the amount of contributions to Helping Hands
21	Partners in the Gospel Endowment \$1,755,977 Permanently Restricted	Principal derived from special synod wide offering. Income only available. To be used as endowment for Home Missions/Evangelism.
22	Whipple-Olson-Wilson Endowment \$100,000 Permanently Restricted	Principal donated as endowment for World Outreach. Income only available.
23	Seminary Endowment \$1,000,000 Permanently Restricted	Principal donated by Marvin M. Schwan as endowment to support seminary in South America. Income only available.
24	Board for World Outreach Reserve Unrestricted	From estates and larger gifts designated for World Outreach. "Fund Functioning as Endowment". Income for World Outreach.
25	Charitable Gift & Trust Agreements Temporarily Restricted	Fund established to account for Charitable Gift & Trust Agreements of which the beneficiaries are Synod programs when the donor dies.
26	Board for Home Outreach Reserve Temporarily Restricted	Original principle of \$100,000 from Marvin Schwan to serve as contingency for use by the Board for Home Outreach if deficits occur. Principal can be used but never has been. Deficits have been funded from estates and other available sources.
27	Robert & Madelyn Soule Endowment \$1,000,000 Permanently Restricted	Donated by Bob & Madelyn Soule as endowment. Income only available. Income divided equally between Bob & Madelyn Soule Scholarship Fund (BLC), Foreign Student Support (BLTS), and World Outreach (ELS).

Fund Description for ELS Foundation (cont.)

Fund Number	Title	Description
28	Board for Home Outreach Expansion Temporarily Restricted	Original principal from Marvin Schwan. Principal and income not restricted. Used for Home Outreach Expansion and to absorb any deficits. Also used for capital purposes in form of loans.
29	St. Martin-Shawano Endowment \$20,146.95 Permanently Restricted	Principal donated from St. Martin Lutheran Church, Shawano, WI. Income only available. Income to be divided between Home Missions/Evangelism and World Outreach for work in the USA and abroad.
30	Truth for Youth Endowment \$410,000 Permanently Restricted	Principal derived from special synod wide offering. Income only available. To be used for youth programs.
31	School Endowment \$20,000 Permanently Restricted	Principal donated by John Arends. Income only available. Income to be used for schools of the ELS nationwide.
32	Anniversary Offering Temporarily Restricted	Synod Thank Offering celebrating the synod's Centennial and the 500 th anniversary of the Reformation. Income to be used by the BHO for home mission expansion.
33	Selma & Constant Steen Endowment \$195,446.87 Permanently Restricted	Principal donated by Magaret Solvcig Steen. Endowment set up in memory of her parents, Selma Georgiana Dalen Steen & Constant Jotham Steen. Income only available. Income to be used for foreign missions & scholarships for foreign seminary students.
40	Donated Temporarily Restricted	Principal from estates designated for ELS without program identification. Income used for general synod purposes.
45	Trustee Unrestricted Designated	"Fund functioning as endowment". Board of Trustees established a policy of applying 2/3 of non-designated estates to this fund. Income goes to general synod purposes with principal available for use at discretion of Board of Trustees.

**BALANCE SHEET AND
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES**
Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation
December 31, 2016

Exhibit M
Page 1 of 2

	ROBERT & MADELYN SOULE PRESIDENTS ENDOWMENT FUND 18	ASBURY PRESIDENTS ENDOWMENT FUND 19	MARVIN AND DELORES SCHWAN MISSION TRUST ENDOWMENT FUND 20	PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL ENDOWMENT FUND 21	WILLIAM E - WILSON SEMINARY ENDOWMENT FUND 22	BWO RESERVE FUND 24	CHARITABLE GIFT & TRUST AGREEMENTS FUND 26	OUTREACH RESERVE FUND 28
ASSETS								
Cash in Bank	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Accounts Receivable	1,133,630.63	749,516.47	689,337.18	1,443,844.70	111,889.19	1,135,859.95	564,125.39	226,837.73
Loans Receivable from Congregations (Schedule A)	0.00	0.00	0.00	268,921.26	0.00	0.00	115,020.00	0.00
Accounts Receivable	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,257.60	0.00
Prepaid Expenses/Deposits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	308,543.00	0.00
Interest Receivable	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,159.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Property Held for Resale	0.00	0.00	0.00	122,111.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	\$1,133,630.63	\$749,516.47	\$689,337.18	\$2,443,915.28	\$111,889.19	\$1,135,859.95	\$996,925.39	\$226,837.73
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,432,310.28	\$226,837.73
Due from (to) other funds							\$324,550.89	\$0.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,133,630.63	\$749,516.47	\$689,337.18	\$2,443,915.28	\$111,889.19	\$1,135,859.95	\$1,087,759.39	\$226,837.73
LIABILITIES								
Accounts Payable	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Charity Gift Annuity Payable	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	226,512.05	0.00
Agency Obligations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	735,219.51	0.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$961,721.56	\$0.00
FUND BALANCES								
Balance 12/31/2015	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Unrestricted - Designated	1,000,000.00	600,000.00	600,000.00	1,755,977.00	100,000.00	1,000,000.00	175,742.22	224,452.58
Permanently Restricted	12,130.63	149,516.47	89,337.18	587,938.28	11,889.19	135,859.95	175,742.22	224,452.58
Temporarily Restricted	\$1,011,330.63	\$731,546.01	\$654,037.29	\$2,044,788.30	\$109,468.41	\$1,109,389.03	\$1,867,464.28	\$224,452.58
TOTAL	\$1,011,330.63	\$731,546.01	\$654,037.29	\$2,044,788.30	\$109,468.41	\$1,109,389.03	\$1,867,464.28	\$224,452.58
Asst:								
Income - Net	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.261166	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$64,969.29	\$21,030.64
Investment Portfolio Income	27,722.89	18,650.11	16,700.60	35,427.72	2,759.75	28,130.78	15,363.59	6,454.59
Investment Dividend	(4,500.00)	(2,170.00)	(1,500.00)	(3,000.00)	(600.00)	(3,000.00)	(1,000.00)	(1,120.00)
Charitable Contribution	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(11,869.30)	(1,120.00)
Charitable Contribution in Gift Interest Agreements	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(105,644.82)	0.00
Distributions	0.00	0.00	(21,659.00)	(36,265.28)	(3,521.00)	(36,669.52)	(32,167.80)	(7,328.18)
Market value gains (losses)	-40,020.96	26,931.55	24,115.76	43,924.81	3,855.62	-40,617.69	22,162.69	66,821.76
TOTAL	\$82,201.93	\$42,861.66	\$41,010.49	\$40,318.78	\$2,910.76	\$26,473.92	\$304,536.89	\$114,491.75
Balance 12/31/2016	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Unrestricted - Designated (Note D)	1,000,000.00	600,000.00	600,000.00	1,755,977.00	100,000.00	1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00
Permanently Restricted (Note F)	12,130.63	149,516.47	89,337.18	587,938.28	11,889.19	135,859.95	175,742.22	224,452.58
Temporarily Restricted (Note G)	\$1,133,630.63	\$749,516.47	\$689,337.18	\$2,443,915.28	\$111,889.19	\$1,135,859.95	\$1,867,464.28	\$224,452.58
TOTAL	\$1,133,630.63	\$749,516.47	\$689,337.18	\$2,443,915.28	\$111,889.19	\$1,135,859.95	\$1,867,464.28	\$224,452.58
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	\$1,133,630.63	\$749,516.47	\$689,337.18	\$2,443,915.28	\$111,889.19	\$1,135,859.95	\$1,087,759.39	\$226,837.73

Exhibit IV

-6-

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES BY FUND
Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Menasha, Wisconsin
December 31, 2016

EXHIBIT V
Page 1 of 4

Account Number	Account Name	Total	General	Church Extension	Parish/Town Trust	Real Estate	Honoraria	World Outreach	Trust Agency	Donor Advised	Elementary Education (LSE)	Thoughts & Prayers Fund	Presidents' Office	Presidents' Office	School in Support	Prayers in Support
4201.0	Income															
4201.01	Contributions	40,885.69	7,660.63				2,311.38	28,889.25			41.10	7,868.88				
4201.02	Contributions - Other	763,315.14	426,786.20				203,421.05	115,004.17			16,137.82					
4201.03	School Program	292,309.09	54,000.00					95,000.00			13,500.00					
4201.04	Contributions - Other	1,712,555.55	1,712,555.55													
4201.05	Contributions - Other	435,664.04	43,752.11				23,554.75	24,027.42		2,354.10	4,060.76	10,030.27	17,722.96	16,652.11	16,700.80	30,427.72
4201.06	Interest	86,738.96	412.75				0.42									10,655.67
4201.07	Real Estate	1,112,112.11														
4201.08	Real Estate	996,103.99	26,842.87				5,000.00	78,699.98		166,800.00	2,965.00	211,388.08				
4201.09	Real Estate	1,220.00	1,220.00								2,997.34					
4201.10	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.11	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.12	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.13	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.14	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.15	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.16	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.17	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.18	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.19	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.20	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.21	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.22	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.23	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
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4201.28	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.29	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.30	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.31	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.32	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
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4201.45	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
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4201.73	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.74	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
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4201.78	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.79	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.80	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.81	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.82	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.83	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
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4201.96	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.97	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.98	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4201.99	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.00	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.01	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.02	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.03	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.04	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.05	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.06	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.07	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.08	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00	119,272.57													
4202.09	School Program Budget Supplement	\$17,500.00														

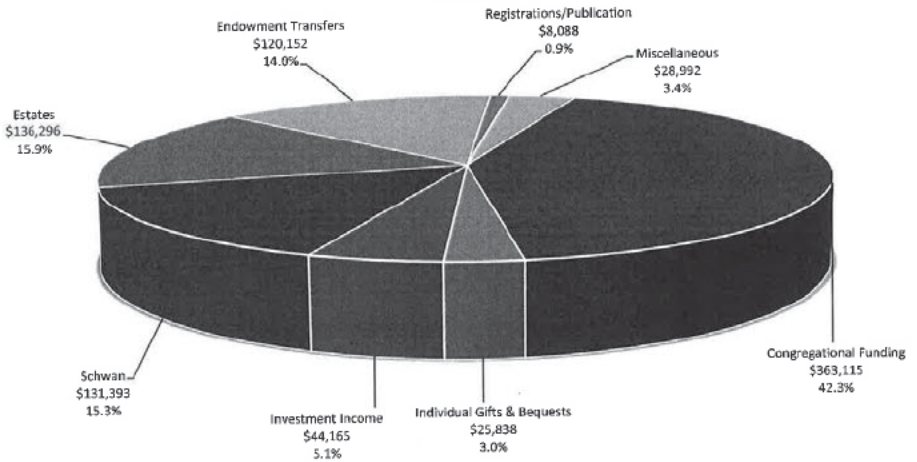
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210

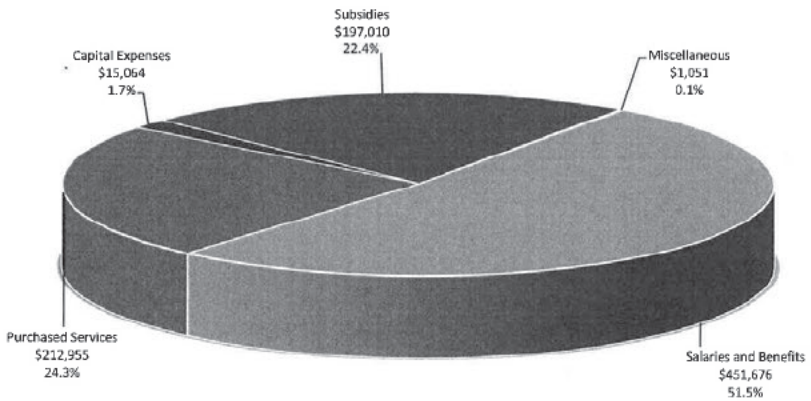
SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES BY FUND
Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Markata, Minnesota
December 31, 2016

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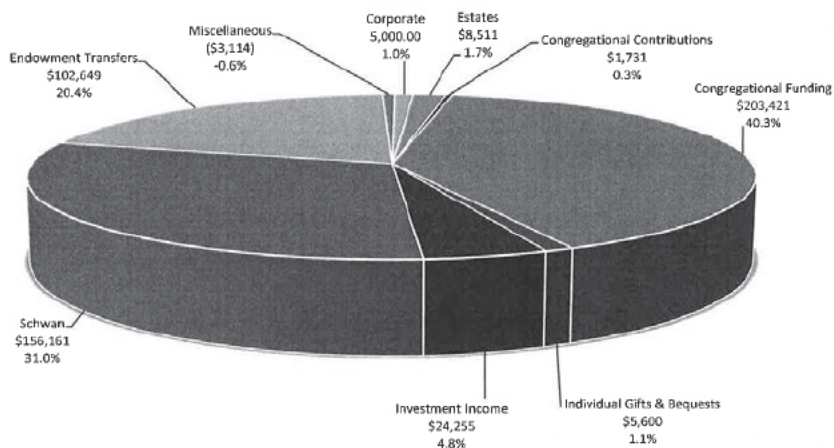
Synod Fund Income Excluding Unrealized Gain
858,039



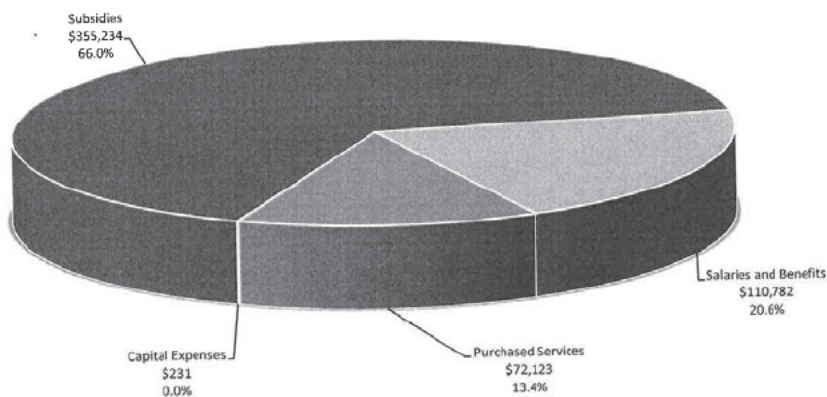
Synod Fund Expenses
\$877,756



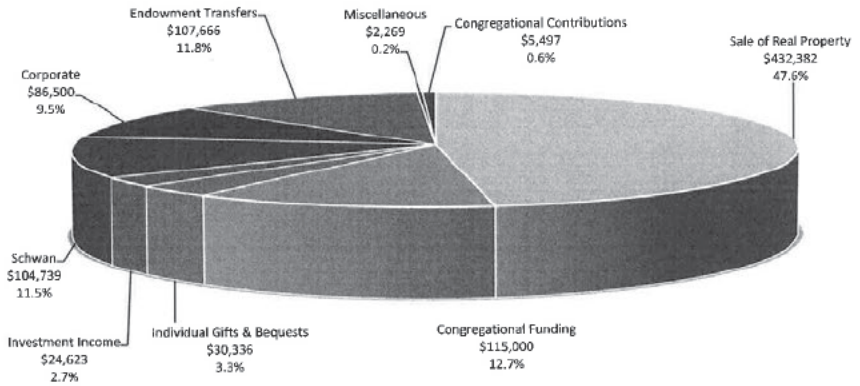
Home Outreach Income Excluding Unrealized Gain \$504,214



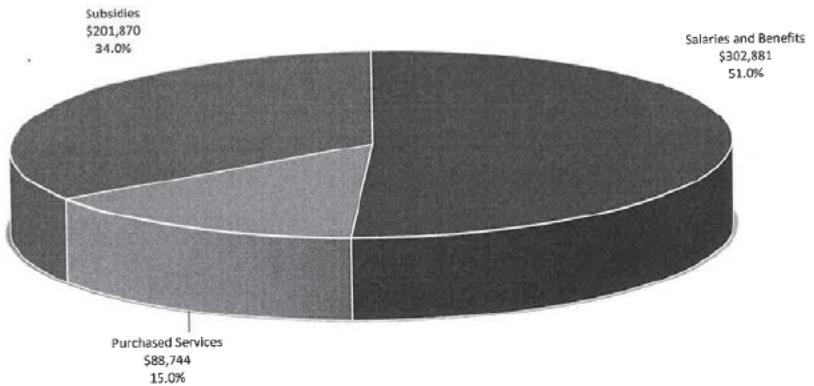
Home Outreach Expenses \$538,370



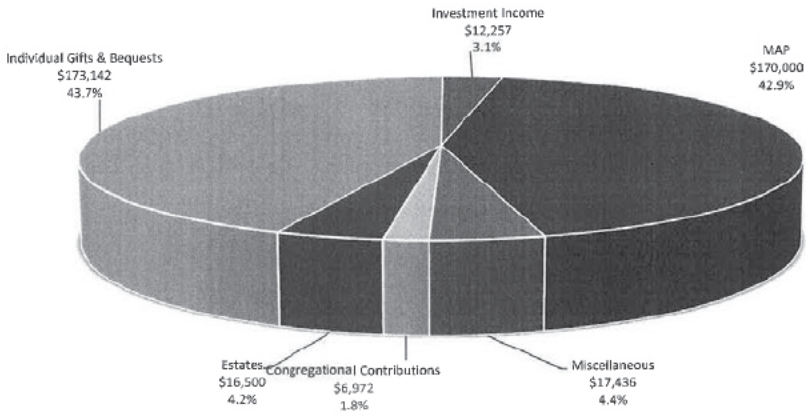
World Outreach Income Excluding Unrealized Gain \$909,012



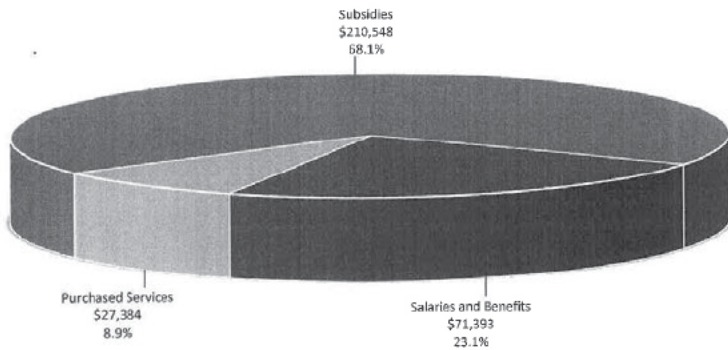
World Outreach Expenses \$593,495



Thoughts of Faith Income Excluding Unrealized Gain \$396,307



Thoughts of Faith Expenses \$309,325



NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota
December 31, 2016

EXHIBIT VI

Page 1 of 5

(A) Summary of significant accounting policies:

The financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis. The significant accounting policies followed are described below to improve the usefulness of the financial statements.

These financial statements are presented in accordance with the principles of fund accounting. Resources for various purposes are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into funds according to their nature and purpose.

The General Fund, Home Outreach Fund, World Outreach Fund, Lutheran School of America Fund and Thoughts of Faith Fund, represents resources available for current operating purposes.

The Church Extension and Loan Fund represents resources used for loans to congregations for building and improvement programs.

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation is an fund established by the Synod's Board of Trustees to invest gifts and bequests for the exclusive benefit of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. In addition to donations specified for the Foundation, two-thirds of undesignated trust and estate income is appropriated to the Foundation each year. The fund includes both strict endowments and funds acting as endowments.

(B) Residences and real estate have been stated at cost or acquisition.

(C) Notes Payable:

The working capital note is a 0% demand note from a synod affiliated organization.

Investment program notes are amounts loaned by individuals, congregations and organizations for one year at the interest rate of .35%

Life Loan Plan Notes are amounts loaned by individuals to the synod at an interest rate of 5.50% and at time of death the principal donated to the synod.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (cont.)

Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota
December 31, 2016

EXHIBIT VI

Page 2 of 5

(D) Unrestricted - Designated:

General Fund

Kenya Conference	(\$662.00)	
Health Reimbursement Account	\$14,000.00	
Christian Service	14,825.67	
Pension Plan	6,535.22	
World Needs	29,298.74	
Publications	79,383.00	
Youth Outreach	126,291.45	
Book of Family Prayer	11,491.20	
Military Tribute	<u>1,540.00</u>	
		\$282,703.28

Project/Grants

Stewardship	7,847.49	
Kessel Book	12,477.12	
Administration Communication	2,079.82	
CFIT	5,372.17	
Reformation Celebration	8,200.00	
Festival Writing	1,375.87	
Synod Centennial	<u>16,977.41</u>	
		<u>\$54,329.88</u>

Total General Fund Unrestricted - Designated

\$337,033.16

Home Outreach

Project/Grants

Preschool	\$14,000.00	
Texas Canvassing	468.80	
Home Mission Seminar	10,900.74	
BOT Congregational Assistance	24,186.00	
Congregational Assistance	<u>18,906.62</u>	

Total Home Outreach Fund Unrestricted - Designated

\$68,462.16

World Outreach

Special Mission Projects (VBS)	\$2,000.00	
Chile - General	68,585.77	
Chile - ESL	47,202.21	
Chile - Seminary Startup	155,200.00	
Korea Exploratory	55,296.00	
India-General	17,414.98	
India-College Fund Orphans	8,013.00	
Peru-General	<u>59,546.68</u>	

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (cont.)Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota
December 31, 2016**EXHIBIT VI**

Page 3 of 5

World Outreach Unrestricted - Designated (cont.)		
Peru-Jungle School	\$187,219.55	
Peru-Christian Day School	37,127.51	
Peru-Seminary	3,701.05	
South America Contingencies	52,059.27	
Amazon	<u>36,511.07</u>	
		\$729,877.09
Project/Grants		
Jungle School	\$38,547.00	
Peru Transition	5,902.21	
Field Familiarization	1,964.50	
Tech Equipment	3,196.94	
LMSI Seminary	6,000.00	
Medication Support	<u>2,500.00</u>	
		<u>\$58,110.65</u>
Total World Outreach Fund Unrestricted - Designated		\$787,987.74
Donor Advised Fund		
Energy Echo	\$8,833.83	
Individual Donor Advised Funds	<u>169,910.58</u>	
Total Donor Advised Fund Unrestricted - Designated		\$178,744.41
Lutheran Schools of America (LSA)		
Lutheran Elementary Schools		<u>\$6,124.71</u>
Project/Grants		
Marketing and Promo	\$12,675.71	
School Visit	<u>29,612.81</u>	
		<u>\$42,288.52</u>
Total LSA Fund Unrestricted - Designated		\$48,413.23
Thoughts of Faith		
Bi-vocational	<u>\$5,809.00</u>	
Total Thoughts of Faith Unrestricted - Designated		\$5,809.00

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (cont.)Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota
December 31, 2016**EXHIBIT VI**

Page 4 of 5

Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation		
Trustees	739,823.80	
Donated	<u>1,565,304.29</u>	
Total Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation Unrestricted Designated		<u>\$2,305,128.09</u>
Total Unrestricted - Designated		<u>\$3,731,577.79</u>
 (E) Unrestricted		
General Fund	\$1,579,071.33	
Residences & Real Estate	311,679.39	
Home Outreach	1,218,041.52	
World Outreach	687,433.27	
Elementary Education (LSA)	95,066.35	
Thoughts of Faith	<u>379,833.38</u>	
Total Unrestricted		<u>\$4,271,125.24</u>
 (F) Permanently Restricted		
Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation		
Robert & Madelyn Soule Pres. Office Endowment	\$1,000,000.00	
President's Office Endowment	600,000.00	
Marvin & Delores Schwan World Outreach Trust Fund	600,000.00	
Partners in the Gospel Home Missions/Evangelism Fund	1,755,977.00	
Whipple-Olson-Wilson Endowment	100,000.00	
World Outreach Seminary Endowment	1,000,000.00	
Robert & Madelyn Soule Endowment	1,000,000.00	
St. Martin Lutheran Church	20,146.95	
Truth for our Youth	410,000.00	
ELS School Endowment Fund	20,000.00	
Selma and Constant Steen Endowment	<u>195,446.87</u>	
Total Permanently Restricted		<u>\$6,701,570.82</u>
 (G) Temporarily Restricted		
Church Extension & Loan Fund	\$1,974,686.56	
Herbert and Cathy Schulz	<u>150,000.00</u>	
Total Church Extension & Loan Fund		\$2,124,686.56

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (cont.)Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota
December 31, 2016**EXHIBIT VI**

Page 5 of 5

Temporarily Restricted (cont.)

Thoughts of Faith	\$91,778.38	
Gift of Life Self Insurance	<u>175,363.18</u>	
Total Thoughts of Faith		\$267,141.56

Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation

Robert & Madelyn Soule Pres. Office Endowment	\$133,630.63	
Arbury Pres. Office Endowment	149,515.47	
Marvin & Delores Schwan World Outreach Trust Fund	69,937.18	
Partners in the Gospel	389,130.08	
Whipple-Olson-Wilson Endowment	11,989.19	
World Outreach Seminary Endowment	135,858.95	
World Outreach Capital Projects	188,000.00	
World Outreach Asia Expansion	\$996,925.39	
World Outreach Reserve Fund	506,312.37	
Charitable Gift & Trust Agreements	156,007.43	
Robert & Madelyn Soule Endowment	198,117.71	
Home Outreach Reserve Fund	226,837.73	
Home Outreach Expansion Fund	3,291,405.91	
St. Martin Lutheran Church	3,223.92	
Truth for our Youth	9,159.50	
School Endowment Fund	2,728.48	
Anniversary Offering	232,137.87	
Selma and Constant Steen Endowment	<u>7,730.02</u>	

Total Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation \$6,014,335.46**Total Temporarily Restricted****\$8,406,163.58**

LOANS RECEIVABLE

Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota
December 31, 2016

SCHEDULE A

	ORIGINAL LOAN BALANCE	REMAINING LOAN BALANCE 12/31/2015	RECLASS./ NEW LOANS 2016	PAID 2016	TOTAL PAID	REMAINING LOAN BALANCE 12/31/2016
Church Extension Loan (Fund 02)						
Hope - West Jordan, Utah	186,203.42	151,595.39	0.00	9,265.08	43,873.11	142,330.31
Resurrection - Winter Haven, Florida	490,610.83	182,402.88	0.00	0.00	308,207.95	182,402.88
Lakewood - Lakewood, Washington	118,068.34	118,068.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	118,068.34
* Family of God, Fort Mohave, AZ	175,623.78	175,623.76	31,438.17	0.00	0.00	207,061.93
	\$970,506.35	\$627,690.37	\$31,438.17	\$9,265.08	\$352,081.06	\$646,863.46
Home Mission Fund (Fund 06)						
Individual Loan						
	28,962.00	22,862.00	-6,962.00	600.00	4,900.00	15,100.00
	\$28,962.00	\$22,862.00	-\$6,962.00	\$600.00	\$4,900.00	\$15,100.00
Partners in the Gospel (Fund 21)						
Peace - Lakeland, Florida	39,333.03	21,211.78	0.00	3,655.22	21,776.47	17,556.56
Redeemer - Scottsdale, Arizona	351,962.20	265,764.70	0.00	16,400.00	102,597.50	249,364.70
	\$391,295.23	\$286,976.48	\$0.00	\$20,055.22	\$124,373.97	\$266,921.26
Asia Expansion (Fund 24)						
Jesus Lutheran, Seoul, South Korea	115,000.00	115,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	115,000.00
	\$115,000.00	\$115,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$115,000.00
Home Mission Expansion (Fund 28)						
Redeeming Grace, Rogers, MN	529,348.01	529,348.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	529,348.01
	\$529,348.01	\$529,348.01	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$529,348.01
Donated Fund (Fund 40)						
Holy Cross, Madison, WI	280,000.00	280,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	280,000.00
	\$280,000.00	\$280,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$280,000.00
Board of Trustees (Fund 45)						
Gloria Dei, Cold Spring, Minnesota	33,794.00	27,794.00	0.00	5,500.00	11,500.00	22,294.00
Jesus Lutheran, Seoul, South Korea	150,000.00	150,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	150,000.00
	\$183,794.00	\$177,794.00	\$0.00	\$5,500.00	\$11,500.00	\$172,294.00
Totals	\$2,496,906.59	\$2,039,470.86	\$24,476.17	\$35,420.30	\$462,855.03	\$2,028,526.73

* Defaulted on LACE loan - Synod currently making payments

WORKING CAPITAL NOTES PAYABLE

<u>Payee</u>	<u>Secured</u>	<u>Total</u>
Helping Hands	No	<u>\$25,000.00</u>
Total Working Capital		\$25,000.00

INVESTMENT PROGRAM

<u>Payee</u>	<u>Secured</u>	<u>Total</u>
Saude Cemetery Fund	No	8,562.00
Western Koshkonong Cemetery Fund	No	<u>12,321.76</u>
Total Investment Program		\$20,883.76

LIFE LOANS

<u>Payee</u>	<u>Secured</u>	<u>Total</u>
Marvin Guderian	No	\$1,000.00
Lois Petersen	No	500.00
Janet Schinker	No	<u>1,629.58</u>
Total Life Loans		<u>\$3,029.58</u>

Total Notes Payable \$48,913.34



STATISTICS

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD: STATISTICAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2016

	CONGREGATION			MEMBERS			MINISTRATIONS							SERVICES	
	State	Location	Congregation	Baptized	Communicants	Voters	Children Baptized	Adults Baptized	Children Confirmed	Adults Confirmed	Communed	Marriages	Burials	Sunday Services	Average Attendance
1	AZ	Fort Mohave	Family of God	48	45	15			1	678			1	52	22
2	AZ	Lake Havasu City	Our Saviour	140	98	3	4	1	7	1,396	1			53	82
3	AZ	Scottsdale	Redeemer	74	61	18	1		1	1,501	2			52	48
4	CA	Bell Gardens	Christ the King	20	14	4				262				52	17
5	CA	Bishop	Our Savior	13	12	4			1				1	52	9
6	CA	Irvine	Faith*	16	15	4				1,248			1	52	12
7	CA	Windsor	Christ		28	7			1	290				52	25
8	FL	Kissimmee	Peace	196	144	54	5	2	6	19	1,708		2	111	114
9	FL	Lakeland	Our Savior	54	49	18				675	1			52	30
10	FL	Lakeland	Peace			12			2	550				52	29
11	FL	Naples	Our Savior*	194	155	55	3		2	5		5	4	65	125
12	FL	Port St. Lucie	Christ	83	67	26			1	1	1,260		4	52	66
13	FL	Sebring	New Life	35	27	10				1	1,052	1	1	52	42
14	FL	Vero Beach	Grace	176	153	20	2		1	4	1,722	2	4	97	91
15	FL	Winter Haven	Resurrection	103	87	14					660	1		53	55
16	IL	Lincoln	Grace*				1		2			1		52	25
17	IL	Lombard	St. Timothy	123	108	22	1		2	1	982		1	53	47
18	IN	Hobart	Grace	220	172	16	3	1	2	2	2,400	1	6	50	117
19	IN	Portage	Hope*	108	52	22	1			1			3	52	36
20	IA	Ames	Bethany	55	41	14			1	1	873			52	44
21	IA	Calmar	Trinity*	14	14	2					170		3	49	12
22	IA	Forest City	Forest	56	37	8					390		1	50	29
23	IA	Indianola	Good Shepherd*	49	43	16			1		507		1	52	26
24	IA	Lake Mills	Lake Mills	37	33	13					98		3	17	42
25	IA	Lake Mills	Lime Creek	13	13	6					92		1	17	42
26	IA	Lawler	Saude	151	106	31	1			1	725			51	52
27	IA	New Hampton	Jerico	114	92	18	1		1		555		3	51	39
28	IA	New Hampton	Redeemer*	66	57	14		1		2	557	1	2	51	29
29	IA	Northwood	First Shell Rock	60	45	20							1	52	28
30	IA	Northwood	Somber	20	20	6					235		1	17	42
31	IA	Parkersburg	Faith	44	38	10	1		1	2	281		1	51	29
32	IA	Riceville	Immanuel	8	8	4					70			52	6
33	IA	Scarville	Center	42	41	16							1	51	10
34	IA	Scarville	Scarville	113	77	32	1		1	1	1,227	1	1	51	73
35	IA	Thompson	Zion	26	27	7					300		1	50	17
36	IA	Thornton	Richland	42	39	10							2	51	21
37	IA	Waterloo	Pilgrim	88	68	16	2		2	3	676			64	42
38	IA	Waukon	King of Grace	43	41	17	1				572		2	52	22
39	MA	Brewster	Trinity	76	71	25	2				1,616		1	51	39
40	MA	Burlington	Pinewood	134	92	32	5		8	1	788		1	52	60
41	MI	Frankenmuth	St. John's	373	307	87	2		1	2	2,516	2	9	68	124
42	MI	Hillman	Faith	71	58	15			2	1	454			52	33
43	MI	Holland	Lord of Life	58	46	24							1	52	20
44	MI	Holton	Holton*	323	243	20	2		2	2	1,280	2	1	52	70
45	MI	Midland	Holy Scripture	138	123	25	1		4	1	1,519		3	52	85

	SERVICES		EDUCATION									FINANCES						
	Special Services	Average Attendance	LES Enrollment	Preschool Enrollment	Sun Sch Enrollment	Sun Sch Teachers	Bible Class	VBS	Summer Camp	Lutheran H.S. & College	Public H.S. & College	For Home Purposes	For All Other Purposes	Value of Property	Debt on Property	Legacies		
1	15	20	12									80,626	2,900	760,000	425,000			
2	13	50	9 2 48 13									144,865	2,323	2,500,000	31,015			
3	13	24	10 7 41									2	156,977	863	1,214,000	249,365		
4	5	10	5 1 8										36,174		400,000			
5	9	4	4												800,000			
6	10	8	8															
7	6	17	2 1 11									1	51,157	1,525	567,964		44,075	
8	11	99	71	10	14	2	30	64	15	1	17	161,718	8,026	1,510,000	1,189,599			
9	14	18	10									6	76,000	2,000	500,000			
10	5	11											55,600		650,000	1,700		
11	15	97	30 4 20 120									2	259,912	5,370	1,639,523	103,401	6,500	
12	13	32	73		22	3	16			2	7	148,761	7,767	1,700,000	848,050			
13	14	38	4 1 12										36,017	6,030	426,162		91,234	
14	17	58	78	12	6	43	95				2	151,210	18,326	1,113,500				
15	10	40	35										108,166			3,089		
16	7	13	6 9									4						
17	16	27	1		6	3	32				13	147,387	20,069	1,000,000	28,891	23,548		
18	12	96	45 5 54 46									28	138,861	24,013	800,000		257,719	
19	15		8 3 8 17									11	68,624	690				
20	17	25	14 3 22 37									1	72,805	373	851,000			
21	13	7	3															
22	15	19	8 2 15 20 10									6	17,000	1,000			190,000	
23	15	19	2 4 16 16 1									7	68,086	510	135,000			
24	7	38	4 2 3 5 2									5	18,921					
25			4															
26	13	68	20 4 20 20 4									6	66,464	8,217			50,386	
27	13	68	9 3 20 20									5	51,905	1,660			91,295	
28	15	26	3 1 4 7															
29	11	14	7 4 2 7 2									6	33,676	8,540				
30	1	45	7									3	22,795	882				
31	9	31	8 2 8 10 1									2	36,148	850	1,060,000		159,820	
32			4										7,905	1,500	20,000			
33	5	28											32,000					
34	13	59	14		30	5	25	30	3	4	3	105,000	12,000					
35	8	15											16,000	500				
36	12	16	1 1 15									2	51,726	5,000	100,000			
37	11	29	19 4 8 10									6	58,723	5,917	1,500,000		93,000	
38	13	17	1 11										52,871	5,000	100,000			
39	15	24	3 3 15									2	102,000	3,000	800,000		300,000	
40	11	22	9 4 15 12 6									14	137,728	17,566	1,200,000		5,000	
41	17	82	5 5 35 14									6	231,316	18,629	3,000,000		325,134	
42	3	32	10 2 8 19									16	36,414	1,180	255,000			
43	8	11	2 1 7 10										46,180					
44	16	31	40 4 15 50									12	124,981	4,034	1,000,000	144,700	4,000	
45	14	67	15 4 61									6	159,924	38,728	2,900,000			

* Current statistics not provided # Not yet a member of the synod

	CONGREGATION			MEMBERS			MINISTRATIONS							SERVICES	
	State	Location	Congregation	Baptized	Communicants	Voters	Children Baptized	Adults Baptized	Children Confirmed	Adults Confirmed	Communed	Marriages	Burials	Sunday Services	Average Attendance
46	MI	Rogers City	Trinity	33	25	12	1	1		444		1		52	27
47	MI	Saginaw	Gloria Dei	205	185	70			3	1,880		10		52	75
48	MI	Suttons Bay	First	52	43	12				462		1		52	26
49	MN	Albert Lea	Our Savior's	402	300	127	2	1	2	6	1,695	3	6	52	80
50	MN	Apple Valley	Heritage	245	187	68	4		3		2,534	1	2	86	159
51	MN	Audubon	Immanuel	136	102	40			1	1	967	2	1	52	55
52	MN	Bagley	Our Savior's	141	124	10					648		1	52	44
53	MN	Belview	Our Savior's	77	65	18	4				622			51	34
54	MN	Belview	Rock Dell	74	63	18				1	404	1	2	50	24
55	MN	Clara City	Faith	81	63	30			2		543		1	50	49
56	MN	Cold Spring	Gloria Dei	161	137	47	7	1	1	1	1,258			52	69
57	MN	Cottonwood	English	137	117	24			2	1	673	3	5	52	39
58	MN	Crookston	Grace* #	36	35	10	1		1		306			52	14
59	MN	E Grand Forks	River Heights	127	112	21	4		3	3	792	2		52	63
60	MN	Farmington	Hope				2			4	300	1		52	40
61	MN	Gaylord	Norwegian Grove	97	80	39	1		1		309			49	32
62	MN	Golden Valley	King of Grace	704	527	228	20	1	7	8	5,701	8	4	51	407
63	MN	Grygla	St. Petri #	33	18	8	1		1		312			50	15
64	MN	Hartland	Hartland	209	150	68			2		360	1	3	51	41
65	MN	Lengby	St. Paul				2		6		708	1	4	52	43
66	MN	Luverne	Bethany	118	94	37					992		3	51	48
67	MN	Manchester	Manchester	54	43	16	1		1	2	192			50	15
68	MN	Mankato	Mt. Olive	985	714	296	16		19		8,921	5	6	140	455
69	MN	North Mankato	Peace	497	355	162	9	2	6	10	4,254	6	2	118	279
70	MN	Oklee	Oak Park	150	98	30	3		1		1,170		2	51	65
71	MN	Princeton	Bethany	212	164	32			3	3	2,172		4	52	68
72	MN	Princeton	Our Savior's	223	171	75	1	1		1	1,144			52	59
73	MN	Rogers	Redeeming Grace	166	128	45	7		3		1,249	3	2	104	92
74	MN	St. Peter	Norseland	220	171	85	3				814	2	2	50	88
75	MN	Tracy	Zion*	142	124	26			2		626			50	36
76	MN	Trail	Mt. Olive	30	10	3					192			50	10
77	MN	Trail	Nazareth	72	44	15	1		1		500			50	26
78	MN	Ulen	Calvary	58	51	18			2		244		1	51	29
79	MO	Cape Girardeau	Scriptural	94	81	5	1			4	226			50	27
80	MO	Carthage	Faith	63	59	17		1		4	1,231		1	52	45
81	MO	Jefferson City	Peace*	75	58	20					910			52	48
82	MO	Osage Beach	Ascension* #	12	9	4					59			44	7
83	MO	Piedmont	Grace*												
84	OH	Bowling Green	Abiding Word	165	145	54	2		3		1,463		2	52	74
85	OH	Deshler	Peace	292	230	48		1	2	1	1,089	1	3	52	94
86	OH	Weston	Grace	88	58	11	1				463		3	52	23
87	OR	Grants Pass	Our Savior*	69	60	19		1		4	1,180			51	35
88	OR	Gresham	Saved by Grace	20	94	20	3		2		1,067	1		52	43
89	OR	Hood River	Concordia*	27	24	7	1				361		1	52	21
90	OR	Klamath Falls	Christ	67	51	22					536			52	24
91	OR	Medford	Faith*	61	47	13			1		626			52	37
92	OR	Myrtle Creek	St. Matthew*	48	44	12	2			2		1		52	25
93	OR	North Bend	Resurrection*	21	19	2	1			1			3	53	13

	SERVICES		EDUCATION										FINANCES				
	Special Services	Average Attendance	LES Enrollment	Preschool Enrollment	Sun Sch Enrollment	Sun Sch Teachers	Bible Class	VBS	Summer Camp	Lutheran H.S. & College	Public H.S. & College	For Home Purposes	For All Other Purposes	Value of Property	Debt on Property	Legacies	
46	4	20			8	2	12				1	36,589	3,500	150,000			
47	12	57	4	2	10	3	30	74			2	164,227	1,400	1,500,000	540,008	35,979	
48	13	15			2	2	8	39			2	56,329	2,000	400,000			
49	12	38	0	0	25	4	30	15	6	1	10	105,000	9,800	400,000		311,000	
50	14	77	6	39	36	8	60	45		5	15	320,269	38,142	1,571,100	1,200,000		
51	15	26			9	2	15	18			11	100,214	7,351	379,773			
52	18	29			9	3	12	23	6	1	1	48,817	20,079	379,773			
53	8	25			5	2	12	8				47,435	632				
54	7	21			5	2	12	8			4	43,327	420				
55	15	48			15	7		50				138,107	7,205		11,572		
56	13	34		53	7	2	28	24			8	133,313	12,727	1,500,000	666,700		
57	11	31			5	2	15			2	4	83,855	8,395	650,000			
58	8	7									1	46,266	20	175,000			
59	12	36			9	3	18	38			15	113,837	3,535	1,000,000			
60	2	30			15	10	20			1	3	40,000	3,000	2,300,000	2,300,000		
61	9	29	4		5	2	19	4				28,942	11,368	1,047,000			
62	16	223	175	33	65	6	125	101		35	27	727,130	80,801	5,225,000			
63	6	9			2	1											
64	9	46			20	3	6	26	6	1	16	66,276	648	400,000		51,078	
65	9	36			12	2	12	23	6	1	1	51,297	2,947	194,000			
66	15	31			9	3	13	18	1	1	2	94,862	9,820	375,000		16,940	
67	10	11			1	1	3	1			6	51,876	515	125,000		103,369	
68	17	208	147		89	16	100	142	33	57	68	1,133,499	22,240	3,819,545	979,334	400,470	
69	15	167	52	45	65	8	95	100	6	21	9	366,032	42,320	1,264,328	576,935		
70	4	30			30	4	10	20	3			55,000	3,600				
71	12	56	4		23	7	24	20	8		13	85,699	10,795				
72	11	36	1		13	4	13	22		1	6	130,773	7,252				
73	11	51		13	36	10	18			3	5	177,967	3,524	975,000	1,282,348		
74	9	74	8		26	9	9	26	2		8	91,594	24,152	3,308,000			
75	12	35			14	4		10			7	59,497	9,867				
76	7	7															
77	4	15			20	3		16	3								
78	10	15			9	3	6	22			6	46,843	2,010	150,000			
79	13	9			4	3	3	6			3	32,648	575	350,000		8,750	
80	11	47			4	1	50	33		4	3	92,000	6,250	1,125,000		415,000	
81	12	28			8	2	10	21		1	6	56,024	3,576				
82									23	1		9,045		2,500			
83																	
84	15	32			12	4	25	15			6	151,065	6,030	666,250			
85	12	52			12	7	32	14			9	114,813	21,945	377,132		189,224	
86	12	11			4	2	6	11			2	61,828	2,920	350,000			
87	11	17			1	1	33			1	2	62,559	1,592	350,000			
88	13	24	1		6	2	12		1		7	93,491	1,303	1,000,000	140,000		
89	12	10				1					4	34,867	3,000	350,000			
90	12	19			4	2	11				2			750,000			
91	14	20			9	2	8	25									
92	11	15															
93	15	9					7				3	13,816					

* Current statistics not provided # Not yet a member of the synod

	SERVICES		EDUCATION										FINANCES				
	Special Services	Average Attendance	LES Enrollment	Preschool Enrollment	Sun Sch Enrollment	Sun Sch Teachers	Bible Class	VBS	Summer Camp	Lutheran H.S. & College	Public H.S. & College	For Home Purposes	For All Other Purposes	Value of Property	Debt on Property	Legacies	
94	12	11			5	1	6					18,660	300				
95	4	18			12	1	6	17			1	33,507	2,657	150,000			
96	11	15															
97	8	36	9		5	1	6										
98	5	14			14	2	5					65,000		380,000			
99	11	19			8	1	14					41,000	4,500				
100	12	47			17	4	16	42	3	2	4	61,579	5,852	800,000	605,000		
101	15	32			11	4	33		10	3	7	153,999	11,041	1,500,000	698,592		
102	14	32			3	4	15			2	9	76,528	400	1,250,000			
103	10	29	19	17	6	2	12	50	3		3	217,969	416	1,653,600	226,160		
104	10	30			15	4	6	25			3						
105	13	163	76	38	34	11	52	110	120	15	30	382,696	386,564	2,079,640			
106	26	59	81	8	10	3	25	30	11	15	14	769,893	14,232	5,148,189	821,771		
107	10	18			4	2	15		1		2	88,533	220	1,750,000			
108	5	7					5				2	23,314	210	350,000			
109	11	35			14	8	19	23	4	1	9	74,768	10,782	273,500		20,000	
110	11		9	4	48	4	85		12	1	23	336,730	17,695	1,383,700	644,389		
111	12	22			3	1	9				6	70,272	8,107	1,000,000		25,000	
112	10	27			5	1	10				4	69,721	7,589	700,000			
113	14	33		24	42	9	40	40	4	3	17	279,685	9,000	1,000,000	50,000		
114	14	19					6				6	37,203	9,612	800,000			
115	8	21			4	2	15				2	29,411	3,153				
116	15	46	2		14	5	18	15		2	4	154,180	17,100	1,900,000			
117	16	28					15				8	39,200	1,800	200,000			
118	11	20	5		3	2	10				1	67,735	3,600	471,000			
119	14	193	80	20	50	10	90	112	20	16	39	499,514	78,167	5,964,282	2,896,000	178,684	
120	10	19			3	1	10				4	54,000	500		30,000		
121	12	61			15	7	35				14	109,082	11,011			47,004	
122	7	20										27,540		250,000			
123	15	153	55	7	20	5	80	40		13	27	530,000	55,000	1,650,000	460,000		
124	11	13			5	2	15					64,839	1,640	125,700	40,462		
125	11				9	2		30			4						
126	10	9															
127	11	41			11	4	12	8	3		11	92,634	15,232	500,000			
128	15	142	56	5	26	8	65	38	5	28	28	490,850	35,450	4,000,000	255,971	5,000	
129	10	7			5	2		7			1						
	1,422	4,759	953	396	1,466	375	2,416	2,247	340	252	793	13,699,692	1,344,073	96,391,161	17,450,051	3,449,210	

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The foundation is ready to serve those who are concerned about their responsibility to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as well as those who are concerned about the needs of our church. It stands ready to serve as no other agency can.

A. GIFTS AND DONATIONS OF MONEY

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation is ready to receive, administer, and distribute gifts of money designated for the general work of our church or any specific phase of its activities. Such gifts may be designated for any purpose the donor may desire, and they may be divided in any way.

In keeping with the donor’s wishes, the principal may be used for the purpose designated, or the principle may be held intact while the income alone is used for the work of the church.

B. GIFTS OF REAL ESTATE AND OTHER PROPERTY

The foundation is ready to receive, administer, and distribute gifts of real estates, securities, or other property designated for the general work of our church or for any specific phase of its activities (including local congregations). If desired the foundation is ready to make arrangements whereby the donor will receive a gift annuity agreement income for life or a life income agreement.

C. BEQUESTS THROUGH WILLS

In a very real sense your will is a continuation of your own life and influence. It is an expression of your wishes, a document that acts as your representative in distributing the material things you leave behind. Only you know how you wish them distributed. Only you have the power and the right to make your own will. If you don't have a will, the state makes a will for you through the laws that apply when a person leaves no will.

The ELS Foundation urgently appeals to you: Make a will, and make your will a "Christian" will by remembering the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church in it.

Gift Annuity Agreements, Life Income Gift Agreements, Life Insurance Gifts, Gifts Through Trusts, and Memorial Gifts, may be used; and the foundation is ready to serve you or counsel with you.

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(insert sum of money or description of property which sum, or property, or proceeds thereof)
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INDEX

Anniversary Offering, Report of the committee	133
Bethany Lutheran College, Report of the Board of Regents	87
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Report of the Board of Regents.	94
Centennial, Report of the committee	145
Christian Service, Report of the board	124
Clergy Assistance Program (CAP).	248
Convention Committees	17
Convention Day by Day	6
Credentials, Action of the synod.	82
Directories:	
Bethany Lutheran College	249
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary	254
Boards and Committees	237
Church bodies in fellowship with the ELS	234
Clergy	278
Congregations	266
High Schools	248
Lutheran Elementary Schools.	255
Lutheran Elementary School Teachers	258
Officers of the synod	236
Other Addresses	248
World Outreach.	245
Doctrine, Action of the synod	86
Doctrine, Report of the committee.	83
Education, Report of the board	118
Elementary Education, Action of the synod	122
Finances:	
Action of the synod	144
Equalization, Report of the committee	132
Financial Statements.	169
Higher Education, Action of the synod	99
Minutes, Action of the synod	166
Miscellaneous, Action of the synod	164
Missions:	
Home Outreach, Action of the synod.	106
Home Outreach, Report of the board.	101
World Outreach, Action of the synod.	117
World Outreach, Report of the board.	107
Parish Services, Action of the synod	129
Pastoral Conference Records and Resolutions, Action of the synod	167
Pictures:	
Gernander, Jerome	67
Hope Lutheran Church (Farmington, Minnesota)	27
Jerico Lutheran Church (New Hampton, Iowa)	27
King of Grace Lutheran Church (Golden Valley, Minnesota)	27
Peace Lutheran Church (Kissimmee, Florida).	27
Pittenger, Tony.	52
Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church (Rogers, Minnesota).	27
Schmeling, Timothy.	38

Trinity Lutheran Church (West Bend, Wisconsin)	27
Planning and Coordinating, Report of the committee	135
President's Message.	22
President's Message and Report, Action of the synod	165
President's Report.	26
Regents, Report of the board	92
Representatives eligible to vote	13
Roll Call.	11
Statistical Report	226
Synodical Membership, Action of the synod.	80
Synod Review, Report of the committee.	147
Trustees, Report of the board	138
Worship, Report of the committee.	128
Youth Outreach, Report of the board	123

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