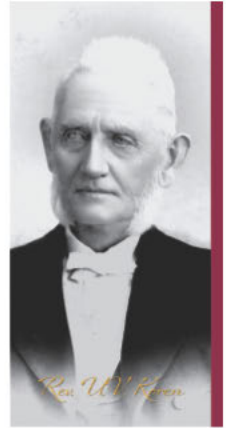
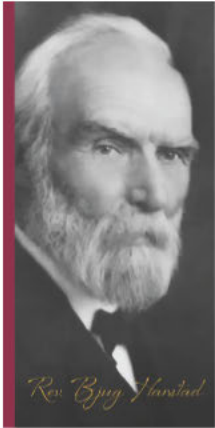


2018



**Report of the  
Centennial Convention  
of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Synod**

Mankato, Minnesota  
June 17–21, 2018



**REPORT OF THE  
CENTENNIAL CONVENTION  
OF THE  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**

**and the**

**62ND ANNUAL MEETING  
OF  
BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE, INC.**

**and the**

**3RD ANNUAL MEETING  
OF  
LUTHERAN SCHOOLS OF AMERICA, INC.**

Convention Theme:

**Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done:  
His Enduring Grace**

Essayist:

The Rev. Peter Faugstad

Compiled by

Rev. Craig A. Ferkenstad, Secretary

Held at

BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE

Mankato, Minnesota

June 17–21, 2018

Artwork by Paul Fries

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Convention Day by Day	
Day by Day .....	7
Roll Call .....	16
2018 Representatives Eligible to Vote .....	18
Convention Committees .....	22
President's Message and Report	
President's Message .....	26
President's Report .....	31
Convention Essay	
Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: His Enduring Grace .....	40
Reports and Action	
Doctrine Committee .....	86
Ad Hoc Committee on Apologetics .....	91
Bethany Lutheran College .....	93
Board of Regents .....	97
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary .....	101
Board for Home Outreach .....	108
Board for World Outreach .....	118
Board for Education .....	128
Board for Youth Outreach .....	133
Board for Christian Service .....	135
Committee on Worship .....	138
Equalization Committee .....	141
Anniversary Offering Committee .....	142
Planning and Coordinating Committee .....	144
Board of Trustees .....	146
Centennial Committee .....	154
Synod Review Committee .....	155
Memorials .....	163
Financial Statements	
Consolidated Financial Statements and Supplementary Information .....	169
Treasurer's Financial Statements & Supplemental Information .....	195
Statistics	
Statistical Report for the Year 2017 .....	220
Directories	
Church Bodies in Fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod .....	228
Evangelical Lutheran Synod .....	230
Addresses of Board and Committee Members .....	235
World Outreach .....	238
Other Addresses .....	241
Area High Schools .....	241



Bethany Lutheran College . . . . . 242

Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary . . . . . 246

Lutheran Elementary Schools, Preschools & Early Childhood Centers. . . . . 247

Directory of Lutheran Elementary School and Preschool Teachers . . . . . 250

Congregations . . . . . 258

Clergy Roster . . . . . 270

Periodicals . . . . . 282

Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation . . . . . 282



# THE CONVENTION DAY BY DAY



*Clergy at Lime Creek Lutheran Church — June 16, 2018*

## THE CONVENTION DAY BY DAY

### SYNOD SUNDAY, JUNE 17, 2018

The Centennial Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Bethany Lutheran College Corporation, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Lutheran Schools of America began with a festival Synod Sunday Service in Trinity Chapel beginning at 4:30 p.m. with four hundred individuals in attendance. This date marked exactly

one hundred years since the reorganizing resolutions for the synod were adopted on June 17, 1918. ELS President John Moldstad preached the sermon's exordium and ELS Secretary Craig Ferkenstad preached the sermon which was based on Psalm 145:3-6 under the synod's anniversary theme, "Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done." As we gather during this centennial year, we first wish

to proclaim God's wonders within our own hearts. His amazing deeds cannot be explained because of anything in us or because of our deserving but only as a result of God's undeserved grace in Jesus Christ "without any merit or worthiness in me." But if our proclamation of thanks is limited to within our own hearts, then we do a disservice to those who gathered at Lime Creek one hundred years ago and even greater, we do a disservice to our Savior-God. With this centennial anniversary comes not only a time of thanksgiving but also a time of responsibility. As we gather as a "little synod" to "Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done," we contemplate His wonderful works in our hearts and we proclaim His great deeds for all to hear. Let that be the legacy of this centennial observance: that we continue to proclaim God's majesty, the Lord's awesome works, and the Savior's great deeds to a new generation and to a generation yet to be born.

During the Synod Sunday Service, the Rev. Shawn Stafford (Hartland, Minnesota) served as the liturgist and the Rev. Adolph Harstad (Mankato, Minnesota) served as the "Klokker" who led the opening and closing prayers in the Norwegian language. The lengthy service also included a sixty-voice Choral Union Choir under the direction of Prof. Dennis Marzolf. Selections included, "The Lord Has Been Mindful" (S.S. Wesley), "Te deum laudamus in B-flat" (C.V. Stanford), and "The Lord Bless You and Keep You" (C.P. Lutkin). At the conclusion of the service, a Christian Day School chorus sang, "Skriv dig Jesus på mit hjerte" (On My Heart Imprint Thine Image) prior to its English rendition by a massed choir.

During his welcome, President Moldstad remarked about the day's weather. He commented that one delegate said the Lord has looked upon us with favor by giving one degree of temperature for each year of the synod's history.



Following dinner served in the college's Great Room, the ELS Historical Society served desserts in the backyard of the ELS Ottesen Museum. The previous day the Historical Society conducted its annual meeting at Our Savior's Lutheran Church (Albert Lea, Minnesota) which was site of the 1919 constituting convention and at Lime Creek Lutheran Church (Lake Mills, Iowa) which was the site of the 1918 reorganizing convention. About 150 people were in attendance.

## MONDAY, JUNE 18, 2018

The first working day of the 1 convention was opened with a devotion conducted at 9:00 a.m. in Trinity Chapel. The chaplain, the Rev. Bernt Tweit (Madison, Wisconsin) preached the opening sermon based on 1 Timothy 1:12–17 under the theme "The Lord's Grace to Us." Tying in with the theme of the convention, "Proclaim the Wonders God has Done: His Enduring Grace," he said in order to understand God's grace we also need to understand God's mercy. God's mercy is not receiving what we deserve, while God's grace is receiving what we don't deserve. We are not punished as we deserve because of our sin, rather Jesus was punished for us (that's mercy) and Jesus gives us something that we don't deserve, the riches of heaven, by his life and death and glorious resurrection (that's grace). The service followed the Order of Matins, including Psalm 136 and the hymns "May God Bestow on Us His Grace" and "Lord Jesus Christ, My Savior Blest."

After those in attendance assembled in the convention auditorium, Secretary Ferkenstad announced that the roll had been gathered at the credentials desk. Eighty-eight voting members and twenty-eight advisory members responded to the initial gathering of the roll; eighty-nine voting members and thirty-nine advisory members were present by the end of the first working day. By the conclusion of the convention, there were 134 members present in addition to 118 delegates who registered their attendance.



At 10:05 a.m. President Moldstad declared the Centennial Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Bethany Lutheran College Corporation and the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

As President Moldstad read the President's Message, he said "This is not the kind of celebration where we focus on our own accomplishments, glory in our pedigree, or become self-absorbed in elevating the characteristics and personalities of the dedicated men and women who have gone before us." Rather because of the chief blessing we have received in Christ, in addition to the whole range of goodness we have inherited, we rejoice and say in the words of Luther's beloved hymn, *Proclaim the wonders God has done!* During this centennial celebration, the president urged the synod to respond by pondering, preserving, and proclaiming. We *ponder* what it means to belong to a confessional Lutheran church body. We *preserve* the faith that has been given to us by recommitting ourselves to the personal use of the Means of Grace and the need to teach "the full counsel of God." We *proclaim* the saving gospel as a key element

of our anniversary so that others may know of God's love and the certainty of heaven. "So, onward with our mission let us go!"

Bethany Lutheran College President Gene Pfeifer spoke about the college. He began by quoting a statement made at the 1927 convention when the synod assumed the ownership and operation of the college, "Once we have discovered that the school is a necessity, we will discover we can afford it. We can do a lot of things that we think are absolutely necessary once they have become a matter of life or death to us." He said that there are challenges in higher education which must be addressed. Bethany has been operating under a deficit budget since 2008 which has been covered by reserve funds but the resources are nearly depleted. The college has taken action in reductions of seven faculty positions and one staff position. In addition two majors and one minor have been dropped. President Pfeifer also explained possible future campus facilities and concluded by saying, "BLC is in a good position. I personally feel more optimistic now about Bethany's future than ever before." He also said, "God is richly blessing the action of the 'little Norwegian Synod' in 1927."

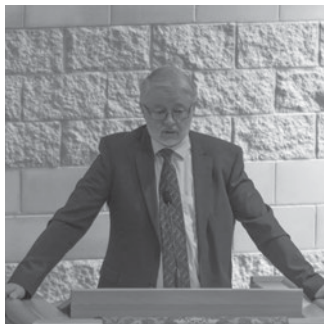
Guests were introduced: Segundo & Lucia Gutierrez from Peru, Tim & Ellen Erickson who have just returned from Chile, and Egil & Nina Edvardsen from Norway.

The afternoon session began with a devotion in remembrance of the faithful departed during this past year. The chaplain read Job 19:25–27 and led the assembly in prayer. The devotion also included the singing of the hymn, "Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart."

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

## TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2018

The Tuesday morning devotion was conducted by the Rev. Egil Edvardsen (Lutheran Confessional Church–Norway). Basing his message upon Romans 3:23–24, he used the theme "Justified By Grace." The Rev. Edvardsen said it is wonderful to look into a mirror and see the friendly, kind eyes of Jesus rather than everything lacking in us. God sees us as we are, but when He looks at us, He sees Jesus. In baptism we were clothed in Jesus and His righteousness. These are wonderful words to hear when we have sinned against God. In the text, the apostle Paul is stating the core of the Christian gospel. In the Norwegian translation, it says salvation is *undeserved*. We deserved to be damned, but instead are acquitted by God's grace. This means that He does not intend us to give Him something before He gives us forgiveness. God's grace is unconditional and when we look into a mirror, we do not see ourselves but rather a sinner who has been justified by grace in Jesus Christ. The service followed the Order of Matins, including Psalm 136 and selected verses from the hymns "Salvation Unto Us Is Come" and "Thy Love, O Gracious God and Lord." The convention chaplain served as the liturgist.



At the conclusion of his message, the Rev. Edvardsen also brought a "little greeting" from the Lutheran Confessional Church–Norway. The fortieth anniversary of the first congregation in Norway has just been observed. Ole Brandal, who was a lay preacher within the Lutheran Church of Norway, left with a group of faithful Christians and founded the first confessional Lutheran congregation in Norway. One year later Brandal quoted Lamentations 3:22–23 ("Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness"). If Brandal could use these words after one year of existence, how much more can we use them after forty years in Norway and one hundred years for the ELS. It is because of God's mercy that we exist as a church body. Humanly



speaking there is no reason that the church on earth exists but is because of the Lord's love that we are not consumed. We give all glory for our existence to the Lord. The Rev. Edvardsen wished God's richest blessings upon the ELS in the future and upon our precious fellowship. He concluded by saying, "Welcome to Norway."

Following the normal preliminaries, the Synodical Membership Committee reported. Two congregations and four pastors were received into membership. The new members were invited to the stage and welcomed by the president.

The convention then proceeded with the election of a president and vice-president. With 211 eligible voters present, Secretary Ferkenstad announced that the Rev. John Moldstad Jr. was elected to a four-year term as the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod by a majority of 165 votes out of 210 votes cast. President Moldstad expressed his appreciation to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. On a first ballot, the Rev. Glenn Obenberger was elected to a four-year term as the vice-president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod by a majority of 109 out of 199 votes cast.

The convention then continued with the report of the Committee on Higher Education and Mr. Harold Theiste was thanked for thirty-three years of service on the Board of Regents.

The afternoon session began with an observance of the anniversaries of ordinations. The chaplain read 1 Corinthians 3:6-11 and led the assembly in prayer. The hymn "Now Thank We All Our God" was sung. The honorees were asked to rise and be acknowledged.

The Rev. Steven Lange was welcomed as an observer from the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).

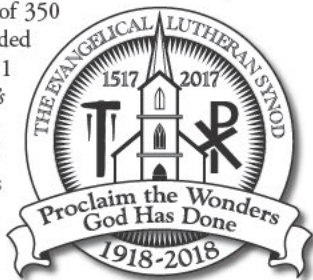
After the normal preliminaries, President Moldstad introduced the essayist, the Rev. Peter Faugstad (Lawler, Iowa). The essayist read the first part of the essay, *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: His Enduring Grace – Who We are*. Discussion followed.

The Centennial Committee was represented by the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, committee chairman. He introduced the Rev. Andrew Soule who spoke on behalf of the ELS Historical Society. A special edition of *Oak Leaves*, the newsletter of the ELS Historical Society, was distributed containing the 1918 report of the Lime Creek convention as printed in the Norwegian-American newspaper *Amerika*. The Rev. Jeffrey Hendrix then introduced the centennial video, "Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: The Journey of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod," which was shown before the convention recessed to Trinity Chapel.

The Anniversary Program was conducted for a crowd of 350 people in Trinity Chapel at 5:00 p.m. The program included

the reading of the history of the synod from the 2001 edition of the ELS *Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism*. President Moldstad served as the master of ceremonies as greetings were brought from WELS President Mark Schroeder, CELC Vice-President Thomas Nass, Bethany Lutheran College President Gene Pfeifer, and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary President Gaylin Schmeling. A written greeting was brought from ELS President Emeritus George Orvick. The program

included a solo rendition of the hymn, *Den Store Hvide Flok Vi Se* ("Behold a Host Arrayed in White"), and the singing of the hymn "Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart." The program concluded by singing two hymns verses written for this anniversary by the Rev. Paul Madson along with the anniversary hymn verse "Dear Christians One and All rejoice" written by Dr. Martin Luther. Lite hors d'oeuvres were served in Honsey Hall.



## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2018

The Wednesday morning devotion was conducted by the Rev. Segundo Gutierrez (Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Peru) with the Rev. David Haueser serving as the translator. Under the theme “By Grace I’m Saved,” he based his message upon Ephesians 2:8–9 and expressed thanks to be able to share the word of God. He continued to say that this is one of the most important texts in scripture because it tells of salvation by faith



in Jesus Christ. It is important to speak of this doctrine because many churches teach that salvation is by works, but scripture says the exact opposite. Scripture says that salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ. That means that salvation is free. If salvation is free, we can not attribute it to any human merit. We are present at this convention not because we are intelligent or very good but because of the grace of God. This is the good news that we want to proclaim wherever we go and wherever we are throughout the world. The service followed the Order of Matins, including Psalm 136 and selected verses from the hymns “By Grace I’m Saved” and “In Jesus I Find Rest and Peace.” The convention chaplain served as the liturgist.

After the normal preliminaries, the convention turned its attention to the report of the Doctrine Committee. Due to quickly changing social conditions and attitudes in regard to sex and gender identity, the committee was asked to prepare a statement that clearly states the Biblical position, which is therefore the position of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and consequently of the institutions of the synod (e.g. Bethany Lutheran College). The position statement was adopted.

The Worship Committee was represented by the Rev. P.Faugstad who made a presentation on behalf of the committee explaining the resources available on the synod’s website.

At 10:30 a.m. a presentation was made by the Board for World Outreach in observance of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of mission work in Peru. Former missionaries were introduced





and the Rev. T. Heyn spoke on behalf of the board. A greeting also was brought by the Rev. Segundo Gutierrez (with translation by David Haeuser) in which he said, "I want to greet all of you with greetings from the Peruvian Lutheran Church. I am a product of the missionaries in Peru. I greet all those who worked as missionaries in Peru and pastors I have met at this convention." A letter was read from Mrs. Helen Miller. Former missionaries Tim & Ellen Erickson along with David Haeuser were presented with gifts of gratitude and addressed the convention. World Mission Coordinator, T. Heyn, noted that fifty years ago, the synod commissioned the first missionaries to Peru and now the final American missionaries have returned. Yet our foreign mission work continues. He spoke about open doors which include contacts which have been made in Kenya.

Before the noon recess, the Rev. A. Pittinger spoke on behalf of the Lutheran Military Support Group.

The Wednesday afternoon session began at 1:00 p.m. with a reading of 2 Corinthians 12:8–9, prayer, and a vocal selection from participants in the Summer Music Camp.

After the normal preliminaries, the convention continued to consider the report of the Committee on Higher Education and Mr. Paul Chamberlain was thanked his thirty-three years of service on the Board of Regents. The report of the Parish Services committee also was considered.

At 1:30 p.m. President Moldstad introduced the essayist, the Rev. Peter Faugstad (Lawler, Iowa). The essayist read the second part of the essay, *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: His Enduring Grace – What We Have*. Discussion followed and thanks was extended to the essayist.

The remainder of the afternoon session consisted of hearing the reports of the committee on Miscellaneous Matters, Elementary Education, and Parish Services.

The Communion Service was conducted in Trinity Chapel beginning at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. G. Obenberger (Parkland, Washington) preached the sermon based upon Acts 4:5–2. We considered the text from the Acts of the Apostles (4:5–21) in which the Jewish Council charged Peter and John not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. Based on their response we focused on how: "We Cannot *but* Proclaim the Wonders We Have Heard God Has Done for Us." As natural as it is for us as Christians to speak of the good news of God's salvation in Christ, we know that at times we have failed in our speaking by being filled with fear and did not speak when given the opportunities in our vocations and have even failed in our speaking by doing so while glorifying ourselves. But this good news is so great that through its power our very sins in this regard are all forgiven by the blood of Christ and we are dressed in Jesus' perfection, including His perfect speaking, never withheld due to fear nor done to promote Himself over others. The greatest wonder, which God has accomplished, is the justification of all the wicked—you, me and all sinners—through the life, death and resurrection of His Son. The Rev. J. Mayer (Rogers, Minnesota) served as the liturgist for the service and the students of the BLC Summer Music Camp participated in the Service.

## **THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2018**

The Thursday morning devotion was conducted by the Rev. Kenneth Mellon (West Bend, Wisconsin). Using the theme "The Lord Is Gracious," he based his message upon Psalm 103:1,8–13. He said, people get various invitations to events or celebrations including the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. King David also offers us a invitation to celebrate as we remember the Lord is gracious. God does not judge us as our sins deserve. He has judged Jesus instead. Jesus has taken away our sins as far as the east is from the west. Although our sins are many, He has covered them as high as the heavens are above the earth. We have every reason to celebrate. Jesus' death and resurrection declare to the world that His victory is complete for our salvation. By faith we will gladly accept Jesus' invitation to join Him in heaven forever. Our praise to Him for his amazing grace will never end. The service followed

the Order of Matins, including Psalm 136 and selected verses from the hymns “My Soul, Now Bless Thy Maker” and “How Blest Are They Who Hear God’s Word.”

During the morning session, presentations were made by the Rev. T.Hartwig on behalf of the Board for Home Outreach in which he urged the synod to continue to support the work of missions financially but especially with prayerful support and also by the Rev. D.Basel who made a presentation both on behalf of the Anniversary Offering and the work of the Giving Counselor. During this same session, reports were considered from the committees on Home Outreach, World Outreach, Finances, President’s Message & Report, Credentials, and Pastoral Conference Records.

In his closing remarks, Pres. Moldstad referred to a comment by former professor George Lillegard writing in the 1953 publication *Faith of our Fathers*. This book was published as a commemorative history in connection with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the old Norwegian Synod. The remark by Lillegard was this: “Each new generation needs to re-study the Word of God, not with the idea that it shall find something better than its fathers knew, but with the hope that it may acquire and make very real for itself the same saving truths by which its fathers lived and died.” Moldstad then referred to Hebrews 13:7–8 and especially to the words “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” What a message we have! May God bless our efforts to proclaim this truth from generation to generation.

At 10:56 a.m. the president declared the Centennial Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Bethany Lutheran College Corporation, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 the hymn, “Holy Father, In Thy Mercy.”

During this centennial convention, oral greetings were received from:

The Rev. Egil Edvardsen (Lutheran Confessional Church—Norway).

The Rev. Sigundo Gutierrez (Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Peru).

The Rev. Thomas Nass (Vice-president, Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference).

President Gene Pfeifer (Bethany Lutheran College).

President Gaylin Schmeling (Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary).

President Mark Schroeder (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod).

Written greetings were received from:

The Rev Gundar Bakulis (Confessional Lutheran Church in Latvia).

Harald R (King of Norway).

President Michael Herbst (Evangelical Lutheran Free Church—Germany).

The Rev. Petr Krakora and Martin Vrsecky (Czech Evangelical Lutheran Church).

The Rev. Dennis Klatt (WELS, Minnesota District president).

The Rev. Solomon Mamidi (Lutheran Mission of Salvation—India).

Mrs. Loyd (Helen) Miller.

The Rev. George Orvick (President-Emeritus, Evangelical Lutheran Synod).

The Rev. Ilars Plume (Confessional Lutheran Church in Latvia).

Missionary Terry Schultz.

Artur Villares (Lutheran Church of Portugal).

President Mark Zarling (Martin Luther College).

Anniversary Hymn:

verses 1–2: The Rev. Paul Madson, 2018  
verse 3: Dr. Martin Luther, 1523 (ELH 378)

*One hundred years, the paths of old  
Still guide our faith and mission  
Our fathers fought for Scripture's gold:  
That in our lost condition—  
Our own good works contribute naught,  
That Christ alone salvation wrought,  
His life and death our ransom.*

*Our fathers' God we honor here,  
Our faith in Him remaining,  
We tremble not, we fear no ill  
With Him our souls sustaining.  
We in His Gospel find sweet rest  
His ways the kindest and the best,  
New blessings ever gaining.*

*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.*

Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done  
Soli Deo Gloria



*Synod Sunday, June 17, 2018*

## ROLL CALL

### 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, S.Brockdorf, M.Brooks, E.Bryant, T.Buelow, J.Burkhardt, A.Burmeister, C.Dale, M.Dale, J.Dalke, C.Eisenbeis, E.Ekhoff, D.Emmons, M.Ernst, M.Faugstad, P.Faugstad, A.Ferkenstad, R.Flohr, T.Fox, K.Freimuth, J.Gernander, W.Grimm, S.Gullixson, C.Hahnke, W.Halvorson, A.Hamilton, R.Harting, D.Hartwig, T.Hartwig, G.Haugen, J.Hendrix, P.Heyn, E.Hoeft, M.Hoesch, J.Jacobsen, D.Jaech, J.Kassera, S.Kauffeld, C.Keeler, B.Kerkow, K.Kluge, F.Lams, P.Lange, D.Larson, R.Lawson, P.Lepak, G.Lilienthal, M.Lilienthal, D.Locklair, J.Luplow, M.Luttman, J.Madson, K.Madson, J.Mayer, 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, A.Ring, M.Rogers, D.Ruiz, S.Schmeling, G.Schmidt, P.Schneider, G.Smith, T.Smuda, A.Soule, S.Sparley, S.Stafford, D.Thompson, B.Tweit, L.Ulrich, S.Van Kampen, C.Walz, D.J.Webber, P.Webber, B.Wiechmann, T.Zenda

Excused: J.Braun, B.Leonatti, H.Mosley, P.Sullivan, J.Wilson, P.Zager

Absent: F.Fiedler, R.Fyffe, N.Krause, D.McQuality, T.Saari, J.Skogen, W.Stehr, 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

#### 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 Sr.

#### 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

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

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

*Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote*

Present: D.Basel, P.Fries, T.Heyn, J.Moldstad, 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*

Absent: Y.Kim

#### 7. Pastors emeriti:

*Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote*

Present: T.Erickson, C.Ferkenstad, E.Geistfeld, T.Gullixson, D.Haeuser, R.Holtz, H.Huhnerkoch, T.Kuster, D.Lillegard, H.Longshore, N.Madson, N.Merseth, J.Olsen, T.Skaaland, J.Smith, J.K.Smith, E.Teigen

Excused: K.Schmidt

Absent: P.Anderson, D.Bakke, H.Bartels, K.Brumble, R.Carter, M.Doepl, D.Faugstad, M.Marozick, J.Moldstad, G.Orvick, W.Petersen, J.Ruppel, F.Schmugge, E.Stubenvoll, F.Theiste, L.Vinton, R.Waters, R.Wiechmann, C.Wosje, T.Zeller

**8. Teachers serving in schools of member congregations:**

*Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote*

Present: S.Beilke, K.Klug, A.Labitzky, A.Pavelchik, L.Rude, J.Young

Excused: S.Lai

Absent: J.Gregovich, C.Zibrowski

**Inactive Membership**

*Advisory membership: Not having the right to vote*

Present: A.Harstad, S.Petersen, R.Tragas

Absent: M.Crick, J.DeDeyne, E.Gernander, B.Homan, D.Meyer

**Individuals**

Present: S.Born, M.Meyer, G.Pfeifer,

Absent: D.Bruss

## 2018 REPRESENTATIVES ELIGIBLE TO VOTE

<b>Congregation</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Delegate</b>
Abiding Shepherd	Cottage Grove, WI	Richard Ziegler
Abiding Word	Bowling Green, OH	Daniel English
Ascension	St. Helens, OR	Ray Biggs
Ascension	Eau Claire, WI	
Bethany	Ames, IA	Robb McMullen
		Keith Lukens
Bethany	Luverne, MN	Doug Tecken
		Bruce Wilson
Bethany	Princeton, MN	Russ Kampa
		Glen Hansen
Bethany	The Dalles, OR	Herbert Klaviter
Bethany	Port Orchard, WA	Chris Denney
		Henry Shadbolt
Calvary	Ulen, MN	
Center	Scarville, IA	
Christ	Windsor, CA	
Christ	Port St. Lucie, FL	David Clark
		Keith Duin
Christ	Klamath Falls, OR	Nick Tousey
Christ	Sutherlin, OR	
Christ the King	Bell Gardens, CA	Philip Remmele
Christ the King	Green Bay, WI	Paul Koch
		Charles Hartwig
Concordia	Hood River, OR	
Concordia	Eau Claire, WI	Scott Davis
		Duane Steinhauer
Cross	Charles City, IA	
Divine Mercy	Hudson Oaks, TX	Lewis Sulzle
		John Schreiber
English	Cottonwood, MN	Shawn Boyum
		Ray Pederson
Faith	Irvine, CA	
Faith	Parkersburg, IA	Steve Pavelec
Faith	Hillman, MI	Marlin Goebel
Faith	Clara City, MN	Wayne Spieker
		Scott Knutson
Faith	Carthage, MO	Fred Waldbuesser
		Charles Krummel
Faith	Medford, OR	
Faith	San Antonio, TX	Curtis Bull
Faith	Oregon, WI	Jeff John
		Mike Zagrodnik
Family of God	Fort Mohave, AZ	
First	Suttons Bay, MI	
First Shell Rock	Northwood, IA	Joel Dirksen
		Dale Songstad



First Trinity	Marinette, WI	Darryl Proft Gary Johnston
Forest	Forest City, IA	
Gloria Dei	Saginaw, MI	
Gloria Dei	Cold Spring, MN	
Good Shepherd	Indianola, IA	Loren Meyer
Good Shepherd	Bloomer, WI	William Anderson
Grace	Vero Beach, FL	Norbert Stege Ray Harakh
Grace	Lincoln, IL	
Grace	Hobart, IN	Glenn Meentemeyer
Grace	Crookston, MN	David Flitter
Grace	Piedmont, MO	
Grace	Weston, OH	Daniel Weaver
Grace	Redmond, OR	
Grace	Madison, WI	Lance Steffen
Hartland	Hartland, MN	Raymond Toot Duane Miller
Heritage	Apple Valley, MN	Dennis Braun Robert Smith
Holton	Holton, MI	Arthur Haeussler Steve Anderson
Holy Cross	Madison, WI	Matt Banbury Chris Poetter
Holy Scripture	Midland, MI	
Holy Trinity	Okauchee, WI	Robert Brown Daniel Neumann
Hope	Portage, IN	
Hope	Farmington, MN	
Hope	Leander, TX	Edward Krieger Ben Wolff
Hope	West Jordan, UT	
Immanuel	Riceville, IA	
Immanuel	Audubon, MN	Marty Wolbaum
Jerico	New Hampton, IA	Neil Shaffer Jim Costello
King of Grace	Waukon, IA	Greg Gilbertson Dennis Benzing
King of Grace	Golden Valley, MN	Jim Minor Harold Theiste
Lake Mills	Lake Mills, IA	William Humphrey Orlan Lau
Lakewood	Lakewood, WA	
Lime Creek	Lake Mills, IA	Gary Honsey
Lord of Life	Holland, MI	
Manchester	Manchester, MN	Gordon Rasmussen
Messiah	Omro, WI	Michael Buchanan
Mt. Olive	Mankato, MN	Herman Harstad Paul Tweit
Mt. Olive	Trail, MN	



Nazareth	Trail, MN	
New Life	Sebring, FL	
Newport	Wisconsin Dells, WI	Paul Gregerson
Norseland	St. Peter, MN	Howard Swenson
		Allen Quist
Norwegian Grove	Gaylord, MN	Rod Tollefson
		Robert Reid
Oak Park	Oklee, MN	Trevor Lomen
Our Redeemer	Yelm, WA	
Our Savior	Bishop, CA	Ole Keller Tjernagel
Our Savior	Lakeland, FL	
Our Savior	Naples, FL	
Our Savior	Grants Pass, OR	
Our Savior's	Albert Lea, MN	James Schneider
		Brian Baldwin
Our Savior's	Bagley, MN	Leroy Sundbom
Our Savior's	Belview, MN	
Our Savior's	Princeton, MN	Robert Soule
Our Savior's	Amherst Jct., WI	
Our Savior's	Elderon, WI	
Our Saviour	Lake Havasu City, AZ	
Our Saviour's	Madison, WI	
Parkland	Tacoma, WA	Todd Knutson
		Michael O'Neill
Peace	Kissimmee, FL	Kenneth Meyer
		Adam Pavelchik
Peace	Lakeland, FL	
Peace	North Mankato, MN	Sergio Salgado
		Mark Zenk
Peace	Jefferson City, MO	Todd Linhardt
Peace	Deshler, OH	Tim Lee Avery
		James Beach
Pilgrim	Waterloo, IA	Mark Perlwitz
		Al Natvig
Pinehurst	Eau Claire, WI	
Pinewood	Burlington, MA	
Redeemer	Scottsdale, AZ	Norman Hartigan
Redeemer	New Hampton, IA	Derwin Robinson
		Wally Knutson
Redeemer	Iola, WI	
Redeeming Grace	Rogers, MN	Ronald Menough
Reformation	Hillsboro, OR	Bill Ivers
Resurrection	Winter Haven, FL	Richard Maginnis
Resurrection	North Bend, OR	
Richland	Thornton, IA	
River Heights	East Grand Forks, MN	Paul Sorenson
Rock Dell	Belview, MN	Larry Parker
Saude	Lawler, IA	Waldon Johnson
		Oakleigh Natvig
Saved by Grace	Gresham, OR	

Scarville	Scarville, IA	Karl Bloedel
Scriptural	Cape Girardeau, MO	
Somber	Northwood, IA	Matthew Levorson
		Joe Holt
St. John's	Frankenmuth, MI	Jeremy Aiello
		Thomas Conzelmann
St. Katherine's	Menomonie, WI	
St. Luke	Mt. Vernon, WA	
St. Martin	Shawano, WI	Howard Waldschmidt
		Glenn Van der Linden
St. Matthew	Myrtle Creek, OR	
St. Paul	Escondido, CA	Scott Markel
St. Paul	Lengby, MN	
St. Paul's	Portage, WI	
St. Timothy	Lombard, IL	William Soule
Trinity	Calmar, IA	
Trinity	Brewster, MA	Paul Chamberlin
Trinity	Rogers City, MI	Dennis Fauver
Trinity	West Bend, WI	Ralph Seidensticker
		Martin Knuth
Western Koshkonong	Cottage Grove, WI	Alfred Kroll
Zion	Thompson, IA	
Zion	Tracy, MN	Dennis Hayes
Zion	Irwin, PA	

## CONVENTION COMMITTEES

### 1. President's Message and Report

Rev. Robert A. Harting  
Rev. Shawn Stafford

### 2. Committee on Nominations

Rev. James Kassera  
Rev. Kyle Madson  
Rev. Tom Rank  
Rev. Ben Wiechmann  
Mr. Greg Costello  
Mr. Lyle Fahning  
Mr. Glen Hansen  
Mr. David Sparley

### 3. Credentials

Rev. Michael Lilienthal  
Rev. Michael Muehlenhardt

### 4. Program

Rev. Glenn Smith  
Rev. Timothy Zenda

### 5. Minutes

Rev. Timothy Buelow  
Rev. Michael Dale  
Mr. Todd Knutson

### 6. Doctrine

Rev. Mark Bartels  
Rev. Daniel Basel  
Mr. Steven Beilke  
Mr. Robert Brown  
Mr. Chris Denney  
Mr. Joel Dirksen  
Rev. William Grimm  
Rev. Cory Hahnke  
Mr. Glen Hansen  
Mr. Herman Harstad  
Rev. Daniel Hartwig  
Mr. Paul Koch  
Rev. Philip Lepak  
Rev. Michael Lilienthal  
Rev. Kyle Madson  
Mr. Al Natvig  
Rev. Samuel Schmeling  
Rev. Paul Schneider  
Rev. Glenn Smith  
Rev. J. Kincaid Smith  
Rev. Thomas Smuda  
Rev. Steven Sparley

Mr. Norbert Stege  
Mr. Raymond Toot  
Mr. Fred Waldbuesser  
Mr. Bruce Wilson  
Mr. Marty Wolbaum

### 7. Finances

Mr. Steve Anderson  
Mr. Tim Avery  
Mr. Ray Biggs  
Mr. Dennis Braun  
Rev. Steven Brockdorf  
Rev. Joseph Burkhardt  
Mr. Keith Duin  
Rev. Aaron Hamilton  
Mr. Ray Harakh  
Rev. Jeffrey Hendrix  
Rev. Peter Heyn  
Mr. William Humphrey  
Mr. Todd Knutson  
Mr. Allen Labitzky  
Mr. Matthew Levorson  
Rev. David Locklair  
Rev. Matthew Luttmann  
Rev. Jeffery Merseth  
Rev. Andrew Palmquist  
Mr. Neil Shaffer  
Mr. Paul Sorenson  
Rev. S. Piet Van Kampen  
Rev. Lawrence Wentzlaff

### 8. Higher Education

Rev. Karl Anderson  
Mr. Jim Beach  
Mr. Karl Boedel  
Rev. Christopher Dale  
Rev. Thomas Heyn  
Rev. Martin Hoesch  
Rev. Roger Holtz  
Mr. Wally Johnson  
Rev. Bradley Kerkow  
Mr. Scott Markel  
Rev. Joshua Mayer  
Rev. Kenneth Mellon  
Rev. John Merseth Sr.  
Mr. Ken Meyer  
Mr. Daniel Neumann  
Mr. Adam Pavelchik  
Rev. John Petersen

Rev. Anthony Pittenger  
Mr. Darryl Proft  
Mr. Gordon Rasmussen  
Mr. Jim Schneider  
Mr. Robert Smith  
Mr. William Soule  
Mr. Lance Steffen  
Mr. Howard Swenson  
Mr. Paul Tweit  
Rev. Luke Ulrich  
Mr. Howard Waldschmidt  
Rev. Paul Webber  
Rev. Benjamin Wiechmann

### **9. Home Outreach**

Mr. Jeremy Aiello  
Mr. Matthew Banbury  
Mr. Dennis Benzing  
Mr. David Clark  
Rev. Christian Eisenbeis  
Rev. David Emmons  
Mr. Daniel English  
Rev. Micah Ernst  
Rev. Mark Faugstad  
Mr. Greg Gilbertson  
Mr. Marlin Goebel  
Mr. Norman Hartigan  
Mr. Charles Hartwig  
Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch  
Rev. Dale Jaech  
Mr. Jeff John  
Mr. Russ Kampa  
Rev. Shawn Kauffeld  
Mr. Alfred Kroll  
Mr. Loren Meyer  
Rev. Donald Moldstad  
Rev. Matthew Moldstad  
Rev. Michael Muehlenhardt  
Rev. Glenn Obenberger  
Mr. Steve Pavelec  
Mr. Allen Quist  
Rev. Thomas Rank  
Rev. Alex Ring  
Mr. Larry Rude  
Dr. Timothy Schmeling  
Mr. John Schreiber  
Mr. Ralph Seidensticker  
Mr. Doug Tecken  
Mr. Ole Keller Tjernagel  
Rev. David J. Webber

### **10. World Outreach**

Rev. Nathanael Abrahamson  
Mr. William Anderson  
Rev. Aaron Ferkenstad  
Mr. Art Haeussler  
Mr. Kevin Klug  
Rev. Kurt Kluge  
Mr. Scott Knutson  
Dr. Thomas Kuster  
Rev. Paul Lange  
Mr. Orlan Lau  
Mr. Robb McMullen  
Mr. Michael O'Neill  
Mr. Larry Parker  
Mr. Ray Pederson  
Mr. Chris Poetter  
Rev. Nicholas Proksch  
Mr. Robert Reid  
Mr. Robert Soule  
Mr. Lew Sulzle  
Rev. Christian Walz  
Mr. Ben Wolff  
Rev. Timothy Zenda  
Mr. Richard Ziegler

### **11. Elementary Education**

Rev. Joseph Abrahamson  
Mr. Brian Baldwin  
Rev. Timothy Bartels  
Mr. Silas Born  
Mr. Shawn Boyum  
Mr. Michael Buchanan  
Mr. David Flitter  
Rev. Ernest Geistfeld  
Mr. Paul Gregerson  
Rev. Samuel Gullixson  
Mr. Bill Ivers  
Mr. Gary Johnston  
Mr. Herbert Klaviter  
Rev. Robert Lawson Jr.  
Rev. Robert Lawson  
Rev. Gene Lilienthal  
Mr. Oakleigh Natvig  
Rev. John Smith  
Mr. Mark Zenk

### **12. Parish Services**

Rev. Tim Buelow  
Mr. Curtis Bull  
Rev. Andrew Burmeister  
Mr. Paul Chamberlin

Mr. Scott Davis  
 Rev. Erv Ekhoﬀ  
 Mr. Dennis Fauver  
 Rev. Wayne Halvorson  
 Prof. Adolph Harstad  
 Rev. Gregory Haugen  
 Mr. Joe Holt  
 Mr. Martin Knuth  
 Mr. Ed Krieger  
 Mr. Todd Linhardt  
 Rev. Jeff Luplow  
 Rev. Jonathan Madson  
 Rev. Norman A. Madson  
 Mr. Richard Maginnis  
 Mr. Glen Meentemeyer, Sr.  
 Mr. Duane Miller  
 Mr. Jim Minor  
 Rev. Mark Rogers  
 Mr. Sergio Salgado  
 Mr. Duane Steinhauer  
 Mr. Leroy Sundbom  
 Rev. David Thompson  
 Mr. Rod Tollefson  
 Mr. Jim Young  
 Mr. Mike Zagrodnik

### **13. Synodical Membership**

Mr. Thomas Conzelmann  
 Rev. Michael Dale  
 Rev. Jerrold Dalke  
 Rev. Peter Faugstad  
 Rev. Erich J. Hoeft  
 Mr. Gary Honsey  
 Mr. Wally Knutson  
 Rev. Nile Merseth  
 Pres. Em. Marvin Meyer  
 Mr. Philip Remmele  
 Mr. Derwin Robinson  
 Mr. Dale Songstad

### **14. Miscellaneous**

Rev. Matthew Brooks  
 Mr. Jim Costello  
 Rev. Timothy Erickson  
 Rev. Jerome Gernander  
 Rev. Timothy Hartwig  
 Rev. Jesse Jacobsen  
 Rev. James Kassera  
 Rev. Charles Keeler  
 Mr. Trevor Lomen  
 Mr. Ronald Menough

Rev. James Olsen  
 Mr. Mark Perlwitz  
 Rev. Steven Petersen  
 Rev. Daniel Ruiz  
 Mr. Wayne Spiekier  
 Mr. Harold Theiste  
 Mr. Nick Tousey  
 Rev. Bernt Tweit  
 Mr. Glenn Van der Linden  
 Mr. Daniel Weaver

### **15. Pastoral Conference Records & Resolutions**

Rev. Frederic Lams  
 Rev. Robert Otto  
 Rev. Ronald Pederson  
 Rev. Tosten Skaaland

### **16. Tellers**

Matthew Behmer  
 Aaron Ferkenstad  
 Kurtis Freimuth  
 Jeffrey Hendrix  
 Joshua Mayer  
 Daniel Ruiz  
 Andrew Soule  
 Noah Thompson  
 Christian Walz

### **17. Chaplain**

Rev. Bernt Tweit

### **18. Head Ushers**

Rev. Micah Ernst  
 Rev. Kurt Kluge

### **19. Parliamentarians**

Rev. Thomas Kuster  
 Rev. Erling Teigen

### **20. Assistant Secretary**

Rev. Paul Lange

### **21. Convention Manger**

Mr. Greg Costello

### **22. Convention Organist**

Mr. John Baumann



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE AND REPORT

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all in this centennial year!

This is not the kind of celebration where we focus on *our own* accomplishments, glory in our pedigree, or become self-absorbed in elevating the characteristics and personalities of the dedicated men and women who have gone before us and did the heavy lifting to organize what today is known as our Evangelical Lutheran Synod. No, if this were so we should all pack up and go home. We join the psalmist in saying, “Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to *your name* be the glory, because of *your* love and faithfulness” (Psalm 115:1). Furthermore, we want to recall and honor precisely what it was that drove the efforts of our forefathers to reorganize. It was singularly to be faithful to God and to his Word.

One wonders how many of us here would have been so determined to uphold the straight path as we think of the stark challenges faced by our forefathers. Those “threats” for the synodical founders included: missing out on a merger where close friends, relatives, and institutions were going in the opposite direction; where they also would immediately face considerable financial obligations in making a new start. We can imagine the pressures were great. Do we assume *our own personal stamina* would have carried us through in contending that “elected in view of faith” could not stand on the same level as “elected only by God’s grace”? I ask this because we know our weaknesses. I ask this because we do not always take time and opportunity to answer those who ask us for the hope we have within us (1 Peter 5). I ask this because we know how the forces of society can easily have us question the validity of the scriptures, especially passages in the Word which are under adverse scrutiny by the world and even by a number of prominent church leaders. I ask this, also, because our old sinful nature frequently colludes with the wily foe who masquerades as an angel of light, getting us to think that a slight compromise of the truth may be okay for preserving some “higher good” of unity and peace.

Our synod’s ancestors knew the challenges. The obstacles were real and personal. The Rev. Bjug Harstad, preparing for the 1918 meeting at Lime Creek, reflected on a serious provocation that could not have been anticipated only a few years earlier. A sizable minority to the 1917 merger had at one time been united in opposition to a compromise document (Opgjør settlement of 1912). But surprisingly the leaders of that hundred-some pastor minority caved in and at the last minute went along with the ecumenical push for the formation of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America (NLCA), a forerunner of today’s ELCA. Harstad writes:

Another bitter disappointment and distress came upon us when the greater part of the minority gave in. They fell into the inviting bosom of Delilah, had their mighty locks clipped off and glasses and muzzles put on. And thus we learned also the meaning of this word of God: “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no help” (Psalm 146) ... We have to stand by and see the first generation of the descendants of the pioneer fishers of men do all diligence to sink the pure fishing boat [the faithful of the Norwegian Synod] and leave it without a trace. Efforts were made to pirate the ship from the time it was put into the water until it began to sink its pure flag under a new command... We will carry on missions first and foremost in our own midst by diligent use of God’s Word and with brotherly admonition of the Lord... The Lord bless our meeting and all its participants for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior.<sup>1</sup>

Thanks be to God—and to Him alone—for granting the vision, the courage, and the faithfulness to move our synod’s founding fathers to action in preserving the truth for their

---

<sup>1</sup> *Oak Leaves*, ELS Historical Society Newsletter. Fall 2017.

generation, for our generation, and for generations yet to come! At the heart of it all was this: That our salvation from sin is in every respect—here in time and from eternity—attributed *only* to God's pure grace alone. He elects us, brings us to faith in the Savior Jesus through his means of grace, and preserves us in that faith until we enter life eternal in our heavenly home. This is what God the Holy Spirit enables us to confess and uphold. All praise goes to Him, as Luther clearly penned in his beloved hymn, "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice" (ELH 378). Not only because of the chief blessing we have in Christ—salvation by faith alone—but also because of the whole range of goodness we have inherited, we rejoice and say: ***Proclaim the wonders God has done!*** We join then with the Apostle Paul in urging: "So then just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness" (Colossians 2:6–7).

Where are we headed with our thanks? In observing 100 years of God's grace, we pray for lasting effects of our celebrating upon all we here discuss, plan and do as a synod to carry out our specific role and niche in advancing Christ's kingdom. Too many celebrations are like flickering candles and fancy balloons. Soon they are extinguished and end with a loud pop. A significant church anniversary, as we have before us, demands appropriate reflection on the past. Yet, it serves as a poignant reminder to review our purpose in moving forward. May I suggest, then, that we respond by **pondering, preserving, and proclaiming?**

## PONDERING

Ponder what our ELS centennial signifies. Consider what it means to be connected with a church body and its worldwide fellowship (the CELC) that both *confesses* adherence to the Word of God in all articles of the Christian faith and *practices* this unity in Word and Sacrament. It means, first of all, that the gospel message of salvation by grace alone is always at the forefront of our expression of gratitude. This gospel is the driving force for our being tenacious about honoring and respecting the heritage of God's Word—all of it—in our midst.

Think for a moment how tragic it must be for anyone who labors in life under the false delusion of a synergistic doctrine of work-righteousness! The people who bought into the theology of F. A. Schmidt and others, who asserted that in a certain sense one's election to salvation was not entirely due to God's grace alone<sup>2</sup>, were duped and deserved to be pitied. Any poor sinner who today believes that he or she is at least in part *contributing* through one's efforts toward having forgiveness and heaven cannot have certainty of salvation. In fact, salvation will be denied all who look to their own works for the holiness needed for heaven. Clearly the Bible teaches that we are "justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified" (Galatians 2:16). When a person becomes aware of the sinful condition of the human heart and realizes how one's works fall woefully short of perfection, where will such a soul find comfort and not despair? Where will one turn, if there remains the nagging but deceptive notion that he must count on some self-participation for the assurance of gaining access to eternal life? Such assurance can only be found in the mercy of God as provided in the holy life and atoning sacrifice of God's Son on behalf of, and in the place of, all sinners. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

U. V. Koren, the leading theologian of the old Norwegian Synod, wrote his famous essay, "Can and Ought a Christian Be Certain of His Salvation?" The essay is one of Koren's finest writings and has been treasured by Christians down through the decades.

---

<sup>2</sup> In November of 1884 Schmidt stated: "I believe and teach now as before, that it is not synergistic error, but a clear teaching of God's Word and our Lutheran Confession, that 'salvation in a certain sense does not depend on God alone.'" The citation is referenced in T. Aaberg's *A City Set on a Hill* (ELS, 1968), p. 36.



Permit for a moment a personal aside. While serving in 1981 as a pastor in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, I had the honor of conducting the funeral for 94-year-old Annette Hansen, who was the wife of one of the thirteen founding pastors of our ELS (Emil Hansen, 1880–1956). On a routine visit to her resident nursing home, I was informed by an aide who had just ducked into the room that Annette had passed earlier that day. Her body now had been transferred to the funeral home. Turning to exit the room, my attention was drawn to a book lying open on the bed stand. I noticed Annette had been reading Koren's essay. What better words to ponder in her last hour of going to be with Jesus than what I realized was underlined by Annette on the page she had marked! Here is what Koren had written:

How can a Christian have certainty regarding his salvation, or, in other words, that he shall be kept in the true and living faith unto the end? He is to believe it. "The entire life which a truly believing Christian leads after Baptism is nothing else than an expectation of the revelation of the bliss which he already has. He certainly has it entire, but nevertheless hid in faith" (Luther). He is to believe, that is, humbly and in a child-like manner rely upon the promises which God has given him precisely concerning this. These promises are firmer than heaven and earth and are given just for this purpose, that we are to believe them, have a firm conviction that He will fulfill them in spite of the devil, the world and our flesh.<sup>3</sup>

As we at this convention contemplate the magnitude of a centennial of blessings showered upon our church body, we must draw special attention to the importance of espousing the verbal inerrancy of God's Word, including what that Word states pertaining to the creation of the world. Recently a Lutheran journal carried a significant article that raised the possibility of good Bible-believing Christians accepting the concept of an "old age creation" or being open to accepting an eon-extension of the "day" term. Countering such error, it is interesting that at the jubilee celebration for our synod Professor M. H. Otto had this to say in a 1968 convention essay:

Perhaps the best-known example of not letting the Scriptures be the final determinant in a doctrinal matter is the whole question of evolution. Its proponents would claim that the word "day" does not mean a normal solar day when the holy writer records the Creation story... the theory of evolution, if permitted to stand, undermines and destroys the whole Bible, not just the opening chapters of Genesis. For, if the first chapters of the Bible are untrue, then by implication whatever follows upon the account there recorded gets to be untrue also, and this includes the Bible's account of the coming into the world of Jesus Christ as the promised Savior from sin.<sup>4</sup>

## PRESERVING

One of the purposes of our synod is "to contend for the faith" (Jude 3). Each time we observe a church anniversary, whether as a congregation or as a synod, we must ask ourselves: Doesn't this mean we are recommitting ourselves to the personal use of the Means of Grace, and also that we are reinforcing the urgent need to teach all generations "the full counsel of God"? We desire to transmit "what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord" (Psalm 78: 3, 4).

---

<sup>3</sup> U. V. Koren as translated by J. Herbert Larson in *Truth Unchanged, Unchanging* (ELS, 1978), p. 175.

<sup>4</sup> M. H. Otto. "The Trumpet with a Certain Sound," *Synod Report* 1968.

Our 2017 convention adopted a resolution calling for the appointment of a committee to promote the use of biblical apologetics in our circles. We are pleased that the ad hoc committee so appointed already has been hard at work and has planned for this coming Thursday a special presentation on our Bethany Lutheran College campus. We look forward to exploring also other ways in which we as a synod and college and seminary can assist our members and especially our youth in being able to give biblical answers for the hope that we have within us (1 Peter 3:15).

It is a fundamental truth that sinners do not naturally gravitate toward God's Word. Only the Holy Spirit working through Word and sacrament makes people receptive to the Word and changes stony hearts to have saving faith in Christ. But there is this palpable societal difference in the approach to the Bible demonstrated in our current decade compared to that of our synod fathers in 1918. Not only is *society* dismissive—even belligerently so—to entertaining a discussion on the tenets of God's Word; young people *in our congregations* feel extra pressure to cower and conform to the views of their secular peers. "So in this era," writes Ken Ham, "we increasingly need to deal with objections to the Bible. By using apologetics to give solid answers, we can help people listen and learn about the most important historical document of all—the whole Bible."<sup>5</sup> Sadly, much of our population does not have even a rudimentary head-knowledge of the true Christian faith. Many years back, one might have been able to assume that non-Christians in our surroundings knew at least *some* things about the Bible and may even have voiced respect for it. "The world today is far different from what it was one or two generations ago, and so our testimony to this world needs to be different too. In many ways, we are back to the first century where the evangelists had to start virtually from square one. On Mars Hill, Paul began with the common ground of recognition of an unknown God (Acts 17:22–31). Today, we may need to become even more basic than that."<sup>6</sup> Ultimately, biblical apologetics has as its goal **to see Jesus for who he is**—the one true God and Savior of the world, as is evidenced so convincingly in his rising from the dead. "In the resurrection, Christian doctrine and apologetics come together. The resurrection is central to both."<sup>7</sup>

The assertion of proofs for the historical facticity of the scriptural accounts is necessary in order to safeguard the *proper use* of God's Word as the great heritage for all generations. But let's not overlook how preserving what God has blessed us with begins with what occurs personally within our own homes. "Our churches may resound with the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, our ministers may preach Jesus so purely and plainly, ... the baptismal font may stand invitingly and attractively in our sanctuaries, the holy Supper of our Lord may be set upon our altars; but what good will all this do, if we do not use the sacred means of grace?"<sup>8</sup> It's one thing to talk about how much we love our church, or how much we love our pastor, or how much we love the Bible; it is another to put those compliments into action.

Can we all become even more conscientious about Sunday worship? Is our yearning for the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar strong and steadfast? Are daily Bible devotions and prayers found in our homes? Are we making full use of our Lutheran educational agencies (Lutheran elementary schools, Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary, our Sunday schools, youth programs, etc.) for the training of our young people? Might we do more encouraging on the local level to enroll people in Bible classes? When we prepare for the trips we take, do we plan also for Sunday worship at congregations of our fellowship? Is our prayerful and financial support for Word and sacrament ministry a priority?

---

<sup>5</sup> *Answers in Genesis*, volume 25, issue 5.

<sup>6</sup> Allen Quist. *The Reason I Believe* (CPH, 2017), p. 25.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>8</sup> A. H. Strand, "Our Mission as a Synod," *Synod Report* 1944.

## PROCLAIMING

Telling others about the Savior involves taking time to make connections with people. The opportunities the Lord puts before us are many. Often those moments prove to be rewarding beyond what we could imagine. After all, what more valuable and precious gift can we ever give to a lost soul than to introduce the person to the Savior? There truly is “much rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents” (Luke 15:10).

Key to any church anniversary celebration is the desire and commitment to share the good news of salvation so that others may know of God’s love and the certainty of heaven. We should not pass over the significance of the second celebration at this year’s convention. For fifty years God has enabled our church body to have a hand in bringing the life-saving gospel of Christ to the people of the great land of Peru. “When the synod met in 1968 for its 50<sup>th</sup> jubilee convention it was excited about the work which it was about to begin in the South American nation of Peru. Since it closed its Cornwall Mission in Great Britain, the synod had been anxious to have its own mission again somewhere on foreign soil. After preliminary trips and studies were made, it was decided that Peru would be that country.”<sup>9</sup> Look how God has blessed the work there! National pastors have been trained, congregations have been established in and around Lima, in the Andes mountains and also in the Amazona region. By God’s grace, this member church (Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Peru) of the CELC carries on its own mission work through the duly elected ruling council (Junta) of its church body. “After almost fifty years the Peruvian Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Church is served by twenty-eight pastors, vicars, and pre-seminary evangelists with approximately fifty congregations in the national church. Sunday worship attendance in Peru totals about 1,200 individuals.”<sup>10</sup>

Our Board for Home Outreach (BHO) has a two-fold task. It assists us in developing and maintaining home mission congregations. It also leads us in helping *all* of the congregations in our synod to move forward with Gospel outreach efforts in their respective communities. You will notice in the board’s printed report a detailed explanation of how the board, especially through the services of our Evangelism–Missions Counselor (EMC), can assist our churches with strategic planning in doing the work of evangelism. The EMC is eager to visit in person, to assess, and to make recommendations upon his being invited by the congregation. We urge all 131 of our congregations to make use of this avenue. Our Board of Trustees recently granted some extra funds to facilitate the beneficial work of the EMC and the BHO.

May the efforts of our forefathers serve as a commendable example to press ahead with the message of God’s peace for sinners that transcends all human understanding. Where we see good efforts have occurred, we give all glory and thanks to God. Mindful of our own unworthiness and shortcomings, and where we see efforts lacking, we say, “O merciful Savior, forgive us!” To spur us on as fellow celebrants of 100 years of grace upon our ELS to do more “pondering, preserving and proclaiming,” we turn only to Christ and his holy gospel. He has come, lived for us, died for us, and has risen from the dead! We are forgiven! We have the assurance of heaven awaiting us through faith in his shed blood. And because he is also our ascended Lord who rules all things for the good of his church, we press ahead with confidence and trust in his blessings.

So, onward with our mission let us go!

*John A. Moldstad, president*

---

<sup>9</sup> J. H. Larson and J. B. Madson. *Built on the Rock* (ELS, 1992), p. 173.

<sup>10</sup> C. Ferkenstad. *Proclaim His Wonders* (ELS, 2017), p. 130.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### ORDINATION AND INSTALLATIONS

Candidate of Theology Kurtis Freimuth was ordained and installed as pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in Kissimmee, Florida, on July 2, 2017. Pastor Herb Huhnerkoch served as liturgist, Pastor Matthew Luttman served as lector, Pastor Michael Dale performed the rite of ordination, and Pastor Greg Sahlstrom preached the sermon.

Candidate of Theology Aaron Ferkenstad was ordained and installed as pastor of King of Grace Lutheran Church in Golden Valley, Minnesota, on July 16, 2017. The Rev. Craig Ferkenstad preached the sermon and Pres. John Moldstad performed the rite of ordination. Pastors Benjamin Wiechmann, Erwin Ekhoﬀ, Gaylin Schmeling, Jeﬀery Merseeth, Adolph Harstad, Matthew Moldstad, and Michael Smith participated, along with other attending pastors from the circuit.

The Rev. Alex Ring was installed as pastor and teacher of Christ Lutheran Church in Port St. Lucie, Florida, on August 13, 2017.

The Rev. Kyle Madson was installed as pastor of Norseland and Norwegian Grove Lutheran Churches in St. Peter and Gaylord, Minnesota, on August 20, 2017. The Rev. Donald Moldstad served as liturgist, the Rev. Peter Faugstad preached the sermon, and Pres. John Moldstad performed the rite of installation.

The Rev. James Kassera was installed as pastor of Divine Mercy Lutheran Church in Hudson Oaks, Texas, on August 27, 2017. The Rev. Larry Wentzlaff (Evangelism–Missions Counselor) conducted the liturgy, the Rev. Dan Ruiz preached the sermon, and the Rev. Dr. Michael K. Smith performed the rite of installation.

The Rev. Steven Sparley was installed as assistant pastor and upper grades teacher at Parkland Lutheran Church in Tacoma, Washington, on August 27, 2017. Pres. Moldstad preached for the occasion, and the Rev. Jesse Jacobsen, the Circuit 12 Alternate Visitor, performed the rite of installation.

The Rev. Jeﬀrey Hendrix was installed as the pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in Oregon, Wisconsin on October 1, 2017, at an afternoon service. Pastor Michael Lillienthal preached the sermon, Pastor Mark Marozick served as the lector, and circuit visitor Pastor Jonathan Madson served as liturgist and performed the rite of installation. Several other pastors from Circuit 5 also participated in the service. The Faith Lutheran Church choir sang a hymn during the service.

The Rev. Jonathan Madson was installed as pastor of New Life Lutheran Church in Sebring, Florida, on January 14, 2018. The Rev. Charles Keeler was the preacher, and the Rev. Alexander Ring was the liturgist. Other pastors participating in the service were: the Reverends Andrew Burmeister, Steven Petersen, Matthew Luttman, Kurtis Freimuth, Herbert Huhnerkoch, Lawrence Wentzlaff, Michael Dale, and Mark Faugstad.

The Rev. Michael Lillienthal was installed as pastor of Our Savior's, Albert Lea, Minnesota, on April 22, 2018. The Rev. Robert Harting performed the rite of installation, and the Rev. Shawn Staﬀord preached the sermon.

The Rev. Edward Bryant was installed as pastor of Our Savior, Grants Pass, Oregon, and Faith, Medford, Oregon, on April 29, 2018. The Rev. Glenn Obenberger preached the sermon, and the Rev. Jesse Jacobsen performed the rite of installation.

Candidate of Theology Christian Walz was ordained and installed as pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Indianola, Iowa on June 10, 2018. Dr. Michael Smith preached the sermon, the Rev. Robert Harting was liturgist, and Pres. Moldstad performed the rite of ordination.

## **DEDICATIONS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

On October 15, 2017, Peace Lutheran in North Mankato, Minnesota, dedicated a new addition. The addition includes offices, fellowship hall, and two rooms for the Jesus' Lambs at Peace Preschool. The current sanctuary also underwent renovation to add more seating. The Sunday School children of Peace sang for the special occasion. The congregation is grateful to volunteers from Kingdom Workers Builders for Christ in assisting with the project.

A new church building at Hope Lutheran Church in Leander, Texas, was dedicated on April 22, 2018. President Moldstad preached for the occasion.

## **MEMBERSHIP REQUESTS**

Grace Lutheran Church in Crookston, Minnesota, has applied for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The proper documents have been submitted.

Cross Lutheran Church of Charles City, Iowa, has applied for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The proper documents have been submitted.

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

The Rev. Aaron Ferkenstad

The Rev. Kurtis Freimuth

The Rev. James Ruppel

The Rev. Christian Walz

## **ANNIVERSARIES OF ORDINATION**

The following anniversaries of ordination are being observed this year:

Timothy Erickson – 40 years

Gaylin Schmeling – 40 years

## **RETIREMENTS, TRANSFERS, AND CLOSINGS**

The Rev. Steven Petersen retired as World Outreach Administrator on June 30, 2017.

The Rev. Luke Willitz was transferred to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod on August 3, 2017, upon the acceptance of the call to serve Immanuel Lutheran Church in Mosinee, Wisconsin.

Grace Lutheran Church in Redmond, Oregon, held its final service on August 27, 2017. As of May 6, 2018, a group of members at a preaching station continue to hold regular Sunday services at 10:30 a.m. at the Seventh Day Adventist building in Redmond, Oregon. For more information, we urge people to contact the Rev. James Ruppel (509-899-5018).

The Rev. Greg Sahlstrom was transferred to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod on September 26, 2017, following the acceptance of the call to serve Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church in West Des Moines, Iowa.

The Rev. Terry Schultz was transferred to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod on February 14, 2018.

Mrs. Ann Holmes retired as director of Gracie's Preschool of Vero Beach, Florida, on May 18, 2018.

The Rev. Michael Smith was transferred to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod on May 20, 2018.

Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church discontinued their preschool program effective June 1, 2018.

## **RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**

The Rev. Matthew Crick resigned from Faith Lutheran Church in Medford, Oregon, on August 13, 2017, for family and health considerations.

Circuit Visitor Jonathan Madson accepted the call to serve in Sebring, Florida, thereby vacating the position of circuit visitor. On December 5, 2017, Pres. Moldstad appointed to serve until convention the Rev. Ken Mellon as Circuit 5 Visitor and the Rev. Mark Bartels as alternate visitor of that circuit.

Dr. Michael Smith resigned from the Board for Home Outreach upon the acceptance on December 12, 2017, of the call to teach at Asia Lutheran Seminary. The Rev. Timothy Hartwig was appointed to fill the vacant position on the Board for Home Outreach until the time of convention.

Mr. Brad Wosmek resigned from the ad hoc committee regarding a military monument on December 29, 2017.

Dr. Michael Smith resigned from the Board of Directors for Missions Advancement Project, Inc. on January 18, 2018. The Rev. Michael Muehlenhardt was appointed by the Board of Trustees for a one-year unexpired term.

The Rev. Jesse DeDeyne has resigned his call to Concordia, Hood River, Oregon, and Bethany, The Dalles, Oregon, effective May 31, 2018. Jesse is planning to pursue a doctoral studies program in Texas.

The Rev. Richard Tragasz has resigned his call to Grace, Weston, Ohio, effective June 10, 2018. Richard and family are planning to move to the state of Missouri.

## **CONSTITUTION REVISIONS**

Revised constitutions have been received from Concordia Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wisconsin and Parkland Lutheran Church, Tacoma, Washington. The Committee on Synodical Membership is asked to review the constitutions.

## **DEATHS**

Mrs. Mildred Gullixson died on August 27, 2017. Mrs. Gullixson was born in 1923 and was the widow of the Rev. Walther Gullixson. Her funeral service was held at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Mankato, Minnesota on September 2, 2017.

Mrs. Carolyn Wosje died on October 13, 2017. Mrs. Wosje was born in 1934 and was the wife of the Rev. Carl Wosje. Her funeral was held at Faith Lutheran Church in Clara City, Minnesota on October 20, 2017.

The Rev. Paul Madson, age 90, went to his eternal rest on March 21, 2018. The funeral service for the Rev. Madson was held on March 26 at Peace Lutheran Church in North Mankato, Minnesota.

## **AD HOC COMMITTEE ON APOLOGETICS**

The 2017 convention adopted a proposal for the promotion of apologetics (see *Synod Report*, 2017, pages 117ff.). This resolution included the creation of an ad hoc Committee on Apologetics to be appointed by the synod president. The appointed committee is the Rev. Thomas Heyn, Dr. Ryan MacPherson, the Rev. Donald Moldstad, Mr. Allen Quist, and the Rev. David Thompson. Dr. Gene Pfeifer of Bethany Lutheran College has also been appointed as an advisory member. We pray that God will continue to bless our efforts to reach out to others with the life-saving gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and to defend the doctrines set forth in his holy and precious Word.

## **LIVE-STREAMING IN PERU**

A new and exciting project was begun recently for the Chimbote congregation in the country of Peru. The congregation now streams their Sunday worship services live via the internet and Facebook. Services and devotions will be shared not only with the congregational

members, but through the Peruvian church body website they are available to the world. The Rev. Paul Fries and the Rev. Matthew Behmer traveled to Peru to assist in this project and also to meet with leaders. May God richly bless this Gospel outreach effort!

### **AD HOC MILITARY MONUMENT FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**

The 2017 convention authorized the Board for Christian Service to seek funding for the military monument project. At the urging of the Board for Christian Service, Pres. Moldstad appointed a Military Monument Fundraising Committee in March 2018. This committee is chaired by the Rev. Glenn Obenberger and includes board members Dennis Behr and Mike O'Neal.

We are thankful to the ad hoc Military Monument Committee (B. Wosmek, W. Bukowski, and B. Gratz) which completed its work this past year.

### **CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE**

We are grateful for the dedicated work of those who have served on the ad hoc Centennial Committee: the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, chairman; Mrs. Lois Jaeger; the Rev. Peter Faugstad, and the Rev. Donald Moldstad. The committee also express its thanks to the Rev. Jeff Hendrix for producing the historical video being shown at this year's convention.

For the centennial observances in our congregations, the committee is recommending the date of Sunday, October 14, 2018. That Sunday also happens to be what is often referred to as "Founders' Day" for the old Norwegian Synod.

### **CONGREGATION CONTRIBUTIONS**

Our synod's Business Administrator reports: "Our 2017 congregational offerings to the total synod budget not only surpassed the \$760,000 budget but 2016's total giving as well. Congregational offerings were \$8,000 above the budget and \$5,000 above last year's total offerings. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" The amount raised over \$735,000 has been earmarked for the Board for Home Outreach.

The adopted congregational contribution portion of the budget for 2018 is a sum total of \$770,000. Any amount received over and above \$740,000 will be earmarked for the Board for Education.

We give thanks to God for enabling contributions for our synodical work to exceed our budgeted amounts these past two years. We pray that he will enable us to meet our needs in the years ahead, asking also that he guide us in using it wisely for the furtherance of his kingdom.

### **PROCLAIM THE WONDERS GOD HAS DONE ANNIVERSARY OFFERING**

As a way of expressing continued thanks to the Lord for his abundant blessings upon our church body, our synod embarked on a thank-offering for the purpose of funding new home missions; funding the Vicar-in-Mission program; and providing support for cross-cultural mission projects. Our synod Giving Counselor, the Rev. Dan Basel, chairs a committee that has been working to promote the offering in our parishes. Other members of the committee are: Prof. Michael Smith; Mr. Dan Neumann; Mr. David Ewert; and the Rev. Timothy Zenda. The committee is hoping that well over \$1 million will be brought in for supporting these project under the direction of our Board for Home Outreach. At the time of this report a total of \$520,000 is the sum of cash and pledges.

### **ELS HISTORY BOOK**

Last year's convention highlighted the newly published book, *Proclaiming His Wonders*, authored by the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad. If you would like to purchase a copy of this pictorial



history of our church body, you may do so by contacting the Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore (1-800-944-1722). The book is available for the price of \$20 plus shipping.

## **REGIONAL HYMN FESTIVALS**

In the month of October of 2017 numerous hymn festivals were conducted throughout the twelve circuits of our synod. The Committee on Worship is to be commended for producing the excellent booklet that assisted these worship events for the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation.

## **CONFESSIONAL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONFERENCE (CELC)**

Following our ELS convention last year, a number of representatives from our synod joined with many from our world-wide fellowship of over thirty churches for the ninth triennial convention of the CELC. The meetings were held at St. Augustin School in Grimma, Germany, June 29–July 2, 2017, and marked the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation with the adoption of a contemporary version of a “95 Theses” paralleling Luther’s Small Catechism ([celc.info/download/95\\_theses/nph-final-word.doc](http://celc.info/download/95_theses/nph-final-word.doc)). The next CELC convention (2020) is slated for Seoul, South Korea. The Rev. Gaylin Schmeling of our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary was elected to a three-year term to serve as the fifth CELC president. Schmeling was among those who helped organize the CELC when it was formed in Oberwesel, Germany, in 1993.

## **WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD (WELS)**

Our synod continues to be blessed with the fellowship we have with our sister church body, WELS. Every other year in September the ELS Doctrine Committee and the WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) meets to discuss mutual doctrinal concerns and practices, as well as address items of interest in connection with the CELC. In the off-years the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Forum (a group of eleven or twelve from each church body) assembles either in Mankato, Minnesota, or in Waukesha, Wisconsin, for two-day sessions. The forum meetings cover a broad range of topics and involve representation from both synod’s colleges, seminaries, synodical officers and administrators, Lutheran schools, and home and world mission programs.

The year of 2017 signaled a centennial milestone for WELS. One hundred years ago a merger of four Midwestern Lutheran synods resulted in what today is known as the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The four synods were Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin. Many blessings came about through this merger into a single, united synod. We join WELS in giving thanks to God for this event that occurred in 1917.

## **INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH LCMS**

On November 28–30, 2017, representatives from the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) met in Jacksonville, Florida, for the sixth annual meeting for informal discussions. The main topics covered were the Doctrine of the Call and a comparative review of the recently published catechisms by WELS and the LCMS. The last version of the catechism for the ELS (2001) also was used in discussing the new editions of the explanations to the *Small Catechism*. In this 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation we especially treasure the work of Dr. Martin Luther in composing his Small and Large Catechisms of 1529.

The three synod presidents provided updates on the respective work of their church bodies. Challenges and blessings also were noted in respect to pastoral training, the filling of congregational vacancies, and the relationships with international churches. The LCMS is part



of the International Lutheran Conference (ILC), while the ELS and WELS are members of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC).

None of the participants at these informal meetings anticipate a restoration of church fellowship between ELS/WELS and the LCMS in the near future. Yet, the sessions themselves were once again helpful as areas of agreement, as well as specific differences, were addressed in a cordial but candid manner. The representatives of the three synods have decided to gather once again in the fall of 2018.

## **FORMAL MEETINGS WITH CLC**

On August 17, 2017 and on November 9, 2017, representatives of WELS and the ELS met with counterparts from the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). These meetings are a continuation of formal doctrinal discussions intended to determine if fellowship between the synods can be restored. Another session of the nine who have been gathering has been planned for August 1, 2018, in Mankato, Minnesota.

In 2015 the group had composed a document entitled “A Joint Statement on the Termination of Fellowship.” Agreement on this joint statement is seen as a necessary first step in the doctrinal discussions. The ELS convention approved the statement in 2016; the WELS convention approved it last summer. The CLC convention discussed it and recommended further study by its pastoral conferences. The CLC will be considering the statement again at its 2018 convention.

Even if the Joint Statement is adopted by all three synods, there are other issues that remain to be more fully discussed and resolved before fellowship could be reestablished. We pray for God’s blessings on these efforts to establish fellowship based on a full agreement in doctrine.

## **COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATION**

The ELS Committee for Communication was created in 2012 for the purpose of advising the synod president and any other synodical persons and agencies in matters relating to communication. The following report is submitted by the Rev. Daniel J. Hartwig, chairman.

### ***Membership***

The membership consists of four members: two appointed by the synod president, and two elected by the synod. The membership presently consists of appointed members the Rev. Daniel Hartwig of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin (chairman), and Mr. Lance Schwartz of Mankato, Minnesota (secretary); and elected members Mr. Andrew Overn of Mankato, Minnesota, and Mr. David Gruen of Lombard, Illinois. The Rev. John Moldstad and the Rev. Paul Fries are advisory members.

### ***Digital Meetings***

The committee has never held an entirely face-to-face meeting, but happily employs the GoToMeeting digital platform to save time and travel expenses for those who live a distance from Mankato. This was used at our October 2017 meeting.

### ***Synodical Book Printing***

The Committee for Communication recommended that all synodical book publishing be handled through a digital print-on-demand platform. This will make creating and selling books easier and cheaper and will eliminate the necessity to have hundreds of unused copies of books sitting in storage. The committee established a storefront on Lulu.com as the official online book seller of the ELS (<http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/elsbooks>). Lulu was chosen because

of its wide variety of binding and size options, enabling the synod to publish any number of projects through this single platform.

Initial offerings at the ELS Lulu page ([www.lulu.com/spotlight/elsbooks](http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/elsbooks)) include the ELS 2001 *Catechism and Explanation* with three different Bible translations (NKJV, ESV, and EHV), and a newly retyped edition of the classic ELS history text *Grace for Grace*. A newly retyped edition of *Faith of Our Fathers* is planned to be offered in the future.

### ***Lutheran Sentinel* Timeliness**

The Committee for Communication recognized the delays in printing the *Lutheran Sentinel* and recommended that the editor expedite future issues. The committee has been pleased with the timeliness of the *Sentinel* since January.

### ***Catechism Explanation* Revision**

The Committee for Communication recognized that, as new editions of the 2001 *Catechism and Explanation* were being prepared using different Bible translations, the catechism text and questions in these editions have remained static for nearly twenty years. Therefore the committee recommended that the synod president consider appointing an ad hoc committee to look into a revision of the *ELS Catechism and Explanation*.

## **CONGREGATIONS VISITED DURING THE PAST YEAR**

Grace, Lincoln, Illinois; Parkland, Tacoma, Washington; River Heights, East Grand Forks, Minnesota; Bethany, Ames, Iowa; Hartland, Hartland, Minnesota; Manchester, Manchester, Minnesota; Pilgrim, Waterloo, Iowa; Faith, Parkersburg, Iowa; Hope, West Jordan, Utah; Gloria Dei, Cold Spring, Minnesota; and Abiding Word, Bowling Green, Ohio; Hope, Leander, Texas.

## **PASTORAL CONFERENCES ATTENDED**

General Pastoral Conference; Great Lakes Pastoral Conference; Great Plains Pastoral Conference; Iowa Winkel (Circuit 7); and Southern Minnesota Winkel (Circuit 9).

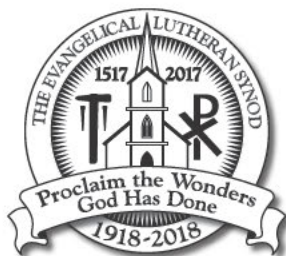
## **INACTIVE MEMBERS**

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: Arlen Dethlefsen and Erik Gernander. A request to extend clergy roster status for Erik Gernander has been received and is recommended to the convention.

*John A. Moldstad, president*





# CONVENTION ESSAY

## PROCLAIM THE WONDERS GOD HAS DONE: HIS ENDURING GRACE

Rev. Peter J. Faugstad

### WHO WE ARE

Over the prairie, making toward the settlement by Spring Creek, rattled an old, dilapidated cart, antique of build, in a state so wretched that it seemed ready to fall apart at the next tussock it might encounter.

The nag in front was in perfect keeping with the vehicle: long-shanked and rawboned, and so lean and lanky that one could have counted every rib. Originally its colour might have been a light grey, but now it was no longer definable: dirty grey, rusty, yellowish-brown—it might have been any one of these, or just as accurately something else. Only a few miserable hanks were left of what probably had once been a flowing mane. Above the shoulders rose a big hump; when the animal stretched out its neck, one was reminded of a dromedary. Undoubtedly it had once been an authentic horse, but that must have been a long time ago.<sup>1</sup>



Rev. Peter Faugstad

This is how O. E. Rølvaag in his epic novel, *Giants in the Earth*, described the horse and wagon of a traveling preacher. It is a picture not far removed from what the Norwegian Synod looked like at its founding in the mid-1800s.

### *A New Frontier*

Norwegian Vikings were in North America long before “Columbus sailed the ocean blue.” But the first band of Norwegians to make the trip across the Atlantic in modern times was a group that sailed from Stavanger to New York in 1825. The letters sent by these brave settlers to family members in Norway were published and widely distributed. The letters told of good land for the taking and of personal freedoms unavailable in Norway. More and more decided to chance the long trip to this promising place, and by 1850, nearly 18,000 Norwegians had arrived.<sup>2</sup> Clergymen trained for service in the State Church of Norway were slower to make the trip. This was at least partly because the Church did not approve of those who were willing to leave behind congregation and family to seek their fortunes in a wild land.<sup>3</sup> It was a valid concern that the emigrants themselves came to understand, particularly when babies were born, young adults wished to be married, and the deceased were laid to rest.

Into this void of spiritual care stepped various itinerant preachers with questionable qualifications. Some were pietistic laymen, who had a strong aversion to the Church of Norway. Others concealed their true credentials and coaxed a number of Norwegian Lutherans into Methodist, Episcopal, Baptist, and even Mormon churches.<sup>4</sup> Claus Lauritz Clausen was the first Lutheran man to serve the settlers in line with the practices of the Church of Norway.

<sup>1</sup> O. E. Rølvaag, *Giants in the Earth: A Saga of the Prairie* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1999), 404.

<sup>2</sup> S. C. Ylvisaker, Chr. Anderson, and G. O. Lillegard, eds., *Grace for Grace: Brief History of the Norwegian Synod* (Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 1943), 11.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Tjernagel Harstad, *Store Per: Norwegian-American “Paul Bunyan” of the Prairie* (Lakeville, MN: Jackpine Press, 2011), 60.

<sup>4</sup> Chr. Anderson reports in *Grace for Grace*: “In the Fox River settlement alone, out of a population of about 450 souls there were said to be about one hundred Mormons.” 17–18.

He came to America in 1843 to become a schoolteacher, but hardly a month after reaching the Muskego settlement in Wisconsin, the settlers called him to be their pastor. He was examined and ordained by a nearby German Lutheran pastor and took up the charge.

Not long afterward, the first seminary-trained pastor from Norway, J. W. C. Dietrichson, traveled to America to see what could be done to organize the Norwegian people into congregations. He consulted with Clausen and soon helped establish congregations in Koshkonong and the surrounding area. For the next few years, he and Clausen were the only pastors available to serve these flocks. Finally, help began to arrive. H. A. Stub came in 1848, and A. C. Preus replaced Dietrichson in 1850. Three more pastors came in 1851: H. A. Preus, G. F. Dietrichson, and N. Brandt. J. A. Ottesen arrived in 1852 and U. V. Koren a year later, among others.<sup>5</sup>

These men came to work, but they could not have imagined the amount of work waiting for them. A pastor in Norway might receive a call to serve two or three congregations in America. But upon arrival, he would discover that those needing spiritual care were not so localized. This is how the Rev. Koren describes his experience:

In my letter of call, the congregations were gathered under only three names: 'Little Iowa,' 'Painted Creek,' and 'Turkey River.' In reality the call comprised the following territory, designated by the present congregations: Decorah, Madison, Lincoln, Calmar, Stavanger, Washington Prairie, Glenwood, West Paint Creek, East Paint Creek, Fægre, Lansing, Norway, Marion, and Clermont. All this comprised my regular parish, and a little later Little Turkey River [Saude] and Crane Creek [Jerico] were added to this.<sup>6</sup>

According to his journal of pastoral acts, Koren conducted at least 234 baptisms from his arrival at Christmas 1853 through the end of 1854, along with a good number of churchings of mothers, weddings, and grave consecrations.<sup>7</sup> He commented some fifty years later that the same area he served was now covered by ten pastors. The Rev. B. J. Muus served twenty-eight congregations in Minnesota at one time, and the Rev. Thomas Johnson covered an area of seventeen counties.<sup>8</sup> The Rev. Brandt also traveled a great distance, gathering congregations in parts of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota.<sup>9</sup>

At this time, roads were poor and travel was difficult. The Rev. Ottesen's extensive travels from congregation to congregation caused damage to the nerves in his legs, which afflicted him throughout his life.<sup>10</sup> Koren wrote about staying in the upstairs of parishioners' cabins where rain and snow might seep in or stars could be seen through the cracks.<sup>11</sup> Besides these physical discomforts, the pastors of the Norwegian Synod faced stiff opposition from the pietists (known as "Haugeans") and others. These heterodox opponents sowed discord among

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 16–46. Herman Amberg Preus noted that only fourteen theological candidates from Norway accepted calls to serve in America from 1848 to 1858. By 1867, three of these had returned to Norway, while just six more had arrived. *Vivacious Daughter: Seven Lectures on the Religious Situation Among Norwegians in America*, ed. and trans. Todd W. Nichol (Northfield, MN: The Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1990), 75–76.

<sup>6</sup> Mark DeGarmeaux, ed. and trans., *U. V. Koren's Works: Volume 4: Memoirs, Poems, Miscellaneous* (Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 2016), 27–28.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Berg, trans., "Pastoral Journal of the Rev. U. V. Koren" (Decorah, IA: Unpublished).

<sup>8</sup> H. A. Preus, 42 with footnote 14 on 207.

<sup>9</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 50. More information about the early mission work of the Norwegian Synod can be found in J. C. K. Preus' *Widening the Frontier: Sketches and Incidents from the Home Mission Field* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1929).

<sup>10</sup> P. Lauritz Larsen, *Jacob Aal Ottesen: A Biography from the Norwegian*, trans. G. A. R. Gullixson (Wenatchee, WA: Webpc, Inc., 1987), 21. The text of this book is available online: <http://www.els-history.org/books/142-jacob-aal-ottesen-a-biography-from-the-norwegian.html>.

<sup>11</sup> *Koren*, Vol. 4, 31.

the Norwegian settlers, particularly criticizing the clerical attire and liturgical practice of the Norwegian Synod pastors. They called them “dead formalists without any spirituality.”<sup>12</sup> Would the Lutheran pastors be stretched too thin—seemingly unequal to the work—like Rølvaag’s gaunt and haggard horse?

### *Growth and Controversy*

Early on, the Norwegian pastors recognized the need to coordinate their efforts among the settlers. In 1849, J. W. C. Dietrichson prepared a draft for a synodical constitution, and a handful of congregations adopted a constitution in 1851. But when some newly-arrived pastors pointed out the “Grundtvigian error” in one of its paragraphs, that organization was dissolved. After receiving input from interested pastors and congregations, “The Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” was formed in October of 1853.<sup>13</sup> This church body is best known by its moniker, the “Norwegian Synod,” and October 2018 marks its 165<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

At the time of its formation, six pastors and thirty-eight congregations were affiliated with the new synod, an estimate of 11,400 people.<sup>14</sup> Due to dedicated home mission work and the continued migration of Norwegians to America, those numbers steadily grew. Pastors were not arriving from Norway quickly enough to fill all the pastoral vacancies. Provision had to be made for the training of men on American soil to carry out this work. In 1855, Pastors Ottesen and Brandt were appointed to visit three seminaries in the Midwest located in St. Louis (Missouri Synod), Columbus (Ohio Synod), and Buffalo (Buffalo Synod). They recommended without reservation that arrangements for seminary training be made with the Missouri Synod. With the Missouri Synod’s approval, the Rev. Laur. Larsen was called as the Norwegian professor at the St. Louis Seminary.<sup>15</sup>

Larsen served in this capacity for just two years, from 1859–1861. The reason for his short tenure is found in the sad conflict which erupted at this time between the northern and southern states. The American Civil War began in 1861, and the state of Missouri was caught in the middle. Voices inside and outside the Norwegian Synod wanted it to take a definite stand against slavery in America, but the Synod’s leaders were wary of crossing the line from doctrine to politics. The pastors and congregations of the Synod adopted a series of statements in the 1860s, which called slavery an evil but not necessarily a sin.<sup>16</sup> The Synod determined to go as far as Scripture did, which was not as far as the Abolitionists of the North or the

---

<sup>12</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 48 (see also 16–17, 47–49). One of the chief instigators against confessional Lutheranism in the Norwegian settlements was Elling Eielsen (1804–1883). “Especially during the cholera years, 1849–1854, the loss of loved ones, loneliness, and depression left settlers vulnerable to his histrionics. Unbridled emotionalism in his sermons and prayers at unstructured ‘meetings’ (as opposed to worship services), and invective against devil-inspired, gowned clergymen who chanted and followed set liturgies in steepled churches with pulpits and altars, attracted followers.” *Store Per*, 109. See also H. A. Preus, 119–136.

<sup>13</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 32–46.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 52–53.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 69–70.

<sup>16</sup> Its initial statement in 1861 read: “Although according to the Word of God it is not in itself sin to have slaves, yet slavery is an evil and a punishment from God, and we condemn all the abuses and sins which are connected with it, just as we, when our call requires it and Christian charity and wisdom demand it, will work for its abolition.” *Ibid.*, 149. How something can be an evil but “not in itself sin” is explained by Koren: “When we call this relationship ‘an evil,’ then this is not said with the understanding that it was an absolute evil, that is, as if it were an evil in and of itself in all situations. For we believed that Christian people knew that there is only one absolute evil, namely sin. We certainly call poverty an evil, and sickness likewise.... The same is true with slavery.” Mark DeGarmeaux, *U. V. Koren’s Works: Volume 3: Articles* (Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 2015), 38.

Secessionists of the South would have liked.<sup>17</sup> Koren later stated that he and his friends “were all anti-slavery men,” and that “none of our opponents were more resolute enemies of slavery nor more happy about its abolition than we were.”<sup>18</sup> The Norwegian-Americans in general overwhelmingly took the side of the North, and many Norwegian-American men served with distinction on the Union side.<sup>19</sup>

Other controversies arose in the 1860s and 1870s, most often provoked by opponents of the Norwegian Synod. Doctrinal statements were adopted to answer such questions as the appropriateness of lay preaching (1862), whether Sunday in particular is the new Sabbath (1863), and whether the power of absolution is found inside or outside the sinner (1874).<sup>20</sup> In each case, the right understanding depended on a proper distinction between Law and Gospel. This biblical and Lutheran approach was vigorously defended and applied by the Norwegian Synod theologians, just as it was by the leaders of the Missouri Synod.

One of the men who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the Norwegian Synod on these issues was the Rev. F. A. Schmidt. He was born in Germany and immigrated to America where he took up studies at the Missouri Synod’s college and seminary. In order to assist with the proofreading of the Norwegian Synod’s *Kirketidende* (*Church Times*), Schmidt learned Norwegian while in seminary and also gained proficiency in English. Upon his ordination in 1857, he served congregations in New York and Baltimore. At C. F. W. Walther’s recommendation, H. A. Preus visited him in Baltimore and invited him to consider teaching at the recently opened Luther College.<sup>21</sup> This is how the twenty-four-year-old Schmidt began his affiliation with the Norwegian Synod in 1861. He taught at Luther College for nine years until he was called to be the Norwegian Synod’s professor of theology at the St. Louis Seminary in 1872, a post that had been vacant since Laur. Larsen’s departure at the beginning of the Civil War.<sup>22</sup> The Rev. Bjug Harstad described the high regard his students had for him:

F.A. Schmidt came as the professor of the Norwegians from Decorah to St. Louis as theological teacher. We Norwegian students who were there then had had him as a teacher in Decorah and thought a great deal of him. In St. Louis he became co-editor of the theological journal *Lehre und Wehre* [*Doctrine and Defense*]. In it he provided clear and powerful testimony against the synergistic doctrine about freedom in election, self-determination, the position of election, the middle-state, and similar things which the Iowa Synod defended.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> For a fuller discussion of this issue, see *Grace for Grace*, 148–155, H. A. Preus, 161–173, and *Koren*, Vol. 3, 5–53. Koren said the Norwegian Synod learned later that the Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and Episcopalians had all discussed the same question around that time and “had declared themselves in the same manner as the pastors of the Norwegian Synod.” *Koren*, Vol. 3, 502.

<sup>18</sup> *Koren*, Vol. 3, 478; also 501.

<sup>19</sup> For more on this, see Petter Strøm Drevland, “Norwegian Immigrants in the American Civil War: Reasons for Enlistment according to the America Letters” (Master’s Th., University of Oslo, 2013), [https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/37031/Drevland\\_Master.pdf?sequence=1](https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/37031/Drevland_Master.pdf?sequence=1).

<sup>20</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 137–147, 156–165.

<sup>21</sup> John M. Brenner, “The Election Controversy Among Lutherans in the Twentieth Century: An Examination of the Underlying Problems,” (PhD diss., Paper 204, Marquette University, 2012), 78. Preus remarked in 1867, “It was a great gift of grace that the Lord supplied us with this competent Christian character.” H. A. Preus, 77.

<sup>22</sup> Rasmus Malmin, O. M. Norlie, and O. A. Tingelstad, eds., *Who’s Who Among Pastors in All the Norwegian Lutheran Synods of America, 1843–1927* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1928), 517.

<sup>23</sup> Bjug A. Harstad, “1921 Presidential Address,” <http://els.org/resources/document-archive/presidents-messages/message1921/>.



The same year he was called to St. Louis, Prof. Schmidt was instrumental in organizing the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference, which included the Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Norwegian, Ohio, and Wisconsin Synods. His influence on the American Lutheran scene was growing. In 1876, the Norwegian Synod realized its goal of having its own seminary when Luther Seminary was opened in Madison. Schmidt was called to teach there, along with Prof. O. E. Asperheim who had arrived in America four years earlier. This arrangement lasted just two years. Asperheim began voicing objections about the Missouri Synod, particularly regarding its doctrine of election or predestination. Schmidt opposed these accusations and called for action to be taken against his colleague. Asperheim resigned.<sup>24</sup> The Rev. H. G. Stub was called to replace him, and the Rev. Johannes Ylvisaker joined the faculty a year later in 1879.<sup>25</sup>

The dissension between the two professors of Luther Seminary had been resolved, but Schmidt was far from content. In the late spring of 1878, he was passed over for the English chair of theology at the St. Louis Seminary, a position he had his eye on. Seemingly embittered by this,<sup>26</sup> Schmidt began to level charges against his mentor Walther that he was promoting a Calvinistic understanding of the doctrine of election. These charges stemmed from an essay presented by Walther to the Western District of the Missouri Synod in 1877. At the outset of this essay, Walther acknowledged the difficulty of the doctrine. He explained that the question of why some are saved and not others cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of human reason:

It is not to be denied that in our teachings much occurs which is impossible to reconcile. Scripture teaches that whoever is chosen to eternal life is not chosen for having accomplished anything for which God had to or wanted to elect him, but that God had first removed the resistance in him. And it also teaches that those who are rejected are cast away because of their own sin and guilt. Who can reconcile this?... Scripture teaches that God loved all men and desired their salvation. And yet we discover that entire nations did not have God's Word for hundreds of years, and therefore were unable to reject it. For centuries they sat in darkness and the shadow of death....

The false church indeed blasphemes God and says: "God does not desire to save all men; hence He gives one the false word, the other the true one; the one godless parents, the other pious; the [one] false teachers, the other believing." Again others say: "It is because certain ones are better than others." Or they may say: "The heathen did not receive the Word because God foreknew that they would not believe." Or: "They are saved because they did receive the word." Yes, one wants to resolve it by teaching that even after death there is a possibility for conversion. These are nothing less than human speculation. Our Lutheran church is not in agreement with this—it does not mingle human speculation with the word of God.<sup>27</sup>

Walther's essay was approved by the representatives gathered for the Synodical Conference convention in 1878. But Schmidt did not approve. He was particularly offended that Walther called the *intuitu fidei* ("in view of faith") approach to the doctrine of election unclear at best. Walther acknowledged that the great dogmatician Johann Gerhard had spoken of election "in view of faith." But this must be explained carefully. If it is taken to mean that God elects a person to eternal salvation *because* he believes, this is incorrect. It gives the impression that there is something within a person that causes the Lord to choose him. On the other hand,

---

<sup>24</sup> Brenner, 79.

<sup>25</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 74–75.

<sup>26</sup> This is the cause and effect indicated by B. Harstad in his 1921 address. For a further examination of this point, see Brenner, 79, footnotes 296, 297.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Brenner, 77.

said Walther, "If one thereby wishes to say that God has chosen no one who does not come to faith, this is correct. Then it is a description of the elect, except that faith is not the cause of election. The cause is Christ alone."<sup>28</sup>

In January of 1879, Schmidt informed Walther that he considered Walther's teaching on this point to be in error. The men agreed to discuss the matter together privately, but Schmidt broke this agreement when Walther continued his presentation on election at the Western District convention in 1879. Schmidt went public with his charges against Walther in a big way. In January of 1880, he mailed his journal *Altes und Neues (Old Things and New)* to every pastor and teacher belonging to the member churches of the Synodical Conference. The charge was clearly stated: "In the publications of the Missouri Synod, a doctrine concerning election had been set forth and defended, which to our knowledge, is an anti-Scriptural and anti-Confessional Calvinizing error. In recent reports of the Western District (1877 and 1879) this erroneous doctrine has fully ripened."<sup>29</sup> Schmidt expected that his charges would gain traction among his fellow Germans, but both the Missouri Synod and the church bodies which would later form the Wisconsin Synod refused to go along with him.<sup>30</sup> Only the Ohio Synod lent a sympathetic ear to his accusations.

What would the Norwegian Synod do? Prof. Schmidt was a highly-regarded teacher in the Synod, but the Norwegian Synod's bond with the Missouri Synod was strong also. Schmidt intensified his attacks both in print and in his seminary classroom. The seminary students began to propagate Schmidt's criticisms and arguments in the congregations in and around Madison. Schmidt's two seminary colleagues, Ylvisaker and Stub, attempted to quell the controversy, but Schmidt would not be quieted. The pastors of the Norwegian Synod met to discuss this doctrine twice in 1880, and early the next year Koren presented an essay at a conference entitled, "Can and Ought a Christian Be Certain of His Salvation?" The debate raged on. In order to deal with the matter while avoiding the appearance of undue outside influence, the Norwegian Synod removed itself from the Synodical Conference in 1882. The Ohio Synod had departed a year earlier, having taken Schmidt's side against Walther and the Missouri Synod. In 1883, the Ohio Synod's Capital University bestowed an honorary doctorate on Schmidt. It had done the same for Walther just five years earlier in 1878. This is how quickly fraternal relations in the Synodical Conference had deteriorated.<sup>31</sup>

Besides branding Walther and his Norwegian Synod supporters as Calvinists, Schmidt also appealed to the Catechism explanation produced by the Danish bishop Erik Pontoppidan (1698–1764).<sup>32</sup> This Catechism was widely-used among Norwegian Lutherans, and it contained the teaching that God elects sinners for salvation "in view of faith." While this phrase can be properly understood, Schmidt understood it improperly. He attributed conversion in some part to a person's own disposition, which makes salvation not entirely by God's grace. In 1882 he declared: "When only one of two ungodly men is converted, there must have been a

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>30</sup> Koren, Vol. 3, 240–241. The leading theologian in the Wisconsin Synod at this time was Prof. Adolf Hoenecke, whose contributions on the doctrine of election brought greater clarity to the discussion. Brenner, 95–99.

<sup>31</sup> Walter A. Baepler, *A Century of Grace: A History of the Missouri Synod, 1847–1947* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), 198, 202.

<sup>32</sup> Prof. Mark DeGarmeaux writes that Pontoppidan's Catechism, "*Truth unto Godliness*, consisting of seven hundred fifty-nine questions and answers, was published in 1737, coinciding with the two-hundredth anniversary of the coming of the Lutheran Reformation to Denmark in 1536." In the same writing, DeGarmeaux cautions against judging Pontoppidan by how his Catechism was later (mis)used. Mark DeGarmeaux, "Revisiting Pontoppidan," *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* XXI, no. 1 (2012): 21–24.

difference in their resistance; for, if not, they would both have been converted.”<sup>33</sup> This idea fits with human reason, but not with the teaching of the Bible.

Another issue complicated the Norwegian Synod response to the “Schmidtians.”<sup>34</sup> The part of the Lutheran *Book of Concord* of 1580 which most thoroughly presents the doctrine of election had not been officially adopted by either the Church of Norway or the Norwegian Synod. Both the 1853 constitution and the 1868 revision listed as its confessional writings: the Apostolic Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530, and Luther’s Small Catechism.<sup>35</sup> Missing were the Apology to the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles with the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord. Article XI of the Formula addresses “God’s Eternal Foreknowledge and Election.” If this part of the *Book of Concord* had never been subscribed to by the Norwegian Synod, how much weight should it be given in the current debate?<sup>36</sup> But even though it had not been officially adopted by the Norwegians, neither had it ever been rejected.

When the Synodical Conference was established, the Norwegian Synod (including Schmidt) had no problem subscribing to its confessional statement: “The Synodical Conference acknowledges the canonical writings of the Old and New Testaments as God’s Word, and the confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of 1580, called the ‘Concordia,’ as her own.”<sup>37</sup> Schmidt claimed that his teaching was in line with Article XI of the Formula of Concord, but he had a hard time proving it. Koren included frequent citations of the Formula in his 1884 doctrinal statement, “En Redegjørelse” (“An Accounting”). When it was presented in the fall of that year, eighty-seven pastors and professors signed on to it, and twenty more added their signatures soon after.<sup>38</sup> The line between the official teaching of the Norwegian Synod and the teaching of Schmidt and his adherents had been clearly drawn.

### *An Accounting*

Koren outlined the reason for “An Accounting” in its introduction:

It is well known to you that we now for several years have been attacked and accused of teaching false doctrines regarding election or the election of grace. Our teaching has been called Calvinistic. The teachings with which we have been charged are of two kinds: some, which we have never believed and never taught; these we have publicly repudiated, but we have continued to be accused of them anyway; others, which we actually have taught, because they are expressly taught in God’s Word and confessed by the Lutheran Church in its public confessions. Therefore we cling to these in spite of all attacks. We do

---

<sup>33</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 172. This was initially printed in Schmidt’s own publication *Lutherske Vidnesbyrd* (*Lutheran Testimonies*), 1882, p. 60.

<sup>34</sup> This was a term Koren used in his writings during the controversy. *Koren*, Vol. 3, 242, 305.

<sup>35</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 35–36; H. A. Preus, 182. A note appended to the 1868 constitution explained, “The only reason why the other symbols of the Lutheran Church are not yet mentioned among the symbolical books of our Synod is the fact that they have hitherto been little known to our congregations.” H. A. Preus, 182.

<sup>36</sup> For an examination of this issue and the significance of the *Book of Concord*, see *Koren*, Vol. 4, 311–317.

<sup>37</sup> Richard C. Wolf, *Documents of Lutheran Unity in America* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 196. Those organizing the Synodical Conference did add this caveat to its confessional subscription: “We prefer a confession of faith which accepts the whole Book of Concord... and we shall officially found our Synodical Conference on such a confession. But we would not deny neither [*sic*] recognition of orthodoxy or organizational membership because of a confession which is direct only with regard to the Augustana.” Wolf, 193.

<sup>38</sup> The names of the initial eighty-seven signees are given in *Koren*, Vol. 4, 310.

not accept as our own a single doctrine which is not clearly based on the Word of God and which cannot be shown to be in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church.

We owe our congregations an accounting for what we teach and confess; and although we dare to believe that our hearers both know our testimony and will judge it by what they hear of us and not by what others say, we have still considered it our duty to present to you now this our common complete accounting, in which we hope no essential question that concerns the disputed doctrines has been unanswered.<sup>39</sup>

In the statement, Koren clearly rejected the Calvinist teachings of limited atonement (Jesus redeemed only those who would believe), irresistible grace (the Gospel cannot be rejected), and perseverance in the faith (the converted cannot fall away). He also rejected the synergistic understanding that the human will plays a role in conversion. He wrote, "Being dead in sin, the natural man cannot himself change this condition of his heart nor cooperate, either little or much, in effecting this change."<sup>40</sup> He further explained what the will can and cannot do. "The natural man has freedom and power outwardly to hear and consider the Word of God or not to do this, but man cannot cooperate at all in bringing about any inner change in his heart for good."<sup>41</sup> He also addressed "the newer synergistic doctrine," that before conversion God's Word frees the will so that it can then choose salvation. Said Koren, "It is the teaching of Scripture that the man who does *not* become converted, has himself to thank for it; but it does not teach that about those who are converted."<sup>42</sup> God does not free the will to make its own decision; He changes the will by the power of His Word, so that the sinner is brought to repentance and faith. "[I]t is God alone who effects this that a man both wants to do this [repent] and does it."<sup>43</sup>

While he wrote in a direct way, Koren did not engage in name calling or take any cheap shots. He was careful to go no further than Scripture, and he was also sensitive toward those who lacked a full understanding of the doctrine. "The doctrine of election is not a chief article in the teaching of God's Word," he stated; "for a man can be a believing Christian and be saved, although he has not attained to a knowledge of this doctrine and appropriated it."<sup>44</sup> At the same time, "The doctrine of election stands in close connection with the fundamental chief articles of the Christian faith, such as: That fallen man is completely corrupted and dead in sin; that God desires the salvation of all men; that salvation is by the grace of God alone; and that it therefore is gained through faith alone without the works of the law."<sup>45</sup> As tempting as it is, reason must not be allowed to determine why some are saved and not others, any more than reason can solve the mystery of the Holy Trinity.<sup>46</sup>

Koren even allowed for doctrinal expressions that he did not personally prefer:

Therefore we acknowledge, not indeed as a complete definition of the concept of election, but still as a correct presentation of the last part of it, the answer given to Q. 548 of Pontoppidan's *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed* [*Truth unto Godliness*], which reads: "That God has appointed all those to eternal life whom he from eternity has seen would accept the grace proffered them, believe in Jesus and persevere in this faith unto the end. Rom. 8,28–30." II Tim. 1,13.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 173–174. The full text of "An Accounting" can be accessed at [els.org](http://els.org).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 182

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 183. Then Koren cites Johann Gerhard's correct understanding of *intuitu fidei*.

God certainly knew from eternity who would be brought to faith through the means of grace and who would not. If Pontoppidan's point was that no one could be considered elect unless he was a believer "faithful unto death" (Revelation 2:10),<sup>48</sup> Koren agreed. But the cart must not be put before the horse. Election does not begin with something in mankind; it begins with God's gracious disposition and purpose in Christ. Romans 8:29–30 says, "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified." The Rev. Theodore Aaberg summed up the difference between the two sides: "The Synod's pastors put faith *after* election, bestowed upon the individual as a *result* of his election. Prof. Schmidt put faith *before* election, making it the *cause* of the individual's election."<sup>49</sup>

The only time Koren quoted Schmidt directly in "An Accounting" is when he wrote, "We reject the synergistic doctrine that the election in Christ has not taken place in accordance with a free purpose of grace by God, and that 'salvation in a certain sense does not depend on God alone.' Eph. 1,11."<sup>50</sup> Schmidt wasted no time in firing back, "I believe and teach now as before, that it is not synergistic error, but a clear teaching of God's Word and our Lutheran Confession, that 'salvation in a certain sense does not depend on God alone.'"<sup>51</sup> In the ensuing years, Schmidt's doctrinal error became more pronounced. He plainly stated: "All have their free, personal, independent choice between the two usable possibilities: either to follow the drawing of grace or to resist it."<sup>52</sup> But if salvation depends in some way on sinners, then they can never be certain of salvation. Then they will never know if they have prepared themselves in the right way, or if they have given God their whole heart.

Clearly this was no mere power struggle among men. It was not "splitting hairs" or "much ado about nothing." The Norwegian Synod leaders including Koren, Preus, and Ottesen were convinced that the Gospel itself was at stake. Schmidt for his part operated as though he were the defender of God's truth. What was clear is that Schmidt's beliefs had changed from what they were before. A 1903 pamphlet issued by the Church Council of the Norwegian Synod recounts the damage done by Schmidt:

Dr. Schmidt knew us. He knew that we taught the old Lutheran doctrine. He was himself a zealous champion of it. He preferred, indeed the form of doctrine "intuitu fidei" (i. e. election in view of faith) which he stated was used also by several in the Missouri Synod; but otherwise he taught in everything like the rest of us, especially with regard to man's natural spiritual impotence and God's exclusive activity and unmerited work of grace in conversion....

Without the slightest justification, he attacked us because we would not take part in his indefensible attacks on the Missourians. Although we had not changed our doctrine in a single point, he "rang the alarm bell," warning our people that we wanted to introduce a new teaching.... The pastors of the Synod did what they could to keep this unnecessary controversy from being brought into our congregations and confusing them. But he "had to sound the alarm" to wake the people up. No wonder then that the people "woke up"!

<sup>48</sup> All Bible passages are given from the *English Standard Version*.

<sup>49</sup> Theodore A. Aaberg, *A City Set on a Hill: A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Norwegian Synod), 1918–1968* (Mankato: ELS Board of Publications, 1968), 27.

<sup>50</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 185.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 172. About this statement Koren wrote, "The one who first used this expression among us, at that time actually stated that he well knew that it had a 'synergistic ring.' According to my conviction, both the 'ring' and the meaning are synergistic and contrary to the Word of God." *Koren*, Vol. 3, 268.

<sup>52</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 172. Schmidt's associate, the Rev. B. J. Muus, made even more radical statements than these. *Koren*, Vol. 3, 237–239, 333–336. For a collection of statements by Schmidt and Muus, see *Koren*, Vol. 3, 482–483.

Had we not always praised Prof. Schmidt? Had we not said he was our ablest theologian? "Surely it could not be without reason that he made all this noise!" And he gained support. As was to be expected in a body as large as ours, there were even before the controversy some pastors and laymen who were disaffected for various reasons. Some of these and a number of others followed him. But his greatest following he gained among the many unstable students who were under his influence (at the Theological Seminary) day after day and year after year.

They did not understand that Dr. Schmidt departed steadily farther away from his earlier teachings and began to sponsor an ever more definitely synergistic teaching, such as he himself had rejected before, even when it appeared in a finer form. His teaching was made more and more to harmonize with *reason*, and the young men were easily influenced.<sup>53</sup>

The controversy picked up steam with each passing year of the 1880s. In 1883, Schmidt succeeded in turning Norwegian Synod President H. A. Preus' own congregation against him. On Good Friday of that year, members of the congregation physically picked up and carried him and his son Christian out of the church.<sup>54</sup> Ottesen's congregation was divided as were so many others. Koren was retained in his congregation only by a narrow vote of confidence.<sup>55</sup> This trouble was felt throughout the Norwegian Synod. Not just congregations but families were torn apart. Often a break off group would construct a church building in sight of the former one. It happened on more than one occasion that bodies were exhumed from one cemetery and reburied in another. The Rev. G. O. Lillegard details the bitter effects of the controversy:

[I]n the Norwegian Synod Dr. Schmidt was able to set brother against brother until many a Norwegian community was literally torn to pieces by the controversy, with one party locking the church doors against the other, proceeding even to violence at times, persecuting and deposing faithful pastors, suing one another in the courts of the land, finally settling down to somewhat peaceful relations only when the church had been formally divided into two opposing groups and the quarrel no longer had to be carried on under the same roof.<sup>56</sup>

By the mid-1880s, the Norwegian Synod had reached its breaking point. Those in agreement with Schmidt's position, who called themselves the "Anti-Missourians," opened a new seminary in 1886 at St. Olaf in Northfield, Minnesota. The following year, the Norwegian Synod delegates to the convention censured them for this action by a vote of 230 to 98. The Anti-Missourians would not change course. In 1887, they withdrew from the Norwegian Synod and officially formed the "Anti-Missourian Brotherhood."<sup>57</sup> Before this division, there were 193 pastors and 143,885 members in 723 congregations. After the break, 138 pastors remained along with 93,891 members in 512 congregations.<sup>58</sup> In just three years' time, 50,000 people had left the Norwegian Synod. The ribs were showing in this once vibrant institution.

---

<sup>53</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 166–167. This pamphlet, "Features of Dr. Schmidt's Conduct," was published by the Synod's Church Council (of which Koren was a member) in consultation with the Theological Faculty at Luther Seminary. *Koren*, Vol. 3, 527.

<sup>54</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 167, 171.

<sup>55</sup> Barbara Scottston, *Are These Our Roots? 150 Years of Lutherans in Lansing, Iowa*, 119, <http://www.lansinglutherans.org/>.

<sup>56</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 169–170.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 189–190.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

## *A New Direction*

The Anti-Missourian Brotherhood soon found allies for its cause. In 1890, it joined with the Norwegian Augustana Synod and the Norwegian-Danish Conference to form the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, or the “United Church” for short. What brought about this union? According to Koren, “The bond of union was opposition against the Norwegian Synod.”<sup>59</sup> By the turn of the century, the United Church boasted a membership of 242,000 people in 1,140 congregations served by 340 pastors.<sup>60</sup> In comparison, the Norwegian Synod in 1903 numbered 140,000 people in 900 congregations served by 280 pastors.<sup>61</sup> Two things are evident in this tally: 1) the United Church was decidedly larger than the Norwegian Synod at this time, and 2) the Norwegian Synod had in just fifteen years returned to the size it was before the split. The growth of both these synods is explained by the continued immigration of Norwegians to America through the latter half of the nineteenth century. An estimated half a million Norwegians arrived in America between 1825 and 1900.

Besides the increase of the Norwegian population in America, there were other reasons for the Norwegian Synod to be optimistic about its future. The Norwegian settlers began to see the results of their hard labor. Families were able to move out of grass huts and log cabins into more spacious accommodations. They felt less and less like strangers in a new land and more like its rightful occupants. Why shouldn’t they pursue the avenues open to them in this free country? The children and grandchildren of the original immigrants became fluent in English and probably thought of themselves less as “Norwegians” and more as “Americans.” Some stayed in farming, while others pursued employment in larger towns and cities. Some even ran for political office. One of these, J. A. O. Preus, the grandson of H. A. Preus, earned a law degree and eventually served two terms as the governor of Minnesota in the 1920s.

The pastors and congregations of the Norwegian Synod saw the changes happening around them. As the Church does in every generation, they wrestled with the question of how to meet these cultural changes without compromising doctrine and practice. The most immediate question was whether, or how quickly, a transition should be made from the use of Norwegian to the use of English. To stick with Norwegian only was to isolate the church body from members of the community who did not speak Norwegian. It might also frustrate the youth whose language preference was English. This may seem an easy choice—make the change to English! But consider what it would mean. The large collection of Norwegian books in home and professional libraries would soon be abandoned: hymnbooks, devotional books, and sermon books. Older congregation members would no longer hear God’s Word or the Catechism recited in their native tongue. Concerned Christians were right to wonder what might be lost in the leap from one language to another. Would the younger generation respect the older, or would the past be set aside in the name of progress? These were exciting times for the church which saw the fields “white for harvest” (John 4:35), but they were also dangerous times.

The Norwegian Synod recognized that even if congregations wanted to keep worshipping in Norwegian, worship resources in English should at least be available. An English book containing 130 hymns had already been published in 1879, but it was not widely used. By 1895, both the Norwegian Synod and the United Church established committees to begin work on an English hymnbook. There was even correspondence between these committees to see if some collaboration would be possible. This was understandable considering the huge task of bringing their beloved Scandinavian and German hymns into English. At the same time, these church bodies were not in doctrinal agreement, and not even a decade had passed since

---

<sup>59</sup> Koren, Vol. 3, 525.

<sup>60</sup> M. P. Dommersnaes, “We Wish to See Jesus,” in *Crane Creek Lutheran Church Centennial Book, 1867–1967*, ed. David Stewart, 9.

<sup>61</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 53.



the bitter split in the Norwegian Synod. The committees went their separate ways with each church body publishing English hymnbooks in 1898, neither of which enjoyed long-term use.

Believing that they had more in common than not, the district conventions of the Norwegian Synod resolved in 1900 that its officials should meet with the officials of the United Church to discuss doctrinal matters. Dr. Schmidt's involvement on the United Church side quickly brought these discussions to a close.<sup>62</sup> But the year 1905 brought renewed optimism to give the discussions another try. In the summer of this year, Norway gained its independence from Sweden, an event celebrated around the world by people of Norwegian descent. Couldn't Norwegian Lutherans accomplish more together than apart? The Hauge's Synod, one of the smaller Norwegian church bodies in America, extended invitations to the Norwegian Synod and United Church to hold joint doctrinal discussions. The invitation was eagerly accepted.

Shortly after this, the Norwegian Synod launched an English-language publication called the *Lutheran Herald* to go along with its Norwegian-language *Kirketidende*.<sup>63</sup> These journals were each published weekly but with different content. From its first issue on January 4, 1906, Jeremiah 6:16 was printed just below the heading: "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." From 1909–1913, the editor of the *Herald* was the Rev. Theodore Graebner, a pastor trained in the Missouri Synod. His association with the Norwegian Synod began when he was asked to teach at the Synod's "Lutheran Ladies Seminary" in Red Wing, Minnesota. He was ordained at a Norwegian Synod church in Red Wing and remained there until accepting a call to be a home missionary in the Chicago area. Graebner gained experience as an editor in Chicago by overseeing the production of the *Illustrated Home Journal*. His work there ended just before he was asked to edit the *Herald*.<sup>64</sup> Graebner was a good pick for the job. He was a learned man and also fair in his approach. As the union cause heated up, he was determined to represent all viewpoints, both those for union and those against.

The first report about discussions on the doctrine of election among the three Norwegian Lutheran church bodies is found toward the end of 1909. Details of the discussion were not given, except that "No agreement was reached."<sup>65</sup> The following year, it was reported that the union negotiations had "come to a stand-still."<sup>66</sup> This was fine with Koren, the standing president of the Norwegian Synod. "The doctrinal discussions which have been carried on with other Norwegian Lutheran church bodies have not, it is my conviction, led to any reliable results," he said. "If only insignificant things were at stake, then it would not be right to separate; but when the question is raised whether God *alone* is our Savior, then we cannot be too careful."<sup>67</sup> These words, however, did not receive a hearing. Being unable to attend the district conventions, Koren sent a message to be read by the vice-president, Prof. H. G. Stub. Stub was a proponent of union with the other Norwegian Lutheran church bodies, so he omitted Koren's words of caution.<sup>68</sup> There was nothing more for Koren to do; the Lord called his soul to heaven on December 19, 1910.

But the plans for union held by Stub and others were no sure thing. Less than a week before Koren's death, the union committee met to continue its discussions. Stub had previously

---

<sup>62</sup> Koren, Vol. 3, 526–527; *Grace for Grace*, 93–94.

<sup>63</sup> Theodore Graebner and G. T. Lee, eds., *Lutheran Herald* (Decorah: Lutheran Publishing House, 1906–1917). The first English-language journal of the Norwegian Synod, *The Lutheran Watchman*, was edited by F. A. Schmidt for the short duration of its existence from 1866–1867.

<sup>64</sup> Erwin L. Lueker, ed., *Lutheran Cyclopedia* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), 430–431.

<sup>65</sup> The *Lutheran Herald* was bound in volumes by year. This reference is on page 1114 of the 1909 volume. See Appendix I for a list of references from the *Lutheran Herald* regarding the church union issue.

<sup>66</sup> *Herald* (1910), 362.

<sup>67</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 98–99.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 98. Associates of Stub later denied that he omitted any of Koren's words. See *Herald* (1916), 789–790.



submitted theses on election for consideration, which the president of the United Church had rejected as un-Biblical and un-Lutheran. The Norwegian Synod men demanded that he point out the errors he saw. He and his colleagues offered no specifics but repeated “the ancient accusations of false, calvinizing doctrine.” Under these circumstances, the Norwegian Synod representatives felt they had no choice but to withdraw from the discussions. In the early part of 1911 they reported, “We must express our profound regrets, that a task which has so long commanded our best efforts, and for the successful consummation of which we entertained such splendid hopes, should terminate here. We had in all sincerity believed that the United Church men had approached more closely to us.”<sup>69</sup> The Norwegian Synod representatives followed this up with a resounding, “We shall make no compromise in order to gain a false union. We shall not depart from the word of God in order to win men. We say with Luther: ‘Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me! Amen.’”<sup>70</sup>

A number of men in the United Church were similarly displeased with the action taken by its union committee. They asked that a new union committee be formed, and their suggestion was adopted. The Norwegian Synod followed suit, which meant there was now a new set of faces around the bargaining table. The first union meeting in November 1911 yielded no change in posture. A subcommittee of two men from each church body was appointed to prepare a set of theses on election to be discussed the following February at a meeting in Madison. The two Norwegian Synod men were surprised to learn that their counterparts from the United Church accepted the teaching of Formula of Concord Article XI as correct (as they interpreted it). Conversely, the Norwegian Synod men could say that they accepted the statement in Pontoppidan’s Catechism (as they understood it).<sup>71</sup> The grounds for compromise were established. For the *Lutheran Herald* subscribers who had read the reports of the previous year, it must have been shocking to stumble across this notice following the Madison meeting in 1912: “The joint committee appointed by the United Church and the Norwegian Synod Feb. 29 agreed on a set of theses dealing with the doctrine of Election.”<sup>72</sup>

The first thesis was the most controversial:

The Synod and United Church Committees on Union acknowledge unanimously and without reservation the doctrine of Predestination which is stated in the Eleventh Article of the Formula of Concord (the so-called “first form of the doctrine”) and in Pontoppidan’s Explanation (“Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed”), Question 548 (the so-called “second form of the doctrine”).<sup>73</sup>

The problem was putting both forms of the doctrine on the same level. The doctrinal statement “An Accounting” had allowed Pontoppidan’s Explanation, “not indeed as a complete definition of the concept of election, but still as a correct presentation of the last part of it.” In other words, Pontoppidan’s Explanation was acknowledged *with* reservation, contrary to the endorsement that seemed to be given by the union committee. The theses had other problems, such as the statement that “we reject every doctrine which either, on the one hand, would rob God of his honor as the only Savior or, on the other hand, would *weaken man’s feeling of responsibility* for the *acceptance or rejection* of God’s grace.”<sup>74</sup> The theses adopted by the union committee were known from that point on as the Madison “Opgjør,” the Norwegian word for “Agreement” or “Settlement.”

<sup>69</sup> *Herald* (1911), 4–8.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>71</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 99–101.

<sup>72</sup> *Herald* (1912), 242. For the full text of the theses, see Appendix II.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 273. Emphasis mine.

From the perspective of the committee, nothing now stood in the way of union between the two church bodies.<sup>75</sup> Their proposal was quickly promoted by the leading officials of the Norwegian Synod. At the 1912 Minnesota district convention, Pres. Stub “expressed his gratitude for the prospect of church union and emphasized the point that absolute harmony in all details of doctrine could not be hoped for, but should not be permitted to stand in the way of union where agreement is reached on all main points.”<sup>76</sup> As he visited other district conventions the same year, he confidently stated about the prospect of union, “The cause is God’s and cannot be stopped.”<sup>77</sup> Stub wanted church union in the worst way, and used every means at his disposal to bring it about. Satisfied by explanations about the content of the Agreement, the district conventions adopted the theses with little objection. About this time, a joint committee consisting of members of the Norwegian Synod, United Church, and Hauge’s Synod completed its work on a new English-language hymnbook. This book, *The Lutheran Hymnary*, was published in 1913 and was adopted by congregations in each of the three church bodies. If they were all using the same book of worship, why shouldn’t they officially establish church fellowship?

But as union plans progressed, there were dissenting voices. When questions were raised about the first theses of the Madison Agreement, one of the committee members explained, “The paragraph does not say, that we accept the two *forms* of the doctrine, but that we recognize *the doctrine* concerning election which is contained in the two forms.” Another committee member agreed, saying “[h]e could not accept the *second form* of the doctrine, since in his opinion *it* is found neither in Scripture nor in the confessions. But he could unreservedly recognize the *doctrine* which is contained in the second form.”<sup>78</sup> Many were willing to go along with the explanations of the committee members, but it soon became clear that the committee members spoke only for themselves and not for the representatives of the United Church. Stub made sure that no contrary opinions were published in *Kirketidende*.

He did not have the same control over the *Lutheran Herald*. In the inaugural issue of 1913, Editor Graebner stated that he did not intend to weigh in personally on the union question. However, he invited any and all readers to express their opinions on the matter.<sup>79</sup> Not surprisingly, he took some heat for this approach. A prominent pastor in the United Church identified the problem as coming from Graebner’s *German* background. Graebner replied with humor and some fire: “Quite probably Rev. Rygh pictures this editorial office as containing a full length portrait of Kaiser [Wilhelm], a map of Germany, a Stuttgarter grandfather pipe to our left, and a flag of Germany overhead.”<sup>80</sup> For Graebner, it was not “German!” “Norwegian!” or “English!” that mattered, but “DOCTRINE.”<sup>81</sup> As the weeks passed, he could not let his views about the Madison Agreement go unpublished. After reporting on a Chicago-Madison special conference at which one of the United Church authors of the Agreement was present,

---

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 274.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 579. Comparing Stub’s comments at this point with what he said during the first round of the election controversy shows how much his doctrinal approach had changed. He wrote in 1881, “The Second Form [Pontoppidan] is an attempt at finding a solution; it is an attempt to explain a great difficulty, an attempt to render intelligible and explicable that which in our opinion must be recognized as inexplicable.... The First Form is very inconvenient for Semi-pelagians and Synergists. Behind the Second Form they can hide; behind the First they cannot.” *Herald* (1913), 478.

<sup>77</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 104.

<sup>78</sup> *Herald* (1912), 604.

<sup>79</sup> *Herald* (1913), 2–3. He repeated this invitation a few months later and challenged *Kirketidende* to allow both sides to be heard.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 48. Graebner continued, “The fact that the editor of this paper, and his parents as well, are American born, will not interest Rev. Rygh.” The name “Kaiser Willem” is given in the original.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 49. “Doctrine” is printed in all caps in the original.

Graebner wrote, "One thing only was clear, if it was not clear before: that the Madison agreement is not a sufficient basis for joint church work, much less for organic union."<sup>82</sup>

Whether Graebner would have retained his editorial position for very long is unknown, since he had collected more than a few opponents.<sup>83</sup> In May of 1913, he tendered his resignation to Pres. Stub citing the growing demands of the Chicago congregation he served. He also remarked to his readers a change he perceived throughout America "of the *racial spirit*." He thought that perhaps the *Lutheran Herald* would "exert a more powerful influence for good, if it were edited by a native son of the Norwegian Synod, and not an adopted one."<sup>84</sup> In his parting words, he mentioned having received correspondence from people on both sides of the union issue thanking him for his work with the *Herald*. His hope was that nothing would happen to separate the Norwegian Synod from its close connection with the Synodical Conference.<sup>85</sup> Graebner was called the same year to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, where he continued to voice his concerns about the Madison Agreement in LCMS publications.<sup>86</sup>

The Rev. G. T. Lee replaced him as the editor of the *Lutheran Herald*.<sup>87</sup> He was a member of the union committee which had prepared the Madison Agreement. Now the pages of the *Herald* were not as open as they were before. In 1914 Lee wrote, "any opposition that can be raised at present [by the minority] is entirely in vain, and any effort to frustrate the proposed union, whether it be federation or amalgamation, will meet with no success. The laity stands solidly for union, and most of the clergy; so the tide cannot be stemmed any more."<sup>88</sup> This did not stop members of the minority from trying to slow the steps toward church union. At various conferences and conventions, they submitted requests for clarification regarding the Madison Agreement. Their motions were defeated every time.

Meanwhile, plans for combining the three church bodies were in full swing, along with an accompanying pro-union campaign. Members of the minority who voiced public opposition to union were not treated kindly in the *Herald*.<sup>89</sup> Appeals were also made for what positive things would be accomplished by the joining together of so many Norwegian Lutherans.<sup>90</sup> Editor Lee called for no more opposition: "Let us desist from bickering and quibbling, which bring nothing but confusion. Let us stand by the agreement and not waste our energies by a new controversy on predestination. Let us think of our schools, our missions, our jubilee fund, our great work for the kingdom of God!"<sup>91</sup> Again, "We have reached a definite conclusion on this matter of doctrinal unity and conditions of union, and on those questions discussion

---

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 313.

<sup>83</sup> Graebner revealed some personal frustrations when he wrote, "This charge ('not a friend of union'), as our readers need hardly be told, is, under present circumstances, one of the more serious which can be lodged against any Norwegian Lutheran. The clergy and lay membership of the Synod as well as of the United Church earnestly desire the reestablishment of brotherly relations. To charge a man with 'not being a friend of union' is, therefore, a most damaging blow against any man's popularity. It is like branding him with a red-hot iron." Ibid., 456.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 527.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 598–599.

<sup>86</sup> Graebner's views moderated somewhat after this. He participated in giving uncertain advice to the minority opposed to the merger (Aaberg, 274–282), and he later leveled some criticisms against the reorganized Norwegian Synod (Aaberg, 151–154).

<sup>87</sup> Of his predecessor, Lee said, "Although we have not shared his views regarding "oppgjør" and the union movement, we have always admired Rev. Graebner's clear and spirited style, his extensive knowledge and appreciated the work he has done for the Synod as editor of the *Lutheran Herald*." Ibid., 642.

<sup>88</sup> *Herald* (1914), 316.

<sup>89</sup> Examples are the pushback in the 1915 *Herald* against the Rev. F. W. Wiese (361–362, 409–410), former editor, Prof. Graebner (431, 819–821), Prof. C. K. Preus (842–844), and the Rev. Chr. Anderson (1227–1229).

<sup>90</sup> *Herald* (1915), 818–819 and *Herald* (1916), 68, 430–431.

<sup>91</sup> *Herald* (1915), 844. Koren warned about this sort of propaganda in 1902. *Koren*, Vol. 2, 110, 112.

must come to a stop. The time for action has come. Let us be loyal to the Synod.”<sup>92</sup> From Lee’s perspective, the matter had been settled in 1912 when the district conventions by a strong majority accepted the Madison Agreement. He took offense at the suggestion that the union committee members were intent on compromising doctrine all along. While he did not extend much charity toward those who disagreed with him, it was also true that those claiming to know the committee’s motivations and intentions did not help their own cause. The Madison Agreement should have been judged on its merits alone—not on the supposed intentions of the authors, or how anyone said it must be interpreted.

It was not wrong for members of the minority to insist that a doctrinal statement should be so clear in its theses and antitheses that differing interpretations are impossible. They were not against church union but wanted to be certain that it was based on true doctrinal unity. Some let it be known that with the unreserved acceptance of the two forms of the doctrine of election in the Agreement, they could not in good conscience join the union.<sup>93</sup> A special synodical meeting was convened on May 18–25, 1916, to determine whether or not to proceed with the merger. Pres. Stub read the proposed constitution, and its adoption was moved. At that time, the Rev. I. B. Torrison, pastor of the largest Lutheran church in Decorah, presented a substitute motion:

Whereas a large minority in the Synod, of which the undersigned are a part, for their conscience’ sake can not enter into union before “Opgjør” is revised by leaving out paragraph 1, and the words “acceptance of” in paragraph 4, and in paragraph 3 the reference to the Book of Concord be from 1 to 20; Therefore the undersigned, who otherwise consider division unavoidable in the church, submit the following resolution: The Synod urges the United Church and the Hauge Synod to adopt these changes in “Opgjør,” and the corresponding words in the motion, and declare that the adoption of the constitution be postponed until this request is granted.<sup>94</sup>

This substitute motion was denied, and the motion for union was carried by a vote of 522 to 202. 172 pastors and 350 lay delegates voted for union; 103 pastors and 99 lay delegates voted against.<sup>95</sup> Another attempt for reconsideration was made on the next day of business, but this motion also failed.<sup>96</sup> In a final attempt, the minority group stated that without changes to “Opgjør,” “it could not enter the new body, but was compelled to maintain the Synod, continue its work, and safeguard its interests.”<sup>97</sup> No changes were accepted.

What was the minority to do? Editor Lee even sounded a bit conciliatory,

---

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 1133.

<sup>93</sup> Editor Lee acknowledged hearing this claim: “There may be a few who are not ready to enter the union. If it is against their conscience they ought not to do it. The Synod has no right or intention to force any man to act against conscience. The only thing for them to do would be to wait until they can join with a good conscience. But it is an absurdity to try to hold up the action of a church body in a matter of this kind by a claim that it is a matter of conscience to certain individuals. We must learn to distinguish between self-conceit and stubbornness and a tender conscience.” *Herald* (1916), 429, also 431–432.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 499. The Rev. J. A. Thorsen spoke in favor of this motion before it was tabled. These men then spoke against the motion for union: the Rev. John Halvorson, Prof. C. K. Preus, the Rev. Paul Koren, the Rev. Findahl, the Rev. Chr. Anderson, Mr. R. M. Nelson, the Rev. J. A. Thorsen, the Rev. G. A. Gullixson, and the Rev. M. K. Bleken.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 500.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 504. The Rev. H. M. Tjernagel made this motion, and the Rev. Thorsen, the Rev. Blækkan, Prof. Preus, and the Rev. Torrison spoke in favor of it.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 532. Members of the minority who spoke at this point include the Rev. Torrison, the Rev. Thorsen, the Rev. N. M. Ylvisaker, the Rev. J. Levorson, Prof. Preus, Rep. A. Storvik, and Rep. Buslee. The Rev. Torrison said there were 150 men who had signed on to this statement. 533.

It is to be regretted that the apparently slight changes in “Opgjør” could not be allowed. As far as we can understand, these changes would not materially effect [*sic*] the document, but the adoption of the substitute motion would throw everything back to the early part of 1912, before the doctrinal agreement was reached, and thus undo everything which has been done since 1912 towards church union.<sup>98</sup>

A United Church pastor surmised that members of the minority might try to organize their own synod. “But it will be a very small affair,” and many “will lose their parishes if they persist in opposing union.... We believe that when the time comes, the minority will also join the *Norwegian Lutheran Church of America*.”<sup>99</sup>

When the union committee met in October of 1916, Torrison and Preus asked that the three changes requested at the Norwegian Synod convention be considered by all three church bodies, so that “great distress and confusion may be avoided and that we may enter the union, as we earnestly desire.”<sup>100</sup> The union committee response was that it would not be possible to make these changes. However, “special cognizance of the three reservations” would be taken, and anyone holding such views would be invited “to take part in the formation of the new church body with full equality and mutual fraternal recognition.”<sup>101</sup> Believing that its opportunities to get any changes made were now exhausted, the representatives of the minority replied, “The minority hereby accepts said invitation, praying that God may direct this step so as to make it a blessing to his church.”<sup>102</sup> Not all in the minority were ready to accept the invitation. These few contended for their cause to the last opportunity.<sup>103</sup> Finally, on June 9, 1917, the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America was officially formed numbering more than 495,000 people belonging to 3,000 congregations.<sup>104</sup> Dr. F. A. Schmidt was one of the participants in the merger.<sup>105</sup>

What was to become of the once vibrant body, which now, as ever before, was “so lean and lanky that one could have counted every rib”? What should the pastors and laypeople do, who could not in good conscience enter into the church merger?

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Some argue that controversy, as opposed to times of peace and unity, is always detrimental to the life of the church. Considering our history, how should we respond? When is controversy necessary and when is it harmful?

---

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 573.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 577–578.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 980.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 981. The union committee later revisited its answer and added further clarifications. *Herald* (1917), 22–25.

<sup>102</sup> *Herald* (1917), 169.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 553. This included the Rev. O. T. Lee, the Rev. Holden M. Olson, the Rev. Bjug Harstad, and the Rev. J. A. Moldstad. Prof. Preus stated at this time that he believed there was unity in doctrine and did not want to “assume the responsibility of causing a division in the church.” 554. The next day, “Rev. E. Hansen stated that he would not now join the new church, but would wait for some time. Revs. A. J. Torgerson and H. Ingebritson stated that they could not join the new church.” 580.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 549–551. With this merger, the *Lutheran Herald* consolidated with *The United Lutheran* and was renamed the *Lutheran Church Herald*. 605.

<sup>105</sup> If not alone for weaknesses in the Madison Agreement, we do not believe U. V. Koren would have entered this merger without a formal retraction by Schmidt of his doctrinal errors. That such a retraction was not made gave legitimacy to Schmidt’s errors and sent the message that the controversy had really been over words and not substance. Neither Koren nor Schmidt would have agreed with that characterization.

2. In light of how *Lutheran Herald* editor G. T. Lee framed the issue, to what extent should practical concerns—like missions and operating schools—dictate efforts on unity? Are there temptations we should especially be aware of?
3. The concerns for pure doctrine and dedicated mission work are sometimes pitted against each other. What happens when one is emphasized over the other? What is the Lutheran response to this issue?
4. The congregations of the old Norwegian Synod were formed through mission work, which is true of all Christian congregations. What similarities and differences are there between home mission work in the old Norwegian Synod and home mission work today?

## WHAT WE HAVE

The man in the seat was of even more uncertain age than either horse or vehicle. He might be forty-five, or he might just as likely be sixty-five. But for his beard and stoutness, one would be inclined to guess the former figure, for the expression of his face was still youthful, the eyes bright and sparkling with something boyish in their gleam. But the beard clearly suggested a more advanced age; it stretched from ear to ear, forming a thick fringe around the chin; it was perhaps an inch long, heavy and stiff, originally blond in colour, but now streaked with grey. The clothes, too, testified to the man's advanced age; especially the coat, which seemed to be neither coat nor jacket, but something out of the ordinary—a garment of thin black cloth, loosely fitting, too long to be called a jacket, yet not long enough for a topcoat.<sup>106</sup>

Was this pioneer pastor described by O. E. Rølvaag young or old? He bore characteristics of both. Were the pastors who would not take part in the Norwegian Lutheran church merger stubborn relics of the past or sturdy defenders of unchanging truths? The answer depended on who was asked.

### *By Right or Might*

The few who refused to enter the merger saw themselves as defenders of God's truth. They believed that many Norwegian Lutherans in America fell under the indictment of 2 Timothy 4:3–4: "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths." Those who did enter the merger viewed the remnant of the minority in 1 Timothy 6:4 terms. They said that this recalcitrant bunch was "puffed up with conceit and understands nothing," and that these men have "an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words." Which side was correct?

To try to understand the motivations of all involved, we must look more closely at what prompted the merger movement in the first place. It is fair to say that the controversy in the early 1900s was not the same as the controversy in the 1880s, even though both dealt with the doctrine of election. In the 1880s, the chief question was whether or not a person contributes "in a certain sense" to his salvation. F. A. Schmidt said that he does, while the leaders of the Norwegian Synod and their brothers in the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods said he does not. What divided the Norwegian Synod at that time was disagreement about doctrine. In the 1900s, *doctrine* was not the primary concern, but rather a *desire for synodical union*. The doctrine of election was discussed by the three participating church bodies, but it

---

<sup>106</sup> Rølvaag, 405.

was not thoroughly fleshed out like it had been by Koren and others in the 1880s. The greatest emphasis at the beginning of the twentieth century was on what the church bodies had in common, more than what might still separate them.

Why this approach? The Norwegians who had immigrated to America toward the end of the nineteenth century had not been a part of the election controversy and did not understand the differences. A new generation of pastors was also now serving in the Norwegian Synod, many of whom did not take part in the battles of the 1880s. They were not interested in rehashing the points of the old controversy. Why waste energy on the past, when the church faced so many challenges in the present? The *Lutheran Herald* editor, G. T. Lee, published a list of these challenges in 1916, given here in summary:

1. Americans of Norwegian ancestry no longer feel compelled to attend a Norwegian church.
2. Many recent arrivals from Norway are as content to join social organizations (like the Sons and Daughters of Norway) as the church.
3. The anti-Christian influences of the times draw many away from the church.
4. Many Norwegian youth are lost to large cities where Norwegian Lutheran church bodies do not have a strong presence.
5. The Norwegian people are continually drifting instead of putting down roots (“distinctly a Viking trait”).
6. Poor record keeping has resulted in an inaccurate accounting of active members.
7. The reluctance to use English in the divine service is alienating the English-speaking youth.<sup>107</sup>

Lee argued that these problems required the combined effort of the Norwegian Lutheran churches:

It is high time that we plan to combine our small and scattered congregations and cooperate with those of the same faith and confession and at least try to hold our own. We must try to overcome petty jealousies and prejudices, quit bathing ourselves in the bitterness of bygone controversies, and look forward to what we have been called to do as a Norwegian Lutheran church in this country....

A torn and disrupted church is not equal to this problem. We must get together. Even then the problem will tax all of our powers.<sup>108</sup>

An even more compelling argument for union was given by a Mr. Grindelund at the decisive 1916 Synod Convention. Grindelund was a judge and a gifted orator. He implored the laymen of Norwegian Synod congregations to reject the “mania” of “church strife and doctrinal controversies,” with its attendant “[q]uibbling over technical distinctions too fine to be seen.”<sup>109</sup> Instead they should focus on the great unity that exists among Norwegian Lutherans in America.

We, the Hauge Synod, the United Church, and the Synod people, have the same “barnelærdom,” the same hymn books, the same sacraments, and the same understanding of sin and grace; we come from the same mother church, have the same ancestry, and have so much in common,—why in God’s name should we not form the proposed union and live and work together as brothers according to the precepts of Christianity?<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>107</sup> *Herald* (1916), 189–191.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 187, 191.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 504–505.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 506.



This was a strong point. How, when all Norwegians were united in one church in Norway, could they be so divided in America? Judge Grindeland laid the blame at the feet of the theologians. They, and not the laymen, “are directly responsible for the present controversy, a controversy based upon mere technicalities.”<sup>111</sup> But the laymen could take control of the situation; they could right the wrongs. Grindeland continued,

We have heard the prayers for union for years. The critical time is finally at hand; the lines are drawn, the battle [is] on, upon one banner we see the foreboding words “Delay or Secession,” upon the other banner we see emblazoned the letters of life, “Union and Brotherhood.”

Brother delegates, under what banner will you rally? Where will the interest of your family and your congregation be?...

With malice toward none, with charity for all, let us here and now face this issue fairly and squarely, and go on record as opposed to useless controversy; let us acquit ourselves like men, men who stand for peace and union.<sup>112</sup>

It was quite a speech! If you were for union, you would have wanted this powerful speech distributed far and wide (which it was in the *Lutheran Herald*). If you were a pastor or layman opposed to the merger, the speech would have affected you in one of two ways. It would have either made you feel very small, or it would have made you feel very angry. You would have felt at that time how you might feel now when someone calls you hateful and bigoted for believing what the Bible says. The characterization is inaccurate and unkind, but it finds acceptance with a sympathetic audience.

So the merger went through. It was not the only church merger to take place at this time. The Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Wisconsin Synods officially merged in 1917, taking the name, “the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States.”<sup>113</sup> The General Council, General Synod, and United Synod of the South merged in 1918.<sup>114</sup> What prompted these synodical realignments? One cause was the significant anniversary observed worldwide in 1917—the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. What better time to promote the rich heritage of Lutheranism through united effort? This was also the era of World War I, which began in 1914, and which America entered in 1917. American Lutherans from various denominations were fighting for the same cause in Europe. Why couldn’t they work for a common cause at home? The sentiment among the Norwegian Lutherans and eastern Lutherans was that this was no time for divisiveness and doctrinal hair-splitting. Lutherans must unite, so that they might carry out the mission of the Gospel on a broader scale and more effectively serve their neighbors.

The Norwegian Synod pastors and laymen who resisted the union movement were not blind to the times. They understood the good that could be accomplished by a united Norwegian Lutheran church. They were not against such a union, but only on the right basis. A union with an unclear biblical and confessional foundation was no real spiritual union. A little over a month after the Norwegian merger was carried out, this small Norwegian Synod group started a new church paper called *Luthersk Tidende* (*Lutheran Times*). A church paper, however, was not enough to unite the remnant of the Synod. Some suggested that application should be

---

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 507. “With malice toward none, with charity for all” is quoted from Abraham Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address on March 4, 1865. “Let us acquit ourselves like men” is loosely based on 1 Corinthians 16:13 and was popular in the political discourse of the time.

<sup>113</sup> The *Herald* (1917) noted, “These synods have 625 congregations, 550 pastors, 175,000 communicant members.” 435. It also published the potential name of the organization, “The Northwest Evangelical Lutheran Synod.” In 1959, this church body was renamed the “Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.”

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 435, 457–458.



made to the Missouri Synod to enter that body as a Norwegian district. But the greater number felt strongly that they should continue on “the old paths” of the Norwegian Synod. In the April 1, 1918 issue of *Luthersk Tidende*, this invitation was published: “Pastors and members of congregations who desire to continue in the old doctrine and practice of the Norwegian Synod will, God willing, hold their annual meeting in the Lime Creek congregation, Pastor H. Ingebritson’s charge, June 14 and following days.”<sup>115</sup>

Between thirteen and sixteen Norwegian Synod pastors attended the meeting at Lime Creek, along with four Missouri Synod pastors and at least 175 laypeople.<sup>116</sup> The Rev. Bjug Harstad delivered the opening sermon, which included a looking back and a looking forward:

We have, dear friends, gathered here by the liberty which we enjoy in Christ Jesus. We are, as it were, clustering around the old building site which is storm swept and waste. A destructive hurricane has swept away the dear old mansion, even taking with it most of them that dwelt there. Discouraged, looking around, we discover only the bare ground with wreckage and dangerous crossroads. Yet let us not be too much alarmed nor discouraged. Worse things have repeatedly happened to the church before this, without its being destroyed. Let us remember and follow these words of Jeremiah, the prophet “*Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.*” (Jeremiah 6:16)<sup>117</sup>

Following several days of study and discussion, the pastors and congregational representatives in attendance unanimously adopted this resolution: “We, members present of the Synod for the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, ministers, delegates of congregations and members of congregations, join together for the purpose of continuing the work of the Synod on the old basis and according to the old principles.”<sup>118</sup>

These steps were not taken lightly. Those who met at Lime Creek faced the ire of their Norwegian neighbors. Much like the strife of the 1880s, the controversial merger of 1917 divided families, congregations, and communities. Close relatives stopped speaking to one another. Pastors were dismissed from their call and evicted from the parsonage, and those who defended them were likewise ushered out the door. Even in small towns, merger and non-merger people would sooner cross to the other side of the street than pass each other on the sidewalk. A number of our ELS congregations formed as a result of these divisions.

This small group that was determined to reorganize the Norwegian Synod in 1918 was attacked from all sides. “They were branded as unreasonable and narrow-minded, as fanatics and cranks, who did not understand what was for their own good.”<sup>119</sup> Officials at every

---

<sup>115</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 118.

<sup>116</sup> The Rev. Chr. Anderson, who was present at the meeting, reports that thirteen Norwegian Synod pastors were in attendance. See *Grace for Grace*, 118. The reporter of the publication *Amerika*, also present at the meeting, counted sixteen Norwegian Synod pastors. See Craig Ferkenstad, *Proclaim His Wonders: A Pictorial History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod* (Mankato: Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 2017), 27. Those Norwegian pastors whose attendance can be verified are: Chr. Anderson, Lauritz Guttebø, Emil Hansen, Bjug Harstad, Henry Ingebritson, Lars Jensen, George Lillegard, John Moldstad, Guttorm Nesseth, Holden Olsen, Christian Peterson, Jacob Thoen, and Augustinus Torgerson. The same *Amerika* article reported that M. K. Bleken was elected to the Constitution Committee, which means he was in favor of the proceedings even if not present. The Missouri Synod pastors were: H. Steger, George/Henry Koenig, George Koch, and Gerhardt Schmidt. For a list of most of the pastors and laypeople present, see Erling Teigen, ed., “Happenings at Lime Creek, June 14–19, 1918,” *Oak Leaves: Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society* 22, no. 1 (2018): 4–5.

<sup>117</sup> Bjug A. Harstad, “Sermon on Genesis 12:1–4,” *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* 43, nos. 2–3 (2003): 192–193.

<sup>118</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 120.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

level of the merger church did what they could to turn congregations against the pastors who had opposed union. Even H. G. Stub, the newly-elected president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, willingly participated in this work. When a dispute between the Rev. A. J. Torgerson and members of his congregation reached the courts, Stub took the witness stand against Torgerson. Unfortunately, Torgerson lost the case.<sup>120</sup> Why endure all this hardship? How could they be so certain that they were on the side of right and not just on the side of stubborn?

### *Truth Unchanged, Unchanging?*

St. Paul exhorted the congregation in Corinth: “Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves” (2 Corinthians 13:5). That is difficult to do. Our general approach according to the old Adam is to imagine that we are in the right—that we think in the right way, that we make the most sensible decisions. This self-centeredness makes it hard for us to recognize when and where we veer off path. It is like the child who thinks he can walk a straight line through the snow by staring down at his feet. We are also easily distracted. We see “the kingdoms of the world and their glory” (Matthew 4:8), both in the ecclesiastical and civil realms, which seem to shine so brightly compared with our humble congregations. For the sake of the Gospel, would it be so bad to loosen up a little in doctrine and practice so that we might reach more of the lost? This was the mentality of the pastors and congregations of the Norwegian Synod in the early part of the twentieth century. It was a new era. The prevailing sentiment was that synodical leaders of the past had been overly engaged in doctrinal controversy. It was time to set aside those old differences with other church bodies and see what might be done together.

Those old synodical leaders were no longer around to defend their teaching, but their confession lived on in their published writings. One of these leaders was the Rev. H. A. Preus, who served as president of the Norwegian Synod from 1862–1894. In 1867, he traveled to Norway and delivered “Seven Lectures on the Religious Situation Among Norwegians in America.” In these lectures, he acknowledged that some considered the Norwegian Synod to be too quarrelsome and separatistic. But while the Synod was saddened by the divisions among Norwegians in America, it would not compromise God’s Word to repair them:

In heartfelt earnest we seek to prevent this party division, sinful and displeasing to God, from continuing, and our synod’s history will testify that we earnestly wish not to bear responsibility for it. But a union without unity of faith, a union in the Prussian mold in which God’s Word and human propositions are tolerated side by side and have equal validity, this kind of union we will not promote. This is an abomination to God and more dangerous to souls than open disunity and faction.<sup>121</sup>

The Norwegian Synod did not seek unity by ignoring differences but by meeting them head on, as Preus explained:

Where we have seen error among our opponents we have not tried to cover its shame with the veil of false charity, but have openly and honorably drawn their attention to it, running the danger of seeming uncharitable. And if our opponents were to show us errors

---

<sup>120</sup> The ELS Historical Society produced a play on this episode from a script by Michael Lilienthal, *The Oak Trees Still Stand*. Copies of the 2013 script and video can be obtained through the ELS Ottesen Museum.

<sup>121</sup> H. A. Preus, 93.

in our doctrine or practice, we would thank them for it and consider it a demonstration of Christian love on their part rather than of hatred or lack of love.<sup>122</sup>

To illustrate this, Preus gave an account of doctrinal discussions between the Norwegian Synod and the Augustana Synod. The pastors from each body were studying a set of theses prepared by the Norwegian Synod on the doctrine of absolution. There seemed to be mutual agreement until thesis number four: “Absolution does not consist in this, that the confessor sits as judge and returns a verdict over the inner state of the penitent, nor in an empty announcement or wish for the forgiveness of sins, but in a powerful communication of it.”<sup>123</sup> The majority of the Augustana pastors did not agree that the word of absolution powerfully imparts the forgiveness of sins whether the hearer believes it or not. They said forgiveness is “given, granted, and imparted only to those who receive it in faith.”<sup>124</sup> The Norwegian Synod pastors countered that this makes faith—and not the Word of Christ—the active element in absolution. In other words, where faith is not present, the Gospel is not powerful. But if the Gospel is not powerful, how is faith strengthened? How is a person converted?

As the discussion continued, the Augustana pastors tempered their position somewhat, but the Norwegian Synod pastors were not convinced their beliefs in the matter had changed. Therefore, said Preus,

we considered ourselves forced, if we were not to be entrapped in ambiguous expressions, to put a very sharp point on the issue and use expressions upon which it was impossible to put a Reformed construction, expressions to which no one could assent without actually agreeing that the Lutheran doctrine is not merely declarative [explanatory], but also collative [imparting], that the gospel always has the forgiveness of sins as its full content, and that God in the gospel, wherever it is heard, always proffers the forgiveness of sins as a gift on his part to all who hear the gospel whether they believe it or not at the time.<sup>125</sup>

All the pastors agreed that “faith is absolutely necessary to accept forgiveness and be saved.”<sup>126</sup> This was a question not about how the Gospel is apprehended, but about what the Gospel is and what it imparts. The Norwegian Synod pastors were careful “not to be entrapped in ambiguous expressions.” They resolved “to put a very sharp point on the issue” and use expressions that could not be understood in different ways.

This was not the approach taken with the Madison Agreement (“Opgjør”). In that statement, “ambiguous expressions” were certainly used to allow room for different understandings of the doctrine of election. When the small group of Norwegian Synod pastors and laymen resolved “to put a very sharp point on the issue,” they were assured by the members of the union committee that nothing in the Agreement contradicted the historic teaching of the Synod. When members of the minority insisted that changes be made, they were rebuffed and marginalized. The Madison Agreement was not the result of a rigorous study of Scripture and the Confessions. It was an exercise of saying only as much as needed to be said to satisfy the majority.

The Norwegian Synod had changed. The changes may have been small and subtle, but they added up. The Rev. Christian Anderson was one who tried to sound the alarm. Already in 1916, he resigned his call from a prominent Norwegian Synod congregation in Minneapolis when the majority of its members favored union.<sup>127</sup> He was present at the meeting in Lime

---

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 159. For more on this debate, see *Koren*, Vol. 3, 54–66, 83–91.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>127</sup> *Herald* (1916), 1023.

Creek, and he served in the reorganized synod the rest of his life. At the 1953 ELS General Pastoral Conference, he outlined the “Underlying Causes of the Deterioration and Breakdown of the Old Norwegian Synod.” He noted that the overarching cause was “the spirit of the times, which is shrewdly directed by the Prince of this world, who will not leave one stone unturned, to rob us of our salvation.” This spirit is seen most clearly in “indifference, liberalism and unionism.”<sup>128</sup> More specifically, Anderson offered four major reasons for the collapse of the Norwegian Synod, summarized here:

1. **The siren call for the church union of all Norwegian immigrants was constantly sounded.** Appeals were made to the unity all Norwegian Americans once had in the state church of Norway. But the state church “was divided into definitely dissenting factions, which were held together by the strong hand of the law.” In America where the law no longer enforced the religion, it was obvious that Norwegian Lutherans were not all of the same spirit. The push for unity overshadowed the differences that existed.
2. **The Norwegian Synod played defense but not enough offense.** The Synod defended its doctrinal position from regular attacks but failed to point out the false doctrine of those who opposed it. When the attacks subsided due to a desire for union, the Synod assumed its opponents had moved in its direction and were now in agreement with it. This assumed agreement was the basis of discussions for union, even though agreement on all doctrinal points had not been clearly articulated.
3. **The clergy and laity relied too much on the leaders of the Synod.** When the election controversy of the 1880s subsided, strong leaders stepped forward to promote the work of the Synod. With these men at the rudder, the clergy and laity happily pulled on the oars without caring overly much about where the Synod had come from or exactly where it was going. When the original leaders of the Synod died, the next generation of leaders steered the Synod in a unionistic direction.
4. **Lack of turnover in leadership positions centralized power and influence.** The Church Council (*Kirkeraad*) of the Norwegian Synod was made up of the president of the synod, the president and one layman from each district, and a layman “at large.” This Council oversaw the work of the Synod between conventions. There was a great deal of turnover among the lay members but very little among the presidents.<sup>129</sup> Koren held a seat on this Council for forty-nine years from 1861–1910. When the “older conservatives” were gone, “the liberal element” used the influence of the Church Council for the union cause.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>128</sup> Christian Anderson, “Underlying Causes of the Deterioration and Breakdown of the Old Norwegian Synod,” *The Clergy Bulletin* XIII, no. 1 (1953): 3.

<sup>129</sup> On the duration of time in synodical office, Anderson notes, “It is no doubt an advantage to let those who have proven their ability continue at the head of the organization, rather than have frequent changes. Experience surely counts for much in carrying out the duties of the office. But on the other hand there is the grave danger that the prestige connected with holding office a long time may be abused when a crisis arises. After all, even the best among us are only human. Because of the experience we had in the formation of the late merger, there was a gentlemen’s agreement among us, when we re-organized the Synod, that the term of office of the President was to be only two years, and that no one was to be re-elected more than once. We have hereby no doubt lost some of the valuable service of experienced men, but this loss has been offset by the safeguard against anyone wrongfully usurping power which this arrangement has given us.” *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 3–6.

### *Unity, Union, and Unionism*

Some who had questions about the Madison Agreement went into the merger with the express intention of contending for the truth as they had all along. But they found no platform to voice their concerns. They became painfully aware that the Norwegian Synod had left “the old paths” to go in a new direction. Already in 1918, just a year after the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America had formed, it joined the newly established National Lutheran Council. H. G. Stub was elected its first president. It was intended to be a way for the Lutheran synods of America to cooperate in externals. For this reason, doctrinal unity among the participating church bodies was not required. But inevitably the lines of church fellowship were crossed.<sup>131</sup>

This caused some pastors, including Professor S. C. Ylvisaker, to leave the merger church and join the reorganized Norwegian Synod. At its constituting convention in 1919, nearly thirty pastors were in attendance. The pastors and congregations who formed the Synod were small in number, but they enjoyed more than an external unity. Theirs was “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). Ylvisaker described the fruits of this unity:

The pastors are on terms of intimate friendship, as well as connected by ties of a common faith. The laity is not as yet a vast number where the individual cannot be heard. We are, as it were, one family and still of the first generation; and though it is readily granted that large numbers can accomplish vastly greater things, we do well in enjoying, while we have it, the intimacy, the direct contact, the fervor and zeal which so often manifests itself in a body where plans and aims and hopes still largely take the place of accomplishments and past success.<sup>132</sup>

Here it may be said that as it is true that a person’s greatest strengths are often his greatest weaknesses, so it is true of synods. A larger synod can reach more people with the Gospel. It can support a greater number of missions and charitable endeavors at home and abroad. It has congregations in more locations for those who relocate. On the other hand, unity in doctrine and practice is often lacking in a larger synod. Pastors and congregations decide to walk their own way instead of “walking together” and deviate from the practices of their brothers. Church bureaucracy makes it difficult to carry out synodical discipline. Factions develop. Once a larger synod starts to steer in the wrong direction, like the Norwegian Synod did, it is hard to turn the ship back around.

A smaller synod benefits from the things mentioned by Ylvisaker: the pastors and people know each other, they have a voice in the synod, the participation of each one is integral to the synod’s mission and work. There tends to be greater unity in a smaller synod and greater accountability. The sufferings and the joys of one are shared by all (1 Corinthians 12:26). Such a spirit of brotherhood is what the Norwegian Synod enjoyed in the first decades after its founding—a bond that was strengthened by synodical collaboration. The Rev. H. A. Preus described the blessing of meeting together:

Representatives elected by the congregations—generally from among their finest, most devout, best informed men—gather here from the farthest reaches of the church body. During fourteen days together they learn to know and love one another as brethren in faith; they tell each other of their experiences, struggles, sorrows, and joys; they are instructed and strengthened in the faith they share; they are cheered on and strengthened to zeal in a shared task, to courage in a shared struggle, to patience in shared suffering. That is why pastors and laity alike meet with tears of joy at these assemblies of the

---

<sup>131</sup> Koren warned about this very danger in 1902. *Koren*, Vol. 2, 113.

<sup>132</sup> Ferkenstad, 39.

Synod and part with pain, although they give thanks to God and to the brethren for encouragement, strengthening, and fortification in the truth.<sup>133</sup>

But while the closeness of pastors and laymen in a synod brings many blessings, it can also result in insular thinking and a sectarian spirit. A smaller synod can think it has itself to thank for its unity and accomplishments, and it can judge other synods too harshly for their disunity. It can fall into the thinking that everything it proposes is right since it has its doctrine and practice in order.<sup>134</sup>

One of the ways larger and smaller synods keep their worst impulses in check is to seek and cultivate fellowship with other orthodox Lutheran church bodies. The Norwegian Synod recognized this and helped to form the Synodical Conference in 1872. It withdrew from the Conference during the election controversy and did not rejoin it once the controversy subsided. However, fraternal relations with the member churches of the Synodical Conference continued until the merger of 1917. Those who stayed out of the merger continued to value this fellowship, and the reorganized Norwegian Synod applied for membership in the Synodical Conference in 1920.

The church body which the reorganized Norwegian Synod counted as its closest friend and ally was the Missouri Synod. This close bond developed shortly after the founding of the Norwegian Synod. Following a visit to Ft. Wayne in 1857, Koren wrote to Professor Cråmer, “We learned nothing new from you, but what we had already learned in Norway theoretically—the two great Lutheran fundamental principles—here for the first time we saw this appear alive plainly and victoriously throughout the whole church body.” Later expanding on this thought, Koren said, “We saw the glory of the Lutheran Confession, already well known to us in words, actually carried out as we had never seen it before.”<sup>135</sup> In his 1938 Synod Convention essay, the Rev. Justin A. Petersen echoed the same appreciation for this fellowship: “How great is our accumulated debt, our personal debt, our debt as pastors, teachers, and lay-people, our debt as congregations, and as a Synod to our dear brethren of the Missouri Synod!”<sup>136</sup>

That bond of fellowship was about to be severely tested. In 1935, the United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA) and the American Lutheran Church (ALC) invited other synods to participate in doctrinal discussions. The ULCA and the ALC had formed from mergers of older synods which were not united in doctrine and practice with the Norwegian and Missouri Synods. The reorganized Norwegian Synod declined the invitation, but the Missouri Synod accepted. To explain its reservations, the Norwegian Synod at its 1936 Convention adopted six theses on “Unity, Union, and Unionism.” The fourth and fifth theses were born out of the painful experience of those who watched the old Norwegian Synod enter into discussions and then a merger without clear doctrinal agreement:

**Thesis IV.** We hold that inter-synodical committees are useful in promoting Christian fellowship only: (a) when the various groups or synods have, through their public ministry of the Word, given each other evidence of an existing unity in spirit, and it remains

---

<sup>133</sup> H. A. Preus, 50.

<sup>134</sup> Koren notes that both the Norwegian and Missouri Synods were accused of “orthodoxism” or “doctrinal purism”: “This consists in making pure doctrine the goal, though it should be only the means to attaining the right goal. The goal should be a true, real, living faith. For this is life in God. As a person believes, so does he live—When people who do not strive to live according to the Word of God still boast of ‘having the pure doctrine,’ the danger and offense is so much the greater.... [H]e who lives an ungodly life, and who lives for the world alone, has no true faith, even if he considers himself ever so orthodox.” *Koren*, Vol. 3, 471 footnote.

<sup>135</sup> *Koren*, Vol. 3, 516. For similar statements about the Missouri Synod, see *Koren*, Vol. 2, 379–385.

<sup>136</sup> Justin A. Petersen, “Address in Commemoration of the Saxon Immigration” 1938 Synod Convention Essay, <http://els.org/resources/document-archive/convention-essays/essay1938-petersen/>.

merely to establish the fact of such unity and to arrange for some public recognition and confession of that fact; (b) or where it is clear that those in error sincerely desire to be taught “the way of God more perfectly,” Acts 18:26.

**Thesis V.** Where such evidence of unity is lacking, or where it is clear that those in error do not sincerely desire to be “taught the way of God more perfectly,” but such committees nevertheless are elected to confer with them with the view to church fellowship, there is grave danger that the work of these committees will result in indifferentism and in compromise of Scriptural doctrine and practice. (For examples of this, consider the mergers and unions of recent years among Lutherans.) The duty of testifying to the truth of God’s Word and thus promoting unity, rests at all times upon all Christians. Cf. 1 Peter 3:15.<sup>137</sup>

The Missouri Synod did not listen to these warnings, but pursued doctrinal discussions chiefly with the ALC. Over the next twenty years, the Norwegian and Wisconsin Synods attempted to call the Missouri Synod back to its historic doctrine and practice.<sup>138</sup> But the Missouri Synod was on a different trajectory. It was convinced that “the old paths” were not sufficient for the times. With much pain, the reorganized Norwegian Synod at its 1955 Convention declared a suspension of fellowship with the Missouri Synod. The Wisconsin Synod followed suit in 1961. The Synodical Conference was dissolved soon afterward. Koren’s questions posed in 1895, “Where will we be then [in 1950 or 1960]? In what circumstances? In what company?” had now been definitely answered.<sup>139</sup>

The reorganized Norwegian Synod (renamed the “Evangelical Lutheran Synod” in 1957) and the WELS now faced an uncertain future. The Missouri Synod had long been “big brother” to both of them, but that unity was no more. In 1967, the ELS and WELS resolved to form the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Forum, as a way to both encourage and test one another. But the desire was also expressed to form an alliance like the Synodical Conference, which would include like-minded Lutherans from around the world. This desire was realized in 1993 when the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) was established. To date, this Conference includes thirty-two member churches numbering about half a million people.<sup>140</sup>

### ***Forward on the Old Paths***

What does the future hold for our small church body? What place will it have on the modern landscape in coming years? After the ELS suspended fellowship with the Missouri Synod, the Norwegian merger church—now called the Evangelical Lutheran Church—declared it to be “the most reactionary splinter group of Lutherans in America.”<sup>141</sup> Considering the periods of intense strife over the 165 years of its history, it is perhaps surprising that the ELS is still in operation. There are many who wish it would cease to exist, primarily because of the unpopular positions it takes on issues like the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible; God’s creation of all things in six twenty-four-hour days; the clear biological distinction of the sexes; the definition of marriage and the union of husband and wife as the only God-pleasing sphere for sexual activity; the promotion and protection of life from conception to a natural death; the roles of men and women in the church, including the restriction of the pastoral office to men only;

---

<sup>137</sup> *Grace for Grace*, 133–134. Online at <http://els.org/beliefs/doctrinal-statements/unity-union-and-unionism/>.

<sup>138</sup> For a thorough treatment of this time period from the ELS perspective, see Aaberg, 134–242.

<sup>139</sup> Mark DeGarmeaux, *U. V. Koren’s Works: Volume 2: Addresses* (Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 2014), 16.

<sup>140</sup> This estimate was provided by the Rev. Gaylin Schmeling, the current president of the CELC. For more information, see <http://celc.info/index.php/membership/member-churches/>.

<sup>141</sup> Aaberg, 195.



the practice of church discipline against the unrepentant and erring; the practice of closed Communion; and last but not least, the doctrine of justification (objective and subjective).

The gap appears to be widening between the Bible-believing, Bible-teaching church and secular society. This has an isolating effect on pastors and congregations. We wonder whether we will continue to survive if we maintain our doctrinal position. We worry that our desire to reach the lost will be compromised if we don't temper our approach. We wish we did not have to face these challenges. But what we face today is no more severe than the troubles our spiritual forefathers faced. The strategy and angle of attack changes from generation to generation, but the enemy is the same—"the old evil foe." Our defense is to put on "the whole armor of God," which is the truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation of Jesus, and to take up "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:11–17).

The church body that casts aside the Word of God for the approval of the unbelieving world is a church body not of Christ but of the devil. This was the belief of the founders of the old Norwegian Synod, and it is still our belief. Preus described such erring church bodies in this way: "We consider a church body held together in what seems to be the bond of peace but without unity of spirit, without a common faith, to be a nonentity, a falsehood, a Babel bearing within it the germ of its own disintegration and fostering not the edification but the destruction of God's congregation and the Christian faith."<sup>142</sup> Koren wrote that even a "seemingly small aberration in matters of faith can have incalculable effects," and that "Satan most often has found his best calculation by adding some drops of truth into his deceitful poison by which he intoxicates people."<sup>143</sup> Each individual Christian, congregation, and church body must constantly contend for the truth.

For in the Kingdom of Christ there is never peace in the sense that its citizens can take it easy and comfort themselves that they have the truth. Scripture, in the first place, teaches us that God will not let us retain it unless we bear its fruits and "lead holy lives according to God's Word." In the second place, we will not be able to preserve the truth without struggling against everything in us that opposes it. In the third place, we will not be able to retain it without interference from others, if we are in dead earnest about holding it in honor.<sup>144</sup>

Koren noted that the struggles which the Norwegian Synod had to endure throughout its history were a "well-deserved chastisement" from God, "because we have not used the truth to better advantage and have not borne better fruits from it."<sup>145</sup> The men who gathered at Lime Creek in 1918 also recognized that "[a] destructive hurricane has swept away the dear old mansion" because the members of the old Synod had taken the truth for granted. Likewise in 1961, when the ELS moved to sever its ties with the Synodical Conference, the Doctrine Committee report contained these sober words,

We have nothing of which to be proud. How much of the evil that has come to pass in the Synodical Conference is due to our lack of faithfulness, lack of prayer, and lack of Christian love? We would warn against a false sense of security. If any think that now we are free from all danger of error, let him remember that there will always be the devil, the world and the Old Adam to contend with, and we are fair game. That which plagues other church bodies today may well come to plague us tomorrow.<sup>146</sup>

---

<sup>142</sup> H. A. Preus, 50.

<sup>143</sup> *Koren*, Vol. 3, 66, 96.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 404.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 405.

<sup>146</sup> Aaberg, 237.



As we gather together to celebrate the centennial of our synod's reorganization, we must admit, too, that there is much in us and in our work that has been lacking. We have too often approached our task in the world with reluctance and trepidation rather than with the confidence of the psalmist, "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" (Psalm 118:6). Where we have not succeeded, we hang our heads. Where we have succeeded, we hold our heads too high. We do not "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) as the Lord invites us. We do not treasure and meditate upon the holy Word of God as we should. We do not trust that the Holy Spirit will work powerfully through the means of grace as He promises to do. We imagine that any good accomplished in our congregations and synod is due to our efforts, and any bad must be the fault of others. If we would honor the legacy of those who have "fought the good fight" before us, and if we would give all glory to God, then we will repent.

The Lord will not despise "a broken and contrite heart" (Psalm 51:17). He forgives our sins, every single one. Jesus atoned for them all by the shedding of His precious blood. Everything God has demanded of us, Jesus fulfilled for us. And everything we need for eternal life in heaven, the Holy Spirit distributes to us. This was God's plan for us even before we were born, even "before the foundation of the world," as St. Paul stated. He chose us in Christ "that we should be holy and blameless before Him" (Ephesians 1:3). God saw nothing good in us that would cause Him to choose us—no better disposition, no greater potential, no weaker resistance. He chose us from eternity entirely by His grace. And then in time, He converted our stubborn, contrary hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace. Through the same means of grace, the Lord visits us and abides with us still. He continues to cleanse, comfort, and strengthen us and to motivate us to do the good works, "which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

God uses our weak hands to carry out His work in our congregations and synod. But He has not left it to us to figure out and acquire the right tools needed for the job. Koren named the "two fundamental principles," also called the "formal" and "material" principles, which anchor and animate Christ's Church. If we would carry out His mission, we will treasure, defend, and promote them. If we would go the way of the world, we will compromise or ignore them. The two fundamental principles are that "Holy Scripture is the only sure and perfect rule of our faith and life" (formal principle), and that "Jesus Christ is the way to salvation for all believing souls" (material principle).<sup>147</sup>

These were the truths which founded the Lutheran Reformation; and where the Lutheran Church has remained true to its calling, it was by faithful adherence to these principles. For it is these principles which keep us from becoming like reeds swayed hither and thither by the many changing winds of doctrine. These alone lay the true and firm foundation for a right conversion and a sincere repentance. These alone preserve us from every temptation to labor for the Kingdom of God by new inventions, self-chosen worship,<sup>148</sup> and ecclesiastical-political schemes. These truths alone establish the heart and make the conscience clear and at the same time teach a man to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling and to have the assurance of faith regarding eternal salvation. These were the truths which were our light in the days when zeal and activity were most noticeable

---

<sup>147</sup> *Koren*, Vol. 3, 407.

<sup>148</sup> Regarding "self-chosen worship," H. A. Preus wrote: "Uniformity in ceremonies and liturgical customs is not, to be sure, necessary to preserve unity in faith, but it is indeed edifying, while diversity in ceremonies often fosters deplorable antagonisms and the cooling of love. On the other hand, the inward bond and collaboration between congregations can be promoted by the greatest possible uniformity in liturgical customs and church order." H. A. Preus, 49.

in the Norwegian Synod... [W]e have discovered nothing new. We continue to contend for those things for which we contended then: the two principles mentioned above.<sup>149</sup>

The official seal of the Norwegian Synod contained the Greek word, “*GEGRAPTAI*,” which means, “It is written.”<sup>150</sup> This phrase has been retained as the motto of the *Lutheran Sentinel* and is also reflected in the “One Thing Needful” motto of Bethany Lutheran College. Any teaching formulated by human reason is not a Bible teaching and therefore is not Lutheran. Lutheran teaching is Bible teaching. A church body does not deserve the name “Lutheran” if it does not teach the Bible as the inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, sufficient, and powerful Word of God.

He who really believes that the Bible is God’s Word, that which ‘*God has spoken*,’ cannot want to deny any part of this Word. He will realize that if he sits in judgment upon a part of God’s Word, he has rejected all of it; for he has then made himself lord over the Word. If he has a right to judge and reject one part of ‘*what God has spoken*,’ why should he not have a right to reject another part?<sup>151</sup>

But there are so many different interpretations of God’s Word, even among those who say the Bible is true in every part. How can any individual or church body claim to have the truth over against another? We do not doubt that our Lutheran doctrine is the true Bible doctrine, because only true Lutheran doctrine maintains the two principles mentioned above while giving all glory to God. The pure doctrine of Scripture is correctly summarized in our Lutheran Confessions contained in the *Book of Concord*. We should study them more. As Koren candidly said, “we do not become Calvinists by holding to the Lutheran Confessions.”<sup>152</sup> Nor, we might add, do we become Roman Catholics, Baptists, or Methodists. These all depart in some way from the clear teaching of Scripture and the pure Gospel of salvation in Christ.

Our sole claim on the truth may sound arrogant, especially to ears conditioned by modern relativism (“what you believe is just as valid as what I believe”). We are tempted to be arrogant about this and to pat ourselves on the back for maintaining the truth. If this attitude is not checked, we will lose what we have. Koren rightly said, “We do not want to be ‘puffed up’ because we have the pure doctrine. If we were, then we would not have the pure doctrine; for we know from God’s Word that if things had gone as we deserved, we would have erred in all points.”<sup>153</sup> Instead we humbly cling to the truth, knowing that we do not deserve it. We freely admit that “it is to be attributed not to our insight or cleverness or faithfulness, but only to God’s mercy when we are preserved in the truth.”<sup>154</sup> By God’s power, we will continue to believe, teach, and confess His truth. To give in to the pressures of the world, and to give up what we have inherited from faithful confessors before us, is to give up the eternal blessings Jesus won for us, which He wants us to have.

Jesus tells us that He is “the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through [Him]” (John 14:6). The Apostle Peter, an eye-witness of Jesus’ saving work, declared that “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). This salvation does not require any decision on our part to come to Him, or that we somehow prove ourselves worthy of Him.

---

<sup>149</sup> Koren, Vol. 3, 407–408.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 201, 412. It was Koren who proposed this inscription. Koren, Vol. 2, 121.

<sup>151</sup> Koren, Vol. 3, 414. Koren likewise said in another place, “For if I give up my confidence in the Holy Scriptures, then I do not know what sense there is in calling myself a Christian.” Koren, Vol. 2, 98.

<sup>152</sup> Koren, Vol. 3, 153. For what happens to one “who usually and regularly turns to the Reformed writers,” see Koren, Vol. 2, 8.

<sup>153</sup> Koren, Vol. 3, 418. Luther expressed the same thing in his “sacristy prayer.”

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 66.

Rather, “whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). We are saved by faith in Jesus’ perfect life, death, and resurrection for our salvation. But even this faith is not our work; it is a gift that God works in us to receive His grace. “Faith is the hand of the heart which apprehends what God by His hands, the Means of Grace, lovingly presents to us.... Justification is gained by Christ totally and completely; it is brought, offered, and given to us in God’s Word and Sacraments. Faith merely accepts. Faith does not give anything, but it receives.”<sup>155</sup> How could *human* effort or *human* works win *spiritual* blessings? The two are not compatible. The blessings of Christ distributed in and through God’s Word can be acquired and appropriated only by the spiritual life of faith that He supplies.<sup>156</sup>

God gives us all things that we need for salvation, and He gives them in abundance. We can trust that He will continue to give them because He promises that He will. This is why we can with confidence go forward on “the old paths.”<sup>157</sup> We have what we need for our mission. We have the pure Word of God with its powerful Gospel message, which alone can convert and comfort sinners. This is what is needed in high-population urban areas and in low-population rural areas. Whether you serve or belong to a congregation of ten active members or a thousand, God’s work is done among you and as a witness to your community by the pure preaching of the Gospel and the proper administration of the Sacraments. To many, this approach sounds too simplistic and also insufficient to meet the demands of our day. Koren’s answer in 1902 to such criticisms still applies today:

But further objection is made that we cannot be as strict in our time as Luther and the theologians of the 16th and 17th centuries were; that this doesn’t fit our time. What will the result be? You will be standing there at your lecterns or in your pulpits and have no listeners.

But for us, the question is not about the results. We must let God take care of that. God says to us as He said to the Prophet Ezekiel: “*You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious*” (2:7; 3:2, 7). In the 20th century God’s Word is not something different from what it was in the 16th.<sup>158</sup>

A healthy congregation in God’s sight is not primarily identified by its attendance totals, but by the Holy Spirit’s work through the means of grace to encourage, strengthen, and equip believers. Such healthy congregations make for a healthy synod. We are part of a synod—and this one in particular—because we want to remain on “the old paths,” and we want others to join us on them. This is done in the ELS just as it was in the old Norwegian Synod by supporting and maintaining Lutheran schools.<sup>159</sup> These schools are important both for

---

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 447, 448.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 448–449.

<sup>157</sup> This emphasis on “the old paths” in our synod did not originate with Bjug Harstad’s sermon in 1918 where he quoted Jeremiah 6:16. Koren referred to “the old paths” in 1882 (*Koren*, Vol. 2, 230), 1886 (*Koren*, Vol. 3, 305, and 1890 (Ibid., 481); the front page of each copy of the *Lutheran Herald* quoted Jeremiah 6:16; and a book of English sermons called *The Old Paths* was published by the Norwegian Synod in 1914. In the forward of this book, the Rev. Knut Seehuus writes, “One claim the book does make. It is this: that its contents adhere to the Old Paths. They are always the safest, bring the best results in church-work, and lead safely to the mansions above.” Knut Seehuus, ed., *The Old Paths: Sermons on the Second Gospel Series according to the Church of Norway* (Decorah: Lutheran Publishing House, 1914). There are no doubt other references to “the old paths” in the old Norwegian Synod besides these.

<sup>158</sup> *Koren*, Vol. 2, 107–108.

<sup>159</sup> Regarding Lutheran schools in the Norwegian Synod, see H. A. Preus, 63–68. There he says in part that the public school is not an ideal place for the education of Christian children, because “the school is religionless and that on principle neither Christian instruction nor Christian discipline can find a place in it.” 64. It was not that the Norwegian Synod pastors were in favor of getting religion into the public schools. To the contrary, Koren wrote, “we acknowledge the necessity of their being without religion; but

training our congregational youth and for exposing others in the community to the Gospel. There are eighteen preschools and elementary schools currently in operation in the ELS.<sup>160</sup> We also support Lutheran higher education for our members and others through Bethany Lutheran College. What H. A. Preus said about Decorah's Luther College in 1867 applies to our purposes at Bethany:

[W]e specifically desire that through a few years' residence at the school they can be subjected to the Christian discipline enforced there and acquire a clearer and more thorough knowledge of Christian truths. They can be fitted not only to be good citizens, but also to take a fruitful and blessed part in the responsibilities of our church body, which, just as it bestows great privileges on its members, makes great demands on their aptitudes and efforts.<sup>161</sup>

Besides supporting our synod's educational institutions, we also work together to maintain missions in America and abroad. None of this would be possible if God did not bless us with the means and the resolve to carry out the work.

Rölvaag's pioneer pastor described earlier was neither definitively young nor old. He bore characteristics of both: "the expression of his face was still youthful, the eyes bright and sparkling with something boyish in their gleam. But the beard clearly suggested a more advanced age.... The clothes, too, testified to the man's advanced age." We in the ELS are also young and old at the same time. Our eyes sparkle brightly with the message of salvation for sinners. We know what the world needs, and by the grace of God we have it! We are eager to broadcast this Gospel around the world. But we are not the first to carry out this work. We do not forget our roots. We walk "the old paths" that our spiritual fathers did. We remember our leaders who spoke to us the Word of God, and we imitate their godly confession and life (Hebrews 13:7). In preparation for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the old Norwegian Synod, Christian Anderson wrote of the importance of remembering in particular the faithful confessors who founded the Synod:

We certainly do not want to accept their teachings just because *they* have said so, or to walk in their paths just because they are old. But if our fathers were thoroughly faithful to the teachings of the divine Word, both as to doctrine and life, it becomes our duty to follow their example, and it would be a sin if we were to despise the heritage which has come to us from them.<sup>162</sup>

In short, we at the same time look back along "the old paths" where we came from, and we look ahead to where those blessed paths lead by the power and promise of God. This is exactly the purpose and plan Koren outlined in his 1890 article, "What the Norwegian Synod Has Wanted and Still Wants."<sup>163</sup> In conclusion he said,

Our heart's desire is to preserve the old doctrine in which our fathers found their peace, for we have learned to see that this doctrine and this alone is founded on God's Word....

---

for that very reason we do not regard them as the right schools for our children; for we believe that there ought to be Christian schools for Christian children." *Koren*, Vol. 3, 571–572.

<sup>160</sup> For a history of Lutheran schools in the ELS, see Ferkenstad, 193–205.

<sup>161</sup> H. A. Preus, 79.

<sup>162</sup> Christian Anderson, "Ask For the Old Paths," *Report of the Thirty-Fifth Regular Convention of The Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Lutheran Church* (Mankato: Bethany Lutheran College, June 24–29, 1952), 21.

<sup>163</sup> *Koren*, Vol. 3, 403–489. This article is also printed in *Faith of Our Fathers* (Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 1953), 47–112.

If we are to be enabled to retain [the Biblical truths], we must in the first place let it become a matter of holy earnestness to preserve God's Word pure and unadulterated as the only clear light in this world's darkness, and we must be willing to endure being scoffed at and mocked because of this firm adherence to the Word. Furthermore, we must let it become a matter of just as great concern to lead holy lives according to God's Word. If we fail to do this, then God Himself has said, '*The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it*' (Matt. 21:43). This we will try to remember every time we pray the Lord's Prayer.<sup>164</sup>

What the Norwegian Synod has wanted, the ELS still wants. God grant it by His enduring grace.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Judge Grindelاند showered a wrongful type of praise on the laity while blaming the pastors and theologians for the controversy in the Norwegian Synod. How are the efforts of both laypeople and pastors necessary to carry out the work of a synod? In what ways can laypeople and pastors be strengthened together for this work?
2. In 1917, some suggested that the Norwegian Synod remnant should join an existing church body. Why was it important for the Norwegian Synod remnant to form its own body in 1918, and why is it important for the ELS to remain autonomous today?
3. In 1957, the "reorganized Norwegian Synod" changed its name to the ELS, and in 1959, the "Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States" changed its name to the WELS. What events at the time may have prompted these changes?
4. The founders of the Norwegian Synod questioned the wisdom of using public schools and promoted the formation of Lutheran schools. In congregations where it is not possible to have a Lutheran school, what can be done to promote the biblical worldview among our youth?

These books about the history and teaching of the Norwegian Synod/ELS would be excellent additions to the home libraries of all pastors and laymen:

1. *Grace for Grace: Brief History of the Norwegian Synod, 1853–1943*
2. *Proclaim His Wonders: A Pictorial History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod*
3. *U. V. Koren's Works*, 4 volumes including Koren's Sermons (Vol. 1), Addresses (Vol. 2), Articles (Vol. 3), and Memoirs, Poems, Letters, Etc. (Vol. 4)

---

<sup>164</sup> *Koren*, Vol. 3, 488–489.

## APPENDIX I

### *Lutheran Herald References to Church Union*

1906–1917

PAGE #	DESCRIPTION
<b>1906</b>	
1–4	Intro to Lutheran Herald
<b>1909</b>	
236	Hymnary done
404	Committees meet
1114	No Cmte. agreement
<b>1910</b>	
101–102	Norw. Synod & Synodical Conf.
362	Union stand-still
1222–1228	Koren remembrance
<b>1911</b>	
2–4	Koren death
4–8	Union Cmte. report
50–51	Larsen comments on Union Cmte.
55–56	LC-MS address at Koren funeral
88–90	Koren memorial service
103–105	Kittilsby address at Koren service
127–128	Hektoen address at Koren service
579–580	Koren memorial volumes
<b>1912</b>	
242–243	Church Union agreement on theses
272–275	Joint Cmte. report with theses
578–580	Church Union approached
602–606	Church Union
<b>1913</b>	
2–3	Notice on Church Union questions
48–49	Editorial
118	Convene extra Convention
312–313	Madison Agreement questions
341–346	Stub article
410–412	Opgjør
432–441	Union?
456–460	Unity/Unionism
478–479	Anti-merger
483–486	Critique, I. G. Momson
502–506	Wittenberg Opgjør
508–509	Faith and Election
509–512	Momson article continued
526–527	LC-MS editor Graebner steps down
527–528	Opgjør
598–601	New editor, Union talk

PAGE #	DESCRIPTION
641–642	New, old editors
645–648	Synod actions
666–667	Pre-Union
694–696	Unity and Union
837–838	Stub and Pieper
881	Convention about Union
908–911	(Women's Suffrage, United Church)

#### **1914** [no index]

---

146–147	Union Cmte.
284–285	Stub honored by all
315–316	Hymnary and Union
338–339	Union Cmte.
444–447	Union Cmte.
484–486	History of division
531–535	Unionism
603–604	Hauge Synod
627	United Church
690–691	Division in Hauge Synod
1011–1016	Synod Mtg.
1035–1043	Synod Mtg.
1059–1064	Synod Mtg.
1121	Union expected
1155	Lutheran Herald

#### **1915** [no index]

---

10–11	Hauge Synod for Union
217–236	(Dr. Laur. Larsen memorial)
311	Union Mtg. for Constitution
361–362	Wiese attacks Opgjør
409–410	Union Cmte. mtg.
431	Former editor attacks Union
435–437	Union Cmte. and pushback
437–439	(Rasmus B. Anderson excommun.)
505–510	Union Cmte., Constitution
601–611	Convention minutes from 3 bodies
817–821	Church Union, Graebner pushback
841–844	C. K. Preus opposes Opgjør
889–891	Why revisit old controversy?
1103	Joint services held pre-Union
1105–1108	Union already!
1125	(Norman A. Madson ordained)
1131–1133	Be loyal to Synod – Unite!
1196–1197	Joint pastors' mtg.
1227–1230	The Minority agitates, Dec. 30

#### **1916**

---

66–69	Stub presentation
89–95	Graebner attacks; peace cmte.
114–119	More unrest
186–192	Statistics of 3 synods

PAGE #	DESCRIPTION
261–263	Opgjør questions
282–284	Union or not?
295–296	(Lillegard leaves China Mission)
307–309	Minority should go along
325	Special Synod mtg.
330–333	Paragraph 1 of Opgjør
344–345	Union inevitable; stop fighting
375	Delegates regarding Union
378–379	Representatives to Synod mtg.
398	(Individual cups introduced)
402–407	Opgjør retranslation
407–415	Conditions for Union
426–429	History of Union, Minority
431–432	Questions of conscience
475–477	Synod mtg. in Minneapolis
498–507	Synod mtg. and Union speech
528–534	Synod mtg.; more debate
550–552	Synod mtg. conclusion
566	Stub surgery
573–574	Amendments rejected; Union here
577–578	What will Minority do?
578–579	United Church & Hauge for Union
594–595	Union done
618–624	Union history, United Church
630–631	(Hartland Church divided)
639	Stub operation successful
667–669	Norw. Luth. Church in America
758	Stub recovering
759	Report on Minority
789–790	Defense of Stub
811	Church Council on Union
836–841	Opgjør & Intersynodical Agreement
884–885	New Constitution
906	Synod mtg. report
910–913	Union movement criticism
979–981	Union Cmte. mtg.
1002–1003	1st mtg. of Norw. Lutheran Church
1023	(Chr. Anders. resigns; Tjernagel call)
1173	Representatives to Synod mtg.
1189	Union Cmte.
1200	Union mtg. in St. Paul
1201	Union Cmte.
1238	Union spirit growing

## 1917

---

2–4	Review of 1916
22–25	Union Cmte. report
159	(Rev. Nils Brandt 93rd birthday)
169–170	Joint Union Cmte. report
264	Union Cmte. mtg.
303	Dissenters in Hauge Synod



PAGE #	DESCRIPTION
379	Synod mtg. set
383-387	Union Cmte.
429-434	Union program plans
451-452	Hotels for Convention
453-454	Devotion by Rev. M. K. Bleken
455-458	Consolidation plans
520	(Justin Petersen to Linn Grove, IA)
526-527	Union on June 9
549-551	Union done [June 14 ed.]
551-554	Synod mtg.; Minority
572	Seminaries consolidated
574-579	Union done
579-582	Synod mtg. concluded [last one]
597-601	Union done
605	Last issue of Lutheran Herald

(Items in parentheses may be of special interest for Evangelical Lutheran Synod history.)

## APPENDIX II

An initial translation of the “Madison Agreement” appeared in the 1912 *Lutheran Herald*, pp. 272–275. The first paragraph of this agreement stated:

The Synod and United Church Committees on Union acknowledge unanimously and without reservation the doctrine of Predestination which is stated in the Eleventh Article of the Formula of Concord (the so-called ‘first form of the doctrine’) and in Pontoppidan’s Explanation (‘Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed’), Question 548 (the so-called ‘second form of the doctrine’).

Later, the Norwegian Synod and the United Church agreed to strike out the words in parentheses, “(the so-called ‘first form of the doctrine’)” and “(the so-called ‘second form of the doctrine’).” The Norwegian Synod vote on this resolution was 394 in favor of striking the words and 106 against.<sup>165</sup>

Four years later, a new English translation was prepared for publication in the 1916 *Lutheran Herald*. The *Herald’s* editor, G. T. Lee, gave the reason that “We are not satisfied with the translation of “Opgjør” found in *Lutheran Herald* No. 12, 1912, or the one found in Dr. Pieper’s book, “Election and Conversion.”... We have not been authorized to furnish any official translation, but we believe our translation is more accurate than the earlier translations.” The later translation is the one given here.<sup>166</sup>

### THE MADISON AGREEMENT

*Joint Report of the Union Committees of the Synod and the United Church.*

Regarding the doctrine of Election the union committees subscribe to the following:

#### AGREEMENT (OPGJØR).

1. The union committees of the Synod and the United Church acknowledge unanimously and without reservation that doctrine of Election which is presented in Article XI of the Formula of Concord and in Pontoppidan’s “Sandhed til gudfrygtighed,” question 548.

2. Since both the negotiating church bodies recognize that the Formula of Concord presents the pure and correct doctrine of the word of God and the Lutheran Confession concerning the election of the children of God to salvation, it is deemed unnecessary to church unity to draw up new and more extensive theses regarding this article of faith.

3. Since, however, it is generally known that concerning the doctrine of Election two forms of presentation have been used, both of which have gained prescriptive right and recognition within the orthodox Lutheran church,

while some in agreement with the Formula of Concord make the doctrine of Election comprehend the entire salvation of the elect from the calling to the glorification (Formula of Concord, Art. XI, 13–24, Jacobs)<sup>167</sup> and teach an election “to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,”

others, like Pontoppidan, in conformity with John Gerhard, Scriver, and other acknowledged teachers in the church define election rather as the decree of final glorification with faith and perseverance wrought by the Spirit as its necessary presupposition, and teach that “God has

<sup>165</sup> *Herald* (1913), 599.

<sup>166</sup> *Herald* (1916), 404–407.

<sup>167</sup> The English translation seems to have been less precise than the Norwegian original. Members of the minority asked that the Formula of Concord reference be amended from “Art. XI, 10–20” in the original (not “Art. XI, 13–24” found here) to “Art. XI, 1–20.”

predestinated all those to eternal life who from eternity he has seen would accept the proffered grace, believe on Jesus Christ, and remain steadfast in this faith unto the end”; and since neither of these two forms of doctrine presented in this manner contradicts any doctrine revealed in the word of God, but does full justice to the order of salvation as elsewhere presented in the word of God and the Confession of the church—we hold that this fact ought not to cause any division in the church, nor disturb that unity of Spirit in the bond of peace which God desires should prevail among us.

4. Since, however, during the doctrinal controversy among us, words and expressions have been used—rightly or wrongly attributed to the one party or the other—which seemed to the other side a denial of the confession of the church, or lead to such denial,

Therefore we have agreed to reject all erroneous doctrines which seek to explain away the mystery of Election (Formula of Concord, Art. XI, 51–64) either in a synergistic or Calvinizing manner; in other words, we reject every doctrine which either on the one hand would deprive God of his honor as the only Savior, or on the other hand weaken man’s feeling of responsibility when face to face with the acceptance or rejection of grace.

5. On the one hand we reject:

a. The doctrine, that the mercy of God and the most holy merit of Christ is not the only cause of our election, but that there also in us is a cause, on account of which God has elected us to eternal life,—

b. The doctrine that in the election God has been determined by, or has taken into account, or has been directed by the good conduct of man, or by anything which man is, or may do, or omit to do, “as of himself, or from his own natural powers.”

c. The doctrine that the faith in Christ, which is indissolubly connected with Election, is wholly or in part a product of, or dependent upon, man’s own choosing, power, or ability. (Compare, however, Formula of Concord, Art. XI, 70–72, 82–85.)

d. Or, that this faith is the result of a power and ability imparted to man by the call of grace, a power now dwelling in and belonging to the unregenerate heart, to come to a determination to accept grace.

6. On the other hand, we reject:

a. The doctrine that in the election God acts arbitrarily and without motive, and points out and counts indiscriminately a certain arbitrary number of individuals, and ordains them to conversion and salvation, while the others are passed by.

b. The doctrine that the will of God regarding our salvation is of two different kinds, one revealed in the Scriptures in the general order of salvation, and another different from this one and unknown to us, which concerns only the elect, and imparts to these a deeper love, a more effective calling from God, and a larger measure of grace than are brought to those who remain in unbelief and condemnation.

c. The doctrine that when the resistance which God in conversion removes from those who are saved is not removed from the others, who finally are lost, this difference in result has its cause in God and in a different will regarding salvation in his act of election.

d. The doctrine that a believer can and ought to have an absolute certainty of his election and salvation, instead of an assurance of faith, built upon the promises of God, and joined with fear and trembling and with the possibility of falling from grace, which, however, by the grace of God he believes will not become a reality in his case.

e. To summarize, all views and doctrines concerning Election which directly or indirectly would conflict with the order of salvation, or which in any manner would violate that word of God which says that “God will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth”—from which gracious and merciful will of God all election to eternal life has its origin.

On the basis of the above agreement the union committees submit to their respective church bodies to adopt the following

## RESOLUTION.

Whereas, our Confession establishes that “for the true unity of the church it is sufficient that there be agreement in the doctrine of the gospel and in the administration of the sacraments; and

Whereas, our former committees by the grace of God have attained unity in the doctrines concerning the calling, conversion, and the order of salvation in general, and we all confess as our sincere faith that we are saved by grace alone without any cooperation on our part; and

Whereas, the negotiations of our new committees have led to a satisfactory agreement concerning the doctrine of Election, and to an unreserved and unanimous acknowledgement of the doctrine of Election which is presented in the Formula of Concord, Art. XI, and in Pontoppidan’s “Sandhed til gudfrygtighed,” question 548,

Therefore we hereby declare that the essential unity now attained concerning these doctrines is sufficient for church union.

May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, grant us the grace of his Holy Spirit, that we all may be one in him and ever remain steadfast in such Christian and God-pleasing union! Amen.

(Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Art. XI, is to be printed together with this report for the annual meetings.)<sup>168</sup>

Madison, Wis., Feb. 22, 1912.

PEDER TANGJERD.  
GERHARD RASMUSSEN.  
S. GUNDERSON.  
H. ENGH.  
M. H. HEGGE.

J. NORDBY.  
R. MALMIN.  
J. E. JØRGENSEN.  
G. T. LEE.  
I. D. YLVISAKER

---

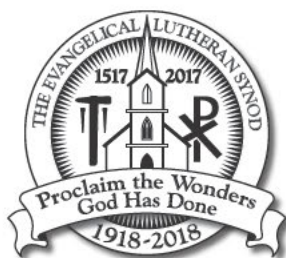
<sup>168</sup> The text of the Formula of Concord can be accessed online at [www.bookofconcord.org](http://www.bookofconcord.org).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aaberg, Theodore A. *A City Set on a Hill: A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Norwegian Synod), 1918–1968*. Mankato: ELS Board of Publications, 1968.
- Anderson, Christian. “Ask For the Old Paths,” *Report of the Thirty-Fifth Regular Convention of The Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Lutheran Church*. Mankato: Bethany Lutheran College, June 24–29, 1952.
- . “Underlying Causes of the Deterioration and Breakdown of the Old Norwegian Synod,” *The Clergy Bulletin* XIII, no. 1 (1953): 3–6.
- Baepler, Walter A. *A Century of Grace: A History of the Missouri Synod, 1847–1947*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947.
- Berg, Donald, trans. “Pastoral Journal of the Rev. U. V. Koren.” Decorah, IA: Unpublished.
- Brenner, John M., “The Election Controversy Among Lutherans in the Twentieth Century: An Examination of the Underlying Problems.” PhD diss., Paper 204, Marquette University, 2012. Accessed May 4, 2018. [http://epublications.marquette.edu/dissertations\\_mu/204](http://epublications.marquette.edu/dissertations_mu/204).
- DeGarmeaux, Mark, ed. and trans. *U. V. Koren’s Works: Volume 2: Addresses*. Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 2014.
- , ed. and trans. *U. V. Koren’s Works: Volume 3: Articles*. Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 2015.
- , ed. and trans. *U. V. Koren’s Works: Volume 4: Memoirs, Poems, Miscellaneous*. Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 2016.
- . “Revisiting Pontoppidan,” *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* XXI, no. 1 (2012): 21–24.
- Dommersnaes, M. P. “We Wish to See Jesus.” In *Crane Creek Lutheran Church Centennial Book, 1867–1967*, edited by David Stewart.
- Drevland, Petter Strøm. “Norwegian Immigrants in the American Civil War: Reasons for Enlistment according to the America Letters.” Master’s Thesis, University of Oslo, 2013. Accessed May 4, 2018. [https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/37031/Drevland\\_Master.pdf?sequence=1](https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/37031/Drevland_Master.pdf?sequence=1).
- Ferkenstad, Craig. *Proclaim His Wonders: A Pictorial History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod*. Mankato: Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 2017.
- Graebner, Theodore, and G. T. Lee, eds. *Lutheran Herald*. Decorah: Lutheran Publishing House, 1906–1917.
- Harstad, Bjug A. “1921 Presidential Address” Accessed May 4, 2018. <http://els.org/resources/document-archive/presidents-messages/message1921/>.
- . “Sermon on Genesis 12:1–4,” *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* 43, nos. 2–3 (2003): 189–199.
- Harstad, Peter Tjernagel. *Store Per: Norwegian-American “Paul Bunyan” of the Prairie*. Lakeville, MN: Jackpine Press, 2011.
- Larsen, P. Lauritz. *Jacob Aal Ottesen: A Biography from the Norwegian*. Translated by G. A. R. Gullixson. Wenatchee, WA: Webpc, Inc., 1987. <http://www.els-history.org/books/142-jacob-aal-ottesen-a-biography-from-the-norwegian.html>.
- Lillegard, George, ed. *Faith of Our Fathers*. Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 1953.

- Lueker, Erwin L., ed. *Lutheran Cyclopedia*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954.
- Malmin, Rasmus, O. M. Norlie, and O. A. Tingelstad, eds. *Who's Who Among Pastors in All the Norwegian Lutheran Synods of America, 1843–1927*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1928.
- Petersen, Justin A. "Address in Commemoration of the Saxon Immigration." 1938 Synod Convention Essay. Accessed May 30, 2018. <http://els.org/resources/document-archive/convention-essays/essay1938-petersen/>.
- Preus, Herman Amberg. *Vivacious Daughter: Seven Lectures on the Religious Situation Among Norwegians in America*. Edited and translated by Todd W. Nichol. Northfield, MN: The Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1990.
- Preus, J. C. K. *Widening the Frontier: Sketches and Incidents from the Home Mission Field*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1929.
- Rölvaag, O. E. *Giants in the Earth: A Saga of the Prairie*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1999.
- Scottston, Barbara. *Are These Our Roots? 150 Years of Lutherans in Lansing, Iowa*. Accessed March 4, 2018. <http://www.lansinglutherans.org/>.
- Seehuus, Knut, ed. *The Old Paths: Sermons on the Second Gospel Series according to the Church of Norway*. Decorah: Lutheran Publishing House, 1914.
- Teigen, Erling, ed. "Happenings at Lime Creek, June 14–19, 1918," *Oak Leaves: Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society* 22, no. 1 (2018): 1, 4–8.
- Wolf, Richard C. *Documents of Lutheran Unity in America*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966.
- Ylvisaker, S. C., Chr. Anderson, and G. O. Lillegard, eds. *Grace for Grace: Brief History of the Norwegian Synod*. Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 1943.





## REPORTS AND ACTION



## SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

### ***Resolution 1: Membership Applications of Congregations***

WHEREAS, Grace Lutheran Church, Crookston, Minnesota, and Cross Lutheran Church, Charles City, Iowa, have applied for membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and have submitted their constitutions for approval, and,

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

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That Grace Lutheran Church, Crookston, Minnesota, be accepted into membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That Cross Lutheran Church, Charles City, Iowa, 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 membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

1. The Rev. Aaron Ferkenstad, pastor of King of Grace Lutheran Church, Golden Valley, Minnesota.
2. The Rev. Kurtis Freimuth, pastor of Peace Lutheran Church, Kissimmee, Florida.
3. The Rev. Christian Walz, pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Indianola, Iowa.

### ***Resolution 3: Membership Application of Pastor by Transfer from WELS***

WHEREAS, The Reverend James Ruppel has been transferred to the ELS by the officials of the WELS, and,

WHEREAS, He has requested the status of pastor emeritus, and,

WHEREAS, He has met all qualifications for being listed on the clergy roster of the ELS, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Reverend James Ruppel be received into membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

### ***Resolution 4: Congregation Constitution Revisions***

WHEREAS, The *Handbook* of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod encourages congregations to submit their revised constitution for synodical review, and,

WHEREAS, Concordia Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, has submitted its revised constitution for review and the Committee on Synodical Membership has found that their constitution meets the requirements of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, Parkland Lutheran Church, Tacoma, Washington, has submitted its revised constitution for review and the Committee on Synodical Membership has found that their constitution meets the requirements of the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod approve the revised constitution of Concordia Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod approve the revised constitution of Parkland Lutheran Church, Tacoma, Washington.

***Resolution 5: Application of Pastors to Continue on the Clergy Roster***

WHEREAS, The Guidelines for the Clergy Roster (III.A) read: “An ordained clergy man 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. Arlen Dethlefsen and the Rev. Erik Gernander, and,

WHEREAS, a request to extend clergy roster status for the Rev. Erik Gernander has been received; and with the approval of the president and the secretary, the convention is being asked to extend the clergy roster status for the Rev. Erik Gernander, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod extend the clergy roster status for the Rev. Erik Gernander.

**CREDENTIALS—ACTION OF THE SYNOD**

***Resolution 1: Excuses of pastors: non-attendance***

WHEREAS, Excuses for absence from the 2018 Synod Convention have been received from the following pastors: James Braun, Bruce Leonatti, Homer Mosley, Kenneth Schmidt, Paul Sullivan, Jim Wilson, and Paul Zager, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That they be excused.

***Resolution 2: Excuses of teachers: non-attendance***

WHEREAS, An excuse for absence from the 2018 Synod Convention has been received from Shu-Ting Lai, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That he be excused.

***Resolution 3: Excuses of delegates: non-attendance***

WHEREAS, Excuses for absence from the 2018 Synod Convention have been received from the following delegates: Alan Whitford and Dean Williams, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That they be excused.

***Resolution 4: Excuse of congregation: non-attendance***

WHEREAS, An excuse for absence from the 2018 Synod Convention has been received from Gloria Dei Lutheran (Saginaw, Michigan), therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That she be excused.

***Resolution 5: Excuse of pastors: late arrival***

WHEREAS, Excuses for late arrival at the 2018 Synod Convention have been received from the following pastors: Rod Flohr, Tom Fox, Aaron Hamilton, Glenn Obenberger, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That they be excused.

***Resolution 6: Excuses of pastors: early departure***

WHEREAS, Excuses for early departure from the 2018 Synod Convention have been received from the following pastors: Gene Lilienthal, Tosten Skaaland, and Thomas Smuda, therefore, BE IT RESOLVED, That they be excused.

***Resolution 6: Excuses of delegates: early departure***

WHEREAS, Excuses for early departure from the 2018 Synod Convention have been received from the following delegates: Steven Anderson and Martin Knuth, therefore, BE IT RESOLVED, That they be excused.

***Resolution 7: Excuse of pastors: partial attendance***

WHEREAS, An excuse for partial attendance at the 2018 Synod Convention has been received from Doyle Holbird, therefore, BE IT RESOLVED, That he be excused.

## **REPORT OF THE DOCTRINE COMMITTEE**

The occasion of an anniversary provides a time to reflect on the past, as well as consider the present, and anticipate the future. 2018 marks the centennial of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, initially named “The Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church” at the organizing convention, June 17, 1918, at Lime Creek Lutheran Church, rural Lake Mills, Iowa.

The first president of the reorganized synod, Pastor Bjug Harstad, encouraged and exhorted those gathered at the first convention with the following:

We have, dear friends, gathered here by the liberty which we enjoy in Christ Jesus. We are, as it were, clustering around the old building site which is storm swept and waste. A destructive hurricane has swept away the dear old mansion, even taking with it most of them that dwelt there. Discouraged, looking around, we discover only the bare ground with wreckage and dangerous crossroads. Yet let us not be too much alarmed nor discouraged. Worse things have repeatedly happened to the church before this, without its being destroyed. Let us remember and follow these words of Jeremiah, the prophet: “Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” (Jeremiah 6:16) (“Ask for the Old Paths” from Bjug Harstad’s opening sermon at the 1918 convention, *Beretning*, 1918, page 78)

The words chosen by Pastor Harstad to describe the newly formed synod’s predicament capture what many felt in those days, as they lived through a doctrinal compromise that shattered congregations and families. “A destructive hurricane,” an “old building site which is storm swept and waste,” “bare ground with wreckage and dangerous crossroads”—these words describe the outward situation of those gathered. There was little that was seen that could provide hope for a future as a church body. But President Harstad’s sermon does not focus on the losses, the sorrows, the tragedies; rather, he points the assembly to the words of Jeremiah, words which we do well to contemplate again as we gather during our centennial: “ask for the old paths where is the good way.”

What are these “old paths?” Pastor Harstad put it this way: “Let us spend the days of our pilgrimage in faith and reliance on every word of our Lord, implicitly obeying it whether

we understand where it leads to or not.” The “old paths” are God’s Word, His promises, the salvation provided through Jesus Christ and given to us in our baptism.

He went on to give this warning: “But let us beware of this question: What can a remnant like us do? Is it really by our own might and ability we intend to succeed on our journey? Is it the power and importance of man that we are to depend on, and by which we expect to work? Then we had better quit now.”

The fact of the continued existence of the ELS, so very much in doubt from its very beginning, must be understood as being a gift of God’s grace, of the work of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament, and not by power and plans of any people. God bless us with humble gratitude for these past years, and with hope for the future, a hope based not on our plans, nor our projections, but on God’s ways, ways that are not ours, thoughts that are not our thoughts. Can we continue in these “old paths?” Not by our strength, but only by that which is given by God, by the salvation won for us by our Savior, Jesus Christ; by the grace distributed to us through Word and Sacrament; and by these blessings received by faith alone. In this way only do we find “rest for our souls,” as we walk in the good way, trusting in the One who is the Way, the Truth, the Life.

### **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. Em. Erling Teigen, and the Rev. David Jay Webber. President John Moldstad is an advisory member, 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.

The committee held regular meetings August 8–9, 2017; December 4–5, 2017; March 19–20, 2018.

### **WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**

The 64<sup>th</sup> biennial convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) was held on the campus of Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wisconsin, July 31–August 3, 2017. The theme for the convention was “Our Great Heritage,” reflecting on the blessings of the Reformation in the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. The convention also observed the centennial (1917–2017) of the final amalgamation of the Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Nebraska synods. Vice President Obenberger attended the convention.

On September 29, 2017, the Doctrine Committee and the WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) met at Waukesha, Wisconsin. Topics of mutual concern were discussed.

On December 4, 2017, the ELS Doctrine Committee and the Doctrine Committee of the WELS Conference of Presidents (COP) met during a regularly scheduled meeting of the ELS Doctrine Committee, Mankato, Minnesota. The meeting was to discuss 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 CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION**

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, pages 74–77). The 2016 ELS convention approved this statement “as a correct presentation regarding

the biblical doctrine of the termination of fellowship.” The WELS 2017 biennial convention adopted the statement as “an accurate articulation of biblical principles.” The 2016 CLC convention referred the statement to the 2017 CLC General Pastoral Conference. The 2017 CLC General Pastoral Conference has recommended to its 2018 CLC convention that the CLC not accept the statement. The 2018 CLC convention will consider this issue.

The ELS and WELS representatives met with representatives of the CLC, August 17, 2017. Another meeting of representatives of each synod is scheduled August 1, 2018, Mankato, Minnesota. Other items remain to be addressed.

### **INFORMAL MEETING WITH THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD**

For the past six years, representatives from the ELS and from the WELS have been holding informal discussions with counterparts from the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The most recent meeting occurred November 27–29, 2017 in Jacksonville, Florida. The two main topics covered were the Divine Call (with documents distributed from each synod) and a review of each synod’s catechism/explanation. Other information, including demographic studies of the LCMS and WELS and mission work of the various synods, was presented by each of the synodical presidents for discussion.

A subsequent meeting is planned for November 2018, in Jacksonville, Florida. As President Moldstad noted in his January 2018 newsletter: “None of the participants at these informal meetings anticipate a restoration of church fellowship between ELS/WELS and the LCMS in the near future. Yet, the sessions themselves were once again helpful as areas of agreement, as well as specific differences, were addressed in a cordial but candid manner.”

### **BIBLE TRANSLATIONS**

The committee has continued its study of Bible translations. The goal is to provide both a quick overview of various translations in use in American Christianity (printed booklet), as well more in-depth studies of those translations (on-line resources). Studies of the New Living Translation (NLT), the English Standard Version (ESV), the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), and the New King James Bible (NKJV) are currently either completed or nearing completion. Further studies will include the English Heritage Version (EHV), among others. Thank you to pastors outside the committee for volunteering for some of this work (Pastors Joseph Abrahamson, Alexander Ring, and Andrew Soule). This study is being led by the Rev. Thomas Rank.

Regarding another popular translation, the 2011 revision of the New International Version (NIV), the Doctrine Committee recommended against its use in its 2013 report to convention, due to a significant weakening of its accuracy, especially, but not limited to, its use of gender neutral pronouns.

### **BIBLE STUDY FOR REFORMATION AND SYNOD ANNIVERSARY**

The committee encourages congregations to continue to make use, as they are able, of the Bible studies produced for the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation and the Centennial of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The Bible study consists of seven segments (Objective Justification and Absolution; Election of Grace and Conversion; The Divine Call; Church Fellowship; Adiaphora and Ceremonies; Mission Work; and Christian Education). Each segment compares the history and theology of the Reformation with the history and doctrinal issues that helped shape the synod.

## CONFESSIONAL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

The 2017 Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) observed the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. The CELC met in Germany, at the Gymnasium St. Augustin in Grimma, June 29–July 2, 2017. The theme was “Reformation: Then and Now.” Complete information regarding this meeting is available in the document, “Proceedings of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference, Ninth Triennial Convention, Grimma, Germany, June 29–July 2, 2017,” available at this link: [http://celc.info/download/convention\\_proceedings/CELC\\_Proceedings\\_2017.pdf](http://celc.info/download/convention_proceedings/CELC_Proceedings_2017.pdf)

This year, 2018, marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of organization of the CELC which was founded in 1993. The next CELC convention is planned for Seoul, South Korea, in 2020.

## SEX AND GENDER IDENTITY STATEMENT

Due to quickly changing social conditions and attitudes in regard to sex and gender identity, the Doctrine Committee was asked to prepare a statement that clearly states the Biblical position, which is therefore the position of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and, consequently, that of its various institutions (e.g. Bethany Lutheran College). The committee drafted and approved a position statement, “Sex and Gender Identity,” and submits it to the 2018 convention for approval.

## THEOLOGICAL TRENDS

The Doctrine Committee desires to keep informed of doctrinal trends and issues within the church at large (e.g., objective justification, homosexuality, same sex marriage, transgenderism, feminism, the “church growth” movement, “contemporary worship” practices, modern Gnostic influence, government encroachment on religious liberty, apologetics, etc.). Therefore committee members continue to monitor and read from a variety sources, including theological journals, magazines, periodicals, internet materials and discussions, and theological essays.

In Jesus' name We live and we will die;  
If then we live, His love we will proclaim; If we die, we gain thereby.  
In Jesus' name, Who from heav'n to us came,  
We shall again arise To meet Him in the skies,  
When at last, saved by His grace, We shall see Him face to face,  
Live with Him in Paradise.  
(ELH 2, stanza 3)

*The Rev. Thomas L. Rank, chairman*  
*Prof. Em. Erling T. Teigen, secretary*

## POSITION STATEMENT ON SEX AND GENDER IDENTITY

God created the human race with unique gender distinctions as male and female (Gen. 1:27; 1 Cor. 15:45a; Gen. 3:20). According to their innate maleness and femaleness, men and women relate to one another in various complementary and mutually-fulfilling ways, within marriage and the family, and also in the larger human community (Gen. 2:18–19a, 20b–24; 1 Cor. 11:11–12). The distinctive procreative anatomy of men and women is an essential mark and feature of the maleness of men and of the femaleness of women (Gen 1:28; Is. 49:15a). Rare and unusual cases of biological abnormality do exist, where a person may have both male and female chromosomal and genetic indicators, and both male and female anatomical features (Matt. 19:12). But when it is unambiguously clear that a person is biologically either

male or female, then before God and as a creature of God that person's objective gender identity—which is unchangeably fixed from birth—corresponds to his or her biological sex (Is. 43:6b–7). This remains true in spite of any psychological confusions pertaining to gender identity with which someone may be afflicted (Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:4b). A person who suffers from such confusions can find peace, relief, and spiritual healing in the redemption and forgiving love of Christ, and with God's help can seek to overcome these confusions (2 Tim. 1:7; Rom. 12:1–2). It is contrary to God's will for someone whom he has created as male to live and identify as a woman, or for someone whom he has created as female to live and identify as a man (Deut. 22:5).

### **PASSAGES REFERENCED:**

Genesis 1:27 (ESV): So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

1 Corinthians 15:45a (ESV): Thus it is written, The first man Adam became a living being ...

Genesis 3:20 (ESV): The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

Genesis 2:18–19a, 20b–24 (ESV): Then the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him. Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens... But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

1 Corinthians 11:11–12 (ESV): Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.

Genesis 1:28 (ESV): And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Isaiah 49:15a (ESV): Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?

Matthew 19:12 (ESV): For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it.

Isaiah 43:6b–7 (ESV): ... bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

Jeremiah 17:9 (ESV): The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Romans 3:4b (NKJV): Let God be true but every man a liar...

2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV): For God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Romans 12:1–2 (ESV): I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Deuteronomy 22:5 (ESV): A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.

## REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON APOLOGETICS

The 2017 Synod Convention resolved that the synod would, in the near term, sponsor various activities to promote an understanding of worldviews and to provide training in apologetics; and, for the long term, establish a Committee on Apologetics “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” (*Synod Report*, 2017 pp. 114–118). President Moldstad appointed Rev. Thomas Heyn, Dr. Ryan MacPherson, Rev. Don Moldstad, Prof. Allen Quist, and Rev. David Thompson each to a two-year position (2017–2019) on the *ad hoc* Committee on Apologetics, with Pres. Gaylin Schmeling and Pres. Gene Pfeifer serving as advisory members. Convening in November 2017, the committee elected the Rev. Heyn as chairman and Dr. MacPherson as secretary and outlined two parallel tasks: 1) implementing short-term projects concerning worldview, apologetics, and cross-cultural evangelism; and, 2) evaluating the feasibility of establishing a sustainable pattern of programs for the long term.

The synod's resolution had suggested, among other possibilities, “an annual workshop on worldview, apologetics, and/or evangelism at Bethany Lutheran College scheduled in coordination with the synod convention.” Therefore, the Committee on Apologetics coordinated an apologetics conference entitled “A Reliable and Defensible Christianity for Today's World: Equipping Christians to Defend and Share the Gospel,” scheduled for Thursday, June 21, 2018. Dr. John Eidsmoe, Prof. Allen Quist, and Dr. Ryan MacPherson were selected as speakers. See [www.blc.edu/apologetics](http://www.blc.edu/apologetics) for further details.

The committee has also begun arranging for the synod website to showcase apologetics resources, including the series of “apologetics” articles published in the *Lutheran Sentinel* during 2017 and 2018. Meanwhile, the History Department of Bethany Lutheran College hosted Prof. Quist's “Evidence for Easter” presentation on March 25, 2018, available in video archive at [www.blc.edu/easter](http://www.blc.edu/easter). Quist's manuscript will be submitted for potential publication in *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*.

In 2018–2019, the committee will review data gathered from the March 25 and June 21 events in order to evaluate the feasibility of sustaining similar efforts in the future.

Members of the committee are the Rev. Thomas Heyn (chair), Dr. Ryan MacPherson (secretary), the Rev. Donald Moldstad, Prof. Allen Quist, and the Rev. David Thompson; advisory: Pres. John Moldstad, Pres. Gaylin Schmeling, and Pres. Gene Pfeifer.

*Dr. Ryan C. MacPherson, secretary*

## DOCTRINE—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

### ***Resolution 1: Informal Meeting with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS)***

WHEREAS, Representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) and Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) have again met informally with representatives of the LCMS and found the meetings to be helpful, 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 2: Bible Translations***

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, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the committee for its work and encourage them to continue.

***Resolution 3: Bible Study for Reformation and Synod Anniversary***

WHEREAS, The anniversary Bible study marks an historical event with practical and contemporary applications, and,

WHEREAS, Not all congregations have been able to make use of the anniversary Bible study, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the Doctrine Committee for its work on the anniversary Bible study, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage our pastors and member congregations to make timely use of the Bible study in these anniversary years.

***Resolution 4: Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference***

WHEREAS, The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) met in Germany June 29–July 2, 2017, to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> 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 with the churches of the CELC and specifically our American sister synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), each of which prize this doctrine of justification by grace through faith, and,

WHEREAS, This fellowship is a blessing to our Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 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 enjoy in this worldwide fellowship, and,

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

***Resolution 5: Sex and Gender Identity***

WHEREAS, Social conditions and attitudes are quickly changing in regard to sex and gender identity, and,

WHEREAS, The Doctrine Committee's document, "Position Statement on Sex and Gender Identity" expresses the current, historical, and Scripturally-based position of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we affirm the "Position Statement on Sex and Gender Identity."

***Resolution 6: Ad Hoc Committee on Apologetics***

WHEREAS, The need for such a committee has been recognized and the committee established, and,

WHEREAS, The committee has already expended significant effort, which has resulted in the Apologetics Conference to be held on June 21, 2018, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we accept its report with thanks, and,  
B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage pastors and congregations to make use of its work.

**REPORT OF  
BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE**

**BOARD OF REGENTS**

Members of the board during the past year: The Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch, Kissimmee, Florida, chairman; The Rev. Mark Bartels, Madison, Wisconsin, vice-chairman; The Rev. Edward Bryant, Lombard, Illinois, secretary; Dr. Willis Anthony, St. Peter, Minnesota; Mr. Paul Chamberlin, South Chatham, Massachusetts; The Rev. Erwin Ekhoﬀ, Golden Valley, Minnesota; Mr. Lyle Fahning, Prior Lake, Minnesota; Mr. Bruce Gratz, Mankato, Minnesota; Dr. Joshua Mears, Lakeville, Minnesota; Mr. James Minor, Danbury, Wisconsin; Mr. Tim Thiele, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin; and The Rev. David Thompson, San Antonio, Texas.

Advisory Members: The Rev. John Moldstad, Mankato, Minnesota, president of the ELS; Dr. Gene Pfeifer, Mankato, Minnesota, president of Bethany Lutheran College; and The Rev. Gaylin Schmeling, Mankato, Minnesota, president of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary.

The Board of Regents at its February 2018 meeting, appointed Tim Thiele as a type “B” member and seeks ratification of this action at the 2018 synod convention. For the 2017–18 academic year, Mr. Thiele was appointed by the Board of Regents to serve out the vacated term left by The Rev. Nicholas Proksch, a type “B” member, who accepted a Call to the Religious Studies department at the college. That one-year appointment was ratified by the 2017 synod convention.

After serving on the Board of Regents for 33 years, Regent Harold Theiste retired in May 2017. We thank him for his service and wish him God’s richest blessings.

**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 12, 2018, the college observed the following anniversaries:

***BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE ANNIVERSARIES OBSERVED 2018***

Sara Edwards - Assistant Professor, Legal Studies .....	10 years
Polly Browne - Associate Professor, Education .....	15 years
Kathryn Bruss - Coordinator, Modern Languages .....	15 years
Jonathan Kovaciny - Support Specialist, Web .....	15 years
Ryan MacPherson - Professor, History.....	15 years
Jeffrey Haugen - Housekeeping Technician .....	20 years
Theodore Manthe - Vice President of Student Affairs .....	20 years
Robert Pipal - Assistant Professor, Health & Human Performance .....	20 years
Peter Bloedel - Professor, Theatre.....	25 years
Connie Gullixson - Payroll and Account Specialist .....	25 years
Donald Westphal - Director of Athletics.....	25 years
Steven Reagles - Professor, Communication & Religious Studies.....	35 years
Joni Wiederhoeft - Assistant to the Director of Financial Aid .....	35 years

This past August 2017 we had the following new faculty and professional personnel join our staff: Benjamin Faugstad, Associate Professor, Music; Jason Lowrey, Dean of Faculty; Deborah

Matzke-Lewis, Associate Professor, Nursing; Nicholas Proksch, Assistant Professor, Religious Studies; Amanda Quist, Assistant Professor, Media Arts; Andrew Schmidt, Dean of Students; and Stacy Tomhave, Registrar.

## GRADUATES

On December 9, 2016, 33 students graduated and on May 12, 2017, 73 students graduated for a total of 106 graduates receiving the baccalaureate degree as part of the 18<sup>th</sup> four-year graduating class. These graduates represented 18 of the 21 majors.

## ENROLLMENT

10-year BLC Fall Report on Attendance Statistics					
	FA2008	FA2009	FA2010	FA2011	FA2012
Full Time	585	607	575	572	558
FTE	590	611	591	587	577
All Enrolled	619	646	607	634	621
ELS	18%	18%	17%	16%	16%

10-year BLC Fall Report on Attendance Statistics					
	FA2013	FA2014	FA2015	FA2016	FA2017
Full Time	534	488	490	514	523
FTE	558	507	500	537	566
All Enrolled	605	536	529	588	655
ELS	16%	16%	15%	15%	16%

We are pleased to report that the total number of students enrolled for fall 2017 equaled 655, an all-time record enrollment for Bethany. This was a jump from the previous fall's enrollment of 588; a 10% increase in students taking courses from Bethany, and a 19% growth in total enrollment since the fall of 2015. The growth in total enrolled students was due in large part to the growth of our now two-year-old set of online dual credit general education courses we offer to high school students. Our traditional on-campus enrollment also increased to 523, a 2% gain over the previous fall, and a 6% growth in full-time students over the past two years. We note that even though our first-year class was down by eight, we were up nine in full-time students, a net difference of 17 due largely to positive retention.

The hard work of our Bethany community to retain students is paying dividends and has significantly contributed to our growth in total enrollment. The fall 2016 to fall 2017 retention rate for first-year full-time students was officially 83%, topping last year's record retention rate of 82%. This reflects an 11% bump over the previous ten-year average of 72%. Contributing factors to this substantial increase in retention include the following: weekly monitoring of course grades and attendance tracking by faculty, the services of the expanded Academic Resource Center coupled with very prescriptive requirements for students who enroll at Bethany with higher academic risk, a "Bethany Cares" online submission process to help identify students of concern, the on-campus mental health counseling center operated by Christian Family Solutions, weekly meetings of the Student Success Committee, continued attention to physical plant and res-hall improvements, and the efforts of our faculty and staff

to personally know and mentor our students and the passion they have to help students fulfill their goals and achieve personal and academic success.

We are also thankful to note an increase in first-year students who come to Bethany from a Lutheran high school background. This past fall 44 of our first-year students came to Bethany from a Lutheran high school background vs. 39 from the previous year. This increase is also more than double the number of first-year students from a Lutheran high school background vs. the fall of 2015. We also observed a slight increase in the number of ELS students attending Bethany this past fall (88 in fall 2017 vs. 87 in fall 2016). This translates into 16% of the Bethany full-time 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 39% in fall 2016, to 41% in fall 2017. 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 (half of cost for air travel). 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 continued growth of our international student body at Bethany. In the fall of 2016, 38 international students studied at Bethany. In the fall of 2017 that number grew to 42 international students, and in the second semester that number has grown again to 49, almost triple the number of international students who studied at Bethany over the past two years. The largest group of students from any international country who study at Bethany is the Congo. 15 Congolese students were enrolled at the college this past spring. We thank God for the opportunity to share the Gospel message with these students while they attend Bethany.

## **BETHANY FINANCES**

Like most colleges, enrollment plays a key role in the financial sustainability of an institution. Aggressive competition for a shrinking pool of students in the Upper Midwest through such strategies as increased student aid plays a major factor in enrollment attainment. While enrollment at Bethany was up, the cost of student aid, lower endowment income (due to a board approved 3.5% spending rate) and with the start of new programs (nursing and engineering), the college experienced a \$1,290,000 deficit at the end of June 2017. This deficit was covered by outside operational revenue such as from mineral rights income, and short-term cash reserves. Likewise, the college will experience a similar scenario in FY2018 as we anticipate an annual budget deficit of approximately \$1,950,000. At the time of this printing, the college will have implemented new measures to lower this deficit through a prioritization and reallocation of available resources process resulting in a reduction of our faculty workforce, along with identifying additional campus efficiencies, the spending down of our cash reserves, and using outside operational revenue in order to reduce and meet annual expenses.

For the third consecutive year we report to you the great need for increased and ongoing financial support from Bethany constituents and the ELS. Such support coupled with increased student enrollment will continue to enable Bethany to fulfill its mission to proclaim the "One Thing Needful" for generations to come. 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**

Over the past two years the college has greatly expanded its majors in an effort to attract more students to study at Bethany. The number of new programs added at the college in recent

years includes nursing, engineering sciences, biochemistry, graphic design, computer science, and special education. In addition, Bethany now offers an online paralegal certificate and general education online courses to both full and part-time students.

Bethany's first cohort of six nursing students continues to work through the junior-level coursework and clinicals. Emily Goetzke was hired in January 2018 as the second full-time faculty member in nursing, joining Deborah Matzke-Lewis. Emily was hired to spend the spring semester and summer to develop the senior-level curriculum. They are joined in the department by Director of Nursing, Dr. Sara Traylor, who took the six students to Nicaragua for a global health cultural immersion trip over Spring Break. The department is very busy preparing for the CCNE accreditation site visit scheduled for September 10–12, 2018.

The Engineering department anticipates its first graduating class of three students earning Bachelor of Arts in Engineering Sciences degrees in May 2018. Work has also been progressing in equipping the labs and grant funding is being pursued to aid in their full build-out. Some of the upcoming challenges for the program include staffing and pursuing ABET Accreditation.

During the spring 2017–18 semester, Bethany's online courses served about 230 students. More than 100 of those students each semester were high school dual credit and PSEO students. Combining fall and spring numbers, Bethany was able to serve 160 unique high school students this year from 13 WELS/ELS partner high schools, ten local public and private high schools, and several home schools. BLC is planning to offer up to 15 different online courses during the summer, including a brand-new biology offering, Medical Terminology, and two special education courses aimed at post baccalaureate students pursuing licensure endorsements.

We continue to search for a full-time faculty position in computer science. In the meantime, we continue to staff the computer science courses with adjuncts while we search for qualified faculty. There are three students on-campus who have expressed interest in the program and recruitment efforts continue to draw more students.

The Special Education major received full approval from the Professional Educators Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). What is especially unique about our Special Education major is that it is approved for both undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students. This means that students with a teaching degree (or any degree) can come to BLC for the addition of special education to their license (about 34 credits of work, depending on their transcript). We have two current students in the on-campus education program that have stated they will declare SPED this spring. However, the interest that has been created among our alumni and community for the post-bac option is great. So much so that Dr. Alanna Lienig and Dr. Carrie Pfeifer will be offering two of the SPED courses in our summer online term. We are also targeting some marketing for these summer courses to our alumni and community partners.

## **MAYO CLINIC EXPRESS CARE CLINIC ON CAMPUS**

This past year, Bethany entered into a unique venture with Mayo Clinic Health System (MCHS) to better serve the health needs of our students. The student health center is now staffed and run by MCHS, which operates an independent Express Care Clinic right on our campus. MCHS provides a physician's assistant (PA) or nurse practitioner (NP) on our campus for two hours every morning, Monday through Friday, when classes are in session. Services are similar to those offered at other Mayo Express Care Clinics. Bethany students can receive diagnosis, treatment, and prescriptions for common conditions such as strep throat, pinkeye, sinus infections, respiratory illnesses, skin infections, and the like. An exciting component to this program is that students have unlimited access to the clinic and are not charged for individual visits as all costs of the program are covered through student fees.

## PHYSICAL PLANT

During the summer of 2017, the college had four main projects on campus. The first two projects dealt with campus appearance. The removal of decaying trees and power washing the limestone to remove mold was done around campus and will continue into 2018. The second project dealt with the front of Old Main. As the reception point for visitors, this area went through numerous improvements to make it more welcoming for our campus guests, and it created a better gathering area for students to visit with their guests.

The other two projects completed on campus were fully subsidized by fundraising efforts by the athletic coaches. The first project involved the removal and replacement of metal lockers with new wood lockers in both the men's and women's locker rooms in the north gym. The other project was the installation of a golf simulator and player lounge for both the men's and women's golf teams. Both enhancements have helped in the recruitment and retention of student athletes.

## 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 the Foundation's generous support.

Bethany Lutheran College is thankful for the continued support of Thrivent Financial. Although down slightly from previous years, during calendar year 2017, the college received \$11,608 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 2017, several projects were approved for support including items for the Memorial Library, education department, art department, and the music department's piano replacement fund totaling \$7,000. The auxiliary also contributed \$5,000 towards the Dorothy Theiste Memorial Auxiliary Scholarship Fund.

## 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.

*The Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch, chairman*  
*The Rev. Edward Bryant, secretary*  
*Dr. Gene R. Pfeifer, president*

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

**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS**

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

The Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch, Kissimmee, Florida, chairman; Peace Lutheran Church  
The Rev. Edward Bryant, Lombard IL, secretary; Faith, Medford & Our Savior, Grants Pass  
Oregon

Dr. Willis Anthony, St. Peter, Minnesota; Norseland Lutheran Church

Paul T. Chamberlin, South Chatham, Massachusetts; Trinity Lutheran Church

The Rev. Erwin Ekhoﬀ, Golden Valley, Minnesota; King of Grace Lutheran Church

Lyle Fahning, Prior Lake, Minnesota; Heritage Lutheran Church, Apple Valley Minnesota

Joshua Mears, Lakeville, Minnesota; Heritage Lutheran Church, Apple Valley Minnesota

James Minor, Danbury, Wisconsin; King of Grace Lutheran Church, Golden Valley  
Minnesota

The Rev. David Thompson, San Antonio, Texas; Faith Lutheran Church

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

Bruce Gratz, Mankato Minnesota; Mt. Olive Lutheran Church

The Rev. Mark Bartels, Madison, Wisconsin; vice chairman; Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Tim Thiele, Okauchee, Wisconsin; Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

***Voting Member – Ex officio***

The Rev. John A. Moldstad, Mankato, Minnesota, President of the ELS

***Advisory Members***

Dr. Gene R. Pfeifer, Mankato, Minnesota, President of Bethany Lutheran College.

The Rev. Gaylin Schmeling, President of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary

**ACTION TAKEN IN FISCAL 2018 BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR BETHANY  
LUTHERAN COLLEGE**

- A. Adopted the 2017–18 budget for the college.
- B. Approved the fiscal 2017 Audit Report and response letter.
- C. Adopted the Non-Faculty Salary Range Proposal for 2017–2019.
- D. Adopted the tuition and fees for the 2018–2019 academic year, an increase of \$820.00.  
Subsequently approved an increase of student fee from the current \$550 to \$680 to  
provide campus health services two hours per day for five days per week through Mayo  
Clinic Health Systems, which students can then access free of additional charge.
- E. Authorized the administration to address the operating deficit by increasing the endowment  
spending rate to as much as 6%, using up to one million dollars of contingency funds,  
directing mineral rights to the deficit and carrying out appropriate cuts.
- F. Approved the 5-year strategic plan for the college.
- G. Approved the list of 2017 graduates pending the successful completion of graduation  
requirements, including the mid-year graduates.
- H. Approved the position of Dean of the Faculty. (Position filled by Jason Lowry)
- I. Promoted Lucas Fricke from position of full-time lecturer to full-time assistant professor  
in Spanish.
- J. Authorized offering David Reagles a full-time position as assistant professor in the  
History department.

- K. Issued a call to the Rev. Brian Klebig to fill the Eleanor Wilson Chair of Speech/English Communication previously held by the Rev. Tom Kuster.
- L. Thanked the Football Feasibility Study Task Force; athletic director, Don Westphal; and the college administration for their outstanding work and comprehensive report; and resolved to continue to study the feasibility of a football program at the college (subsequently assessed as not likely to be feasible) along with exploring other potential program options, both athletic and non-athletic.
- M. Authorized the college to partner with the City of Mankato to move the BLC baseball program to Franklin Rogers field.
- N. Supported President Pfeifer in his additional role as an adjunct professor of an online course at Martin Luther College called "Improving Instruction Methodology."
- O. Approved an updated Non-Discrimination Statement.
- P. Approved new majors in Computer Science, Special Education and Education Studies; and a Paralegal Certificate program.
- Q. Renamed the Communication Center the "Thomas A. Kuster Communication Center."
- R. Approved a plaque near the physics classroom honoring the late Peter Kjeer.
- S. Approved the basic design concept of the Student Activity Center with the understanding that it will be further refined and that profit/loss estimates will be presented to the board. Permission was also granted to continue discussions with many potential donors and stakeholders.
- T. Said goodbye with thanks to Harold Theiste for thirty-three years of service on the Board of Regents.
- U. Estates received through December 31, 2017:
  - Costello, M. Maxine
  - Dalchow, Wayne A.
  - Goetzke, Lester E.
  - Jeppesen, Ada Amelia
  - Levorson, Morris

#### **ACTION TAKEN IN FISCAL 2017 BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

- A. Approved for graduation seminary students Aaron Ferkenstad and Kurtis Freimuth for Master of Divinity degrees.
- B. Declared Aaron Ferkenstad and Kurtis Freimuth eligible for calls into the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
- C. Set the seminary tuition for the academic year.
- D. Adopted the 2017–18 budget for the seminary.
- E. Set the endowment spending rate for 2017–2018 at 4.5%.
- F. Approved President Schmeling's proposed goals and objectives for 2017–2018.
- G. Assigned legacies in excess of \$100,000 to offset the budget shortfall of \$30,738, with the remainder going to the contingency fund.
- H. Chose the Regents' Seminary Committee to gather information on all the nominees for the seminary professorship being vacated by the Rev. Michael Smith and to bring their top three recommendations to the full Board of Regents in May 2018.
- I. Estates received through fiscal 2017:
  - Dahle, Paul
  - Dalchow, Wayne A.
  - Knott, Viola Marie



## **ACTION REQUIRED AT THIS CONVENTION**

The Board of Regents appointed Tim Thiele as a type B member and seeks ratification of this action at the 2018 synod convention.

## **CONCLUSION**

There are signs that Bethany Lutheran College has turned the corner on enrollment and is seeing some slow but steady growth. The hope is that new programs like the nursing program will begin to show strength and prove their worth in preparing even more capable, God-fearing graduates for their various vocations. Nonetheless, we have a long way to go toward our goal of 800 students. Meanwhile we are still facing a major deficit in the operating budget as noted above. We humbly look to the Lord to bless our attempts to address these issues and pray that He will sustain us as we await His gracious answers.

Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary is still looking for more young men desiring to serve in the pastoral office to attend and complete their pastoral studies in our small seminary which equips them to be faithful, well-prepared servants of the Lord. As many of our current pastors near retirement, many more additional pastors will be needed. Let us all pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth workers into his harvest field and help identify young men who display gifts needed for the pastoral ministry.

Your Board of Regents is grateful to have had the privilege during this past year of governing these two institutions on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

*The Rev. Herbert Huhnerkoch, chairman*

*The Rev. Ed Bryant, secretary*

**BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE, INC.**  
**Mankato, Minnesota**  
Consolidating Statement of Activities  
Year Ended June 30, 2017

	<u>College</u>	<u>Seminary</u>	<u>2017 Total</u>	<u>2016 Total</u>
<b>REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>				
Tuition and general fees	12,816,308	355,550	13,171,858	12,184,604
Less: Scholarships and grants	(6,150,807)	(335,950)	(6,486,757)	(5,972,655)
Net Tuition and Fees	6,665,501	19,600	6,685,101	6,211,949
Government Grants	74,867	-	74,867	136,786
Contributions	4,594,974	434,861	5,029,835	4,514,179
Endowment income	534,446	87,245	621,691	581,161
Endowment gains (losses)	2,686,780	874,508	3,561,288	(1,684,346)
Gains (losses) on beneficial interest in funds held in trust	8,981	13,762	22,743	(13,085)
Gain (loss) on beneficial interest in perpetual trust	(2,113)	(2,113)	(4,226)	(44,574)
Sales and services of student activities	280,059	-	280,059	65,946
Gain on sale of property	-	-	-	92,023
Other sources	1,013,275	69,645	1,082,920	946,830
Auxiliary services	3,272,184	-	3,272,184	3,115,832
Adjustment of actuarial liability	28,633	10,136	38,769	27,209
Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support	<b>19,157,587</b>	<b>1,507,644</b>	<b>20,665,231</b>	<b>13,949,910</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Program expenses				
Instruction	6,822,868	532,649	7,355,517	6,756,307
Academic Support	584,012	-	584,012	556,575
Student services	4,242,493	152,201	4,394,694	4,182,615
Auxiliary	2,779,983	7,883	2,787,866	2,728,133
Support expenses				
Institutional Support	3,381,174	59,042	3,440,216	3,427,452
Allocable expenses				
Operation and maintenance of plant	1,802,730	74,977	1,877,707	1,653,155
Depreciation	1,897,529	71,667	1,969,196	2,016,168
Interest	418,006	-	418,006	438,227
Less: Allocated expenses	(4,118,265)	(146,644)	(4,264,909)	(4,107,550)
Contributions receivable written-off	15,633	-	15,633	22,400
Total expenses	<b>17,826,163</b>	<b>751,775</b>	<b>18,577,938</b>	<b>17,673,482</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>1,331,424</b>	<b>755,869</b>	<b>2,087,293</b>	<b>(3,723,572)</b>
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	67,135,977	10,773,153	77,909,130	81,632,702
<b>NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR</b>	<b>68,467,401</b>	<b>11,529,022</b>	<b>79,996,423</b>	<b>77,909,130</b>

## REPORT OF BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

This year is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. In 1918 several pastors gathered at Lime Creek Lutheran Church in rural Lake Mills, Iowa. Though standing solidly on Scripture's foundation, they represented a theological minority among the Norwegian-American Lutherans. Their spiritual heritage, however, was not unique to either Norway or America. The pastors and laymen met to reorganize on the same foundation upon which the "old" Norwegian Synod was built. They were encouraged by the words of Jeremiah: "Stand in the way and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls" (6:16). The reorganized synod has remained on the old paths in all its teaching: where one can find rest for the soul—true rest found in Jesus our Savior. Our souls are never at rest until we are at rest in Him.

Our synod is continually striving to proclaim the gracious message of justification by faith alone in Christ as the Savior. 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 wonderful treasure is offered to us in the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments, and is received by faith alone in Him as the Savior, which faith is worked, strengthened, and preserved through these same means of grace.

Our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary continues to play a vital role in preparing men to go forth to proclaim the saving message of 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; the Rev. Edward Bryant, Lombard, Illinois, secretary; the Rev. Mark Bartels, Madison, Wisconsin; the Rev. Erwin Ekhoﬀ, Golden Valley, Minnesota; the Rev. David Thompson, San Antonio, Texas; Dr. Willis Anthony, St. Peter, Minnesota; Mr. Paul Chamberlin, South Chatham, Massachusetts; Mr. Lyle Fahning, Prior Lake, Minnesota; Mr. Bruce Gratz, Mankato, Minnesota; Dr. Joshua Mears, Lakeville, Minnesota; Mr. James Minor, Danbury, Wisconsin; and Mr. Tim Thiele, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. By virtue of office, the president of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc., the Rev. John Moldstad, Mankato, Minnesota, serves as an ex officio member of the Board of Regents.

## **FACULTY**

The following professors taught in the seminary during the 2017–18 school year: Michael Smith, Thomas Kuster, Nathan Nass, Timothy Schmeling, and Gaylin Schmeling. Dr. T. Schmeling led our Old Testament studies and teaches Symbolics, Homiletics, and other practical courses. He is in the midst of a master of theology degree in Old Testament studies at St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota. Dr. Smith taught our New Testament courses, Counseling, Homiletics, and other practical courses. Dr. Kuster taught Communication and Professor Nass taught multicultural studies. President Schmeling taught Dogmatics, Church History, Homiletics, and other practical courses.

At the seminary commencement service, Dr. Smith was honored for his sixteen years of service at the seminary. He has accepted a call to teach at Asia Lutheran Seminary, Hong Kong. Dr. Smith has distinguished himself as a New Testament professor and has received his Ph.D. in biblical studies. His dissertation was entitled "The function and purpose of the parables of Matthew 13 as viewed through the epistemology of Michael Polanyi." He has taught the Greek New Testament classes at Bethany Lutheran College, the New Testament courses at the seminary, and has served as guest lecturer in international seminaries of our fellowship. We thank the Lord for the wonderful blessings He has bestowed upon our seminary through Dr. Smith.

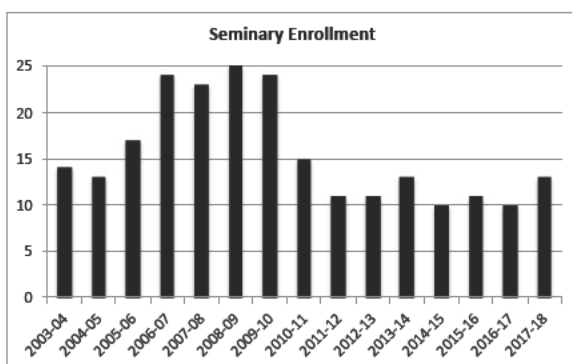
## **ENROLLMENT**

There were thirteen students enrolled at the seminary in the 2017–18 academic year. It breaks down as follows: 5 juniors, 5 middlers, 1 senior, and 2 vicars. The vicars were Noah

Thompson at St. John's Lutheran Church (Frankenmuth, Michigan); and Christian Walz at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Indianola, Iowa).

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>
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
2017-18	5	5	1	2		13



## RECRUITMENT

Our synod is facing a potential shortage of pastors to fill the various vacancies, and more young men are needed for the public ministry. If there is a shortage of pastors, congregations will remain without a shepherd. The seminary is employing various procedures for recruiting 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 to study for the ministry. The Lord of the harvest reminds us that "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send out laborers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:37-38). In addition to fervent prayer let us also do what we can in the form of encouragement and financial assistance, if possible, to make it feasible for students to study for the ministry.

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. The seminary would like to encourage every young man in our synod—and not merely the young men but also older men—to consider this vital work which the Savior has placed before us. There is no greater work!

## 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 Church, The Dalles, Oregon on June 6, 2017. Prof. Michael K. Smith presented "A Fresh Look at the Parables of Matthew 13." In this presentation, Prof. Smith examined the traditional manner in which the Lutheran church has interpreted parables, especially as this paradigm is applied to the parables of Matthew 13. He then introduced the epistemology of Michael Polanyi as a possible lens through which to view these parables, and suggested a modified paradigm for their interpretation. The goal of this exercise was to glean new insights into the parables of Matthew 13.

**Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures:** The Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures were held October 26–27, 2017. This year the theme was *Luther's Three Treatises: The Reformation Platform*. Lecture One: Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation—Prof. Erling Teigen; Lecture Two: Martin Luther's Babylonian Captivity in Context—Dr. Erik Herrmann; Lecture Three: The Freedom of a Christian—Rev. James Langebartels.

**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 6–8, 2018. The theme of the seminar was "Building on the Rock."

**Seminary Marriage Workshop:** On February 16–17, 2018, Prof. and Anita Smith conducted a marriage workshop for the students and their wives. The workshop focused on the need for unconditional commitment in the marriage relationship, looking especially to the unconditional love Christ Jesus has for his church as a model and as motivation for the marriage relationship. The workshop also focused on strengthening the marriage relationship and giving the students tools to use in marriage workshops in their future parishes.

**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 18, 2018. This is always a pleasant and relaxing evening for the students and staff.

**Vicar Workshop:** Our annual vicar workshop was held on Wednesday, May 9, 2018. 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 9, 2018, at 3:00 p.m. in Trinity Chapel. The Rev. David Thompson 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: Noah Thompson and Christian Walz.

## LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

The *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* is a continuation of the *Clergy Bulletin* (1941–1960). The purpose of the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*, as was the purpose of the *Clergy Bulletin*, is to

provide a testimony of the theological position of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and also to promote the academic growth of her clergy roster by providing scholarly articles, rooted in the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. 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](http://www.blts.edu/lsq).

## **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 received during the past fiscal year are noted in the report of the ELS Board of Regents.

## **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 and Dorothy Abrams; Herman and Evelyn Anderson; Joey and Trisha Anderson; Keith G. Anderson; John, Ethel and Rodney Arends; Robert, Flora and Charlotte F. Becker; Edmund Bolstad; Kenneth and Audrey Bolstad; Gregory C. and Susan D. Bovid; Bruss Family; Nora Buffington; Larry and Jane Carlovsky; Arthur O. Carlsen; Glenn and Dorothy Collins; Mabel Dahlgren; Allen and Susan Daniels; Davis-Nelson; Robert and Betty Diesing; Roger and Lois Dohrmann; Stuart Dorr; John Dukleth Memorial; Keith and Claudia Eisberg; George and Dorothy Feil; Ole Martin Fjar; Howard and Jeanette (Hovland) Gulbrandson; Donald and Opal Hackbarth; Albert S. Hammer; Paul and Cordia Hasz; Hoiland Family; Lyle and Debby Hoverson; Lenwick and Glenna Hoyord; Brian Koch; Ewald and Verda Kohlmeyer; Jens, Jerome and Laverne Kvam; Ernest W. Larsen; Albin Levorson; George O. Lillegard; Harold and Ellen Loe; Lorentz Book; Gwenn and Sigfred Lysne; Juul B. Madson Memorial Fund for Excellence in New Testament Greek; Norman A. Madson Sr.; Rev. William and Jean McMurdie; Clarence E. and June Labb Miller; Moldstad/Fick Family; Joe and Peggy Moll; Julius F. Mundschenk; Rev. Richard and Hazel Newgard; George Nygaard; Arleta M. Olson; Ordal; George and Ruth Orvick; Kenneth and Violet Peter; Pres. Wilhelm and Naomi Petersen; Emil and Martha Peterson; Timothy and Gail Peterson; Richard and Florence Rado; Chauncey and Enanda Reinertson; Roland and Lois Reinholtz; Richland Lutheran Church; Merrill and Dorothy Rope; Ronald and Gay Rose; Herbert, Linette, and Grace Sahnnow; Edna May Scherzer-Getz; Eugene and Bertha Schiller; Gaylin and Rebecca Schmeling; John and DeLores Seime; Robert and Madelyn Soule;

St. Mark's Lutheran Memorial; Alhert and Clara Strand; Thomas Stueck; Calhoun and Jean Sumrall; Timothy and Nancy Thiele; Gerald and Gwen Tjernagel; Milton E. Tweit Student Support; Jim and Juanita Walberg; Walker-Schneider; William and Eunice Wehrenberg; Gerhard and Lois Weseloh; Patty Jo Weseloh; Whipple; Wayne and Esther Wiechmann; James and 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*

### **HIGHER EDUCATION—ACTION OF THE SYNOD**

#### ***Resolution 1: Type “B” Appointment to the Board of Regents***

WHEREAS, At its February 2018 meeting, the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary appointed Mr. Tim Thiele 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 2018 synod convention, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the convention ratify the board's action.

#### ***Resolution 2: Recognition of Service of Mr. Harold Theiste***

WHEREAS, Mr. Harold Theiste served the Board of Regents for thirty-three years, and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Harold Theiste retired in May of 2017, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank Mr. Harold Theiste for his thirty-three years of service on the Board of Regents.

#### ***Resolution 3: Recognition of Bethany Lutheran College Anniversaries***

WHEREAS, God has blessed Bethany Lutheran College through the faithful service of its faculty and staff, and,

WHEREAS, A number of them have been recognized this year for their many years of work, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank God for the faithful service of those who have received special recognition in the past year and for all others who help to fulfill the mission of the college and seminary, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage the members of the synod to continually remember in prayer the staff and faculty of our college and seminary.

#### ***Resolution 4: Recruitment and Retention Efforts at Bethany Lutheran College***

WHEREAS, The total number of students enrolled for fall 2017 equaled 655, and,

WHEREAS, This is an all-time record for enrollment for Bethany and a 10% increase over the previous fall, and,

WHEREAS, The fall 2016 to 2017 retention rate for first-year full-time students was officially 83%, and,

WHEREAS, This growth in recruitment and retention can be attributed to several factors including, but not limited to: expanded services offered by the Academic Resource Center, a “Bethany Cares” online submission process to help identify students of concern, the on-campus mental health counseling center operated by Christian Family Solutions, the addition of online dual credit education courses offered to high school students, and the efforts of faculty and staff, and,

WHEREAS, There has been an increase in the number of first-year students from Lutheran high schools, and,

WHEREAS, The number of international students (49) is almost triple the number of international students who studied at Bethany over the past two years, 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, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That we give thanks to God for His continued providence and blessing of Bethany Lutheran College.

#### ***Resolution 5: Communication Regarding Bethany's Financial Status***

WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College will experience a \$1,950,000 budget deficit in Fiscal Year 2018, and,

WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College reports for the third consecutive year the great need for increased and ongoing financial support from Bethany constituents and the ELS, and,

WHEREAS, Enrollment and retention have increased while overall revenue has decreased, and,

WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College receives limited financial support directly through the annual budget of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, Our synod's congregations and members need to be aware of the issue in order to increase the fervor of their prayers and the generosity of their giving, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That our pastors continue to inform their congregations and encourage their members to remember Bethany in prayer and to consider special congregational or personal financial gifts, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the leadership of Bethany Lutheran College continue its candor in communicating its financial status, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That Bethany Lutheran College examine who receives its printed publications and if those publications are effectively enabling our members to remain informed about the status of our synod's college.

#### ***Resolution 6: Necessity of Enrollment Increase at Bethany Lutheran College***

WHEREAS, There is a need to increase the enrollment to a level which can sustain the college, and,

WHEREAS, There is a desire for more of our synod's youth to attend Bethany Lutheran College, and,

WHEREAS, The Bethany ELS Youth Grant covers costs for pastors, youth group leaders, and high school juniors and seniors to visit Bethany, and,

WHEREAS, This program could benefit other youth including seventh graders through high school sophomores, and,

WHEREAS, Interest has been expressed by ELS pastors to bring along youth who are not members of ELS congregations, and,

WHEREAS, It would be a benefit to have promotional material aimed at grade school students, therefore,



- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That Bethany Lutheran College consider expanding the scope of the Bethany ELS Youth Grant to include seventh through twelfth graders as well as non-member students chaperoned by our ELS pastors or youth group leaders, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That Bethany Lutheran College consider creating promotional materials or recruitment programs aimed at grade school students, and,
- C. BE IT RESOLVED, That our ELS congregations fervently promote Bethany Lutheran College within their congregations and schools, and to consider establishing scholarship funds and other ways to encourage their members to attend our synod's college.

***Resolution 7: Grants, Estates, Legacies, Scholarships, and Other Financial Support***

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 the National Bethany Auxiliary, and,

WHEREAS, Estates have been received from Maxine Costello, Paul Dahle, Wayne A. Dalchow, Lester E. Goetzke, Ada Amelia Jeppesen, Viola Marie Knott, and Morris Levorson, 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 8: Dr. Michael Smith's Acceptance of Divine Call to Asia Lutheran Seminary***

WHEREAS, Dr. Michael Smith faithfully served on the faculty of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary for sixteen years, and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Smith has accepted a call to teach at Asia Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank Dr. Smith 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 9: Continued Encouragement for Future Teachers in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod***

WHEREAS, Our synod at the 2017 convention resolved to encourage future teachers in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, There are schools in our synod that are experiencing difficulties obtaining teachers, and,

WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College has a program for the training of teachers for ELS schools, and,

WHEREAS, There are few individuals in the Bethany Lutheran College education program that pursue ELS certification, therefore,

- BE IT RESOLVED, That the college and synod continue to work together to find and implement ways to promote the teaching ministry to students enrolled in Bethany Lutheran College's education program; e.g. through post-graduation incentives for those teaching in ELS schools.

### **Resolution 10: Recognition of Service of Mr. Paul Chamberlain**

WHEREAS, Mr. Paul Chamberlain served the Board of Regents for thirty-three years, and, WHEREAS, Mr. Paul Chamberlain has declined reelection to the Board of Regents, therefore, BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank Mr. Paul Chamberlain for his thirty-three years of service on the Board of Regents.

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR HOME OUTREACH**

“We have no other reason for living on earth than to be of help to others. If this were not the case, it would be best for God to kill us and let us die as soon as we are baptized and have begun to believe. But He permits us to live here in order that we may bring others to faith, just as He brought us...<sup>1</sup> You must, says Peter, exercise the chief function of a priest, that is, to proclaim the wonderful deed God has performed for you to bring you out of darkness into the light... Thus you should also teach other people how they, too, come into such light... Then let it be your chief work to proclaim this publicly and to call everyone into the light into which you have been called. Where you find people who do not know this, you should instruct and also teach them as you have learned, namely, how one must be saved through the power and strength of God and come out of darkness into the light.”<sup>2</sup> To this end, the Board for Home Outreach assists the synod’s members in proclaiming and serving their Lord through their outreach, evangelism, and mission efforts in the U.S.

### **ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD**

The following members comprise the board: the Rev. Timothy Hartwig, chairman; the Rev. Rodney Flohr, vice chairman and chaplain; the Rev. Ben Wiechmann, secretary, Mr. Keith Duin,\* Financial Coordinator; the Rev. Aaron Hamilton, Missionary Care; Mr. Mark Perlwitz, Site Selection Coordinator; Mr. Channing Smith,\* Property Management Coordinator; Mr. David Sparley, Resource Coordinator; and the Rev. Luke Ulrich, Outreach Strategy;. Members marked with an asterisk also serve on the Trustees/Home Outreach Subcommittee. 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.

### **FAITHFUL SERVICE**

The board recognizes the faithful service of the Rev. Michael Smith. The Rev. Smith accepted a call to serve as a professor at the seminary in Hong Kong. We give thanks for God for Michael’s years of service to the Board for Home Missions and the Board for Home Outreach and ask the Lord to bless his future service in Christ’s kingdom.

### **MLI AND LONG-RANGE PLANNING**

At its January meeting, the BHO participated in a workshop facilitated by Ministry Leadership Institute (MLI). The workshop helped the BHO identify and develop long range goals and how to reach them. Some of the six-year goals are:

- Fully developed & continually updated differentiated educational packages for equipping new & existing congregations for evangelism and outreach

---

<sup>1</sup> Luther, M. (1999). *Luther’s works, vol. 30: The Catholic Epistles*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 30, p. 11). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 64–65.

- Fully developed, excellent communication methods including new and developing technologies that clearly and effectively communicate and encourage outreach and mission growth.
- BHO engaging with 100% of ELS congregations
- Begin six new missions/ministries (including cross-cultural settings)
- All 2017 current missions are no longer receiving subsidy (through growth goals)
- Additional funding secured to fully support BHO strategic plan

## EVANGELISM-MISSIONS COUNSELOR

Serving as the Evangelism Mission Counselor, Rev. Larry Wentzlaff is striving to support our five home missions on a regular basis. He also works to support many of the synod's 130 congregations. He is available to all congregations but only assists when invited to do so. He is currently promoting strategic planning as a tool to help congregations move forward in their efforts to carry out the Great Commission. Any congregation of the synod looking for assistance with its outreach and evangelism efforts is encouraged to contact Rev. Wentzlaff.

In Response to Resolution 3: Reports of Evangelism-Mission Counselor (*Synod Report*, 2017, page 106), which reads:

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.

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 congregations. and  
(Resolutions B and C do not pertain to this project)

## ***EMC Services available to the congregations of the ELS***

1. Promoting and offering resources available to assist congregations with outreach and evangelism:

- a. Working with the Rev. Paul Fries, ELS Director of Communications, a page was developed for the synod website that has a list of Evangelism ideas and resources. These ideas and resources are located on the synod website. Locate and click on the resource button, which can be found on the home page. Scroll down to Evangelism Resources and you will find many categories regarding outreach and evangelism.
- b. The website page listing the resources available has been advertised on the synod convention floor and some have been highlighted in the President's Newsletter.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

The Evangelism Resource page on the synod website serves two purposes:

- a. It can be used as an idea primer for your congregation's outreach committee, viewing the list of potential ideas can help the creative juices begin to flow.
- b. In many cases, it acts as a detailed guide for outreach and evangelism events. On many of the sub-pages, you will find instructions for planning and coordinating an event.

## 2. Assisting with prospect list management:

This service provides reasons for having a prospect management list, detailed instructions on developing a prospect management list and how to use a prospect management list.

This information can be found on the synod website under Evangelism Resources.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

In order to provide full service to the missions and congregations of the ELS, not only do we recommend outreach and evangelism ideas and projects, we also offer follow up assistance. In essence, if a congregation is going to expend resources to engage others with Jesus, which is a primary goal, they should also be prepared to follow up on those that might have expressed an interest in the message of salvation and the church. This resource is provided to help the congregations organize for that follow up.

## 3. Assistance with strategic planning:

A strategic planning package (tool kit) has been assembled and is available on the ELS website under Evangelism Resources. The tool kit consists of six tools that can be used in the process of strategic planning:

- a. The Vision Statement, there are instructions on the development of the vision statement.
- b. The Mission Statement, there is a Bible study meant to lead the congregation to the writing of a Mission Statement.
- c. Community Profile, meant to be completed by the congregation to raise awareness of the community around them in which they are to work to engage others with Jesus.
- d. Congregational Profile, a brief history of the statistical data of the congregation, a survey to be filled out by the members of the congregation. The compilation of the survey data can be completed within the congregation or can be sent to the EMC for compilation. When the information is returned to the congregation it is accompanied by a list of recommended goals to include in the strategic plan. Included in the Congregational Profile are the Planning Questions, which help guide the congregation in the strategic planning process.
- e. SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), SWOT Analysis gives the congregation a real time assessment of their current situation. The SWOT Analysis can be done in a congregational forum.
- f. The Strategic Plan Instructions, designed to take the congregation through the strategic planning process and the development of goals and objectives.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

When preparing for vacation, in an effort to get where we want to go and to know when we want to get there, we make plans. Just as we make plans for our future retirements, plans for our children's college years, we even make a list to go to the store for groceries. These plans help us stay on track and keep us well organized. Are we to do any less for our churches and our gospel outreach efforts? Many people gruff, "Strategic planning and short and long-range planning follows the secular business model and has no place in our churches." The answer is, "yes", many businesses in the secular world do employ strategic and long-range planning. But were they the first? Take for instance Moses and the people of Israel as they moved across the wilderness for forty years, did they not have plans and instructions to keep them organized? Can you imagine the chaos that would have ensued had there not been a plan? Also consider how Jesus laid out detailed plans for the Apostles as He prepared them for their first missionary

journey, Matthew 10. Strategic planning simply helps us organize to do the work that our churches have been called to do. There are also many side benefits to the planning process:

- a. The vision statement helps us to look to the future as it provides a target (goal) for us to aim for.
  - b. The benefit of a mission statement is many times more about the process of developing the statement than the statement itself. The mission statement is developed through in-depth Bible study that helps create the mission mindset for the congregation, which the members are reminded of every time they see the mission statement.
  - c. The community profile helps us to better understand the community in which our church is located. Even if we have lived there for years, it helps to make us aware of new changes.
  - d. The Congregational profile helps the congregation shed light on itself. It is a tool to help us reflect on where we are, so we can make better plans for where we want to be.
4. Assistance with Facebook ads and website design and updating:
- a. Grant funds are available to assist with Facebook advertising, usually on a matching funds basis.
  - b. Website design and update can be coordinated through the EMC. The cost of a new website is \$400.00. Update costs vary from case to case. Matching funds are available.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

In today's world of instant information, through the use of Facebook and the internet, families looking for a church will search out information on the churches in their area online. It is important for your congregation to have a clear, concise website and Facebook page to help facilitate their search.

5. Promoting and facilitating live streaming of worship services:

The cost of the live streaming equipment is \$6,500.00, which includes everything needed to set up a two-camera system. Also included in the cost of the project is the travel and accommodation expense for the installer and his crew. If the congregation wants to add other equipment such a third camera or special microphones the price rises accordingly. All installations coordinated and scheduled through the office of the synod's Communications Director. Be advised there is currently a waiting list and there may be a waiting period of up to two years.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

Live streaming serves a couple of different purposes:

- a. Live streaming serves to enhance the congregations Facebook and internet presence. It takes away the question, "What will the worship service be like?" For many people, one of the hardest things to do is step through the doors of a church not knowing what to expect. Live streaming helps to alleviate that fear.
  - b. Congregational members that may be traveling in areas where they cannot find a church of our fellowship for worship can hear the law and gospel online.
  - c. Live stream signals are not limited to a specific area. They go out into the world. The signal carries the Gospel message around the world to be found and viewed by anyone.
6. Making use of ministry area demographic studies:
- Currently there are two configurations of demographic studies available:
- a. The zip code study, which can be useful if your church or the desired study area is, located more toward the center of the zip code boundaries.
  - b. The three radius demographic study which, using the church as the center point allows you to pick three radius' (for example 1mile, 3 mile, and 5 mile). If you would like a sample copy of a demographic study, please contact the EMC.
  - c. The demographic studies are currently provided free of charge.

- d. An analysis of the pertinent study data is available upon request. Included in the summary are recommended outreach and evangelism ideas to employ in light of the data provided.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

Demographic studies give the congregation detailed factual data within the study area, such as, population, break down of population by age, number of households in the study area, income of households in the study area, types of families within the study area, etc., etc. This data can help guide the congregation as to which outreach and evangelism strategy they might employ to reach the lost and straying with the saving Word of God.

7. Researching and implementing ministry area digital advertising:

The use of digital advertising, on Facebook and the Internet, is currently being researched. Several test cases, in selected demographics, have been employed. We continue to work toward tailoring this advertising medium to best accommodate our ELS congregations. One of the drawbacks at this point is the cost of digital advertising.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

More details upon request.

8. Facilitating the annual Christmas and Easter season postcard and other special mailing:

- a. For the past three years, the BHO has offered Christmas and Easter postcard printing and mailing for all our ELS congregation. This year we added a Reformation postcard mailing. Prior to the holiday an order form is distributed via email to all the pastors. Assistance with selecting mailing route within the churches zip code(s) is available, contact the EMC. The cost of the mailing is .24 per card, printed and mailed. Half the cost, .12 per card is covered using grant funds available to the BHO. Contact the EMC for further details.

- b. Under the same program, custom postcard printing and mailing to all ELS congregations throughout the year. Take advantage of this opportunity to advertise special services, special events, and other activities that take place at your church. (Anniversaries, Vacation Bible School, Fall Festivals, Ice Cream Socials, etc.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

Every Door Direct Mailing (EDDM) is a means of reaching the entire community in the congregation's ministry area with information regarding upcoming events or with just a simple invitation to join you for worship.

9. Studying and tracking current religious trends in the US:

This is an ongoing practice. If your congregation is aware of a trend they would like to have analyzed, please contact the EMC.

10. Managing and assisting congregations with a Board of Trustees financial grant:

- a. The Board of Trustees has been very generous in supporting the EMC position and insuring that the EMC has the resources available to be of substantial assistance to the Home Missions and Congregations of the ELS. These funds are available and distributed at the discretion of the EMC.
- b. Grant funding is available to assist congregations with any outreach and/or evangelism event, for example: Supplement the cost of
- hosting a Faith In Action team
  - putting on seminars to which the community is invited
  - all types of printed materials used for outreach and evangelism
  - updating church signs
  - etc.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

Apply for funding assistance can help stretch the congregations annual outreach and evangelism budget. The BHO likes to operate on a matching funds basis where half the cost of an outreach or evangelism project is covered with grant money. However, if there is a project that the congregation would like to employ but cannot cover half the cost please contact the EMC so we can work together. It is far more important for the outreach and evangelism to take place than to be hindered by a lack of funds.

11. Travel to your location:

- On Site Visits
  - Meeting with pastors
  - Meeting with Leadership
  - Meeting with congregation
- For the purpose of:
  - Discussing with leadership or in open congregational forum outreach and evangelism strategies that the congregation might employ to engage others with Jesus.
- On Site Bible Studies
  - Vocational Evangelism (PPT)
  - Rural Evangelism (PPT)
  - Assimilation: The Challenge of Integrating and Keeping New Members in Rural & Small Town Congregations (PPT)
  - The Work of the EMC: a brief overview of services offered (PPT)
  - Mission Mindset: Creating & Maintaining mission mindset in the congregation (PPT)
  - Practical Publicity in a Digital World (PPT)
  - The Gospel To Share: Scriptural Foundations for Mission Work
- Conduct Divine Worship Service and Preach

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

Onsite congregational visits allow the EMC to personally assess the outreach and evangelism needs and developments first hand. They also help give the congregation a point of contact with the BHO and to know that the BHO wants to partner with them as they strive to engage others with Jesus.

12. Phone or Skype conferencing: EMC can join your Evangelism discussion with a simple phone call placed on voice or a Skype connection.

*How this resource can assist in your Congregational outreach and evangelism:*

Phone conferencing and Skyping allows the Evangelism Committee or Church Counsel real time answers to questions and available resources.

## ***Conclusion***

All ELS congregation are invited and encouraged to make use of the services provide by the EMC through the BHO. Working together and brothers in Christ with the resources we have available we will continue to strive in our efforts to engage others with Jesus.

## **BUILDING PROJECTS AND LAND ACQUISITION**

On January 8, 2017, Hope Lutheran Church, Leander, Texas broke ground for a new worship facility. The congregation was finally able to worship in the building on Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018. The dedication is planned for April 22 at 4:00 p.m. As of the writing of this report \$2,670,630.36 has been spent for the construction of the facility. The total indebtedness of the mission for the land, parsonage and building will be \$3,343,855.

The BHO received permission from the Board of Trustees at its February meeting to pursue the purchase of sixteen acres of land with the price cap of \$1,000,000 for Divine Mercy Lutheran Church, Weatherford, Texas. It is the plan of the board, in conjunction with the trustees, to sell off certain parcels of the entire purchase and therefore recover much of the original expenditure. At the time of this report, negotiations have begun but are not finalized. If the land purchase is realized, a modest worship facility will be built as soon as possible.

## **SPECIAL OFFERING**

The board is grateful to the synod that the proceeds from the special anniversary offering that began at the 2016 convention have been designated for use by the board to start new home missions (*Synod Report*, 2014, page 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 UPDATES**

**Cristo Rey/Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bell Gardens, California:** The Rev. Matthew Behmer serves this cross-cultural mission. In addition to serving the existing members of Christ the King, 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 [www.iglesialutheranocristo.com](http://www.iglesialutheranocristo.com).) With the help of Builders for Christ, a complete remodel to the worship facility was recently completed. The congregation numbers 28 baptized and 19 communicant members.

**Divine Mercy Lutheran Church, Weatherford/Hudson Oaks, Texas:** The Rev. Kyle Madson, having served as missionary and pastor to Divine Mercy, accepted a call to serve the Norseland and Norwegian Grove parish in rural Minnesota. The Rev. James Kassera accepted the call to Divine mercy and was installed on the August 27, 2017. As stated above, the congregation is in the process of purchasing land for a future building site. The congregation numbers 46 baptized and 31 communicants.

**Hope Lutheran Church, Cedar Park/Leander, Texas:** The Rev. Brad Kerkow and Rev. Dan Ruiz continue to serve Hope, located in the northwest part of the Austin, Texas metro area. The missionary team regular reviews the division of duties to improve the efficiency of the ministry. The congregation numbers 103 baptized and 48 communicant members. (See “Building Projects” 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 103 baptized and 69 communicant members.

**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 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. The congregation numbers 175 baptized and 131 communicant members.

**Grace Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Illinois:** The Rev. Dan McQuality serves this central Illinois congregation. The BHO is providing a limited subsidy to Grace. This past year the congregation moved from the former supper club on the edge of town to a church building located in the center of Lincoln. The church building was purchased and financed with the help of generous members. The congregation numbers 39 baptized and 19 communicant members.



## SALARY SCALE FOR 2019

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 \$2700 deductible level. The board approves an annual contribution of \$2700 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.

2019 Salary Schedule				
<i>Years of Service</i>	<i>Home Mission Salary</i>	<i>Increment Increase</i>	<i>*5%</i>	<i>*10%</i>
0	33,976	250	35,675	37,374
1	34,226		35,937	37,649
2	34,476		36,200	37,924
3	34,726		36,462	38,199
4	34,976		36,725	38,474
5	35,226		36,987	38,749
6	35,551	325	37,329	39,106
7	35,876		37,670	39,464
8	36,201		38,011	39,821
9	36,526		38,352	40,179
10	36,851		38,694	40,536
11	37,251	400	39,114	40,976
12	37,651		39,534	41,416
13	38,051		39,954	41,856
14	38,451		40,374	42,296
15	38,851		40,794	42,736
16	39,326		41,292	43,259

17	39,801	475	41,791	43,781
18	40,276		42,290	44,304
19	40,751		42,789	44,826
20	41,226		43,287	45,349
21	41,776	550	43,865	45,954
22	42,326		44,442	46,559
23	42,876		45,020	47,164
24	43,426		45,597	47,769
25	43,976		46,175	48,374
26	44,601	625	46,831	49,061
27	45,226		47,487	49,749
28	45,851		48,144	50,436
29	46,476		48,800	51,124
30	47,101		49,456	51,811
31-W	47,101		49,456	51,811

## OPERATING BUDGET – 2018

*Please refer to the audited financial report submitted by the synod treasurer for actual home outreach expenditures for 2016.*

ANTICIPATED INCOME \$ 452,523

### SUBSIDY — HOME MISSIONS

Divine Mercy, Weatherford/Hudson Oaks	\$ 78,000
Hope, Cedar Park	270,000
Hope, Farmington	139,000
Redeeming Grace, Rogers	24,000

### SUBSIDY — CONGREGATIONS RECEIVING SUPPORT

Grace, Lincoln	\$ 10,000
Christ the King, Bell Gardens	88,000

### BOARD/EMC EXPENSES

EMC	80,750
Board meeting travel expense	10,000
<u>Other travel and expenses</u>	<u>43,780</u>
Total Expected Expenditures 2018	743,530
Budget Shortage	291,007

## THANK YOU

We thank God that He has caused 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 2017, the synod budgeted \$200,106 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: \$143,583), 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. Tim Hartwig, chairman*

## HOME OUTREACH—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

### ***Resolution 1: Faithful Service***

WHEREAS, Dr. Michael Smith faithfully served on the Board for Home Missions and the Board for Home Outreach, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we give thanks for Dr. Smith's years of service to the Board for Home Missions and the Board for Home Outreach and pray for God's blessings as he continues to prepare students for the ministry.

### ***Resolution 2: Evangelism—Mission Counselor***

WHEREAS, All ELS congregations are encouraged to consider themselves mission congregations, and,

WHEREAS, The Evangelism—Mission Counselor has made known the evangelism resources located on the synod website which are available to all ELS congregations, and,

WHEREAS, The Evangelism Mission Counselor is available to visit congregations for outreach assistance and to equip members to evangelize within their vocation, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That all congregations in the synod be encouraged to review this list of resources and to utilize them in their congregations to reach out with the gospel in their communities, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage congregations to request a visit from the Evangelism—Missions Counselor.

### ***Resolution 3: Work of the Board***

WHEREAS, The Board for Home Outreach presented their six year plan and reported on the home mission work that is currently taking place, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the board for their work to promote gospel outreach through the Evangelism—Missions Counselor and home mission congregations.

### ***Resolution 4: 2019 Benefits and Salary Scale***

WHEREAS, The Board for Home Outreach had proposed the 2019 benefits and salary scale for home missionaries, and,

WHEREAS, The WELS VEBa health insurance deductible was increased to \$2700 after the printing of the report, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the deductible for health insurance in the salary scale be changed from \$2600 to \$2700 in the schedule of benefits for home missionaries, and,

- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Health Savings Account annual contribution amount in the salary scale be changed from \$2600 to \$2700 in the schedule of benefits for home missionaries, and,
- C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod approve this emended salary scale for home missionaries for the 2019 fiscal year.

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR WORLD OUTREACH**

*Hark! The voice of Jesus crying, “Who will go and work today? Fields are ripe and harvests waiting . . .”* We might wonder where there are ripe fields. We look around and see hostility toward Christians, a world that has abandoned any idea of truth, congregations decreasing in membership, young people with little interest in the triune God revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Perhaps the disciples of Jesus were seeing the same thing in their day when Jesus saw the people “like sheep without a shepherd” and surprised the disciples by saying, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.”

Despite what we see with our eyes and experience in our culture, there are still fields that are ripe and harvests of souls waiting for us. The Board for World Outreach (BWO) is that arm of our Evangelical Lutheran Synod that oversees, assists and supports the world outreach efforts of our synod. We hold to God’s promises and carry out the work he has given us, for it is a great privilege to share the Gospel “to the ends of the earth.”

The BWO supports and assists with gospel outreach in seven different fields in three parts of the world: South America, Asia and Europe. As these fields grow, we rejoice to see them embrace biblical Lutheran theology and to share their faith in situations that are often difficult, and perhaps even dangerous. We pray that God continues to bless these fields as we, and they, continue to make known the name of Jesus throughout the world.

### **BOARD ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL**

The BWO consists of nine members, each member serving on one of three committees. The South America committee is responsible for ELS-supported work in Peru and Chile. The members of this board are Pastor Matthew Behmer, Pastor Timothy Bartels, and Mr. Rodney Rivera. The Asia committee is responsible for ELS-supported work in India and Korea. The members of this board are Pastor Bradley Kerkow, Pastor Steven Sparley, and Mr. Daniel Browning (who also serves as chairman of the BWO). The Europe committee is responsible for ELS-supported work in Czech Republic, Latvia and Ukraine. The members of this committee are Pastor John Petersen, Pastor Timothy Buelow and Mr. Thomas Conzelman. The Rev. Thomas Heyn serves as BWO administrator. Mrs. Denise Luehmann is the financial assistant to the board.

The BWO meets in plenary session in Mankato several times a year. The board and/or committees also meet via internet multiple times per year as needed. This year the board began a goal-setting and long-range planning process to review our work and to plan for the future.

### **COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDRAISING**

To promote our synod’s world outreach efforts, two publications are prepared and sent out. *Mission News / Helping Hands* focuses on mission work in South America (Peru and Chile) and Asia (India and South Korea). *Thoughts of Faith* newsletter covers work being done in Europe (Czech Republic, Latvia and the *Gift of Life* program in Ukraine.) We encourage the pastors of our synod to ensure these newsletters are distributed in their congregations and we thank you for your help in promoting our world outreach work.

The BWO communication committee plans the subjects to be covered by the newsletters as well as articles for the *Lutheran Sentinel*. We continue to look for more ways to inform ELS members of the work being done in the various foreign fields.

*Cross-stitch* is a network of various ELS women's organizations. Regional rallies are held, usually in the fall, where the women of our congregations meet for worship, fellowship and presentations to learn what their support is helping to accomplish in world missions. This year, *Cross-stitch* aims to become more actively organized to better carry out its purposes. It has been especially helpful in supporting programs that care for orphans as well as programs that support education for young women, where, in some countries, their education is often neglected.

More information on these and other programs can be found at [tof.org](http://tof.org) (Thoughts of Faith) and [elsworldoutreach.org](http://elsworldoutreach.org). You can also find updates at [facebook.com/ELSWorldOutreach](https://facebook.com/ELSWorldOutreach).

## THANK YOU

During the past year many donors have supported our ELS world outreach efforts. Individuals, congregations and foundations have provided much needed support. We thank all donors for their generous gifts to assist in reaching out to our world with the precious Word of God.

May God continue to grant his blessings on our efforts to share the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world so that many may be blessed and share in the salvation won by Jesus.

*The Rev. Thomas A. Heyn*  
*Board for World Outreach Administrator*

## SOUTH AMERICA COMMITTEE

### *Peru*

The year 2018 marks fifty years of sharing the gospel in Peru. Humble beginnings in 1968 have spread to established churches in Lima, outlying coastal areas, the Andes Mountains, and the Amazon Jungle. In recent years, the responsibility for this ministry has transitioned from North American missionaries to Peruvian pastors.

Last summer, after many years of faithful service, Missionary David Haeuser retired. The South America Committee expresses its sincere gratitude to David and Ruth for their service to our synod's mission program.

With no further ELS missionary presence in the field, much of the work in 2017 focused on a transition to a more self-governing Peruvian church. Peruvians continue to lead the national church, teach at their seminary, administer their schools, serve as pastors at their congregations, and explore new mission opportunities. Properties owned by the ELS mission corporation are being transferred to the national church. The national church will manage all aspects of work in Peru, with support and guidance from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. In addition to annual field visits, the South America Committee (SAC) of the BWO conducts regular video conferences with the board of the national church.

In Lima, there are several congregations, the seminary, and two Christian day schools. The seminary also serves as the headquarters for the national church. Currently, there are three vicars under the supervision of the seminary. Because there are no new students enrolled at the seminary, the national church is encouraging pastors to identify and recruit qualified prospective students. In the meantime, the seminary professors are teaching at extension campuses in Chimbote and Tarapoto. They are also providing continuing education to pastors in Lima and developing topical bible studies for congregational use throughout their synod.

Seminary professors are Pastors Segundo Gutierrez, Jaime Cortez, and Guillermo Carrera. Pastor Jaime Cortez will be with us during our convention.

The Christian day schools are Martín Lutero in Reynoso and Jesús Redentor in Año Nuevo. Pastor Jaime Cortez serves as the administrator for both schools. Pastor Giovanni Rivas serves as the principal of Año Nuevo. One encouraging aspect of the work in Peru is the exploratory mission work being conducted by Pastor Rivas in Año Nuevo. He is holding worship services with school families on Saturdays. These services consistently average approximately twenty individuals.

In the Amazon jungle, the work is headquartered in Tarapoto where an active congregation is served by Pastor Ronal Rivas. Tarapoto is also home to the Amazon Bible Institute. Six times a year approximately twelve jungle evangelists from the Shawi tribe travel from their respective communities in the jungle to the institute for seminary level classes. Pastor Rivas and Pastor Cortez serve as professors. In between these sessions, Pastor Rivas and Pastor Cortez make routine visits to the jungle communities. The jungle evangelists are regularly being invited to new communities to share the gospel. Funding has been allocated to allow for the evangelists to make more trips.

Among the coastal regions, work is especially thriving in Chimbote. The congregation in Chimbote, served by Pastor Segundo Gutierrez, regularly gathers forty people for worship. The congregation has undergone extensive remodeling without external financial support. They recently began live streaming their worship services. These services are streamed to the national church's Facebook page and website. They also will be streamed to Iglesia Luterana Cristo ([iglesialuteranacristo.com](http://iglesialuteranacristo.com)), a collaborative effort between Spanish speaking pastors and missionaries throughout Latin America. Funding for this live streaming equipment was provided by Cross-stitch and the BWO. This congregation also serves as an extension site for the seminary with several second career students taking classes.

The national church is thinking about the next steps and future opportunities for outreach. Areas where work is already being done will serve as launch points for new outreach. The congregation in Chimbote plans to welcome a vicar so their pastor can pursue outreach opportunities in Trujillo and Cajamarca. The national church is also investigating ways to utilize technology to connect seminary education between Lima, Tarapoto, and Chimbote.

A highlight from the past year was a three-day festival, held at the seminary building in Lima, commemorating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation sponsored by the national church. This festival included a pastor's conference, sporting competitions between the schools in Año Nuevo and Reynoso, chorale performances from various congregations, a festival worship service, and more. Members from congregations throughout the country and several jungle evangelists attended this festival.

The mission in Peru is not exempt from challenges. Several pastors have reached retirement age and the national church is struggling to find replacement pastors. Work in some areas has declined due to a lack of full-time pastors. Please pray that the Lord would continue to provide the seminary with students and congregations with pastors. Please also pray that the Lord would guide the national church so that his will may be done and his kingdom come in Peru.

## ***Chile***

The year 2017 marked twenty-five years of sharing the gospel in Chile. A special celebration was held in Linares to celebrate this milestone in conjunction with the ordination of Mario Galvez, the first ordained national pastor in Chile. Three Peruvian pastors attended this event and participated in the ordination.

The work in Chile is centered at three congregations in Santiago and one congregation in Linares. In addition to Pastor Galvez, there are two vicars and one seminary student. The mission has been served by Missionary Timothy Erickson. Missionary Erickson has provided

administrative leadership, served as the seminary professor, assisted with preaching, and performed other pastoral duties. Missionary Erickson and his wife Ellen concluded their service in March of 2018. The South America Committee is very grateful for their many years of service in Chile and Peru.

Much of the work during 2017 focused on the Chilean national church preparing for Missionary Erickson's departure from the field. The national church will manage all aspects of work in Chile with support and guidance from the ELS. In addition to annual field visits, the South America Committee of the BWO conducts regular video conferences with the board of the national church.

There are three congregations in Santiago. La Cisterna is served by Pastor Mario Galvez. San Bernardo is served by Vicar Victor Hernandez. Puente Alto is served by Vicar Guillermo Ruz. After the sale of the property in La Cisterna, the congregation has been worshiping in the house and Karate gym of Pastor Galvez. At the time of writing this report, the congregation is working on purchasing a new property, close to the main roads and public transportation. Chelsea Deitsche has relocated to Santiago with tentative plans to begin an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) program in La Cisterna as an outreach initiative. Two new Kingdom Workers arrived in Santiago in 2018, with the goal of conducting outreach and evangelism.

The congregation in Linares is active and blessed with many outreach opportunities. Pastor Galvez, Vicars Hernandez and Ruz, and Missionary Timothy Erickson (while still serving) take turns traveling to Linares to preach and serve the congregation. Three Kingdom Workers serve as teachers in the community. These North Americans regularly invite their friends and acquaintances to worship services. They also sponsor activities and do other things to promote the church and share the good news. The congregation continues to work on their new building. The sanctuary is complete. They are still working on bathrooms and making necessary renovations to their former building. After many years of having an EFL program on site, the congregation has decided to not replace Chelsea Deitsche and focus on other outreach initiatives.

While the work in Chile has been blessed, the mission and national church face many challenges. Pastor Galvez is dedicated to the ministry, but also is a business owner with demanding responsibilities. Vicars Hernandez and Ruz have completed all seminary coursework, but still need to be ordained. They also have demanding secular employment. The congregations in Santiago face low attendance. The congregation in Linares does not have a resident pastor. Please pray that the Lord would provide opportunities for the national church to overcome these challenges. Please also pray that the Lord would guide the national church so that his will may be done and his kingdom come in Chile.

*The Rev. Matthew Behmer  
South America Committee, chairman*

## **ASIA COMMITTEE**

### ***India***

The Lutheran Mission of Salvation-India (LMSI) is a mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and is primarily funded through the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation; along with growing support from many ELS donors, as well. We are thankful that the Women's Mission Societies of the ELS and Cross-stitch have also shown a special love for the work of LMSI, and have 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. Each Gospel Worker is supervised by an ordained pastor from the district clergy roster of LMSI.

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.

The BWO's primary focus for India is the training of national pastors and providing financial assistance for capital projects in each district which often far exceed their ability to undertake them themselves.

We are pleased to report that a new class of Gospel Workers have begun their five-year journey of one-week-a-month seminary level training leading to eventual ordination. A class of ten Gospel Workers from each of the two main districts (Rajahmundry and Hyderabad) meet in their respective cities each month. This past January, BWO Administrator Pastor Thomas Heyn was a guest lecturer for the seminary classes.

Monthly workshops still occur for the remaining Gospel Workers to teach them Luther's Catechism, liturgics, homiletics and other practical courses to make them effective and doctrinally sound in carrying out their duties in their respective village congregations.

Over 300 children (orphans, semi-orphans or children from poverty-stricken families) are cared for in nineteen orphanages operated by LMSI. With little or no social security or welfare programs in India, many widows in congregations also receive modest support, and sometimes housing through work in the orphanages.

Over 320 Indian children are hearing the word of God taught daily at three LMSI-operated grade schools.

Simeon Mamidi, the gifted son of President/Pastor Solomon Mamidi has completed his bachelor's degree through Asia Lutheran Seminary (WELS) in Hong Kong and Beijing. Chairman Browning and BWO Administrator Heyn were pleased and honored to participate in the ordination service for Pastor Simeon Samuel Mamidi while visiting the Hyderabad district this past January. Pastor Heyn delivered the ordination sermon at this large and festive service held for 200+ congregation members. Pastor Simeon Mamidi is already effectively serving a congregation in the metro area of Hyderabad. He will continue his studies at Asia Lutheran Seminary to receive his Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree in approximately two years.

Grace and Truth Lutheran School with some 160 students operates on the second floor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Rajahmundry. It is another major accomplishment made possible by the generosity of ELS donors and the Schwan 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 seminary students and 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 Rev. Thomas Heyn 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.

LMSI has adjusted well to major funding declines of the past recent years, and, by ingenuity and frugal decision-making, are managing to carry on the important work of LMSI. Donations from ELS individuals and congregations are ever-the-more important considering these reductions in overall funding. The generosity of individual and congregational donors 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, such as devastating floods and cyclones in some areas of southern India within the Rajahmundry district.

### ***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 China. 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 China and elsewhere in the greater Pacific-Oceania-Asia region 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. Recently, BWO has been invited to more closely examine potential missionary efforts in the Philippines. That examination is in its very early stages.

The ministry teaching goals of Seoul Lutheran Theological Institute (SLTI) began to take shape and bear initial fruits in 2017. 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.

In 2017, a change was made in the pastoral staff at Seoul Lutheran Church (SLC). After many years of faithful service to SLC as senior pastor, Pastor Young Ha Kim has taken a semi-retirement position at SLC. The senior pastor position at SLC is now held by the Rev. Sam Choi.

Seoul Lutheran Church continues to be the thriving anchor of our South Korea outreach efforts. Under the fifteen years of highly capable and enthusiastic leadership of Pastor Young Ha Kim, and now with Pastor 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 265 baptized members.

In 2017 we saw the first God-pleasing fruits of our collaborative work with SLC coming from the operation of the SLTI. A graduate of that program of modified seminary-level instruction, Pastor Jae Woong Kim, was ordained in May 2017. Again, by the efforts of SLC and BWO benefactors, a sister congregation of SLC was initiated in western metro Seoul and Pastor J.W. Kim began his work to grow the congregation named, Anyang Hee Mang (Hope) Lutheran Church. We praise and thank God for allowing this expansion of his Kingdom in South Korea.

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 U.S., is in transition as Mrs. Margaret Kim takes leave of her administrator duties, and while new students and a Director are being recruited. Canaan Lutheran Academy is built on the premise that the parents of these students may be drawn into a deeper relationship and membership with SLC (and now Anyang Hee Mang) in the process of preparing for their children to study in the USA.

In 2017, the BWO was led to cease the budgeted financial support of Pastor Kyun (Ken) Chung by BWO funding. Various fellowship and managerial/relationship issues called for the ending of financial support for the fledgling work of Pastor Chung in areas of Seoul.

*Mr. Dan Browning  
Asia Committee, chairman*

## **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***

Pastors Petr Krákora and Martin Vršecký serve St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Plzen, St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Tlučná and Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Horní Bržá. 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 (MLS) in Plzen continues to grow, serving over 300 children from pre-school through 8th grade. During this past year, Miloš Vršecký who served for many years as the school's director, was called home to his Lord. With the approval of the BWO, Rev. Martin Vršecký has stepped into this role after Milos trained him during his final years on this earth. 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 outreach tool in the Czech Republic. The mission has been blessed over the years by the service of volunteers from the U.S. who have assisted in teaching English as a Second Language for both the MLS students and others in the community. We note with sadness the recent passing of one of those volunteers, Jeanne Schewe, who served us on multiple three-month stints with her husband, the Rev. Harold Schewe. The BWO encourages any who might be interested in serving in this capacity to contact the BWO Administrator for more information.

During the 2017–18 school year, the board worked with MLS to employ a Lutheran elementary school teacher from the United States, Jeanine Heller. We are thankful she was able to assist not only in English language instruction, but also in the music program of St. Paul church. We continue to explore long-term solutions for providing teachers of our fellowship who are willing to serve as MLS-employed teachers in Plzen.

## ***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 Ozolniecki (Pastor Uldis Fandejevs). Both places are blessed with larger congregations worshiping in newer and fully-functioning church buildings made possible in past decades largely by American donors. Both congregations engage in programs to reach out to their un-churched neighbors. Both congregations have members who need to work elsewhere in Europe due to job scarcity in Latvia. Meanwhile, outreach work is showing fruits in the capital, Riga's downtown area, where Pres. Rev. Bakulis and Rev. Ugis Sildegis serve as unsubsidized co-pastors. This is thanks partly to members of the CLCL attending college in Riga and inviting their fellow students to service.

Our Latvian brothers are currently pursuing the publication of a new hymnal making use of updated translations and popular Latvian folk melodies. The BWO is using designated gifts to subsidize Pastor Ugis Sildegis, who recently received his doctorate in theology, as he uses his considerable gifts to finish this project. Meanwhile Pastor Ilars Plume is working with the chairman of his congregation, a man whose plywood factory helped built the church in Ozolniecki, to consider a new site, between Ozolniecki and Riga, for further mission outreach.

Furthermore, our Latvian brothers continue to identify and encourage gifted young men to consider further studies toward the Holy Ministry while producing and publishing theological books. 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/>.

*Rev. Timothy H. Buelow  
Europe Committee, Secretary*

## ***Ukraine—The International Charitable Fund “Gift of Life”***

Gift of Life (GoL) had another productive year in 2017. Client numbers were good at clinics and life centers. The material aid program continues to garner participants stateside and is greatly appreciated by the Ukrainians who benefit from it. Donations to GoL were again, generous and allowed for needed capital improvements. The Lutheran faith is promoted as the gospel message is proclaimed. The mobile clinics were requested and hosted in all four corners of Ukraine, the furthest being Kharkiv in the east.

Medical Clinic on Wheels (MCOW): MCOW traveled to and located in sixteen different destinations in 2017. The medical bus (staff of three) had 5,044 visits. The dental bus (staffed by four dentists) had 5,116 visits. More than 80% of the visits served needy children. GoL skilled drivers/mechanics upgrade and repair the buses keeping them in good condition although replacement parts are becoming more difficult to procure. Two new tires and upgraded dental chair were installed. More tires have been ordered for 2018 as six tires in use are twenty six years old.

Head Physician, Dr. Laryssa Cnorna suffered a stroke as a result of a glioblastoma requiring brain surgery, radiation and chemotherapy. She continues courses of chemotherapy and rehabilitation. She has not regained use of her left arm or hand; her left leg, however, has strengthened allowing her mobility. Generous donors from the USA provided needed funds.

The administration and staff of GoL visit often. Please continue to keep her and her family in your prayers.

Lutheran Pro-Life Centers (LPLC): 14,972 people attended pro-life presentations by GoL counselors at various institutions throughout Ukraine. GoL is blessed to have the opportunity to provide presentations in government and private facilities. 3,730 attended programs conducted in the life centers. 1,106 individual counseling sessions were given. In addition, 1,841 attended group counseling sessions. Not all women in crisis pregnancies saved their babies but GoL does know of at least 100 who did. 97 babies were counted as baptized, some in the Lutheran faith. Bible studies were provided at the life centers by three Ukrainian Lutheran Church pastors.

Material Aid: The aid is dispersed at MCOW visits and LPLCs—mostly at the centers. The largest donors in 2017 were Abiding Shepherd Lutheran Church, Cottage Grove, Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Saline, Michigan and Trinity Lutheran Church, Thornton, Iowa. The Hustisford Quilting Guild is preparing a spring 2018 shipment. Awareness of the GoL material aid program stateside continues to increase.

Capital donations provided for needed improvements: VW Caddy a town car, numerous improvements to life centers, new dental chair desk and table, new wallpaper for both buses. Capital donations are a real help for GoL as it moves forward unencumbered by pressure.

Receptionist and Traveling Evangelist: Ludmyla Voichunas (Deaconess) oversees the MCOW/evangelism Greeting Program scheduling Lutheran Church members to be a welcome person for clients.

The economy of Ukraine remains depressed. More and more young adults are leaving to work abroad. Cost of utilities consumes most of a pensioner's income. Food prices continue to soar as wages lag behind.

Gift of Life saved its usual hundreds of children from abortion and improved the lives of thousands of others through the dental and medical services—all the while proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. We thank the many who contribute financially and those who 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 (BWO) for your leadership and support.

*Nick and Kerry Laper  
Gift of Life Administration*

## **WORLD OUTREACH—ACTION OF THE SYNOD**

### ***Resolution 1: Communication and Fundraising***

WHEREAS, *Mission News/Helping Hands* and *Thoughts of Faith* are publications promoting synodical mission efforts, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the pastors of our synod be encouraged to continue faithfully distributing these informative publications to the members of our congregations.

### ***Resolution 2: Peru***

WHEREAS, “With no further ELS missionary presence in the field, much of the work in 2017 focused on a transition to a more self-governing Peruvian church,” and,

WHEREAS, Missionary David Haeuser and his wife Ruth retired last summer after many years of faithful service, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That God be thanked for the fifty years of ministry in Peru and the transition to a self-governing church body, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That David and Ruth Haeuser be thanked for their nineteen years of service in Peru.

***Resolution 3: Chile***

WHEREAS, The Lord has blessed the ELS with twenty-five years of sharing the gospel in Chile, and,

WHEREAS, Missionary Timothy Erickson and his wife Ellen concluded their many years of faithful service in March of 2018, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That God be thanked for the twenty-five years of ministry in Chile, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That Timothy and Ellen Erickson be thanked for their twenty-two years of service in Chile.

***Resolution 4: South Korea***

WHEREAS, Pastor Young Ha Kim and his wife Margaret are transitioning to semi-retirement positions, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That Young Ha Kim and his wife Margaret be thanked for their thirteen years of faithful service.

***Resolution 5: Future World Outreach***

WHEREAS, The ELS no longer has missionaries serving in a world mission field because of recent retirements, and,

WHEREAS, Various contacts throughout the world have presented new opportunities and opened doors to world outreach, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board for World Outreach pursue these opportunities as they are able, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod be encouraged to support the Board for World Outreach in their efforts.

**REPORT OF THE  
BOARD FOR EDUCATION  
FOR THE SCHOOLS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**

**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: Mr. Steven Beilke, the Rev. Chris Dale (chair), the Rev. Michael Dale (secretary), Mr. Todd Knutson, the Rev. Paul Lange, Mr. Ken Meyer (Treasurer), Mr. Nathan Rovey, the Rev. Trent Saari and Mr. ShuTing Lai. In addition, the Rev. Alexander Ring (ELS Secretary of School), serves the board as an advisory member.

**MEETINGS**

The board met October 2–3, 2017 in Mankato, Minnesota and on April 16–17, 2018 at Christ Lutheran Church and School, Port St. Lucie, Florida.

## WORK OF THE BOARD IN THE PAST YEAR

### *Grant Disbursement*

Lutheran School Subsidy Grants were distributed as follows:

Holy Cross Lutheran School, Madison, WI	\$15,000
Peace Lutheran Church (preschool), North Mankato, MN	\$15,000

### *School Marketing Grants Follow-up and Review*

In 2016, the board received program funding of \$13,100 from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation. These funds were distributed to six ELS schools for use in special school marketing projects. During 2017, the board reviewed these projects and resolved to continue with efforts to find further grant dollars for ELS school marketing projects.

### **ELS 2018 TEACHER CONFERENCE 2018**

The ELS Teacher Conference will take place on July 19–22, in Boston, Massachusetts. Thanks to a generous grant from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation in the amount of \$32,000, the cost per teacher will be limited to \$300.00. In addition to professional learning opportunities the conference will include guided walking tours of the Freedom Trail and Lexington and Concord, a teacher workshop at the USS Constitution Museum, a Boston Duck Harbor Ride and a tour of Harvard University.

ELS schools are encouraged to make every effort to have their teachers and administrators attend this important conference. 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 18, during synod convention lunch recess.

### **INCREASED CONTINUING EDUCATION GRANTS FOR TEACHERS**

The ELS Board for Lutheran Education is pleased to offer grants in the amount of \$600/year (a \$300/year increase) 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](mailto:chrisdale@christportstlucie.org).

### **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

The schools of the ELS aspire to assist families in bringing up their children “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 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.

## **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.

## **SECRETARY OF SCHOOLS REPORT**

The following report is submitted by the Rev. Alexander Ring:

The role of the Secretary of Schools is to “assist congregations in the promotion and advancement of Christian elementary and secondary education.” He doesn’t oversee schools like a “super-principal” but works to give assistance to them as they carry out their mission. As the synod supports the schools in the synod, it supports her congregations and is engaging in mission outreach.

The position of Secretary of Schools has been somewhat dormant the past number of years. This is because of the excellent work of Prof. Silas Born as the Director of Christian Education at Bethany Lutheran College. As part of his role there, he took on many of the responsibilities of the Secretary of Schools, and for that the Board for Education is very grateful.

Now that Prof. Born has retired I have been filling the role of Secretary of Schools, and trying to be active in the roll, assisting “congregations in the promotion and advancement of Christian elementary and secondary education.” To this end I’ve been trying to visit at least two of our schools every year. This past year I had the opportunity to visit Concordia Lutheran Preschool in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and also Scarville Lutheran School in Scarville, Iowa. At Scarville I also had the opportunity to talk about expanding their program to include high school.

I am also the one who generates call lists for teachers in the ELS. For the most part this is done in cooperation with WELS, so I work with Jim Rademann, the Director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools.

As part of my duties I also attend the ELS Board for Schools meetings, this past year held on October 2–3, 2017 in Mankato, Minnesota; and on April 16–17 at Christ Lutheran School, Port St Lucie, Florida.

The number of homeschoolers in the ELS has also been increasing, and they have been making efforts to share and coordinate with each other. As part of this growth, they had an evening conference last year on April 19 where I presented on classical education and integrating that with a Lutheran ethic and perspective on education. This was an exciting opportunity, since it allowed our board for schools explore ways we can be of help to families in our synod who have chosen the homeschooling option.

## **APPRECIATION**

The board would like to acknowledge the dedicated services of Larry Rude, long-time educator (1971–2018) and former Board for Education and Youth member (1976–97). We thank God for his work in promoting Lutheran schools in our synod and wish him the Lord’s blessings in his retirement.

## **SUGGESTED ELS TEACHER SALARY SCALE**

The board offers the following compensation package guidelines for consideration by ELS churches and schools.

Years of Service	ELS Bachelor of Science Salary 2017/18	Increment Increase	ELS Bachelor of Science Salary proposal 2018/19	ELS Bachelor of Science Salary proposal 2019/20
			1%	1%
0	\$30,463		\$30,768	\$31,075
1	\$30,713	\$250	\$31,018	\$31,325
2	\$30,963		\$31,268	\$31,575
3	\$31,213		\$31,518	\$31,825
4	\$31,463		\$31,768	\$32,075
5	\$31,713		\$32,018	\$32,325
6	\$32,038	\$325	\$32,343	\$32,650
7	\$32,363		\$32,668	\$32,975
8	\$32,688		\$32,993	\$33,300
9	\$33,013		\$33,318	\$33,625
10	\$33,338		\$33,643	\$33,950
11	\$33,738	\$400	\$34,043	\$34,350
12	\$34,138		\$34,443	\$34,750
13	\$34,538		\$34,843	\$35,150
14	\$34,938		\$35,243	\$35,550
15	\$35,338		\$35,643	\$35,950
16	\$35,813	\$475	\$36,118	\$36,425
17	\$36,288		\$36,593	\$36,900
18	\$36,763		\$37,068	\$37,375
19	\$37,238		\$37,543	\$37,850
20	\$37,713		\$38,018	\$38,325
21	\$38,263	\$550	\$38,568	\$38,875
22	\$38,813		\$39,118	\$39,425
23	\$39,363		\$39,668	\$39,975
24	\$39,913		\$40,218	\$40,525
25	\$40,463		\$40,768	\$41,075
26	\$41,088	\$625	\$41,393	\$41,700
27	\$41,713		\$42,018	\$42,325
28	\$42,338		\$42,643	\$42,950
29	\$42,963		\$43,268	\$43,575
30	\$43,588		\$43,893	\$44,200



Years of Service	ELS Masters Degree Salaries for 2017/18	Increment Increase	ELS Masters Degree Proposed Salaries for 2018/19	ELS Masters Degree Proposed Salaries for 2019/20
			1%	1%
0	\$32,537		\$32,862	\$33,191
1	\$32,787	\$250	\$33,112	\$33,441
2	\$33,037		\$33,362	\$33,691
3	\$33,287		\$33,612	\$33,941
4	\$33,537		\$33,862	\$34,191
5	\$33,787		\$34,112	\$34,441
6	\$34,112	\$325	\$34,437	\$34,766
7	\$34,437		\$34,762	\$35,091
8	\$34,762		\$35,087	\$35,416
9	\$35,087		\$35,412	\$35,741
10	\$35,412		\$35,737	\$36,066
11	\$35,812	\$400	\$36,137	\$36,466
12	\$36,212		\$36,537	\$36,866
13	\$36,612		\$36,937	\$37,266
14	\$37,012		\$37,337	\$37,666
15	\$37,412		\$37,737	\$38,066
16	\$37,887	\$475	\$38,212	\$38,541
17	\$38,362		\$38,687	\$39,016
18	\$38,837		\$39,162	\$39,491
19	\$39,312		\$39,637	\$39,966
20	\$39,787		\$40,112	\$40,441
21	\$40,337	\$550	\$40,662	\$40,991
22	\$40,887		\$41,212	\$41,541
23	\$41,437		\$41,762	\$42,091
24	\$41,987		\$42,312	\$42,641
25	\$42,537		\$42,862	\$43,191
26	\$43,162	\$625	\$43,487	\$43,816
27	\$43,787		\$44,112	\$44,441
28	\$44,412		\$44,737	\$45,066
29	\$45,037		\$45,362	\$45,691
30	\$45,662		\$45,987	\$46,316

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 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: Secretary of Schools Report***

WHEREAS, Pastor Ring serves as Secretary of Schools, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank Pastor Ring, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That he continue to communicate with the Education Department of Bethany Lutheran College with regard to the needs of the schools of the ELS.

### ***Resolution 2: Promotion of Classical Education***

WHEREAS, The Board of Education encourages the classical education method, and,

WHEREAS, Bethany Lutheran College has the classical education method embedded in its curriculum, and,

WHEREAS, This classical education curriculum needs support with classical education practicum, and,

WHEREAS, The classical education practicum is unavailable locally, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education communicate with Bethany Lutheran College to investigate ways to add such a practicum, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education encourage workshops or other methods for providing continuing education in the classical education method, and,

C. BE IT RESOLVED, That schools of the ELS be urged to make use of such workshops or other methods.

***Resolution 3: Suggested ELS Teacher Salary Scale***

WHEREAS, There are differences in the cost of living in various regions of the country, and, WHEREAS, This may not be addressed by the current salary scale, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the salary scale be adopted, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board for Education explore the benefits of a regional salary scale.

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR YOUTH OUTREACH**

The Board for Youth Outreach has met twice since the ELS Convention in June 2017. 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 thank-offering, His Truth for Our Youth, gathered at the time of the synod's seventy-fifth anniversary. 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 Prof. Ben Faugstad, Prof. Pete Bloedel, Mr. Chris Hoffman, the Rev. Kyle Madson, and the Rev. Tony Pittenger. The recording secretary announced to the BYO at its February meeting that he does not plan to seek re-election to the BYO in 2018, having served on the board since the 2008 synod convention.

In 2014 the board was asked to begin maintaining a record of youth summer camps held for the youth of the synod. The BYO has responded positively to requests for greater summer youth camp assistance. The BYO will now grant up to \$250 per camp to be used as stipends for counselors (up to \$25 per counselor). Requests must be in by June 1 each year. Camp leaders should make requests to Chairman Bernt Tweit with the secretary copied. What follows are the planned summer camps for 2018:

### **2018 CAMPS AND INFORMATION**

- Camp Indianhead, Minnesota: July 8–13, “Walking Retro ... Since 1918” Lutheran Island Camp, Henning, Minnesota, \$285.
- Camp Indianhead, Wisconsin: July 8–13, “Shaped” Camp Luwisomo, Wild Rose, Wisconsin, \$325. [www.CampIndianheadWI.com](http://www.CampIndianheadWI.com)
- Camp Lor-Ray, Michigan: K–3rd grade: \$180, July 5–7, 4th–6th grade: \$280, July 8–13; 7th–9th grade: \$280, July 15–20 Twin Lake, MI [www.camplor-ray.org](http://www.camplor-ray.org)
- Camp Lutherhaven, Washington, July 14–19, Wildcat Lake, Bremerton, Washington \$125
- Camp 4 Star, Washington, July 8–14, Millersylvania State Park, Olympia, Washington \$215 [www.camp4star.com](http://www.camp4star.com)
- The City Camp, Orlando, Florida, July 31–Aug 3. \$75. [pastor@mypeacekids.org](mailto:pastor@mypeacekids.org)

The 2017 Lutheran Youth Association (LYA) Convention was held on the campus of Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, July 27–30, under the direction of the Rev. Matt Brooks. Dr. David Menton, a confessional Lutheran who is on staff at the Creation Museum was the keynote speaker. The youth had the privilege to go to the brand new exhibit, *The Ark Encounter*, which is a real-size replica of Noah's ark, as well as have some free time in downtown

Cincinnati on Saturday. 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 2018 will be held on the campus of the University of Puget Sound in Seattle, Washington, July 26–29. The theme will be *Even When Steeples Are Falling*, reminding attendees that God's Word is our sure foundation even at a time when many church bodies and colleges with a Christian background are departing from the truth of God's Word. During the convention attendees will have an opportunity to review the birth of our church body one hundred years ago. Special thanks to the Rev. Paul Fries and the Rev. Jeff Hendrix for their assistance to the BYO in developing promotional materials. Besides subsidizing the many costs of an LYA Convention, the board provides travel subsidy which is being increased this year from the normal \$10,000 to \$20,000, in an effort to get as many youth and chaperones to attend as possible.

The 2019 LYA Convention is due to be held on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College July 25–28, 2019, as our board feels it is very important to get the youth of our synod on its college campus at least once every four years.

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 February 2018 meeting the board voted to give \$3000, up from \$2000, for the 2018 Summer Music Camp, which is held each year during synod convention. This was formerly known as the ELS Youth Honor Choir Camp. For the first time, in 2018, the Camp will include band and strings as well as voices. Many thanks to Prof. Ben Faugstad, member of the BYO, for doing so much to add even more to this already successful music camp.

The BYO wishes to make the synod aware that bulletin inserts which are intended for children are available for download through the synod website. These *Color the Liturgy* and *Color the Catechism* inserts were produced by Rev. Sam Gullixson in memory of his and Anna's infant son. Please visit [els.org](http://els.org), and then go to "youth" under the "Our Work Together" tab to access the bulletin inserts.

The BYO also wishes to remind the members of the synod of the Hugh Brooks Youth Mission Fund. This fund has been set up to financially help ELS teens and college students participate in mission work within our fellowship. Please contact the BYO for more information and to request assistance.

Finally, plans are underway by the BYO to work with someone in media arts to produce apologetics videos geared towards reaching youth. One idea on the table is to create a six-part series. Members of the ELS may have noticed that *Young Branches* is now a two-page layout in each edition of the *Lutheran Sentinel*, the official bi-monthly publication of our synod. We also encourage the pastors of the synod to remember to give either edition of *Cling to the Cross* to their confirmands each year. Simply make your requests for these free teen devotionals to Paul Wold at the Bethany bookstore.

*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. Dennis Behr, ELS representative of the Lutheran Military Support Group; 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 Wosmek, secretary and Widows and Retired Workers Special Needs Coordinator. The board met three times in the past year, with regular meetings in June, October, and February.

### **TERM LIFE INSURANCE**

The synod carries a \$50,000 term life insurance policy on 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.

Another possible saving option is a Health Savings Account (HSA) which 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, out of West Bend, WI, 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 of Averill Anderson, LLC at (262) 338-8588.

### **WORLD NEEDS FUND**

The balance of the World Needs Fund as of December 31, 2017 is \$15,050.87. Through the Mother's Day offering and other donations, the fund receives gifts from individuals and congregations. The World Needs Fund received donations totaling \$11,741.13 for the year 2017.

In 2017, the synod sent \$13,000 in relief funds to these two World Needs projects: Hurricane Relief for Hurricane Harvey and Peru Flooding Relief.

In addition to providing relief to those suffering from those catastrophic natural disasters, the board has given additional special offerings of \$12,000 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: [www.els.org](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 & organizations
\$5,000 - \$10,000	World Relief

Please note that the Board for Christian Service can adjust these amounts as need and situations arise.

### **SPECIAL OFFERING FOR HURRICANE RELIEF**

In addition to the funds given to the Board for Christian Service via the World Needs Fund, this past year we received a special offering to help those victims of the Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. Congregation and individuals raised a total of \$32,609.00, all of which was sent to the WELS Christian Aid & Relief. The board thanks all the individuals and congregations who donate toward this specific relief for their generosity.

### **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 2017 the synod matched congregational funding of pastors' and teachers' pensions up to \$500 for all pastors and full time teachers and \$250 for part time teachers. Total support payments were \$59,370 for the year. For the 2018 year, the amount has yet to be determined due to changes in funding availability.

### **WIDOWS' SUBSIDIES**

In 2015, the board increased the amount of subsidy from \$310 per month to \$320 per month. Total support payments for 2017 were \$33,280 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 fifty-six cases were opened.

Our total expenditures since its inception total \$45,745.00, of which \$19,000.00 has been paid out in 2017.

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: [www.wlcfs.org](http://www.wlcfs.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 on active duty or deployed in service overseas and would like to receive devotions, sermons, etc. please send an email to the Rev. Erich Hoeft, at [pastorehoeft@gmail.com](mailto:pastorehoeft@gmail.com).

The board also has taken on the duty of providing support for veterans and their families. To that end, the board has added a page to the synod's website [els.org/resources/military](http://els.org/resources/military). Also, board member Dennis 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 for more information [lutheranmilitary.org](http://lutheranmilitary.org) or you can find them on Facebook.

### **MILITARY MONUMENT PROPOSAL**

The military monument plans are moving into a new stage. Our *ad hoc* committee, Prof. William Bukowski, Mr. Bruce Gratz, and Mr. Brad Wosmek, have completed their work researching and studying the feasibility of a military monument. A new committee has been formed to oversee the fundraising aspects as well as placement of the monument. Members of this committee include: Mr. Dennis Behr, ELS Vice President Rev. Glenn Obenberger, and Mr. Michael O'Neill.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT GROUP**

Board member, the Rev. James Kassera along with Rev. Chris Eisenbeis have approached the board to ask for help promoting a support group for families within our synod who have special need children. Currently, this project is in the planning phase.

## APPROVED EXPENDITURES FOR 2018 BUDGET

Widow support	\$34,560
Board Expenses	\$1,500
Wisconsin Family Services	\$5,000
Miscellaneous	\$300
Pastor Retirement support (Schwan Foundation grant)	<u>\$40,000</u>
Total	\$81,360

*The Rev. Erich Hoeft, chairman*

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP

Members of the committee during the past year were the Rev. James Braun (secretary), Mr. Daniel Burleson, the Rev. Peter Faugstad (chair), the Rev. Dennis Marzolf, and Mr. James Olson.

### ANNIVERSARY RESOURCES

The Committee on Worship has been glad to supply worship resources in the past year for the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation and the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. A Reformation hymn festival booklet, “Walking the Old Paths,” was completed last summer by request of the ELS Centennial Committee. 4,750 copies were distributed among the circuits of the ELS, and at least fifteen hymn festivals were held throughout the synod.

For 2018, a schedule of “ELS Heritage Hymns” with short descriptions of each hymn was prepared for every month of the year (special thanks to Pastor Jerry Gernander for this resource). These can be accessed on the synod website at [els.org/els-100](http://els.org/els-100). The committee has also prepared a synod-wide anniversary service to be used on October 14 of this year (Norwegian Synod Founders’ Day). Congregations are invited to download and print as many copies of the service as needed from the same webpage listed above.

### WORSHIP ACCOMPANIMENT

The committee was contacted by several individuals during the year looking for help with worship accompaniment. We recommend that congregations consider utilizing the “Substitute Organist Service” from Church Music Solutions. With this program, any member of the church can play the liturgy and hymns for a service from an iPad. The music is recorded by professional organists. There is a fee for each use of the program, but the cost is negotiable for smaller congregations. For more information, visit [churchmusicsolutions.com](http://churchmusicsolutions.com).

There are also free online hymn resources, but these do not include hymns under copyright. For a list of some of these sites, go to [els.org/resources/worship/music-for-liturgy-and-hymns](http://els.org/resources/worship/music-for-liturgy-and-hymns).

### ONLINE RESOURCES

More worship resources are available on the synod website, including a Church Year calendar, a companion handbook for the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (ELH), and links to other useful worship materials. Graphics for each part of the liturgy are also available for those who print out the service each week. Go to [els.org/resources/worship](http://els.org/resources/worship).

### EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN HYMNARY

The *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (ELH) was reprinted last year using higher quality paper and binding material than in some previous editions. Cost for the book is lower than any



other Lutheran hymnbook on the market. Individual copies can be obtained from the Bethany Bookstore for \$15. If multiple copies are ordered, the cost per book is \$12.

Due to copyright restrictions, the entire content of the ELH cannot be made available online. However, we can provide electronic files of the hymns to any congregation with ELH in the pews. This could be useful for congregations which make a large print version of the service available on a weekly basis. Please email [pastorfaugstad@gmail.com](mailto:pastorfaugstad@gmail.com) for these files.

## **FUTURE PROJECTS**

Within the next year, the committee hopes to make an ELH altar book available for download on the synod website. Progress is also being made on an ELH e-book that will be available for purchase when complete. The committee members are in regular communication about other projects that will be made available when ready.

*The Rev. Peter Faugstad, chairman*

## **PARISH SERVICES—ACTION OF THE SYNOD**

### ***Resolution 1: Increased funding***

WHEREAS, The Board for Youth Outreach has increased the funding for the camps, youth convention, and summer music camp, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the board for the increased funding.

### ***Resolution 2: Resources for the youth***

WHEREAS, The Board for Youth Outreach has made available bulletin inserts (*Color the Liturgy* and *Color the Catechism*) for use by congregations, and,  
WHEREAS, The Hugh Brooks Youth Mission Fund is setup to financially help ELS teens and college students participate in mission work within our fellowship, and,  
WHEREAS, Plans are under way to produce apologetics videos geared towards reaching youth, and,  
WHEREAS, *Young Branches* is a two-page layout in the *Lutheran Sentinel*, and,  
WHEREAS, The devotional booklets *Cling to the Cross* are available to confirmands each year, therefore,  
A. BE IT RESOLVED, That congregations of the synod be encouraged to utilize these resources, and,  
B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the board continue to make these resources available, and,  
C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the board continue to make, develop, and communicate that these resources are available.

### ***Resolution 3: Expanding Summer Music Camp***

WHEREAS, Youth Honor Choir has been re-named to Summer Music Camp to include band and stringed instruments as well as voices, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board for Youth Outreach continue its financial support of this already successful summer camp.

### ***Resolution 4: Term Life Insurance***

WHEREAS, The synod is currently supplying a \$50,000 supplemental term life insurance policy for its pastors and called workers, and the premium costs are to be reimbursed by the congregations, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That congregations be encouraged to continue to reimburse the synod for those premium, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the board continue to review the costs of increased premiums for increased coverage.

***Resolution 5: Health insurance***

WHEREAS, There are various options of health insurance for called workers, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That congregations be encouraged to provide quality health insurance for their called workers.

***Resolution 6: World Needs Fund***

WHEREAS, The fund received needed donations for the year 2017, and,  
WHEREAS, The board utilized the donations for a variety of needs and projects, and,  
WHEREAS, The board also received special donations for Hurricanes Harvey and Irma relief and Peru flooding relief, therefore,  
A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank the Lord for the generosity of those who donated to these funds, and,  
B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the board encourage congregations and their members to remember this important Mother's Day offering.

***Resolution 7: Pension***

WHEREAS, The synod is providing a matching pension fund of up to \$500 per year for the full time called workers and up to \$250 per year for part time teachers, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That congregations continue to provide retirement benefits for their called workers.

***Resolution 8: Called Worker Assistance Program***

WHEREAS, The synod has renewed its contract with Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services to offer counseling services to the pastors and teachers of the ELS, and,  
WHEREAS, The WLCFS also offers their services to individual congregations, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That the board be tasked with developing bulletin inserts highlighting these services and encourage congregations to examine the costs and benefits of these services.

***Resolution 9: Military Personnel***

WHEREAS, The Board for Christian Service maintains a list of deployed active duty personnel in need of spiritual care, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That congregations be encouraged to provide the board with names of all active military personnel who are under the spiritual care of our congregations.

***Resolution 10: Special Needs Support Group***

WHEREAS, A special needs support group project is in the planning phase, therefore,  
A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the board move forward with this project by seeking input from congregations and individuals, and,  
B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the board report on its progress at the 2019 Synodical Convention.

**Resolution 11:**

WHEREAS, The Committee on Worship provided worship resources for the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reorganization of the ELS, and,  
 WHEREAS, The committee has provided resources for help with worship accompaniment on the synod website, and,  
 WHEREAS, The *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (ELH) was reprinted with upgraded materials, and,  
 WHEREAS, The committee hopes to make an ELH altar book and ELH e-book available, therefore,  
 BE IT RESOLVED, That the committee be thanked for making these resources available, and,  
 BE IT RESOLVED, That the committee be encouraged to develop additional projects.

## 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 – 2018 CONVENTION**

Cash Balance on Hand 4/1/2017	\$ 1,442.59
-------------------------------	-------------

Receipts 4/1/2017 through 3/31/2018:

Assessments Received	\$22,718.55
Interest Income	<u>\$ 1.44</u>
Total Receipts	<u>\$22,719.99</u>
 Total Cash Available	 \$24,162.58

Disbursements 4/1/2017 through 3/31/2018:

Air Fares and Mileage	\$ 22,088.80
Printing, Postage, checks, etc.	<u>\$ 61.16</u>
Total Disbursements	<u>\$ 22,149.96</u>
 Cash Balance on Hand 4/1/2018	 <u>\$ 2,012.62</u>

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.)

*Mr. 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.

Our ELS home missionaries are hard at work in their individual mission fields. While they carry out weekly services and classes, they also carryout activities to help them serve, as well as get to know, new families and individuals who are without a church. They are teaching those who have never been taught the Christian faith about Jesus and the salvation he has won for us all. Whether in Bell Gardens, California, or in the sprawling suburbs of Austin or Fort Worth, Texas, our missionaries are connecting with new families and individuals through the Word. Souls who found themselves in new communities and starting new jobs, now have a new church home, thanks to your support. We are rejoicing with these new members of our ELS family! Thank you for your help and for your prayers. You are helping to make a difference as we seek to carry our ELS Lutheran heritage into the future.

How are we doing as a synod in support of home missions through the Anniversary Offering? After a year and a half of the offering we have received nearly \$502,000 in gifts and pledges (as of 12/31/2017). At the same time as our campaign has been carried out for home missions, our foreign missions have received similar support. Truly this makes for a reason to rejoice. In addition to the Anniversary Offering, our congregations have given over \$90,000 above our base budgets since 2015. Gifts given to the synod above this mark (\$735,000 in 2017 and 2016, and \$725,000 in 2015) also went to support home missions. There is also an additional \$190,000 in deferred gifts earmarked for home missions, and other gifts are being planned. These numbers truly give us a reason to rejoice in our members' generosity.



*(Above: Graph report on offering as of December 31, 2017)*

In this last year of the offering we will face our greatest challenge. The goal, set at \$1,500,000, is a long way off. With all gifts included, we are still only half way toward reaching our goal. These next few months will truly be a test of our generosity as we pray our gifts reflect the generosity our Lord. Our generosity can have a huge impact on the future of our ELS home mission efforts. So please be generous in your support! Enlist your friends, family, and church families in this effort to reach our goal for ELS home missions, in this our 100<sup>th</sup> year as a synod. May it be just another indicator of our dedication to our Lord's Great Commission.

The Anniversary Thankoffering Committee met in May 2017, prior to convention, and continues to communicate via emails and by electronic means when necessary. In addition to our committee work we have overseen the following in promoting the offering:

Monthly updates and encouragements reported in the President's newsletter, and Bi-monthly articles and updates in the *Lutheran Sentinel*.

Materials for inserts are regularly updated and made available to our churches on the *els.org/offering* website. An update video was produced in May 2017 and was sent out to all the pastors and their congregations. All video materials are also made available on the offering website and can be shown at anytime to congregations or other gatherings of our synod to promote mission support.

Our synod's financial administrators also provide updated information on gifts, including the tracking of individual commitments to the offering. In addition, reminders of promised gifts by our supporters are sent out twice a year. Full update newsletters that include news on home missions and a request of support are sent out quarterly.

If you want to receive your own quarterly updates and mailings, be sure to send your request and address information to Chairman Dan Basel [danbasel@blc.edu](mailto:danbasel@blc.edu) or Denise Luehmann [dluehmann@blc.edu](mailto:dluehmann@blc.edu) at the business office. We can also send a copy of these letters by email and you can then give online or by text message. You may also call 507-469-9656 to reach Chairman Basel for further assistance.

A special thanks again goes to our Anniversary Offering Committee members for their help over the past three years. Special thanks goes to our synod communication director, the Rev. Paul Fries. The update video was produced at Bethany Lutheran College studio and we thank them for their help in filming and Pastor Fries for producing the video.

While Christian giving remained a major focus in 2017 as we celebrated the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, we still have the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our synod to celebrate. And what better way to celebrate this joyous occasion than continuing generous support of home missions.

The Anniversary Offering Committee continues its work and asks that our delegates, pastors, church leaders, and especially our member congregations to please continue to promote the offering, *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done!* especially in this the final few months of the offering. If you and your congregation would like a presentation, please let us know. We update our home mission information as soon as we can so that each presentation is a current update on home missions. By God's grace there are wonderful things happening in our missions.

Remember again our stated purpose for this offering:

- to start and sustain new missions,
- to provide for the vicar-in-mission program, and
- to support cross-cultural projects.

What can you do to promote the offering? Please make sure you have an Anniversary Offering poster(s) on display in your church. Draw attention to the campaign whenever you can. Continue to make the offering booklets available along with the gifting envelopes (e.g. keep copies in your narthex). Use the updated inserts at least once every quarter. Call us if printing is a problem for you and we can provide copies of the inserts. Give local updates in your newsletters and bulletins. Purposefully track your congregation's giving to the offering and synod and report it to your members. As you report giving, rejoice that you are able to support the work we do together through our synod and its missions.

*The Rev. Daniel Basel, chairman*

## REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Proclaim the wonders God has done! Not only has the Lord showed His blessings upon the Evangelical Lutheran Synod throughout the past century, but His blessings again have been evidenced during this past year.

### 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 16, 2018.

### PLANNING

During this past year, our synod had the special opportunity to *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done*. While we face several challenges, the Lord also has blessed us with opportunities.

2017 congregation contributions once again surpassed the budget. Contributions exceeded \$768,000 with contributions in excess of \$735,000 allocated to the Board for Home Outreach (*Synod Report*, 2016, page 135).

Bethany Lutheran College is facing an operating deficit, receiving less than 2% of its budget from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Yet there is an important constituency that supports BLC as a synod school and recognizes the school's importance to identity of the synod.

In 2016 median synod-wide Sunday attendance is thirty-nine people as compared to forty-five people in 2007, yet the synod has well trained clergy and teachers who distinguish between law and gospel with a well-trained laity to support its clergy and teachers.

Many of the synod's congregations are small. Yet the lesser demand of a smaller congregation may allow the targeting of a small town nearby for exploratory mission work. Larger congregations could consider calling an associate pastor to conduct exploratory work. Many of the synod's congregations also are rural and may feel there is little opportunity for growth. Yet the state of rural America is not as bleak as one might think and there is actually new growth taking place in many rural communities as people retire and move to the country and many people, thanks to the age of technology, are now working remotely from home while enjoying a rural lifestyle as non-white Europeans are moving into these communities and finding work in agriculture. Rising expenses also affect congregations. It may be advantageous for congregations to explore the possibility of using some nonbinding funds, such cemetery funds, in a budgetary way to fund reaching out efforts or to dedicate estates received to fund outreach efforts. We must recognize that the field is ripe unto the harvest.

We have made efforts to "engage others with Jesus." Talking about outreach has had an impact in a few individual cases, but did result in discussion and enthusiasm in some of our churches. Congregations can establish an "open homes" program where members seek to reach out informally to non-members in the community or inactive members by inviting them to a dinner (not to speak about spiritual issues necessarily, but to establish relationships). It

also should be remembered that the synod's evangelism-missions-counselor is available for *all* congregations, not only urban/exploratory sites.

The Planning and Coordinating Committee next meets in February 2019 and, following this anniversary year, will devote the first day of a two-day meeting to planning.

# BUDGET

In 2017 congregation contributions to the synod's budget exceeded \$768,000. Last year's adopted budget included congregation funding budget of \$760,000. This included a challenge that contributions in excess of \$735,000 be allocated to the Board for Home Outreach (*Synod Report*, 2016, page 135). Once again, in 2018, a congregation budget goal of \$770,000 has been adopted with contributions in excess of \$740,000 being allocated to the Board for Education (*Synod Report*, 2017, page 144).

Last year the synod adopted a unified budget for 2018 recognizing that funding for the synod's work comes from several sources: congregation contributions, the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation, Mission Advancement Project, Helping Hands, Cross-stitch, endowments, and other sources.

A unified 2019 budget of \$3,118,141 is being proposed. This budget anticipates congregation contributions of \$780,000 which is a 1.3% increase over the this year's budget. Once again, this proposed budget includes a challenge to the synod in that all contributions above \$740,000 will be allocated to Bethany Lutheran College to be designated toward calling an additional professor in the religious studies division. It is with such understanding that the Planning and Coordinating Committee recommends the following 2019 expenditure budget along with sources of anticipated income:

	2018	2019
<b>Anticipated Income:</b>		
Congregations - Budget	770,000	780,000
Congregations - Non Budget	15,000	15,360
Individual gifts	\$161,000	\$161,720
Organization Giving	40,000	40,360
Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation	500,000	440,000
Missions Advancement Project	386,000	371,750
Endowments	345,690	389,095
Registration/Fees	50,000	50,000
Subscriptions	25,000	25,000
Helping Hands/Faith Mission Society	45,000	36,000
Cross-stitch	27,500	25,000
Investments	67,500	74,500
Publication Sales	14,500	14,750
Salary Reimbursement	25,000	25,000
Reserves	693,652	627,273
Miscellaneous	<u>20,253</u>	<u>42,333</u>
Total anticipated income	\$3,186,095	\$3,118,141
<b>Anticipated Expenditures:</b>		
Bethany Lutheran College	\$150,000	\$265,000
Bethany Lutheran Seminary	31,000	31,500
Board for Home Outreach	812,537	719,925
Board for World Outreach	1,147,187	1,147,026
Board for Youth Outreach	82,700	79,700
Board for Education	77,750	99,600

Communications/Publications	59,853	39,691
Christian Service	91,360	47,200
Synod Fund	683,708	688,499
Special Projects	<u>50,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Total anticipated expenditures	\$3,186,095	\$3,118,141

## CONCLUSION

During this centennial year, we continue to *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done*. May we prove faithful to His calling!

*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. David Ewert, the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, the Rev. Phillip Lepak, Mr. Norman Hartigan, the Rev. Jonathan Madson, Mr. Paul Mielbrecht 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.

### MEETINGS

The Board of Trustees of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod has met since the last convention for regular quarterly meetings on August 1, November 7, 2017 and February 6, 2018.

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. Phil Lepak. Members serving on the Board of Trustees-World Outreach Subcommittee are the Rev. Jonathan Madson and the Rev. Paul Schneider.

### 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 Lutheran Schools of America, Inc. and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation. 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” with any day-by-day operations managed by the Board for Education (*Bylaws for the Lutheran Schools of America, Inc.*, Article II.A and III). This year’s convention also serves as the third annual meeting of the Lutheran Schools of America, 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. David Ewert, Mr. Norman Hartigan, Mr. Mark Olsen, and the Rev. Richard Wiechmann. In the coming year, the position of R. Wiechman will be filled by Mr. Jeff Younge. This committee considers and makes recommendations regarding the investment of the synod’s assets and the use of the income from those investments. The rate of return for all investments for the calendar year 2017 was 13.87%. For the year 2018, the distribution percentage from the endowments will be 3.25% of a three year rolling average of 2014-15-16. An accounting is found in the “Financial Statements and Supplementary information.”

### ***Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.***

“Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. meets concurrently with the convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, whose membership is the same as Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.” (*Guidelines for the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Board of Regents*, Preamble). At this meeting, BLC, Inc. elects the “Evangelical Lutheran Synod Board of Regents” (*Guidelines for the “Evangelical Lutheran Synod Board of Regents*, Article I.A). In addition, the officers and Board of Trustees of the synod serve as the officers and trustees for Bethany Lutheran College, Inc. (*Bylaws of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.*, Preamble). As such, the Board of Trustees regularly receives 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 November 7, 2017.

As has been the case for many years, college expenditures have exceeded revenues with the deficits largely being covered by the internal transfer of funds. For 2017, the college receives 19% of the congregation contribution portion of the synod’s budget. The Board of Trustees will assist the college by providing an additional \$75,000/annually for a four year period. This will be taken from the synod’s general funds. During the past fiscal year, Bethany Lutheran College had expenditures of \$17,826,163. During this same period, Bethany Lutheran Seminary had expenditures of \$751,775.

The assets of the Lutheran Synod Book Company were turned over the college in 2012. As the bookstore now transitions to an online bookstore, it will yet stock church supplies and continue to be a marketing agent for publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The Board of Regents also have approached the Board of Trustees about the construction of a possible future student activity center.

## 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 of Trustees endorsed the process of the Board of World Outreach for distributing the synod's property in both Peru and Chile into the ownership of the respective national church bodies.

The board also authorized the Board for Home Outreach to pursue a land purchase of up to \$1 million in Weatherford, Texas. It is the plan of the board that a portion of this land may be resold at a later date.

### *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 committee oversees the work of the Ottesen Museum, the Synod Archives, and the ELS Historical Society. Committee members include: Chairman the Rev. John Petersen, Secretary the Rev. Shawn Stafford, the Rev. Theodore Gullixson, Mr. Sigurd Lee, the Rev. Mike Muehlenhardt, and the Rev. Norman Madson.

The committee met in September, 2017 and February, 2018 and regularly hears reports from ELS Archivist Theodore Gullixson and Ottesen Museum Director Rebecca DeGarmeaux.

### *Report of the Synod Archivist*

Since the beginning of 2017, the ELS archives has received much material from pastors, congregations, and the Board for World Outreach. The Rev. Craig Ferkenstad also gave the archives all the photographs—in digital and print that were in the ELS centennial anniversary book, *Proclaim His Wonders*. Prof. Erling Teigen worked with the archives to scan panoramic photos of ELS conventions and BLC classes. The Rev. Steven Petersen gave twenty-three boxes of materials from *Thoughts of Faith*—videos, photographs from eastern Europe and South America, board meetings, cassettes of radio broadcasts, brochures, and items used in presentations.

In 2017, the archivist worked part time during the year due to his work as a vacancy pastor in Indianola and West Des Moines, Iowa. Until October 2017, the Rev. Paul Madson also volunteered his time at the archives. He was working on combining files that were received from the Rev. S. Petersen. During the summer of 2017, BLC senior, Leah Zacate worked in the archives and received college credits for her work. She transferred information about the archives library to an Excel spreadsheet. She completed that work during her fall semester at Bethany as a work-study student.

From December 2017 to April 2018, the archivist filled a vacancy in Oregon, which meant that nothing was done in the archives—due to his absence and to Paul Madson's declining health and subsequent death.

The principal monies of the Gullixson Archives Fund is \$51,040.87, as of September 6, 2017; with an additional \$8,873.46 in interest that the ELS archivist may use. The synod's treasurer has purchased a total of \$303.28 in supplies during this current year.

The archivist is proposing to use BLC students for additional help, to have Kermit Traska to assess *Thoughts of Faith* materials, and to have a seminar in 2018 on archival issues—to which the Boards of Trustees and Regents will be invited (to be paid from Gullixson Archives Fund monies).

The critical need in the ELS archives is space for more shelving to store boxes of material. Space for storing materials from synod boards and committees is non-existent and some materials are stored out of order because of space issues.

Another set of issues is the storage of digital materials—photographs, emails, congregational radio and television broadcasts—and the ability to make these digital materials available to synod members.

### ***Report of the Ottesen Museum Director***

Confirmation classes, Bethany Lutheran College students, Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary students, and descendants of Rev. J. A. Ottesen were among the 165 visitors to the ELS Ottesen Museum in 2017. The highlight of the year was the annual Christmas Open House. This year's theme was "Christmas With the Luther Family" and featured area homeschoolers singing the hymn "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come." Two of the children accompanied the singers on violin and flute.

Museum Director Rebecca DeGarmeaux also gave presentations on Bethany Ladies' College and her work at the museum to groups in Minnesota and Massachusetts last year. She also continues to encourage congregations to use the booklet "Preserving Your Heritage," produced by the ELS Committee on History and Archives, for guiding them in protecting congregational records and historic artifacts. This past year she has been working with the ELS Historical Society to promote the synod's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Last summer, the museum reorganized some of its displays and reception area. The reception area also has an ever-changing collection of some of the newest items donated to the museum. The director continues to catalog the collection and improve the storage of some of the older objects so that they can be enjoyed by future generations.

The museum's facebook page continues to add new followers and is used by the museum and the ELS Historical Society to promote their news and events as well as noting significant dates in synod history.

## **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 \$768,000. 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. The Rev Michael Muehlenhardt will replace M.Smith as a member of the board.

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:

Peru & Chile	\$ 40,000
India/LMSI	152,500
MAP - administrative	50,000
Gift of Life/Thoughts of Faith	<u>157,500</u>
Total	\$400,000

### ***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 2018, the Foundation is providing a grant of \$440,000. This will be distributed as approved by the 2017 convention. The Board of Trustees will request \$440,000 from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation to supplement the 2019 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 2017, the following projects received approval and funding.

National Teachers' Convention	\$32,000	Board for Education
Media and Video Streaming	7,000	Board for Home Outreach
Grant Writer	<u>6,000</u>	Board of Trustees
Total	\$45,000	

### ***Wills and Estates***

The synod gratefully acknowledges the receipt of proceeds from the following estates during the period March 1, 2017 - February 28, 2018:

Martin A. Robinson Estate Trust (Annual Payout)	\$28,600.00
Rev. Walter and Mildred Gullixson Estate - CGA	\$23,957.92
Donald C. Sell Estate - Beneficiary on several accts	\$ 7,500.79
Keith E. Emmelhainz, (TOF was beneficiary of insurance)	\$ 10,703.00

Estates received by the college or the seminary are acknowledged in the report of the Board of Regents.

### ***Expenditures***

Audited numbers were not available at the time of 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:

The giving counselor continues to offer assistance in teaching and preaching on this topic of Christian giving as well as reporting the blessings and challenges of our various missions. Many have taken advantage of this opportunity with the giving counselor being allowed to speak or preach at twenty-five of our congregations around the synod in 2017.

Stewardship is an integral part of all we do as Christians. Whether it is using our time and talent to serve on boards and committees locally as well as synodically or serving our congregations as workers, teachers, or in other capacities; all are a part of our Christian stewardship. But we should in no way underestimate the importance of earning a living that enables us to care for ourselves and our families. It is through our various vocations that we are enabled to share in God's financial blessings to us with our churches and missions.

The believing Christian knows and believes that all we have—life and breath, health and home, as well as earthly treasures—are a gift from God. How we use them, enjoy them and

plan for their future use says a lot about what we believe them to be. Managing these gifts in order to honor our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and our fellow man are integral parts of our Christian stewardship. Giving generously to our church and missions, in accord with our Lord's gifts to us, is a true act of worship. We continue to exhort ourselves and our fellow members as Peter did in 1 Peter 4:10, "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." Our goal should always be to nurture both young and old alike in earthly stewardship and in generosity. This is especially important as our young people enter the work force. Setting a good example for our children, youth, and fellow Christians is important. It is also a wonderful privilege to support the gospel. Consolidating our resources to do more than we can do as individuals, or congregations has always been a goal of synodical missions and ministries. It also is a matter of being responsible to those who give, as well as to those appointed to oversee the work of our synod and its missions.

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. Materials for teaching and preaching on stewardship are a great help and it is the goal of the giving counselor to have available tried-and-true teaching tools on the giving counselor's web page. Pastors are asked to please share materials that you find helpful. If you are willing to share, help us make them available for all our churches and pastors.

While the synod studies provided this year focus on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our ELS, let's not forget to include the topic of Christian stewardship. As we emphasize our gospel motivation behind Christian giving, we also want to tie in the vital role our stewardship of treasures plays in starting and sustaining new missions and mission churches and schools.

On a more practical note, we thank our pastors and congregational leaders for emphasizing giving to missions through their synodical offerings. Both our foreign missions and home missions have been blessed through your congregational gifts.

To help our leaders and pastors stay in tune with financial stewardship, our synod's administrator, Keith Wiederhoeft, provides monthly emailed reports to our pastors. In addition, our synod *President's Newsletter* also includes financial reports. Monthly updates on the anniversary offering are also reported in the *President's Newsletter* and on the offering webpage at [www.els.org/offering](http://www.els.org/offering).

We should rejoice that our congregations gave generously this past year and we surpassed our budget for the second time in a row. Congregations gave \$768,322 surpassing our budget \$760,000. We are very thankful for the support our members and their congregations give. Note that all gifts over the \$735,000 base budget went toward the support of our home mission efforts. Praise the Lord for his people and their generosity in sharing our Lord's gifts to help with gospel ministry!

In addition, we thank individual as well as organizational donors of our ELS who gave over \$721,504 directly to various ELS ministries and missions, including the anniversary offering. Disaster and hurricane aid giving totaled \$51,530. (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 \$224,968 in support of Thoughts of Faith in 2017 (note that our TOF giving was down by nearly 10% from 2016).

In this final year of the "*Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done*" anniversary offering, we once again appeal to our synodical members as we in thanksgiving generously support our synod's outreach efforts.

Note that the synod's End-Of-Year Offering was promoted through the Giving Counselor's office. An insert on our synod's ministry goals and budget was sent out for congregational use along with envelopes for the offering. We asked 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.

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 *Congregational Planned Giving* is also available to our congregations and congregational leaders. The giving counselor offers assistance in all areas of this program and will continue to follow up with congregational committees to help the programs succeed.

We still have much to do in promoting giving from estates. The gifts from estates are far less than the number of burials we see in the synod. With nearly 226 burials taking place in our ELS churches in 2017 it would be a reasonable question to ask how many remembered the Lord’s work in their estate plans. Note however that we are thankful for those who do and that we received at least three gifts from estates for our synod.

Please be sure to encourage your members to remember their church and its missions in their estate planning. Continue to work to develop a “giving culture” in your congregation and circuit. We cannot emphasize enough that it takes effort, repeated efforts, before blessings to a congregation and to our missions are fully realized. Yet it is as simple as putting the church down as a beneficiary of an account. At the same time, may we not hesitate to rejoice in the Lord when gifts are given.

As giving counselor, I can’t thank the pastors and congregations of our synod enough for extending invitations or accepting offers to preach and talk about planned giving in their churches. Gifts of lodging and meal support to cover the cost of the giving counselor’s travel expenses are always appreciated and happen fairly often. Thank you to all for your gifts to the work of your church and synod.

May we ever rejoice when we see generosity abounding in our midst, 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 Delegates Equalization Fund has provided its report on the cash receipts and disbursements for the 2017 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 with thanks.

### ***Resolution 2: Report of the Anniversary Offering Committee***

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Synod is celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reorganization of the synod, and,

WHEREAS, The Board for Home Outreach will use the funds received from the Anniversary Offering for home mission work, and,

WHEREAS, The committee began the offering in the summer of 2016, and,

WHEREAS, The stated goal of the offering is \$1,500,000, and as of December 31, 2017, the total of cash gifts and pledges totaled \$501,811 (\$538,033 as of June 1, 2018), not including \$190,000 in deferred gifts (\$210,000 as of June 12, 2018), 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 in the final year of this offering to continue faithfully promoting 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—2019 Budget***

WHEREAS, The Planning and Coordinating Committee has provided its report on the proposed unified budget for 2019, and,

WHEREAS, The 2017 congregational contributions toward the synod budget exceeded \$768,000, 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 allocated to Bethany Lutheran College to be designated toward calling an additional professor in the religious studies department, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod adopt the proposed unified 2019 budget of \$3,118,141, which includes a congregationally funded portion of \$780,000, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That, with thanks to God, the congregations of the ELS be commended for once again exceeding the budgeted congregational contributions of \$760,000 in 2017, and,
- C. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod communicate to the congregations that any funding received in excess of \$740,000 in the 2019 budget will be allocated to Bethany Lutheran College for the purpose of calling an additional professor in the religious studies department and/or helping to pay for the cost of adjunct professors in the religious studies department.

***Resolution 4: Report of the Planning and Coordinating Committee***

WHEREAS, 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 with thanks.

***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 with thanks.

***Resolution 6: 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, 2017 and 2016," and he has provided the "Treasurer's Financial Statements and Supplemental Information for Year Ended December 31, 2017," and,

WHEREAS, The convention Committee on Finances has reviewed them and found them to be in proper order, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod accept the treasurer's report and the independent accountants' review.

### ***Resolution 7: Giving Counselor***

WHEREAS, The Rev. Dan Basel continues to serve faithfully as ELS Giving Counselor, visiting congregations, conducting presentations and assisting individuals with planned giving, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod thank Rev. Basel for his work, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod encourage the congregations of the synod to make use of the services Rev. Basel provides.

## **REPORT OF THE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE**

The synod's centennial has arrived! One hundred years ago in 1918, a remnant of the Norwegian Synod reorganized as The Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 1958 the synod's name was changed to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. At this significant time, we pause to give thanks to our gracious God who has preserved the synod in His faith and truth.

Two significant anniversaries are being observed. Last year, the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Lutheran Reformation was celebrated. This year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reorganization of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. A number of events have been planned in commemoration of these concurrent anniversaries under the theme *Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done*.

The quincentenary anniversary was observed at last year's convention with a Reformation Hymn Festival. A special edition of the *Lutheran Sentinel* was published and at least fifteen regional hymn festivals were conducted throughout the nation.

The centennial anniversary is being observed at this year's convention with a special Synod Sunday Service including a Choral Union Choir under the direction of Prof. Dennis Marzolf. An anniversary program and reception is planned for Tuesday evening. Another commemorative issue of the *Lutheran Sentinel* is being published.

Between the anniversaries, 2,000 copies of *Proclaiming God's Truth* were printed. This Bible study has received wide-spread use in the congregations of the synod. This study, along with other resources, is available on the synod's website at [els.org/els-100](http://els.org/els-100).

Two significant items have been produced by the committee. The book, *Proclaim His Wonders: a pictorial history of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod* was authored by the Rev. Craig A. Ferkenstad and has been available since last year's convention. Copies can be purchased from the Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore at a cost of \$20. A video presentation about the synod's history is being prepared by the Rev. Jeffrey Hendrix and will be showed during the convention on Tuesday afternoon. It then will be available for download on the synod's website or on DVD (by request).

Hopefully all the congregations of the synod will set aside Sunday, October 14 as a special day of celebration and thanksgiving to God upon the occasion of the synod's centennial. This date was chosen because October 14 was known as Founders' Day in the old Norwegian Synod. It was on that day in 1859 that the Norwegian Synod undertook its first joint activity by establishing a seminary professorship. Since that time, many significant synodical events have been observed on this date. Our selection of this date for a centennial observance in the congregations is a testimony that the ELS is the continuation of the former Norwegian Synod.

The anniversary celebrations have been planned by the ad hoc Centennial Committee. The committee was appointed in 2009 and has met five times since the last convention. Serving on the committee over the years have been: the Rev. Craig Ferkenstad (chairman), the Rev. Mark Harstad (chairman), the Rev. Peter Faugstad, Mrs. Lois Jaeger, the Rev. Donald Moldstad and President John Moldstad.



The committee wishes to extend special thanks to the many individuals who have assisted with the observance of these anniversaries. Especially noted are . . .

the Doctrine Committee for preparing the Bible study, *Proclaiming God's Truth*.

the Board for Youth Outreach for conducting the 2018 LYA convention in Parkland, Washington where the synod's first president resided.

the Worship Committee for organizing last year's hymn festivals and making the preparations for the Founders' Day Service on October 14, 2018.

the ELS Historical Society for hosting a 2018 anniversary program and a service at Lime Creek Lutheran Church. The Historical Society has produced a commemorative medallion which is available for purchase at this convention and also will distribute a special edition of the newsletter *Oak Leaves*, which will contain a reprint of a 1918 article about the synod's inaugural convention.

As we observe these anniversaries, we do not wish just to look back in silence at what God has done. We wish to proclaim His name, His deeds, and His salvation to a new generation and to a generation yet to be born. We yet 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. Piet Van Kampen and Mr. Norman Werner. President John Moldstad attended all the meetings. The committee met six times since the last convention.

In 2013, the convention instructed the Synod Review Committee to “conduct [a] review of the *Handbook* and to report” (*Synod Report*, 2013, Res. 3, pp. 114–115). With this report, the committee states that it has completed its assignment made by the 2013 convention. In addition to this report, the Synod Review Committee has sent to the secretary of the synod a second introduction to the *ELS Handbook* reviewing its work since the first introduction, and it sent a List of Definitions to be included in the *ELS Handbook*. Both documents are intended for information purposes and are not in need of ratification by the convention.

The following proposed additions and amendments to the *ELS Handbook* are underlined and deletions are shown as ~~strike throughs~~. It should be kept in mind that proposed amendments to Section 121: Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod require a “two-thirds majority vote” of the convention (Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Article VIII).

## 1. SECTION 121: BYLAWS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD, CHAPTER IV: CONVENTIONS:

*To further clarify who is to be elected as convention delegates and to bring paragraph 2 in line with Section 121, Chapter IV, paragraph 2.b., which was adopted last year.*

### Paragraph 2

Member congregations should make every effort to be represented at the synodical conventions by their pastor(s) and by two delegates. ~~These delegates shall be elected by the congregations and~~ In order that they might properly represent their congregation, the delegates shall be lay voting members of the congregation and shall be elected by the voting membership of the congregation. The delegates 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.

## 2. SECTION 131: BYLAWS OF THE ELS FOUNDATION, III.D.

*To further clarify the office of Treasurer with respect to the ELS Foundation.*

- D. The treasurer, appointed by the Board of Trustees of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Inc., shall serve as the treasurer of the Foundation. The treasurer shall have the care and custody of all funds and securities of the foundation and....

## 3. SECTION 210: GENERAL SYNODICAL GUIDELINES, ARTICLE IV: OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION(S)

*To clarify the definition of “official notifications” in keeping with present laws of Minnesota and Wisconsin.*

[NOTE FOR THE CONVENTION FLOOR COMMITTEE: Since the definitions for advisory member, advisory consultant, and ex officio member are in the List of Definitions, the content of the present Article IV: Definitions for Standing Boards and Committees **shall be deleted** and the following Article IV: Official Notification(s) shall be inserted.]

- A. The Lutheran Sentinel is the publication of record for the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.  
B. Information concerning pastor and teacher calls by congregations (accepted), lists of institutional nominations (presidents or theological professors), calls to synodical administrators, and successful colloquies should also appear in the synod's publication of record, the Lutheran Sentinel.  
C. Wherever the Articles of Incorporation, constitutions, by-laws, and guidelines require official publication (such as announcements of meetings, calls for nominations, call lists, notices of colloquies, or other notices), such notices shall be announced by the synodical administration in electronic or printed media that goes to all pastors and congregations of the synod. Where certain lengths of time are specified before action can be taken, that period shall be stated at the time the notice is disseminated by the appropriate synod official.

## 4. SECTION 222: GUIDELINES FOR THE PASTOR'S ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION

*To change the name of the section and provide more specific terminology:*

- A. Change the name of Section 222 from “~~Guidelines for the Pastor's Ordination and Installation~~” to be “Guidelines for Candidates of Theology and Pastors Receiving a Divine Call.”  
B. Add word to Article I: Acknowledgment: “Upon receipt of a divine call the recipient shall promptly send a letter of acknowledgment to the calling congregation and copies to

the president of the synod, the circuit visitor of his own circuit, the visitor of the circuit to which he is called, and, if it is a mission call, to the respective board.”

- C. Amend Article II: Announcement: “If a pastor is currently serving a parish, he shall announce the receipt of a divine call to his congregation ~~at once as soon as possible~~.”
- D. Amend Article III: Consultation: “A. He should ~~shall~~ call request a voters’ meeting of his own congregation to give the congregation members the opportunity to consult with him regarding the call he has received.
- E. Amend Article IV: Decision, as follows:
  - A. He should strive to reach a decision without undue delay.
  - B. If his decision is to return the call, he shall inform his congregation and the calling congregation promptly. Copies of the letter should be sent to those listed in Article I above.
  - C. If his decision is to accept the call, he should ~~seek~~ request a peaceful release of his call from the congregation he is presently serving.
  - D. If his decision is to accept the call, then arrangements for installation in the new charge call should be made with the calling congregation, ~~the its~~ circuit visitor and the president of the synod.
- F. Amend Article V: Ordination and Installation: “When a Candidate of Theology receives a divine call, he shall arrange for his ordination and installation through the office of the president of the synod. This ordination will normally be held in a congregation to which he has been called.”

## 5. SECTION 225: GUIDELINES WHEN THERE IS A PASTOR OR TEACHER VACANCY IN A CONGREGATION.

*To clarify procedures to follow during vacancies of pastors or teachers:*

- 1. Amend Article I: Pastor Vacancy as follows:
  - A. When a congregation becomes vacant, ~~it should promptly notify~~ the visitor of the circuit and/or the president of the synod shall promptly be notified (see Guidelines for Circuit Visitors and Visitations, Article III.D.).
  - B. The congregation should consult with ~~the its~~ circuit visitor to arrange for a vacancy pastor and other necessary vacancy services.
  - C. The congregation should also consult with ~~the its~~ circuit visitor in arranging a call meeting at which time he or his representative should be present to counsel with the congregation and to submit a list of candidates that he has received from the president of the synod. Nominations for pastor may be made by the congregation from the president’s list or additional nominations may be made from the Clergy Roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
    - 1. Prior to any discussion of the specific call itself, the circuit visitor should inform the congregation about the Scriptural basis of the call and its application to the congregation. The congregation should discuss and determine its specific needs. The pastoral duties should be designated enumerated.
    - 2. The compensation that is to be offered to the called worker should be agreed upon.
    - 3. The list of names suggested by the president and others added by the congregation should be discussed and, ultimately, one man chosen to be called, preferably by unanimous vote.
  - D. In cases where a congregation or parish is unable to meet the minimum mission salary and benefits scale (see *Synod Reports* as appropriate), the visitor may need to encourage the congregation or parish to seek alternative ways (consolidation, mergers, shared or joint services, etc.) to secure pastoral services at the respective

location. [See also Section 230, Guidelines for Circuit Visitors and Visitations, Article III.D.4.].

Ð: E. If the calling congregation desires to issue a divine call to a pastor who is a member of a sister synod, it shall do so after consultation with the circuit visitor, who, in turn, shall consult with the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. In such cases the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod shall consult with the president of the sister synod or of the district where the pastor currently serves. After such consultation, the president shall make his recommendation to the calling congregation.

2. Amend Article II: Lutheran Elementary Teacher Vacancy as follows:

1. Change title of Article II from “~~Teacher Vacancy~~” to “Lutheran Elementary School Teacher Vacancy.”

2. Amend Article II as follows:

When there is a teacher vacancy, the congregation should notify the ~~Bethany Lutheran College Education Coordinator~~ ELS Secretary for Schools and request a list of candidates. It may add its own candidates from the Directory of Lutheran Elementary School and Preschool Teachers of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. If a congregation desires to call a teacher from a sister synod, it shall counsel with the ~~Bethany Lutheran College Education Coordinator~~ ELS Secretary for Schools regarding the proper procedures. The designation of duties and the call meeting concerning a teacher should be conducted in the same manner as for pastors in Article I.C. above.

## **6. SECTION 230: GUIDELINES FOR THE CIRCUIT VISITORS AND VISITATIONS, ARTICLE III: THE DUTIES OF THE VISITOR.**

*To add an additional duty to the Circuit Visitors.*

[Note: the sub-section letters will need to be changed]

D. Provide counsel to pastors in his circuit who have received a call.

E: F. Conduct regular visitations in the congregations of his circuit.

## **7. SECTION 240: CONVENTION GUIDELINES, ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS, B., 1.**

*To clarify nomination procedures and who may be nominated to synod positions.*

B. Duties of the Committee on Nominations

1. At least two candidates shall be nominated for each board or committee position that will become vacant at the next convention of the synod. Nominees who have lost an election to a particular board or committee shall not automatically be nominated by the Nominations Committee to a subsequent position on the same board or committee, but they may be nominated from the floor of the convention for another position on that same board or committee.

a. The committee is not obligated to nominate an incumbent to continue his present position on a board or committee. However, the committee should consider whether that person has been suggested for nomination for reelection, the experience and continuity of service that he brings to the office and his ability to continue effective service.

b. Names of potential candidates may be solicited from congregations of the synod, from circuit visitors, from chairmen of standing boards and committees, from synodical officers and from other sources.

c. Nominees must be permanent synod members or active members of an ELS congregation.

[b.] d. Ordinarily, no person should serve on more than one synod board or committee.

## **8. SECTION 260: GUIDELINES FOR SYNODICAL DISCIPLINE AND APPEALS, ARTICLE IV: SYNODICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. B.**

*To further clarify what circumstances might require synodical discipline:*

“...The board has the duty to suspend or remove from office any member of the faculty or staff whose case has been properly presented to the board through the office of the president and who, despite due admonition, has been found guilty of false doctrine, offensive life living an offensive life contrary to Scripture, or willful neglect of official duties.”

## **9. SECTION 422: GUIDELINES FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE SCHOOLS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD.**

*To change the name of the board and update the guidelines for the board's work.*

A. Change the name of this board from “Board for Education for Schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod” to now be known as the “Board for Lutheran Schools” so that the title of Section 422 shall read “Guidelines for the Board for Lutheran Schools.”

B. Add to Article II: Objectives.D.:

D. To promote Lutheran early learning centers, preschools, elementary schools and secondary schools throughout the country, in conjunction with existing congregations or in exploratory mission sites. To this end, the board will:

C. Add the following amendments to Article V: Officers of the Board and Their Duties. D.  
D. The board shall select a member or advisory member to serve as the ELS s~~Secretary of~~ for s~~Schools~~ who shall:

1. Assist congregations in the promotion and advancement of Christian early childhood, elementary, and secondary education.
2. Encourage the youth to attend one of the Lutheran high schools of our fellowship.
3. Receive subsidy requests from Lutheran early childhood programs and elementary schools for presentation to the board.

4. Prepare reports on the progress and condition of all schools of the synod.

5. Be available for counseling with existing schools on such matters as school administration, curriculum, teaching materials, placement of teachers, and government legislation affecting the church and youth.

6. Receive and process applications for ELS teacher certification.

~~6-7.~~ Attend workshops and/or courses to keep informed and well prepared.

D. Add the following amendments to Article VII: Certification Rules for Teachers of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.A.4.a. & b.

A. In order for the board to certify a teacher, the candidate must demonstrate that he/ she

4. As a graduate of an institution other than Bethany Lutheran College or Martin Luther College, has completed the following steps:

a. Submission of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod certification application that includes copies of transcripts, and letters of recommendation. Submission of an application for teacher certification to the ELS Secretary for Schools that includes copies of transcripts.

b. Completion of a successful evaluation by the board. This evaluation will include an examination to determine whether the applicant is in doctrinal agreement with the Holy Scriptures and the confession and constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, whether the candidate has completed

adequate required courses that are related specifically to Christian education, and to determine the applicant's philosophy of education.

*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 completed its planning and celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reorganized Norwegian Synod, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That the report of the Centennial Committee be accepted, and that the committee be thanked for their work.

### ***Resolution 2: Section 210: General Synodical Guidelines, Article IV***

WHEREAS, The current General Synodical Guidelines, Article IV, contain the definitions for advisory member, advisory consultant, and ex officio member, which now are in the new List of Definitions, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the current content of the present Article IV: Definitions for Standing Boards and Committees be deleted, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the proposed Article IV: Official Notification(s) shall be inserted.

### ***Resolution 3: Report of the Synod Review Committee***

WHEREAS, The Synod Review Committee's detailed report has proposed numerous updates and amendments to the *Handbook* of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and,

WHEREAS, With this report, the committee states that it has completed its assignment made by the 2013 convention to the committee to "conduct [a] review of the *Handbook* and to report" (*Synod Report*, 2013, Res. 3, pp. 114–115) to the convention, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the emended report of the Synod Review Committee (with the exception of General Synodical Guidelines, Article IV which was addressed by Resolution 2) be adopted, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the committee be thanked for its work on the review and updating of the *Handbook*.

### ***Resolution 4: Dates for the 2019 Synod Convention***

BE IT RESOLVED, That the next Synod Convention be held June 23–27, 2019.

*See further action under "Memorials."*

## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE AND REPORT—ACTION OF THE SYNOD

### ***Resolution 1: President’s Message and Report***

WHEREAS, President Moldstad’s message celebrates one hundred years of God’s grace upon our Evangelical Lutheran Synod and reviews our purpose in moving forward, and,  
WHEREAS, He suggested that we respond by pondering what our ELS centennial means, by preserving the pure teaching of God’s Word, and by proclaiming the good news of salvation both in our country and throughout the world, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That the convention approve the President’s Message and Report and receive it with thanks to the Lord.

### ***Resolution 2: Apologetics***

WHEREAS, Both the President’s Message and Report highlight the importance of biblical apologetics as a tool for contending for the faith by reaching out to others with the gospel and defending the doctrines of God’s holy Word, and,  
WHEREAS, In response to a 2017 convention proposal (*Synod Report* 2017, pages 117ff) for the promotion of apologetics, an ad hoc Committee on Apologetics was appointed by President Moldstad, and,  
WHEREAS, An apologetics and worldview seminar will be held at Bethany Lutheran College on Thursday, June 21, therefore,  
A. BE IT RESOLVED, That we thank the president and the ad hoc committee for their continuing work in promoting biblical apologetics, and,  
B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod be encouraged to make use of these resources by attending the seminar in person or viewing via the livestream or as it becomes available on the BLC video archive.

## 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 17, 2018, as well as the Monday business session, June 18, 2018, 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 19, 2018, and found them to be correct, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod adopt the minutes as read.

### ***Resolution 3: Secretary’s Minutes***

WHEREAS, The Minutes Committee has heard the minutes of the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod for the Wednesday morning and afternoon business sessions, June 20, 2018, and found them to be correct, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod adopt the minutes as read.

#### ***Resolution 4: 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 Thursday, June 21, 2018.

### **PASTORAL CONFERENCE RECORDS AND RESOLUTIONS—ACTION OF THE SYNOD**

#### ***Resolution 1: Records***

WHEREAS, It clearly states in the *Book of Reports and Memorials* (BORAM) that "Secretaries of circuit pastoral conferences are to mail their respective reports to records@els.org OR to hand in their respective reports to the floor committee on the first day of the convention", and,

WHEREAS, The floor committee received no reports on the first day of the convention, and,  
WHEREAS, Some secretaries actually emailed their reports to the temporary chair of the floor committee, and,

WHEREAS, Those reports had to then be forwarded to the archivist by the chairman of the floor committee to the appropriate synod address, and,

WHEREAS, Such a variety of record submission seems to indicate no lack of willingness to submit conference records but a lack of understanding of the proper procedure for submitting said reports, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That all conference chairmen and all conference secretaries take note of the information provided each year in the BORAM concerning the submission of conference records, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That we encourage the conference secretaries to add the "records address" given above to their mailing list and submit the minutes of their conferences at the same time as they mail those minutes to their conference attendees, and,
- C. BE IT RESOLVED, That those secretaries bring their conference papers and submitted to the floor committee on the first day of the convention unless those papers were submitted electronically with the minutes.

#### ***Resolution 2: Anniversaries of Ordination***

WHEREAS, The Reverend Timothy Erickson is observing the fortieth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, and,

WHEREAS, The Reverend Gaylin Schmeling is observing the fortieth anniversary of his ordination into the holy ministry, therefore,

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That letters of congratulations be sent to Missionary Erickson and President Schmeling 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 publically congratulate them for their years of service to His kingdom.

#### ***Resolution 3: Deaths***

WHEREAS, The Lord in His wisdom and love has called to Himself in heaven the soul of Mrs. Mildred Gullixson on August 27, 2017, and,

WHEREAS, The Lord in His wisdom and love has called to Himself in heaven the soul of Mrs. Carolyn Wosje on October 13, 2017, and,

WHEREAS, The Lord in His wisdom and love has called to Himself in heaven the soul of the Reverend Paul Madson on March 21, 2018, therefore,



BE IT RESOLVED That letters of condolences be sent to the immediate families of these faithful servants of our Lord expressing our sympathy, our support, and reminding them that their sure solace and comfort is in Jesus, their Savior.

## MEMORIALS

### VOTING CONVENTION DELEGATES

WHEREAS, It has been a long-standing tradition of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod to place a strong emphasis on laymen involvement in synod matters, and,

WHEREAS, The ELS has secured that emphasis in its Bylaws, stating: “Member congregations should make every effort to be represented at the synodical conventions by their pastor(s) and by two duly elected delegates” (*Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod*, chapter IV, paragraph 2, emphasis added), and,

WHEREAS, Many ELS congregations struggle to find two lay delegates to represent them at convention, and,

WHEREAS, The 2017 ELS convention approved the establishment of a new rule prohibiting pastors emeriti (retired pastors) from serving as a congregation’s voting delegate [(“b) Pastors are not to be elected as lay delegates” (*Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod* chapter IV, paragraph 2b)], hereafter referred to as “Rule b,” and,

WHEREAS, It was stated from the floor of the convention that the explanation for “Rule b” was the desire to maintain the laymen/clergy ratio at synod conventions, and,

WHEREAS, It was further expressed that “Rule b” eliminates the possibility of a pastor emeritus, who would be serving as a congregation’s voting representative, from being nominated and/or voted into a “layman position” on a given board or committee, and thus, upsetting the laymen/clergy ratio, and,

WHEREAS, Such a nomination would be immediately disallowed by the president of the synod, at the very least, and certainly by the convention at large, because, despite being retired, they are still clergy, and,

WHEREAS, It appears that the Synod Review Committee developed “Rule b” so as to avoid possible future problems, rather than addressing any existing problems of a pastor emeritus serving as a voting delegate, and,

WHEREAS, The problems that “Rule b” seeks to address have never actually been an issue, and,

WHEREAS, “Rule b” potentially creates a problem in that a congregation stands to be disenfranchised in the event that only a pastor emeritus is available and willing to serve as its lay delegate, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That “Rule b” under paragraph 2 of chapter IV of the *Bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod* be amended to read: “Pastors emeriti may be allowed to serve as voting delegates.”

*Gloria Dei Lutheran Church  
Cold Spring, Minnesota*

### ACTION OF THE SYNOD

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the memorial regarding Voting Convention Delegates be sent to the Synod Review Committee for further consideration, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Synod Review Committee report its conclusions to the 2019 Convention of the ELS.

## SEMINARY FACULTY NOMINATION PROCEDURE

WHEREAS, The process for calling a president and professors to Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary is articulated in the Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Article II.A.1.a–d and Article II.A.2.a–d., and,

WHEREAS, The nomination process is inconsistent between seminary presidents and professors, and,

WHEREAS, The timeline of the current process limits participation because it requires many congregations to publicize and hold a special meeting of their voters' assembly, and,

WHEREAS, The process for calling of professors requires publication in at least two issues of the *Lutheran Sentinel*, and,

WHEREAS, The *Lutheran Sentinel* has adopted a bi-monthly publication schedule, creating significant and unnecessary delays for calls to be issued and for new professors to take up their work, and,

WHEREAS, The aim of the nomination process is to provide the Regents with a list of candidates from which they must choose to fill these positions, therefore,

A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the nomination process for both seminary president and professors be streamlined and simplified, allowing flexibility to reflect the communicative technologies of our modern times and broadening the participation of our congregational members in the nomination process by accepting nominations from individual voting members of our congregations, and,

B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Guidelines for Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Article II. A.2. be amended as follows:

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 already.

- a. When the board determines that it is necessary to seek a candidate for president, it shall publish an announcement from the ELS Board of Regents and 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 voting members of the synod's congregations ~~the congregations of the synod through its official representatives (signed by the president/chairman and secretary)~~ to submit nominations for the office through a process determined by the ELS Board of Regents in consultation with the ELS Committee for Communication. 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 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–e remain unchanged.

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.

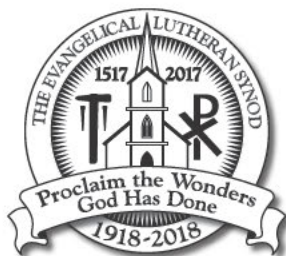
[Delete the existing II.A.2.a-d and replace with]

- a. The board shall follow the same procedure as that used for the calling of a seminary president (see Article II.A.1.a-d).
- ~~c-~~b. 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.

*Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Okauchee, Wisconsin*

#### **ACTION OF THE SYNOD**

- A. BE IT RESOLVED, That the memorial regarding Seminary Faculty Nomination Procedure be sent to the Synod Review Committee for further consideration, and,
- B. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Synod Review Committee report its conclusions to the 2019 convention of the ELS.



# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**AND SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**  
**YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD  
TABLE OF CONTENTS  
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**

<b>INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</b>	
<b>CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION</b>	
<b>CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>CONSOLIDATING SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>COMBINING SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL POSITION</b>	<b>24</b>

## 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, 2017 and 2016, 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 consolidating statement of financial position, consolidating schedule of activities, 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  
May 24, 2018

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	2017	2016
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,963,348	\$ 974,066
Accounts Receivable	551,357	1,013,948
Interest Receivable	161,204	97,258
Inventory of Publications	81,488	46,601
Prepaid Expenses	19,472	28,356
Other Assets	3,940	3,940
Loans Receivable	2,541,649	2,028,527
Mission Deposits	405,123	388,543
Investments	18,839,225	18,107,578
Property Held for Resale	1,089,325	1,405,812
Property, Plant, and Equipment, Net	357,967	367,188
	<u>\$ 27,014,098</u>	<u>\$ 24,461,817</u>
Total Assets		
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts Payable	\$ 457,933	\$ 365,668
Interest Payable	60	60
Other Liabilities	4,255	4,988
Notes Payable	22,384	48,914
Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements	981,910	931,752
Total Liabilities	1,466,542	1,351,382
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted:		
Designated	3,699,127	3,731,580
Undesignated	4,807,918	4,271,122
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	8,507,045	8,002,702
Temporarily Restricted	10,320,940	8,406,162
Permanently Restricted	6,719,571	6,701,571
Total Net Assets	25,547,556	23,110,435
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 27,014,098</u>	<u>\$ 24,461,817</u>

See accompanying Notes to Consolidated financial Statements.

(3)

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
<b>REVENUES, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>				
Contributions:				
Congregations/Organizations/Individuals	\$ 1,714,948	\$ 202,003	\$ 18,000	\$ 1,934,951
Estate, Trusts, and Memorials	115,959	-	-	115,959
Thrivent	19,425	-	-	19,425
Helping Hands	89,357	-	-	89,357
Mission Advancement Project	380,000	-	-	380,000
Schwan Funds	489,999	-	-	489,999
Others	106,940	-	-	106,940
Interest	12,275	104,394	-	116,669
Investment Income	143,093	299,273	-	442,366
Publications	19,585	-	-	19,585
Registration Fees	50,084	-	-	50,084
Subscriptions	34,929	-	-	34,929
Realized and Unrealized Gain on				
Long-Term Investments	751,923	1,613,452	-	2,365,375
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	304,344	(304,344)	-	-
Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support	4,232,861	1,914,778	18,000	6,165,639
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Bethany Lutheran College	148,040	-	-	148,040
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary	31,358	-	-	31,358
Lutheran Schools of America	46,668	-	-	46,668
Thoughts of Faith	373,284	-	-	373,284
Christian Services	173,446	-	-	173,446
Church Extension	2,499	-	-	2,499
Youth Outreach	79,485	-	-	79,485
World Outreach	862,860	-	-	862,860
Home Missions/Evangelism	806,882	-	-	806,882
Publications	70,123	-	-	70,123
Synod Fund	705,110	-	-	705,110
Other Programs and Costs	416,949	-	-	416,949
Depreciation	11,814	-	-	11,814
Total Expenses	3,728,518	-	-	3,728,518
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	504,343	1,914,778	18,000	2,437,121
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	8,002,702	8,406,162	6,701,571	23,110,435
<b>NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR</b>	<u>\$ 8,507,045</u>	<u>\$ 10,320,940</u>	<u>\$ 6,719,571</u>	<u>\$ 25,547,556</u>

See accompanying Notes to Consolidated financial Statements.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**  
**(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)**

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
<b>REVENUES, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>				
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 Gain 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	(5,747)	-	-
Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support	4,139,579	345,292	-	4,479,865
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
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
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	667,164	345,292	-	1,012,456
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	7,335,538	8,060,870	6,701,571	22,097,979
<b>NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR</b>	<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 STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**  
**YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	2017	2016
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Change in Net Assets	\$ 2,437,121	\$ 1,012,456
Adjustments to Reconcile Change in Net Assets to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities:		
Depreciation	11,814	13,779
Decrease in Liability for Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements	50,158	27,652
Realized and Unrealized Gains on Investments	(2,365,375)	(695,714)
(Increase) Decrease in:		
Accounts Receivable	462,591	(526,146)
Interest Receivable	(63,946)	(27,218)
Inventory of Publications	(34,887)	3,871
Prepaid Expenses	8,884	(2,269)
Other Assets	(1,970)	(1,970)
Property Held for Resale	316,487	-
Mission Deposits	(16,580)	18,257
Increase (Decrease) in:		
Accounts Payable	92,265	97,160
Interest Payable	-	6
Other Liabilities	(733)	816
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	895,829	(79,320)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Proceeds from Investments	4,715,472	1,190,105
Purchases of Investments	(3,081,744)	(844,247)
Issuance of Loans Receivable	(686,156)	(31,438)
Collections of Loans Receivable	175,004	42,382
Purchase of Equipment	(2,593)	(4,026)
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Investing Activities	1,119,983	352,776
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payment of Notes Payable	(26,530)	(34,916)
<b>INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	1,989,282	238,540
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Beginning of Year	974,066	735,526
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR</b>	<u>\$ 2,963,348</u>	<u>\$ 974,066</u>
<b>SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION</b>		
Cash Paid for Interest	<u>\$ 156</u>	<u>\$ 274</u>

See accompanying Notes to Consolidated financial Statements.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
**(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)**

**NOTE 1 SUMMARY OF 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 nonprofit 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 nonprofit 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 nonprofit 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, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

**NOTE 1 SUMMARY OF 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, 2017 and 2016.

**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 \$232,582 and \$226,512 at December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, and is included in annuities payable on the consolidated statements of financial position.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD  
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)**

**NOTE 1 SUMMARY OF 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 \$420,294 and \$401,441 at December 31, 2017 and 2016, 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 date of the gift and applicable mortality tables and amounted to \$329,034 and \$303,799 at December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

Assets held by the Synod under Trust agreements are reported at fair value based on quoted market prices and amounted to \$800,466 and \$736,147 at December 31, 2017 and 2016, 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, 2017.

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, 2017.

**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, 2017 and 2016.

**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.



**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
**(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)**

**NOTE 1 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**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, 2017 and 2016.

**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 the 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, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

**NOTE 1 SUMMARY OF 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, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

**NOTE 1 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**Fair Value (Continued)**

Financial instruments carried at fair value on a recurring basis are as follows at December 31:

December 31, 2017				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Investments:				
Equity Mutual Funds	\$ 1,440,562	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,440,562
Equities	10,984,022	-	-	10,984,022
Alternative Investments	1,713,514	-	-	1,713,514
Real Estate and Specialty Assets	2,519,892	-	-	2,519,892
Government Obligations	405,222	-	-	405,222
Municipal Bonds	154,850	-	-	154,850
Corporate Obligations	916,163	-	-	916,163
Total	<u>\$ 18,134,225</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 18,134,225</u>

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>

**Subsequent Events**

In preparing these consolidated financial statements, the Synod has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through May 24, 2018, the date the consolidated financial statements were available to be issued.

**NOTE 2 INVESTMENTS**

Investments consist of the following at December 31:

	2017	2016
Equity Mutual Funds	\$ 1,440,562	\$ 1,816,004
Equities	10,984,022	9,771,094
Alternative Investments	1,713,514	1,936,358
Real Estate and Specialty Assets	2,519,892	2,135,011
Government Obligations	405,222	913,532
Municipal Bonds	154,850	157,255
Corporate Obligations	916,163	1,173,324
Subtotal	<u>18,134,225</u>	<u>17,902,578</u>
Lutheran Association for Church Extension, Inc., Certificates	705,000	205,000
Total Investments	<u>\$ 18,839,225</u>	<u>\$ 18,107,578</u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

**NOTE 2 INVESTMENTS (CONTINUED)**

Assets held by the Synod under the charitable remainder unitrust agreements as of December 31, 2017 and 2016 totaled \$800,466 and \$736,147, respectively. They are included in the various investment categories.

	2017	2016
Investment Return is Summarized as Follows:		
Interest Income	\$ 116,669	\$ 96,134
Investment Income	442,366	435,556
Realized and Unrealized Gains (Losses)	2,365,375	695,714
Total	<u>\$ 2,924,410</u>	<u>\$ 1,227,404</u>

**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 through the operating support. Interest receivable as of December 31, 2017 and 2016 totaled \$144,472 and \$92,105, respectively.

	Interest Rate	Maturity	2017	2016
Congregational Loans:				
Hope, West Jordan, UT	3.25%	December 1, 2022	\$ -	\$ 142,330
Lakewood, WA	3.25%	N/A	118,068	118,068
Peace, Lakeland, FL	3.25%	N/A	17,557	17,557
Redeemer, Scottsdale, AZ	3.25%	February 1, 2012	226,765	249,365
Resurrection, FL	3.25%	November 1, 2020	181,899	182,403
Family of God, Fort Mohave, AZ	5.75%	June 15, 2024	233,073	207,062
Gloria Dei, Cold Spring, MN	0.00%	September 1, 2020	15,794	22,294
Hope, Farmington, MN	3.25%	February 24, 2027	660,145	-
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:				
Board for Home Outreach	0.00%	December 1, 2021	14,000	15,100
Total Loans Receivable			<u>\$ 2,541,649</u>	<u>\$ 2,028,527</u>

Maturities of the loans receivable for the year ending December 31 are as follows:

Year Ending December 31,	Amount
2018	\$ 43,052
2019	25,818
2020	23,962
2021	20,148
2022	16,948
Thereafter	2,411,721
Total	<u>\$ 2,541,649</u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
**(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)**

**NOTE 3 LOANS RECEIVABLE (CONTINUED)**

The following table presents the aging of past due loans by loan segment as of December 31:

	Current	31 - 90 Days Past Due	90+ Days Past Due	Total	Nonaccruing Loans
<i>As of December 31, 2017</i>					
Congregational Loans	\$ 1,750,287	\$ -	\$ 777,362	\$ 2,527,649	\$ -
Loan to Individuals	14,000	-	-	14,000	-
Total	<u>\$ 1,764,287</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 777,362</u>	<u>\$ 2,541,649</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
	Current	31 - 60 Days Past Due	90+ Days Past Due	Total	Nonaccruing Loans
<i>As of December 31, 2016</i>					
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>

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.

	Current	Watch	Past Due	Doubtful	Total
<i>As of December 31, 2017</i>					
Congregational Loans	\$ 1,750,287	\$ 526,732	\$ 250,630	\$ -	\$ 2,527,649
Loan to Individuals	14,000	-	-	-	14,000
Total	<u>\$ 1,764,287</u>	<u>\$ 526,732</u>	<u>\$ 250,630</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 2,541,649</u>
	Current	Watch	Past Due	Doubtful	Total
<i>As of December 31, 2016</i>					
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>

**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, 2017 and 2016, there was no allowance for uncollectible accounts.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

**NOTE 4 PROPERTY, PLANT, AND EQUIPMENT**

	December 31, 2016	Additions	Disposals	December 31, 2017
Land	\$ 227,621	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 227,621
Buildings	197,842	-	-	197,842
Equipment	110,253	2,593	-	112,846
Subtotal	535,716	2,593	-	538,309
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	168,528	11,814	-	180,342
Total	<u>\$ 367,188</u>	<u>\$ (9,221)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 357,967</u>

	December 31, 2015	Additions	Disposals	December 31, 2016
Land	\$ 227,621	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 227,621
Buildings	197,842	-	-	197,842
Equipment	106,227	4,026	-	110,253
Subtotal	531,690	4,026	-	535,716
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	154,749	13,779	-	168,528
Total	<u>\$ 376,941</u>	<u>\$ (9,753)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 367,188</u>

**NOTE 5 NOTES PAYABLE**

Notes payable consist of the following at December 31:

Description	2017	2016
Investment program notes, unsecured, amounts loaned by individuals, congregations, and organizations for periods less than one year; interest rates at 0.35% per annum	\$ 20,884	\$ 20,884
Life Loan Plan notes, unsecured, amounts loaned by individuals at interest rate of 5.5% per annum	1,500	3,030
Unsecured working capital demand loan from Helping Hands; payment terms variable	-	25,000
Total	<u>\$ 22,384</u>	<u>\$ 48,914</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.

Year Ending December 31,	Amount
2018	\$ 20,884
2019	-
2020	-
2021	-
2022	-
Thereafter	1,500
Total	<u>\$ 22,384</u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

**NOTE 6 CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY AND TRUST AGREEMENTS**

Obligations under charitable gift annuity and trust agreements consist of the following at December 31:

	2017	2016
Charitable Gift Annuities - Due to Donors	\$ 232,582	\$ 226,512
Charitable Gift Annuities - Due to Others Upon Death of the Donor	329,034	303,799
Agency Obligations (Unitrusts)	420,294	401,441
Total	<u>\$ 981,910</u>	<u>\$ 931,752</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, 2017 and 2016 was approximately \$40,900 and \$43,500, respectively. The related employee contributions were \$76,575 and \$74,924 for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, 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 are as follows:

	2017	2016
Program	\$ 3,066,531	\$ 2,792,534
General and Administrative	661,987	674,875
Total	<u>\$ 3,728,518</u>	<u>\$ 3,467,409</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 \$148,040 and \$150,225 on December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, to Bethany Lutheran College and \$31,358 and \$31,820 on December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, to Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. The funds provided are used for operating support.



**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

**NOTE 9 RELATED ORGANIZATIONS (CONTINUED)**

As of December 31, 2017 and 2016, the amounts included in accounts payable for Bethany Lutheran College were \$27,859 and \$-0-, respectively, and for Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary the amounts were \$2,570 and \$2,084, 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, 2017 and 2016, the Synod is contingently liable to the extent of approximately \$4,403,418 and \$2,898,000, respectively, as guarantor of the indebtedness for the following congregations: Family of God – Ft. Mohave, Arizona; Redeeming Grace – Rogers, Minnesota.; Faith - San Antonio, Texas; Peace – Kissimmee, Florida, and Hope – Farmington, Minnesota. As of December 31, 2017, 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 \$26,000 and \$32,000 for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

**NOTE 11 UNRESTRICTED DESIGNATED, TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSET BALANCES**

Unrestricted board designated net assets consist of the following at December 31:

	2017	2016
World Outreach	\$ 504,544	\$ 787,327
Home Missions/Evangelism	16,117	68,462
Lutheran Schools of America	118,289	48,414
Projects and Grants	61,000	54,330
Publications	79,435	79,383
Youth Outreach	121,881	126,291
World Needs	15,051	29,299
Book of Family Prayer	10,524	11,491
Christian Service	-	14,826
Special Disaster Aid	1,039	-
Pension Plan	-	6,535
Health Reimbursement	14,000	14,000
Thoughts of Faith	5,809	5,809
Energy Echo	9,870	8,834
Donor Advised Funds	282,870	169,910
Military Tribute	1,923	1,540
ELS Foundation:		
Donated	778,374	739,824
Board of Trustees	1,678,401	1,565,305
Total	<u>\$ 3,699,127</u>	<u>\$ 3,731,580</u>



**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
(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:

	2017	2016
Home Mission Expansion/Evangelism	\$ 3,632,027	\$ 3,291,403
World Outreach	739,943	490,614
General World Outreach	566,119	506,311
Church Extension	2,228,257	2,124,687
Home Mission/Evangelism Reserve	252,389	226,838
Thoughts of Faith	302,011	267,141
Robert & Madelyn Soule Endowment Fund	292,885	198,117
Partners in the Gospel	540,782	389,130
World Outreach Mission Seminary	266,942	135,859
President's Office	233,962	149,515
Charitable Gift Annuity	200,320	156,008
Marvin and Delores Schwan	145,547	69,937
Soule President Endowment	301,090	133,631
Anniversary Offering	498,055	232,138
Steen Endowment	26,752	7,729
Hugh Brooks Endowment	2,048	-
75th Anniversary / His Truth for Our Youth	56,354	9,160
St. Martin Lutheran Church - Shawano, WI	5,856	3,225
Whipple-Olson-Wilson Endowment	24,313	11,990
ELS Schools	5,288	2,729
Total	<u>\$ 10,320,940</u>	<u>\$ 8,406,162</u>

Temporarily restricted net assets were released during the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, as qualifying expenditures were made by the Synod.

Permanently restricted net assets are restricted for the following purposes at December 31:

	2017	2016
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 Lutheran Church - Shawano, WI	20,147	20,147
Hugh Brooks Endowment	18,000	-
Total	<u>\$ 6,719,571</u>	<u>\$ 6,701,571</u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
(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

The following is a summary of endowment funds for the years ended December 31:

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
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 Gains	-	246,954	-	246,954
Total Investment Return	-	417,988	-	417,988
Contributions	-	-	-	-
Appropriations and Release of Endowment Assets for Expenditure	1,147	(244,503)	-	(243,356)
Endowment Net Assets, December 31, 2016	-	1,111,021	6,701,571	7,812,592
Investment Return:				
Investment Income	-	167,153	-	167,153
Net Realized and Unrealized Losses	-	878,343	-	878,343
Total Investment Return	-	1,045,496	-	1,045,496
Contributions	-	-	18,000	18,000
Appropriations/Transfers of Endowment Assets for Expenditure	-	(254,697)	-	(254,697)
Endowment Net Assets, December 31, 2017	\$ -	\$ 1,901,820	\$ 6,719,571	\$ 8,621,391

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**  
**(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)**

**NOTE 12 ENDOWMENT (CONTINUED)**

**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- at December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

**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 5% 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 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Evangelical Lutheran Synod	Lutheran Schools of America	Thoughts of Faith, Inc.	Total
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,963,348	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,963,348
Accounts Receivable	542,211	-	9,146	551,357
Interest Receivable	161,204	-	-	161,204
Inventory of Publications	81,488	-	-	81,488
Prepaid Expenses	19,130	-	342	19,472
Other Assets	3,940	-	-	3,940
Loans Receivable	2,541,649	-	-	2,541,649
Mission Deposits	405,123	-	-	405,123
Investments	17,759,807	197,356	882,062	18,839,225
Property Held for Resale	1,089,325	-	-	1,089,325
Property, Plant, and Equipment, Net	357,967	-	-	357,967
Total Assets	<u>\$ 25,925,192</u>	<u>\$ 197,356</u>	<u>\$ 891,550</u>	<u>\$ 27,014,098</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>				
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Accounts Payable	\$ 365,933	\$ -	\$ 92,000	\$ 457,933
Interest Payable	60	-	-	60
Other Liabilities	4,255	-	-	4,255
Notes Payable	22,384	-	-	22,384
Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements	981,910	-	-	981,910
Total Liabilities	1,374,542	-	92,000	1,466,542
<b>NET ASSETS</b>				
Unrestricted:				
Designated	3,575,029	118,289	5,809	3,699,127
Undesignated	4,237,121	79,067	491,730	4,807,918
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	7,812,150	197,356	497,539	8,507,045
Temporarily Restricted	10,018,929	-	302,011	10,320,940
Permanently Restricted	6,719,571	-	-	6,719,571
Total Net Assets	<u>24,550,650</u>	<u>197,356</u>	<u>799,550</u>	<u>25,547,556</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 25,925,192</u>	<u>\$ 197,356</u>	<u>\$ 891,550</u>	<u>\$ 27,014,098</u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**CONSOLIDATING SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Evangelical Lutheran Synod	Lutheran Schools of America	Thoughts of Faith, Inc.	Total
<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>				
Revenues, Gains, and Other Support:				
Congregations/Organizations/Individuals	\$ 1,531,030	\$ 5,970	\$ 177,948	\$ 1,714,948
Estate, Trusts, and Memorials	109,967	-	5,992	115,959
Thrivent	19,425	-	-	19,425
Helping Hands	89,357	-	-	89,357
Mission Advancement Project	217,500	-	162,500	380,000
Schwan Funds	442,620	47,379	-	489,999
Others	106,940	-	-	106,940
Interest	12,275	-	-	12,275
Investment Income	126,261	3,531	13,301	143,093
Rent and Royalties	-	-	-	-
Publications	19,585	-	-	19,585
Services Provided	-	-	-	-
Registration Fees	50,084	-	-	50,084
Subscriptions	34,929	-	-	34,929
Realized and Unrealized Losses on				
Long-Term Investments	663,473	18,557	69,893	751,923
Gain on the Sale of Property	-	-	-	-
Transfers	(25,106)	25,106	-	-
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	248,796	-	55,548	304,344
Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support	3,647,136	100,543	485,182	4,232,861
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Bethany Lutheran College	148,040	-	-	148,040
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary	31,358	-	-	31,358
Lutheran Schools of America	-	46,668	-	46,668
Thoughts of Faith	-	-	373,284	373,284
Christian Services	173,446	-	-	173,446
Church Extension	2,499	-	-	2,499
Youth Outreach	79,485	-	-	79,485
World Outreach	862,860	-	-	862,860
Home Missions/Evangelism	806,882	-	-	806,882
Publications	70,123	-	-	70,123
Synod Fund	705,110	-	-	705,110
Other Programs and Costs	416,949	-	-	416,949
Depreciation	11,814	-	-	11,814
Total Expenses	3,308,566	46,668	373,284	3,728,518
<b>CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	338,570	53,875	111,898	504,343

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**CONSOLIDATING SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

	Evangelical Lutheran Synod	Lutheran Schools of America	Thoughts of Faith, Inc.	Total
<b>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>				
Support:				
Congregations, Organizations, and Individuals	\$ 147,605	\$ -	\$ 54,398	\$ 202,003
Estate, Trusts, and Memorials		-	-	-
Interest	104,394	-	-	104,394
Investment Income	293,514	-	5,759	299,273
Realized and Unrealized Losses on				
Long-Term Investments	1,583,191	-	30,261	1,613,452
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	(248,796)	-	(55,548)	(304,344)
<b>CHANGE IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	1,879,908	-	34,870	1,914,778
<b>PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>				
Support:				
Congregations, Organizations and Individuals	18,000	-	-	18,000
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	-	-	-	-
<b>CHANGE IN PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	18,000	-	-	18,000
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<u>\$ 2,236,478</u>	<u>\$ 53,875</u>	<u>\$ 146,768</u>	<u>\$ 2,437,121</u>

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD**  
**COMBINING SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2017**  
(SEE INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT)

ASSETS	Evangelical Lutheran Synod December 31, 2017	Bethany Lutheran College June 30, 2017	Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary 6/30/2017	Total
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,963,348	\$ 103,566	\$ 210,995	\$ 3,277,909
Inter-Company Receivable (Payable)	-	(61,777)	61,777	-
Accounts Receivable	551,357	-	-	551,357
Student Accounts Receivable, Net of Allowance for Doubtful Accounts of \$60,000	-	84,254	-	84,254
Contributions Receivable	-	103,834	-	103,834
Interest Receivable	161,204	-	-	161,204
Other Receivables, Net of Allowance for Doubtful Accounts of \$2,000	-	133,765	5,344	139,109
Inventory	81,488	236,054	-	317,542
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	428,535	29,190	-	457,725
Student Notes Receivable, Net of Allowance for Doubtful Notes of \$40,000	-	425,355	-	425,355
Loans Receivable	2,541,649	-	-	2,541,649
Investments	18,839,225	35,831,731	9,837,374	64,508,330
Deferred Debt Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Beneficial Interest in Funds Held in Trust	-	145,141	104,102	249,243
Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trust	-	399,373	399,373	798,746
Land Held for Resale	1,089,325	-	-	1,089,325
Property, Plant, and Equipment, Net	357,967	45,470,106	1,276,358	47,104,431
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 27,014,098</b>	<b>\$ 82,900,592</b>	<b>\$ 11,895,323</b>	<b>\$ 121,810,013</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>				
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Accounts Payable	\$ 457,933	\$ 334,690	\$ 25,922	\$ 818,545
Interest Payable	60	-	-	60
Other Liabilities	4,255	24,755	-	29,010
Accrued Liabilities	-	746,777	5,448	752,225
Deposit Accounts	-	86,768	-	86,768
Line of Credit Payable	-	166,419	-	166,419
Long-Term Debt and Notes Payable	22,384	11,818,262	-	11,840,646
Charitable Gift Annuity and Trust Agreements	981,910	712,623	326,211	2,020,744
Deposits Held in Custody for Others	-	184,358	8,720	193,078
U.S. Government Grants Refundable	-	358,539	-	358,539
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>1,466,542</b>	<b>14,433,191</b>	<b>366,301</b>	<b>16,266,034</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>				
Unrestricted:				
Designated	3,699,127	-	-	3,699,127
Undesignated	4,807,918	37,170,674	1,807,033	43,785,625
<b>Total Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	<b>8,507,045</b>	<b>37,170,674</b>	<b>1,807,033</b>	<b>47,484,752</b>
Temporarily Restricted	10,320,940	6,079,312	859,808	17,260,060
Permanently Restricted	6,719,571	25,217,415	8,862,181	40,799,167
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>25,547,556</b>	<b>68,467,401</b>	<b>11,529,022</b>	<b>105,543,979</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 27,014,098</b>	<b>\$ 82,900,592</b>	<b>\$ 11,895,323</b>	<b>\$ 121,810,013</b>

**TREASURER'S**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**  
**FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**



**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 - Menkato, Minnesota  
December 31, 2017

**EXHIBIT I**

**ASSETS**

GENERAL FUND 1	CHURCH EXTENSION AND LOAN FUND 2	RESIDENCES AND REAL ESTATE FUND 5	HOME OUTREACH FUND 6	WORLD OUTREACH FUND 7	TRUST AGENCY FUND 8	DONOR ADVISED FUND 9	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (LSA)	THOUGHTS OF FAITH	EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN FOUNDATION	TOTAL ALL FUNDS
\$88,170.07	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$88,170.07
117,468.56	500.00	0.00	57,161.24	357,344.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	8,146.41	\$9,737.32	551,357.99
75,985.31	0.00	0.00	10,483.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	81,488.31
15,478.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	83,651.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	325,123.00	424,596.33
3,940.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,940.00
\$1,374,255.85	\$453,414.65	\$0.00	\$1,103,742.24	\$1,220,020.71	\$195,454.71	\$292,739.71	\$197,355.51	\$882,062.83	\$16,014,356.34	\$21,733,402.35
0.00	1,722,533.54	0.00	14,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	805,115.08	2,941,648.62
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0.00	72,750.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	58,454.84	181,204.83
58,101.33	0.00	480,208.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,089,324.47	1,627,334.63
0.00	0.00	(180,241.44)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(180,241.44)
\$1,709,409.80	\$2,246,199.18	\$299,865.39	\$1,185,395.48	\$1,681,016.82	\$195,454.71	\$292,739.71	\$197,355.51	\$881,551.04	\$18,332,098.85	\$27,014,098.49
\$381,835.95	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$391,835.95	\$0.00
\$2,091,245.76	\$2,246,199.18	\$299,865.39	\$1,185,395.48	\$1,681,016.82	\$195,454.71	\$292,739.71	\$197,355.51	\$881,551.04	\$17,950,273.89	\$27,014,098.49

**TOTAL ASSETS**

**LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES**

GENERAL FUND 1	CHURCH EXTENSION AND LOAN FUND 2	RESIDENCES AND REAL ESTATE FUND 5	HOME OUTREACH FUND 6	WORLD OUTREACH FUND 7	TRUST AGENCY FUND 8	DONOR ADVISED FUND 9	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (LSA)	THOUGHTS OF FAITH	EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN FOUNDATION	TOTAL ALL FUNDS
\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
1,500.00	20,883.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	22,383.78
102,096.51	0.00	0.00	2,757.34	64,277.91	195,454.71	0.00	0.00	92,000.06	1,344.00	457,933.53
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	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4,255.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	981,909.98	991,909.98
\$107,854.98	\$20,943.41	\$0.00	\$2,757.34	\$64,277.91	\$195,454.71	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$92,000.06	\$953,252.99	\$1,460,542.37

**TOTAL LIABILITIES**

**FUND BALANCES:**

Unrestricted - designated (Note D)	\$304,198.63	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$16,116.60	\$505,205.67	\$0.00	\$92,739.71	\$118,289.07	\$5,809.00	\$2,456,774.43	\$3,893,125.31
Unrestricted (Note E)	1,975,199.85	0.00	299,865.39	1,166,522.54	\$1,091,533.24	0.00	0.00	75,066.44	491,736.73	0.00	4,807,916.29
Unrestricted - restricted (Note F)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,719,570.82	6,719,570.82	13,439,141.61
Temporarily restricted (Note G)	0.00	2,228,252.77	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	302,611.25	7,780,574.68	10,320,941.70	20,643,366.63

**TOTAL FUND BALANCES**

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES**

\$1,983,390.78	\$2,228,252.77	\$299,865.39	\$1,182,639.14	\$1,596,738.91	\$0.00	\$92,739.71	\$197,355.51	\$769,650.98	\$16,067,019.93	\$25,457,556.12	\$30,457,556.12
\$2,091,245.76	\$2,246,199.18	\$299,865.39	\$1,185,395.48	\$1,681,016.82	\$195,454.71	\$292,739.71	\$197,355.51	\$881,551.04	\$17,950,273.89	\$27,014,098.49	\$30,457,556.12

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES  
Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota  
December 31, 2017

EXHIBIT J

Balance 12/31/2016									
GENERAL	CHURCH	RESIDENCES	HOME	WORLD	TRUST	DONOR	ELEMENTARY	EVANGELICAL	TOTAL
FUND 1	EXTENSION AND	AND REAL	OUTREACH	OUTREACH	FUND 8	ADVISED	EDUCATION	LUTHERAN	ALL
	FUND 2	ESTATE	FUND 6	FUND 7		FUND 5	(LSA)	SYNOD	FUNDS
		FUND 5						FOUNDATION	
Unrestricted - Designated	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$68,462.16	\$787,987.74	\$0.00	\$178,744.41	\$48,413.23	\$2,305,128.09	\$3,731,577.79
Unrestricted	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,678.39	\$687,433.27	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$95,066.35	\$0.00	\$4,271,125.24
Permanently Restricted	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,701,570.82	\$8,701,570.82
Temporarily Restricted	\$2,124,085.66	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,014,335.48	\$8,459,163.58
<b>TOTAL FUND BALANCES 12/31/2016</b>	<b>\$2,124,085.66</b>	<b>\$311,678.39</b>	<b>\$1,286,563.69</b>	<b>\$1,475,421.01</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$178,744.41</b>	<b>\$143,479.58</b>	<b>\$15,021,034.37</b>	<b>\$23,110,437.43</b>
ADD:									
Investment Portfolio Income	\$34,197.11	\$0.00	\$24,047.20	\$24,678.07	\$0.00	\$5,807.86	\$3,531.41	\$10,066.68	\$18,778.43
Investment Services	(7,173.64)	0.00	(5,170.33)	(5,178.37)	0.00	(1,237.21)	(740.78)	(3,988.19)	(170,345.21)
Change in Split Interest Agreements	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(126,556.07)	(\$126,556.07)
Annuity/Trust Amortization	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
Market Value Gains (Losses)	179,988.27	0.00	128,516.00	129,697.26	0.00	30,991.97	18,556.75	(460,748.86)	(\$460,748.86)
Excess of Contributions Over Expenditures	(139,435.45)	(1,814.00)	(252,857.50)	(27,840.08)	0.00	78,342.88	32,528.56	31,454.81	\$72,365.37
and Appropriations for the Period	\$67,265.28	\$103,669.21	(\$1,814.00)	\$121,317.80	\$0.00	\$113,995.30	\$53,875.93	\$143,107.04	\$319,077.25
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONS</b>	<b>\$27,829.78</b>	<b>\$101,855.21</b>	<b>(\$1,814.00)</b>	<b>\$121,317.80</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$113,995.30</b>	<b>\$53,875.93</b>	<b>\$143,107.04</b>	<b>\$2,431,116.09</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,983,360.78</b>	<b>\$2,228,255.77</b>	<b>\$299,855.39</b>	<b>\$1,182,030.14</b>	<b>\$1,596,738.91</b>	<b>\$292,739.71</b>	<b>\$197,355.51</b>	<b>\$16,907,019.93</b>	<b>\$25,547,553.12</b>
Balance 12/31/2017									
Unrestricted - Designated (Note D)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$16,116.60	\$565,205.57	\$0.00	\$262,739.71	\$118,285.07	\$5,800.00	\$2,455,774.43
Unrestricted (Note E)	\$204,450.83	\$0.00	\$1,166,333.46	\$1,091,333.46	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$79,068.44	\$491,730.73	\$3,909,125.31
Permanently Restricted (Note F)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,719,570.82	\$8,719,570.82
Temporarily Restricted (Note G)	\$0.00	\$2,228,255.77	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,302,011.20	\$3,770,266.97
<b>TOTAL FUND BALANCES 12/31/2017</b>	<b>\$1,983,360.78</b>	<b>\$2,228,255.77</b>	<b>\$299,855.39</b>	<b>\$1,182,030.14</b>	<b>\$1,596,738.91</b>	<b>\$292,739.71</b>	<b>\$197,355.51</b>	<b>\$16,907,019.93</b>	<b>\$25,547,553.12</b>

### Descriptions of ELS Foundation Funds

<b>Fund Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Description</b>
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 <sup>th</sup> 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 Solveig 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.
34	Hugh Brooks Youth Mission Fund Endowment \$18,000 Permanently Restricted	Principal donated by Matthew & Rebecca Brooks. Endowment set up in memory of their son Hugh. Income only available to be used for evangelism outreach travel expenses. Intended for youth between the ages of 14-22.
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, 2017

Exhibit IV  
Page 1 of 2

	ROBERT & JOHN WILSON PRESIDENTS ENDOWMENT FUND 18	ABRURY PRESIDENTS ENDOWMENT FUND 19	MAVRE DELORES SCHWAN MISSION TRUST ENDOWMENT FUND 20	WILSON THE GOSPEL ENDOWMENT FUND 21	WILSON ENDOWMENT FUND 22	SEMINARY FUND 23	BWO RESERVE FUND 24	CHARITABLE GIFT & TRUST AGREEMENTS FUND 25	RWP OUTREACH RESERVE FUND 26	EMERSON SOLE ENDOWMENT FUND 27
<b>ASSETS</b>										
Cash in Bank	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Investments	1,391,089.81	833,982.72	746,547.42	1,921,233.28	124,313.22	1,266,942.11	887,284.56	1,564,065.28	265,388.34	1,292,886.34
Loans Receivable	0.00	0.00	0.00	241,330.00	0.00	0.00	116,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Accounts Receivable	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Prepaid Expenses/Deposits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	325,123.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest Receivable	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,102.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Property Held For Resale	0.00	0.00	0.00	425,101.96	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	\$1,391,089.81	\$833,982.72	\$746,547.42	\$2,296,768.73	\$124,313.22	\$1,266,942.11	\$1,307,407.56	\$1,564,065.28	\$265,388.34	\$1,292,886.34
Due from (to) other funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$(391,835.96)	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,391,089.81</b>	<b>\$833,982.72</b>	<b>\$746,547.42</b>	<b>\$2,296,768.73</b>	<b>\$124,313.22</b>	<b>\$1,266,942.11</b>	<b>\$1,307,407.56</b>	<b>\$1,182,229.32</b>	<b>\$265,388.34</b>	<b>\$1,292,886.34</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>										
Accounts Payable	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,344.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Charity Gift Annuity Payable	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	232,582.05	0.00	\$0.00
Agency Obligations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	749,327.91	0.00	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$1,344.00</b>	<b>\$981,909.96</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>										
Balance 12/31/2016	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$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	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$1,000,000.00
Permanently Restricted	133,630.63	148,915.47	69,937.18	389,130.08	11,869.19	135,855.95	995,825.39	156,007.43	226,837.73	169,117.71
Temporarily Restricted	\$1,130,630.63	\$749,516.47	\$669,937.18	\$2,145,107.08	\$11,869.19	\$1,135,855.95	\$995,825.39	\$156,007.43	\$226,837.73	\$1,198,117.71
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,391,089.81</b>	<b>\$833,982.72</b>	<b>\$746,547.42</b>	<b>\$2,296,768.73</b>	<b>\$124,313.22</b>	<b>\$1,266,942.11</b>	<b>\$1,307,407.56</b>	<b>\$1,182,229.32</b>	<b>\$265,388.34</b>	<b>\$1,292,886.34</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>										
Income - Net	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$276,231.91	\$33,142.00	\$0.00	\$(26,984.34)
Investment Portfolio Income	27,702.08	16,041.18	16,146.65	30,260.60	2,947.59	27,854.70	16,775.77	17,800.00	5,458.97	28,182.76
Investment Capital Gains	(5,811.15)	(3,784.55)	(1,347.13)	(3,387.13)	(553.39)	(5,843.16)	(3,519.10)	(13,281.00)	(1,145.14)	(5,907.79)
Charitable Contribution	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(126,358.07)	0.00	0.00
Distributions	0.00	(24,611.76)	(21,906.30)	(38,200.44)	(3,880.64)	(37,298.60)	(68,560.60)	(7,446.58)	(7,446.58)	(48,406.40)
Market value gains (losses)	145,569.25	94,817.09	84,847.09	159,012.72	13,912.47	146,370.26	88,152.95	133,407.00	28,686.86	147,569.34
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$167,459.18</b>	<b>\$64,447.25</b>	<b>\$75,610.24</b>	<b>\$151,651.65</b>	<b>\$12,324.03</b>	<b>\$131,063.16</b>	<b>\$309,136.17</b>	<b>\$44,311.93</b>	<b>\$25,550.61</b>	<b>\$94,758.63</b>
Balance 12/31/2017	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$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	0.00	\$1,000,000.00
Permanently Restricted (Note F)	301,089.81	333,982.72	145,547.42	640,781.73	24,313.22	286,942.11	1,306,053.56	200,319.36	252,388.34	292,886.34
Temporarily Restricted (Note G)	\$1,391,089.81	\$833,982.72	\$746,547.42	\$2,296,768.73	\$124,313.22	\$1,266,942.11	\$1,306,053.56	\$200,319.36	\$265,388.34	\$1,292,886.34
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,391,089.81</b>	<b>\$833,982.72</b>	<b>\$746,547.42</b>	<b>\$2,296,768.73</b>	<b>\$124,313.22</b>	<b>\$1,266,942.11</b>	<b>\$1,307,407.56</b>	<b>\$1,182,229.32</b>	<b>\$265,388.34</b>	<b>\$1,292,886.34</b>

**BALANCE SHEET AND  
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES (Cont.)**  
Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation  
December 31, 2017

Exhibit IV  
Page 2 of 2

**ASSETS**

BHO EXPANSION FUND 28	ST. MARTIN SHAWANO FUND 29	TRUTH FOR OUR YOUTH FUND 30	L.S.A. SCHOOL ENDOWMENT FUND 31	BND Fund FUND 32	HWO STEEN ENDOWMENT FUND 33	HUGH BRINKS MISSION FUND 34	TRUSTEES DONATED FUND 40	TRUSTEES FUND 45	TOTAL
Cash in Bank	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00
Accounts Payable	2,897,208.65	466,383.77	25,288.65	488,117.75	222,198.74	20,047.91	488,373.38	1,500,353.63	16,014,366.34
Loans Receivable from Congregations (Schedule A)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	280,000.00	185,746.88	85,746.88
Accounts Receivable	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,237.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,237.32
Prepaid Expenses/Deposits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	325,123.00
Interest receivable	70,997.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,763.42	88,453.64
Property Held For Resale	664,222.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,099,324.47
	\$3,632,027.00	\$26,003.25	\$466,383.27	\$486,055.07	\$222,198.74	\$20,047.91	\$778,373.38	\$1,676,401.05	\$18,332,109.65
Due from (to) other funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$581,635.95
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,632,027.00</b>	<b>\$26,003.25</b>	<b>\$466,383.27</b>	<b>\$486,055.07</b>	<b>\$222,198.74</b>	<b>\$20,047.91</b>	<b>\$778,373.38</b>	<b>\$1,676,401.05</b>	<b>\$17,949,273.89</b>

**LIABILITIES**

Accounts Payable	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,344.00
Charity Gift Annuity Payable	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$232,562.05
Agency Obligations	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$749,327.91
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$983,263.96

**FUND BALANCES**

Balance 12/31/2016	Unrestricted	Permanently Restricted	Temporarily Restricted	TOTAL
0.00	\$20,146.95	\$410,000.00	\$0.00	\$430,146.95
3,291,405.91	3,223.82	8,159.50	2,728.48	3,305,517.71
\$3,291,405.91	\$23,370.77	\$418,159.50	\$22,728.48	\$3,754,664.66

**Add:**

Income - Net	\$27,887.83	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$32,725.90	\$74,950.73
Investment Portfolio Income	90,990.69	562.43	10,897.07	546.97	8,098.73	338.78	10,788.86	31,851.75	318,776.53
Investment Services	(12,876.00)	(17,860.00)	(2,115.86)	(114.74)	(1,698.89)	(71.67)	(2,383.21)	(6,702.61)	(76,459.68)
Change in Opt Interest Agreements	55,774.32	(787.52)	(13,782.60)	(746.28)	0.00	0.00	(26,469.12)	(112,777.00)	(120,556.07)
Market value gains (losses)	320,334.80	2,955.45	53,035.29	2,674.22	42,504.47	25,228.03	1,780.20	56,603.05	167,699.32
	\$340,821.09	\$2,832.38	\$47,193.77	\$2,590.17	\$255,817.20	\$19,021.85	\$20,047.91	\$38,549.58	\$113,096.76
<b>TOTAL</b>									\$1,945,982.56

**Balance 12/31/2017**

Unrestricted	Designated (Note D)	Permanently Restricted (Note F)	Temporarily Restricted (Note G)	TOTAL
\$0.00	\$20,146.95	\$410,000.00	\$0.00	\$430,146.95
3,632,027.00	5,856.30	56,383.27	5,298.65	3,699,555.22
\$3,632,027.00	\$26,003.25	\$466,383.27	\$26,298.65	\$4,130,692.17

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES**

\$3,632,027.00	\$26,003.25	\$466,383.27	\$26,298.65	\$486,055.07	\$222,198.74	\$20,047.91	\$778,373.38	\$1,676,401.05	\$17,949,273.89

## Page 1 of 4

[illegible]



EXHIBIT V  
Page 2 of 4

Partners in the Gospel 21	(2,704,890)	(38,200,444)	647,253,181
			151,551,956

## December 31, 2017

December 31, 2017

-9-

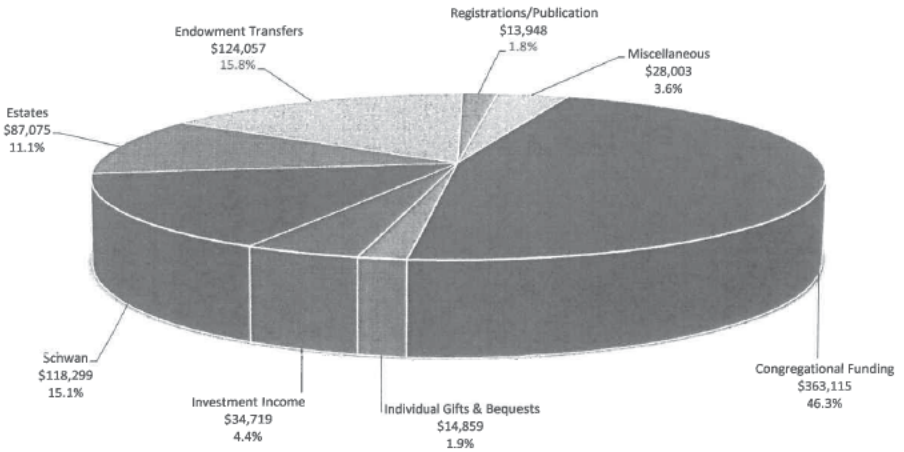
## December 31, 2017

Директор

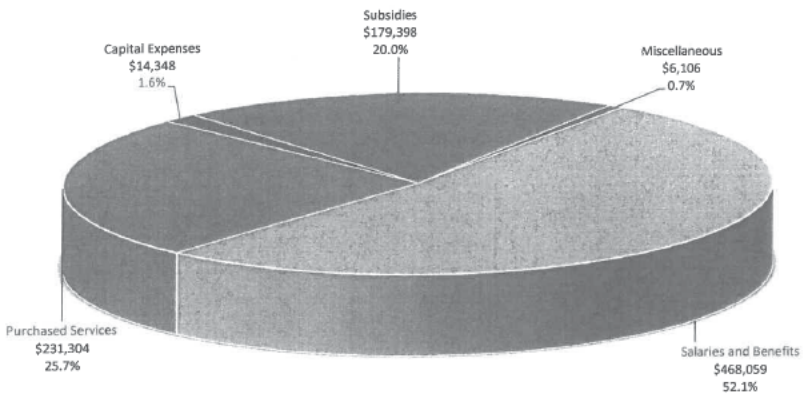
Page 4 of 4

-10-

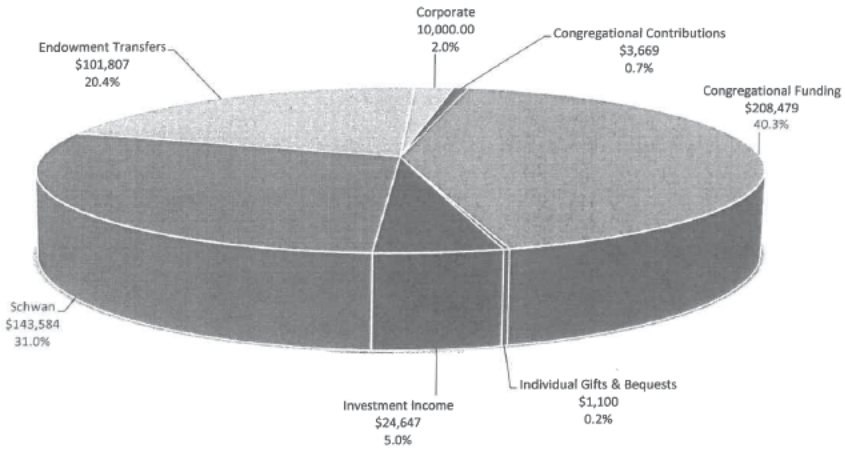
### Synod Fund Income Excluding Unrealized Gain \$784,075



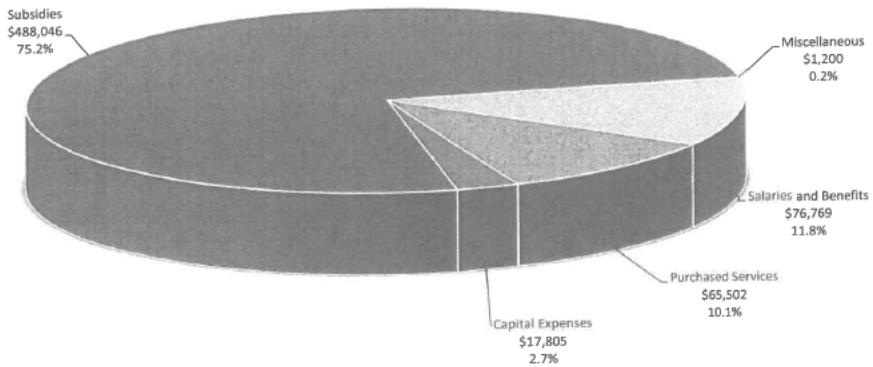
### Synod Fund Expenses \$899,215



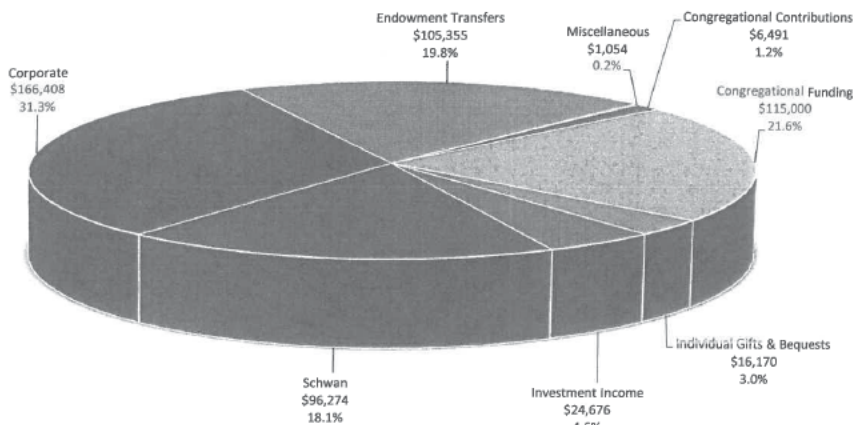
### Home Outreach Income Excluding Unrealized Gain \$493,286



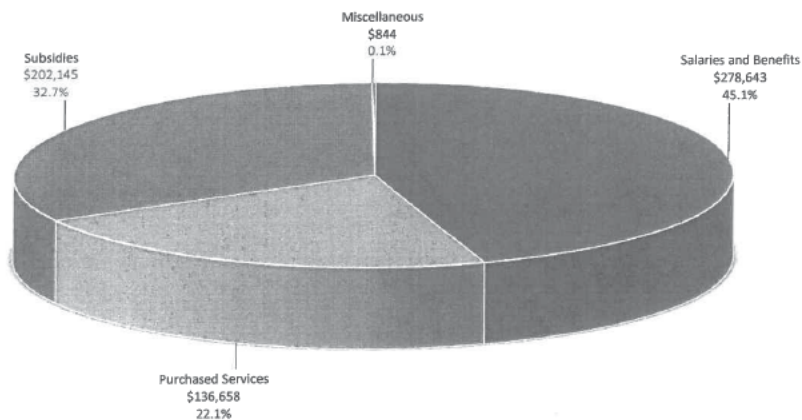
### Home Outreach Expenses \$649,322



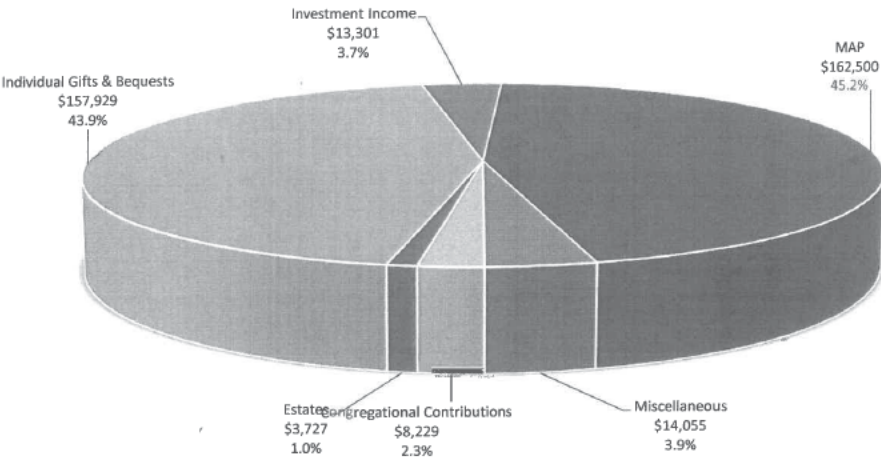
### World Outreach Income Excluding Unrealized Gain \$531,428



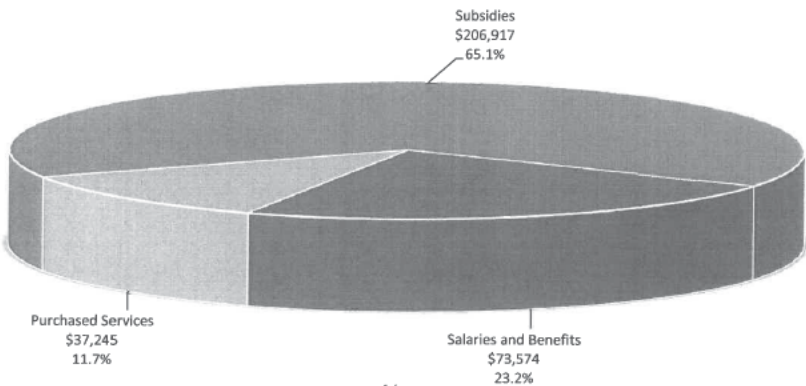
### World Outreach Expenses \$618,290



# **Thoughts of Faith Income Excluding Unrealized Gain** **\$359,741**



# **Thoughts of Faith Expenses** **\$317,736**



## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota  
December 31, 2017

## 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:

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, 2017

**EXHIBIT VI**

Page 2 of 5

**(D) Unrestricted - Designated:**

## General Fund

Kenya Conference	(\$661.99)	
Health Reimbursement Account	\$14,000.00	
World Needs	15,050.87	
Disaster Aid	1,040.00	
Publications	79,435.11	
Youth Outreach	121,555.75	
Hugh Brooks - Youth Mission Trips	324.67	
Book of Family Prayer	10,523.52	
Military Tribute	<u>1,922.72</u>	
		\$243,190.65

## Project/Grants

Stewardship	7,847.49	
Kessel Book	12,677.12	
Administration Communication	781.23	
CFIT	5,372.17	
Reformation Celebration	9,530.53	
Festival Writing	1,375.87	
Grant Writing	3,041.00	
BOT President	4,200.00	
BOT Mission Counselor	5,000.00	
Synod Centennial	<u>11,174.77</u>	
		\$61,000.18

Total General Fund Unrestricted - Designated

\$304,190.83

## Home Outreach

## Project/Grants

Preschool	\$14,000.00	
Texas Canvassing	(31.20)	
Home Mission Seminar	(398.96)	
BOT Congregational Assistance	3,288.32	
Evangelism Counselor	25,000.00	
Congregational Media and Streaming	<u>(25,741.56)</u>	

Total Home Outreach Fund Unrestricted - Designated

\$16,116.60

## World Outreach

Special Mission Projects (VBS)	\$11,000.00	
Chile - General	72,257.07	
Chile - ESL	43,544.86	
Korea Exploratory	43,294.81	
India-General	<u>32,613.67</u>	

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (cont.)Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota  
December 31, 2017EXHIBIT VI

Page 3 of 5

World Outreach Unrestricted - Designated (cont.)		
India-College Fund Orphans	9,763.00	
Peru-Jungle School	\$192,215.51	
Peru-Christian Day School	37,775.26	
Amazon	<u>17,694.49</u>	
		\$460,158.67
Project/Grants		
Jungle School	\$38,547.00	
LMSI Seminary	6,000.00	
Medication Support	<u>500.00</u>	
		<u>\$45,047.00</u>
Total World Outreach Fund Unrestricted - Designated		\$505,205.67
Donor Advised Fund		
Energy Echo	\$9,870.48	
Individual Donor Advised Funds	<u>282,869.23</u>	
Total Donor Advised Fund Unrestricted - Designated		\$292,739.71
Lutheran Schools of America (LSA)		
Lutheran Elementary Schools	\$45,897.60	
		<u>\$45,897.60</u>
Project/Grants		
Marketing and Promo	\$44,675.71	
School Visit	<u>27,715.76</u>	
		<u>\$72,391.47</u>
Total LSA Fund Unrestricted - Designated		\$118,289.07
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, 2017

**EXHIBIT VI**

Page 4 of 5

## Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation

Trustees	1,678,401.05
Donated	<u>778,373.38</u>

Total Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation Unrestricted Designated \$2,456,774.43

**Total Unrestricted - Designated \$3,699,125.31**

**(E) Unrestricted**

General Fund	\$1,682,591.59
Christian Service	(556.86)
Pension Plan	(2,834.78)
Residences & Real Estate	299,865.39
Home Outreach	1,166,522.54
World Outreach	1,091,533.24
Elementary Education (LSA)	79,066.44
Thoughts of Faith	<u>491,730.73</u>

**Total Unrestricted \$4,807,918.29**

**(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	195,446.87
Hugh Brooks Mission Endowment	<u>18,000.00</u>

**Total Permanently Restricted \$6,719,570.82**

**(G) Temporarily Restricted**

Church Extension & Loan Fund	\$2,078,255.77
Herbert and Cathy Schulz	<u>150,000.00</u>
Total Church Extension & Loan Fund	\$2,228,255.77

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (cont.)**Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota  
December 31, 2017**EXHIBIT VI**

Page 5 of 5

## Temporarily Restricted (cont.)

Thoughts of Faith	\$91,836.78	
Gift of Life Self Insurance	<u>210,174.47</u>	
Total Thoughts of Faith		\$302,011.25

Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation		
Robert & Madelyn Soule Pres. Office Endowment	\$301,089.81	
Arbury Pres. Office Endowment	233,962.72	
Marvin & Delores Schwan World Outreach Trust Fund	145,547.42	
Partners in the Gospel	540,781.73	
Whipple-Olson-Wilson Endowment	24,313.22	
World Outreach Seminary Endowment	266,942.11	
World Outreach Capital Projects	378,000.00	
World Outreach Asia Expansion	\$1,306,063.56	
World Outreach Reserve Fund	566,121.24	
Charitable Gift & Trust Agreements	200,319.36	
Robert & Madelyn Soule Endowment	292,886.34	
Home Outreach Reserve Fund	252,388.34	
Home Outreach Expansion Fund	3,632,027.00	
St. Martin Lutheran Church	5,856.30	
Truth for our Youth	56,353.27	
School Endowment Fund	5,288.65	
Anniversary Offering	498,055.07	
Selma and Constant Steen Endowment	26,751.87	
Hugh Brooks Mission Endowment	<u>2,047.91</u>	
Total Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation		<u>\$7,790,674.68</u>

**Total Temporarily Restricted****\$10,320,941.70**

# LOANS RECEIVABLE

Evangelical Lutheran Synod - Mankato, Minnesota  
December 31, 2017

## SCHEDULE A

	ORIGINAL LOAN BALANCE	REMAINING LOAN BALANCE 12/31/2016	RECLASS / NEW LOANS 2017	PAID 2017	TOTAL PAID	REMAINING LOAN BALANCE 12/31/2017
<b>Church Extension Loan (Fund 02)</b>						
Hope - West Jordan, Utah	186,203.42	142,330.31	0.00	142,330.31	186,203.42	0.00
Hope - Farmington, Minnesota	0.00	0.00	660,145.15	0.00	0.00	660,145.15
Resurrection - Winter Haven, Florida	490,610.83	182,402.88	0.00	504.09	308,712.04	181,898.79
Lakewood - Lakewood, Washington	116,068.34	116,068.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	116,068.34
* Family of God, Fort Mohave, AZ	207,061.93	207,061.93	28,011.32	0.00	0.00	233,073.25
	\$1,001,944.52	\$649,863.46	\$666,156.47	\$142,834.40	\$494,915.46	\$1,193,185.53
<b>Home Mission Fund (Fund 06)</b>						
Individual Loan	26,962.00	15,100.00	0.00	1,100.00	12,962.00	14,000.00
	\$26,962.00	\$15,100.00	\$0.00	\$1,100.00	\$12,962.00	\$14,000.00
<b>Partners in the Gospel (Fund 21)</b>						
Peace - Lakeland, Florida	39,333.03	17,556.56	0.00	0.00	21,776.47	17,556.56
Redeemer - Scottsdale, Arizona	351,962.20	249,364.70	0.00	22,600.18	125,197.68	226,764.52
	\$391,295.23	\$266,921.26	\$0.00	\$22,600.18	\$146,974.15	\$244,321.08
<b>Asia Expansion (Fund 24)</b>						
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
<b>Home Mission Expansion (Fund 28)</b>						
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
<b>Donated Fund (Fund 40)</b>						
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
<b>Board of Trustees (Fund 45)</b>						
Gloria Dei, Cold Spring, Minnesota	33,794.00	22,294.00	0.00	6,500.00	18,000.00	15,794.00
Jesus Lutheran, Seoul, South Korea	150,000.00	150,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	150,000.00
	\$183,794.00	\$172,294.00	\$0.00	\$6,500.00	\$18,000.00	\$165,794.00
<b>Totals</b>	\$2,528,343.76	\$2,028,526.73	\$666,156.47	\$173,034.58	\$672,851.61	\$2,541,646.62

\* Defaulted on LACE loan - Synod currently making payments

**WORKING CAPITAL NOTES PAYABLE**

**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	<u>500.00</u>
Total Life Loans		<u>\$1,500.00</u>
Total Notes Payable		<u>\$22,383.76</u>





# STATISTICS



# EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD: STATISTICAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2017

	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	47	42	13				685			3	53	28
2	AZ	Lake Havasu City	Our Saviour	99	77	15			1	1	1,265		3	53	69
3	AZ	Scottsdale	Redeemer	77	62	18	1		1		1,469		1	53	45
4	CA	Bell Gardens	Christ the King	25	19	8	1	1		1	289			76	24
5	CA	Bishop	Our Savior	14	14	4					416		2	51	9
6	CA	Escondido	St. Paul*												
7	CA	Irvine	Faith*	16	15	4					1,248		1	52	12
8	CA	Windsor	Christ	34	33	9				5	247		1	52	24
9	FL	Kissimmee	Peace	206	142	54								100	111
10	FL	Lakeland	Our Savior	39	37	17				1	810	1	1	52	24
11	FL	Lakeland	Peace	29	29	12					29			53	25
12	FL	Naples	Our Savior	192	172	61	3		5		3,573	2	3	53	155
13	FL	Port St. Lucie	Christ	84	70	26	6	1	1	3	1,241		2	52	61
14	FL	Sebring	New Life	35	30	10	2				1,560		1	51	41
15	FL	Vero Beach	Grace	157	129	30	2		4		1,770	2	6	79	89
16	FL	Winter Haven	Resurrection	104	85	14				1	925		2	53	50
17	IL	Lincoln	Grace*				1		2			1		52	25
18	IL	Lombard	St. Timothy	125	109	3	2			1	950			53	47
19	IN	Hobart	Grace	222	167	16	6			2	2,295	2	6	52	114
20	IN	Portage	Hope*	108	52	22	1			1			3	52	36
21	IA	Ames	Bethany	49	36	13	2				768			53	44
22	IA	Calmar	Trinity*	14	14	2					170		3	49	12
23	IA	Forest City	Forest	56	37	7			2		300		1	51	29
24	IA	Indianola	Good Shepherd*	49	43	16			1		507		1	52	26
25	IA	Lake Mills	Lake Mills	22	18	7					1,980		2	53	12
26	IA	Lake Mills	Lime Creek	14	14	7					1,282		1	53	12
27	IA	Lawler	Saude	141	103	30	1		1		931			53	53
28	IA	New Hampton	Jerico	112	91	16	1				655		3	53	41
29	IA	New Hampton	Redeemer	57	54	10			2		541		3	51	23
30	IA	Northwood	First Shell Rock	50	46	17	2		4		2,422		1	53	35
31	IA	Northwood	Somber	20	20	7					1,980		1	53	15
32	IA	Parkersburg	Faith	43	37	10					299	1	1	50	29
33	IA	Riceville	Immanuel	8	8	4					70			48	6
34	IA	Scarville	Center*	42	41	16							1	51	10
35	IA	Scarville	Scarville*	113	77	32	1		1	1	1,227	1	1	51	73
36	IA	Thompson	Zion*	26	27	7					300		1	50	17
37	IA	Thornton	Richland	44	41	12				2	243		1	52	23
38	IA	Waterloo	Pilgrim	88	68	16			1	3	692			53	40
39	IA	Waukon	King of Grace	42	40	17					461		1	52	18
40	MA	Brewster	Trinity*	76	71	25	2				1,616		1	51	39
41	MA	Burlington	Pinewood	133	98	32	4			1	903		1	53	63
42	MI	Frankenmuth	St. John's	374	307	85	7				2,381		8	54	122
43	MI	Hillman	Faith	73	60	16				1	448		1	54	30
44	MI	Holland	Lord of Life	48	60	26	1				400		1	53	20

	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	13	19						12				3	69,269	1,800	860,679	500,000		
2	18	38				8	3	36	15			5	185,978	1,788	2,500,000	18,015		
3	14	24				7	5	28				3	50,281	42	1,213,800	226,883		
4	12	11						12					64,796	1,000	1,200,000			
5	10	6											31,107	161	600,000			
6																		
7	10	8						8										
8	9	14				2	1	11				3	58,173	1,593	579,322		46,565	
9	12	75	81	12	15	4	28	60	20			4						
10	14	15						8				4	72,000	1,500	500,000			
11	13	10				3	2	2					49,606	463	350,000	27,000		
12	13	125				20	2	30	110			10	471,316	4,528	3,250,000			
13	15	39	84			12	4	18		2	2	2	158,367	7,600	1,700,000	809,620		
14	8	38				3	1	12				1	61,680	4,000	426,000		95,000	
15	19	58			72	8	3	26	80				159,384	35,729	1,113,500			
16	11	24						40				2	85,958	15,987	300,000	175,000		
17	7	13				6		9				4						
18	16	29		1	5	3	26					6	142,624	23,701	1,000,000	23,937		
19	13	86				53	5	62	58			25	139,719	24,516	800,000		257,719	
20	15					8	3	8	17			11	68,624	690				
21	13	27				9	3	21	39			5	76,070		851,000			
22	13	7						3										
23	13	20				5	2	13		5		6	14,000	900			200,000	
24	15	19				2	4	16	16	1		7	68,086	510	135,000			
25	10	15				4	2	4	3	2	2		4,000		90,000		25,000	
26								5					7,783	287	150,000		10,000	
27	14	80				21	4	22	16	6		8	55,548	10,667			62,259	
28	14	92				9	3	22	16	3		6	97,244	1,795			92,605	
29	9	23								2		6	32,596	600				
30	8	30		2	4	3	2	5	7	4		10	92,000	8,000	275,000		25,000	
31	1	18						7				3						
32	5	24				5	2	8	8			2	45,458	1,423	1,069,000		144,834	
33								4					6,060		25,000			
34	5	28											32,000					
35	13	59	14		30	5	25	30	3	4	3	3	105,000	12,000				
36	8	15											16,000	500				
37	7	14				2	1	10	8			1	51,589	5,000	100,000		49,000	
38	14	29				13	3	6	7		1	4	63,422	6,221	1,500,000		93,000	
39	11	13						9				2	50,192	4,798	100,000			
40	15	24				3	3	15				2	102,000	3,000	800,000		300,000	
41	9	21				12	4	25	9	3		3	135,000	9,000	1,600,000			
42	18	70				7	2	38	9			4	353,852	16,501	3,000,000		358,374	
43	4	9				10	2	8	19			16	42,791	1,070	255,000			
44	21	9				2	1		10				45,103	1,358				

\* 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
45	MI	Holton	Holton*	323	243	20	2	2	2	1,280	2	1		52	70
46	MI	Midland	Holy Scripture	139	126	25	4	1		1,492		3		51	84
47	MI	Rogers City	Trinity	35	24	12	2			432				53	25
48	MI	Saginaw	Gloria Dei	200	179	60	5			1,669	1	6		53	71
49	MI	Suttons Bay	First	64	56	15	1	2	1	572				53	29
50	MN	Albert Lea	Our Savior's	389	292	123			1	3	1,265		10	53	80
51	MN	Apple Valley	Heritage	238	182	69	6			3	3,002		1	88	152
52	MN	Audubon	Immanuel	136	105	35		2			1,100	1	1	51	53
53	MN	Bagley	Our Savior's*	141	124	10					648		1	52	44
54	MN	Belview	Our Savior's	78	65	20	1			1	652	2	2	52	35
55	MN	Belview	Rock Dell	75	66	25	1	2	1		444	2		52	24
56	MN	Clara City	Faith	85	67	31	1	3			1,098		1	53	50
57	MN	Cold Spring	Gloria Dei	173	144	50	6	3			1,319		2	53	66
58	MN	Cottonwood	English	133	116	33	1	1	1		688	2	1	53	44
59	MN	Crookston	Grace* #	36	35	10	1	1			306			52	14
60	MN	E Grand Forks	River Heights*	127	112	21	4	3	3		792	2		52	63
61	MN	Farmington	Hope	103	69	30	12	2		5	360	1	1	56	50
62	MN	Gaylord	Norwegian Grove	95	78	38					347		1	51	33
63	MN	Golden Valley	King of Grace	719	533	220	9	4	7		5,748	5	4	50	391
64	MN	Grygla	St. Petri #	33	17	7	1				278			51	13
65	MN	Hartland	Hartland	215	150	69	2	6			729		2	53	40
66	MN	Lengby	St. Paul*				2	6			708	1	4	52	43
67	MN	Luverne	Bethany	114	93	34	4	2			952		7	52	49
68	MN	Manchester	Manchester	54	43	16					175			53	15
69	MN	Mankato	Mt. Olive	975	518	252	12	12	1			1	4	143	478
70	MN	North Mankato	Peace	518	357	165	16	5	7		4,210	4	2	118	301
71	MN	Oklee	Oak Park	145	97	30			2		965			51	67
72	MN	Princeton	Bethany	190	150	34	1	2	1		2,214		3	53	67
73	MN	Princeton	Christ* #												
74	MN	Princeton	Our Savior's	220	169	73	1	2			1,104		3	53	57
75	MN	Rogers	Redeeming Grace	176	132	53	3	1			1,266			104	79
76	MN	St. Peter	Norseland	214	163	78	2	2	1		877		4	52	89
77	MN	Tracy	Zion*	142	124	26			2		626			50	36
78	MN	Trail	Mt. Olive	30	11	3	1	1			188			51	12
79	MN	Trail	Nazareth	72	44	16		2			486			51	36
80	MN	Ulen	Calvary	90	48	16			1		300		1	51	22
81	MO	Cape Girardeau	Scriptural	97	83	5	1		1		244			53	26
82	MO	Carthage	Faith	58	51	17	2				1,156			53	42
83	MO	Jefferson City	Peace	71	57	16	4				627			53	45
84	MO	Linn Creek	Ascension #								70			49	6
85	MO	Piedmont	Grace*												
86	OH	Bowling Green	Abiding Word	165	145	52	1	1		1	1,292		2	53	75
87	OH	Deshler	Peace	274	218	45	2		1		1,012	2	5	53	96
88	OH	Weston	Grace	88	58	11					386			53	19
89	OR	Grants Pass	Our Savior*	69	60	19		1		4	1,180			51	35
90	OR	Gresham	Saved by Grace	100	82	15	1	2	1	2		3	3	52	38
91	OR	Hillsboro	Reformation	75	56	17	1	1		1	1,386		3	53	30
92	OR	Hood River	Concordia	27	24	7					352			52	18

	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
45	16	31			40	4	15	50			12	124,981	4,034	1,000,000	144,700	4,000
46	16	62			12	4	60				9	156,801	38,099	3,000,000		
47	5	13			8	2	13				1	41,099	3,810	150,000		
48	14	58	4	2	10	3	25	65	1		2	170,942	8,135	1,499,679	517,896	40,251
49	14	14			3	3	9	17			4	70,000		400,000		
50	12	28			26	5	31	17	2	1	5	90,937	7,849	402,000		317,182
51	14	85	6	40	48	12	60	40	1	5	13	350,524	25,000	2,002,143	1,126,936	
52	16	31			8	3	20	15	5		14	106,786	8,000	379,500		
53	18	29			9	3	12	23	6	1	1	48,817	20,079	379,773		
54	7	32			5	4	11	11			1	48,875	740			
55	8	28			5	4	12	11			3	55,757	475			44,797
56	16	36			11	4	15	52		3	4	64,965	6,281	300,000	4,000	
57	11	31		56	7	2	28	24			9	137,524	13,136	1,500,000	630,212	
58	12	37			7	2	18			2	4	91,270	9,438	650,000		
59	8	7									1	46,266	20	175,000		
60	12	36			9	3	18	38			15	113,837	3,535	1,000,000		
61	3	50			12	10	20			1	4					
62	8	23	3		7	3	14	3				33,477	10,844	1,047,000		
63	18	235	167	35	66	6	115	98		31	36	773,856	84,973	5,225,000		
64	7	10			2	2	7	2	1							
65	11	45			20	3	7	21	4		17	66,337	5,609	400,000		47,194
66	9	36			12	2	12	23	6	1	1	51,297	2,947	194,000		
67	14	33			7	3	13	24	2	1	3	97,500	9,820	375,000		16,940
68	11	11			1	1	3	1			3	30,025	835	125,000		96,735
69	21	248	158		84	16	100	145	35			1,108,508	26,360	3,970,632	1,161,457	1,860
70	17	176	62	52	85	7	120	100	15	23	31	495,578	70,189	2,023,824	1,276,666	
71	4	35			25	4	4	25	6		13	56,000	4,000			
72	11	64			21	4	25	25	7	1	13	101,345	12,884			
73																
74	11	34			11	3	25	22		1	3	121,464	28,270			
75	13	33		6	34	10	22	24		4	9	181,584	771	975,000	1,216,340	
76	9	60	10		31	7	25	24	12	2	6	114,366	36,296	3,308,000		
77	12	35			14	4		10			7	59,497	9,867			
78	7	7						3								
79	4	51			20	3	8	19	5							
80	8	15			4	2	9				4	50,000	1,740	150,000		
81	12	8			6	3	3	5			3	36,478	854	350,000	4,000	8,750
82	14	46			4	2	42	17		2	2	92,000	5,900	1,125,000		285,000
83	14	17			8	3	7	18	7	1	7	66,411				
84	1	8					7		12			7,377		2,000		
85																
86	15	34			17	5	25	17			10	129,361	6,820	666,250		
87	12	48			15	5	37	14			9	140,811	23,174	2,260,000		302,399
88	11	12			4	2	9	12			2	62,807	605	350,000		
89	11	17			1	1	33			1	2	62,559	1,592	350,000		
90	12	19	1		4	1	12	32	2		3	102,974	788	1,500,000	121,000	
91	17	15				1	15	12	1		3	118,232	14,552	3,000,000		
92	14	9									2					

\* 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
93	13	19			3	1	13				3		67,765	4,552	750,000		
94	14	20			9	2	8	25									
95	11	15															
96	9	4					7						18,799				
97	2	21			17	1	10	17			1		25,143	1,342			
98	11	15															
99	14	10	18				8	9			2						
100	5	14			14	2	5						65,000		380,000		
101	11	15			11	3	10						55,917	9,298			
102	10	41			16	5	17	25	3	4	4		77,967	7,796	3,000,000	2,800,000	
103	15	28			5	3	44		4	2	5		149,597	27,601	1,500,000	667,576	
104	15	32			4	4	15		4	1	6		71,600		850,000		
105	9	14	27	24			10	40	3		4		253,638	424	1,653,600	226,160	
106	10	30			15	4	6	25			3						
107	13	171	75	39	28	9	39	115	111	14	33		399,914	828	1,893,010		
108	26	62	83	6	19	4	20	33	10	12	13		757,158	15,560	5,148,189	724,632	103,230
109	12	10					15		1				95,460	500	1,750,000		
110	5	7					5				2		23,314	210	350,000		
111	11	35			14	8	19	23	4	1	9		74,768	10,782	273,500		20,000
112	11		6		40	5	70		15		49		355,693	16,301	1,386,861	596,321	
113	13	25				1	10				5		78,758	9,519			80,565
114	11	23			4	1	8				3		67,374	9,541	700,000		
115	16	65	8	10	37	11	50	51	3	3	27		239,000	10,200	1,000,000	34,000	
116	14	16					8				5		37,748	3,130	800,000		
117	8	21			4	2	15				2		29,411	3,153			
118	18	42	2		15	5	25	18	1	2	6		157,121	17,384	1,900,000		
119	16	28					15				8		39,200	1,800	200,000		
120	7	13	3		3	2	7	3	3								63,042
121	14	174	100	33	50	9	90	105	20	20	34		465,028	82,167	5,876,241	2,916,000	181,609
122	7	14			4		14									50,000	20,000
123	12	53			11	5	35				7		111,065	11,080			47,469
124	3	27			12	2	5						20,783	1,677			
125	22	86	51	13	51	8	72	20		5	16		382,078	1,368	5,500,000	438,600	
126	11	13			5	2	15						64,839	1,640	125,700	40,462	
127	15	29			9	2	8				4						
128	5	16					4										
129	10	43	1		12	4	10	8	2		8		94,112	14,530	500,000		
130	15	158	63	14	26	11	55	38	5	35	25		481,177	34,077	4,000,000	171,630	5,000
131	7	15			2	1	4										
	1,463	4,694	1,027	417	1,451	369	2,476	2,149	373	193	746		14,003,326	1,013,509	106,115,203	16,649,042	3,445,380

\* Current statistics not provided # Not yet a member of the synod

---

## PERIODICALS

---

### **Lutheran Sentinel**

Subscription—\$12.00 per year

Blanket subscription—\$10.00 per year

Bulk subscriptions (20 copies & over)—\$10.00 per year

Send to: The Lutheran Sentinel

6 Browns Ct

Mankato MN 56001

### **Lutheran Synod Quarterly**

Subscription—\$25.00 per year (\$35.00 international)

Send to: Lutheran Synod Quarterly

6 Browns Ct

Mankato MN 56001

### **Annual Synod Convention Report**

Cost—\$10.00

Order through: Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore

700 Luther Drive

Mankato MN 56001

---

## EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD FOUNDATION

---

“The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation is established for the purpose of soliciting gifts, other than for current operating funds, for the synod, its agencies, and as requested, for its congregations and for the theological seminary, college, and other institutions related to the synod. The foundation is to encourage the making of wills, gift annuity agreements, trust agreements, insurance contracts, etc., under which the synod or any of its parts or agencies may become an actual or contingent beneficiary.”—(Adopted by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 1969.)

### **IS GOD’S WILL INCLUDED IN YOUR WILL?**

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.

**Legal Form for Gifts to the**  
Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation  
Through Your Will

*(check with your attorney)*

I give, devise and bequeath to the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD  
FOUNDATION (a Minnesota Corporation):

---

*(insert sum of money or description of property which sum, or property, or proceeds thereof)*  
to be used for

---

*(insert description of purpose)*  
or, if no direction as to use is stated,  
as its Board of Directors may determine.

Send inquiries to:

Giving Counselor  
6 Browns Court  
Mankato MN 56001



## INDEX

Anniversary Offering, Report of the committee . . . . .	143
Bethany Lutheran College, Report of . . . . .	93
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Report of . . . . .	101
Centennial, Report of the committee . . . . .	155
Christian Service, Report of the board . . . . .	136
Clergy Assistance Program (CAP). . . . .	241
Convention Committees . . . . .	22
Convention Day by Day . . . . .	7
Credentials, Action of the synod. . . . .	85
Directories:	
Bethany Lutheran College . . . . .	242
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary . . . . .	246
Boards and Committees . . . . .	231
Church bodies in fellowship with the ELS . . . . .	228
Clergy . . . . .	270
Congregations . . . . .	258
High Schools . . . . .	241
Officers of the synod . . . . .	230
Other Addresses . . . . .	241
World Outreach . . . . .	238
Doctrine, Action of the synod . . . . .	92
Doctrine, Report of the committee. . . . .	86
Education, Report of the board . . . . .	128
Elementary Education, Action of the synod . . . . .	133
Finances:	
Action of the synod . . . . .	153
Equalization, Report of the committee . . . . .	142
Financial Statements. . . . .	167
Higher Education, Action of the synod . . . . .	106
Memorials . . . . .	164
Minutes, Action of the synod . . . . .	162
Miscellaneous, Action of the synod . . . . .	161
Missions:	
Home Outreach, Action of the synod. . . . .	118
Home Outreach, Report of the board. . . . .	109
World Outreach, Action of the synod. . . . .	127
World Outreach, Report of the board. . . . .	119
Parish Services, Action of the synod . . . . .	140
Pastoral Conference Records and Resolutions, Action of the synod . . . . .	163
Pictures:	
Edvardsen, Egil . . . . .	9
Faugstad, Peter . . . . .	40
Ferkenstad, Craig . . . . .	7, 230
Gutierrez, Segundo. . . . .	11
Moldstad, John . . . . .	7, 230
Obenberger, Glenn. . . . .	230
Planning and Coordinating, Report of the committee . . . . .	145
President's Message. . . . .	26
President's Message and Report, Action of the synod . . . . .	162

President's Report. . . . . 31

Regents, Report of the board . . . . . 98

Representatives eligible to vote . . . . . 18

Roll Call. . . . . 16

Statistical Report . . . . . 220

Synodical Membership, Action of the synod. . . . . 84

Synod Review, Report of the committee. . . . . 156

Trustees, Report of the board . . . . . 147

Worship, Report of the committee . . . . . 139

Youth Outreach, Report of the board . . . . . 134

---

## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

---



700 Luther Drive  
Mankato, Minnesota 56001  
Gene R. Pfeifer, President



6 Browns Court  
Mankato, Minnesota 56001  
Gaylin R. Schmeling, President



700 Luther Drive  
Mankato, Minnesota 56001

Susan Harstad, Manager

Telephone: 507-344-7777 or 1-800-944-1722  
E-mail: [bookstore@blc.edu](mailto:bookstore@blc.edu)  
Website: [www.blc.edu/bookstore](http://www.blc.edu/bookstore)