

# Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

## Minutes and Commentary - 3rd Annual Gathering

October 5-7, 2003

(Gathering music, hymn sing and opening prayer.)

The body was called to order at 8:45 A.M.

Rev. Jerry Yarnell, senior pastor of St. Michael Lutheran Church, Canton Michigan extended greetings and welcome on behalf of the congregation.

Barry Anderson offered Message of thanks on behalf of the association recognizing St. Michael as host to the convention and as host to our national office.

Bible study on 2n Corinthians 5: 18, 19: The Longing for Reconciliation, led by Rev. David Mann, Upper Arlington Lutheran Church.

Report on the state of the association by Judge G. Barry Anderson, chairman of the board of trustees, and Rev. Dale Wolf, vice chairman of the board of trustees and past chairman of the Ministry Board of LCMC. Some observations:

-We have grown to over 80 congregations in three years, with most remarkable activity occurring in the past 18 months. Congregations are joining; districts are coalescing.

-We will be challenged to check our attitudes and break out of the mold of being told what to do. Churches will need to continue to learn how to network with other churches to support mission partnerships, not rely on a hierarchical structure from a distance.

-Another challenge will be to continue to explore new approaches to training pastors.

-LCMC also faces the challenge of resisting encroaching institutionalism – we're drawn towards what we've known. Our greatest investment will be in building strong congregations, making disciples and fulfilling the Great Commission.

-We need to worship well together and yet celebrate our diversity in worship styles;

-We need to celebrate our effectiveness in ministry and our success in Lutheran circles.

-Ask "What is God doing in your place?" and then listen to one another.

-We need to learn how to tell our story well – about who we are, reach the broken, and leave behind the comparison to the ELCA.

-Separate from WA – process completed, though it was longer and more complex than expected.

-Future is with new congregations, mission starts, those who don't have benefit of church home.

Rev. Gerald Nerenhausen and Dr. Oliver K. Olson, shared a new idea in seminary education called Claus Harms House. Recently organized and located on the University of Chicago campus, it will be a "house of studies" and is named after the father of neo-confessionalism.

Strategic Planning Committee report presented by Rev. Chris Magnell, Lutheran Church of the Cross, Altoona, Iowa, chairman, and the team: Rev. David Mann, UALC, OH; Amy Williams, Elkhorn, IA; Dr. Jim Krier, Omaha, NE; Rev. David Schrader, Shippensburg, PA. The report is descriptive, talking about who we are and where we're headed. The team identified goals from a survey of the association last fall. Surveys were sent to each pastor and each church council of member congregations, with approximately 2/3 responding. The "POST" method was used; from the responses the Purpose, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics were identified and appear in the accompanying report.

Rev. Revenel Benoit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Haiti spoke on his ministry of reconciliation to his the impoverished people.

M/S/P To nominate Barry Anderson as temporary convention chair.

M/S/P To nominate Deb Lingen as convention secretary.

M/S/P/ To authorize, for the purposes of this convention, as constitution committee, with the addition of Mark Jamison to those listed in the convention information packet.

M/P To adopt the proposed convention rules as amended by the chair.

Note: Section 9 of the proposed rules was amended to read "Amendments to Convention Bylaws," inserting the word "bylaws" for "constitution;" the reference in the first sentence should read the same. Additionally, the deadline for submitting proposed bylaw amendments to the constitution committee was amended to read "5:30 P.M." on Monday, October 6, 2003, rather than "noon."

M/S/P To adopt the reapportionment of areas as recommended by the board of trustees for the purposes of electing trustees.

John Chatelain presented the treasurer's report, based on the audited report for 2002 and including the year to date report for 2003. He noted that the association is in very good financial health.

M/S/P To approve the treasurer's report as presented.

According to the change adopted at the last annual meeting, a treasurer will be elected by the body at large. Nominations will be accepted from the floor.

The body recessed for lunch, followed by a second Bible study with Pastor Mann on 2 Corinthians 5:21 "The Dread of Reconciliation."

M/S/P To close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot to elect John Chatelain as treasurer of the association to serve a 3-year term.

The body went in to breakout sessions.

Pastor Gerrit Wolfaardt continued his presentation on his ministry of reconciliation, speaking as President of Veritas College. Veritas is in 20 countries around the world, training servant leaders to teach people to interpret the Scriptures for themselves. Its ministry is described as "The Philosophy and Practice of Leadership Development: Equipping to Serve." Its purpose is assisting churches around the world to develop their own leaders. In the Extraction Model, leaders are trained outside of the values of their local church and often separated from the life of the church. By contrast, Veritas employs the Integrated Leadership Development Model, where leaders are trained in the church; the Bible is the foundation, and it is a forward movement requiring that everyone become trained in the Word of God, thus completing the cyclical process of establishing a congregation, training leaders, and then sending forth evangelists, as Paul taught the early church. Outcomes of the ILD Approach: a solid understanding of the Word and the Absolutes it contains; ability to communicate it clearly; ability to apply it in all walks of life; leadership is developed in the congregation. Rev. Wolfaardt also spoke of his role as part of the Anglican Mission in America (AmiA), whereby the Anglicans in Africa are sending missionaries to America to bring the word of God to Anglicans and others in America who have not heard it. He noted the new model of non-geographic synods is a challenge but it also means evangelism cannot be stifled. AmiA churches affiliate with whatever AmiA bishop they choose, and the mission is training lay leaders and focusing on networking among the churches. He also entertained questions about his ministry of reconciliation.

M/S/P This 2003 LCMC convention commend our international partners who have joined us at this convention for their commitment and courage in living out faith in Jesus Christ in their settings and commit to them our ongoing support.

M/S/P This 2003 convention requests the Board of Trustees to examine and develop a plan to strengthen our relationship with our international partners, including but not limited to those international congregations invited to join LCMC, which would form LCMC into an international Lutheran association. The trustees may return to the next convention seeking action if the trustees deem such action as necessary.

Lenae Rasmussen and Rev. Michael Bonham spoke to the body about a project Augsburg Lutheran Churches have undertaken to produce a multimedia presentation on the subject of Biblical teaching on sexuality.

Rev. Roger Lindler spoke on the formation of LCMC-Lutheran Men, an organization that provides avenues for the men of LCMC to provide support of mission churches and smaller churches needing assistance.

M/S/P Whereas, mission congregations associated with LCMC would benefit from support from a united effort of men in LCMC congregations, be it resolved that this convention endorses the concept of a National Men's Organization focused on assisting missions and smaller congregations with a mission gift fund and a mission loan fund.

The credentials committee reported 121 registrations, representing 32 congregations and 62 delegates.

M/S/P To approve the credentials committee report as given.

The report of the constitution committee (attached at end of these minutes)

M/P To adopt the proposed amendment to section 7.09 of the bylaws as proposed by the constitution committee.

M/P To adopt the proposed amendment to section 9.01 of the bylaws as proposed by the constitution committee.

M/P To adopt the proposed amendment to section 8.01 of the bylaws as proposed by the constitution committee.

M/P To adopt the proposed amendment to section 8.02 of the bylaws as proposed by the constitution committee.

The Ministry Board report was presented by Rev. Kip Tyler. The Ministry Board seeks input on the process of refining LCMC Ministry Standards. There were also comments on:

-Leadership Conference

-No single way of training pastors and lay leaders

-LCM's experience – Churchstaffing.com through the Leadership Network.

-Call process

-Model Letters of Call

-Credentialing issues

-Standardized card on ministry status

The report ended with a Q & A session.

The chairman spoke briefly about the benefits of LCMC's joint health plan with the WordAlone Network. It is important to recognize that without the participation of St. Andrew's (Mahtomedi, MN) this health plan would not have been possible. The board of trustees encourages all congregations of this association to consider switching to the LCMC health plan. Because of the way the plan is structured it may be particularly beneficial to larger congregations.

Rev. Doyle Karst (Sterling, NE) offered devotions prior to recessing for dinner.

Rev. David Mann opened the morning session with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bible study on 2 Corinthians.

An appeal was made for any items congregations would like to make available to Peace Lutheran, Gulf Shores, Alabama.

Rev. David Drum and Robin Lake, retiring board members, briefly addressed the convention.

The 2005 annual convention of LCMC will be held at Atonement Lutheran Church in Fargo, North Dakota. The body will come together in late September or early October; specific dates will be announced.

Morning breakouts.

Fred Jensen of Edward D. Jones updated the body on the LCMC pension plan. There are currently \$2,313,000 invested in plan funds. He offered his full support to facilitate the process of bringing new pastors into the plan. He noted that even in the difficult market the funds held up remarkably well.

The chair reminded the body that anyone interested in the LCMC health plan should contact Gayle McCann of Johnson McCann in Minneapolis

Rev. Roger Lindler announced officers and key members for LCMC-Lutheran Men and encouraged each congregation to provide a key member to serve as a contact.

The new board of trustees was introduced to the body:

M/S/P The meeting adjourned at 11:15.

The convention closed with worship led by Rev. Larry Lindstrom