

Minutes: Board of Directors Meeting – Approved by the Board on 12.1.2020
Minnesota South (MNS) District
Tuesday, September 22, 2020, 9:00am – 12:00pm
Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

Mission Statement

Cultivating leaders intentionally engaged in the mission of God.

1. OPENING DEVOTION

Rev. Stefan Wismar, Executive Assistant to the President, led the opening devotion. He compared a sermon written by author John Donne highlighting the phrase “for whom the bell tolls” (death), with the certainty and hope of the resurrection that are ours through faith in Christ. We can mock death through the promises of Christ that are ours in Romans 8:37-39 and First Corinthians 15:51-57.

2. PARLIAMENTARY OBLIGATIONS

- a) Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 9:18 by Rev. David Mumme, First Vice President of the District, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- b) Roll Call
Present: Rev. David Mumme; Rev. Thomas Evans; Rev. Harold Storm; Rev. Steven Wheeler; Rev. Keith Grimm; Mr. Rick Marko; Rev. Christopher Horton; Mr. Daniel Thao; Ms. Rosa Summers; Mr. John Branstad; Rev. Loel Wessel; Ms. Sara Sorenson; Mr. Dave Kenow; Rev. Dennis Heiden; Mr. Benjamin Hagemann; Mr. Neal Breitbarth; Mr. Leland Huebner; Mr. Joel Landskroener

Staff: Rev. Stefan Wismar; Rev. Dr. William Utech; Mr. Sean Martens; Mr. Kai Larson; Dr. Phil Johnson; Rev. Fred Hinz

Absent: Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford; Rev. Isaac Williams; Matt Steiner
- c) Approval of Agenda
Item 4 of the agenda was removed. Then a motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda. The motion carried.
- d) Approval of the Minutes of Past Meetings – *(prepared by Keith Grimm, Secretary)*
A motion was made and seconded to approve the BOD minutes from May 5, 2020. The motion was carried. A motion was made and seconded to approve the BOD minutes from August 14, 2020. The motion carried.
- e) Correspondence
It was reported that the LCMS Board for International Mission is seeking nominations to fill one vacancy due to the resignation of Rev. Dr. Carl Rockrohr, who moved outside of

the Central Region of the Synod and is no longer eligible to serve on the board. The person appointed to fill this position would serve through the end of the current term (August 31, 2022) and is eligible for election to two additional six-year terms. All nominees must reside within the boundaries of the Central Region. The deadline for receiving nominations is September 30, 2020.

A letter from Rev. Jon Vollrath, who serves on the Board of Directors for People of the Book Lutheran Outreach (POBLO), is asking the Board of Directors to reconsider funding POBLO's International Friendship Center in Faribault, Minnesota, in the amount of \$30,000 annually. The Mission Committee reported in September 2020 that the Faribault IFC would no longer be considered a district supported mission.

Finally, District Secretary Keith Grimm reported that now is the time to nominate individuals for officer, board and commission positions for the 2022 Synod Convention. All nominees must be members of LCMS congregations. Incumbents who are eligible for re-election are automatically considered to be nominees for a successive term. Their names do not need to be resubmitted.

3. GUEST PRESENTATION

Mr. Doyle Benson, President of MN South District LLL, was unable to join us. However, he shared a letter with the BOD updating several local and international opportunities through Lutheran Hour Ministries.

4. VISIONING / STUDY ITEMS / PRESENTATIONS

Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford was unable to attend this virtual meeting due to a health complication. He will share his presentation titled "The Coming Revolution in Church Economics" at our next BOD meeting.

5. REPORTS

a) President's Report Highlights, Q & A

A copy of Dr. Lucas Woodford's activity report (May through September) was forwarded to the Board. Rev. Stefan Wismar shared information on these four topics:

- **Ministry amid a COVID-19 context.**
Congregations and professional church workers have been adversely affected by the pandemic. We are encouraging pastors to take advantage of Doxology opportunities.
- **Multiethnic conversation**
A recent meeting was held at St. Michael, Bloomington to listen and discuss opportunities to advance social justice and racial reconciliation.
- **Budget philosophy**
President Woodford wants a zero-based balanced budget as the District manages congregational contributions in the future. The revenue is not what it was in the past due to the pandemic. Consequently, cuts have been made to the proposed 2021 budget.

- Convention planning
Preparations for next year's MN South District Convention are on schedule. The District Convention has to take place in-person due to Synod bylaws.

b) Financial Report

Mr. Rick Marko, District Treasurer, provided financial results as of June 30, 2020. Congregational support has dropped off in July and August. So the District is keeping a close watch on cash, spending and expenses. The District applied for loan forgiveness for the PPP loan we received earlier this year. It will take a few months for this process to be completed. At this point the District is predicting annual congregational offerings will be \$75,000 below budget. We are thankful that District investment losses have made a complete comeback throughout the summer.

c) LCEF Report

Mr. Kai Larson, LCEF Vice President, reported there are no impaired or troubled LCEF loans in the District. At this point we are below last year's budget due to the pandemic. There has been a net gain in LCEF investment in the past year. During this COVID season, twelve congregations were assisted with relief options. In addition, over one million dollars was donated by the LCEF to "soldiers of the cross" which benefitted 105 families. The LCEF also distributed funds to assist those in need in the Twin Cities through the Trinity First, Jehovah and St. Stephanus congregations.

d) Other Committee Minutes: schools and commissioned; ministerial health; mission formation; missions, pre-seminary interviews, finance, endowment, etc.

No reports were shared.

6. INFORMATION AND DECISION ITEMS

Suggested board deliberation process:

- i. The problem/issue/project is described.
- ii. Multiple options for addressing this problem/issue/project are described.
- iii. The best of these solutions is identified, explained, and endorsed by whoever is proposing the problem/issue/project.
- iv. How the progress will be measured and reported is identified.
- v. Agreement is sought and a vote is taken.

a) Camp Omega

Mr. John Branstad and Mr. Rick Marko stated that we are on track for camp property and buildings to be gifted to Camp Omega, Inc. The donation and bill of sale agreements should be signed and completed by September 30, 2020, with the help of the District's legal counsel. Mr. Sean Martens mentioned that the camp is running into obstacles building their new retreat center due to a septic issue with the county. The goal is to launch this project in Spring 2021.

b) Approval of the MNS District 2021 Convention Fees

It was moved and seconded to set the Voting Delegate fee at \$260 and the Advisory Delegate fee at \$130 for the 2021 District Convention. The fees for the 2018 District Convention were \$250 and \$125. The hope is that this will be a "break even scenario." The motion carried.

- c) Election of a new MN South District Board of Directors member
Biographical information was sent to the BOD for Alfrieda Baldwin and Sam Erdman for the vacant Lay Member position in Region I – East Metro. The BOD voted and Alfrieda Baldwin was elected to fill this position.
- d) 2021 Budget
Mr. Rick Marko, District Treasurer, gave extensive information concerning the draft of the 2021 District budget. He shared details about various expenses that will be reduced. There will be \$164,000 added to the budget this year to cover District Convention expenses. The Personnel Committee is recommending a one percent increase for staff. The District Missions program was set at \$336,900 for 2021 (this was \$450,700 in 2020). We will vote to approve the 2021 budget at the December BOD meeting.
- e) Budget line item considerations: Funding for POBLO International Friendship Center in Faribault
Rev. Dr. William Utech, Assistant to the President for Missions, shared information about the POBLO International Friendship Center ministry in Faribault. Due to \$115,000 cuts from the 2021 mission budget, the MN South District Missions Committee chose to make this difficult decision. Hopefully the national POBLO organization will be able to provide additional funding for this Faribault project. The offering from the District Fall Pastors Conference will go toward the Faribault POBLO ministry.
- f) Constitution Committee: Mrs. Rosa Summers
The constitution and bylaws for St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Osseo, were approved at the August 22, 2020, Constitution Committee meeting. The Constitution Committee made the motion for the constitution and bylaws of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Osseo, be approved. This motion was seconded. The motion carried.
- g) Proposed changes to the MNS District Handbook will be presented at the December 1, 2020 meeting.

7. ROUND TABLE

Celebrations and prayer requests were shared.

8. CLOSING PRAYER

Rev. Stefan Wismar, Executive Assistant to the President, led our closing prayer.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by District First Vice President David Mumme at 11:42am.

<p>UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS: Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 10:00am – 4:00pm <i>Weather alternative, December 3, 2020</i> Saturday, February 20, 2021 Tuesday, May 4, 2021 Monday & Tuesday, September 20-21, 2021 Tuesday, December 7, 2021</p>
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