

# ***The Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod*** **California - Nevada - Hawaii** **71<sup>st</sup> District Convention**

**First Session**  
**Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

## **1. OPENING**

Immediately before the opening of the Convention, the Divine service was hosted by members of the combined circuits of the Sacramento area, Circuits 4 and 19. Synod 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Rev. Dr. Herbert Mueller, offered the message.

President Robert Newton opened the 71<sup>st</sup> Convention of the CNH District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod at 1:05 p.m. The president noted that we were opening in the afterglow of Easter and Ascension. He reminded the convention attendees that while Jesus invites us, “follow me,” we live in a world that is increasingly hostile to the Gospel.

In speaking of the convention theme, “Hearts Burning with Christ,” inspired by the account of the disciples on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:32), President Newton stated that after the crucifixion, the disciples were “stuck.” However, after meeting with the risen Lord, he offered that they found their hope in His Word. *“His Word is our hope for today in our world -- Jesus was chasing after disciples then; he’s still chasing after disciples today.”*

The President introduced Synod 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Rev. Dr. Herbert Mueller, who will be with us throughout the convention. Rev. Mueller greeted those in attendance on behalf of Synod President, Matthew Harrison, the St. Louis Ministry Center staff and the Council of Presidents. President Newton offered a prayer of thanksgiving for Rev. Mueller’s leadership in difficult times.

The President introduced: the Rev. Dr. Scott Murray, Synod 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President representing our region – Northwest District President, Rev. Dr. Paul Linnemann -- Past District President, Rev. Dr. Walt Tietjen and Ione -- District First Lady Priscilla Newton -- District 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Rev. Dr. Thomas Zelt, The District Board of Directors and the District Secretary, Rev. John Standley. Enthusiastic applause accompanied the introduction of Rita Konda.

President Newton also introduced the leadership of Addis Kidan Lutheran Church of San Francisco and acknowledged the excellent work they have done since our last convention.

## 2. MEMORIAL ROLL CALL

President Newton called the names of the Ordained and Commissioned Ministers that were called to glory in the past triennium. The list of these names can be found beginning on page 42 of the Convention Manual.

## 3. REGISTRATION REPORT

Rev. James Kabel presented the first Convention Registration Report. A detailed list of Convention attendees will be posted in the Convention Proceedings.

Voting Lay Delegates = 102

Voting Pastoral Delegates = 90

***Total Voting Delegates = 192***

Total Non-Voting Participants = 106

***Total Registered = 298***

- ***A motion was made and seconded to accept the report. The motion was approved.***

## 4. ADOPTION OF THE STANDING RULES

Parliamentarian, Rev. Richard Rice, read the Standing Rules as printed in the Convention Manual. He asked that Standing Rule #11 be changed to allow the minutes of the Convention to be posted to the District website within the week following Convention rather than being read at the next session. The minutes would then be approved at the first meeting of the District Board of Directors following the Convention.

- ***A motion was made and seconded to approve the Standing Rules with the change to rule #11. The motion was approved.***

## 5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- ***A motion was made and seconded to approve the Convention Agenda. The motion was approved.***

## 6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Part One

### ***Educational Services***

To open his report, President Newton called District Executive for Education, Joel Koerschen, to the podium. The President reviewed some of the innovations that Joel has brought to the District Educational services as well as his work to upgrade the accreditation standards during his many years of service to the District.

Joel's presentation focused on what he considers some of the most critical issues facing education today.

#1. Wasted gifts, talents, and abilities. *“Education at its best is about helping people discover, refine and develop their God-given gifts, talents, passions, and abilities, and then helping them to discover how to use those gifts, talents, and abilities in ways that benefit others and oneself.”*

#2. Educational Technologies -- *What is enough? What is too much? There is a danger of educational technologies shaping us more than we shape the technologies.*

#3. Character, virtues, and other non-cognitive skills -- *Helping to develop those things that define who we are and what we will be.*

#4. Human Agency - *Understanding that we make choices that will impact our lives.*

#5. Purpose and Meaning – *One of the great dangers of society is that there is no meaning to a person's life or life in general.*

#6. Vocation and work – *Work is an essential part of life. Education is essential to getting people to get and do work with excellence and character.*

#7. Leadership – *It is not that our schools suffer from a lack of leadership; it's that we don't have enough leaders.* Joel went on to speak to the shortage of School Principals in the Synod.

### **Congregational Services**

In introducing Ted Hartman, Executive Director for Congregational Services, the president spoke of the long history that their two families had shared over the past 45 years.

Rev. Hartman distributed a handout sheet to all attendees entitled *“Some Generalizations on C1 and C2 Churches”*. The document offered some differences between the “church” that most of us know and the “emerging church.” Pastor Hartman worked through each of the categories on the page. On the other side of the handout which bore the title, “What Will We Become?” there were some “Coaching Questions” designed to assist the congregation in addressing this new era of missions.

## **7. DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President Newton introduced the District 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Rev. Dr. Thomas Zelt.

Chairman Zelt noted that our District is incredibly diverse not only in social makeup but also in geographical size. We stretch from Crescent City in the North to Lompoc in the

South -- from our preaching station at Wells, Nevada to the East, to St. Matthews on the Island of Kauai, Hawaii. We have 182 Churches, 18 Schools, 3 Pre-Schools, and 1 High School.

As he talked of the District, he offered that as an organization of independent churches, our purpose is to *"Challenge and assist one another,"* to serve each other and proclaim the gospel. He pointed to the members of the Board of Directors whom the previous convention elected to "Challenge and assist" from the top. He looked forward to the new group of Board members that this convention will send forth with that same charge. He also noted that we have a multitude of others in the District with exceptional talents and varied areas of expertise.

The Chairman reviewed the Outcomes that have been generated by the Board during the past triennium. These Outcomes have served as the outline for the work of the District. The Board has dedicated themselves to keeping first things first. He stated that the CNH District has always been a *"Mission Minded"* district. But he also acknowledged that over the course of time, strategies change. He went on to highlight some of the actions that the Board has supported to accomplish the stated Outcomes. A video was shown highlighting some of the challenges that have faced the District, and how LINC – Bay Area is meeting some of those challenges. After the video, Rev. Aaron Putman, the Director of LINC – Bay Area was introduced.

In conclusion, Rev. Zelt reminded the delegates that we need to trust one another. Although our ministries may look different, we share the same mission, confession, and faith.

## **8. ELECTION OF THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT**

The nominees for the office of the president of the CNH District of the Lutheran Church:

Rev. Jason Bredeson

Rev. Mark Kliewer

Rev. Michael Lange

Rev. Ronald Youngdale

Before the actual vote, several practice votes were taken to assure that the electronic voting machines were functioning properly.

Rev. Dr. Thomas Zelt offered a prayer for wisdom, guidance, and a God-pleasing outcome.

Before the vote, James Kabel, chair of the Registration Committee presented the current registration report:

Voting Lay Delegates = 105

Voting Pastoral Delegates = 95

**Total Voting Delegates = 200**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Ballot %	2 <sup>nd</sup> ballot %	3 <sup>rd</sup> Ballot %
Rev. Jason Bredeson	25	30	42
Rev. Mark Kliewer	10	---	---
Rev. Michael Lange	42	42	58
Rev. Ronald Youngdale	24	27	---

- **Rev. Michael Lange is the President-Elect of the California – Nevada - Hawaii District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.**

Priscilla Newton presented Kristi Lange with flowers telling her to “Stand by your man. He will need it.”

President Newton congratulated President-Elect Lange, presenting him with a Pontiff's hat that was given to him by the sainted Lon Haack. As for the “real” gift, Bob gave Mike a red towel telling him, *“You are being called to wash feet, and the one who not only washed feet but souls did it with His precious blood, so follow Him.”*

## **9. REPORT FROM CEF**

President Newton introduced Bill Swift, LCEF representative to the CNH District. Bill talked about the merger of CEF to LCEF. He acknowledged and thanked those who were involved in starting and carrying out the work of CEF for these many years.

The transition to LCEF began in 2015 when the CEF Board realized that the mission of CEF had changed in that there weren't as many new church starts as before. Over time, it was decided that the mission could benefit from a merger with LCEF.

In his new position, Bill reported that much of his time is spent working with the challenge of clergy housing. In a survey taken dealing with clergy housing, it seems that most of our current pastors have been able to deal with the question of housing. Questions do remain, however, for new pastors coming into the District.

One possible solution is in partial equity. In this scenario, the congregation buys the house and then sells a portion of the property to the pastor. In this way, the pastor invests the amount that he can afford, thus allowing him to have a share in the equity.

## **10. RESOLUTION 2-01 -- TO DISSOLVE THE CNH DISTRICT CHURCH EXTENSION FUND**

- ***A motion was made and seconded to approve the resolution. A friendly amendment was offered that noted that in addition to removing Bylaw section III.H as included in the resolution, a reference to the Chair of the Church Extension Fund in section III.A.1 also needs to be removed. The motion was approved as amended.***

## **11. GREETINGS FROM THE LWML**

President Newton welcomed past-LWML District President, Lynnette Campbell, to the podium. Lynnette noted that the current president, Martha Dubke, is in Hawaii and so was unable to attend. Lynnette talked about how the CNH LWML works with District leadership to choose which grants are funded. She reported that 16 new grants were approved at their recent convention totaling \$95,000.00. Lynnette invited the convention attendees to visit the LWML booth.

## **12. PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Part Two**

President Newton welcomed President-Elect, Rev. Michael Lange, to the podium to talk about Mission in the CNH District. Mike began by saying that Mission happens because of the congregations and their leadership. We are called to walk together with the baptized people of God.

Our call is to plant the Gospel. Mike focused on three main areas:

1. Helping our congregations and their people to be witnesses in their communities.
2. We want to be about the work of missionary training for both professional and lay leaders.
3. We want to be about the work of new starts -- multiplying disciples.

A video was shown that sums up the work of the Mission Agency in the CNH District. This video can be viewed on the web at <http://www.cnh-lcms.org/missions>.

After the video Mike, went on to say that “We are in this together; We are better together.” The District seeks to collaborate with others that work in different ways to reach the same goals. He spoke of several instances where congregations and individuals have banded together to worship Christ and to seek and save the lost.

Rev. Lange also spoke about the funds that have been raised through the District to assist those congregations and members that were affected by the recent fires in the District. He also noted that there are funds available from the District for mission projects.

In conclusion, Rev. Lange encouraged those in attendance to consider becoming a Mission Prayer Communicator. He stated that there is a “Job Description” at the Missions booth in the exhibit hall.

President Newton returned to the podium and stated again the passage from Luke 24 that is the source of our convention theme, “*Didn’t our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?*” He reminded the convention that the depth of God is not in creating the world; it is in loving the world. We are a part of the cosmic story that was known before the world was created; that Jesus would die – rise, and that repentance and forgiveness would be proclaimed in His Name.

The President talked about the history of the CNH District which began way back in 1859, making the point that we have always been a mission field and have always had a mission heart. He reminded the convention of the post-church reality in which we live and spoke of the process that took us from one to the other. In that context, he spoke about his and Priscilla’s time serving in the Philippines where the people didn’t know Jesus at all, and that his seminary degree meant nothing at all to them. Where we are is where we are called. The world needs a Savior.

In his closing remarks, he encouraged the convention to continue the work that has been accomplished thus far and to imagine what ministry can look like beyond a building and Sunday morning. Jesus has ascended, but he is still with us.

### **13. ELECTION OF THE 1<sup>st</sup> VICE – PRESIDENT**

Before the election, President Newton offered a prayer of thanksgiving for the slate of nominees and called for God’s blessings on the election.

The Nominees for the office of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President of the CNH District of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod are as follows:

Rev. James Beyer	Rev. Jason Bredeson	Rev. Mitchell Gowen
Rev. Aaron Smith	Rev. Robert Weller	Rev. Thomas Zelt

- ***Rev. Thomas Zelt received 60% of the vote on the first ballot and will be the CNH District 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President in the next triennium.***

### **14. RESOLUTION 2-03 -- TO ELIMINATE THE PROHIBITION OF BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEMBERS BEING ELECTED FROM THE SAME CIRCUIT.**

Rev. Aaron Smith introduced Resolution 2-03 and moved for adoption.

- ***A motion was made and seconded to adopt Resolution 2-03. The motion was approved.***

### **15. RESOLUTION 1-01 – TO RENEW THE TERM OF THE CNH DISTRICT DISABILITY MINISTRY TASK FORCE (DMTF) FOR A 3-YEAR TERM**

Rev. James Beyer introduced Resolution 1-01 and moved for adoption.

- **A motion was made and seconded to adopt Resolution 1-01. A friendly amendment was offered to add the Task Force’s Mission statement to the resolution as follows: *“To equip the church to reach out, include, and encourage full participation of people with disabilities and their families in the life of Christ’s Church.”* The motion was approved as amended.**

## **16. FIRST SESSION OF THE CONVENTION IN RECESS**

President Newton offered prayer and then announced that the convention was in recess until 7:45 am Saturday morning. The delegates were instructed to go to various meeting rooms for their Regional Caucus.