

THE FORTY-EIGHTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION
THE MINNESOTA DISTRICT—WELS

Martin Luther College
New Ulm, Minnesota

June 12–14, 2012

SESSION ONE

OPENING SERVICE

The Forty-Eighth Biennial Convention of the Minnesota District of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod opened with a communion service at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, June 12, 2012 at the Chapel of the Christ on the campus of Martin Luther College in New Ulm. Pastor John Boeder served as the presiding minister. Pastor Martin Bentz delivered the sermon based on Matthew 7 and focused on the beauty of the pure word of God. About 350 people attended the opening service with an offering that totaled \$2864. Prof. Wayne Wagner served as the organist, Prof. Miles Wurster as the Brass Coordinator, and Prof. Kermit Moldenhauer as the Choir Director.

OPENING

President Charles Degner opened the convention in the name of the Triune God at 11:00 a.m.

COMMITTEE 1

Pastor Paul Tessmer, from the Credentials and Membership Committee #1, presented his report. Resolution #1 regarding credentials was adopted.

GREETING

President Mark Zarling of Martin Luther College welcomed the delegates to the campus of Martin Luther College.

COMMITTEE 17

Housing Committee Chair Jeffrey Schone welcomed us to the convention, reviewed the housing arrangements, committee room assignments, and offered the services of MLC.

COMMITTEE 16

First Vice President Mark Schwertfeger recommended we adopt the agenda with two additions. It was moved, seconded and carried that we adopt the agenda.

COMMITTEE 6

Pastor Jeff Bovee of the Media Relations reported for Committee #6. He encouraged delegates to subscribe to www.welsmn.org for district emails and information.

COMMITTEE 14 Pastor John Boeder, chairman of Committee #14, encouraged the delegates to make use of his Courtesy and Printing Committee's services.

COMMITTEE 15 Second Vice President Don Sutton reported for the Copy Review committee.

COMMITTEE 3 Nominations Committee Chairman, Henry Koch, brought forward the nomination list for elections.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT District President Charles Degner presented his report to the Minnesota District.

ELECTIONS Teacher Nathan Bitter called for nominations by paper ballot for the office of District President.

MISSION FOR THE DEAF Mr. Ben Olson from the Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing encouraged congregations to send a delegate to the August convention in Shakopee, Minnesota.

CLOSING Session 1 closed at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael R. Hatzung, Secretary

SESSION TWO

DEVOTION	Session 2 of the Forty-Eighth Biennial Convention of the Minnesota District opened at 1:30pm with a devotion led by Pastor Dennis Klatt, who focused our attention on the theme God's Word-Our Heritage: In Prayer.
MINUTES	Secretary Michael Hatzung read the minutes of Session 1. The minutes were adopted as read.
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter reported that the nominees for the office of District President are Pastor Jeff Bovee, Pastor Charles Degner, Pastor Mark Schwertfeger, and Pastor Don Sutton. Ballots for the election of District President were gathered.
WELS TRANLSATION	Pastor John Braun from the Translation Evaluation Committee shared his report on the careful process of translation evaluation. After questions, Pastor John Braun was excused with thanks.
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter shared that Pastor Charles Degner was reelected as District President. Nomination ballots for the office of 1 st Vice President were received.
CONT. EDUCATION	Professor Lawrence Olson shared a presentation from the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee (CECW).
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter shared names for nomination for the office of 1 st Vice President. Before ballots were gathered, the convention recessed for a 15 minute break at 3:00pm.
WELS CAR	At 3:15pm Mark Vance reported for WELS Christian Aid and Relief.
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter shared that Pastor Jeff Bovee, Pastor Mark Schwertfeger, and Pastor Don Sutton were nominated to serve as 1 st Vice President. Ballots were received for this election.
PRESENTATION	Pastor Mark Cordes shared a presentation titled, "How We Got the Bible." He was thanked for his work.
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter reported that there will be a runoff election between Pastor Mark Schwertfeger and Pastor Don Sutton. An election ballot was collected.

WELS PRESIDENT President Mark Schroeder presented his report on the WELS to our convention.

ELECTIONS Pastor Don Sutton was elected as the 1st Vice President of the District.

NOMINATIONS Pastor Henry Koch presented the Nominating Committee's election ballot for positions in the Minnesota District.

CLOSING The floor was opened for announcements. Pastor Dennis Klatt closed the session at 5:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael R. Hatzung, Secretary

SESSION THREE

DEVOTION	Session 3 of the Forty-Eighth Biennial Convention of the Minnesota District opened at 8:30 a.m. with a devotion led by Pastor Dean Gunn. He focused our attention on the theme “God’s Word—Our Heritage: In Meditation.”
NOMINATIONS	Pastor Henry Koch shared the ballot for positions throughout the district and synod. It was moved, seconded, and carried that Teacher Macord Johnson be added as a nominee for Lutheran Schools. Ballots for this election will be collected before the morning break.
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter shared that nominations for the office of 2 nd Vice President will received and nominating ballots were gathered from the floor.
MINUTES	Minutes for session 2 of the convention were read by Secretary Michael Hatzung. They were approved as read.
LUTHERAN SCHOOLS	Teacher Dan Whitney reported for the Lutheran Schools Committee. He was excused with thanks for his six years of service.
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter shared that Pastor Jeff Bovee, Pastor Mark Kom, and Pastor Mark Schwertfeger have been nominated for the office of 2 nd Vice President. Ballots for this election were gathered.
TRANSLATION COMP	Pastor Eric Schroeder led the convention in a translation comparison exercise between Holman, ESV and NIV 2011.
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter shared that Pastor Mark Schwertfeger was elected 2 nd Vice President. Nominations were gathered for District Secretary.
RECESS	At 10:30 a.m. we recessed for a 15-minute break.
ELECTIONS	Elections Chair Nathan Bitter shared that Pastor Jeff Bovee, Pastor Michael Hatzung, and Pastor Jeffery Schone were nominated for District Secretary. Ballots for this election were gathered.
WLC	Mr Craig Russow reported for Wisconsin Lutheran College.

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP Pastor Paul Lindhorst reported for the Adult Discipleship Committee.

EVANGELISM Pastor Michael Dietz reported for the Evangelism Committee.

ELECTIONS Elections Chair Nathan Bitter announced that Pastor Michael Hatzung has been elected District Secretary.

COMMITTEE 4 Pastor Eugene DeVries presented Resolution 1 from the Resolutions and President's Report Committee and it was moved, seconded and carried that we adopt this resolution. He presented Resolution 2 with the addition of St John, Mazzepa in place of St John, Red Wing. It was moved, seconded and carried that we adopt the resolution. He presented resolution 3 which ratifies conference officers, and it was moved, seconded and carried that we adopt the resolution. He presented resolution 4 which ratifies the election of circuit pastors, and it was moved, seconded and carried that we adopt the resolution.

HOME MISSIONS Pastor Jeremy Glowicki reported for Home Missions.

SPECIAL MINISTRIES Pastor Darren Green reported for the Special Ministries Committee.

WORSHIP Prof David Bauer reported for the Worship Committee.

CLOSING Pastor Dean Gunn led us in a prayer and Session 3 was closed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael R. Hatzung, Secretary

SESSION FOUR

- DEVOTION** Session 4 of the Forty-Eighth Biennial Convention of the Minnesota District opened at 1:30 p.m. with a devotion led by Chris Christenson. He focused his message on the theme “God’s Word—Our Heritage: In Struggle.”
- MINUTES** Minutes of Session 3 were read and approved as read.
- YOUTH AND FAMILY** Pastor Bill Monday reported for the Youth and Family Committee. He requested that people assist him by filling out a survey.
- CARE COMMITTEE** Pastor Mark Falck reported for the Care Committee for Called Workers and the District Help Team.
- TRANSLATION** Pastor Eric Schroeder presented his convention paper, “Brief and General Observations as I Evaluate Translations.” After questions and discussion, he was dismissed with thanks.
- ELECTIONS** Elections Chair Nathan Bitter shared that there will be a runoff election for the board position at Michigan Lutheran Seminary between Mr David Bauer, Mr Paul Pappenfuss, and Mr Todd Russ. Ballots were gathered from the floor.
- SYNODICAL COUNCIL** Mr. Paul Holzhueter reported to us as the Minnesota District Synodical Council Representative. He was dismissed with thanks.
- RECESS** A 20 minute recess was declared at 3:10.
- COMMITTEE 12** Chair Roger Knepprath shared reports 1 and 2 from the Special Matters Committee 12 on the Translation Evaluation Committee Report to the Twelve Districts. He then shared a resolution from their committee regarding the memorial to merge the Redwood Falls and New Ulm Conferences into the Minnesota River Valley Conference. The motion was seconded and carried. A resolution from Special Matters recommended adoption of a memorial for establishment of a Minnesota District scholarship fund at Martin Luther College. The resolution was seconded and adopted. The memorial on Administrative Release Time for School Principals was presented as. The committee presented it for adoption and it was seconded. It was moved and seconded that the memorial be amended to replace “school day” with “week” and “at the time of the call” be inserted in Resolved 1. The amendment was carried.

The resolution was adopted. The memorial titled “Proposed District Response to 2012 Minnesota Marriage Amendment Issue” was presented for adoption by Special Matters and was seconded. It was noted that the amendment before Minnesota voters says, “Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended” rather than “be revised”. After discussion, it was adopted by the convention. It was moved and supported that we accept the report from Committee 12.

COMMITTEE 7 Chair James Grabitske shared the report for the Home Missions Committee. He presented a resolution from Committee 7 addressing the Regional Approach for Board Representation which was seconded. The committee agreed to change “prioritize” to “focus on” in Resolved c. The resolution carried. It was moved, seconded and carried that we accept the report of Committee 7.

COMMITTEE 8 Chair Dan Kroll presented reports #1-6 from the World Missions Committee. It was moved, seconded and carried that we accept the report from Committee 8.

WM ADMINISTRATOR Pastor Dan Koelpin, Administrator for World Missions, shared his presentation on our church body’s work in sharing the gospel around the world. He was thanked for his presentation.

CHRIST IN MEDIA ELS Pastor Don Moldstad shared an invitation to the Christ in Media Institute which has a goal to be a think tank to use mass media through our WELS/ELS missions throughout the world. More information is available at www.christinmedia.org.

CLOSING The session was closed with prayer by Pastor Chris Christenson at 5:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael R. Hatzung, Secretary

SESSION FIVE

DEVOTION	Session 5 of the Forty-Eighth Biennial Convention of the Minnesota District opened at 7:00 p.m.
WLCFS	Pastor Jim Mattek shared information from Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service about this ministry, including the rapid growth of online counseling. This system is in use by many congregations, and allows the counselors to focus on their area of expertise.
TLHA	Pastor Curt Seefeldt presented information about The Lutheran Home Association and its work.
MINUTES	The minutes of Session 4 were read and adopted.
COMMITTEE 10	Chair Matt Rauh shared reports #1-5 for Committee 10, Parish Services. Resolution 1, “Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee” was shared and brought forward for adoption. After discussion, it was seconded and adopted. A second resolution, “Congregational Mission Offerings” was presented and brought forward for adoption. The resolution was seconded and adopted. The entire report from Committee 10 was accepted.
COMMITTEE 11	Chair Mark Kutz shared Reports #1-10 for the Administrative Services Committee. It was moved, seconded and carried that we accept the reports from Committee 11.
LEGISLATION	Pastor Martin Bentz reported for the Minnesota District Legislation Committee.
CONSTITUTION	Pastor Tim Smith reported for the Minnesota District Constitution Committee.
KINGDOM WORKERS	Laura Harstad shared information about WELS Kingdom Workers including Travel/Canvass/Witness trips, overseas mission opportunities, Builders for Christ, VBS, soccer camps, adopting a home or world mission, etc.
WELS FOUNDATION	Pastor Michael Hatzung reported for the WELS Foundation.
OFFERING	Pastor Marcus Birkholz made a motion to conduct a door offering at our closing service designated for the Minnesota District

Scholarship Fund at Martin Luther College. The motion was seconded and carried.

CLOSING

At 8:25 p.m. the convention moved to the Chapel of the Christ to close with Evening Vespers led by Pastor Michael Neumann.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael R. Hatzung, Secretary

SESSION SIX

DEVOTION

Session 6 of the Forty-Eighth Biennial Convention of the Minnesota District opened with a devotion led by Pastor Dennis Strong. He focused our attention on the theme, “God’s Word—Our Heritage: In These Last Days He Has Spoken to Us by His Son.”

MINUTES

The minutes of Session 5 were read and adopted.

CONVENTION DATES

A motion was made to conduct our Forty-Ninth Minnesota District Convention from June 10-12, 2014. The motion was seconded and carried.

DISTRICT MCG

District Ministry of Christian Giving Chair Duane Schmeichel shared his report. He shared a video presentation and personally highlighted “It’s All About Jesus”, our synod’s new stewardship program focused on a person’s relationship with Jesus. Pastor David Bendix will replace Pastor Schmeichel as the chair of the Minnesota District Ministry of Christian Giving committee, and Pastor Schmeichel was thanked for his six years of service.

ELECTIONS

Chair Nathan Bitter shared the final report of Elections Committee 5 and the report was accepted by the convention.

COMMITTEE 9

Chair Greg Thiesfeldt shared Reports #1-3 from Ministerial Education Committee 9. Resolutions #1-2 were presented, seconded and adopted. The committee’s entire report was accepted.

COMMITTEE 1

Chair Paul Tessmer presented Resolution 2 from the Credentials and Membership Committee. It was seconded and adopted. The entire report of the committee was accepted.

COMMITTEE 4

Chair Eugene DeVries of the Resolutions & President’s Report Committee shared Resolutions #5-6 which were seconded and adopted. Report #1 was presented for adoption, seconded, and accepted as is. The entire report of the committee was accepted.

CHINA PARTNERS

Pastor James Witt shared a video presentation of the work of China Partners, and he and Pastor Mark Cordes added further details. If there are other pastors who would like to teach, please contact these pastors.

COMMITTEE 2	Chair David Gartner shared the report of the Registration Committee 2 which was accepted.
COMMITTEE 13	Pastor Paul Tessmer reported for the Excuse Committee and the report of the committee was accepted with changes.
SUPPORT	1 st Vice President Mark Schwertfeger shared an oral report from the Board of Support.
PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS	President Degner shared comments on how we can seize mission opportunities wherever the Lord presents them—at home, in our communities, or anywhere around the world.
MINUTES	The minutes of Session 6 were read. There was a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded and carried.
RECESS	We broke for recess at 10:20 a.m.
CLOSING SERVICE	The Convention closed with a service conducted by Rev Wesley Bruss. He focused us on the theme “Eternal Life: Our Everlasting Heritage.” The district officers for the 2012-2014 biennium were installed. The convention was adjourned at 11:40 on June 14, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael R. Hatzung, Secretary