

# LCMS North Dakota District Board of Directors

## Second Quarter Meeting Minutes      20 May 2022

### Saint Mark Lutheran Church, Minot, ND

Present at the meeting were Rev. Arie Bertsch, district president; Rev. Steve Schulz, first vice-president, chair; Rev. Kirk Peters, second vice-president; Mr. Tom Langer, Vice-chair; Rev. Daniel Voth, secretary; Mrs. Kay Kreklau, treasurer; Rev. Dr. Adam Filipek; Mrs. Tana McKenna; Mr. Jason Paradis; Mr. Scott Pfennig; Mr. Eric Poppinga; Mr. Marty Visto; Rev. Lester Wolfgram; and Mrs. Tami Ulland, Business Manager.

## **1.0 Life Together**

Chairman Schulz called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. CDT.

President Bertsch opened with prayer.

No items were added to the agenda.

## **2.0 Board Action Items**

### **2.1 Consent Agenda**

Chairman Schulz called the board's attention to the proposed consent agenda in order to expedite addressing some of the regular business of a board meeting. Opportunity was provided for board members to request the removal of specific items from the consent agenda to be discussed during the meeting. It was moved, seconded, and passed to adopt the consent agenda which included the following items:

2.1.1 Minutes from February 4, 2022 (DB)

2.1.2 Message in the Pew (DB)

2.1.3 Tentative Meeting Schedule 2022 – 2025

• Bismarck/Mandan		August 26, 2022	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Beautiful Savior, Fargo		October 28, 2022	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Bismarck/Mandan	Planning Council	February 2-3, 2023	2:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
• Bismarck/Mandan		February 3, 2023	1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Beautiful Savior, Fargo		April 14, 2023	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Minot		August 25, 2023	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Beautiful Savior, Fargo		October 27, 2023	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Beautiful Savior, Fargo	Planning Council	February 1-2, 2024	2:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
• Beautiful Savior, Fargo		February 2, 2024	1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Bismarck/Mandan		April 12, 2024	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Beautiful Savior, Fargo		August 23, 2024	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• Minot		October 25, 2024	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
• District Convention, Minot		January 19-22, 2025	

2.1.4 Wittenberg Report (DB)

2.1.5 Zion, Claire City release from ND District

2.1.6 Unclaimed Property Letter

## 2.2 Items for Board Approval

### 2.2.1 President's Appointment of Task Force Chairs and Committees.

No new appointments have been made.

**Motion:** To establish four (4) task forces to accomplish the four (4) goals identified at the planning council early today, folding existing task forces into these four (4) new task forces.

Motion seconded. This motion failed unanimously.

**Motion:** To establish three Standing Committees of the Board (policy 2.7.1) in the areas of Witness (policy 1.3); Mercy (policy 1.4); and Life Together (policy 1.5).

Motion seconded and adopted.

Chairman Schulz appointed Vice-president Peters, Secretary Voth, and Board Member Filipek to work out how the existing subcommittees would be incorporated into these standing committees. See discussion under 5.0 Board Visioning.

### 2.2.2 Staff Salary Review

Report from review in Dropbox. Recommendations will be presented to the board in August of this year.

### 2.2.3 Youth Events Budget

We have extensive reports from past events. No budget has been submitted from the Youth and Young Adult subcommittee for any upcoming events. Treasurer Kreklau will continue to seek budgets for upcoming events.

### 2.2.4 District Reconcilers

With the Rev. Seter being called to glory, one open "ministers of religion-ordained" reconciler position is vacant (Synod bylaw 1.10.10).

**Motion:** To appoint Rev. Kirk Peters to the ministers of religion-ordained district reconciler position.

Motion seconded and adopted.

### 2.2.5 Appointment of New Members.

None at this time.

### 2.2.6 CCM Bylaw Opinion

Secretary Voth received a letter from the Synodical Committee on Constitutional Matters (CCM) regarding the district bylaws passed at the 2022 convention (see Dropbox). One item needed to be addressed by the board to bring the district into compliance with Synod bylaws (as provided by Synodical bylaw 3.9.2.2.3 [b]) and three areas were noted to be addressed at the next district convention.

**Motion:** To restore the words "if appointed, and to voice in the convention" to bylaw 1.8.5.1. as required by the CCM.

Motion seconded and unanimously adopted.

### 2.2.7 All Faiths Chapel - Life Skills & Transition Center

Rev. Seter served as chaplain for the center in Grafton, ND. The center has found a new chaplain following his death.

## 2.3 Board Unfinished Business

### 2.3.1 Review of Passed Convention Resolutions

No reports from those assigned the tasks.

With the death of Rev. Seter, a position on the Synodical Board of International Missions has been vacated. The Synod is seeking nominations for individuals from the Great Lakes Region to fill the vacant position.

**Motion:** To nominate Rev. Rick Jones to the position on the Board of International Missions.

Motion seconded and passed.

### 2.3.2 Family Convocation

Working with International Mercy (Rev. Rick Jones) and Revitalizing Congregations (Rev. Heath Trampe) subcommittees, the Local Mercy subcommittee is planning the “Love Abounds” family convocation scheduled for October 21-22 in Bismarck. The presenters for the convocation include Rev. Mark Wood with Congregation Re-Vitalization and representatives from Lutheran Family Service. The convocation will coincide with the ND District Middle School Gathering at the Ramada in Bismarck on the evening of Friday, October 21. The convocation will continue on Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at Bethel Lutheran Church in Bismarck. Comfort Dog Gideon from St. Michael’s Lutheran Church in Bloomington, MN will also be present. Registration for the convocation is free through a grant from Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF). We are asking families to pay for their travel expenses and lodging. A lunch will be provided at Bethel on October 22. A block of rooms has been reserved at LaQuinta and Ramada for participants. Registration forms are available and are to be sent to the Fargo District Office. Bulletin blurbs and other promotional materials will be made available as the convocation draws near.

### 2.3.3 Conflict of Interest Policy Statements

All board members have now signed the statements and collected by the district secretary.

### 2.3.4 DP Task Force

Task force has met to evaluate the needs of the district president in response to Omnibus Resolution 3-10 and the shared North Dakota District President Ministry (overture 3-8). They will continue to meet and bring the results of their findings to a later board meeting.

### 2.3.5 LFS Partnership

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Rev. Max Phillips, Rev. Mick Wolfram, and Joy Wolfram, all from Lutheran Family Service (LFS), met with President Bertsch, Vice-presidents Peters and Schulz, Tami Ulland, and members of the subcommittee including Kay Kreklau, Rev. Marcis, Kirk Rosin, and Rev. Wolfram. Discussion included a path forward toward partnership between LFS and the LCMS ND District.

- i. A vital first step is to intentionally inform pastors and congregations of the services offered by LFS.
- ii. President Bertsch agreed to work with Director Phillips to bring representatives from LFS to present at the October 2022 LCMS ND District Fall Pastoral Conference.

- iii. Representatives from LFS will also present at the “Love Abounds” family convocation scheduled October 21-22 in Bismarck. It was strongly suggested that one of the counselors in mental health (Wanda or Toni, or both) be selected to present to the convocation.
- iv. The ultimate goal is to provide overall Christ-centered, spiritual, mental, and emotional wellness for pastors, their family members, and the congregations under the pastor’s care.
- v. It was indicated that pastoral care including Law/Gospel Confession/Absolution ministry be done in concert with licensed Christian counselors to properly diagnose and treat emotional and mental health challenges.

Director Phillips will draft a suggested timeline and markers for anticipated progress to inform and engage pastors and congregations in the LCMS ND District toward full partnership with LFS in care for our workers, their family members, and those under their care. Those gathered agreed that the LCMS ND District would cover the travel/lodging expenses for LFS representatives when they serve in the LCMS ND District.

Tami Ulland agreed to compile and share with Rev. Phillips upcoming dates on the LCMS ND District Calendar when LFS might engage with various groups and gatherings including the LWML ND District Convention.

Tami indicated that Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is assisting in many ways in the vital work of wellness for pastors. Financial considerations and obligations will be addressed as conversations between key leaders of the LCMS North Dakota District and LFS continue. A few of the services to be considered include the vetting of Christian counselors in ND, offering insights/assistance to pastors as they care for souls with emotional and/or mental challenges, counseling services for couples/individuals with an unplanned pregnancy, providing adoption services that adhere to Biblical principles, and providing clinical mental health support for Called Workers in the LCMS ND District.

### **2.3.6 Planning Council Review**

Strengths identified in the LCMS North Dakota District

- doctrinally sound
- trust in the Bible
- lagging in the culture

Weakness identified in the LCMS North Dakota District

- long term planning for rural ministry challenges
- intentional outreach beyond ourselves
- tendency to be reactive instead of proactive
- Biblical stewardship (not just money)

Ministry opportunities in the LCMS North Dakota District

- strength in congregational catechesis - home catechesis
- consolidation, reorganization, cooperation of congregations
- church plants/preaching stations in Fargo, Kindred, Bismarck, south Grand Forks, and Valley City

### Ministry threats or barriers in the LCMS North Dakota District

changing family dynamics (disintegration of family; lack of male participation; misplaced priorities by our families; poor catechesis in the home)

Christians under attack (increasing hostility toward Christianity and Christian values; public schools including higher education; Satan; less emphasis on first-fruits giving; misappropriation of the name “Lutheran”)

technology distractions (social media; search engines: Google, Bing, etc.; online worship/communion)

### Four focuses for the district:

- 1) Family Faith Formation
- 2) Outreach
- 3) Rural ministry
- 4) In reach

### Four goals for the district:

- 1) Using our ordained and commissioned workers to evaluate, prepare plans and implement programs of catechesis using The Lutheran Study Bible, the Small Catechism, and Lutheran Service Book in families by May 2023 and report back to the planning council.
- 2) Increase witness of Christ in the LCMS North Dakota District by organizing and providing a 2023 gathering for pastors and lay people to teach, train, encourage faithful witness, mercy care, and life together.
- 3) By January 1, 2023 the LCMS North Dakota District will have an established and functioning rural/small town ministry task force for the purpose of identifying specific challenges and concerns in rural and small town ministry in North Dakota.
- 4) By January 2023, the LCMS North Dakota District will introduce encouragement and training for assisting congregations in bringing back their inactive members. This will involve the district president, circuit visitors, pastors, and congregational leaders.

The result of these goals led to a plan to organize a convocation (similar to the LCMS Wyoming District) to equip, train, and network in the areas of family faith formation, “in reach”, and outreach. There will be special attention given to discover ways that larger, more stable congregations might partner with rural congregations in ministry opportunities. A suggested date for the convocation is the second weekend of February, 2023. President Bertsch and the LCMS North Dakota District board of directors will work with members of the (yet to be named) Rural Ministry Task Force to plan and coordinate the convocation. It was further suggested that Rev. Kirk Peters help to coordinate the convocation because of his ties to successes in WY.

## **3.0 Board Education**

### **3.1 Review Section 3 - Board & Executive Relationships Policies**

No additional questions to the review.

## **4.0 Board Monitoring Items**

### **4.1.1 District President's Report**

Nothing to add to report in Dropbox.

#### **4.1.1.1 Report on Synod Information**

The Council of Presidents has completed their discussions regarding online communion.

Approximately 105 pastoral candidates and 100 vicarage assignments were handed out between our two seminaries this past month.

### **4.1.2 Business Manager Report**

Nothing to add to report in Dropbox.

### **4.1.3 Financial Reports**

Reports are found in Dropbox

Each district received funds from Soldiers of the Cross to help during the past year. Unused funds may need to be returned. LCEF has advised doing nothing with these funds until this matter is cleared up by Soldiers of the Cross.

Board policy 4.5.6 states that the treasurer is to ensure that there is always three (3) months operating expenses available. The board will need to determine what are and are not operating expenses, as the current \$50,000 per month minimum threshold may not be enough.

### **4.1.5 Board of Directors Subcommittee Reports**

Reports were shared at the planning council.

Request was made for standing committees and subcommittees of the board to develop budgets for committee actions early on in their planning, rather than late or after the fact.

## **5.0 Board Visioning**

**Motion:** To move existing subcommittees of Lutheran Education (parochial schools and child care centers) and Planting and Revitalizing Congregations under the Witness Standing Committee; Local Mercy and International Mercy under the Mercy Standing Committee; and Youth and Young Adults, Ordained and Commissioned Ministers, and Life Coordinator under the Life Together Standing Committee; and further that the existing chairs of these subcommittees be made co-chairs of the Standing Committees of the Board to accomplish the goals established at the planning council and reported in section 2.3.6 of these minutes.

Motion seconded and adopted.

## **6.0 Adjournment**

Chairman Schulz adjourned the meeting at 3:54 p.m. CDT.

President Bertsch closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel C. Voth". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Rev. Daniel C. Voth  
Secretary  
LCMS North Dakota District