

Minutes
LCMS North Dakota District Board of Directors
October 30, 2020 – Fourth Quarter Meeting

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING DEVOTION

The October 30, 2020 Fourth Quarter meeting of the LCMS North Dakota Board of Directors was called to order by Rev. Tom Marcis, Chairman at 9:02 a.m. Members present: Rev. Arie Bertsch, District President; Rev. Kirk Peters, 1st Vice President; Rev. Steve Schulz 2nd Vice President; Rev. Tom Marcis, Chairman; Mr. John Riley, Vice Chairman; Rev. Joshua Reimche, Secretary; Mr. Leon Bladow, Treasurer; Mrs. Tina Davidson, Mrs. Tami Ulland, Business Manager; Mr. Jason Paradis, Mr. Tom Langer, Rev. Dan Voth, Mr. Kirk Rosin, Mr. Paul Huber, Mrs. Kay Kreklau Absent:.

President Bertsch opened with a prayer for the church and the work of the board.

Chairman Marcis reviewed the agenda. Church property in Fortuna, and Synod nominations were added to the agenda. It was moved, seconded, and passed to adopt the agenda as amended.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Marcis 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. The February BOD meeting was moved to the regular agenda for discussion. It was moved, seconded, and passed to adopt the consent agenda, as amended which includes the following items, was thus approved:

- Minutes from August 21, 2020
- Ed Bean Update*
- Message in the Pew (DB)
- 2021 – 2023 Tentative Meeting Schedule
 - District Convention January 25-27, 2021 – Fargo
 - Bismarck - February 5, 2021 10am–6:00pm
 - Beautiful Savior, Fargo April 16, 2021 2:30pm-6pm
 - Jamestown, ND August 20, 2021 2:30pm-6pm
 - Minot October 29, 2021 10am-6pm
 - Beautiful Savior, Fargo February 4, 2022 10am-6pm
 - St. Paul's, Minot April 29, 2022 10am-6pm
 - Bismarck/Mandan August 19, 2022 2:30pm-6pm
 - Beautiful Savior, Fargo October 28, 2022 10am-6pm
 - Bismarck/Mandan February 3, 2023 10am-6pm
 - Beautiful Savior Fargo April 14, 2023 10am-6pm
 - St. Paul's, Minot August 25, 2023 2:30pm-6pm
 - Beautiful Savior, Fargo October 27, 2023 10am-6pm
 - District Convention Minot, ND, Jan 21-24, 2024

*Items attached to these minutes as *Appendix A*

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

February BOD Meeting

It was moved, seconded and passed to have the reorganization meeting in Feb 2021 be an in-person meeting.

President Task Force Appointments

Nothing to report.

Board Policy Manual

CCM opinion was discussed. No changes were suggested by the board and the consensus was that the board continue to operate under the current policy manual and regularly review it and ensure it is followed. The primary issue is that the current policy must be followed regarding the DP acting as Chief Executive of the district.

District Convention Update

Due to a scheduling conflict the convention was moved from the Delta to the Ramada in Fargo. If covid is present and space limitations are still mandated, the opening worship service will be held at the hotel instead of Immanuel. CCM has advised that a convention cannot be held virtually. 1/3 of total delegates is the minimum for a quorum at convention. Bertsch will develop a 1 day convention schedule in case we need to shorten the convention. We can cancel 3 weeks before the convention without penalty from the Ramada. The board will meet Dec 28 at 7 pm to determine whether or not to continue with the convention or postpone.

Middle School Gathering Update

Event was cancelled due to low numbers it could not break even.

Guidebook

The title is “District Resource and Policy Manual”. It was moved, seconded and passed to send an overture from the BOD to the convention to adopt the “District Resource and Policy Manual”.

International Missions

It was moved, and seconded and to send an overture from the BOD to continue support of Chile at \$25,000 per year. Motion failed.

It was moved, and seconded and to send an overture from the BOD to continue support of Christ Care for Children – Kenya at \$20,000 per year.

Fortuna Property

The abandoned property in Fortuna has received an offer of purchase for \$100 from the man who takes care of the property. He will pay for the legal transfer of the land. The district will retain the mineral rights to the property.

Endowment Policy

The auditors required the district to develop a policy for the district endowment. Tami discussed a proposed policy. It was moved, seconded and passed to remove the last sentence of section C-3section and section G-2 regarding spending of the corpus of the fund, and to forward the policy to the LCMS Foundation for review.

CTAP Update

Philip and Bethany Brandvold sent another letter stating since they only signed a loan agreement for one year, and are therefore only responsible for that one year of loans. They claim that their part time volunteer service should qualify their loans to be forgiven. The board declined to consider their

It was moved, seconded and passed to hold Carolyn Ferguson responsible for the \$25,300 balance in loans, giving her the opportunity to arrange repayment, otherwise the previous resolution of the board will be carried out, ie. the loans will be forgiven and reported to the IRS.

It was moved, seconded and passed to send one more letter to Janke and Carivou stating that their reasons do not qualify for forgiveness and the original resolution will be carried out, unless a repayment plan is submitted by December 15, 2020

Unfinished Business

- **Convention Review Task Force.**
- **Task Force Guidelines.** No Action taken.
- Review Triennium Planning.
- Bylaws – Vice President Nomination
- CCM Bylaw Changes Overture.
- **Small Groups Planning.** No action taken.

BOARD MONITORING ITEMS

Management Report – District President

Appendix B.

Management Report – Business Manager

- **Activity Report.** Attached as Appendix C.

Financial Report – Finance Committee

- **Budget Report.** Indicates we are doing well, contributing factors include:175K gift designated toward CTAP, decrease in Bean's salary, virtual meetings save on travel expenses. Looks good on paper, but reality shows the district is still operating with deficit spending if it were not for the cost savings due to covid.

- **Preliminary Budget.**

Proposed '21-'22 budget is decreased from a \$50K deficit to a \$25K deficit. The board entered executive session at 3:08 pm. The board exited executive session at 4:13.

- It was moved, and seconded that in order to be financially faithful stewards of district resources, the \$5K Deaf ministry subsidy, \$5K Main Street Living, and \$1,500 National Disaster Conference from the '21-22 budget at a budget savings of \$11.5K. Motion defeated.
- It was moved, seconded and passed to appoint a committee from the board to examine a possible reduction in force among district assisting staff.

Task Force Liaison Reports

- **Rev. Kirk Peters - Ordained and Commissioned Ministers.** Nothing to report.
- **Leon Bladow - Stewardship Report.** Nothing to report.
- **Rev. Steve Schultz - Local Mercy and Life.** Nothing to report.
- **Rev. Tom Marcis - International Mercy.** Nothing to report.
- **VACANT – Youth & Young Adults.** Nothing to report.
- **Kay Kreklau – Lutheran Education.** Nothing to report.
- **Josh Reimche – Plant and Revitalize.** Nothing to report.

BOARD VISIONING

President Matt Harrison, Vice President Peter Lange, and Regional President Nabil Nour joined the meeting at 10:00 am for district visitation and synodical report.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was Adjourned at 5:14 p.m. by Chairman Marcis.

Sub Cruce,



Rev. Joshua D. Reimche, Secretary

DIRECTOR OF BIBLICAL FINANCE
Ed Bean, October, 2020 Narrative

Tami – Another month has zoomed by! I am happy to report a full month worked. I facilitated a couple of closures as well as continued work with 3 gifts I'm trying to get documented before the end of January.

Currently I'm working with a couple in the Minot area who have approximately \$3M net assets. We almost had this completed in September but after they attended a family funeral they want a little more time to think about future gifting to family. Tentatively, least 50% of this future gift is to be gifted to the N D District for future church worker scholarships. Their intention is to add it to our current District scholarship fund. They like the idea of "loan" declining as they work full time in church work after graduation.

The house in Minot gift will be a reality in November or December. The lady is currently living in assisted living and her relatives are cleaning out the house prior to being gifted to LCMS Foundation for liquidation and funding a charitable trust.

The future farmland gifting in Griggs County is a maximum one year away. We are working on preliminary details-getting a current appraisal-plus a couple of other logistical things. This potential gift will be split into two separate financial instruments, a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) and a charitable trust providing income for the couple until the good Lord takes them home.

Today I visited with the lady that called in to the District a couple of days ago looking for "legal" help updating her husband's Will. What an exciting call to make. He is currently on hospice so speed is of the essence. He is removing distant relatives from receiving any financial gifts and is including ministry in his new Will. I also had him consider a contingent for his executor. I always ask to close with prayer when I'm finished with my visits. Today the couple had tears of joy in their eyes fully knowing that their wants, wishes and desires are being realized! What a God moment! Those kind of personal meetings make this "job" so exciting and interesting! That's all for this month. God bless! Ed

President's Report

- The Lord has been blessing my work as District President. For several months we had all calling congregation vacancies filled. Especially after the call service of the seminaries where we were blessed with 3 candidates. A native ND man, Rev. Brock Schmeling to Great Bend and Barney dual parish; Rev. Justin Woodside to serve as Associate Pastor at Shepherd of the Valley and Bethel in Bismarck; and Rev. Brian Doel as Associate Pastor at Our Savior in Minot.
- Sadly, we now have two vacancies; one in the SE Circuit, Redeemer in Lisbon. Pastor Aaron Hambleton has received and accepted a call to St. Paul Lutheran in Eldora, Iowa, Iowa East District. Pastor Hambleton will be missed. Second is the parish of Trinity, Adrian, and Trinity, Lamoure. Pastor Durkopp has received and accepted a call to Zion, Douglas, WY and Our Redeemer, Glenrock, WY. Pastor Durkopp too will be missed.
- We have great pastors in the District and every other District in Synod knows it. It is almost a weekly affair of request for PIFs and SETs (resumes) for our pastors to another District.
- My desire for the next year is to do more with the Commissioned Ministers. They are the teachers and DCE's and deaconesses. Also, my goal is to have more involvement with the Pastor's wives. That is, to have a retreat scheduled for them. Usually this is done with coordination with the President's wife. Doris has had a couple of years of health problems and has not been able to accomplish this. I believe things are going better for her now and she has been and will continue to work with a few other pastors' wives to get something together for a retreat.
- I have visited with the pastors of the District at each circuit's winkels. Everybody seems to be doing fine. The congregations are back at worship but attendance is down due to the coronavirus. Many are still not attending church but are still being served virtually via Facebook and YouTube. This is good if there are other health issues that could be catastrophic with the coronavirus. I commend all pastors here and I pray the lay people here are commending and holding up the Prophet's Hand during this time. The pastors have been working extra hard serving God's people with Word and Sacrament through this time. I am thankful for God's people remaining faithful with their offerings to support the pastors and congregations so far. I pray that this continues.
- We had our scheduled Fall Pastor's Conference and I am planning to continue with plans for the District Convention, January 24-27, 2021 in Fargo at the Ramada. The Convention will go on as long as we can have a quorum. Of course we will try to practice social distancing and be careful if this COVID-19 virus continues and or gets worse.
- The District Convention theme for the upcoming Convention, which is January 24-27, at the Ramada in Fargo, is: Rejoice in the Lord always! Rejoice! Taken from Philippians 4:4-9. I will be presenting on Hymns vs. Songs used in our ND District. That study is on 414 songs I have collected and 414 hymns randomly picked from the LSB hymnal. I have scored these 828 texts of music asking 47 questions of each. Along with that Rev. Jon Veiker will be presenting on hymnody in the church. This all fits in with the theme of Rejoicing in the Lord; as we do so with hymn.

- I had mentioned earlier how we have been blessed in the District with pastors. The day may come when we will not have enough pastors to go around. Ministry may have to change. Our pastors are used to a Sunday morning drive of many miles to serve God's people. What lacks in these combinations of parishes is the opportunity for Sunday morning Bible Studies. In the future we may have to see and encourage Hub Ministry. Where the larger city or town congregations join with the smaller rural congregations to have a/or several associate pastors to hub out from the city and serve the rural congregations. As a District President I can only plant that seed. Each congregation has to decide how they will be served with Word and Sacrament. The word that I am hearing as I travel the District is that people are tired of Couch Church (virtual on line church) and eager to get back to congregating together (as God's people have always done). The body of Christ, the church, needs to be connected in this personal and physical way.
- I have visited most of the congregations in the past 3 years. The COVID-19 pandemic has made this more difficult. Although I have been out and visiting again recently. If I haven't been to your congregation I hope to do so before January 24th.
- Following a resolution from the Synodical Convention last July, the District has adopted a 1-1-1 Mission Giving. \$1-per 1 baptized member- every week. Hopefully all of you know what I am talking about and have seen the 1-1-1 collection box in your church. Most churches have them set up. When I visit and do not see the box I start walking around waving my dollar. People look at me like I am strange (which I am) and ask what I am doing. Then I explain the 1-1-1 Mission of the District. It is to assist in funding the missions of the District that we said we were going to support as a District of congregations. That would especially be Christ Care for Children; Kenya, the Chile Mission, the UND Wittenberg ministry, and several others. Of course, this pandemic has kept this 1-1-1 program from working as well as desired.
- We have had 2 pastors who have tested positive with COVID-19; Rev. Joel Brandvold and Rev. Tom Eckstein.
- Rev. Lyle Kath, Associate Pastor at Immanuel, Wahpeton, has died and the family had a private family funeral for him.

Business Manager Activity Report August - November 2020

I am still doing MANY virtual meetings – almost every day. Not what I like, but is part of the new ‘normal’. Not a whole lot has changed since we met in August, just more of the same.

Vicki is still plugging away at the vault and has had a few ‘research projects’. These requests take time, but she usually finds it quite interesting.

Financially, the District is very solid. We are not too far off on income budget. Spending is a bit under budget. As the numbers person, I really would like to see more income so we aren’t deficit spending all year with a catchup in January.

Leon and I have put together the budget. It needs a lot of tweaking yet, but that is where your input comes in. And of course, there is a small get-together in January that can change everything!

I have put together an Endowment Policy. It is a starting point and will need some more work.

We still have a weekly LCEF Central Region meeting and have had several national meetings thrown in the mix. I have been busy planning a Technology Workshop that will exploit the talents of tech wizard Brandon Trondson from Minot. This workshop is offered to North Dakota and Minnesota North District congregations. LCEF is picking up the tab – Brandon usually charges \$50/person.

The district business managers across Synod meet monthly via zoom for updates to legislation and other training.

District Convention planning is in full swing. Details are time consuming, but I am so happy working with the Ramada.

I spent a couple of days in Bismarck with LCEF colleagues meeting with lay leaders and pastors from Bethel and Shepherd of the Valley. I also visited with the rest of the pastors and rostered workers. They are so good about accommodating me and meeting all together so I can hear what’s going on and what they need from me.

Other updates:

1. I am waiting for a current update regarding Epworth. This was the latest: I have been in contact with the lawyer working on the Epworth mineral rights issue. She has drafted an affidavit for me to look over and sign. I will be sending that back to her this week. As soon as she gets it, a petition will be filed and a court date set. I will travel to wherever that case may be if needed.
2. Ed Bean is working when people are willing to see him.

3. I have been working with Rev. Jahnke on call lists for a principal for Grace Lutheran.
4. I would like a decision from the board on selling the Fortuna church property. From August: The district owns the church property there. It is a huge liability risk. I recommend we sell the property to Steve Feil. He has been taking care of the property and using the building for storage. He is willing to purchase it for \$100 and the cost of getting the deed changed which will be around \$150. We would maintain the mineral rights. Right now, royalties do not cover the taxes.
5. We were in Bismarck for three days at Pastors Conference at the beginning of October. I have several requests for demographics that came out of that.

Blessings,
Tami