

Convention Minutes

Session 7

Wednesday a.m., August 2, 2023

Matins

The Rev. Dr. Ely Prieto, associate dean for Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, preached on Romans 3:21–26 in the Office of Matins; Chaplain Daenzer served as liturgist; Kantor Machemer, as accompanist; and the presidents of Latin America partner churches, LCMS missionaries to Spanish-speaking areas, and other guests, as the choir.

[The entire text of Dr. Prieto’s sermon will be printed in the *2023 Convention Proceedings*.]

Greetings—Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty

The Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz addressed the assembly to share the work of his organization, strengthening Lutherans to proclaim freely the full Word of God to a world possessed of utopian notions of governmental benevolence—and one tending toward determining what lives are worth being allowed to live. The Center provides input, education, advice, and advocacy in the areas of life, marriage, and religious liberty, for the sake of our churches, schools, universities, and seminaries.

Convention Essay: “We Preach Christ Crucified—The Redemption of the World”

During the essay, President Harrison relinquished the chair to Minnesota South District President Lucas Woodford.

[The entire text of the essay by Dr. Juhana Pohjola, bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland, will be printed in the *2023 Convention Proceedings*.]

Committee 7: University Education

The President recognized Chairman Scott R. Murray to resume the report of his committee. He recognized and thanked five Concordia University presidents: Michael Thomas (Irvine), Bernard Bull (Seward), Erik Ankerberg (Mequon/Ann Arbor), Russell Dawn (Chicago), and Brian Friedrich (St. Paul), who he described as strongly desiring their schools to excel in faithfulness and connection to the Synod, for their faithful service. He expressed the Synod’s love for these “fine leaders” and the Synod’s determination to “defend them to the nth” for the sake of a clear confession of Christ in their universities. Murray noted their “wonderful input” and unanimous support for Res. 7-04B.

Res. 7-04B, “To Revise Bylaws to Revisit and Renew Relationship of Colleges and Universities with the Synod” (*TB*, 4:417–42) was explained by committee member and 2019 Res. 7-03 Committee Chairman Christian Preus and introduced by the committee.

It was moved to call the question, which motion was withdrawn before being seconded. A delegate asked whether the question could be divided; the Secretary offered the explanation that due to the complex interrelation of bylaw changes across the sections, division of the question would be out of order.

With 20 minutes debate elapsed, the chair called the question under the rule; this motion failed [Yes: 638; No: 326]. After further debate, the previous question was moved; this carried [Yes: 803; No: 180]. Res. 7-04B was adopted [Yes: 882; No: 120].

It was moved that the convention expressly direct with respect to Res. 7-04B that Bylaw 7.1.2 be invoked so that the Synod Board of Directors may in an exceptional circumstance amend the bylaws with respect to that if they run into any conflicts in implementing the direction of the convention. The Secretary clarified that the “express direction” contemplates in Bylaw 7.1.2 that the convention, the delegates of the congregations assembled, would give specific instruction for bylaws to be developed and that a blanket grant of authority to make undetermined changes would be inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod, which require the convention to amend the Synod’s bylaws. The delegate withdrew the motion.

Res. 7-05A, “To Bring Accountability to Concordia Boards of Regents and to Improve Doctrinal Fidelity and Amenability to Ecclesiastical Supervision” (*TB*, 2B:335–36) was read and introduced by the committee.

Moved and seconded was the amendment on *TB* 5:476, to amend at *TB* 2B:335, lines 47–48, by replacing the inserted language (“Members appointed by the board of regents may not vote on the appointment of members of the board.”) with the language adopted in Res. 7-04B, *TB* 4:434, ll. 6–7, namely, “An appointed member shall not vote on his or her reappointment.” Debate ensued. After 20 minutes, the chair called the question under the rule; this carried [Yes: 883; No: 93]. The amendment failed [Yes: 348; No: 626]. The chair, again under the rule, called the question on the resolution; this carried [Yes: 832; No: 139]. Two points of information were called for, to which the committee responded. Res. 7-05A was adopted [Yes: 824; No: 143].

Res. 7-06B, “To Support Colleges and Universities of the Concordia University System” (*TB*, 4:442–43) was read and introduced by the committee. With the chair sensing no need for debate, he put the question by an immediate hand and voice vote; the resolution was adopted unanimously.

Greetings—Concordia Historical Institute

The chair welcomed the Rev. Dr. Daniel Harmelink, executive director of Concordia Historical Institute (CHI) to bring greetings to the Synod. Its mission is to “treasure and trumpet the redeeming work of Christ in the work of the Missouri Synod.” The institute resources congregations, families, districts, and Synod, in preserving historical touchstones of the Synod’s history and proclaiming the Lord’s grace evidenced in them. Dr. Harmelink noted to the convention the institute’s publications, including its *CHI Quarterly* and its growing monograph series. During the greeting, President Harrison relinquished the chair to First Vice-President Lange.

Committee 11: Church and Culture

The President recognized Chairman Terry R. Forke, president of the Montana District, to begin the report of his committee. He opened with the words of our Lord in John 15:18, noting both challenges and opportunities in our addressing the culture around us—both of which are evidenced in the resolutions to be offered by the committee. He noted difficulty saying everything exactly the right way, but asserted that Christians *do have the answer*; therefore, on a topic like racism, there is both something to reject and something to rejoice that we know—that the answer is in Christ and that God is working in the Church to overcome racism. He concluded: “In the love of Christ let us join our hearts and voices to say to each other and to the world, ‘Within the incomprehensible variety of gifts given to mankind; gifts of color and culture and courage; God has created one humanity. He loves us all and sent His Son for all.’”

Res. 11-01A, “To Encourage Appropriate Use of Social Media” (*TB*, 3:383–84) was read and introduced by the committee. The question was called; after an indecisive voice vote, the motion failed [Yes: 412; No: 426]. After further debate, the question was called; this carried in a voice vote. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 853; No: 31].

Res. 11-02A, “To Reject All Forms of Racism and Affirm Our Witness to All People” (*TB*, 3:384–85) was read and introduced by the committee.

It was moved and seconded to amend the whereases on *TB* 3:385, ll. 11–14 as follows:

WHEREAS, BLM, DEI, and CRT are multifaceted and ~~include some proponents endorse~~ controversial aspects and theories as well as some explicitly unbiblical tenets; and

WHEREAS, Elements of the BLM organizational philosophy, certain DEI policies, and some proponents of CRT ~~often sinfully divide people on the basis of race and may therefore promote another form of racism;~~ and

The chair called the question on the amendment, which carried. After an voice vote, the result of which was not announced, the amendment failed [Yes: 239; No: 704].

It was moved and seconded to amend at *TB* 3:385, line 34, to delete the words “implore her congregations and ministries to.” There being no objection, this was accepted by consent.

It was moved to amend at *TB* 3:385, line 32, to insert, prior to the words “in our confession of the Word” the words “in our common humanity and” and at l. 38 to add “traumas” to the list “movements, methodologies, and ideologies.” The question on the amendment was immediately called; a division of the house was called for after a voice vote; the closure of debate carried [Yes: 689; No: 238]. The amendment failed [Yes: 281; No: 640].

With 20 minutes of debate having elapsed, the question was called under the rule; this carried [Yes: 789; No: 150]. Res. 11-02A was adopted as amended [Yes: 875; No: 84].

1 Res. 11-03A, “To Love and Disciple Peoples of All Ethnicities, Languages, and Skin Colors” (TB, 3:385–86) was
2 read and introduced by the committee. With President Harrison resuming the chair, the chair called the question; this
3 carried by voice vote. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 882; No: 69].

4 Res. 11-06A, “To Oppose Mandatory Registration of Women into the Draft” (TB, 3:386–87) was briefly
5 explained and introduced by the committee. The chair immediately called the question; this carried by voice and hand
6 vote. The resolution was adopted by voice and hand vote.

7 Res. 11-04, “To Address Abortion and Use of Fetal Tissue in Vaccines” (TB, 1:206–7) was read and introduced
8 by the committee. The chair immediately called the question; this carried by voice and hand vote. The resolution was
9 adopted by voice and hand vote.

10 Res. 11-05, “To Address the Relationship Between Church and State in an Increasingly Hostile Environment”
11 (TB, 1:207–8) was read and introduced by the committee. The chair immediately called the question; this carried by
12 voice and hand vote. The resolution was adopted by voice and hand vote.

13 With the committee’s resolutions fully processed, the chair dismissed the committee with thanks.

14 *Special Recognition: LCMS President Emeritus*

15 President Harrison welcomed President Emeritus Gerald Kieschnick and his wife Terri, who were warmly received
16 by the convention. President Emeritus Kieschnick addressed the assembly, concluding that “God is able to do
17 immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work in us” and with the words of
18 Jesus that “You are the light of the world...” and “On this rock I will build my church and even the gates of hell shall
19 not prevail against it.” President Harrison also acknowledged President Emeritus Robert Kuhn, who served from
20 March to August 2001, after the passing of President Barry; he resides in Oviedo, Fla., and was not able to be with
21 the convention. “God bless you, Dr. Kuhn.”

22 At this point, the resolution on TB, 5:475–6, “To Create a Task Force to Explore Term Limits for Synod Officers,”
23 was moved. The chair put to the body whether it wishes to consider the motion from the floor. The body declined to
24 consider the resolution [Yes: 462; No: 469].

25 *Committee 13: Registration, Credentials, and Elections – Balloting for Other Boards and Commissions*

26 The chair called Committee 13 Chairman Scott Sailer to the podium to update the credential report and conduct
27 the next elections in the prescribed order. The registration report indicates 1,019 delegates presently checked in.
28 Chairman Sailer then continued with the order of elections, with the chair relinquished to Fifth Vice-President Esget.

29 *Concordia University System (Ordained, 6-year term)*

Mark P. Braden (EN)	583	(declared elected)
Timothy D. (Tim) Runtsch (RM)	363	

32 *Concordia University System (Commissioned, 6-year term)*

Steven (Steve) Buuck (PSW)	256	
Jonathon Giordano (SI)	561	(declared elected)
Phillip L. Johnson (MNS)	132	

36 *Concordia University System (Lay, elect 2, 6-year term)*

37 *Position 1 of 2:*

Jonathan Busarow (EN)	208	217	
Ellen R. Lange (EN)	436	610	(declared elected)
James J. Munden (SI)	45		
Linda Stoterau (PSW)	107		
Gary R. Thompson (SW)	155	140	

43 *Position 2 of 2:*

James J. Munden (SI)	144		
Linda Stoterau (PSW)	212		
Gary R. Thompson (SW)	568	(declared elected)	

47 *Board of Regents, Fort Wayne (Ordained, 6-year term)*

1	Steven C. Briel (MNS)	217	
2	Joshua C. (Josh) Miller (MNS)	198	
3	Matthew W. Rueger (IE)	518	(declared elected)

Session 8
Wednesday p.m., August 2, 2023

Commemoration of the Faithful Departed

Standing in for the Rev. Dr. John C. Wille, president of the LCMS South Wisconsin District, the Rev. Nathan Meador preached on 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 in the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed; Chaplain Daenzer served as liturgist and Cantor Philip Magness as organist and pianist. Jon Rusnak, Eric Carlson, and Julie Rusnak, instrumentalists; Erika Flowers, vocalist; and a choir provided special music.

[The entire text of President Wille’s sermon will be printed in the *2023 Convention Proceedings*.]

Minutes

With First Vice-President Lange taking the chair, the minutes of Tuesday’s Sessions 5 and 6 were presented and approved by consent.

It was moved and seconded to alter the order of the day to remove the catechism section to allow for further business. The motion failed.

Committee 5: Theology and Church Relations

The chair recognized Chairman Brian S. Saunders to resume the report of his committee. He noted that the committee would be proceeding out of order to preference resolutions other than affirmations of previously treated material. President Harrison resumed the chair.

Res. 5-13A, “To Address Uses of Online Technology” (*TB*, 2B:307–8) was read and introduced by the committee. The chair immediately called the question; this carried by voice vote. The resolution was adopted by voice vote.

Res. 5-09, “To Review Guidance on Admission to the Lord’s Supper” (*TB*, 1:122–24) was read and introduced by the committee. After a word of explanation, the chair, without debate, called the question; this carried by voice vote. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 842; No: 105].

Res. 5-15, “To Uphold Proper Elements and Reverential Administration of the Lord’s Supper” (*TB*, 1:127–28) was read and introduced by the committee. The chair immediately called the question; this carried by voice vote. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 761; No: 193].

Res. 5-10, “To Articulate Theology and Philosophy of Lutheran Education” (*TB*, 1:124–25) was read and introduced by the committee. The chair immediately called the question; this carried by voice vote. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 901; No: 66].

Res. 5-11, “To Reaffirm Synod’s Biblical Positions on Marriage and Sexuality” (*TB*, 1:125) was read and introduced by the committee. The chair immediately called the question; this carried by voice vote. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 934; No: 34].

Res. 5-12, “To Address Lutheran Theological Principles of Mission and Ministry in Post-Christian Context” (*TB*, 1:126) was read and introduced by the committee. The chair immediately called the question; this carried by voice vote. The resolution was adopted [Yes: 910; No: 48].

Noting that for a variety of reasons the committee decided to withdraw Res. 5-14, Chairman Saunders indicated the work of the committee was complete. Subsequently, with time remaining before the orders of the day, it was moved and seconded by a delegate to put before the body whether to consider Res. 5-14; the body determined not to consider it [Yes: 416; No: 479].

Catechism—The Sacrament of the Altar

The chair welcomed the Rev. Dr. Jacob Corzine to the stage to continue his catechesis, focusing on the Sacrament of the Altar. Dr. Corzine began by focusing on the *who* and *what*: It is Christ who *gives* the Sacrament and it is Christ who *is* the Sacrament. He then focused on the benefits of “such eating and drinking” the Sacrament and noted that three times in this part of Luther’s explanation we see the words, “the forgiveness of sins,” all grounded in Christ’s

Words of Institution. We know that in the Sacrament are the body and body of Christ. We know that to know Christ is to know his benefits. We are then reverent and joyful, not just because Christ is present in the Sacrament, but because he forgives sins in the Sacrament. Dr. Corzine continued by addressing the question of how bodily eating and drinking do such great things. He emphasized that, just like with Baptism, the Sacrament of the Altar depends on Christ's word, not your act of faith. Finally, he spoke to the question of "who receives this sacrament worthily." He emphasized that acts of preparation are not condemned and can certainly be helpful for the Christian as they come to the Sacrament. It is faith that makes us worthy and without faith, we still receive Christ, but on the wrong terms.

Committee 13: Registration, Credentials, and Elections – Balloting for Other Boards and Commissions

With First Vice-President Peter Lange taking the chair, the chair called Committee 13 Chairman Scott Sailer to the podium to conduct the next elections in the prescribed order. Chairman Sailer then continued with the order of elections:

Board of Regents, Fort Wayne (Lay, elect 2, 6-year term)

Position 1 of 2:

Kaibo Feng (NE)	213	286	
Michael D. Lange (EN)	129	78	
Troy N. Prehar (TX)	126		
Beverly K. Yahnke (SW)	351	498	(declared elected)

Position 2 of 2:

Kaibo Feng (NE)	537		(declared elected)
Michael D. Lange (EN)	210		
Troy N. Prehar (TX)	147		

Board of Regents, St. Louis (Ordained, 6-year term)

Tyler C. Arnold (MO)	282	327	420
Jon C. Furgeson (MO)	77		
Warren W. Graff (RM)	63		
Adam C. Koontz (RM)	346	439	497 (declared elected)
Jeffrey E. Skopak (SE)	145	153	

Board of Regents, St. Louis (Lay, elect 2, 6-year term)

Position 1 of 2:

Paul P. Edmon (NE)	519		(declared elected)
Bill A. Frerking (TX)	85		
Henry Hardt (IW)	79		
Matthew R. Kenitzer (IE)	76		
Janis G. Mc Daniels (SE)	155		

Position 2 of 2:

Bill A. Frerking (TX)	155	128	
Henry Hardt (IW)	113		
Matthew R. Kenitzer (IE)	339	495	(declared elected)
Janis G. McDaniels (SE)	313	316	

Board of Regents, River Forest (Ordained, 3-year term)

Eric R. Andrae (EN)	395	483	(declared elected)
Paul Dare (IW)	171	451	
David P. Ramirez (SW)	363		

Board of Regents, River Forest (Commissioned, 3-year term)

Carol R. Johnson (NJ)	273		
Jennifer (Jen) Siukola (EN)	657		(declared elected)

Board of Regents, River Forest (Lay, elect 2, 3-year term)

Position 1 of 2:

1	Jeffrey E. Elbert (IE)	209	220	
2	John Thielke (TX)	413	530	(declared elected)
3	Alison C. Witte (OH)	206	185	
4	Mark D. Wolfrum (NI)	102		
5	<i>Position 2 of 2:</i>			
6	Jeffrey E. Elbert (IE)	292	390	
7	Alison C. Witte (OH)	391	535	(declared elected)
8	Mark D. Wolfrum (NI)	242		
9	<i>Board of Regents, Irvine (Ordained, 3-year term)</i>			
10	Scott C. Klemsz (CNH)	597		(declared elected)
11	Nathan E. Schaus (PSW)	338		
12	<i>Board of Regents, Irvine (Commissioned, 3-year term)</i>			
13	Jeffrey S. Beavers (PSW)	636		(declared elected)
14	Kate E. Thielke (TX)	301		
15	<i>Board of Regents, Irvine (Lay, elect 2, 3-year term)</i>			
16	<i>Position 1 of 2:</i>			
17	Mark L. Biermann (IN)	152	141	
18	Laura G. Hemminger (NOW)	345	481	(declared elected)
19	Michael C. McThrow (CNH)	248	313	
20	Linda Stoterau (PSW)	88		
21	Brian Yamabe (CNH)	99		
22	<i>Position 2 of 2:</i>			
23	Mark L. Biermann (IN)	216		
24	Michael C. McThrow (CNH)	470		(declared elected)
25	Linda Stoterau (PSW)	141		
26	Brian Yamabe (CNH)	98		
27	<i>Board of Regents, Seward (Ordained, 3-year term)</i>			
28	Brad E. Birtell (NEB)	500		(declared elected)
29	Kenneth Mars (WY)	437		
30	<i>Board of Regents, Seward (Commissioned, 3-year term)</i>			
31	Craig A. Ernstmeyer (MO)	389	538	(declared elected)
32	Wendy L. McCarty (NEB)	202		
33	David J. Pratt (PSW)	334	388	
34	<i>Board of Regents, Seward (Lay, elect 2, 3-year term)</i>			
35	<i>Position 1 of 2:</i>			
36	Jason Burk (TX)	242	176	
37	Joseph L. Cook (WY)	99		
38	Timothy Hu (WY)	370	565	(declared elected)
39	Douglas Tewes (NEB)	234	200	
40	<i>Position 2 of 2:</i>			
41	Jason Burk (TX)	401	392	
42	Joseph L. Cook (WY)	80		
43	Douglas Tewes (NEB)	466	541	(declared elected)
44	The chair invoked the orders of the day, elections to be resumed at a later time.			
45	<i>Committee 10: Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution</i>			
46	The President recognized Vice-Chairman Dwayne Lueck to resume the report of his committee.			

1 Res. 10-06, “To Amend Bylaw 2.11.2.2 regarding Candidate Status” (*TB*, 1:202) was read and introduced by the
2 committee. It was moved and seconded to amend as indicated in *TB*, 3:394, namely, to replace, at *TB* 1:202, lines 19–
3 22, with the following:

4 (a) A candidate may be continued on the roster for a period not to exceed ten years by act of the president of
5 the district through which the person holds membership. ~~A candidate may be further continued on the roster~~
6 ~~for a period not to exceed five additional years upon recommendation of the applicant’s district president and~~
7 ~~approval of three fourths (75%) of the Council of Presidents.~~

8 The chair called the question on the amendment; this carried. On a voice vote, a division was called for. The
9 amendment failed [Yes: 383; No: 533]. The chair proceeded to a voice vote on Res. 10-06, which was adopted.

10 *Presentation: “International Missions: Show Mercy”*

11 James Krikava, associate executive director of the Office of International Mission and formerly OIM’s Eurasia
12 regional director, and Ted Krey, regional director for the OIM Latin America and Caribbean region, addressed the
13 convention on mercy and outreach work among Ukrainian war refugees. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine
14 Bishop Maschewski blessed the assembly in Ukrainian. A choir joined the convention to sing “A Mighty Fortress” in
15 Spanish, Ukrainian, German, and English.

16 *Special Presentation: Flame*

17 President Harrison welcomed Cristian rap artist and LCMS congregation member Flame, author of *Extra Nos:*
18 *Discovering Grace outside Myself* (St. Louis: CPH, 2023), whose lyrics President Harrison considers to be the “most
19 intensely Lutheran lyrics since the great chorales of the 16th and 17th centuries—they just happen to be accompanied
20 with rap.” With First Vice-President Lange taking the chair, Flame shared some of his art and spoke of his youthful
21 discovery of the form’s value as a medium for “edutainment.” He described also his journey from an interest in
22 “Christian rap” as a means of obtaining God’s favor, of obtaining assurance that God was for him—a struggle for
23 internal assurance that led from a from a Pentecostal fervor through the “I could if I would” of Calvinism, to a master’s
24 program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, to justification by faith, to the Baptism “that saves you,” to the theology
25 of the cross, to light and hope and Good News, the pure Gospel—to, that is, his present Lutheran faith and to a new
26 practice of his art form that is full of that faith, handing on what has been handed down to him in the Lutheran
27 confession of the faith. He thanked the convention for “enduring meetings like this for people like me,” for preserving
28 the preaching and teaching of the pure Gospel in the midst of many less-than-pure and less-than-hope-filled
29 alternatives.

30 *Committee 6: Pastoral Ministry and Seminaries*

31 The President recognized Chairman John E. Hill to resume the report of his committee.

32 Res. 6-03A, “To Affirm and Strengthen the Synod’s Commitment to Well-Formed Clergy for the Sake of the
33 Gospel” (*TB*, 4:414–16) was read, with some background information provided, and introduced by the committee.

34 It was moved and seconded to amend the resolution, on *TB*, 4:415, line 24, to strike the word “strongly” and to
35 strike ll. 36–37 and in place of those to insert “2. the SMP route and all Synod-approved routes to ordination be
36 understood as necessary for the Synod and for the preparation and ordination of her pastors.” The question was called,
37 with the rule’s 20 minutes elapsing. Closure of debate carried [Yes: 848; No: 93]. The amendment failed [Yes: 325;
38 No: 617]. The question being called under the rule, it carried by voice vote. Res. 6-03A was adopted [Yes: 856; No:
39 92].

40 *Responsive Prayer I*

41 Chaplain Daenzer led the convention in Responsive Prayer (I), with the text, Exodus 34:5–9; Kantor Machemer
42 provided accompaniment.

43
44 John W. Sias, *Secretary*