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**THE OPENING SERMON**  
**for the**

**47<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
of the  
CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE  
Delivered by its President, the Rev. Paul R. Bloedel, Seattle, Washington  
Text: Romans 8:1-11**



Beloved friends in Christ, pastors and delegates to the 47<sup>th</sup> Convention of our CLC:

The motto of our convention this year is, “*Here am I, send me!*” This motto, however, cannot be effectively followed unless there be in our hearts a certain “*mindedness*” which is spoken of by the Apostle in our text. Now to be “*minded*” toward something is to be “*inclined*” or “*disposed*” toward that thing—to *set your mind on it, to give it first priority in your thoughts* as the Apostle Paul writes to the Philippians (4:8), “*Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*” The Apostle Paul, in our text, has much to say about “*mindedness*”—and in the light of this Word of God and under the gracious guidance of the Holy Ghost, we will consider as our theme for this morning’s meditation:

**The Importance of Spiritual Mindedness in Our Lives as Christians and, of Course,  
Therefore, in our Efforts as a Conference of Lutheran Christian Congregations.**

We shall consider: **I. How spiritual mindedness differs from carnal mindedness,**  
and **II. How spiritual mindedness is produced and nourished in us.**

**I.**

The word *carnal* means “*fleshly.*” To be “*carnally minded*” is to be “*fleshly or worldly minded.*” The carnal mind is that mind which is in **all** people by birth, since the Fall of Adam. It is the mind which rules and directs all unbelievers in their thoughts, desires, words, and actions. It is the mind of **your** Old Adam!

The Apostle tells us in our text: “*The carnal mind is enmity against God!*” It opposes God and everything that God wants us to do and not to do, and how God wants us to be—as well as everything that God wants us to do and not to do for us and for our salvation. Those who are “*carnally minded*” “*walk after the flesh*” and “*cannot please God!*” Romans 8:8. They neither **want** **nor** can they *receive* what the Lord God, by His undeserved kindness, promises them in His Word. (Romans 8:7; I Corinthians 2:14)

“*Carnal mindedness*” is easy to detect and to observe in **rank unbelievers**—in those who will not take the trouble even to try to obey God’s commandments outwardly. They have their own code of morals **or** are entirely without moral scruples **and** do not want anyone to oppose or to interfere with their life-style. The word “*sin*” is odious to them and is a threat to their so-called “*freedom*” and “*civil rights.*” **They hate** the thought of hell and of someone calling them to account for what they think, for what they say, and for what they do. **They try to persuade themselves** that there is **no** God and **they live in any sin** which appeals to them or suits their

fancy. **Here is one** who makes a god of his belly—eating and drinking are his greatest pleasures. **Here is another** whose life is dominated by worldly ambition and by thoughts of power, honor, and praise among men. **Here is another** who is controlled by the lust of his flesh and the lust of his eyes—reveling in the base sensual pleasures which this world has to offer and having, what he calls, “a good time” in life. To identify ourselves with such as are so carnally minded by the way we dress, speak, or conduct ourselves—even though such behavior is carried out only by ONE person in our congregations—certainly cannot bring the blessing of God upon our Conference. Remember, the whole congregation of Israel was punished (at least three million souls) because of the sinful behavior of Achan (Joshua 7:1ff).

But there are more **subtle** forms of carnal mindedness by which people are deceived into thinking that they are grand Christians. Besides the vast army of anti-Christian sects and cults, there are many who **may** even worship the true God outwardly; they **may** read the Bible every day; they **may** contribute sacrificially to a true-teaching Church; they **may** respect their parents and support them in their old age; they **may** have a high regard for authority and scrupulously obey the laws of the land; they **may** help their neighbors and refrain from acts of impurity; they **may** be polite, patient, diligent, and accommodating—but **all these things** they may do only **outwardly, hypocritically, to please others, to please their parents, but not** out of the fear and love of God. They may even think that by doing these things they help earn God’s grace and favor for themselves. Such people, together with the followers of the heathen religions, are by far in the vast majority throughout the world. They are “*carnally minded*” and “*to be carnally minded*” St. Paul tells us in our text “*is death*”—spiritual death! They are walking along **the broad way** that leads to eternal destruction! They neither want to do the work of the Lord, nor do they want the work of the Lord done in them or through them.

And there are evidently many who call themselves **Lutherans** who deceive themselves into thinking that, **because** their sins are forgiven by God’s grace for Christ’s sake, God no longer requires of them perfection and holiness, **and** who, rather than repenting of their sins and shortcomings, **excuse the things which they do or leave undone** contrary to the Word of God by saying, “*Well, Jesus died for my sins anyway,*” and “*No one can be perfect anyhow!*” and “*Well, God forgives sins; in fact, in Christ, He has forgiven the sins of the whole world, so what should I be worried about!*” Such people also are “*carnally minded*” and are NOT Christians—and can only hinder the work of our Savior among us!

To be “*spiritually minded*” is **the very opposite** of being “*carnally minded.*” This is very plain from our text, for whereas the **carnally minded** are the enemies of God, the **spiritually minded** are the friends of God. **They love** God as their heavenly Father and the Spirit of Christ dwells in them. As a fruit of their faith in Christ Jesus, **their prayers** rise heavenward from their hearts and their lips, and they offer up true heartfelt praise and thanksgiving. Earnestly **they strive to subject** their will daily to the Word and Will of God, praying with Luther, *That Thou wouldst keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please Thee*” and in that little morning prayer, “*O, help me Lord, this day, to be Thine own dear child and follow Thee!*” With **sincerity of heart**, the spiritually minded “*hunger and thirst after righteousness*” (Matthew 5:6) with the eager desire to be perfect—to do all that God requires of them and to avoid all that is contrary to His Word. Yes, all true Christians are thus “*spiritually minded!*”

**According to the New Man**, which was created in them when they were brought to faith in Jesus as their only Savior and Redeemer, by the Holy Ghost, through the power of the Gospel, and according to that same Spirit who lives in them and makes them His holy temple, **their chief**

**joy and delight is to know and to do the Will of God**—and, in order to do God’s Will, they daily crucify the flesh, their Old Adam, with its sinful affections and lusts. Nothing makes them happier than to know that they are doing God’s Will as His own dear children through faith in their beloved Savior. Therefore also, as “*spiritually minded*” Christians, **they love God’s Word** and joyfully confess it with their fellow Christians in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. **They want to do** works pleasing to God in their homes, in Church, at work, and among their fellowmen everywhere. “*Spiritually minded*” Christians will **hate and detest sin and error** of any kind **as an insult** to their gracious God in heaven and **as a mockery** of their precious Savior. They hate sin and every evil **especially** when it appears in themselves through the devil, the world, and their sinful flesh; it grieves and troubles them deeply, and with repentant and believing hearts they earnestly fight against it with God’s Word, which is the Sword of the Spirit, and with fervent prayer.

**Are YOU** thus *spiritually minded*, yes, you, as a pastor, as a delegate, as a member of one of the congregations of our Conference (father or mother, son or daughter)? **Are you** glad to do God’s will, not perfunctorily, but from the heart—to do what God wants you to do in your life, to look to Him for guidance and leadership, through His Word, day by day. **Do you** take pleasure in obeying God’s commandments? **Does it** grieve you when sin, wickedness, impurity arise in your heart? **Do you** really hate sin and earnestly strive against sins of commission and sins of omission in your words and your actions? **Does your** heart find true joy and rejoicing in prayer, in the Word of God, and in the wonderful faith-confessing hymns of our Church? **Do you** cheerfully give of your gifts and talents for the work of the Church and the extension of Christ’s Kingdom? O, may we **diligently examine ourselves** and **earnestly beseech** the Lord our God that He would give us **an ever greater measure of His Holy Spirit** that each one of us (pastors, and delegates, and every member of our respective congregations) may **grow daily** in “*spiritual mindedness*” and that the “*carnal mindedness*” **of our sinful flesh** may be more and more suppressed as we live out our lives in this world. **What a blessing our Conference would then experience!**

## II.

The Apostle Paul points out also in our text how this **spiritual mindedness** is **produced** in us—how it is **nourished** and **sustained**. We read: “*For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh!*” *Spiritual mindedness* is **not produced** by the Law. It is **not produced** by the commandments of God even though they are good and holy. It is **not produced** by those portions of the Bible which tell us our duties and threaten punishment to all who are disobedient. The Holy Law of God **cannot produce** “*spiritual mindedness*” in us or in anyone, because, as our text states, it is “*made weak through the flesh.*” The **fault is not** in God’s Holy Law, but the fault is in **US**—in our sinful flesh. Since the Fall of Adam, our corrupt nature rebels against the Law because we are not able to keep it perfectly in our thoughts, desires, words, and deeds as God’s Holy Law requires. **If** the Holy Law of God is used as a rule for the life of **unbelievers**, the most it can produce is civil righteousness and hypocrisy.

“*Spiritual mindedness*” **cannot**, therefore, be produced by taking a person by the throat and telling him: “*Do God’s will!*” “*Be spiritually minded!*” “*Keep God’s Commandments, or else you will be cast into Hell!*” That has never yet produced saving faith and the love of God in the human heart. But our **text** tells us, “*God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh!*” This is the GOSPEL which alone **IS able to produce** a saving knowledge of Christ, our Savior, and, **as the fruit** of such faith, true growth in “*spiritual*

*mindedness.*”

If you **truly** believe with all your heart that the Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, has “redeemed [you], a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won [you] from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death,” and **that you have not** acquired this faith by your own reason or strength, **but that** the Holy Spirit, through the Gospel, has worked this saving knowledge of Jesus in your heart; **that**, by virtue of Christ’s work of redemption, **the Lord God has declared** you and all people righteous and has forgiven you all your sins, for Jesus’ sake, that all who believe in Him “*might not perish, but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16); that the Lord God has graciously, in Christ, promised you an inheritance “*incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*” (I Peter 1:4,5); **that the Lord God has made you**, who by your sins deserve nothing but eternal punishment in hell, **His own dear child** through faith which is in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26) and an heir of heaven where there is fulness of joy and pleasures forevermore (Romans 8:17; Psalm 16:11), **YES**, spiritual mindedness which is “*life and peace*” will continue to grow in you. **You will want** to know more and more of God’s Word, and **you will want** to do His will more and more perfectly day by day. Your **hatred** of sin and Satan will become greater and your **love** for the Word of God will increase. This is **how**, through the Gospel, *spiritual mindedness* is created and nourished in you.

But, **because** of your Old Adam, your spiritual mindedness may **wane** and your life as a Christian may **falter**. Do **not**, then, **forget** the Gospel which alone, as “*the power of God unto salvation*” (Romans 1:16) is able to **strengthen** and **preserve** you steadfast in the true faith and **revitalize** your spiritual life. Each and every day **think of** and **meditate upon** the Gospel of Christ. **Take every opportunity** to become **better acquainted** with the precious promises of God to you through your precious Savior and **ponder often** the great things which He has done for you. “*God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,*” John 3:16. “*The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin,*” I John 1:7. “*Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,*” Isaiah 1:18. “*Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners,*” I Timothy 1:15. “*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,*” II Corinthians 5:19. “*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us,*” Galatians 3:13. “*He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed,*” Isaiah 53:5. “*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*” Romans 3:23,24. “*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace,*” Ephesians 1:7. “*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him,*” John 3:36. “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned,*” Mark 16:16. “*By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast,*” Ephesians 2:8,9. Make such Bible passages your daily meat and drink for your soul. Let these Scripture texts, and others like them, ring out daily in your mind and heart, for the Lord God says through the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah, “*Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live!*” Isaiah 55:3.

And then **remember** the words of the Lord Jesus, “*If a man love Me, he will keep My Words*”

(John 14:23) and through the Apostle Paul, “*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,*” II Corinthians 5:17. Remember that we Christians are God’s product, “*created in Christ Jesus unto good works*” (Ephesians 2:10), that our Lord Jesus Christ “*died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again*” (II Corinthians 5:15); that we, whom Christ has “*delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him, all the days of our life*” (Luke 1:74); that God has made us “*a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people that we should show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light*” (I Peter 2:9); that “*our conversation [i.e., citizenship] is in heaven,*” (Philippians 3:20); that we should “*walk worthy of the vocation wherewith [we] are called,*” (Ephesians 4:1); that is we are Christians, and we should live like Christians! Each of us should ask with the Apostle Paul, “*Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?*” (Acts 9:6) and exclaim with Samuel, “*Speak, Lord; Thy servant heareth*” (I Samuel 3:9), and with our Savior in Psalm 40:8, “*I delight to do Thy will, O My God.*” This indeed also belongs to “*spiritual mindedness.*”

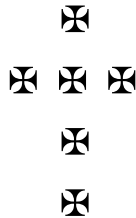
To be *spiritually minded*, then, **means** not only to know by heart a host of Bible passages, but to be able, by God’s grace, diligently and faithfully to **apply** what the Lord says in His Word to **what** we believe **and how** we live as Christians **and what we say** to others at home and elsewhere in our daily conversation **and how we conduct ourselves** as Christians. **The Bible teaches us** that whatever we do in this life, even simple things like eating and drinking, should all be done to the glory of God (I Corinthians 10:31). We therefore ask God to **work in us** and **through us** that which is well-pleasing in His sight and which will redound to the proper growth, welfare, and extension of His Church on earth. **This work** can and will be accomplished, **not** by the worldly, fleshly, and carnally minded, but only through “*spiritually minded*” Christians who earnestly want the Lord to lead them by His Word every moment of their lives. Have you ever asked yourself: *Are the plans which I make for myself day by day always designed to glorify God?*

**All of those** who are *carnally minded*, whether outwardly they obey the Law of God or whether they openly live in sin and wallow in the mire of vice, will perish! **Their life** here on earth is a living death. **They may stupefy** themselves with self-deception and with the vain promises of false prophets—but death and eternal damnation will be theirs. **Such, however,** is not the case with *spiritually minded* Christians. **They know** that all their sins have been condemned and removed in the flesh of Jesus Christ, and that therefore, as we read in our **text**, “*There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*” The Apostle continues in our text: “*They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit mind the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*” “*They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.*” **Oh, what a glorious prospect** for those who are spiritually minded. **And all this is brought about** by the Holy Ghost through the power of the Gospel. **Let us ask Him** therefore to **grant us** and our fellow Christians in our member congregations of our Conference an increased measure of **zeal, interest, energy, enthusiasm** and **liberality** in the use of our time, talents, and earthly possessions, **in harmony** with His Word **and motivated by** our God-given love of the Savior, **that His work may be performed among us more effectively and His Word, in the life of each member of our Conference** (man, woman, or child) *be in him a well of living water,*

**springing up into everlasting life.** And each of us will joyfully exclaim, “*Here am I, send me!*” “Help me, dear Lord, to be more spiritually minded day by day — to do Thy will more eagerly, to follow Thy Word more faithfully, and to do this cheerfully, with a heart filled with faith in and love for Jesus my Savior, in the midst of all those with whom I associate during my time of grace here in this world!”

With such spiritual mindedness and its blessed results in our lives as Christians, we will indeed possess “*life and peace*” as individuals, as congregations, and as a Conference. God grant it for His mercies’ sake. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*



**THE SUNDAY SERMON  
for the  
47<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
of the  
CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**

Delivered by the Rev. E. R. Stallings of San Antonio, Texas

Text: **Isaiah 6:1-8**



Dear Friends in Christ,

According to the 1998 World Almanac, there are approximately 5 billion, 890 million people in the world. In other words, almost 6 billion people.

Now even though the Almanac says about 1/3 of the world has some Christian affiliation, we know this does not mean there are close to 2 billion true believing Christians in the world. Mere affiliation with a name-only Christian group does not make a person a Christian. It may well be that 90% of visible Christendom is not Christian at all. Christ says, *“Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?”* Luke 18:8. While we are not down to only 8 believers as in the days of Noah, far and away the great majority of the people in the world are heathen. When they die they will enter eternal damnation in hell where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. They will weep and gnash their teeth for all eternity. Christ clearly says, *“But he that believeth not shall be damned,”* Mark 16:16.

Now we could be very philosophical about this. We could sit back and say, “Well, its their own fault. What am I supposed to do about it?” True enough, when the wicked die in their sins, it is all their fault. But does this mean that we as Christians are to stand idly by and just let people go to hell? We must remember that the Great Commission which Christ gave to the Church is still in force. Christ still says, *“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,”* Mark 16:15. Also still in effect are Christ’s words, *“The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few,”* Matthew 9:37

But we may say, “Well, that’s what we have pastors for— to preach the Word.” Indeed, didn’t Paul say to Timothy, *“Do the work of an evangelist”*? True enough, but according to the Word of God, every Christian has both the duty and the privilege of spreading the Word and winning souls. Indeed, here in particular is where the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers comes in. Every Christian is a priest of God. I Peter 2:9 says, *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”* Even though all Christians are not public servants of the Word, God calls out to all Christians and asks, *“Whom shall I send, and who will go out for us?”* And what answer does God anticipate? Rightly God anticipates that you and I will answer with Isaiah, *“Here am I; send me!”*

Therefore, on this occasion of our 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, we are here to focus our attention on this blessed answer of Isaiah, *“Here am I; send me!”* But the question is, “Are you and I eager, ready, and willing to say, “Here am I; send me”? We should be ready to give this answer, and hopefully all of us have already been so ready and willing. However, being truly ready to say, *“Here am I; send me,”* is not something which comes about by our own will. The Bible says, *“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure,”* Philippians 2:13. God Himself prepares us to be His witnesses. And how does He do it? Basically God prepares us the same way He prepared Isaiah. God prepared Isaiah by subjecting him to a dose of both the Law and the Gospel.

Therefore, our sermon will consider these two points: **I.** How God applied the Law and the Gospel to prepare and move Isaiah to say, “*Here am I, send me;*” and **II.** How God applies the Law and the Gospel to us to prepare and move us to say, “*Here am I; send me.*”

### I.

In the first place, before Isaiah was ready and prepared to be the great Evangelist of the Old Testament, God first crushed Isaiah by means of an awesome vision. The vision was that of the very throne of the Almighty God Himself. It took place the same year that Uzziah, the King of the southern kingdom of Judah, died. Our text says, “*In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up...*” When Isaiah says he saw the Lord high and lifted up, we are to understand that he saw in prophecy the exalted Christ! John 12:41 says, “*These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him.*”

And what a vision this was! Though no doubt veiled in that no man can look upon God in His naked majesty and live, the Lord enabled Isaiah to see His glory. As a gracious condescension, the entire vision was presented to Isaiah in the form of an earthly tabernacle or temple. In this vision, Isaiah saw the Lord’s train or robe completely filling the heavenly sanctuary. This signified the Lord’s all-encompassing presence, He who fills heaven and earth.

Then Isaiah saw hovering above this heavenly sanctuary angels called “*seraphim.*” We are told that each seraph had six wings. Yet so awesome and overwhelming is the heavenly throne and temple of God that the seraphim used only two of their six wings to fly. What, then, did they do with the other four? We are told that with two they covered their faces in that even angels cannot behold the essential holiness of God. And with the remaining two they covered their feet in humility and reverence. Thus, even these perfect spirit beings, created to serve God night and day, are humbled in awe as they hover above the Lord’s temple.

At this point, these seraphim began to cry one to another in antiphonal song, “*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole world is full of His glory.*” These seraphim proclaimed with reverent voices the holiness of Almighty God. That these seraphim cried, “*Holy*” three times was not by coincidence. This three-fold “*holy*” expresses the blessed truth of the Scriptures that though God be One, He is three distinct Persons.

And notice what else these angels sang: “*The whole earth is full of His glory.*” Here God is revealing to Isaiah the glory of Christ which was from all eternity and which would later shine forth when Christ would come into the world. In Christ the very glory of God is manifested. The Bible says, “*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,*” II Corinthians 4:6.

Now then, as each seraphim sang back and forth, “*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts,*” the very doorposts of the heavenly temple shook. Our text says, “*And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.*” Even this declaration of God’s holiness by the angels shook the very portals of the temple, and filled it with smoke. It was reminiscent of when God came down upon Sinai with angels and the mountain shook and was covered with smoke. God in His sovereign majesty and holiness is utterly overwhelming! His holy presence lays bare the feebleness of His creatures. His holiness lays bare fallen man in his utter sinfulness and uncleanness.

For this reason, Isaiah was cut to the heart. He cried out, *“Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”* In beholding the very King of Glory, Isaiah could not help but see most vividly his own woeful, miserable condition. When he said, *“Woe is me,”* he saw himself as a poor, miserable sinner who deserved the eternal wrath and punishment of God. He was brought, as it were, right to the very brink of hell. This was no shallow, superficial, outward show of humility. Isaiah was cut to the quick. He was crushed by the realization of his sin and guilt. He was beside himself. He saw that he was totally unworthy to stand before God! He openly declared that he was a man of unclean lips, and that he dwelt in the midst of a people of unclean lips. In other words, he did not exclude himself from the sins of the people. Isaiah freely confessed himself to be a poor sinful being.

However, true to His covenant of mercy in Christ, God also absolved Isaiah of his sins. Our text says, *“Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.”* This hot coal which the angel took off the altar represented the absolution of the Gospel, the forgiveness of sins. Though the coal was hot and did burn, it was not unto destruction or injury, but unto purging and healing. It purged and absolved Isaiah of his sin and guilt. It rendered him to be dead indeed to sin, but alive unto God. Having been crushed by the Law, Isaiah was lifted up with the Gospel of the forgiveness of sin. As the Bible says, *“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,”* Isaiah 1:18.

Now Isaiah was a vessel fit for the Master’s use. Having been humbled by the Law and having been exalted by the Gospel, Isaiah now had a purged heart to begin his work as a prophet. Therefore God spoke to Isaiah. Our text says, *“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”* From out of the inner council of the Holy Trinity, God asked out loud as to whom He should send, and who should go forth for Him. And since Isaiah had just been purged and cleansed of his sins, most willingly and most eagerly he answered, *“Here am I; send me.”* This was not the reply of self-will, but the reply of a man who was utterly grateful for the forgiveness of sins. Here was a man who understood what Scripture means when it says, *“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not,”* Lamentations 3:22.

## II.

However, as we gather here this weekend for our Conference Convention, our prayerful goal and intent is to apply the Word of God to our own souls. Our theme, *“Here am I; send me,”* is to be more than a mere theme, but a word to be laid on our hearts. As we said before, God still asks to this day, *“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”* Yet none of us is truly ready and prepared to say, *“Here am I; send me,”* if we have lost the impact of the Law and the Gospel in our own hearts and lives. How can we really tell others about Christ if we have lost sight of how it is that God saved us? Let us never forget that at one time we all belonged to the billions of people who are dead in trespasses and sins! As the Bible says, *“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others,”* Ephesians 2:3.

Well, then, how did God deliver us out from the billions of those still sitting in heathen darkness? He did it by applying to our hearts His holy Law and His holy Gospel. We were first crushed by the Law to see our sins and to repent, and then we were absolved of our sins by the

Gospel of the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ our Savior. Now, even though our conversion was a past experience, in a way it is also a daily experience. Remember what Luther said the significance of our Baptism is? “It signifies that the Old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man DAILY come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.” Daily we are to undergo a full dose of the Law and the Gospel.

Therefore, stop and ask yourself, “Do you still see clearly what it means that you are a sinner?” Are you still able to say, “*Woe is me, for I am undone?*” Or have you graduated to such an extent that you no longer ever have to say, “*Woe is me*”? Have you become so excellent that you never have to say, “*For the good that I would, I do not; and the evil which I would not, that I do,*” Romans 7:19? If you have so graduated, you are ready to stand next to that wretched Pharisee in the temple who said, “*God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are.*” God forbid that we should ever draw such a conclusion about ourselves! The truth is, we are still by nature sinful and unclean. If we look into the mirror of God’s holy Law, we shall see that there is nothing in us but sin and death from which we can in no wise set ourselves free. Yes, like Isaiah we must still say, “*Woe is ME! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.*” Let us never forget that there is only one thing we deserve, and it is not mercy but eternal damnation in hell. That we have earned right well!

But what has God done for us who deserve nothing but temporal and eternal punishment? God in His grace sent us His Son, the Lord Jesus, to take upon Himself our nature so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and Law of God and for us and for our deliverance suffer death and all that we by our sins have deserved. Truly, “*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,*” II Corinthians 5:19. Yes, God in Christ has justified the world, and therefore He has justified you and me. It is this objective justification that we believe and cling to for our personal assurance that we are forgiven sinners! By faith in this blessed justification of all mankind, you and I have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By faith in our Redeemer we have that peace of God which passeth all understanding.

It is this blessed peace of the Gospel, God’s purging coal of absolution in Christ, which moves our hearts to say with Isaiah, “*Here am I; send me.*” “*The love of Christ constraineth us!*” II Corinthians 5:14. Now we truly have something to say to the lost! We ourselves know what it means to be purged from our own wretched sin and guilt! We understand how precious the cross-earned forgiveness of Christ is! Now we, according to the New Man in us, really want to tell others. Like the Apostles, “*We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard,*” Acts 4:20. Now we earnestly desire to reach out and tell someone, “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,*” Acts 16:31. Suddenly the feelings of self-consciousness about witnessing our faith fade and flee. We realize that we have nothing to be embarrassed or ashamed of. As the hymn says, “*Ashamed of Jesus? Yes, I may when I’ve no guilt to wash away, no tear to wipe, no good to crave, no fear to quell, no soul to save.*”

No, we are now eager when our pastor organizes evangelism-calling to respond and say, “*Here am I; send me.*” As we’re seated on an airplane or on a bus, we are “*ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh [us] a reason of the hope that is in [us] with meekness and fear,*” I Peter 3:15. We see why it is a good idea to keep some tracts handy in our glove compartment so that we can give one as occasion is provided. We know the real reason of our hope. We know we have a Savior who bled and died for us!

And let it be said here that it is also this blessed absolution of the Gospel which God uses to move a young man to want to prepare for the public ministry of the Word. The desire to be a pastor is a God-wrought desire to proclaim the glad tidings of God's absolution in Jesus Christ. Even before a man is trained for the ministry and then receives a divine call to serve a congregation, there first takes place what we sometimes refer to as the inner, personal call where God lays on a man's heart the desire to preach and teach God's Word. The Gospel has made such an imprint on his heart that he doesn't want to do anything else but to preach Christ and Him Crucified.

It is this blessed Gospel of God's forgiveness which also remains the joy and motivation for our pastors to continue to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Indeed, in these last days, God's true prophets will find that their work of preaching the Gospel may at times be done under circumstances which Isaiah faced. Just beyond our text, God said this to Isaiah: "*Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not,*" Isaiah 6:9. From time to time we may face a gainsaying people for whom the Gospel will be a savor of death unto death. Nevertheless, we keep on proclaiming the blessed Word because that blessed Gospel shall ever remain a savor of life unto life unto those who will believe.

O, what a blessed work it is to spread the saving Gospel of Christ! What greater or more important work can we do for the Lord? In fact, Jesus once said, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to My Father,*" John 14:12. No doubt Jesus was referring to our spreading the Word farther and wider than He did in the three years of His earthly ministry! In view of all of this, who of us is not ready and willing to say with Isaiah, "*Here am I; send me*"?

“Hark! the voice of Jesus crying,  
 ‘Who will go and work today?  
 Fields are white and harvests waiting,  
 Who will bear the sheaves away?’  
 Loud and long the Master calleth,  
 Rich reward He offers thee;  
 Who will answer, gladly saying,  
 ‘Here am I, send me, send me’”?

(TLH #496, v. 1)

Amen.

***Soli Deo Gloria!***

## CONVENTION ESSAY

delivered to the

**47<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference**

by the Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Pastor

St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church

Wilmot, South Dakota

***“Personal Christian Mission Work”***

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[PLEASE NOTE — The essay as presented on the floor of the convention, though initially accepted pending the usual review by the *praesidium*, was re-submitted to the essayist for necessary revision and correction of substantive doctrinal and practical matters before it would be appropriate for publication. Sadly, a revised manuscript was never submitted to the *praesidium* by Pastor Dierking, and therefore the essay is not included herewith. While the *praesidium* earnestly pursued this matter even over several years, it was unable to secure any copy but the original; and it felt that for the *praesidium* itself to undertake a revision of the essay apart from its original author would not have been appropriate.

The 1998-1999 *praesidium* consisted of

Pastor Paul R. Bloedel, President

Pastor David T. Mensing, Vice President

For the reader’s information, summary statements concerning the general content of the essay may be found in the MINUTES of the Convention, which follow.]

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**MINUTES OF THE 47th ANNUAL CONVENTION  
of the  
CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE  
June 26, 27 and 28, 1998**

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**FRIDAY, JUNE 26****THE MORNING SESSION****THE OPENING SERVICE:**

The 47th Annual Convention, held at St. John's Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Oregon, officially began at 9:30 a.m. with a Divine Worship Service of Convocation in which the local pastor, the Rev. M. L. Natterer, served as liturgist, and the Rev. Paul R. Bloedel, President of the Conference, delivered the keynote sermon. Pastor Bloedel chose as his text Romans 8:1-11 and focused on the importance of being spiritually-minded. In his first part he explained how *spiritual*-mindedness differs from *carnal*-mindedness; and in his second part he showed how spiritual-mindedness is produced, nurtured, and sustained in us.

Immediately following the service, the first session of the convention was called to order by the President, the Rev. Paul R. Bloedel, at 11:15 a.m. according to the customary usages. Hymn 233, verses 1-5, was sung, and a prayer was offered, followed by the reading of Scripture in Ephesians 6:10-18 and the usual opening exhortation. The devotion concluded with the singing of the last two stanzas of the hymn.

**APPOINTED CONVENTION COMMITTEES:**

According to the convention **PROSPECTUS**, the following committees were appointed by the President for the carrying out of convention business:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>A. Auditing Committee:</b>                     | Pastor David G. Redlin, Chairman<br>Mr. Phillip R. Martin (Peace)<br>Mr. Ron Lake (St. John's)           |
| <b>B. Committee on Registration and Excuses:</b>  | Pastor E. R. Stallings, Chairman<br>Mr. Dan Ellis (St. Luke's)<br>Mr. Joshua Redlin (Good Shepherd)      |
| <b>C. Committee on Nominations and Elections:</b> | Pastor Mark W. Dierking, Chairman<br>Mr. John Steinke (Holy Scripture)<br>Mr. Dale Peterson (St. John's) |
| <b>D. Resolutions Committee:</b>                  | Pastor M. L. Natterer, Chairman<br>Mr. Robert G. Bloedel (St. Luke's)<br>Mr. Lloyd E. Martin (Peace)     |

**INITIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES:**

The committee reported the following delegates present and seated for this convention:

From **PEACE, Oak Forest**: Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Phillip R. Martin and Mr. Lloyd E. Martin, Lay Delegates; Mr. Paul Bloedel, Mr. David Mensing, and Mr. Paul Steinke, Alternates — 3 votes.

From **ST. STEPHEN'S, Wilmot**: Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Pastoral Delegate; no Lay Delegates — 2 votes.

From **HOLY SCRIPTURE, San Antonio**: Rev. E. R. Stallings, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. John Steinke, Lay Delegate — 3 votes.

From **ST. LUKE'S, Seattle**: Rev. Paul R. Bloedel, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Dan Ellis and Mr. Robert G. Bloedel, Lay Delegates; Mr. John Okamoto and Mr. Daniel Bloedel, Alternates — 3 votes.

From **ST. JOHN'S, Lebanon**: Rev. M. L. Natterer, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Ron Lake and Mr. Dale Peterson, Lay Delegates; Mr. Paul Natterer and Mr. Dan Beugli, Alternates — 3 votes.

From **GOOD SHEPHERD, Tucson**: Rev. David G. Redlin, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Joshua Redlin, Lay Delegate — 3 votes.

Total number of votes to be cast: **17**. Total attendance at the opening service: **113**.

The offering received to benefit the General Conference Treasury was \$ 622.20 and to benefit the Student Aid Fund \$ 20.00. It was moved and seconded that the Committee's initial report be adopted and that all delegations be seated as indicated in the report. This motion was unanimously carried.

#### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT:**

President Bloedel briefly reviewed the Conference fiscal year 1997-98, taking note first of all of our ongoing support of our sister congregation in Wilmot, South Dakota and of our opportunity to bear testimony of our Scriptural position to two Missouri Synod pastors and one independent pastor at our Fall Pastoral Conference in Oak Forest. He cited the mailing out of two Church and Ministry papers to pastors of the ELS and of the CoLC, as well as the setting into operation of our Seminary program and its initial success, as highlights of the year. He also made special mention of our *Concordia Lutheran* and of the Web page recently developed and published on the internet. Singled out for special recognition by the President were the Secretary of the Conference, Pastor David T. Mensing, who is also our first-year Seminary professor; Pastor Stallings, the Editor of our church paper and chairman of the publishing house; Mr. David Steinke, out-going Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications*; and our Treasurer, Mr. Victor Bloedel. He concluded with a brotherly reminder concerning the real nature of God-pleasing "church growth" as this is done by the Lord, not by us, and only through the Gospel when it is properly divided from the Law and clearly set forth in faithful teaching, diligent application, and forthright testimony. This alone is the growth for which we look and for which we pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior. — It was moved and seconded to accept this report subject to the usual review. The motion was carried, and the Vice President, the Rev. Mark W. Dierking, appointed as the **Committee to Review the President's Report** Pastor David G. Redlin and Mr. Lloyd E. Martin.

#### **THE CONVENTION AGENDA:**

The President then laid before the Convention for its consideration the official **Agenda** as printed. Two reports were inadvertently omitted from the Agenda, namely, the **Report of the**

**Conference Archivist** and the **Report on the Seminary Bookstore**. It was agreed to place these two reports on Sunday afternoon, immediately following the recess. It was moved and seconded to adopt the Agenda as amended. This motion was carried, and the Agenda was officially adopted.

#### **REPORT OF THE PRESS COMMITTEE:**

This committee, composed of the local pastor and the Conference Secretary, reported that no release had been given to the local press in advance of the Convention. The report was unanimously adopted.

The Agenda for the Friday morning session having been completed, several brief announcements were made by their chairmen as to time and place of convention committee meetings. The President then declared the convention in recess at 12:04 p.m. for the noon meal.

### **THE AFTERNOON SESSION**

The afternoon session was opened at 1:27 p.m. with a brief devotion conducted by Pastor M. L. Natterer. Hymn 427, verses 1-6, was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Isaiah 40:1-31 and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the singing of the last stanza of the hymn and the Apostolic Benediction.

#### **THE ESSAY: “Personal Christian Mission Work”**

The essay, delivered by the Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Pastor of St. Stephen’s Ev. Lutheran Church of Wilmot, South Dakota, was divided into three main sections. The first part treated the **command** to do personal Christian mission work, the **promises** associated with it, and the **preparations** necessary to carry it out. —The presentation of the first section of the essay was accompanied by lively discussion and edifying Scriptural comments from the floor. (NOTE: The essay is NOT printed in these PROCEEDINGS. Please see the special note regarding this on p. 12.)

A brief recess followed the presentation of the first portion of the Essay.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

There was only one recommendation from the Board of Directors, having to do with the work of the Committee on Missions. The chairman therefore announced that this would be held in abeyance until that committee has presented its report.

#### **INITIAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

The initial report concerned, first of all, the past fiscal year, as the Treasurer, Victor K. Bloedel, presented the *Financial Report* for fiscal year 1997-98. The report showed a beginning cash balance of \$30,395.98 in the General Fund plus total receipts of \$13,902.63, yielding total cash available of \$44,298.61. Expenditures totaled \$15,758.16, leaving an ending cash balance as of May 31, 1998 of \$28,540.45. The report also showed an increase in the Student Aid Fund from \$24,312.71 at the beginning of the fiscal year to an ending balance of \$25,046.17 on its

closing date, May 31st, in spite of \$3,796.66 in expenditures.. (The entire financial report is to be found elsewhere in these PROCEEDINGS. Please see the **Table of Contents** for its exact location.) It was then moved and seconded to receive, subject to audit, the *Financial Report* of the Treasurer concerning the past fiscal year, and this motion was carried.

The Treasurer then distributed his committee's *Budget Worksheet* for the new fiscal year, June 1, 1998 through May 31, 1999. It showed a beginning cash balance of \$28,540.45 and anticipated receipts (including the pledges of our congregations) of \$11,910.00, for total cash available of \$40,450.45 in the General Fund. Projected budgetary expenditures totaled \$19,600.00 divided among the following items: *Scriptural Publications*--\$3,000.00; St. Stephen's Subsidy--\$6,600.00; Archival Subsidy--\$500.00; Telephone Expense--\$2,000.00; Convention Expense--\$1,000.00; Travel Expense--\$4,000.00; Miscellaneous--\$1,500.00; Proceedings Production--\$500.00; Seminary Bookstore--\$500.00. It was moved and seconded to accept the preliminary budget proposal, subject to any subsequent amendment by the delegates in Convention assembled and pending final approval later in the Convention. This motion was unanimously adopted.

#### **REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:**

The chairman reported on the work of preparing the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* for publication every two months in the Conference's ongoing effort to spread the Word of God by which our precious unity is strengthened and preserved, and on which our fellowship is based. In this report the editor pointed out that our *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* can be an outstanding mission work tool to supplement our personal oral testimony. The editor also highlighted several articles published in our official organ. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

#### **REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL:**

The chairman of *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS* briefly summarized the accomplishments of the publishing house this past year as including **a)** the dissemination of Church & Ministry documents to E.L.S. pastors, **b)** the printing of 200 copies of the Sketch of our Doctrinal Position, **c)** the breaking in of a replacement *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* production staffer in anticipation of the vacancy on the Board of Control created by the resignation of Business Manager David A. Steinke, effective May 31, 1998, and **d)** the creation of the Sunday School Lessons schedule for 1997-98. The motion was carried to receive the report.

#### **REPORT OF THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS*:**

The Business Manager of our publishing house, Mr. David A. Steinke, was not present to report personally, but Mr. Phillip R. Martin, a member of the Board of Control, read the report prepared by him. He reported that *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS* began the fiscal year on June 1, 1997 with a cash balance of \$ 931.68 and that cash receipts were added for a total cash available of \$4,282.22. Disbursements totaled \$3,444.69, leaving a cash balance of \$ 837.53 at the end of the fiscal year. (The printed report with pertinent detail is to be found elsewhere in the PROCEEDINGS.) The motion was carried to receive this report.

It was mutually agreed to amend the Agenda to hear the report of the **Web Page Administrative Committee** at this time *before* the **Report of the Committee on Missions**.

**REPORT OF THE AD HOC WEB PAGE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE:**

Committee member Phillip R. Martin presented the report from the podium, while another member, Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi, distributed a 20-page hard-copy printout of the Conference Web Page in sample sub-pages for the examination of the delegates. [While this exhibit is not included in the PROCEEDINGS, the reader is encouraged to log on to the Conference Web Page at the Internet address,

**<http://www.concordialutheranconf.com>**

to see the progress made by this committee in crafting an attractive, informative, and technically superior document.] It was moved and seconded to receive the Committee's report, and the motion was carried unanimously.

In acting upon the Committee's recommendations, it was moved and seconded that we approve the URL name *concordialutheranconf.com* for the Conference's web page presently being carried by Orbitel Communications of Orland Park, Illinois, and that we defray the cost of maintaining that proprietary name (\$35.00 per year) as a miscellaneous expense of the Conference. This motion was carried.

Moved and seconded that, for the coming fiscal year, we maintain the **Web Page Administrative Committee** as an *ad hoc* committee of the Conference, its membership to be appointed by the President; that this committee be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the page; and that all oversight of the web page be the responsibility of the President and the Secretary of the Conference. Any design changes, additional documents, and new page categories will also need the approval of the Conference President and Secretary; and any costs incurred in the maintenance of this web page shall be defrayed out of the Conference's General Treasury as a "miscellaneous expense". —This motion was carried unanimously.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS:**

Pastor Redlin, its chairman, summarized the mission endeavors carried out by our Conference during the past fiscal year, specifically the publication of our *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN*, the training of a future ministry, the setting of our Conference churches before the world in the Internet, and the support of a sister congregation with our financial subsidy. He also pointed out that effective Christian mission work is not carried out by those who climb on popular bandwagons which water down the essential message of God's pure Word in doctrine and practice in the name of "evangelism," but by those who stand firm on the Word and faithfully witness it to others. It was moved and seconded to receive this report, and the motion was carried. Since the single specific recommendation of the Committee was to continue the Conference subsidy to St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church of Wilmot, South Dakota, the **Recommendation of the Board of Directors** regarding this same matter was then presented to the convention for its collateral consideration with that of the Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

WHEREAS, as a matter of Christian stewardship in the use of Conference funds and oversight of the same, and in accordance with our Constitution as it relates to subsidizing needy congregations (Article IX, §3c), it is incumbent upon the Conference "to survey the field and general circumstances of congregations

requesting financial subsidy;” and

WHEREAS the Wilmot congregation is amenable to such an evaluation of their circumstances and on-going need, as well as of their desire to continue as a functional Christian congregation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference in convention assembled authorize a special committee composed of Pastors Bloedel and Mensing to visit the congregation in the very near future for the above-stated purpose;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the requested subsidy be contingent upon the findings of this committee and the subsequent action of the Board of Directors; but

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in the meantime, that is, until the recommendations of this special committee have been acted upon by the Board of Directors, the Conference completely underwrite whatever of Pastor Dierking’s present salary of \$1000.00 per month is not paid by his congregation, so that the needs of his family are provided for.

Moved and seconded to table action on this **Recommendation of the Board of Directors** regarding the Wilmot subsidy until after the Saturday morning recess. This motion was unanimously carried.

Before adjournment of the Friday Session, the minutes were read by the Secretary and adopted subject to polish. Following this and several brief announcements, the session adjourned at 5:40 p.m. with the singing of Hymn 23 and the Apostolic Benediction pronounced by the chairman.

## S A T U R D A Y, J U N E 2 7

### THE MORNING SESSION

The session was opened at 9:07 a.m. with a devotion led by Pastor David G. Redlin. Hymn 498, verses 1-4, was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Isaiah 54:1-10, a prayer, and the Lord’s Prayer in unison. The devotion concluded with the last two stanzas of the hymn and the Apostolic Benediction.

### THE ESSAY: “Personal Christian Mission Work” (Continued)

Pastor Dierking now proceeded to the second part of his essay concerning first of all the **objective** and then also the **objects** of Christian mission work. In the first case, he summarized the objective of personal mission work in the words of the Lord Jesus to Paul recorded in Acts 26, namely, “*to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me.*” With regard to the **objects** of mission work, the essayist’s first target or object was the **Christian home**. This occasioned protracted, broad-based, and lively discussion on the floor,

indicating the deep concern of our Christian parents for the nurture and admonition of their children in the Lord's Word and the proper way in which this is to be accomplished by means of instruction, application, discipline, and example—always maintaining the proper distinction between Law and Gospel in all of those activities. (NOTE AGAIN: The essay is NOT printed in these PROCEEDINGS. Please see the special note regarding this on p. 12.)

The recess scheduled for 10:30 a.m. was observed at 11:00.

#### **RECOMMENDATION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

The recommendation of the Board of Directors, tabled on Friday afternoon, was then taken up for continued discussion. (See *Minutes* of the Friday afternoon session.) Following discussion, the recommendation was unanimously adopted.

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:**

In view of the shortness of time remaining before the noon lunch hour, it was mutually agreed to hear the **Seminary Student's Interest Report** summarizing his studies, his co-curricular activities, and his leisure time pursuits during his first semester of theological study. Seminarian Paul E. Bloedel gave an interesting and informative report, lightly seasoned with good humor; and his report was followed by lively discussion and questions of interest on the part of delegates and visitors. Before standing in recess for the noon lunch hour, the assembly joined in singing the fourth and sixth stanzas of Hymn 485.

After a few brief announcements by the *pastor loci*, the convention stood in recess at 12:10 p.m. for lunch.

#### **THE AFTERNOON SESSION**

Following the noon meal, the afternoon session began at 1:20 p.m. with a devotion conducted by Pastor E. R. Stallings. Hymn 507, verses 1-4, was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Acts 8:5-8 and 26-40, a prayer, and the Lord's Prayer in unison. The devotion was concluded with the last two stanzas of the hymn and the Apostolic Benediction.

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:**

This report was presented in two parts, the first by Pastor David T. Mensing, chairman of the Committee for the first half of the fiscal year, and the second by Pastor M. L. Natterer, chairman since January 12, 1998, when Pastor Mensing was relieved of the chairmanship to assume his duties as instructor. The first part of the report summarized the work of the Committee as it prepared for the matriculation of our first student in ten years. This included not only the continued personal preparation of the instructor, but also a great deal of logistical preparation including construction of the student's living quarters in the facilities of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church and the acquisition of necessary books and supplies. The second portion of the report summarized the Committee's work since the start of the first academic semester and its oversight of the instructional program. —Moved and seconded to adopt the report of the Committee on Theological Education with thanks to God. This motion was unanimously carried. —The Committee's single specific recommendation was to renew the Conference's **Student Maintenance Allowance** of \$300.00 per month for the coming academic year, August 15, 1998

through May 15, 1999. It was moved and seconded to authorize this expenditure from the Student Aid Fund, and the motion was unanimously carried.

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION:**

In his report, Pastor Dierking, the chairman, first noted the Committee's efforts to make and continue contact with the *Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations* and our frustration over the course of many years now at our inability to arrange face-to-face talks with the leaders of that body. Although initial contact was made and a brief personal meeting with its president was arranged by Pastor Mensing of our committee three years ago, no further word was heard from the F. L. C. or from its president, the Rev. Robert Lietz, until the spring of this year, when Pastor Mensing was specially invited by the Secretary of the F. L. C. to attend its convention in April. That invitation was subsequently broadened to include others of our Conference; and our eventual delegation included besides Pastor Mensing also President Bloedel, our Seminarian, and Mr. Phillip Martin. By God's grace, both before and during that meeting, our men were able to be of some influence in getting the leadership of the F. L. C. to reverse itself from its denial of the doctrine of Objective Justification into which it had strayed due to the efforts of a rabid false teacher. The chairman also read a letter from President Lietz of the F. L. C., received during this present convention, in which he thanked our delegation for its profitable attendance at their convention and expressed the hope that the two bodies may faithfully strive, without compromise of God's Word, to work toward the attainment of true unity. In the discussion of the report, Pastor Bloedel briefly summarized what our delegation witnessed at the spring convention of the F. L. C.; and this summary was briefly discussed on the floor. —It was moved and seconded to receive the Report of the Committee on Lutheran Union, and the motion was carried unanimously. —It was also moved and seconded that our Conference send a delegation of observers to the April, 1999 convention of the *Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations*, the composition of this delegation to be determined by the Committee on Lutheran Union. This motion was unanimously carried.

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

The committee found the President's Report edifying, instructive, and informative. It was gratified that the President made special mention of the faithful labors of the Conference Secretary and our Seminary Instructor, of the Treasurer, and of the Editor and Chairman of the Publishing House, as well as of its Business Manager; and it expressed thanks to our dear heavenly Father for granting the President wisdom and strength to carry out the duties of his office during the past year and besought God's blessings upon his future labors in our midst. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

#### **REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE:**

The Auditing Committee found the books of both the Conference Treasurer and the Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications* to be accurate and complete; and it expressed the Committee's special esteem for the Conference Treasurer's faithfulness, diligence, and conscientiousness, and thanks to both men for their faithful service. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

#### **FURTHER REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE**

**BUDGET:**

The chairman of the Finance Committee, Mr. Victor K. Bloedel, reported that there was no change since his previous report on Friday. It was moved and seconded to receive this interim report, and the motion was carried.

At 2:15 p.m., the afternoon recess was observed.

**INITIAL REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:**

The Resolutions brought back to the convention floor two resolutions committed to it in the reports of committees. (These are numbered respectively **Resolution #1** and **Resolution #2**, and can be found in the last pages of the PROCEEDINGS.)

**Resolution #1:** Thanks to Pastor P. R. Bloedel and Mr. Paul E. Bloedel for their selfless efforts in the preparation of Church and Ministry documents to be sent out to E.L.S. and C.o.L.C. pastors. —This resolution was moved by the Committee, seconded, and carried unanimously.

**Resolution #2:** Thanks to Pastor David T. Mensing for his faithful service as Secretary of our Conference, Professor in our Seminary, and contributor of various edifying articles to the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN*. —This resolution was moved by the Committee, seconded, and carried unanimously.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES:****OFFICERS—**

**PRESIDENT:** Nominated—Pastors Bloedel, Dierking, and Mensing.

**Elected—Pastor Paul R. Bloedel** (to his *third* term)

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Nominated—Pastors Stallings, Mensing, Natterer, and Redlin.

**Elected—Pastor David T. Mensing**

**SECRETARY:** Nominated—Pastors Dierking, Natterer, Stallings, and Redlin.

**Elected—Pastor Mark W. Dierking**

**TREASURER:** Nominated—Messrs. Victor Bloedel, Robert Bloedel, and Phillip Martin.

**Elected—Mr. Victor K. Bloedel**

**BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE from the Far West:** Nominated—Messrs. Raymond Kusumi, Robert Bloedel, Stephen Bloedel, Mark Natterer, and Paul Natterer.

**Elected—Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi**

**BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE from the Middle West:** Nominated—Messrs. Phillip R. Martin, John M. Steinke, and Lloyd E. Martin.

**Elected—Mr. Phillip R. Martin**

**STANDING COMMITTEES—**

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:**

SLATE A—Pastor Stallings, Pastor Natterer, Mr. John Steinke

SLATE B—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Mensing, Mr. John Steinke

SLATE C—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Phillip Martin

SLATE D—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Mensing, Mr. Phillip Martin

**Elected—SLATE A**

**COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION:**

SLATE A—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Dierking, Pastor Stallings, Mr. Robert Bloedel

SLATE B—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Dierking, Pastor Stallings, Lloyd E. Martin

SLATE C—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Dierking, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Lloyd E. Martin

**Elected—SLATE C**

**COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:**

SLATE A—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Mensing, Mr. Daniel Bloedel, Mr. Phillip Martin

SLATE B—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Stallings, Mr. Ray Kusumi, Mr. John Okamoto

SLATE C—Pastor Redlin, Pastor Mensing, Mr. Daniel Bloedel, Mr. Phillip Martin

SLATE D—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Stallings, Mr. Stephen Bloedel, Mr. Lloyd E. Martin

**Elected—SLATE C**

**COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS:**

SLATE A—Pastor Redlin, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Ted Fitzwater, Mr. Rodney Reyelts, Mr. Raymond Kusumi

SLATE B—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Redlin, Mr. Paul E. Bloedel, Mr. Paul Steinke, Mr. Mark Natterer

SLATE C—Pastor Redlin, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Paul Natterer, Mr. Lloyd E. Martin, Mr. Raymond Kusumi

SLATE D—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Redlin, Mr. Paul Natterer, Mr. Lloyd E. Martin, Mr. Raymond Kusumi

**Elected—SLATE B**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

SLATE A—Mr. Victor Bloedel, Mr. Paul Natterer, Mr. Phillip Martin, Mr. Rodney Reyelts

SLATE B—Mr. Victor Bloedel, Mr. Luke Dierking, Mr. Jerry Sidwell, Mr. Phillip R. Martin

SLATE C—Mr. Victor Bloedel, Mr. Luke Dierking, Mr. Jerry Sidwell, Mr. Mark Mensing

SLATE D—Mr. Victor Bloedel, Mr. Paul Natterer, Mr. Phillip Martin, Mr. John Steinke

**Elected—SLATE C**

**PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL:**

SLATE A—Pastor Stallings, Pastor Mensing, Mr. John Steinke, Mr. Ray Kusumi, Mr. Phillip Martin.

SLATE B—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Stallings, Mr. Ray Kusumi, Mr. John Steinke, Mr. Daniel Bloedel

SLATE C—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Stallings, Mr. Ray Kusumi, Mr. Phillip Martin, Mr. Daniel Bloedel

**Elected—SLATE C**

The balloting having been completed, it was moved and seconded to make all elections

unanimous. This motion was unanimously carried.

The Secretary was then asked to read the minutes of the Saturday sessions. It was moved and seconded to adopt them as read, subject to polish. The motion was carried.

Following several brief announcements by the chairman, by the *pastor loci* and by committee chairmen regarding special meetings, the Convention stood in recess until Sunday afternoon at 1:30 p.m. The session closed at 5:50 p.m. with the singing of Hymn 53, the reading of Scripture in Ephesians 2:4-22, a prayer. The devotion concluded with the singing of Hymn 590 and the Aaronic Benediction pronounced by the chairman.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 28

### SUNDAY MORNING — The Divine Worship Service with Holy Communion:

The *pastor loci*, the Rev. M. L. Natterer again served as liturgist; and the Rev. E. R. Stallings of San Antonio, Texas, preached the sermon based on **Isaiah 6:1-8**, the text which served as the motto of the convention. His theme was: ***Why A True Christian Congregation Is Such a Blessing to Us***, and his sermon was divided into two reasons: **I. There we have the grace of God preached to us**, and **II. There we are strengthened in our faith**. Delegates and visitors from the congregations of our fellowship then partook of the Lord's Supper together as guests of St. John's Lutheran Church for the remission of their sins, for the strengthening of their faith, and in demonstration of their blessed unity in the Word of their Savior. Immediately following the service, delegates, visitors, and the local members assembled in the congregation's fellowship hall for the noon meal which was served by the ladies of the local congregation.

### THE AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon session began at 1:37 p.m. with a devotion conducted by Pastor Paul R. Bloedel. Hymn 625 was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Joshua 24:1-15, a prayer, and the Lord's Prayer said in unison. The devotion concluded with the singing of Hymn 451 and the Apostolic Benediction.

The final portion of Pastor Dierking's essay was delayed until 2:35 p.m. by an unsolicited ruling from the chair that, in order to forestall any wrangling between the Editorial Committee and the Publishing House Committee as to where and how the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* is to be printed, especially now that the Editorial Committee and the Publishing House are headquartered in different cities, and in order to keep the pastor and members of Peace Congregation from being overwhelmed with work, the Editorial Committee continue to function as it has during the past year in the preparation, publication, and mailing of the C. L.; and that Mr. John Steinke, a member of the Editorial Committee, continue to assist the editor in the formatting and layout of the C. L. The chairman stated that this ruling was *not subject to debate* since it was made in the best interests of the Conference and that its content was in his view in harmony with historical precedent in our Conference. Nevertheless he allowed that it may be either ratified or disallowed by majority vote of the convention delegates.

The right of the chair to make such a unilateral ruling without the appeal of the convention was

respectfully challenged on two counts, first, that the Constitution does not give this right to the chair as part of his duties; and secondly, that an ambiguity in the Constitution which heretofore has not been problematical will not be satisfactorily settled by an undebatable ruling. Both the ruling and the challenge were the subject of protracted discussion, and the delegates expressed themselves variously as to their preferences, both in the matter of the ruling and in the matter of how best, how conveniently, and how economically the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* can be produced. — The motion was made and seconded to decline the ruling of the chair and to permit the two committees to work out philosophical, logistical, and technical problems in the spirit of true brotherliness and mutual cooperation in the bond of peace as properly befits us as Christians working together to God's glory. After some further discussion, the question was called; the motion was unanimously carried.

**THE ESSAY: “Personal Christian Mission Work”** (Continued to its conclusion).

In this portion of the essay, Pastor Dierking took up the subject of *how we are to witness*. He summarized the technique of effective witnessing in the term “nouthetic confrontation,” taken from the Greek words *nouthesis* and *noutheteo*, both of which are rendered in the English of our Bible by the noun *admonition* and the verb *to admonish*. The coined term is “**nouthetic confrontation.**” The central thought of Pastor Dierking's essay on this point was that mission work, by its very nature, is “nouthetic confrontation,” confronting an individual with the Word of God. He pointed out that “nouthetic confrontation” has three elements: 1) A problem is always at the heart of witnessing, the chief problem every person has, his sin and its attendant curses; 2) the problem solving is done verbally with the Word of God, applying both Law and Gospel as needed and appropriate; and finally, 3) the ultimate purpose of witnessing, the salvation of a soul from Satan, sin, death and hell.

Following brief discussion of this section, it was moved and seconded that we tentatively adopt this essay with thanks to the essayist, subject to the usual review by the *praesidium* (Constitution, Art. VIII, 1, b). This motion was carried unanimously. (NOTE AGAIN: The essay is NOT printed in these PROCEEDINGS. Please see the special note regarding this on p. 12.)

A fifteen minute recess was observed at this time before continuing with the final reports and business of the convention.

**FINAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE BUDGET:**

The Treasurer reported a minor change in the projected income of the Conference, namely, that the 1998 Convention Collection totaled \$622.20, which made anticipated receipts (including the pledges of our congregations) \$12,032.20, for total cash available of \$40,572.65 in the General Fund. Projected budgetary expenditures had not changed since the Committee's Initial Report and totaled \$19,600.00 divided among the items initially stated. It was moved and seconded to accept the budget proposal, as amended above, as the working budget for Fiscal Year 1998-99. This was carried unanimously. (The final budget can be found in its entirety elsewhere in these PROCEEDINGS. Please see the **Table of Contents.**)

**REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE ARCHIVIST:**

Pastor Mensing, our archivist, explained how the committee had worked with the Committee on Theological Education in preparing and making available materials for our seminary student,

reprinting out-of-print booklets and pamphlets. This material will soon be available to our Conference pastors and laymen. The Committee also worked with the *Ad Hoc* Web Page Committee, compiling and computerizing materials for us in our Conference web page. These documents also should be available in printed form in the near future. The Committee upgraded its OCR (Optical Character Recognition) software which allowed them to scan more of the older convention materials. Their plans for the coming year include computerizing convention proceedings, compiling a list of available materials for the pastors and interested laymen, as well as reproducing articles from the past issues of the *Orthodox Lutheran* and the *Concordia Lutheran* into tract or book format, and making more materials available under the archive section of our web page. The committee also expressed its thanks to those who volunteered their time and talents this past year to further the work of the committee, work which will not only benefit us now, but also to the future members of our Conference.

It was then moved and seconded to re-appoint the Conference Archivist, Pastor David T. Mensing, and Mr. Phillip R. Martin to assist him, as the *ad hoc* committee for fiscal year 1998-99. This motion was unanimously carried.

#### **REPORT ON THE SEMINARY BOOKSTORE:**

The bookstore committee was able to acquire several good out-of-print books during the past year which are now available for sale to our sem students and pastors. All available books have been placed on a computerized list which will be sent to the Conference pastors. The committee plans to add to its present "book runs" to Michigan and St. Louis solicitation of books from retired pastors in the Missouri Synod, with the goal in mind of having more than sufficient books to provide for the needs of our pastors and sem students.

The report of the Seminary Bookstore Committee was adopted as presented.

#### **FINAL REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:**

The Resolutions Committee submitted drafts of the following resolutions to the Convention for its consideration and moved their adoption. (The numbering follows the two resolutions already adopted. Please see the **Table of Contents** for their location.)

**#3:** Thanks to David Steinke for his faithful service as Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications* during the past several years;

**#4:** Thanks to the members of Peace Congregation for their labors of love in hosting our Conference Seminary and its student, and to Pastor David T. Mensing, who has unselfishly given of his time and energy in behalf of our Conference;

**#5:** Thanks to the outgoing officers and standing committees;

**#6:** Thanks for the sermons by Pastors Bloedel and Stallings, for the opening devotions conducted by the pastors, and for the essay delivered by Pastor Dierking;

**#7:** Thanks to Stephen P. Bloedel and Lloyd E. Martin for the special organ music which enhanced the services and devotions, and to those members of our respective congregations who joined to form a mixed choir for the Sunday service;

**#8:** Thanks to Pastor and Mrs. M. L. Natterer and to the host congregation for their hospitality.

All of the above resolutions were unanimously adopted.

#### **FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES:**

The Committee's final report showed that six congregations were represented at the convention by six pastoral delegates, eight lay delegates, and five alternate delegates. Total attendance at the Friday service was 113 and at the Sunday service 155. Total offerings for the Friday service: \$642.20; for the Sunday service, \$1,824.43. Total number communed in the Sunday service was sixty-nine. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and this motion was carried.

#### **REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE STATISTICIAN:**

Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi distributed his statistical report for fiscal year 1997-98. It was moved and seconded to receive this report. Carried. It was also moved and seconded that Mr. Kusumi be reappointed to the position of Conference Statistician for the coming fiscal year with thanks for his continued faithful service. This motion was unanimously carried.

#### **TIME AND PLACE OF THE 48th ANNUAL CONVENTION:**

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church of Oak Forest, Illinois, through its delegate, Phillip R. Martin, extended to the Conference its invitation to host the **48th Annual Convention**. (Dates— **Pastoral Conference:** Tuesday and Wednesday, June 22 and 23; **Board of Directors Meeting:** Thursday, June 24; **The Convention:** Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 25, 26 and 27, 1999.) It was moved and seconded to accept this kind invitation with thanks, and the motion was carried.

The minutes of the Sunday session were then read by the Secretary. It was moved and seconded that the minutes be adopted subject to polish. This motion was carried. After several brief announcements, the chairman entertained a motion to adjourn the convention. This motion was made, seconded, and unanimously carried; and adjournment followed at 5:20 p.m. with a closing devotion. Hymn 500 was sung, followed by a prayer, the responsive reading of Psalm 111, confession of the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer in unison. The devotion closed with the customary formula and the Apostolic Benediction.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Secretary

#### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE PRESIDENT**

Dear Brethren,

By God's grace alone, several things have happened during this past year which illustrate our value and usefulness as a Conference of orthodox Lutheran congregations—"*perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*"

We have been able to help support a sister congregation which is about one-sixth of its former size as the result of the unscriptural machinations of a rebel group within its midst. We have been able to bring our testimony to bear in our Pastoral Conference last Fall with two Missouri Synod pastors

and one independent pastor who persists in denying the doctrine of objective justification.

During the past year, two documents in booklet form entitled respectively, “HOW THE FALSE DOCTRINE ON THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY OF THE W.E.L.S., E.L.S., AND C.O.L.C. AFFECTS OTHER CLEAR TEACHINGS OF SCRIPTURE” and “A CATECHISM ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY,” were sent to every pastor and professor of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (E.L.S.) and of the Church of the Lutheran Confessions (C.o.L.C.). Through this medium we, as a Conference, have been able to bear witness to the true doctrine of God’s Word on the Church and its Ministry before those who are in error in order to help them, if possible, return to the old paths of genuine Lutheranism or, on the other hand, that they may be without excuse. (The President of the C.o.L.C., Daniel Fleischer, in reply to a letter of September 10<sup>th</sup> in which I had asked him to be kind enough to show us, if possible, where we are wrong in our critique of their public doctrine on the Church and Ministry, simply stated, without at all going into the matter, “Concerning the recognized issue that divides us we will have to acknowledge the difference. Again we can do so without being contentious.” Such a reply, of course, does not at all befit a man of his official capacity whose responsibility is to protect and defend the doctrinal position of his church body. He speaks as though “*contending for the faith once delivered to the saints*,” as we are commanded to do in Jude 1:3, is below their dignity and that he, as the watchdog of doctrinal purity in the C.o.L.C. is actually neither able nor willing to defend what they themselves profess to believe.)

During the past year, we have set our Seminary into operation and have now completed the first semester of instruction for our first student under the fine teaching ability of Professor David T. Mensing at our initial campus in Oak Forest, Illinois. The material covered during the first semester by Professor Mensing and his student is right on schedule with our carefully planned Seminary program—demonstrating the workability of a system which heretofore has been only theoretical and untried. We thank the Lord for this initial success of our seminary program and for His noteworthy answer to our earnest prayers to provide for a future ministry.

During the past year, by God’s grace, our official periodical, the *Concordia Lutheran*, has once again shown unprecedented excellence in composition and material, and has put to shame anything else available in the area of confessional Lutheranism among other Lutheran bodies throughout the world. We have continued to send our official periodical free of charge, in the excess of 300 copies of each issue, to a selection of various pastors in other Lutheran bodies.

And, last of all, we have during the past year, set up a Web page which will enable our Conference and its Scriptural stance to be exposed before the whole world on the Internet. It is simply great, and something for which we should not forget to thank God, that His Word in all its truth and purity is made accessible to so many people through this medium. These are things of which you will hear in much greater detail from the reports of the various committees of our Conference as the convention progresses.

In order that our Conference does not stagnate, wilt, or die on the vine, much work is required. Unfortunately, this work is quite unbalanced constitutionally and, therefore, it is generally carried on by only a few. First recognition for work being done in our Conference this past year goes, of course, to our Conference Secretary, the very capable and energetic Pastor David T. Mensing, who has given selflessly of his time and talents not only to his numerous secretarial duties which he has carried out far beyond the minimum responsibilities required of him by our Constitution, and his primary responsibilities to his congregation in Oak Forest, Illinois, and

Midland, Michigan, but also to his work of teaching 16 credit hours as our first-year Seminary Professor. The initial courses in our Seminary are recognizably the most difficult to teach, besides giving a new student a good start in our five-year program. Teaching seminary courses must never be minimized as an easy part-time occupation. And as the years go by with such immense rapidity, and it is so obvious that we are indeed living in the Last Days of the world in which the faith of even the most staunch Christians will be severely tried, our Seminary students need, more than ever before, to have the most excellent training available—that our future pastors may be more capable, stronger, and nobler than the last because of the demands which will be made upon their leadership, constancy, and faithfulness to the pure Word of God in the decades to come. Besides his professorial work in our seminary, Pastor Mensing has regularly contributed excellent doctrinally sound articles for the readers of our *Concordia Lutheran*. Because our Secretary has no access to the floor by means of a special report on his activities during the past year for which he should receive our special expression of gratitude, I propose that our appointed Resolutions Committee for this convention bring to the floor a special resolution to take care of this matter for our unanimous approval.

The second recognition for effort and work expended in behalf of our Conference during the past year goes to the Editor and to all of those involved in the publishing of our *Concordia Lutheran*, and of the booklets on the Church and Ministry which, in accordance with our last year's resolution, were sent to all of the pastors and professors and the C.o.L.C. and E.L.S. Their work is often taken for granted, even as is the work of our secretary, but hours are literally spent in making whatever is published in our Conference the very best available in legibility and content. However, these good efforts are in vain if that which is produced by our Editorial and Publishing House Committees is not earnestly read, especially by the members of our congregations, and applied to their Christian faith and life.

Here also special recognition should go to Mr. David Steinke, who, above and beyond the responsibilities of Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications*, has so faithfully and professionally prepared our official periodical for publication in its fine readable and aesthetic form during the past years and has now decided, with the conclusion of this fiscal year, to retire from this labor of love for the Lord and for our Conference and to give the opportunity to someone else to continue this important work. Our delegates to this convention must consider this matter carefully when the opportunity presents itself to vote for our Editorial and Publishing House Committees. Yes, we need men, who without any fanfare, are eager and willing to spend themselves and be spent for the extension of our Savior's Kingdom.

The Treasurer of our Conference also has quietly and efficiently performed the work required of him by our Constitution, keeping our congregations and the Board of Directors regularly informed with regard to the monetary solvency of our Conference and, together with the Finance Committee, providing a workable budget from year to year. The work of keeping orderly financial records for our Conference requires on-going accuracy, accountability, responsibility, effort and faithfulness and our Treasurer's efforts in this work should certainly be kept in mind with heartfelt thanksgiving and praise to the Lord.

Now, none of these men blow the trumpet to attract attention to themselves or to their work. They do not say, "Look at me and all the work which I have done and all the time which I have expended for the Concordia Lutheran Conference!" But they are men for whom every one of us throughout the membership of the congregations of our Conference can earnestly pray that God would continue to give them health and strength in all that they are called upon to do for

the work of the Lord in our midst.

In conclusion, I wish to add a small note with regard to the growth of our Conference. In the distant past, this concerned many people in our congregations who would ask, “When are you going to meet with the Wisconsin Synod, or with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, or with the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation, or with the Church of the Lutheran Confession,” thinking, of course, that such meetings would result in being in fellowship with a larger body. Meetings were, indeed, held but no larger union ever eventuated because of the inroads which liberalism, the toleration of error, and the perpetuation of false teaching and practice had made in these bodies. Yes, we find ourselves today, holding the old orthodox Lutheran position which is not at all palpable to modern Lutheranism and which only succeeds in besetting so-called conservatives with pangs of conscience which they seek to stifle in order to continue to serve their own bellies and not our Lord Jesus Christ and the pure teachings of His Word. We are no longer looking for any kind of alignment with those Lutheran groups which have shown themselves to be stubbornly heterodox, but we pray to the Lord of the Church to help us, and to do all that we can to find those who, by God’s grace, are one in faith with us and are not afraid or ashamed to teach, uphold, and defend the Word of God in all its truth and purity.

Our real growth, however, is not to be looked for in these efforts but in our own congregations—and the growth that we look for is not numerical but spiritual, not that growth which takes in members hand over fist with little or no instruction in God’s Word but that growth which comes from helping people thoroughly to learn and to know what the Bible says; not that growth which comes from lowering standards of catechetical instruction and memorization, but by helping our people to know what is plainly taught in the Bible as well as possible, to apply it diligently in their own lives, and effectively to defend it before others that the members of the congregations live neither in carnal security nor practice a dead orthodoxy. This is the growth that we look for in our congregations and every pastor knows that such growth is that for which he must one day give account—for it the Lord who adds daily to His Church such as should be saved and He does this only through the Gospel when it is properly divided from the Law and as it is set forth clearly in the full Word of Truth.

And as our congregations continue to grow in wisdom and understanding, in counsel and might, in knowledge and the fear of the Lord, through the diligent labors of their pastors into whose care they are entrusted by the Lord, so also will the God-given unity of our Conference be strengthened and our accomplishments enhanced. Certainly, numbers mean something in the eyes of the world and many church organizations wrongfully use their numbers to influence community, state and government. Let the Lord God always work in us through the pure teachings of His Word and we will see the salvation of our God.

Our Concordia Lutheran Conference, in convention assembled and in its work throughout the year, is not “child’s play” or “vacation time” for the members of our congregations. It is our earnest endeavor and prayerful desire that the work of the Lord may be done in us and through us, yes, in and through every member of every congregation in our Conference, man, woman, and child, in his appropriate calling and station in life. And through His Word alone, which we, by His grace, will continue to teach, uphold, profess, and defend in doctrine and practice, the Lord will, according to His promise, add to the Church daily such as should be saved! This alone is that growth for which we pray in the Name of Jesus, our Savior.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Paul R. Bloedel, President

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The Committee found the President's Report edifying, instructive and informative. We are gratified that President Bloedel made special mention of the faithful labors of the Conference Secretary, Pastor Mensing, who was also seminary professor in this year's course of studies; also the Editor and Business Manager of the publishing house, Pastor Stallings and Mr. David Steinke respectively, and our Conference Treasurer, Mr. Victor Bloedel. For all this we give thanks to our dear heavenly Father and for granting the President the wisdom and strength to perform the duties of his office, and for sustaining him this past year.

Everyone throughout the Conference should earnestly pray that God would continue to give him health and strength in all that he is called upon to do for the work of the Lord in our midst.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David G. Redlin, Chairman  
Mr. Lloyd E. Martin

### **THE INITIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES**

Based on the official credentials of delegates for the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference, the following are the officially seated delegates for each of our member congregations:

**Peace Ev. Lutheran, Oak Forest, IL** — Pastoral Delegate: Pastor David T. Mensing  
Lay Delegates: Phillip Martin, and Lloyd E. Martin; **3 votes.**  
Alternate delegate: Paul Steinke

**St. Luke's Lutheran, Seattle, WA** — Pastoral Delegate: Pastor P. R. Bloedel  
Lay Delegates: Robert G. Bloedel, and Dan Ellis; **3 votes.**  
Alternate Delegates: John Okomoto and Dan Bloedel

**St. John's Lutheran, Lebanon, OR** — Pastoral Delegate: Pastor M. L. Natterer  
Lay Delegates: Ron Lake, and Dale Peterson; **3 votes.**  
Alternate delegates: Paul Natterer and Dan Beugli

**Good Shepherd Lutheran, Tucson, AZ** — Pastoral Delegate: Pastor David G. Redlin  
Lay Delegate: Joshua D. Redlin; **3 votes.**

**St. Stephen's Lutheran, Wilmot, SD** — Pastoral Delegate: Pastor Mark W. Dierking  
No Lay Delegates; **2 votes**

**Holy Scripture Lutheran, San Antonio, TX** — Pastoral Delegate: Pastor E. R. Stallings

Lay Delegate: John Steinke; **3 votes.**

Total Conference Votes: 17

Friday Service Attendance on 6/26/98: 113; Friday Service Offering: General Fund: 622.20;  
Student Aid Fund: 20.00

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Dan Ellis  
Mr. Joshua D. Redlin  
Rev. E .R. Stallings

### **THE FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES**

The Committee on Registration and Excuses in this, its final report, sets forth the following data:

Six congregations were represented by six pastoral delegates, eight lay delegates, and five alternate delegates.

Total attendance at the Friday service was 117; total attendance at the Sunday service was 155. Total number of communicants at that Sunday service was 69.

Total offerings at the Friday service were \$622.20 plus \$20.00 for the Student Aid Fund. Total offerings at the Sunday service were \$1,824.43.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. E. R. Stallings  
Mr. Joshua Redlin  
Mr. Dan Ellis

### **REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

Dear Brethren:

Because the chief responsibility of our Editorial Committee is the production of the *Concordia Lutheran*, this always forms the chief focus of our annual report to the Convention. As has been stated before, our *Concordia Lutheran* is not merely our official Conference organ, but also our main missionary outreach. And since some of the articles are on the Internet, we are literally spreading the Word worldwide.

This being true, the theme of this year's Conference Convention, "*Here am I; Send Me,*"

coincides well with the work of your Editorial Committee. Even though our official periodical is disseminated by bulk mail, it also can be and should be handed out on an individual basis to persons we encounter who show an interest in the Lord and His Word. In other words, by using our periodical as a kind of expanded tract, something to pass on to others, we are doing personal mission work. While we should always be ready to give an answer with our mouth, what better supplement is there to our oral witness than something which we can give in writing to be taken home and read! Indeed, we encourage this additional use of the *CL*.

While all our Pastors' articles are well-written and doctrinally sound, we cannot comment on all of the articles submitted this past year. Nevertheless, we feel it in order to point out a few of our choice articles. The first three issues of the past Conference year set forth Pastor Mensing's three-part Convention essay, "The Nature, Exercise, and Preservation of Christian Fellowship." This served not only as a good review for our people, but also as a solid testimony to other church bodies on what real Christian fellowship is. Except for the May-June issue, Pastor Bloedel's "President's Column" continued the theme he started last year, "Every Pastor in the Concordia Lutheran Conference Preaches..." A particularly fine issue was the March-April issue which focused on the Lenten-Easter season. Our May-June issue contained a series of articles on the Ascended Christ in His three-fold Office of Prophet, Priest and King. And although we have commented in past reports on the "Around the World" column by Pastor Natterer, we wish to draw attention to this excellent column once again. As you know, the column sets forth various contemporary subjects or current events, and then gives a doctrinal analysis of such subjects and events. They are not only very interesting to read, but also very valuable for keeping us abreast of what is going on in the world so that we may be better informed as we witness our faith in the world.

There are two other matters which will be treated in greater detail in the Report of the Publishing House Board of Control but which also warrant attention in this report. First, our committee assisted in the review of the Conference documents on Church and Ministry which we sent to the pastors of the E.L.S. and the C.o.L.C. Secondly, we wish to express appreciation to Mr. David Steinke for his fine layout and formatting of the *CL* over the last several years. He has informed us that, as of this Convention, he will not longer be available to perform this valuable service. We are especially grateful that he made a point of providing a smooth transition by breaking in John Steinke to carry on the important work of the layout and formatting of the *CL*. The current May-June issue is a product of this transition.

As we consider the importance of our *Concordia Lutheran*, it is incumbent of us that we continue to pray for the Lord's blessing upon this missionary instrument of our Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor E. R. Stallings, Editor  
Pastor M. L. Natterer, Assistant Editor  
Mr. John Steinke

## REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL

According to our Conference Constitution, "The **Purpose** of the publishing house shall be to provide for the needs of the Conference so far as the printed Word is concerned in the interest

of advancing Christ's Church here on earth."

In conjunction with this purpose, your publishing house was given a directive at last year's convention to reprint two official documents, "How the False Doctrine on the Church and Ministry of the W.E.L.S., E.L.S., and C.o.L.C. Affect Other Clear Passages of Scripture" and "A Catechism on the Doctrine of the Church and Ministry," and send a copy of each document to each pastor in the E.L.S. (Evangelical Lutheran Synod). The reason for sending these documents to the E.L.S. pastors is that we were informed that they were considering a re-examination of their position on Church and Ministry. Before reprinting these two documents, Pastor Bloedel, the author of both, sent them to each of our pastors with the request that each document be carefully reviewed and that suggestions for possible reworking, amending, or clarification on any points be submitted. Upon the completion of this careful review by our pastors, Pastor Bloedel had both documents reprinted in the same booklet form as the originals. Some 150 copies of each booklet were made. Subsequently, the enveloped booklets were sent down to our publishing house in San Antonio for bulk mailing. Since our bulk mailing permit requires a minimum of 200 items and the E.L.S. has only some 80 pastors, we decided to print additional booklets and send them also to each of the pastors of the C.o.L.C. The total mailing was 212. Except for one pastor in the E.L.S. who wrote to inform us that he did not receive our documents, we have so far received no responses. It is our prayerful hope that at least a few men in the E.L.S. and C.o.L.C. will recognize and honor the difference between our Scriptural position and their own false position on Church and Ministry.

Due to the dwindling number of available copies of "A Sketch of the Doctrinal Position of the Concordia Lutheran Conference," last month your publishing house had 200 copies printed at Newton Printing and Copying in San Antonio. Here at the convention, each pastor is being given 10 copies to take home for local use. Otherwise, copies are available for \$3.00 each. So far, this document is the most requested from outside our Conference.

This past April Mr. David Steinke informed our Board that he will no longer be available to serve as Business Manager. His valuable services will be sorely missed in that David not only performed well the standard duties of the Business Manager, but also did an excellent job at his own expense in formatting our *Concordia Lutheran* for the past several years. For all practical purposes, David's work with the *CL* has made it possible for us to function without a salaried publishing house manager as defined in Article XII, paragraph f. of our Constitution. In addition, David was the possessor of the Scriptural Publications Home Page. The future arrangement of our web site will need to be considered here at the Convention. According to Pastor Mensing, the other pastoral member of our board, "the Scriptural Publications web site can easily be combined with a CONFERENCE web site."

Furthermore, as in previous years, your Publishing House made available to each of our congregations the Sunday School Lesson Schedule. Once in a while we encounter a scheduling problem. For example, this year Pentecost Sunday fell on a quarterly review Sunday so that the Pentecost lesson was scheduled for the previous Sunday. Otherwise, we always seek to have lessons on Christian festivals coincide with the festival Sunday.

As the work and responsibilities of our board seem to increase with each passing year, your prayers for the Lord's help and blessing are surely needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor E. R. Stallings, Chairman  
Pastor David T. Mensing  
Mr Ray Kusumi  
Mr. David Steinke  
Mr. Phillip R. Martin

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Dear Brethren:

***“Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth’s sake!”*** (Psalm 115:1). With this same humble cry of gratitude to the Lord of the Church for His gracious benefits to us, your chairman received and read a brief letter of only six lines dated August 13, 1997, requesting an application for admission to our Seminary. This letter came from Mr. Paul E. Bloedel of Seattle, one of the sons of Pastor Bloedel of St. Luke’s congregation. Paul was twenty-one years old at the time, employed in an optical lab in Seattle and, up to that point, intending to pursue a career as an optometrist. By God’s grace, however, his *spiritual eyes* were opened to a *greater* need; and he realized that, if our congregations were to have pastors for the future, young men would have to be prepared for the work of the ministry --a long and arduous effort, but one which had to begin without undue delay. With literally trembling hands, your chairman responded immediately and sent the application and other forms which he had just that summer been developing for the Committee on Theological Education in hopeful anticipation of just such a blessed day!

While it was over two months before Paul’s completed application would arrive on my desk as CTE chairman, there was no time to waste in tackling a staggering host of preparations in advance of his matriculation into our Seminary. The first of these was to arrange for a place for him to stay. Unfortunately, no one in the local congregation had a spare room to offer as a temporary student residence. However, with the approval of the Board of Directors, Peace Congregation embarked upon an ambitious plan to build a custom apartment into the basement of its Christian Education Facility, to finish it, and to furnish it in time for Paul’s arrival. The Conference, by authorization of the Board, picked up half the cost of this project, and the local congregation the remaining half. In addition, the voting members of the congregation pitched in time, talent, materials, and special contributions to a man; and what had just weeks before been a sketch on paper soon became a reality. Only three subcontractors were engaged: an electrician, a plumber, and an acoustical ceiling installer. By the time of the Fall Pastoral Conference, which was scheduled to be held in Oak Forest, the basic structure had been completed, and the only things yet to be accomplished were the installation of carpeting and millwork and the finishing of the bathroom. Shortly after Christmas, just prior to Paul’s arrival, the last of the furnishings were installed, and the key was ready to be delivered to the Conference’s first theological student in over ten years.

As the first-scheduled instructor on our peripatetic rotation, it also became immediately incumbent upon me to finish preparing my coursework outlines, studying ahead and re-mastering subject-matter I had worked through twenty-eight years before, fine-tuning especially my Greek, ordering textbooks and other materials for the student, and setting up a host of forms and templates for the smooth operation of the “business end” of the seminary. I also had to develop a viable schedule of theological classes in which also my regular congregational work could be

accommodated without compromising either endeavor. The result was an extremely tight balancing act. With my bi-weekly trips to Midland to serve the remote contingent of my congregation there, it was going to be a tight schedule for the pastor/professor. The student would not fare much better, what with study assignments, homework, and activities in his practicum. I was happy that soon I would be relieved of the chairmanship of the Committee on Theological Education and could concentrate on the rigorous task at hand. On January 12th, President Bloedel appointed Pastor Natterer to finish my term as chairman and kept me on as the second pastoral member of the committee. For the record, I should like to express my personal appreciation to Mr. Phillip R. Martin, one of the lay members of the committee and an elder in my congregation, for his invaluable assistance to me in many of the tasks I had to accomplish during the preparation period, and for his ongoing interest, involvement, and ready help to me as professor, in alleviating me of many mundane tasks which would otherwise have consumed many additional hours of precious time.

With all glory to God for His abundant, enabling grace toward our Conference, toward our student, toward my congregation, and toward me personally, I rejoice greatly in the privilege of being able to commit what I once learned to faithful men in our Conference, who shall be able to teach others also (II Timothy 2:2) and to undertake the ministry of the precious Word of God and the Holy Sacraments, *“that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God”* (Psalm 78:6-7). I now yield to Pastor Natterer for his portion of this report, covering the second half of the fiscal year.

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The Lord commands us, *“Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me,”* Psalm 50:15. Our dear Savior promises us with an oath, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you,”* John 16:23. There are some who would have us believe that these words applied only to the disciples and are no longer valid for us. But if that were the case, then there would be nothing left of the Holy Scriptures and we Christians would flounder hopelessly about. For *“if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”* Psalm 11:3. But thanks be to God our faith rests on solid ground. *“God is not a man, that He should lie,”* Numbers 23:19. He who has commanded us to pray, has promised not only to hear our petitions but also to answer them in accordance with His good and gracious Will. *“This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His Will, He heareth us,”* I John 5:14. The proper prayers of the believers have never, are not now, and never will be in vain. *“The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much,”* James 5:16. We have no righteousness of our own. We confess with the Apostle: *“not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith,”* Philippians 3:9. And we readily acknowledge with Dr. Luther that **“we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them, but that He would grant them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment...”**

Do we not have tangible proof of the efficacy of prayer in our Seminary? For a long time our petitions have ascended to the Throne of Grace, praying that the Lord of the harvest would send forth laborers into His field (Matthew 9:38). God has not only heard our pleas but He has also answered them. In His mercy and without any merit or worthiness on our part He has granted us a qualified student who willingly has accepted the privilege of preparing for the Pastoral Office, “the highest office in the Church” (*Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, Art. XV,

*Concordia Triglotta*, page 327). On December 31, 1997, our Conference President, Pastor Bloedel, appointed me to serve as chairman of the Committee on Theological Education beginning January 12th. Pastor Mensing's position as chairman of the CTE had to be changed to the *second* Pastoral Member on the CTE due to his responsibilities as professor of our seminary. At the same time President Bloedel also informed me that his son, Paul, would be arriving on January 9th to begin his seminary work at Oak Forest, Illinois under Rev. David T. Mensing, the pastor of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church. Throughout the past months Pastor Mensing has kept me fully informed concerning the excellent progress of Student Bloedel in all his classes at our Seminary. Detailed information will be given at this Convention by Pastor Mensing and Student Bloedel.

In April I was made aware of an inquiry from a student at Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne who expressed an interest "to know where and how you train pastors for your fellowship of churches." Unfortunately, however, when we asked for his name and address in order that we might send him this information, we never received an answer.

As the one specific recommendation of our Committee, the Committee on Theological Education urges the convention to renew the Student Maintenance Allowance of \$300.00 per month during the coming academic year, August 15, 1998 through May 15, 1999, so that our current student, Paul Bloedel, will have the wherewithal to continue his studies with ample resources for his needs.

May our dear heavenly Father continue to lead and guide us as we strive to carry out our respective duties in providing for future pastors in our midst for Jesus' sake.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. M. L. Natterer, Current Chairman  
Rev. David T. Mensing, Chairman thru 1/12/98  
Mr. Daniel M. Bloedel  
Mr. Phillip R. Martin

#### **INTEREST REPORT OF OUR SEMINARIAN, MR. PAUL E. BLOEDEL**

In St. Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 13, verse five, God tells professing Christians: "*Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves.*" Before deciding to enroll in our seminary, I performed one of these regular self-examinations. I knew that every Christian's highest love should be his gracious God; every Christian's most valued possessions should be his saving faith, and the true Word of God through which his faith is created, preserved, and continually strengthened; every Christian's greatest wish should be that he and all his loved ones will enter into eternal life with their Savior; so every Christian in our Conference who is aware of our urgent need of pastors for the future should fear the day in which God will take one of our current pastors to his heavenly home. This was certainly how my new man felt, and this had to be the attitude that I would strive after in my life of sanctification. I wanted always to have a faithful pastor, but I did not want this important office for myself. Probably like many of the young men in our Conference, the great responsibility associated with the office of the ministry seemed entirely too overwhelming for me. However, to have a faithful watching out for my soul and the souls of my family and close friends till the

end of my earthly life seemed to be a highly unlikely scenario without future pastors. This concerned me so thoroughly that I more fervently besought the Lord to bless our small Conference with some dedicated seminary students and to preserve His pure Word among us. Answering this prayer according to His own design instead of the design which I had submitted, the Holy Ghost prompted me, of all people, to enroll in our seminary. And, although being an overseer of eternal souls is still a frightening thought for me, it has changed from being a discouraging factor to one which impels me to study hard and learn thoroughly so that I know the revealed truths of God and am able rightly to divide the Word of Truth (II Timothy 2:15) in communicating His Word accurately and in applying it correctly (I Peter 4:11; Jeremiah 23:28).

The one-on-one instruction which I have received from Pastor Mensing in my first semester of seminary training has delivered the broad and thorough education that I had hoped to receive. My seven subjects were divided into 15 periods, which in theory last one hour each, and were distributed over five days of the week—Tuesday through Saturday. With my living quarters located only a 15 seconds walk from all my classes, I have very little time which is necessarily unproductive, and absolutely no excuse for being late to class. Not only is my room ideally located, but it is also very comfortable and quite spacious for only one seminary student. Great care has been taken by the members of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church to make my stay an enjoyable one.

The *practicum* work this semester allowed me to participate in the administrative, instructional, and operational activities which take place somewhat “behind the scenes.” As an observer, I attended most committee and board meetings which are chaired by Pastor Mensing and was privileged to participate in the discussion. After many weeks of close observation of the intermediate Sunday School class, I was given the opportunity to teach the class myself under the supervision of their usual instructor. I also learned to do many of the little things connected with smooth church operations such as the copying, collating, folding, stapling, and cutting of various documents for distribution in the congregation, posting the new hymn numbers each week, servicing the altar candles, licking envelopes and carefully depositing them in the mail box, and many other no-skill tasks which ordinarily cut into the pastor’s valuable time.

Though most of my time this past semester was consumed with my studies, I still had the time (or maybe I just took the time) to engage in a bit of extra-curricular activities. Through experimentation, I learned to cook—sort of. I often enjoyed the hospitality of families in the congregation who took pity on me and provided me with real meals and a relaxed family atmosphere. I was also able to get some much needed exercise by doing some distance running, and by engaging in competitive Ping-Pong games against the local challengers.

In closing I would like to express my gratitude to all my brethren in the Concordia Lutheran Conference for their support, primarily by their effective prayers in my behalf, but also by their loving service and by their ongoing financial support. We must also not forget earnestly to beseech God to bless us with more students to matriculate into our world class seminary. One young seminarian with five years until graduation is not going to be sufficient adequately to meet the needs of our Conference in the near future. The welfare of our souls should be of such importance to us that we do not let a single day slip by without pleading God that we never have a shortage of faithful pastors to bring us God’s holy Law and His precious Gospel—the power of God unto salvation.

“Yea, bless Thy Word alway,  
Our souls forever feeding;

And may we never lack  
 A faithful shepherd's leading!  
 Send workers forth, O Lord,  
 The sheaves to gather in  
 That not a soul be lost  
 Which Thou art come to win." (TLH 485, adapted)

Respectfully submitted,

Paul E. Bloedel, Seminarian

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

Some of the mission endeavors of our Conference during that past year are as follows: 1) Our Conference has continued to publish and disseminate the *Concordia Lutheran*; 2) It has begun to train a student for the ministry; 3) It has assisted in putting our Conference churches on the Internet, which has led to inquiries from several Lutheran pastors about our Conference; and 4) The Conference has also continued to support the pastoral ministry at St. Stephen's, Wilmot, South Dakota. And we recommend that the requested subsidy be continued in the coming fiscal year with the total yearly sum of \$6600.00 at the rate of \$550.00 per month.

In His Word, God has told us Christians to "*Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes,*" Isaiah 54:2. God has also said, "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,*" Matthew 5:16. What those passages mean is that Christians should use all their God-given manpower and resources to proclaim the "good news" to as many souls as possible—wherever possible. What those passages do not mean, however, is that we will become so engrossed in certain forms of evangelism that doctrinal standards are lowered; for instance, that we demand a more simple and modern Bible translation so that newcomers to the church can more quickly and easily understand God's Word; or that we drastically change the form of our worship service so that it conforms to what visitors from other churches may be used to and prefer (a more ecumenical type of service); or perhaps even putting aside our hymnals and singing the more popular Gospel music, so-called. Some Lutherans have tried these evangelism forms, and their doctrinal standards have been lowered to the point that they often are no longer Lutherans at all. God does not tell us in His Word the exact form of worship service we are to use, but Law and Gospel must be in the forefront of every service; and also in every class, for that matter. And when this is the case among us, then we are true evangelists, sincere missionaries. May the lay people of our Conference ever demand this of our Conference pastors! And may they and our Conference pastors also continue to stand firm in the Scripture teaching that not every Christian is a minister, as some Lutherans and others teach, but that each Christian can, and should, tell others in some way about Christ, the Savior of the world!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David G. Redlin, Chairman  
 Rev. M. L. Natterer

Mr. Ted Fitzwater  
Mr. Rodney Reyelts  
Mr. Raymond Kusumi

## THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION

One of the objects of our Conference as set forth in Article III of its Constitution is the **“joint effort toward God-pleasing union with other Lutherans, namely, such union as is based upon the unity of the spirit—full agreement in doctrine and practice on the basis of God’s Word (Acts 2:42; I Cor. 1:10; III John 8-9; II Timothy 1:16-18; Ephesians 4:1-6).”** To that end our Conference in convention assembled decided to contact the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations (F.L.C.) three years ago. The response we received was nearly a year later and asked for **every essay** ever written, **every CL** ever published, **minutes of every convention**, and the like. Despite this seemingly negative response from the F.L.C., it was decided to send them a copy of *“A Sketch of the Doctrinal Position of the Concordia Lutheran Conference”* in answer to their request. The president of the F.L.C., the Rev. Robert Lietz, assured your committee chairman that they would take up the “Sketch” in their pastoral conference and get back to us in the near future. We heard nothing from them for another year. After the last convention, the Committee asked Pastor Mensing, who lives near Pastor Lietz, and Pastor Bloedel, who has had a long-standing personal and telephone acquaintance with Rev. Lietz, to contact him and follow up on his promise that the F.L.C. would examine our “Sketch.” The contacts were made by both Pastors Bloedel and Mensing, and the meetings and phone calls seemed to be positive. However, it was discovered through a lay member of the F.L.C. that the doctrine of objective justification had come under attack in the F.L.C. by its president, Pastor Lietz. Upon discovering this, Pastor Bloedel called Pastor Lietz and confronted him with his perverted position of the cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith. While Pastor Lietz did not respond positively during the initial phone call, the word fitly spoken by Pastor Bloedel and others must have had its effect, for, by the limitless grace of God, Pastor Lietz began to re-examine his erroneous position.

In April of this year, Pastor Mensing received an invitation from the secretary of the F.L.C. to attend their annual convention in Sauk Village, IL. Pastor Mensing informed your chairman and, after speaking with President Bloedel, it was decided that both Pastor Mensing and Pastor Bloedel would attend that convention. (Your chairman was unable to attend due to recent surgery.) They did attend the convention, along with our seminarian, Mr. Paul Bloedel, and layman Mr. Phillip Martin. At that convention, by the grace of God alone, Pastor Lietz **recanted** and **repented** of his erroneous position on justification, and publically apologized for all the difficulty his departure from Scripture truth had caused. We give thanks to God that Pastor Lietz has repented his error and returned to the pure doctrine of justification and, knowing that all things work together for the good to them that love God (Rom. 8:28), may we look upon this door opened by God not only as a real opportunity to expand our contacts with the F.L.C. with the hope of an eventual face to face meeting with them to discuss on the basis of God’s Word areas of agreement and possible disagreement, but also as a warning to us all—that pastor and layman alike can easily be led down the road of false doctrine by a belly-serving prophet if we do not, by the grace of God, hold fast to the doctrines which we have learned (Rom 16:17,18).

Pastor Lietz, on behalf of the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations, in a letter to your chairman dated June 22, 1998, has requested that I read this message to you:

(SEE ATTACHED LETTER, p. 41 of these *Proceedings*.)

We give thanks to God in Christ our Lord for this overture from Pastor Lietz—and your committee does indeed view this letter as an opening or overture. Note the last thought expressed by Pastor Lietz, a thought we have oft times expressed to him: “*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment,*” I Cor. 1:10. It is with that prayer on our lips and in our hearts that we will continue our efforts to meet with the FLC to determine whether or not we can unite together in God-pleasing union.

Brethren, we ask that you keep this matter in your prayers and thus before the Lord’s throne of grace. We are so few. What a wonderful and joyous thing--and what a “shot it the arm” it truly would be if there are in fact others with whom we are or can be in true Christian fellowship and unity. As the Psalmist expresses it: “*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*” Psalm 133:1. May God guide our contacts with the FLC to attaining that unity as well as to lead us to others with whom we may also establish oneness in faith through our precious Savior. Amen.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Mark W. Dierking, Chairman  
Pastor David T. Mensing  
Pastor E. R. Stallings  
Mr. Robert G. Bloedel

**ADDENDUM to the REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION  
Letter from the Rev. Robert Lietz, President, Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations (FLC)**

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Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations

June 22, 1998

Rev. Mark W. Dierking  
Box 33  
Wilmot, SD 57279

Dear Mark,

***“O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever”*** (Ps. 136:1)

Since you are the chairman of the Committee on Lutheran Union, would you kindly convey to your upcoming convention the following message from me, on behalf of the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations: “We thank God for the four men from the Concordia Lutheran Conference (Rev. Bloedel, Rev. Mensing, Mr. Paul Bloedel, and another young man, whose name I cannot remember), and Rev. Russow, who attended our FLC Convention on Friday, April 24, and the three (the first three mentioned above) who were also present on Saturday, April 25. Furthermore, it was very profitable to have Rev. Bloedel, Rev. Mensing, and Mr. Paul Bloedel meet, on Friday evening, April 24, with Pastor Boyer and me (members of the FLC Doctrinal Committee) to discuss some matters of mutual concern and interest. We had hoped to have ready, by your end-of-June Convention, copies of the essay presented at our April Convention. However, we still have some proofing and then printing to do, but this essay, *Theses on The Justification of Sinners Before God Only Through The Gospel*, when ready for distribution, will be sent to you, the other pastors of the Concordia Lutheran Conference, and to whomever else you would want to receive copies. With the words of Psalm 119 as our confession, ‘*Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*’ (Vv. 104-1-5), let us, the FLC and the CLC, faithfully strive, without compromise, to bring to pass the will of God as set forth in I Corinthians 1: ‘*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*’ (V. 10).”

(Signed) R. J. Lietz

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## REPORT ON THE SEMINARY BOOKSTORE

Dear Brethren,

During the past year, the bookstore was able to acquire several good out-of-print books for the future pastors of our Conference. These books have been inventoried and catalogued and are now available for sale to seminary students and pastors.

The bookstore had some purchases of books this year with the arrival of our new seminary student, Mr. Paul Bloedel. Many of those books were used as text books in the current year’s curriculum.

Also during this past year, the bookstore has developed a computerized inventory of the books that are available. This list will be sent to all the pastors of the Conference once the latest acquisitions have been added to the list.

In cooperation with the Committee on Theological Education, the bookstore purchased some new and still-in-print books for the bookstore and seminary library. Some of these books were recent discoveries and have been helpful in the seminary program. The bookstore would encourage the pastors of the Conference to let us know of any books that would be of value to future students and pastors before they become “out-of-print.”

This coming year the bookstore is planning to solicit books from retired pastors by direct mail. With the help of the Missouri Synod’s *Lutheran Annual* book we will be mailing form letters requesting specific books and authors. This will give us yet another way to acquire classic out-of-print books. In addition to direct mail, we would like to put an advertisement in the Conference web page and the *Concordia Lutheran*.

With these new approaches along with our usual “book runs” to Michigan and St. Louis the bookstore is looking forward to a “bumper crop” of books for future pastors and students of the Concordia Lutheran Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor David T. Mensing  
Mr. Phillip R. Martin

### **REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE ARCHIVIST**

Dear Brethren:

This past year your archive committee has been busy not only with its basic responsibilities of compiling, storing and computerizing old text but has been involved with several Conference related projects and programs. This year the Archives Committee worked with the Committee on Theological Education in preparing and supplying materials for the instructor and student in our seminary curriculum. Out of print booklets and pamphlets were reproduced and used in this year’s course studies. With the help of student Paul Bloedel much of the material was proofread and reprinted and should be made available to the Conference brethren in the near future.

Your committee also worked with the *Ad Hoc* Web Page Committee in compiling and computerizing materials to be used for the proposed Conference web page. Much of the materials that were needed for the web page required the usual scanning, OCR’ing and proofreading before they could be added to the web page. Some of these same documents that are available on the web page will soon be available in print format.

This past year the committee upgraded its OCR (Optical Character Recognition) software which converts image letters into actual editable words. This new software is more accurate in the conversion process from image to text which has allowed us to scan more of the older convention proceedings that were too deteriorated to OCR in the past. We are looking forward to an even better upgrade scheduled to come out this fall which hopefully will require us to type even less material in the future.

Projects for the coming year are as follows:

- A. Completing work on converting the essays from the convention proceedings into computer text which can then be put into booklet form.
- B. Compiling a list and order form of materials that the archives committee has available for distribution and sale.
- C. Posting archive type material on the Conference web page, specifically under the “Archives” section of the web page.
- D. Reproducing selected classic articles from past issues of the *Orthodox Lutheran* and the *Concordia Lutheran* to be put into tract or booklet form.

The committee would like to take the opportunity to thank those who volunteered their time and talents this year for this Conference project, a project not only of benefit to us now, but to the future children and members of our beloved Concordia Lutheran Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor David T. Mensing, Archivist  
Mr. Phillip R. Martin, Assistant

### **WEB PAGE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Dear Brethren:

In accordance to resolution #1 of last year’s convention, the Web Page Committee has followed through and has now completed a draft web page for your review and approval at this year’s convention. With the oversight and approval of the Conference President Bloedel and Secretary Mensing, this committee has followed the suggestions and guidelines established by the Ad Hoc Committee in 1996 and the follow-up report of 1997.

The web page draft was begun this spring with the purchase of computer software which allowed for an easy design layout and construction. The page layout followed basic page construction found on many web pages on the Internet. The web page and its content were designed and focused for those outside our Conference, to make them aware of who and what the Concordia Lutheran Conference is about. With this in mind, the many historical and official documents of our Conference were gathered and produced with the help of the Archives Committee to a computer text format and then inserted into the web page.

During the design phase of the project, it was agreed upon that the Conference should have its own Domain Name, that is, a name or “address” by which our Conference could be found on the Internet. The committee settled on “**concordialutheranconf.com**” as the web URL address. The registration and yearly fee to keep that domain name costs \$35 per year. The payment of this registration fee and the subsequent yearly renewals will need to be discussed at the end of this report if we wish to put it on the Conference budget.

Right now the Conference web page is “up and running” at Orbitel Communications, a server that also holds the web page for Peace Congregation. The cost for using Orbitel Communications this coming year has been absorbed by our brother, Ray Kusumi, as agreed upon at last year’s convention. Beginning in June of 1999, however, the Conference will have to decide whether to underwrite the financial support of this web page or to discontinue it and also whether to continue with the same server.

For this year the committee recommends the following:

- A. To continue this *ad hoc* web page committee and that the President of the Conference appoint the committee members.
- B. That this committee be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the web page, and that all oversight of the web page will be the responsibility of the President and Secretary of the Conference. Any design changes, additional documents, or new page categories will also need the approval of the Conference President and Secretary.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi

Mr. David A. Steinke

Mr. Phillip R. Martin

**Concordia Lutheran Conference  
FINANCIAL REPORT for 1997-1998**

	----General Fund----		Student Aid Fund
	Balances	Budgeted	Balances
Beginning Cash Balance, June 1, 1997	\$ 30395.98		\$ 24312.71
Add Cash Receipts:			
Holy Scripture, San Antonio	660.00	600.00	0.00
Peace, Oak Forest	4200.00	4200.00	0.00
St. John’s, Lebanon	3105.00	3105.00	0.00

St. Luke's, Seattle	2200.00	1200.00	2200.00
St. Stephen's, Wilmot	0.00	0.00	0.00
Good Shepherd, Tucson	308.63	300.00	31.40
Interest Income	2392.66	1500.00	2298.72
1997 Proceedings	344.00	400.00	0.00
1997 Convention Collection	450.84	471.61	0.00
1996 Proceedings	241.50	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 13902.63</b>		<b>\$ 4530.12</b>
<b>Total Cash Available</b>	<b>\$ 44298.61</b>		<b>\$ 28842.83</b>
Less Disbursements:			
<i>Scriptural Publications</i> Subsidy	2500.00	3000.00	
St. Stephen's Subsidy	6000.00	6000.00	
Telephone Expense	1718.78	2000.00	
Convention Expense	1000.00	1000.00	
Travel Expense	2187.42	4000.00	
Miscellaneous Expense	1371.28	1500.00	
1997 Proceedings Production	469.70	400.00	
Seminary Bookstore	510.98	500.00	
Oak Forest Student Quarters	0.00	0.00	2000.00
Student's Travel Expense	0.00	0.00	106.00
Student's Moving Expense	0.00	0.00	340.66
Student's Support	0.00	0.00	1350.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 15758.16</b>		<b>\$ 3796.66</b>
<b>Ending Cash Balance, May 31, 1998</b>	<b>\$ 28540.45</b>		<b>\$ 25046.17</b>

Total Cash, All Funds: \$ 53586.62

Respectfully submitted,  
V. K. Bloedel, Treasurer

### REPORT OF THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS*

**Cash Balance, June 1, 1997** \$ 931.68

Add Cash Receipts:

Books and Tracts	\$ 25.00	
C. L. Subscriptions	804.00	
Conference Subsidy	2500.00	
Gifts	.50	
Sunday School Lessons	21.04	
<b>Total Income</b>		<u>3350.54</u>
<b>Total Cash Available</b>		<b>\$ 4282.22</b>

## Less Disbursements:

C. L. Postage	\$ 369.08	
C. L. Printing	2664.58	
Mailing Supplies	23.99	
Misc. Postage (Other than C. L.)	113.76	
Misc. Printing (Other than C. L.)	273.28	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<u>3444.69</u>
<b>Cash Balance, May 31, 1998</b>		\$ 837.53

Respectfully submitted,

David A. Steinke, Business Manager  
*Scriptural Publications***REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE**

The auditing committee, appointed by our Conference for the purpose of examining all submitted documents of both the Concordia Lutheran Conference Treasurer and the Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications*, have found the financial records of both to be accurate and complete for the fiscal year 1997-98.

We esteem our Conference Treasurer, Mr. Victor Bloedel, for being faithful, diligent, and conscientious in fulfilling the duties of his office with which he has been entrusted.

Likewise, we would like to thank Mr. David Steinke for his devoted service to our Conference as Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications*.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David G. Redlin, Chairman  
Mr. Phillip R. Martin  
Mr. William R. Lake**CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE  
FISCAL BUDGET ADOPTED FOR 1998-1999**

Cash Balance, June 1, 1998	\$ 28,540.45
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**1998-1999 Pledges and Other Estimated Income:**

Holy Scripture, San Antonio	\$ 660.00
Peace, Oak Forest	4,800.00
St. John's, Lebanon	2,800.00
St. Luke's, Seattle	1,200.00

St. Stephen's, Wilmot	0.00
Good Shepherd, Tucson	350.00
Interest Income	1,200.00
Proceedings Sales	400.00
1998 Convention Collection	622.20
<b>Total Pledges and Other Estimated Income</b>	<b>\$ 12,032.20</b>

**Total Cash Available for Budgetary Purposes** **\$ 40,572.65**

**On-Going Expenses:** **1997-98 Expenses** **1998-99 Budget**

<i>Scriptural Publications</i>	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 3,000.00
St. Stephen's Subsidy	6,000.00	6,000.00
Conference Archives Subsidy	500.00	500.00
Telephone Expense	1,718.78	2,000.00
Convention Expense	1,000.00	1,000.00
Travel Expense	2,187.42	4,000.00
Miscellaneous Expense	1,371.28	1,500.00
Proceedings Production	469.70	500.00
Seminary Bookstore	510.98	500.00

**Total Budget Adopted by the Convention** **\$ 19,600.00**

**STATISTICAL REPORT for Fiscal Year 1997-98**

	Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church	Holy Scripture Ev. Lutheran Church	Peace Ev. Lutheran Church	Saint John's Lutheran Church	Saint Luke's Lutheran Church	St. Stephen's Lutheran Church	Totals
<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>							
Baptized Members	38	44	94	88	88	19	371
Communicant Members	32	27	57	52	52	14	234
Voting Members	12	13	18	18	21	6	88
Children in Sunday School	3	10	20	22	27	2	84
Adults in Bible Class	15	25	38	30	50	13	171
Received by Transfer	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Received by Confirmation or Profession	2	1	1	2	0	0	6

Lost by Transfer	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Lost by Other Circumstance	0	1	0	0	0	2	3

**OFFICIAL ACTS**

Infant Baptisms	2	2	1	5	3	1	14
Adult Baptisms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Confirmations of Children	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
Confirmations of Adults	2	1	0	0	4	0	7
Marriages Solemnized	1	0	0	2	0	0	3
Funerals or Burials	0	1	0	0	0	2	3

**AUXILIARY STAFF**

Sunday School Teachers	2	2	6	3	5	1	19
Elected Auxiliary Officers	5	13	10	9	8	6	51
Organists	1	2	1	1	1	1	7
Choir Members	0	0	8	6	14	0	28

**PROPERTY**

Church Facilities <b>Owned?</b>	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Church facilities <b>Rented?</b>	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	Totals
Acreage (with or without buildings)	11	.42	3.2	1.47	.667	2.25	19
Value (in thousands of \$\$)	\$350	\$150	\$800	\$160	\$600	\$200	\$2,260

Number of Congregations: 6      Number of Pastors: 6      Available Candidates: 0

Respectfully submitted,  
Raymond S. Kusumi, Statistician

**RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 47<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION****RESOLUTION #1:**

**WHEREAS** Pastor Bloedel and Paul Bloedel gave of their time and talents in the preparation of two documents in booklet form entitled “*How the False Doctrine on the Church and Ministry of the WELS, ELS, and CoLC Affect Other Clear Teachings of Scripture*” and “*A Catechism on the Doctrine of the Church and Its Ministry*” for distribution to every pastor and professor of the ELS. and CoLC; and

**WHEREAS** the workmanship on these materials was of superior quality and done in timely fashion, bearing witness to the true doctrine of God’s Word on the Church and its Ministry before those who are in error;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Conference in convention assembled thank these men for their selfless efforts on our behalf.

**RESOLUTION #2:**

**WHEREAS** the Rev. David T. Mensing, in his role as Secretary of our Conference, Professor of our Seminary, and contributor of various edifying articles to the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* this year has demonstrated exceptional diligence, energy and enthusiasm in the performance of his duties; and

**WHEREAS** his work has gone far beyond the minimum responsibilities required of him by our Conference constitution;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Conference in convention assembled thank Pastor Mensing for his faithful service, giving all thanks to our Heavenly Father for preserving and sustaining him in carrying out these arduous tasks.

**RESOLUTION #3:**

**WHEREAS** Mr. David Steinke has, in his capacity as Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications* during the last several years, exercised great diligence and innovative thinking in the production of our flagship publication, the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN*; and

**WHEREAS** he has so faithfully and professionally prepared this periodical in a fine, readable and aesthetically pleasing form;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Conference in convention assembled recognize this special work and give thanks to the Lord for this labor of love and service to his brethren.

**RESOLUTION #4:**

**WHEREAS** our Conference Seminary has continued to enjoy the use of the physical facilities of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Oak Forest, Illinois, where our student, Mr. Paul E. Bloedel, is currently being instructed by our professor, Pastor David Mensing, who has so unselfishly given of his time and energy;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we express our thanks to the members of the congregation and its faithful pastor for their labors of love in behalf of our Conference as we strive together to carry out the work which the Lord has laid upon us.

**RESOLUTION #5:**

**WHEREAS** the officers, standing committees, and appointed committees have served our Conference so faithfully during the past fiscal year under the continued blessing of the Lord of the Church; and

**WHEREAS** our Conference Treasurer, Mr. Victor K. Bloedel, has served our Conference so ably during the past twenty-five years, utilizing his God-given gifts to the benefit of our Conference;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we express our sincere thanks to these brethren who have conscientiously fulfilled their respective duties in behalf of our Conference.

**RESOLUTION #6:**

**WHEREAS** the sermon delivered by our president, the Rev. Paul Bloedel, at the opening service of this 47<sup>th</sup> Convention, as well as that delivered in the Sunday morning worship service by Pastor E. R. Stallings, were found to be particularly edifying to the delegates, guests and visitors in attendance; and

**WHEREAS** all those in attendance received special encouragement and strength from the various devotions conducted by our pastors during the daily sessions; and

**WHEREAS** the convention essay delivered by Pastor Mark Dierking was especially timely and brought forth much edifying and instructive discussion;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the convention thank them for their edifying messages and the special devotions at this convention.

**RESOLUTION #7:**

**WHEREAS** the services and devotions were enhanced with appropriate music provided by Mr. Stephen P. Bloedel, the organist of St. Luke's Lutheran Church and Lloyd E. Martin, organist of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church; and

**WHEREAS**, under the direction of Mr. Stephen P. Bloedel, various members of the respective congregations of our Conference joined in the singing of a chorale which further beautified the Sunday worship service;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we thank these brethren for the use of their talents to the glory of God in our worship services.

**RESOLUTION #8:**

**WHEREAS** St. John's Lutheran Church of Lebanon, Oregon, has shown itself to be a most gracious host to our convention; and

**WHEREAS** the host congregation has so graciously provided the delicious meals served to all

those in attendance at this convention; and

**WHEREAS** most generous and sacrificial Christian hospitality has been demonstrated by the members of this congregation, making the stay of the delegates and visitors a particularly pleasant and enjoyable experience,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we express our gratitude to Pastor and Mrs. M. L. Natterer and the members of St. John's Lutheran Church for all they have done, by the grace of God, to make our convention a success and to contribute to our spiritual edification and our physical comfort.

Drafts of the above resolutions were laid before the convention by its **Resolutions Committee** and were

Respectfully submitted by,

Rev. M. L. Natterer, Chairman

Mr. Robert G. Bloedel

Mr. Lloyd E. Martin

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**SOLI DEO GLORIA!**