

## Celebrate Jesus



The Michigan District, LCMS  
2009 Convention

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2: 9-11

# The 99th Michigan District Convention

More than 910 delegates and guests gathered at Concordia University Ann Arbor on June 28-July 1, 2009, to Celebrate Jesus at the 99<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Delegates and guests were there to celebrate God's work and His presence among each other, build a sense of fellowship and partnership in the Body of Christ, be challenged and inspired for greater service, conduct official business, and give direction and provide vision for future mission and ministry.

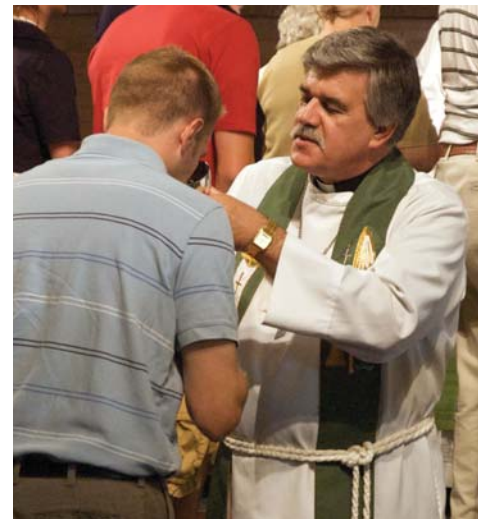
This year's convention theme, "Celebrate Jesus," came from Philippians 2:9-11. The convention logo, designed by Michigan District staff member Jenna Szpara, illustrated the verses with two figures: one with knees bending in worship and prayer and the other in a standing position expressing joy and praise at the foot of the cross.

## ● Worship

It has been said many times over the years that worship services are a highlight, if not THE highlight, of attending the convention. Picture an overflowing sanctuary, a procession of robed ministers, singing worshippers, banners filling the chancel area, the Lord's Supper prepared and ready on the altar, vocal and brass choirs, and music played by skilled musicians giving praise and honor to their

Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Perhaps it's a taste of heaven on earth, a glimpse into future glory.

Although the convention officially started on Monday morning, delegates prepared themselves for the work ahead by attending Opening Worship, at which members of the Praesidium and District staff shared God's heart through Word and Sacrament. Rev. Dr. C. William Hoesman's message inspired worshippers to continue to Celebrate



Jesus in a world that, "with increasing intensity, does not want to hear about Him." They were encouraged to "remain focused on Jesus and reach out even though we do not fully understand why the world turns a deaf ear to the Good News of Jesus Christ. Through us, Christ is brought to a dying world." An offering of \$4,604.01 was collected for the LCMS Armed Forces Project Barnabas. This project



equips congregations for the critical role they can play in helping military chaplains and other veterans during the readjustment period after returning from the battlefield.

Each morning, the chapel was filled with worshippers beginning the tasks of the day seeking God's direction.

Convention preachers included Rev. Hoesman, president of the Michigan District; Rev. Dr. Scott Sommerfeld, Holy Cross, Jenison; Rev. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, LCMS president; Rev. John Merrill, St. John, Fraser; and Rev. C. William Weis, Peace, Saginaw. Organists were Dr. Scott Hyslop, St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth; Irene Beethe, Immanuel, Grand Rapids; James Gladstone, Redeemer, Flint; and Dr. Thomas Strode, St. Paul, Ann Arbor. The choirs were under the direction of Paul Eschmann of Valley Lutheran High School in Saginaw and Walter Gresens of Faith, Grand Blanc. Matthew Wolf of Concordia University was the brass choir director. Soloists included Beth Folkerts, Diane Gladstone, and Neil Skov.

Convention worship was organized by Convention Committee Member Rev. Daniel Meckes of Faith, Bay City. Banners representing The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, the Michigan District, LCMS, and previous convention themes had been designed and made by the Banner Committee from St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth.

## ● Elections and Orders of Business

Rev. David P.E. Maier was elected as District President on the first ballot. Delegates elected four regional vice-presidents: Rev. Mark D. Brandt, St.

Lorenz, Frankenmuth; Rev. David A. Davis, St. Luke, Haslett; Rev. Dr. K. Frank Graves, Emeritus; and Rev. John M. Duerr, Hope, Warren. Other elections included Board of Directors members, Church Extension Fund Board Members, 2012 Convention Nominating Committee, and the Concordia University Board of Regents. A full election report can be found on page nine and will be published in the 2009 Convention Proceedings, scheduled to be distributed in early fall.

Orders of business included the adoption of eight new congregations that officially became members of Synod during the past triennium. They are Journey of Faith, Byron Center; Living Hope of the Bay, Chesterfield Twp.; Family of Christ, Comstock Park; Family of Christ, Imlay City; Living Word, Lansing; Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word, Rochester Hills; Trout Lake, Trout Lake; and Faith Tamil, Troy.

The convention received with gratitude “Partners in Ministry: Ethical Conduct for Congregations” and “Partners in Ministry: Ethical Conduct for Professional Church Workers.” The documents, originally presented to the 2006 Convention, were studied by circuits and congregations over the past triennium, and various suggestions were incorporated into the amended documents presented to the



2009 Convention. These documents were printed in Workbook I and can be found at [www.michigandistrict.org/pdf/whoware/WorkbookI2009.pdf](http://www.michigandistrict.org/pdf/whoware/WorkbookI2009.pdf).

Fourteen resolutions submitted by floor committees to the delegates were discussed and passed, three of them with amendments. These resolutions included such topics as stem cell research and professional church worker mental health. Resolutions can be found in Workbook II on the District website.

## Special Guest Speakers

Rev. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, president of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, brought greetings of God’s grace, mercy, and peace to those



assembled for the Installation Worship Service. He shared the extremes of ministry: the joys, the challenges, and the blessings of bringing Christ to the world. To the convention assembly, he gave the Synodical Report and offered a question-and-answer time to delegates.

Each day, Convention Essayist/Bible Study

Leader Rev. Dr. R. Reed Lessing inspired delegates with a Bible study of the book of Philippians titled “Developing the Attitude of Joyful Fellowship in Christ.” Audio files can be found at



[www.michigandistrict.org](http://www.michigandistrict.org). Dr. Lessing is director of the Graduate School at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

A report was given by Ray Zavada, Michigan District Vice President of Development, regarding *The Future is Now* in partnership with *Fan into Flame*, which purposes to plant churches, provide financial assistance to professional church work students, and support international ministries. Now in its early congregational phase, the campaign has raised more than \$3 million.

The sharing of a report from The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance and a Q&A were offered by Rev. Jon Brauner-reuther, Senior Assistant to the President of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Information on The Blue Ribbon Task Force can be found at [www.lcms.org/LCMSFuture](http://www.lcms.org/LCMSFuture).

## Fellowship

Interspersed throughout the convention were special times of fellowship such as the final evangelism rally of the 2009 *Ablaze! Torch Relay: For the Heart of Michigan*. This event, prior to Opening Worship, marked the third Torch Relay across the state of Michigan; more than 80 runners, fast walkers, and bicyclists spanned the 515-mile route in 10 days. Each evening of the relay an evangelism rally was held at a host congregation. More than 2,500 people attended these rallies. Gospel contacts were made through congregational outreach efforts and as runners connected with people along the route. Rev. Hoesman carried the torch into the final rally. More information on the relay can be found at [www.ablazerelay.org](http://www.ablazerelay.org).



On Monday night, more than 600 people enjoyed a festive Hawaiian luau-style pig roast complete with a steel drum band at an outdoor banquet. Over the course of the convention, several receptions also took place, including an ice cream social.





The Ministry Tent was alive with the Spirit of God from beginning to end. A rushing wind Sunday afternoon kept exhibitors busy protecting their displays, literature, and promotional goodies in their booths as they set up. A total of 50 booths and more than 70 people were registered as exhibitors, keeping the tent always humming with activity, especially conversation. David Paul Britton provided musical entertainment Sunday evening during the culmination of the *Ablaze!* Torch Relay as delegates and guests arrived and mingled for dinner under the big top. The tent also was the place for snacks. Hot pretzels and Keg Root Beer were among the favorites. It was a great way to Celebrate Jesus and share the ways the Holy Spirit is moving through our organizations and RSOs!

## ● In conclusion

It is hoped that delegates departed with thoughts summarized by President Hoesman in his address to the convention, as he shared: “There are pointed challenges as we chart and compass new and uncharted demographics, economy, and what has come to be known as the new normal. We carry with us the promise that God is with us as needs and opportunities may change, but the focus of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ into the lives of people who do not know Him does not change.”

Final thoughts in his address, he felt, were captured best by this hymn verse:

*Eyes upon our home above,  
thank and praise our God of love;  
Test the challenge and the vision  
of a world yet to be won,  
and with boldness and decision  
build on what was here begun.  
Eyes upon our home above,  
thank and praise our God of love.*

From the hymn text, Where the Swallow Makes Her Nest (st. 5)  
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## Election Results

### District President

Rev. David P.E. Maier

### Regional Vice Presidents and Ranking

1st VP - Rev. Mark D. Brandt  
2nd VP - Rev. David A. Davis  
3rd VP - Rev. K. Frank Graves  
4th VP - Rev. John M. Duerr

### Secretary

Rev. David H. Reed

### Treasurer

William Young

### Board of Directors

#### Metro West

Rev. Paul M. Moldenhauer  
Harvey M. Schmit  
Stephen R. Boergert & Chris Chauvin

#### North & East

Rev. Paul D. Theiss  
James C. Anderson  
Larry A. Bauermeister & Dale D. Gust

### Church Extension Fund Board of Trustees

Rev. Robert B. Appold  
Julian H. Petzold  
Joseph R. Carabell, James R. Saalfeld  
& David C. Vallie

### Nominating Committee

#### Metro East

Rev. Thomas F. Fischer  
Terry M. Davis  
Phillip J. Fluegge

#### Metro West

Rev. Daryl Andrzejewski  
Daniel W. Ramthun  
Philip M. Krauss II

#### North & East

Rev. Paul R. Hinz  
Kevin J. Hendrikson  
John Nutzmann

#### West

Rev. Scott G. Sommerfeld  
Susan L. Truog  
Carla M. Woell

### Concordia University Board of Regents

Rev. Paul R. Naumann  
John E. Brandt  
Ian W. Schonsheck & Tina Wilks-Putz