



## Dear Fellow Redeemed

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Post Convention thoughts continue to bring joy in reflecting upon the **98<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Michigan District**. The cover picture of this issue of *Michigan In Touch* captures the essence of our convention very beautifully. In the foreground is the altar at Concordia University Chapel. Most prominent is the representation of the Trinity in the words Holy, Holy, Holy. Rising above the altar and the banners is our Lord Jesus Christ, the very One who in John 17:33 shared the words, "I have overcome the world." Evidence of that wonderful truth unfolded under our convention theme depicted on the banner, "Celebrating God's

Faithfulness: Redeemed ... Refreshed ... Ready ...". Almost hidden, but if you look closely at the banner, you will see the top of the "125<sup>th</sup>". We celebrated 125 years of history as the Michigan District. The uplifting worship, the sessions and the fellowship all came together in our mutual love of the Lord and the commitment of all who planned as well as all who attended the convention.

It was particularly refreshing also that the weather cooperated! Previous conventions have seen weather in the mid to high 90s. The air conditioning in the convention hall was taxed but not overcome. All who attended focused on working together in a wonderful spirit. My heart is filled with gratitude to the dedicated delegates for their commitment, wonderful attitude and willingness to serve. The presentations by Dr. Lehenbauer on the **Office of the Ministry and the Priesthood of Believers** furthered our understanding of working together. His teaching approach to a much discussed topic in our church was greatly appreciated. Following his presentations there was discussion among all the delegates, and an opportunity, via the voting pads, to share thoughts and reactions.

This emphasis on building relationships was furthered by the convention's receiving of two booklets: **Partners in Ministry — Ethical Conduct for Professional Church Workers and Congregations**. The convention affirmed a willingness to study these documents, provide feedback and consider implementation in the life of the congregation toward more effective ministry.

Very much appreciated was the response of the delegates, via the voting pads, to a series of **ministry survey questions**. These survey questions covered various categories of our District ministry. Input was received which will aid in determining priorities and directions. These survey results are invaluable to the District Board of Directors and District staff in serving in the coming triennium.

As you will note in the following pages of this issue of *Michigan In Touch*, **resolutions** were considered and voted upon. In the days ahead, all the convention

resolutions will be followed through in planning for action. The convention authorized the formation of a Task Force to look at future conventions, inclusive of issues from convention preparation to convention length. The time required for worship, bible study/doctrine/essay presentations, resolutions, other presentations and activities will be reviewed.

The 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was celebrated in many ways. The 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Thank Offering "**The Future Is Now**" was unveiled. The Thank Offering first phase features contact with individual donors which will be followed by the congregational phase. The dual focus is to provide financing for planting new missions and financing for church work student aid. We thank and praise God for the generous and enabling commitment of the **Church Extension Fund** in providing for campaign expenses as well as the offer of matching funds up to one million dollars!

For me, the spirit of fellowship, cooperation and commitment to mutual ministry was a joy to behold. The delegates' attention to the presentations, their interest, their concerns and their discussion spoke well for our Michigan District. Thank you for that! **Thank you** also for the warmth of your love as was felt on the heels of the announcement of my reelection. The moment that particularly lives in my heart is that, as Barb was invited forward and joined me at the podium, you honored her. My heart was full. May God be praised for the privilege of service of these past nine years. While that time has flown by quickly, may God be praised for the opportunity He presents for ministry together in a new triennium. Your encouragement lifts my heart.

A final reflection is one of thankfulness to our District Staff and the Convention Committee. Thank you for honoring and appreciating the Committee as the convention began and doing so for the Staff at the conclusion of the convention. May we all go forward "Redeemed ... Refreshed ... Ready ..." to serve in a new triennium.

In Him with you,  
C. William Hoesman