



Dear Fellow Redeemed

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The final strains of the hymn-singing at the **99th Convention** of our Michigan District remain yet in my mind! What a joy it was to gather at Concordia to focus upon our Lord Jesus Christ under the Convention theme “Celebrate Jesus.” Philippians 2:9 states “God exalted Him to the highest place ... that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow ... and every tongue confess ... the glory of God the Father.” The Convention logo depicts a kneeling figure with arms open in a prayerful approach. The second standing figure shows thanks and praise for Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, and presence as we witness Him, reminiscent of Luther’s “... pray, praise, and give thanks.”

The Convention began with the completion of the *Ablaze! Torch Relay: For the Heart of Michigan*. It began its journey 10 days earlier at Trinity, St. Joseph. As the relay proceeded through the heart of Michigan, there were 10 rallies at various congregations that brought together over 2,500 people!

The Convention was especially blessed by the **Bible Study** led by Dr. R. Reed Lessing. His presentations, based on the book of Philippians, lifted our hearts in celebration of Jesus’ gift of our relationship with Him and each other that we would be an “inviting” group of God’s people. These studies and the worship services were among the highlights!

The first order of business at convention was elections. The **Rev. David P. E. Maier** was elected as the 15th President of the Michigan District. We thank and praise God for Pastor Maier’s ministry and pray God’s blessing upon his leadership. Our prayers also include his wife, Pat, and their family in these days of transition. Elected as Vice-Presidents, in order of rank as determined by the Convention, are **Rev. Mark D. Brandt, Rev. David A. Davis, Rev. Dr. K. Frank Graves,** and **Rev. John M. Duerr**. God has blessed many in

the congregations of our District through these men of God. We pray for continuation of that as their gifts are brought to District leadership. For all elected, we are thankful and prayerfully support them as they begin their tasks.

Other business included the acceptance and commending for use of the **ethics** documents. The cooperation of the entire District in the past triennium of studying, suggesting, and revising the docu-

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ments is a true joy. May they help to develop relationships between and among congregations and church workers throughout our District.

We are very thankful for all who shared resources in the **Ministry Tent**. This year, the Ministry Tent was on an asphalt parking lot rather than a gravel area! A report on other actions of the Convention can be found beginning on page six.

Special words of thanks are directed to all the **delegates** who were faithful in their commitment to serve in a spirit of fellowship. It was a joy to see the way the Spirit worked through

Convention Committees, the District Board of Directors, and District staff to provide a context in which we could truly *Celebrate Jesus* and His presence among us. I continue to stand in awe of God’s gifts to His Church and the way they show forth in willing labor to work together for the sake of the Gospel.

As the Convention and this triennium draw to a close, this signals for yours truly the conclusion of my fourth and final term. My praise goes to our Lord for His faithfulness throughout my tenure of service and **my thanks** is directed to all of you for your partnership. My words may fail to express the depth of feeling within my heart, but His words do not. Philippians chapter 1 says it best, “I thank my God every time I remember you ... because of your partnership in the Gospel ...” For me, the greatest joy as a new triennium begins under new leadership in the Michigan District is that we may be “confident that He who began a good work in us, will carry it on to completion.” Thank you one more time and may God be praised!

In Him with You,
C. William Hoesman