Dear Planning Committee Members,

Thank you for your part in planning a conference for the congregations and/or church workers of the Michigan District, LCMS. The time and effort that is spent by volunteers of the various conferences of the District is indispensable and probably immeasurable.

We have assembled the information in this brochure to help make you aware of not only by-law and governmental requirements, but also to ensure you are aware of the resources that the District can provide to your committee. We appreciate your help in complying with the policies and procedures of the District. In no way do we intend these operational issues to interfere in your dreaming, planning, and control of the conference. We need you, and we deeply appreciate your help.

Thank you again and may God bless your conference and planning!

**DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Michigan District, LCMS
3773 Geddes Rd
Ann Arbor MI  48105
Phone 734.665.3791
Toll Free 888.225.2111
Fax 734.665.0255
www.michigandistrict.org

Event Coordinator, Debbie Cameron
debra.cameron@michigandistrict.org
The event coordinator is your primary staff contact for the operations side of your conference planning. The coordinator is available and willing to assist you in almost any aspect of your conference, such as hotel and facility arrangements, contract negotiations, pre-registrations, name tags, and on-site logistics and registration.

Various District Executives
Your primary staff contact on the program side of your conference will be an executive staff member. If you are unsure who this is, please speak to the Event Coordinator.

Assistant to the President - Communications, Debby Fall
debby.fall@michigandistrict.org
Debby can assist you in developing a publicity strategy and timeline for your event. Along with her staff she can develop a logo around your theme and use all of the District’s communication channels including the e-bulletin, Michigan In Touch, and the District website.

VP-Finance/Business Manager, Chad Woltemath
chad.woltemath@michigandistrict.org
Assistant to the Business Manager, Donna Conrad
donna.conrad@michigandistrict.org
Donna is the first contact for incoming checks and payment requests. Chad signs all legal contracts for the District and has general supervision of the business office of the District. He can answer general questions about budget, finances, and policies.
ATTENDANCE/REGISTRATION/DATABASE
Online registration will be utilized for all conferences. Payment can be made thru PayPal or by sending in a check to the District office.

CONTRACTS
For legal reasons, the District must limit the number of agents that can sign documents on its behalf. The Board of Directors has authorized the Vice President of Finance (Business Manager) to sign general contracts such as hotel, catering, rental, and service agreements. The planning committee will choose the venue from their own suggestions or those provided by Debbie Cameron. She will then negotiate the contract on the committee’s behalf. The final negotiated contracts should list “Michigan District, LCMS” as the contract party and should be forwarded to the business office for signature. Liability, indemnification, and insurance clauses in contracts are becoming more tedious and often require both legal and insurance approvals before the District can enter into the contract. Please allow at least two weeks for the District to seek these approvals before contract execution dates.

DISTRICT OFFICE BUILDING
The District Office building is available for committee meetings and conferences that require meeting space for 25 or less. Contact Debbie Cameron for availability.

EQUIPMENT
The District has some equipment suitable for traveling to events and committees may request their use. Once the equipment is listed on the calendar for the event, it will be reserved for that group. Available equipment includes:

- Video projectors (various lumens and features)
- Portable video system (includes DVD, VCR, three computer inputs and video source switcher)
- Video cameras with tripods to record sessions
- Audio recorder to record sessions, will need input from soundboard or other mixer
- Video cable collection – with video cables up to 100 feet for connecting projectors and video system
- Portable wireless microphones (2), including lavaliere and “nearly invisible” microphones
- Portable Speakers (Fender System)
- 2-way commercial radios (set of 10 with battery chargers)
- Mobile laptop computer lab – with 10 Windows XP computers and wireless router
- Display tabletops
- Other: Televisions, Communion ware, Overhead projectors, Easels

Most hotels and other venues are able to provide microphones and speaker systems, podiums, and screens, but usually come with a high rental cost. If at all possible we try and negotiate to use our own equipment to save costs. Before renting something, please check to see if the District can provide what you need.

FUNDRAISING AND SUPPORT
All District committees seeking third-source funding (grants, gifts, etc.) are asked to communicate their intentions with the Vice President of Development, Ray Zavada at ray.zavada@michigandistrict.org.

PAYMENTS
Payment and mileage vouchers are available from Donna Conrad. Typical vouchers will request payment for honorariums, supplies, services, mileage for committee meetings (within the budget), and travel and/or mileage for the speakers.

SALES TAX
The District is typically exempt from Sales Tax in the State of Michigan for purchases from its funds that promote its exempt purposes. If the District is acting as a conduit for the funds (such as collecting a registration fee to pay for meals and/or lodging), then the source of funds for the purchase must be traced to determine the taxability of a purchase. If the funds can be traced to another exempt organization, then the purchase is exempt. If the funds are traced to an individual or non-exempt entity, then appropriate tax must be remitted for a portion of the purchase either to the vendor or directly to the State of Michigan.
HEALTH ISSUES FOR EVENTS
Committees will want to concern themselves with the health and welfare of event participants, in particular the professional church workers as there are many professional and personal growth goals that they address each year. Some of the issues your committee will want to address include:
- Balanced meals and provide participants with the opportunity to acknowledge restricted diet needs.
- Balanced time for learning, personal reflection, networking, and physical “exercise.”
- Expectation of personal “refreshment” as an outcome for each participant.
- For suggestions on how to apply these goals contact Parish Nurse - Kim Baker, RN at 517.610.8613.

GREAT COMPASSION MINISTRY
In support of the Michigan District Critical Targets (www.michigandistrict.org/about/outcomes), specifically “Great Compassion Ministry,” committees are encouraged to incorporate a service project into their conference to meet the needs of people locally, nationally, or even internationally. The event coordinator will provide suggestions, and the committee can choose the organization that they would like to support through an in-gathering of items collected at registration, conference service project, or offsite project.

HONORARIUMS
Honorarium amounts are a decision of the committee, but guidelines are often sought out. Committees sometimes use a rate of $80 - $140 per speaking hour, plus travel and housing expenses for speakers and presenters.

Committee members should be reimbursed mileage (60 percent of standard business rate) and direct expenses. The District will not reimburse volunteers or their congregations for time off work or substitute teacher expenses. Also, no stipend is to be given for service on a District Committee.

INSURANCE
If your committee has special insurance needs or needs a certificate of insurance for the hotel or host, please contact the Business Manager for the proper paperwork. Liability, indemnification, and insurance clauses in contracts are becoming more tedious and often require both legal and insurance approvals before the District can enter into the contract. Please allow two weeks for the District to seek these approvals before contract execution dates.

PURCHASES
The District has open accounts with numerous vendors, often with discounts. The staff would be happy to order supplies and other items on the committee’s behalf. In addition, we are often able to open accounts with vendors we currently do not have accounts with. Please contact Donna Conrad with requests for orders or accounts.

PUBLICITY
The Communications Department offers to work with your committee in forming a publicity strategy for your event utilizing the District’s communication avenues. These avenues include the Michigan Minute weekly enews, Michigan In Touch supplement to The Lutheran Witness, Michigan In Touch online blogs and community calendar (www.michiganintouch.com), Michigan District website calendar, and social media outlets. Services most often include online registration, email marketing, social media posts, and print products (registration postcard). Other offerings include developing event artwork, videography, photography, and electronic surveys and evaluation reports. Please contact Debby Fall, Assistant to the President—Communications for assistance.

EXHIBITORS
Vendors are sent an email at the beginning of the calendar year outlining participation options at upcoming conferences. Typically opportunities are available at regional pastors’ conferences, all pastors’ conferences, professional church worker conferences, and district convention. Rates vary depending on conference and venue. Exhibits are open throughout the conference per schedule established by the committee. Exhibitors may secure lodging at the venue utilizing the group rate. Meals can be purchased when registering at our cost.
Event Check List

This list will establish action items, along with answers that will guide you to set up a general budget. Not all points listed will necessarily apply to all groups.

Planning

☐ Set dates*
☐ Choose location and venue
☐ President notification
☐ Develop a general budget
☐ Theme - main topic, Bible verse, main purpose, target audience
☐ Choose speaker(s)
☐ Event agenda
☐ Develop list of committee assignments
☐ Meet with communications staff to develop artwork and publicity strategy
☐ Online event registration
☐ Additional information requested
☐ Online payment offered
☐ Tax charged or absorbed by committee

Publicity and Communications

☐ Speaker(s) biography and picture and Internet links to blogs/video/etc.
☐ Speaker(s) social media links (Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Instagram, etc.)
☐ Event webpage and online registration
☐ Online community calendar
☐ Postcard invitation
☐ Michigan In Touch in print article(s) and online blog(s)
☐ Michigan Minute Enews announcements and calendar link
☐ Email marketing
☐ Social media posts
☐ Videography and photography
☐ Copyright and legal needs
☐ Event electronic evaluation

Arrangements

☐ Contracts with hotel/venue and caterer
☐ Room blocks
☐ Menus
☐ Exhibitor details, including invitation and contract
☐ General session and/or break-out space
☐ Worship arrangements, worship folder and/or slides, copyright information
☐ Registration process
☐ Speaker travel and arrangements

Confirmation Process

☐ Will there be a confirmation?
☐ Will there be a separate confirmation packet with information for attendees only?

Pre-Event

☐ Final schedule and budget
☐ All print documents to be handed out at event need to be submitted to the District office two weeks prior

Event

☐ Registration process - tables, name tags, materials or handouts for attendees
☐ Finalize worship arrangements
☐ Speaker needs - equipment and material support

Final Accounting

☐ Honorariums - request checks from District one week before event
☐ Follow-up thank-you’s, especially if host is a church
☐ Pay bills (within two weeks of event date)
☐ Final reports and evaluations to District Executive

*If this is a District Event, check with the District Office to make sure the date is open and put on the District Calendar, then confirm the date with your speakers and your location.

Revised December 2013