

## **NJ DISTRICT 2018 CONVENTION OVERTURES**

### **Overture 1**

#### **To Ensure Timely and Transparent Financial Reporting in the Synod**

WHEREAS, A principle of Biblical stewardship is to be accountable with the resources with which one has been entrusted, as expressed in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14 ff.); and

WHEREAS, Much is required of those to whom God has entrusted his gifts. As Jesus said, “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more” (Luke 12:48b, ESV); and

WHEREAS, The Scriptures teach “it is required of stewards that they be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2, ESV); and

WHEREAS, The Synod has historically recognized its responsibility of accountability and faithfulness in the handling of the finances entrusted to it by its members, as is witnessed in Bylaw 1.5.4, “The Synod and each of its agencies shall fully disclose their financial books and records to any member congregation of the Synod;” and

WHEREAS, The Synod in previous conventions has expressed its opinion that such accountability and faithfulness be found additionally in regular reporting of such financial disclosure by adopting 2010 Convention Resolution 4-03, “To Broadly Communicate the Statement of Financial Position of LCMS,” which reads in its totality:

“WHEREAS, It is helpful to understand the Synod’s financial position and communicate it to the members of the congregations of Synod; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That each November, the Vice-President–Finance—Treasurer of the Synod use widely available means, (i.e., The Lutheran Witness, Reporter, the LCMS Website) to state the financial position of the Synod in a format easily understood by persons unfamiliar with financial terminology.” (2010 Convention Proceedings, p. 120); and

WHEREAS, The members of the Synod expressed even further the need for full transparency in all areas of financial disclosure by adopting 2016 convention RESOLUTION 9-04A, “To Improve Disclosures Related to Financial Gifts from God’s Stewards for Special Appeals,” which stated in part,

“... WHEREAS, Monies for special appeals requested by corporate Synod (e.g., following natural disasters) are reported only in part in Synod publications (e.g., Reporter and The Lutheran Witness) and sometimes only annually; and ...

WHEREAS, Donors and members of the Synod are interested in the impact of funds raised for special appeals and will appreciate improved disclosure of results; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the financial offices of corporate Synod continue to recognize the desire of donors and members of the Synod to improve processes of reporting and work to provide clear, timely, and transparent accounting for all funding and special appeals, so that the Body of Christ

may experience the joy of Gospel-centered mission and ministry beyond the local context or community.” (2016 Convention Proceedings, p. 189); and

WHEREAS, It was reported to the 2013 Convention of the Synod by the Board of Directors in its Report on the Disposition of Funding the Mission Recommendations (R6-03-01) that “the decline in the Synod’s annual unrestricted revenue continues...The board believes that congregations will respond through better, open, and honest communication about the great things God is able to accomplish for His kingdom when we work together. Numerous conventions have passed resolutions calling on congregations to maintain and increase unrestricted support for district and Synod ministries, yet the unrestricted support passed through our districts to the Synod has continued to decline at the average rate of \$1 million each year.” (2013 Convention Workbook 2013, p. 114-115); and

WHEREAS, In 2016, the Chief Financial Officer of the Synod, in reporting to the Synod about offerings received, stated, “This sharing from God’s bounty continues to decline. Although the amount of decline in the past three years has not been as severe as the average decline of the previous 20 years, it is still trending negatively. In the face of continued declining unrestricted revenues, the ability of Synod, Inc. to respond quickly and nimbly to mission and ministry opportunities and challenges laid before us by our Lord also declines, as does our ability to “fill in the gap” when restricted revenues, needed to fund much of our mission and ministry activities, fall short of their goals. The financial challenges facing our beloved Synod persist. I believe that these challenges are of our own making, a product of how we distribute the resources provided by our loving Father.” (2016 Convention Workbook, pp. 61-62); and

WHEREAS, There have been few tangible reports about the financial struggles of the Synod, such as the need to trim \$4 million dollars from the budget of the Synod (ref. July 7, 2017 Reporter, <https://blogs.lcms.org/2017/international-national-mission> and the May 19-20, 2017 Synod Board of Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4769>), these reports are less than sufficient to keep the members of the Synod regularly informed about the financial condition of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, It has been widely reported, albeit not in the official channels of the Synod communications, that the Synod has only minimal days of operating capital in its cash reserves, which would seemingly place the synod in a precarious financial position (ref. Paragraph 45, Financial Reports of the February 17-18, 2017 LCMS Board of Directors Minutes <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4659>), which stated that without funds held on behalf of the two Seminaries, Synod had only a 5 days of cash available); and

WHEREAS, In the face of such challenging financial times, transparency and regularity in reporting of the financial situation of the Synod is of upmost importance to the members and constituency of the Synod who have a vested interest in the financial viability of the Synod and who merit clear, concise, and timely reports; and

WHEREAS, The president of the synod recommended in his report to the Synod in 2016 that the synod have “Uniform Financial Reporting.” (2016 Today’s Business, p. 28); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Synod in convention direct the Chief Financial Officer to report quarterly in the Synod’s official publications about the financial position of the Synod in a format easily understood by persons unfamiliar with financial terminology, such reporting to include, but not limited to income and expenses, budget versus spending, cash reserves and cash position, etc.; and be it further

RESOLVED, That these quarterly reports include information about the regular Synod budget and the reporting on special appeals as stipulated in 2016 Resolution 9-04A; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod be shrewd managers with the resources God has given it; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Synod give thanks to God for the resources He has entrusted to us, recognizing  
“That the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (Psalm 24:1, ESV).

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-03)

## **Overture 2**

### **To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724**

Whereas the Texas District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, at its 2015 convention, adopted the following resolution: RESOLUTION: 02-01-15A

RE: OVERTURES 02-04-15, 02-05-15, 02-06-15, 02-07-15, 02-08-15, 02-09-15, 02-10-15, 02-11-15, 02-12-15, 02-13-15

SUBJECT: TO OVERRULE CCM OPINION 14-2724

WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries, notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

WHEREAS, Article III. 2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod identifies an objective of the Synod as to “Strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world;” and

WHEREAS, Article VII of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod states, “In relation to its members, the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and with respect to the individual congregation’s right of self-government it is but an advisory body”; and

WHEREAS, Article XIV of the Constitution states, “The Synod in convention may adopt bylaws that are consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod, which controls and supersedes such bylaws and all other rules and regulations of the Synod”; and

WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in Resolution 8-32B); and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally congregational in nature; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 09-2573 states in part that “. . . there is a common understanding that a congregation exercises its self-government . . . in carrying out . . . its own ministry programs and financial affairs . . .”; and

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any event; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy; and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 states in part, “Congregations may not send funds to mission societies and non-Synod entities for work in foreign areas without taking into consideration policies developed and determined for this purpose by the Board of International Mission as the only sending agency;” and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations and others to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the congregations of the Texas District and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Texas District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

RESOLVED, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Texas District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void and of no effect.  
Rev. Larry Krueger, Chairman  
Rev. Brian Hesse, Secretary

and

WHEREAS, The above resolution appears in the 2016 LCMS Convention Workbook as Overture 2-04; and

WHEREAS, Three other LCMS districts, three district boards of directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations also adopted this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Two other overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention that also requested that CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) regarding the CCM says, in part:

An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action.

(Emphasis added)

And

WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, No disposition of these overtures whatsoever is recorded in the 2016 Synod convention Proceedings; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the resolution quoted above be submitted as an overture to the 2019 Synod convention by the adoption of this, current resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be done in a fitting and orderly way” (I Corinthians 14:40).

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 1-04)

## OVERTURE 3

### To Overrule Board of Directors' May 2017 Resolution 12-14, re Bylaw 7.1.2

WHEREAS, The 2016 Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in its Resolution 12-14 [*“Regarding the Right of an Accuser to Appeal When a District President or President of the Synod Fails to Act or Declines to Suspend”*] and according to Bylaw 7.1.2, deferred its rightful and legislative authority regarding the development of ecclesiastical supervision bylaws with respect to and inclusion of the President of the Synod, the decision given to Synod’s Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14, in accordance with Bylaw 7.1.2, set forth a specific path and timeline for consideration, negotiation and counsel to be conducted with the Council of Presidents, with any proposed amendments to the bylaws to be reviewed by the Commission on Constitutional Matters and the Commission on Handbook; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 12-14 states that the Commission on Constitutional Matters in Op. 16-2791 *“has indicated portions of the expulsion processes of Synod’s Bylaws are presently in an unconstitutional state with respect to Const. Art. XI B 1–3 and Const. Art. XIII 2”*; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors, acting under Bylaw 7.1.2 and at the express direction of the 2016 Resolution 12-14, in May of 2017 adopted changes to the bylaws of the Synod regarding ecclesiastical supervision; and

WHEREAS, The Constitution of Synod defines clearly, precisely, and fully the supervisory role of the President of Synod, wherein the President of Synod has *“the supervision regarding the doctrine and the administration of a. All officers of the Synod; b. All such as are employed by the Synod; c. The individual district of the Synod; d. All district presidents”* (XI.B.1); and

WHEREAS, The President of Synod, as ecclesiastical supervisor, is limited in the exercise of said power, assuming *“only such rights as have been expressly conferred”* (XI A.1) [*“The officers of the Synod must assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by the Synod, and in everything pertaining to their rights and the performance of their duties, they are responsible to the Synod.”*], which are expressly conferred to be *“the power to advise, admonish, and reprove....conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod”* (XI.B.3); and

WHEREAS, Synod’s Constitution expressly confers upon the District Presidents the duty to *“exercise supervision over”* their district’s ministers and to *“visit and...hold investigations in the congregations”* (XII.7), including the District Presidents being empowered *“to suspend from membership”* their district’s ministers (XII.8); and

WHEREAS, Prior to the year 2016 and CCM Op. 16-2791, numerous CCM opinions [to wit Ag. 1970, Op.15-2750, 13-2669, 10-2581, 03-2354, and 03-2338, A and C] interpreted the President of Synod’s scope of ecclesiastical supervision do not include supervision over individual workers and congregations expressed in Article XII.7,8; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That Synod in convention, as the ultimate legislative body of Synod [Bylaw 1.4.1: *“The delegate convention of the Synod is the legislative assembly that ultimately legislates policy, program, and financial direction to carry on the Synod’s work on behalf of and in support of the member*

*congregations. It reserves to itself the right to give direction to all officers and agencies of the Synod. Consequently, all officers and agencies, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, shall be accountable to the Synod for all their actions, and any concerns regarding the decisions of such officers or agencies may be brought to the attention of the Synod in convention for appropriate action. This provision does not apply to specific member appeals to the Concordia Plans, which has its own appeal process for such cases.”]* considers the following to be steps to the resolution of this matter; and be it further

RESOLVED, That changes, subsequent to 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, made under Bylaw 2.14 “Expulsion of Congregations or Individuals from Membership in the Synod,” under Bylaw 2.15 “Expulsion of a District President or Officer from Membership in the Synod”, under Bylaw 2.16 “Expulsion of a President of Synod from Membership in the Synod”, and under Bylaw 2.17 “Expulsion of Individuals from Membership in the Synod as a Result of Sexual Misconduct or Criminal Behavior”, as a result of 2016 Convention Resolution 12-14, as adopted by the Board of Directors (May 2017) be overruled and of no effect; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Bylaws 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 and 2.17 be returned to and replaced by the same corresponding Bylaws as set forth in the 2013 Synod Handbook; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a Blue Ribbon Task Force of seven members, with four members appointed by the 35 District Presidents, three of whom shall be District Presidents, and three members appointed by the President of Synod, be authorized and formed to conduct a thorough study of the ecclesiastical supervision matter, including Articles III, VI, VII (studies of Articles VI and VII were previously resolved by the 2010 Convention), XI, XII, and XIII, and make recommendations to the 2022 Synod Convention, including any necessary revisions of constitutional provisions, with the purpose of evangelically resolving the current difficulty and division among us; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all relevant CCM opinions such as 16-2791, 16-2793, 16-2794, 16-2797, 17-2822, 17-2828 and 17-2836 be placed in abeyance until the 2022 Convention and any necessary action at the 2022 convention; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Synod in convention affirm the powers provided to the Synod President “*to advise, admonish and reprove...conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod*” do not include direct supervisory responsibilities of individual members of Synod, since such individuals are under the ecclesiastical supervision of District Presidents; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the convention pray for peace and harmony in the Synod as it moves forward in mission and ministry.

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

Somerset Hills Lutheran Church  
Basking Ridge, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 2-01)



## **Overture 4**

### **To Explore Consolidation/Merger of Congregations/ Ministries**

Whereas, many of our congregations are continuing to decline in membership and financial stability

Whereas, many of these same congregations and pastors are highly engaged in creative outreach, Learning Communities, Transforming Churches Network, etc and

Whereas, this dissonance of effort and results can produce high anxiety and so lower levels of creativity, and

Whereas, it would benefit the pastors to have a colleague to work with in a shared ministry, and

Whereas, our pastors are generally highly gifted in various tasks of pastoral ministry, but none in every task, and

Whereas, at every church closing, many of those current members fall through the cracks and cease attending worship,

Whereas, when a congregation and pastor is in crisis mode it is difficult to think beyond keeping the lights on, and

Whereas, we have many rostered and trained DCEs that were raised in NJ and moved back to NJ in a desire for the ministry in NJ but are unable to be called by our smaller congregations

Whereas, one of the roles of a district is to support current congregations and workers, be it

Resolved, the the NJ District explore, promote and facilitate ministry options for congregations to yoke together in dual parish ministries, combined ministries, regional parish models, etc, that would be served by multi-pastorates, deaconesses, DCE, etc so as to make full use of the giftedness of the church and be it further

Resolved, that the NJ District help congregations in developing creative ways to manage the resource of land and facilities, including the sale of said properties so that the current congregation could continue and thrive in a new way.

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 1-03)

## **Overture 5**

### **To Adopt Data Privacy Best Practices**

WHEREAS, The District and Synod collect personal identity and contact information from convention delegates and from those who vote for President of Synod; and

WHEREAS, Best practices for data privacy include the safeguarding of such personal information, its use only in the official conduct of business, and strict limitations on its disclosure; and

WHEREAS, Our delegates in convention take positions at odds with the culture, making disclosure of their personal information a security concern. For example, the Family Research Council in DC and donors to California Prop 8 were attacked professionally and personally for the same positions on marriage that our delegates enacted in 2016 14-02A, 14-03A, and 14-04; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3 now prohibits non-official use or distribution of the list of congregation-selected voters for President of Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Synod openly publishes the street addresses of national delegates as part of the Convention Workbook, which is posted on the Internet and easily downloaded; and

WHEREAS, The Secretary of Synod's office sells copies of this list to interested parties, which use them mainly for political ends. In 2016, some of those distributions disclosed national delegate e-mail addresses without consent; and

WHEREAS, LCMS districts have used their access to voters lists to send advocacy-type mailings and e-mails directly to those who vote for synod officials; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District affirms its commitment to data privacy best practices, including protection of identity and contact information for its district convention delegates, and the use or distribution of that information only for official business and with consent of the persons involved; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District adopts a practice, consistent with LCMS Bylaw 3.12.2.3, which prohibits its use of private voter contact information in connection with synod-level elections; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt practices that stop the public disclosure of delegate street addresses and require prior consent for any distribution of their personal contact information.

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-02)

**Overture 6**  
**To have the District President Serve as a Part Time Position**

WHEREAS, the New Jersey District of the LCMS encompasses the smallest geographic area of the districts of the LCMS, and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey District has the second fewest number of congregations (54 NJ, 53 SELC, 9619 communicant NJ, 12376 communicant SELC), and

WHEREAS, congregational financial support has decreased to the point at which the district must use savings, and continued sale of closed church properties to maintain the current level of spending at a district level, and

WHEREAS, larger districts both geographically (SELC, encompasses 11 states and 2 Canadian provinces) and in number (Oklahoma, 82 congregations) are served by part-time district presidents who regularly also serve as parish pastor, and

WHEREAS, the NJ District has also allowed for the district president to serve as a parish pastor, and

WHEREAS, it would be of best stewardship of the resources that God has entrusted to the churches and the district to consider how other districts have organized themselves to best accomplish the mission of the church, and

WHEREAS, pastors have been called in to pastoral congregational ministry and the church would lose a great resource to remove these men from the congregational ministry to serve as solely a DP, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey District President be a part-time position, both in time and compensation, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the NJ DP be allowed to serve a congregation as pastor.

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 3-01)

## **Overture 7**

### **To Engage in Ministry to Transgendered Persons**

WHEREAS, All persons are created in God’s image and are made to glorify Him ([Genesis 1:27](#); [Isaiah 43:7](#)); and

WHEREAS, God’s design was the creation of two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female ([Genesis 1:27](#); [Matthew 19:4](#); [Mark 10:6](#);) which designate the fundamental distinction that God has embedded in the very biology of the human race; and

WHEREAS, Distinctions in masculine and feminine as ordained by God are part of the created order and should find expression in every human heart ([Genesis 2:18, 21–24](#); [1 Corinthians 11:7–9](#); [Ephesians 5:22–33](#); [1 Timothy 2:12–14](#)); and

WHEREAS, The Fall of man into sin and God’s subsequent curse have introduced brokenness and futility into God’s good creation ([Genesis 3:1–24](#); [Romans 8:20](#)); and

WHEREAS, According to a 2016 study from the UCLA School of Law, about 1.4 million Americans identify as transgender; and

WHEREAS, Transgenderism differs from hermaphroditism or intersexualism in that the sex of the individual is not biologically ambiguous but psychologically ambiguous; and

WHEREAS, The state of New Jersey prohibits licensed counselors from any attempt to change a child’s “gender expression”; and

WHEREAS, the church does not have a good history at ministering to transgendered persons often due to our uncomfortability with the topic or harsh, unloving, hypocritical manner in which we speak to them often while refusing to speak publicly against other sexual sins such as divorce, remarriage, pornography, sexual harassment, coarse language, etc, and

WHEREAS, the CTCR has produced a 2014 paper entitled, “Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria in Christian Perspective” which begins to address this topic; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the NJ District in convention affirm God’s good design that gender identity is determined by biological sex and not by one’s self-perception—a perception which is often influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God’s design ([Ephesians 4:17–18](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commend the CTCR for their current work and request they produce a full study on practical ministry to transgendered persons, and be it

RESOLVED, That we grieve the reality of human fallenness which can result in such biological manifestations as intersexuality or psychological manifestations as gender identity confusion and point all to the hope of the redemption of our bodies in Christ ([Romans 8:23](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we extend love and compassion to those whose sexual self-understanding is shaped by a distressing conflict between their biological sex and their gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we invite all transgender persons to trust in Christ and to experience renewal in the Gospel ([1 Timothy 1:15–16](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we love our transgender neighbors, seek their good always, welcome them to our churches and, as they repent and believe in Christ, receive them into church membership ([2 Corinthians 5:18–20](#); [Galatians 5:14](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we regard our transgender neighbors as image-bearers of God and therefore condemn acts of abuse or bullying committed against them; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we oppose efforts to alter one's bodily identity (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgery) to refashion it to conform with one's perceived gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we continue to oppose steadfastly all efforts by any governing official or body to validate transgender identity as morally praiseworthy ([Isaiah 5:20](#)); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our love for the Gospel and urgency for the Great Commission must include declaring the whole counsel of God, proclaiming what Scripture teaches about God's design for us as male and female persons created in His image and for His glory ([Matthew 28:19–20](#); [Acts 20:27](#); [Romans 11:36](#)).

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary  
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 4-03)

## **Overture 8**

### **To Combat Racism within the Church and Society**

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches, “God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,” (Acts 17:26); and

WHEREAS, All people are created in the same image of God, no matter what human distinguishing identifiers might be (Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6; cf. Acts 17:25, 26) and

WHEREAS, central to the doctrine of creation is the truth of the equal value of all humans grounded in the unsurpassable worth that God places in them, demonstrated by the unsurpassable price he paid for each individual person, and

WHEREAS, In Jesus, God became a human and so identifies fully with every human (Hebrews 2:17), not only Israel but all of humanity and that his mission embraces all of humankind (Matt. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38), and

WHEREAS, Any claim that there is something about the nature of another human being as such that renders that person to be of inferior value not only denies the biblical doctrine of creation, but also calls into question what the Scriptures teach about the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As a human, Jesus descended from Adam, whom God created (Luke 3:38), and whom all human beings have as progenitor. To deny the full humanity of any fellow human being is at the same time to compromise the apostolic truth that in Christ “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col. 2:9), that is, that he truly “was made man” (Nicene Creed).

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ has removed all barriers between all human beings, making peace through His cross (Eph. 2:13-16), and

WHEREAS, The Apostle Peter said, “God doesn’t show favoritism, but in every nation the person who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him” (Acts 10:34–35); and

WHEREAS, The Book of Concord teaches that all Christians will make the will of Christ supreme in their own lives and in human society, and so opposing all forms of racism (AC Ap V 1-3, )

WHEREAS, ““That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself,” Dr. Martin Luther wrote in the Large Catechism, is “really your God.” “If any one boasts,” he continued, “of great learning, wisdom, power, prestige, family, and honor, and trusts in them, he also has a god, but not the one, true God.” If anyone should claim superiority over others and treat them as inferior because of racial origin or characteristics, we may add, that person, too, has a god, but not the one true God. Racism is at its core idolatry

WHEREAS, racism in the church poisons and cripples all sincere efforts “to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). and physical characteristics or cultural customs are made to serve as “a dividing wall of hostility” that separates brothers and sisters in Christ—to which the only appropriate response must be “Is Christ divided?” (1 Cor. 1:13). Racism in the church, in its essence, is a blatant denial of the unity of the body of Christ, into which all who have been baptized into his name have been incorporated: “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13), and

WHEREAS, Foremost in the list of “the fruit of the Spirit,” which is to characterize the life of those who have been set free from the tyranny of their sinful flesh, is love (Gal. 5:22; cf. 5:13-26). The “new commandment” given by Jesus to his disciples is that they love one another as he has loved them, for “by this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35; cf. 1 John 2:8-11; 4:20-5:3; Phil. 2: 4-5)

The law of love cannot be made an excuse for respect of persons. That is to say, keeping one precept of the law does not give one license to disobey the full requirements of the law of love. James says, “If you really fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors” (James 2:8-9), and

WHEREAS, in white nationalist/separatist, alt-right, Evropa Identity, etc the worth of an individual or group as determined principally by genetic origins, biological characteristics, or cultural heritage, race is the primary basis for drawing conclusions about the comparative worth of an individual,

(cf. Ayn Rand, “Any white person who brought the element of civilization had the right to take over this continent”, To graduating class of West Point, 1974;

“Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.. look with confidence to the ultimate universal acknowledgement of the truths upon which our system rests? It is the first government ever instituted upon the principles in strict conformity to nature, and the ordination of Providence, in furnishing the materials of human society. Many governments have been founded upon the principle of the subordination and serfdom of certain classes of the same race; such were and are in violation of the laws of nature. Our system commits no such violation of nature's laws.” Alexander Stevens, Vice President to the Confederacy, “Cornerstone Address” March 21, 1861;

“To be white is to be a striver, a crusader, an explorer and a conqueror. We build, we produce, we go upward ... For us, it is conquer or die. This is a unique burden for the white man, that our fate is entirely in our hands. And it is appropriate because within us, within the very blood in our veins as *Children of the Sun*, lies the potential for greatness. That is the great struggle we are called to. We are not meant to live in shame and weakness and disgrace. We were not meant to beg for moral validation from some of the most despicable creatures to ever populate the planet. We were meant to overcome—overcome all of it. Because that is natural and normal for us. Because for us, as Europeans, it is only normal again when we are great again...the concepts that are now designated “problematic” and associated with whiteness—power, strength, beauty, agency, accomplishment. Whites do and other groups don’t ... We don’t exploit other groups. We don’t gain anything from their presence. They need us, and not the other way around.” Richard Spencer, Hail Trump Speech, November 2016 )

WHEREAS, Christians of differing national or ethnic origins must not claim Christ as exclusively their own, as if to say that their view of him most closely approximates the biblical portrayal of him.

WHEREAS, the Synod in convention has passed the following resolutions



- 1971 — Res. 9-32:** To Encourage Christian Action to Combat Racism  
**1973 — Res. 9-22:** To Continue Efforts to Combat Racism  
**1977 — Res 10-18A:** To Make Every Effort to Eliminate Racism  
**1979 — Res 4-11:** To Reaffirm Efforts to Combat Racism  
**1981 — Res 8-07:** To Oppose Racism and Violence  
**1983 — Res 3-09:** To Clarify Position on Anti-Semitism  
**1992 — Res 3-03:** To Combat All Racism  
**1995 — Res 2-05A:** To Commend for Study the CTCR Document *Racism and the Church*, and

WHEREAS, As the 1992 resolution states, racism is contrary to God's Word and a sin against Him. Synod by-law 2.3.1 (a) states:

"It shall be the policy of the Synod to decline membership to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or other congregational privileges to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin."

WHEREAS, Racism and white supremacy are present all over the world in various white supremacist movements known as "white nationalism" or "alt-right"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey District of the LCMS, denounce every form of racism, including alt-right white supremacy, white separatists, British Israelism, Evropa Identity as antithetical to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and be it further,

RESOLVED, That we denounce and repudiate white supremacy and every form of racial and ethnic hatred as a scheme of the devil intended to bring further suffering and division to the world and to hinder the Gospel; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we earnestly pray, both for those who advocate racist ideologies and those who are thereby deceived, that they may see their error through the light of the Gospel, repent and come to know the peace and love of Christ through redeemed fellowship in the Kingdom of God, which is established from every nation, tribe, people, and language. and be it further

RESOLVED, to reaffirm the resolution the Synod in convention of 1992, "It shall be the policy of the Synod to decline membership to congregations whose constitutions deny membership or other congregational privileges to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin." and be it finally

RESOLVED, that it shall be the policy of the New Jersey District of the LCMS to deny membership any member of Synod who espouses racists ideology as is found in white nationalist/separatists, etc. groups, and to suspend membership any member who refuses to repent of such ideology as it denies the Confessions to which we are to all subscribe.

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Somerset, NJ

( Refer to Resolution 4-02)

## **Overture 9**

### **ASSISTING CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH**

**Whereas** Congregations need to find creative ways to engage their communities,

**Whereas** many people in the community know little about the local Lutheran Church

**Whereas** the need is for members to interact with community residents in caring ways

**Whereas** in many Church budgets there is limited money available for much needed projects,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the New Jersey District establish a fund to assist Congregations with “seed” money to impact their communities. The Fund’s oversight would be the responsibility of the Outreach Council. Congregations would submit a request, including a description of their activity, start date, people who will put the plan into action, desired results and date of conclusion, followed by a final report presented to the Outreach Council. The Outreach Council, once receiving a request will first get the “go ahead” from the BOD, before final approval. The results were shared with the District through the Grapevine and Servant to Servant.

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

NJ District Outreach Council

(Refer to Resolution 1-01)

## Overture 10

### GREAT COMMISSION INITIATIVE!

**Whereas** Jesus clearly states His purpose “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10) and whereas with absolute conviction we belief, teach and confess that only trust in the Lord Jesus is the only answer to the question “what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:31)

**Whereas** the Mission Statement of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod reads, “In grateful response to God’s grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of The LCMS is vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world.”

**Whereas** Jesus plainly commissioned His disciples to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19) never telling the world to go to Church but for His church to go to the world.

**Whereas** Jesus unmistakably teaches “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

**Whereas** St. Peter emphatically confessed “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

**Whereas** St. Paul undeniably taught “All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

**Whereas** we hold firmly to Scriptures teaching, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God!” (Ephesians 2:8) And again, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift. (Romans 3:23,24)

**Whereas** it is evidently clear that part of the phenomenal growth of the early Church was the people’s amazement, seeing how they loved one another reminding us that we love because we are first loved. (1 John 4:19)

**Whereas** St Paul warns us that “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly place, (Ephesians 6:12). There is no doubt that Satan wants to keep people out of church, and if he can’t keep them out, he wants to get them out, and if he can’t keep them out or get them out, he will work to render the church ineffective.

**Whereas** churches are not impacting their communities with the Gospel as shown by a sharp decrease in disciple-making and the spiritual apathy of some who confess that Jesus is both Savior and Lord.

**Whereas** wide spread Biblical illiteracy has added to the lack of concern for those who do not know Christ.

**Whereas** 80+% of Congregations in the United States are at best plateau or in a state of decline.

**Whereas**, according to some recent studies, only 4% of the young people in the United States are presently involved in any religious instruction.

**Whereas** for today's church, the "Body of Christ" to attract people from today's society, people within the world's society must begin to see a clear difference between people who confess Christ and those who do not! St Paul urges us "to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called..." (Ephesians 4:1)

**Whereas** when you "google" "why are Christians so..." among the top ten answers are "critical, judgmental, and unloving."

**Whereas** we no longer live in a church culture, but in a culture that is hostile towards the church, no longer allowing God in our schools, business, and places of public gatherings.

**Whereas** non-churched people don't have the same appreciation for our creeds, confessions and traditions until they know we really care about them as people and not simply as "numbers" to add to our roles.

**Whereas** effective and persuasive witness demands the unity of the Church.

**Whereas** the LCMS and its Congregations firmly confess that we are justified by faith through grace and boldly profess that we are "not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes..." (Romans 1:16)

**Whereas** our mission is to love the world God loves, and to welcome "sinners" (Luke 15:2) To love others as Christ does, necessitates that we find way to include people and not erect barriers to keep them out.

**Whereas** St. Paul "vigorously" teaches that those whom God has called are "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11-16)

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that ignoring Christ's command "to go" and to "seek and save the lost" is not acceptable, and that the excuses we use for not sharing Christ's love and sacrifice in our communities is more of the devil and does not witness to how big and great and strong is our God.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that every Congregation, which God has strategically placed throughout the State of New Jersey, rededicate themselves to join with Jesus in mission as "ambassadors for Christ," finding ways to effectively and courageously engage their respective communities.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that by the Spirit's guidance each Congregation will intentionally set realistic but challenging goals to impact and engage their communities by first studying and better understanding the demographics of their communities towards the goal of being the best church for their community. (LCEF has an excellent resource, "Mission-in-site")

**BE IT RESOLVED** that each of our Congregations will hold at least three net fishing events before Ash Wednesday, 2019, mutually sharing their experiences both with churches of their Circuit and District.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that because we are called to be "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) and directed to "let our lights shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven," (Matthew 5:16) that we respectfully request all Circuit Visitors to encourage the congregations of their Circuits to be more incarnational and missional, reporting at their respective Circuit meetings the efforts of each Congregation and sharing the results with the Outreach Council of the District.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that we come to a better understanding of what God is already doing in our communities, reminding ourselves that we “are not on mission for Jesus, but rather with Jesus,” knowing that the Head of the Church graciously invites us to join Him in mission, promising to come alongside of us through the power, wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Outreach Council and other member Congregations of the New Jersey District will aid and support those Congregations that are requesting assistance as to “where to begin?” and “how do we get started?” and “what sources are available?”

**BE IT RESOLVED** that all congregations of the New Jersey District will use their God given creativity to impact their communities with the love of God, and to adaptively find ways to “Lift high the Cross” in the marketplace.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the congregations of the New Jersey District will give prayerful and financial support to our missionaries working within the District in the areas of Church plants, Urban Ministry, and restarts.

**AND FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Congregations of the New Jersey commit themselves to hastening the day when “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 5:10-11)

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

NJ District Outreach Council

(Refer to Resolution 1-02)

## Overture 11

### Sexual Harassment

Whereas, we live in a sexually charged culture; and whereas the notion that humans are sexual creatures with needs and desires is not often addressed by the Church apart from the Sixth Commandment; and whereas the term sexual harassment implies repeated, if not deliberate actions and comments, not just an off-hand remark or an unplanned action, and whereas the rules of engagement, and personal and professional conduct are ill defined, sometimes questioned, but seldom discussed;

Whereas, the news outlets are full of stories of individuals who are said to be victims of sexual abuse, violence, etc... and whereas those Church who volunteer or work in our congregations are not immune from such charges;

Whereas, church workers will from time to time encounter troubled individuals who seek out their counsel and advice; and whereas such counsel will happen in private discussions and behind closed doors;

Whereas, church workers themselves may not have the best attitude with regard to this issue, and may in fact be targets for lawsuits;

Whereas, some of our own (clergy and lay people) may have been victimized in the past;

Whereas, it has been quite a few years since the District and her pastors have had training in this area;

And whereas there is a spiritual dimension to sexuality that has not been adequately explored or discussed;

Be it resolved that the New Jersey District congregations direct the District to offer teaching and training on this important issue; that we direct our pastors, pastoral conference(s) and circuits to spend some time discussing at length, not just sexual harassment, but related issues as well.

We ask now that the district and her clergy give attention to the following issues:

What is sexual harassment? Do we all know it when it happens? Are we agreed on what it is and what it isn't? What is the district's responsibility and liability?

Where are the lines of casual banter and conversation among friends, and between coworkers?

How do we address one another when it happens?

How is the district (president) supposed to supervise its pastors, workers and congregations in this matter?

How do congregations exercise supervision of volunteers and support staff?

How can the District instruct congregations in providing adequate liability coverage?

Be it Resolved that the NJD in order to protect herself, and to set an example for her congregations offer a day-long event (retreat or seminar) on the issue of sexual harassment.

We should seek advice and input from Synod personnel, from the insurance industry, lawyers, police and others who have something intelligent to offer.

Not only should pastors should be **required** to attend, but also retired clergy who may serve vacancies or as pulpit supply to congregations. Deacons, office workers and especially youth workers should also be in attendance.

Be it further resolved that such teaching be offered, if not required, within 18 (eighteen) months of the passage of this resolution, and periodically thereafter.

And be it further resolved that clergy who from time to time enter our district be made aware of policies that come as a result of these events.

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church  
Hamburg, NJ

(Refer to Resolution 4-01)

## Overture 12

### **To Support the Well-being of All the Church's Workers in the New Jersey District**

WHEREAS, The well-being of the church's workers is vital to the ministry and mission of the church; and

WHEREAS, Those who are called to serve the church in various capacities are well advised to care for themselves so that they can carry out their ministries to the best of their ability; and

WHEREAS, Congregations, schools, and other agencies are vital to the well-being of their ministers as they support those ministers in pursuit of their well-being; and

WHEREAS, Major challenges to the well-being of the church's ministers are known and documented, along with effective strategies to deal with those challenges to enhance their wellbeing; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the New Jersey District in convention express its support for all efforts of congregations, schools, and agencies to care for our workers and support them in their wellbeing, including the following components of holistic well-being: spiritual, financial, vocational, intellectual, relational, emotional, and physical; and be it further

*Resolved*, That our congregations, schools, and agencies be encouraged to do all they can to support the holistic well-being of their ministers, focusing on intentional, strategic, practical efforts at preventing problems before they develop and resolving them before they become crises; and be it further

*Resolved*, That our congregations, schools, and agencies be encouraged to support the holistic well-being of all their other workers as well; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the church's workers of the New Jersey District be encouraged to care for themselves in every aspect of holistic well-being so that they can continue to serve to the best of their ability with the gifts and strength that God supplies.

---

Signature of President or Chairman

---

Signature of Secretary

NJ District Congregational Services Committee

(Refer to Resolution 3-04)



## Overture 13

### To Direct the President of Synod to Assure the Provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) Are Followed

WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 (To Overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724)<sup>1</sup> was not brought forward for debate at the 2016 LCMS National Convention; and

---

<sup>1</sup> TO OVERRULE CCM OPINION 14-2724

WHEREAS, the Word of God (Acts 13) clearly reveals that in the first century of the New Testament, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus, assembled in Antioch, after much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, freely consecrated and sent missionaries, notably Barnabas and Saul, into mission fields; and

WHEREAS, Article III. 2 of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod identifies an objective of the Synod as to “Strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world;” and

WHEREAS, Article VII of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod states, “In relation to its members, the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and with respect to the individual congregation’s right of self-government it is but an advisory body”; and

WHEREAS, Article XIV of the Constitution states, “The Synod in convention may adopt bylaws that are consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod, which controls and supersedes such bylaws and all other rules and regulations of the Synod”; and

WHEREAS, 2010 Synod Convention Res. 8-32B encourages the Synod to study Article VII of the Constitution, including study of “Congregations and Synod, Background Material on the Advisory Nature of the LCMS” along with opinions of the Commission on Constitutional Matters related to this topic (including CCM Opinion 09-2573 listed in a “Whereas” paragraph in Resolution 8-32B); and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-10A in a “Resolved” clause states that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod reaffirms that its synodical polity is essentially and principally congregational in nature; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 09-2573 states in part that “. . . there is a common understanding that a congregation exercises its self-government . . . in carrying out . . . its own ministry programs and financial affairs . . .”; and

WHEREAS, Synod Bylaw 3.8.3 deals only with who has authority to send ministers of religion and other workers into Synod foreign mission fields, and prior bylaws have been careful not to restrict congregational activity specifically relating to whom congregations could send funds overseas, and nothing in the current bylaws restrict or could restrict the right of member congregations to (a) fund ministries in foreign countries, or (b) send/fund congregation members for service with organizations seeking to share the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, 1983 Synod Convention Res. 5-37 amending the bylaws only dealt with who on behalf of Synod as a whole could send missionaries at the expense of the Synod, and where the restriction applied, it being a sending bylaw only, clearly not applicable to congregations in any event; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 referring to 2013 Synod Convention Res. 1-08, “To Work Together in Mission,” called for a two-fold response: First, “Resolved, That the Synod, by the next convention, develop and provide a mission best practices policy document for districts and congregations engaged in mission projects to assist them to better carry out their mission and their life together”, indicating that districts and congregations have and are recognized to have mission work and practices of their own, and because they have their own mission work and practices, the Synod should assist and support those efforts by developing a best-practices policy; and second, “that these best practices include encouragement to districts and congregations to communicate their international mission activities to the Synod’s Director of Church Relations and Offices of National and International Mission for the purposes of healthy coordination and stewardship” (underlined portions indicate emphasis added), indicating that districts and congregations can have their own mission activities and when they do they are encouraged to communicate these activities to the Synod for coordination and good stewardship; and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 states in part, “Congregations may not send funds to mission societies and non-Synod entities for work in foreign areas without taking into consideration policies developed and determined for this purpose by the Board of International Mission as the only sending agency;” and

WHEREAS, CCM Opinion 14-2724 incorrectly restricts the mission outreach of congregations and others to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the congregations of the Texas District and of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be encouraged, with much prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to send missionaries to foreign areas; and be it further

WHEREAS, Overture 2-04 was submitted by four LCMS districts, three district boards of directors, one circuit, and seventeen LCMS congregations; and

WHEREAS, Two other overtures (2-07, 2-09) were submitted to the 2016 LCMS Convention that also requested that CCM Opinion 14-2724 also be overruled; and

WHEREAS, LCMS Bylaw 3.9.2.2 (c) regarding the CCM says, in part: “An opinion rendered by the commission shall be binding on the question decided unless and until it is overruled by a convention of the Synod. Overtures to a convention that seek to overrule an opinion of the commission shall support the proposed action with substantive rationale from the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod. All such overtures shall be considered by the floor committee to which they have been assigned and shall be included in a specific report to the convention with recommendations for appropriate action;” and

WHEREAS, No such report was given to the 2016 convention of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, No disposition of these overtures whatsoever is recorded in the 2016 Synod convention Proceedings; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That Overture 2-04 as found in the LCMS 2016 National Convention Workbook be submitted as an overture to the 2019 Synod convention by the adoption of this, current resolution; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the President of Synod be directed to assure that the provisions of Bylaw 3.9.2.2(c) are followed with respect to this resolution and any other resolution that becomes an overture to the Synod asking for a CCM opinion to be overruled; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That also in our agreements in how we will work together in the LCMS, things “be done in a fitting and orderly way” (I Corinthians 14:40).

---

*Resolved*, That the Texas District affirms and encourages congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, in their efforts to give bold witness by word and deed, to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world; and be it further

*Resolved*, That nothing in the bylaws of Synod should ever be interpreted to limit efforts by congregations, auxiliaries, recognized service organizations, districts, and individual members of the Synod, to give bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness to all the world, but only be interpreted as requesting information which might allow Synod to support (and to assist in connecting potential support for) congregations and individual members, to assist in connecting potential mission partners, and to provide best practices information which could assist the efforts; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the Texas District in convention memorialize the Synod in convention to adopt this resolution and to overrule CCM Opinion 14-2724, to be thereby declared null and void and of no effect.

(Refer to Resolution 2-02)