

**2009 ATLANTIC DISTRICT CONVENTION
SESSION 1 - FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2009**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The 57th Regular Convention of the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS), was called to order at 1:00 pm.

2. OPENING PRAYER AND DEVOTION

The Rev Johnson Rethinasamy and Mr. Don Bracken led the opening service of Responsive Prayer.

3. INTRODUCTION

President Benke introduced former Atlantic District presidents, the Rev. Dr. Henry Koepchen and the Rev. Dr. James Zwernemann who were in attendance.

4. CONVENTION COMMITTEE REPORT

President Benke introduced the Rev. Deric Taylor, special assistant to the District President who offered thanks to Ms. Andrea Masley and Ms. Kris Schulz for their work planning the convention.

5. REGISTRATION AND CREDENTIALS REPORT

Atlantic District Secretary, the Rev. Paul Sauer announced that although final registration numbers were still being tabulated A quorum, had however, been achieved.

6. WELCOME OF IMMANUEL – DELHI

President Benke welcomed Immanuel Lutheran Church in Delhi, New York and officially recognized them as a new congregation of the Atlantic District. Also welcomed was their pastor, the Rev. John Priest, who had previously become a member of the LCMS through his completion of the colloquy process and through the acceptance of the congregation on the roster of the LCMS.

7. ADOPTION OF STANDING RULES AND AGENDA

Secretary Sauer called the delegates attention to the Standing Rules of the Convention.

8. FLOOR COMMITTEE #1, STRUCTURE

President Benke invited the Floor Committee #1 Chairman, the Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell forward to introduce Resolution 01-02-09A: To Realign the Regions and Circuits of the Atlantic District.

Background information was presented on the non-compliance of a number of our circuits, and the requests that had been made from within and outside of the district to bring those circuits into compliance.

A task force was formed: including the Rev. William Harmon, the Rev. Secretary Paul Sauer, the Rev. Dr. Dien Ashley Taylor, and the Rev. James Jaekel to realign our circuits to better address our mission and ministry, while at the same time bringing our district into compliance with the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod.

Emphasis was made about how the district restructuring is separate, and has no relation to the Synod's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Structure.

Motion #1: Resolution #01-02-09A Adopted (without dissent)

9. FLOOR COMMITTEE #4 ELECTIONS

President Benke introduced Floor Committee #4 Chairman, Mr. Tim Elwell. Chairman Elwell thanked the members of the Elections Floor Committee, and provided explanation about voting procedures.

10. ELECTION OF DISTRICT PRESIDENT

Chairman Elwell announced that incumbent president, the Rev. Dr. David Benke was running unopposed. The Rev. Charles Froelich, St. Luke, Dix Hills introduced a motion that since President David Benke was running unopposed, he be elected by acclamation. Motion seconded by James Darden, Trinity, Jamaica.

Motion #2: To elect the Rev. Dr. David H. Benke as president of the Atlantic District by acclamation.

Motion #2: Moved/Seconded/Adopted (M/S/A) (without dissent)

Motion #3: To accept nominations from the floor for first vice-president of the Atlantic District.

Motion #3: M/S/A (without dissent)

The Rev. John Hannah, Trinity, Bronx introduced a motion to request nominations for the newly created non-geographic first vice-president position.

The Rev. Jonathan Priest – St. John the Evangelist, Brooklyn nominated the Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell, Village, Bronxville

The Rev. John Hannah – Trinity, Bronx nominated the Rev. Charles Froehlich, St. Luke, Dix Hills

Motion #4: To close nominations for first vice-president of the Atlantic District.

Motion #4: M/S/A (without dissent)

11. SECRETARY AND TREASURER ELECTIONS

Motion #5: To elect the Rev. Paul Sauer as Secretary of the Atlantic District and the Mr. Douglas Kurz as Treasurer of the Atlantic District by acclamation.

Motion #5: M/S/A (without dissent)

12. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President David Benke delivered his report to the Atlantic District convention

12A. ELECTIONS REPORT OF FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT:

Rev. Charles Froehlich	62
Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell	59
Disqualified	4

A simple majority (63 of 125 votes cast) was not achieved due to confusion over the ballot, which resulted in 4 ballots being disqualified for having more than one name marked.

A new simplified ballot was distributed.

Due to the need for time to tabulate the first vice president ballots, a change in agenda was made to present an Outreach moment instead of moving directly to the regional caucus.

13. REGISTRATION AND CREDENTIALS

Secretary Sauer announced that 72 OF 73 registered Voting Lay Delegates were present and 59 of 62 registered Voting Pastoral Delegates were present.

14. MISSION MOMENT #1 *and Old Westbury*

Resurrection and the Life in Garden City

15. INTRODUCTION TO TASK FORCE 2, TRANSFORMING CONGREGATIONS

President Benke invited forward the Rev. James Jaekel, chairman of Atlantic District Task Force #2, *Transforming Congregations*, to describe the work of the task force and recognize the work of the members of this task force.

15A. ELECTION RESULTS OF FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT ELECTION

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT:

Rev. Charles Froehlich	71
Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell	59
Disqualified	1

16. CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE

President Benke introduced Ms. Gretchen Jameson of Concordia Publishing House. Ms. Jameson called forward the Rev. James Goodine and the Rev. James Gajadhar to receive a “Stock the library” award.

17. REGIONAL CAUCUS

Chairman Elwell invited Secretary Sauer forward to describe the elections procedures to be conducted during the regional caucuses. This convention, due to the restructuring of circuits, regions also break down into circuits to nominate their circuit counselors.

17. REGIONAL CAUCUS RESULTS

Region 1

Vice-President:

The Rev. James Jaekel

Circuit Counselor, Circuit 1:

The Rev. Adam Wiegand

Circuit Counselor, Circuit 2:

The Rev. Mark Mueller

Circuit Counselor, Circuit 3:

The Rev. John Young

Circuit Counselor, Circuit 4:

The Rev. Donald Lee

Region 2

Vice-President:

The Rev. Deric Taylor

Circuit Counselor, Circuit 5:

The Rev. Dr. John Hannah
Circuit Counselor, Circuit 6:

The Rev. Jonathan Priest
Circuit Counselor, Circuit 7:

The Rev. Arthur Gillespie

Region 3

Vice-President:

The Rev. Charles Byer
Circuit Counselor, Circuit 8:

The Rev. Thomas Fisher
Circuit Counselor, Circuit 9:

The Rev. David Wackenhuth
Circuit Counselor, Circuit 10:

The Rev. John Fleischmann

Advisory Teacher - Synod Convention – Dr. LuJuana Butts

Advisory Alternate Teacher - Synod Convention– Mr. Matthew Dummann

Advisory Pastor - Synod Convention – Rev. James Zwernemann

Advisory Alternate Pastor - Synod Convention – Rev. Dr. Martin Conkling

18. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairman of the Nominations Committee, the Rev. Mark Mueller, introduced and thanked the members of his committee.

Additional nominations we solicited.

Rev. Marvin Griffin (Queens Village) was nominated to serve as AD Board of Directors – Pastor – Region III

Mr. James Darden (Trinity, Locust Manor) – was nominated to serve as AD Board of Directors – Layperson – Region III

Motion #6: To close nominations for District Board of Directors, Concordia Board of Regents, and Convention Committees

Motion #6: M/S/A (without dissent)

19. SYNOD PRESIDENT KIESCHNICK'S REPORT

Rev. William Diekelman, First vice-president of the Synod, read a letter of welcome from President Kieschnick, which highlighted the significance of the unity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod even in the face of our disagreements.

Due to audio difficulties with President Kieschnick's video presentation, the presentation was postponed until later in the convention.

20. BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE ON SYNOD STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Rev. Diekelman described the process of how the Task Force has gone about gathering information and suggestions for the proposed changes.

First, District Board of Directors and randomly selected congregations we solicited for information.

Information was gathered together, organized, and brought back to the congregations and District Boards.

Each District convention participates in the evaluation and recommendation of the proposals. Indeed, the proposals presented here to the Atlantic District are different than those presented to earlier conventions due to feedback received from the proposals brought before them. Proposed changes and proposals are available on the Task Force's website. As the presentation was made, questions were raised regarding the various proposals.

Point 2

The Rev. Vic Rap, Trinity, Glen Cove was concerned that Congregations are left out of the process. Vice-president Diekelman answered that any constitutional changes had to be approved by congregations.

The Rev. Dave Demara, Immanuel, Whitestone asked what happens if it fails to receive a 2/3 of the vote.

The Rev. Neil Mittelstaedt, Our Saviour, Rego Park asked for an example of a doctrinal resolution that was decided recently by a narrow vote. President Benke raised the issue of the closeness of the vote concerning the role of women at the last Synodical convention.

POINT 4

Mr. Don Bracken, Our Redeemer, Aquebogue raised the concern that inclusion of the "commissioned ministers" in the category of lay person might tend to stifle the service of laypeople who would instead look to their commissioned ministers as delegates.

POINT 5

Mr. Don Mathews, Good Shepherd, Glens Falls raised concerned about giving larger congregations greater representation based on one-cut off number. A range of numbers would be better.

Mr. Gustave Rothmaler, Calvary, East Meadow asked about what happens with a congregation that is vacant but does not have a designated vacancy pastor.

POINT 8

The Rev. Neil Mittelstaedt, Our Saviour, Rego Park raised concern by adding these levels to get resolutions to the convention, congregations

The Rev. Mark Mueller, Bethlehem, Delmar, asked how this was going to reduce costs if any congregation could still directly submit resolutions to synod.

POINT 9

Mr. Don Bracken from Our Redeemer, Aquebogue asked how these changes would affect the district cycle.

Vice-president Diekelman responded that the Task Force is not tasked with those sort of details, it will be worked out by the delegates themselves to the 2010 Synod convention.

The Rev. Richard Jones, Grace, Mastic Beach asked if districts and circuits are not operating correctly on a three year cycle how will a four year cycle help them.

POINT 10

The Rev. Dr. Elwood Mather III, Good Shepherd, Hurley appreciates the diversity of the current circuit structure.

The Rev. Jonathan Priest, St. John the Evangelist, Brooklyn since we have to align for voting purposes, sometimes that affects how a circuit functions.

The Rev. Bruce Nation, Holy Trinity, Middle Island asked why the district gets to choose and not a congregation. Would a congregation be allowed to change districts?

Vice-President Diekelman responded that the bylaws of Synod already allow for a congregation to change districts should they so choose.

21. ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Benke thanked Mr. Stan Kramer for designing the Convention banner.

Those completing terms as circuit counselor, the Rev. Shawn Dugan, the Rev. Dave Elseroad, the Rev. Mark Danzis, The Rev. Bruce Nathan, and The Rev. Steve Roth were thanked for their service.

22. ELECTIONS TO RATIFY CAUCUS ELECTIONS

Motion #7: To elect the slate of nominees presented by the circuit caucuses during regional caucus session.

Motion #7: M/S/A (without dissent)

Ballots were distributed for the ranking of vice-presidents.

23. CLOSING PRAYER

Mr. Kenneth Ko closed session 1 of the convention with prayer in both Korean and English.