



I hear that the LC-MS national convention is this July. What's on the agenda?

Here's an overview of the convention and some of the major business that will be conducted there.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) will gather at the George Brown Convention Center in Houston July 10-17 for its 64th Regular Convention. Among other convention business, delegates will elect (or re-elect) the synod president and other officers. Current president Rev. Gerald Kieschnick is facing a strong challenge for re-election from Rev. Matthew Harrison who currently heads up LC-MS World Mission and Human Care.

The theme of the Convention is ONE People - Forgiven.

The theme fits nicely with the themes of the two previous conventions, "ONE Mission - Ablaze!" and "ONE Message - Christ!"

Together these three themes comprise our Synod's vision endorsed by the 2004 convention: ONE Mission! ONE Message! ONE People! The 2010 theme reminds us that as ONE People we are blessed by God through His Word and Sacraments to carry out the ONE Mission He has given to proclaim throughout the world the ONE Message of forgiveness and eternal life in Jesus Christ. By the grace of God, that is happening throughout the LC-MS.

The theme comes from the apostle Paul's letter to the Christians in Ephesus: "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:31-32)

The apostle Paul sounds a similar theme in Colossians 3:12-13, "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive."

The 2010 LC-MS convention will focus primarily on governance issues and elections, as the synod considers structures that will decrease the costs of governing our church body as well as increase efficiency and effectiveness. Under one proposal, national conventions will be held every four years instead of three. Other proposals include changing the current number and structure of Districts, and renewing emphasis on cooperation between Circuit congregations. The potential changes to the LC-MS structure arise from the proposal of a four-year Blue Ribbon Task Force on Structure and Governance, appointed by current Synod President Gerald Kieschnick in 2005.

Depending on the results of delegate voting on these proposals, a series of elections of synod officers will take place as the week progresses. Votes that are affected by restructuring include the election of a treasurer, a position that would no longer be an elected position if the proposal passes.

The 1,218 delegates will also consider the relationship between the LCMS and the ELCA, (in light of the ELCA's 2009 decision to allow homosexuals to be ordained) as well as the future of cooperative ministries between the two church bodies. Another proposal that seeks to re-open talks with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod will be considered.

LCMS members encouraged to pray for the convention

In anticipation of these important decisions, a round-the-clock prayer vigil will be held from 8:00 a.m. on July 11 to 11:00 a.m. on July 17, when the convention is scheduled to adjourn.

"As we gather together in convention not just to make decisions about synod business but also to worship, learn, and be inspired, all of us — delegates, visitors, and staff — will be strengthened by the

prayers of friends and family, and even those whom we don't know," said the Rev. Larry Krueger, assistant to the president and convention planner. Those interested in participating in the prayer vigil can sign up on the Web site: www.lcms.org/prayervigil

As always, our Circuit (10 congregations in the west-central part of the state) is represented by one lay delegate and one clergy delegate. Duane Hansen was the lay delegate to the previous convention.

We will include an update on the decisions of the convention in the August newsletter. Until then, please pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance for all who are involved.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net