



The Beacon Online

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The Beacon Online is the communication source for the SELC District.

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LCMS Convention Deferral Referendum Voting

The deadline for the congregational vote is February 15, 2021. This Synod-wide action is being proposed due to the uncertainty of districts being able to safely gather in 2021 due to COVID-19. A large number of districts have been restricted from holding their conventions because of space limitations in churches, hotels and convention centers. Also, many of our typical convention delegates are in the high-risk category for infection and may be hesitant to travel to and fully participate in these gatherings.

The decision to delay conventions belongs to the congregations of the LCMS. This is in keeping with bylaws which guide decisions that need to be made between Synodical Conventions. A quorum is achieved when 25% of the 6,000 LCMS congregations participate in the vote. A simple majority vote is needed to approve or decline. President Vinovskis strongly encourages the congregations of the SELC District to participate and to vote, Yes. He believe this is the right decision for the SELC District and for the Synod-at-large to do its work well and faithfully.



LCEF Covid-19 Response

LCEF has employed numerous financial tools to help our borrowers, including several specifically put in place by our COVID-19 Response Team. Needs are unique. So are the remedies. And we continue to look for more.

Some need a simple re-amortization of an existing loan. Others need a quick line of credit to bridge the gap. Others need a specialized loan to carry them through a greater need. For more challenged circumstances, those identified as most vulnerable, including, early childhood centers and our church workers, LCEF stands ready to provide more aggressive financial solutions.

Need and duration are unique. Congregations are encouraged to **contact your LCEF District Vice President**, Pastor Daniel Lepley, to discuss the remedy that allows your work to continue.

For more information, and a link to apply for PPP funds through the Lutheran Federal Credit Union, see the January 11, 2021 LCEF update at <https://lcef.org/business-continuity-statement/>.



Online Orlando Concert Band January 23, 2021

Concert theme: 'Sonidos Latinos'--Central Florida is home to a rich Latino population. The Orlando Concert Band is presenting "Sonidos Latinos"--Latin Sounds. Sonidos Latinos samples the vibrant, dance-inducing rhythms and melodies from the music of Cuba, Mexico, and Spain. Ignacio Cervantes, Arturo Marquez, and Santiago Lope are just a few composers with works featured on this night of Sonidos Latinos. [Watch online Here!](#)





The Lutheran Haven receives Approval as a Recognized Service Organization of the LCMS

The Lutheran Haven is pleased to announce that they received approval status as a Recognized Service Organization from The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. This approval is for five years.

Within the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, are RSOs – Recognized Service Organizations. One of the RSOs is the Lutheran Haven. A Recognized Service Organization is a not-for-profit organization that is independent of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, but whose operations foster the mission the mission and ministry of the Church, whose programs are in harmony with the Synod and who agree to respect and not act contrary to the doctrine and practice of the Synod. These organizations reach out in mercy and love to meet the needs of those who are suffering, poor, sick, or lonely. They address human, social, economic, educational, and spiritual needs.

You must apply and be approved to be a RSO. A RSO can call ordained and commissioned ministers on the LCMS roster, use the LCMS logo, and obtain loans through the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF).

The Lutheran Haven is a full-service retirement community providing security, value, and peace of mind in Oviedo, Florida. Residents enjoy retirement with like-minded individuals in a close-knit community where neighbors become best of friends. The Haven story is one of caring—for those most vulnerable, and for those who want to enjoy retirement living among good friends and great neighbors in a Christian atmosphere and environment. Several years ago, the trustees embraced the concept of caring beyond the confines of the Haven community. Lutheran Haven Home Healthcare, a certified home care agency, serves the greater community, and is licensed in Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties.

In the 1920's, Lutheran immigrants from Czechoslovakia living in Cleveland, Ohio, dreamed of building an "orphanage" for children and a "retirement home" for pastors who had limited income. Several of these early settler families moved to Slavia, now part of Oviedo, Florida "to live in the country away from the temptations of the city." They cleared the land and started farming. After they became established, the thought of a haven for retired pastors and orphaned children surfaced again.

In 1937, one of these settlers, Mr. Andrew Duda Sr., in gratitude to the Lord for His many blessings, offered the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church (now the SELC District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod) forty acres of land and \$90,000 for the first two buildings - a home for the elderly and a home for needy, dependent children. The offer was graciously accepted by the Synod. In 1946 at the Synod Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, Articles of Incorporation were approved, and a board of trustees was elected. The doors were opened to children and the elderly on May 30, 1948. The SELC District President and other District Pastors and congregational members continue to serve on the Board of Directors.



Call for Nominations - LCMS Board of Directors

The LCMS Board of Directors has issued a Call for Nominations for regular appointments to the **Board of Trustees—Concordia Plans and Board of Directors—Concordia Plan Services (the boards)** positions and **LCEF Members-at-Large** positions. These regular appointments will be made at the May 2021 LCMS Board of Directors meeting. The **electronic nomination form(s)** (as well as the memo and qualifications document) may be downloaded from the following webpage: www.lcms.org/secretary/appointmentforms.

A Cry for Civility

Rev. Thomas Soltis, EM



Definitions

Civility ... being civil, courteous, polite, helpful.

Civilization ... people with a high level of intellectual, caring, social development.

Civilized ... someone enlightened, refined.

Uncivilized ... discourteous, ill-bred, barbarous.

Civil Rights ... the privileges of citizens accorded by the 13th & 14th Amendments of the Constitution.

Civility

Civility reflects a sense of equality between fellow human beings. It involves feeling neither superior nor inferior to others as it endeavors to be helpful. Humble helpfulness was a characteristic of Christ. Though King of Kings and Lord of Lords, He made clear His role: *"I am among you as one who serves."* (Luke 22:27) Though God-Man, He humbly washed His disciples feet. (John 13:1-17)

Civil Protests

The opening words of the Declaration of Independence proclaim: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal.*" Equality! What a precious principle to ensure civility. The US Constitution grants citizens the right to protest whatever they consider injustices. The word protest is derived from the Latin word "*protestari*" (*pro* = forth; *testari* = to testify). The word "*Protestant*" is used to describe the "*testifying forth*" of the Lutheran Augsburg Confession which politely protested (testified Biblical truths) with peaceful civility. So did Martin Luther King, Jr., who promoted peaceful protest against racial injustice. In India, Mahatma Gandhi promoted protest via pacifism. Princeton University research indicates that violence undermines support for a cause while peaceful demonstrations strengthen it. The 1st amendment of the US Constitution guarantees "*the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.*"

Uncivil Protests

Responding to the death of George Floyd in Portland, Oregon, peaceful protestors generally gathered by day to be replaced by uncivil mobs at night. Like uncivilized savages, they set fires, threw projectiles, attacked police, vandalized, looted and destroyed. Such actions are not protected by the constitution. They are criminal. Perpetrators should be arrested, prosecuted and punished.

The January 6, 2021, destructive assault on the U.S capital violated the principle of freedom. People are not free to vandalize. The uncivil protestors insulted our nation, bypassing the principle of law and order. Such incivility is repugnant. When a large crowd with swords and clubs came to unjustly arrest Jesus, His disciple, Peter, violently protested. Drawing a sword, he cut off the ear of one in the crowd. Jesus quickly responded: "*Put your sword back in its place, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword.*" (Matt. 26:52) He then restored the ear. (Luke 22:51). There were many injustices at the time of Christ - political oppression, injustice, societal corruption, religious falsehood and hypocrisy. In response, Jesus did not organize a militant mob to revolt. He protested (testified) civilly, peacefully, respectfully. What horrific wars were waged throughout history in the name of God! Consider the hate driven "*holy*" wars of the Crusades and Jihads. In contrast, Jesus taught to love enemies. (Matt. 5:43-44)

The Incivility of Racism

The Holy Scriptures make no distinction between races. Scripturally there is only one race - the human race - created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:27) The Church is compared to a human body with all parts working together in harmony regardless of race, nationality, rank or social status. (1 Cor. 12:12-13) There are no truly black or white people. All are actually shades of brown depending on the amount of "*melanin*" pigment (and other minor factors) in the skin. No race is superior. The concept of a Hitler-like "*Master Race*" is absurd. Look around. Successful, highly intelligent, resourceful, inventive, productive, talented people are found within every race. Sports fans are "color blind" when they cheer their heroes. Racially, everyone should be color blind.



SELCE Directory Updates

If you have updates to your name, address, etc. please notify the [SELCE District Office](#) by email so the Directory can be as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Also, the SELCE Directory is available as a PDF or in a printed version. Please email the District Office to request your Directory.



Synod Convention Vote Reminder

Each congregation should have received voting instructions regarding the proposed one year change in the Synod calendar via U. S. mail. Please remember that each congregation must vote by **February 15, 2021**. The envelope will be marked **"CONVENTION REFERENDUM"**. The vote is done electronically.



National Lutheran Schools Week

January 24 - 30, 2021

The theme of this year's National Lutheran School Week is "Sent to Serve". The Bible verse for the 2021 week is Matthew 20:28 ESV;

28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

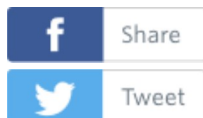
Resources can be found at this link - <http://www.luthed.org/national-lutheran-schools-week/> Due to COVID events are not scheduled but you are encouraged to share the daily chapels from the LCMS international center ([LCMS Facebook](#) and [KFUO Radio](#)) even though they will not have choirs or other NLSW-specific events this year.

Especially this year, we know that our schools throughout the country will be celebrating National Lutheran Schools Week at different times and on different dates. However, we encourage both you and your schools to follow, like and tag the LCMS School Ministry social media accounts and use the **"#NLSW21"** and **"#LuthEd"** hashtags for anything related to the 2021 National Lutheran Schools Week celebrations throughout the year!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LCMSschools>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lcmsschools>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/lcms.school.ministry/>

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