



Convention Update from January 17th

Daily Update - Day 2

Day 2 Opens with Greetings from the Florida/Georgia District

Our day began with greetings from President James Rockey of the Florida/Georgia District as he highlighted the blessing of working side-by-side in ministry and mission here in Florida. President Rockey reminded us that we are one body with many parts and that we have an urgent calling to let our light shine on those living in the darkness around us.



Morning Devotion, Welcome of New Rostered Workers, and Special Guests Bring Greetings



Our morning devotions were led by Pastor Jon Palmer of The Way Church in Columbia, Illinois. Pastor Tige Culbertson of St. Luke's in Oviedo reminded us that our identity was darkness, but now is light because of the person and work of Jesus.



After our morning devotion, we welcomed all new rostered members to the District since our last convention. Those in attendance at the Convention were: Pastors Troy Countryman and Jonathan Moyer of Faith in Viera, Florida, Allen Dass of Zion in Clark, New Jersey, Pastor Philip DeVries of St. John in Cudahy, Wisconsin, Pastor Gordon Naumann of St. John's in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, Pastor Jon Palmer of The Way in Columbia Illinois, Pastor Brady Retzlaff of Racine, Wisconsin, Pastor Samuel Schick of Oviedo, Florida, Pastor Miguel Torneire, Missionary to the Hispanic people of St. Louis, Missouri, and Pastor Russell Peterson of Holy Cross in Lake Mary, Florida.

We also received special greetings from Rev. Dr. Allan Buss (right), President of the Northern Illinois District, Shalisa Griffin (below left) from The Sharing Center, and Jonathan Schultz, CEO of Concordia Publishing House below right.



Our First Resolution Passes

Our morning session came to a close as Pastor Troy Countryman, Chairman of the Resolutions Committee presented Resolution R25-01A encouraging all congregations of the SELC to adopt a missionary.



The morning also included Circuit meetings to elect their Pastoral and Lay representatives to the Synod Convention in 2026. Below in the first photo are the Pastoral delegates and alternates and the second photo are the Lay delegates and alternates.





Pictured above from left to right are three Circuit Visitors - Rev. George Hansell, Rev. James Fernandez, and Rev. James Douthwaite.

Afternoon Session

Our afternoon session began by ratifying our circuit visitors and the delegates to the 2026 LCMS National Convention. Later, President Vinovskis presented his report to the convention highlighting the challenges and blessings that we have as a District. Pastor Mark Larson (below) then presented a report on the church planting mission of our district, and led us in celebrating the amazing things our God is doing in Canada through the Spirit-led efforts of Pastor Charles St-Onge. We heard from Pastor Miguel Torneire about how he feels God will use him in St. Louis. Finally, we heard about what God is doing in India through our mission efforts there.



After our mission presentation, we heard about a proposal regarding a district-wide capital campaign focused on helping us to continue our mission of planting churches and supporting our national and international missions.

Pictured below left to right are Rev. John Bush and Rev. John Schoedel who are assisting with the capital campaign.



Elections And Closing Devotion

The business of the convention continued as we re-elected Pastor Wally Vinovskis to another term as District President for the SELC. We also elected Pastor Wally Arp as our First Vice-President, Pastor Chris Cahill as our Second Vice-President, and Pastor Jon Palmer as our Third Vice-President. Pastor John Telloni was elected to another term as our District Secretary, Mr. Robert Lange was elected to another term as our Treasurer, and Ms. Irene Bray elected as our new Financial Secretary. Our elections for the day concluded as Pastor Troy Countryman was elected to serve on the Board of Directors as the at-large pastoral representative and Pastor Tige Culbertson was elected to serve on the Board of Directors as the mission focus representative.

Our day drew to a close as Pastor Kevin McLeod (left) led us in worship and Pastor Charles St-Onge (right) shared a message with us based on the text from Hebrews 1.



SELC District of LCMS | 2623 Brookside Road | Macungie, PA 18062 US

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