PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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Whatever is Admirable



Finally, whatever is ADMIRABLE – think about such things – and the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4. The Greek word euphayma actually means "good report". This word deals with passing along good information – good news – good reports. One commentator explains that this word means "worth talking about". Another translates it, "Things which are fit for God to hear".

Finally, whatever is admirable (a good report), think on such things, and the God of peace will be with you. A couple days before soldiers crucify Jesus, when Mary pours perfume for Jesus' burial onto His head, Jesus declares, "This good report will be spoken in memorial of her". God's apostle Paul writes, "I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. They only heard the report: The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy."
Solomon writes, "A good report makes the bones healthy". Proverbs 15:30

You share good reports to give your hearers healthy bones. You share good reports to lead others to the God of peace.

And of course what is most admirable – the greatest good report: Christ is Risen Indeed. 1 Corinthians 15. Reverend Doctor Lucas Woodford, District President of Minnesota South, gives a good report from this summer's Synod Convention. Think about his good report of what is admirable, and the God of peace will be with you.

The 69th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod met July 18-23 in Phoenix. Its theme, "Christ is Risen Indeed" was drawn from 1 Corinthians 15:20-22: "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead… For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

The convention began with the Divine Service. Thousands joined in singing "This Joyful Eastertide," accompanied by organ, brass and a choir of 55 children from congregations across the Synod. Throughout the week, daily prayer, hymnody, international greetings and remembrance of church workers called to glory helped keep the convention grounded in Christ.

Especially inspiring were the standing ovations and singing of the Common Doxology after the Synod recognized the altar and pulpit fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Christian Church of Bolivia and expressed support for the same with Lutheran Missions – Australia.

Actions Taken

The Synod adopted "Tell the Next Generation" as its new mission and ministry emphasis and approved resolutions encouraging parish-level church planting, campus ministry, ministry among youth and young adults, congregational revitalization and stronger digital witness. The convention's national offering for this emphasis surpassed $740,000 during the week.

The convention also reinstated the Commission on Worship, providing the Synod with a formal means to evaluate worship resources and encourage faithful, beautiful and doctrinally sound hymnody and liturgical practice.

Other significant resolutions condemned political violence, encouraged responsible Christian participation in public life, directed the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) to examine pressing political and social questions, and called for careful theological and ethical consideration of artificial intelligence. The convention also addressed sexual misconduct by rostered workers, seeking clearer procedures and spiritual care for those harmed.

The Synod reaffirmed its historic teaching and practice regarding closed communion. The seminaries were asked to study questions surrounding the public reading of Scripture in worship.

Pastoral Formation

The convention reaffirmed the Synod's traditional residential approach to preparing pastors while responding to concerns raised throughout the church.

Resolution 6-04A affirmed the residential Master of Divinity and Residential Alternate Route as the Synod's normal, preferred forms of pastoral formation and rejected an online M. Div. model. Resolution 6-05A reaffirmed that the LCMS will continue to own and operate its pastoral-training pathways rather than outsource formation to independent institutions. These resolutions passed with more than 75% and 80% support, respectively.

The convention also affirmed the current parameters of the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program, encouraged SMP pastors to pursue General Pastor Certification and urged congregations and districts to help fund that continuing education. The Pastoral Formation Committee was broadened to include additional seminary, parish and district representation, thereby strengthening consultation across the Synod.

Finally, Resolution 6-13 encouraged exploration of multi-point-parishes, circuit-riding and other cooperative arrangements that can provide faithful pastoral care and appropriate compensation, while acknowledging that bi-vocational ministry will remain necessary in some settings.

Of course, no convention settles every question, nor does every delegate agree with every decision. Yet we can give thanks that the Synod gathered around God's Word, received Chrit's body and blood, sang the faith together and conducted its work beneath the joyful confession that we certainly do all agree upon: Christ is risen indeed!

Whatever is admirable – whatever is of good report – think about such things, and the God of peace will be with you.

As Jesus lives,
Pastor Paul Egger
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