

TO: The Congregations, Ordained Ministers and Commissioned Ministers of Iowa District West

FROM: Rev. Rich Merrill, District Secretary

DATE: September 1, 2021

SUBJECT: Election of Convention Delegates
Nominations for District Offices (President, Vice-Presidents, Board of Directors, etc.)
Nominations for Circuit Visitors
Overtures to the District Convention
Convention Registration Fees

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1. INTRODUCTION

The time has come to prepare for the 2022 District Convention of Iowa District West (**June 26-28, 2022**) to be held at Camp Okoboji. This letter contains important and pertinent information regarding lay and pastoral delegates to the District Convention and nominations to various district offices. Please read it carefully. All communication will be conducted via email and posted on the district website: www.idwlcms.org/convention.php.

All items mentioned in this letter need to be brought to the attention of your congregation. The general rules for nominations are found in chapter nine of the district *Handbook*. You can download a copy of the *Handbook* from the district website: www.idwlcms.org/handbooks.php.

2. ELECTION OF LAY DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE LAY DELEGATE

Our current district *Handbook* states that each congregation (multipoint parishes are considered one congregation) is to elect its lay delegate and alternate lay delegate to the District Convention (district *Handbook* Bylaw 2.4). A multipoint parish shares one lay voting delegate (district *Handbook* Bylaw 2.4.2). Please complete the attached “Congregational Lay Delegate to the Convention” form for this purpose, include the required signatures, and return it by mail or email to the Secretary of the District so that he receives it by **February 1, 2022**. **Please note: if a congregation had previously submitted**

the names of its lay delegate and alternate lay delegate for the 2021 convention, those names will stand unless a new form is received.

Email completed forms to: IDWSecretary@iowadistrictwest.org

Mail completed forms to: The Rev. Richard Merrill, Secretary
Iowa District West
409 Kenyon Rd, Suite B
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

3. PASTORAL DELEGATE

The pastoral delegate from the congregation shall be the called pastor of the congregation. If a congregation has a called associate or assistant pastor, the congregation must determine whether the senior pastor, the associate pastor, or the assistant pastor shall be the pastoral delegate and notify the district office if an associate or assistant will be serving as voting delegate. Pastors who have emeritus status on the Roster of the Synod are not eligible to serve as voting delegates at a district convention. A voting pastoral delegate must have been called to the congregation he is serving.

4. SELECTION OF CIRCUIT VISITOR

Synod *Handbook* Bylaw 5.2.2 (pg.192-193) states “The circuit visitor shall hold his position by virtue of his selection by the circuit forum and ratification by the district convention.”

- (a) Circuit forums shall meet at the call of their circuit visitors to select their circuit visitors no later than the time established by the district. When in-person meetings are burdensome (e.g., geographically large circuits), circuits may select another manner of meeting (e.g., e-meeting technologies) that is suitable and available to all participants, taking into consideration the need to provide for an open exchange of ideas, and the means to ensure secure, private, and confidential voting.
- (b) Prior to the day of the circuit forum, nominations for candidates for the office of circuit visitor may be submitted by a voting congregation of the circuit and suggested by the district president, in consultation with the praesidium of the district.
- (c) Each circuit may adopt procedures and methods that will insure efficiency and accuracy including the use of mechanical, electronic, or other methods of casting, recording, or tabulating votes. The privilege of voting shall be exercised by the representatives from each member congregation of the circuit, who shall have been selected in the manner prescribed by the congregation (Bylaw 5.3.2).
- (d) All nominated pastors serving congregations and emeriti pastors **whose names were nominated prior to the day of the circuit forum** shall be eligible for election in accordance with section 4.3 of these Bylaws.
 - (1) Following presentations of pertinent information regarding each pastor as listed in Bylaw 3.12.3.6 (c) and circuit visitor responsibilities as provided hereafter in this bylaw, each voter shall write in the names of two pastors on the initial ballot.
 - (2) The three pastors (or more in case of a tie vote) who receive the highest number of votes in this preliminary ballot shall be placed on the next ballot. Each voter shall vote for only one candidate.
 - (3) Balloting shall continue with the lowest candidate being removed from each succeeding ballot until one pastor shall have received a simple majority of all votes cast, who shall be declared the nominee.

- (e) Immediately following the circuit forum, the circuit visitor shall report in writing the results of the selection process to the secretary of the district in preparation for ratification by the District Convention.
- (f) In the event that a circuit visitor has not been selected by a circuit forum or has been selected but is no longer available to serve, thus resulting in no circuit visitor selection being included on the convention slate of circuit visitors for a circuit, the district president shall make the selection, which selection shall then be included on the convention slate of circuit visitors.
- (g) The convention shall have the right to alter the slate by amendment.
- (h) The convention shall then ratify the slate of circuit visitors, which ratification shall constitute election.

For the 2022 convention, if a circuit held its forum to select its circuit visitor in 2020 or early 2021, that selection will stand unless the circuit meets to revise it.

There are no limits on the number of successive terms a pastor may serve as circuit visitor.

5. NOMINATIONS FOR DISTRICT PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

The procedure for nominating the district president and vice-presidents as stated in the district *Handbook* Bylaws 9.1 and 9.2 is as follows:

- “9.1.1 Each member congregation of the district shall be entitled to nominate from the clergy roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod two ordained ministers as candidates for the office of district president. [Synod Bylaw 4.3.1]
- “9.1.1.1 On or about September 1 in the year before the district convention, the district secretary shall solicit from all member congregations of the district nominations for the office of district president. The district secretary shall send, or cause to be sent, to each member congregation of the district ballots for nominating candidates for the office of district president.
- “9.1.1.2 Each nominating ballot returned shall be signed by the president and secretary of the member congregation and shall be returned to the district secretary no later than February 1 in the year of the district convention.
- “9.1.1.3 By April 15 in the year of the district convention, the district secretary shall tabulate the nominating ballots and shall make the results known to the district office in preparation for publication in the district Convention Workbook and to post on the district website. The names and tallies of all ordained ministers who have received nominating votes for the office of district president shall be reported, and the report shall identify the top three names (or more, in case of a tie for the third position) of those who have agreed to serve if elected. This report shall also include the names of those who have declined nomination, if any have declined nomination.”
- “9.2.1 Each member congregation of the district shall be entitled to nominate from the clergy roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod two ordained ministers as candidates for the office of first vice-president and two ordained ministers for the office of second vice-president.
- “9.2.1.1 Each nominee for first vice-president and second vice-president shall be a member of a member congregation of Iowa District West.
- “9.2.1.2 On or about September 1 in the year before the district convention, the district secretary shall solicit from all member congregations of the district nominations for the offices of first vice-president and second vice-president. The district secretary shall send, or cause to be sent, to each member congregation of the district ballots for nominating candidates for the office of first vice-president of the district and second vice-president of the district.

- “9.2.1.3 Each nominating ballot returned shall be signed by the president and secretary of the member congregation and shall be returned to the district secretary no later than February 1 in the year of the district convention.
- ”9.2.1.4 By April 15 in the year of the district convention, the district secretary shall tabulate the nominating ballots and shall make the results known to the district office in preparation for publication in the district Convention Workbook and to post on the district website. The names and tallies of all ordained ministers who have received nominating votes for the offices of first vice-president and second vice-president shall be reported, and the report shall identify the top three names (or more, in case of a tie for the third position) of those who have agreed to serve if elected. This report shall also include the names of those who have declined nomination, if any have declined nomination.”

There are no limits on the number of successive terms the president and the vice-presidents may serve (district *Handbook* Bylaw 3.4.1).

The appropriate ballot is attached (as a fillable PDF document) for these nominations. Please note that the ballot must be signed by the president and secretary of the congregation, and should be mailed or emailed to the Secretary of the district so that he receives it no later than **February 1, 2022** **Please note: nominations that were made previously for the 2021 convention will stand unless the congregation submits another ballot, in which case the new ballot will supersede the old.**

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6. SUGGESTED NAMES FOR NOMINEES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Members of the Board of Directors of the district must also be nominated and elected. These include the following:

- Chairman of the board, a layperson
- Secretary, an ordained minister
- Treasurer, a layperson and an accountant familiar with good business and banking practices
- Chairman of the missions department, an ordained minister
- Chairman of the Christian education department, an ordained minister
- Chairman of the youth services department, an ordained minister
- Chairman of the stewardship department, an ordained minister
- Chairman of the human care ministries department, an ordained minister
- Ordained minister member-at-large, an ordained minister
- Commissioned minister member-at-large, a commissioned minister
- Three layperson members-at-large, laypersons

The offices listed above are limited to two consecutive three-year terms (district *Handbook* Bylaw 3.4.3), except for secretary and treasurer which are limited to four consecutive three-year terms (district *Handbook* Bylaw 3.4.2).

The present members of the Board of Directors who are ineligible for reelection because they have served two consecutive terms include:

Mr. Stan Ullerich, Chairman of the board

Rev. Bruce Lesemann, Chairman of the missions department
Rev. Jonathan Riggert, Chairman of the youth services department
Rev. Jonathan Conner, Chairman of the stewardship department
Rev. Daniel Vogel, Ordained minister member at-large
Mr. Tim Buelow, Layperson member-at-large

An electronic form for solicitation of nominations for members of the Board of Directors and other positions can be found under the Convention tab on the District website:

www.idwlcms.org/convention.php or at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IDWnominationform>.

This electronic nominating form needs to be completed no later than **February 1, 2022**.

Please note that nomination forms request the person's email address in order to simplify the nomination process (avoiding extra time and costs associated with postal mail).

Names submitted to the district secretary by the congregations are turned over by him to the nominating committee no later than February 15, 2022. The nominating committee determines its nominees, using the names suggested by the congregations and additional names selected by its own members.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELECTED LAY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The following general and specific information is provided to assist congregations and individuals in determining whether a layperson would be able to fulfill the responsibilities of the office or position if nominated and elected. For further information regarding the responsibilities of the officers and committees of the Board of Directors, see the District *Handbook*, chapters 3, 4, and 5.

All members of the Board of Directors are expected to attend the board meetings. These meetings are held four times a year, usually in the months of February, May, August, and November. All members of the Board of Directors, including the lay members and commissioned and ordained ministers, are also appointed to one of the committees of the Board of Directors. These committees meet a minimum of four times a year, usually once between each of the four meetings of the Board of Directors. These committees have policy recommending and evaluating functions as well as administrative and service functions. Consequently, the laypersons elected to the Board of Directors also often have responsibilities and duties on these committees in addition to the meetings of the Board of Directors and the meetings of the committees.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FILLED BY LAYPERSONS

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

The chairman of the board of directors chairs the meetings of the board of directors and currently serves on the stewardship committee. The meetings of the board of directors and the stewardship committee would involve a total of at least eight meetings a year.

DISTRICT TREASURER

The district treasurer attends the four regular meetings of the board of directors; works with the business manager of the district and the assistant to the president for stewardship of the district; must be aware of the financial position of the district; reviews the income, expenses, and investments of the district; gives the treasurer's report of the income and expenses to the board of directors at its regular meetings; assists in budget setting; and his signature is required on certain legal documents of the district involving real estate matters.

The district treasurer serves on the district’s stewardship committee. This involves a minimum of four meetings, though usually there are several extra meetings to prepare the annual budget of the district, and the suggested salary schedule for pastors and teachers. The district treasurer serves as the chairman of the endowment and legacy committee of the district which meets four times a year.

7. SUGGESTED NAMES FOR NOMINEES FOR THE DISTRICT NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The district nominating committee consists of three ordained ministers, one commissioned minister, and three laypersons. This committee is an ad hoc committee to which limitations on holding multiple offices do not apply. In other words, a person can hold another office or be elected to an office in the district or on the board of directors or as circuit visitor and still serve on this committee. The district nominating committee begins to meet early in February to prepare the slate of candidates for the comprehensive ballot for the district convention, and continues to serve throughout the convention in the capacities outlined in the District *Handbook* Bylaws 9.4-5. The members of this committee should have the widest possible knowledge of people in the district—ordained ministers, commissioned ministers, and laypersons—who can serve in the various offices of the district.

An electronic form for nominations for members of the Nominating Committee and other positions can be found under the Convention tab on the District website: www.idwlcms.org/convention.php or at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IDWnominationform>.

This electronic nominating form needs to be completed no later than **February 1, 2022**.

The following member of the district nominating committee is ineligible for reelection because she has served two consecutive terms (see District *Handbook* Bylaw 3.4.3):

Ms. Wanda Pritzel, layperson

8. SUGGESTED NAMES FOR NOMINEES FOR THE COMMITTEE FOR CONVENTION NOMINATIONS

The members of the 2023 Committee for Convention Nominations (CCN) of the Synod are elected by district conventions according to Bylaw 3.12.3f (Synod *Handbook*, p. 179-180). Iowa District West is responsible for electing one professional church worker (ordained *or* commissioned minister) and one alternate (also a professional church worker) for the 2023 committee.

The nomination form provided under the Convention tab on the district website: www.idwlcms.org/convention.php or at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IDWnominationform> may be used to make suggestions for nominees to this committee. Please complete this form no later than **February 1, 2022**.

9. REMINDER CONCERNING OVERTURES TO THE DISTRICT CONVENTION

District *Handbook* Bylaw 2.8 gives the regulations regarding overtures to the District Convention:

“2.8.2 Overtures to a district convention may be submitted only by a member congregation of the district, the board of directors, an official district conference of ordained or commissioned ministers, a committee established by a prior convention, a circuit forum, or a committee appointed by the district president.

“2.8.3 Overtures shall be submitted to the office of the district president no later than March 1 prior to the opening of the convention. No overture received after that date shall be approved for convention consideration unless a committee consisting of the president

and the two vice-presidents considers it to be a matter of overriding importance and urgency that is not adequately covered by documents already before the convention.”

10. REGISTRATION FEES FOR THE CONVENTION

The District *Handbook* Bylaws 2.10.1-2.10-4 state regarding registration fees: “The costs of the convention shall be covered by fees and assessments to the congregations of the district. One-half of the costs shall be covered by registration fees charged to each congregation (multipoint parishes shall be considered as one entity for the purpose of assessing this registration fee), and one-half of the costs shall be covered by an assessment from each congregation on a per communicant basis (based on the communicant membership given in the latest statistical information given to the district by the Synod). Each congregation shall pay the registration fees and per communicant member assessment whether or not its voting delegates attend. No delegate shall stand accredited unless the registration fee and assessment have been paid.”

In January, the district office will send to each congregation the amount owed for the District Convention.

11. CONCLUSION

Please observe all deadlines and return the forms promptly so that those who depend on these nominations to prepare for the Convention, may be able to complete their work expeditiously. Thank you for your cooperation.

May the Lord of the Church guide us as we make our nominations and suggested nominations so that His will be done among us, His kingdom furthered, and His Name be glorified.

Cordially, in Christ,



The Rev. Richard C. Merrill
District Secretary