

Iowa District West Convention Summary – Tuesday, June 10, 2025

The day opened with Morning Prayer led by Rev. John David Mull at the Point at Camp Okoboji, Milford, Iowa. Rev. Paul Egger led a memorial service honoring the ordained and commissioned workers who have entered their eternal glory over the last triennium.

Rev. Max Phillips provided a report on behalf of Lutheran Family Services. Rev. Phillips highlighted LFS being a Christian, Lutheran resource for our churches and schools, with goals to support healthy church workers, pastors' wives, counseling, abortion recovery, and adoption. He ended by stating it is important to find continued ways to fund LFS, which is all non-profit.

Greetings were given by Concordia University, Seward; Concordia University, Chicago; and Concordia University, St Paul.

Rev. Kris Morris emphasized that Concordia, Seward, has had the largest group of students on campus since the 1970s. Concordia, Chicago, has launched the church work guarantee. If you attend Concordia, Chicago, you will not pay more than \$5,000 a year in tuition as a church work student. Concordia, St Paul, reports that they are the second-largest private university in Minnesota. They now have geographical locations in St Paul, Portland and Denver. They, too, have a church work guarantee.

Rev. Dr. Brian Freidrich continued his presentation on sharing the faith between generations.

There are seven generations in the United States right now. How can we work through that as a person? Jesus never let issues stand in the way of relationships. God provides a grace-filled, gentle witness. We can learn to listen better to those around us and use who they are as a strength for ministry.

Rev. Dr. Keith Haney provided the district Stewardship report. He encouraged pastors not to wait until a budget is prepared to utilize the resources of the district. Make a plan now to talk about stewardship in your congregations. A simple strategy is to invite the heads of church programs to share what they are doing rather than simply putting a budget on paper. People are more apt to give to a ministry described than numbers on a page.

Julie Mann of IOWAY (Individual Outreach with Adults and Youth) reported that Iowa District West is fantastic about giving to needs, from health kits to shoes for children. Mann highlighted LERT (Lutheran Early Response Team), reminding the convention that LERT is not a trained first responder, but instead comes to assist the community after a disaster. Chainsaw training was held at Camp Okoboji, where, upon the completion of training, the volunteers assisted in helping to clean debris at the Camp. Finally, the annual trip to assist in the Lutheran Hour float building will take place at the end of December. Individuals will also be involved in Lot 318, a mission in the neighborhood.

Jim Schroeder of the LCMS Foundation greeted the convention by stating he is retiring June 30. Schroeder provided a handout for pastors so Jim's replacement can assist with writing a will, estate planning, and having the LCMS Foundation at their church.

Gary Thies of Mission Central stated this is the greatest year in 31 years since Mission Central opened. He provided updates on missionaries who have recently visited Mission Central, as well as those visiting through December 2025. "If you love your people and your people love you, amazing things happen," he stated. Thies invited Rev. Steve Schulz to join him as well. Schulz continues to work with Thies at Mission Central and highlighted the upcoming volunteer luncheon coming up in July.

Joe Willman of LCEF thanked Iowa District West for its joy-filled support. Updates were given on different churches and schools utilizing LCEF monies. Current District investments stand as follows: \$16.8 million invested, with \$10 million loaned. Special thanks were given to Carole White Mandernach for her years of service to LCEF. Willman introduced Josh Remington, who will be serving in the new role as LCEF's IDW Representative.

Rev. Josh Cook of CPH (Concordia Publishing House) greeted the assembly. CPH is committed to providing resources to the church that are faithful to God's Word and the confessions. Please use LCMS25 for 25% off for those attending this convention, as well as free shipping. As you have ideas for items to provide to the church, please reach out to CPH. CPH also seeks new authors.

Rev. Mick Wolfram greeted the assembly on behalf of Operation Barnabas. He reminded the assembly that recently over 1,800 service men and women have been deployed. This is a great opportunity to love and serve our neighbors. Wolfram also introduced Rev. Steve Hokana, Chaplain and Assistant Director to the LCMS Armed Services, who shared the importance of supporting these service members.

The assembly then approved the Circuit Visitors on the ballot.

Rev. Nabil Nour installed Rev. Paul Egger as District President of Iowa District West.

Rev. Egger then installed Rev. Jonathan Riggert and Rev. Benjamin Dose as first and second vice-presidents.

Rev. Egger finished official acts by installing the Circuit Visitors and the District Treasurer, Secretary, and the Board of Directors.

No other business was provided, and the assembly was adjourned.

The convention ended in devotional worship.