

The 2023 Synod Convention

July 29 - August 3

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Overview, by Mark Wanamaker, Lay Delegate.

The big subjects for the 2023 Convention were:

- Communion practices
- Pastoral formation
- Relationship of Concordia Universities to Synod, especially per Concordia Texas
- Status and role of nonvoting convention delegates
- Issues related to Critical Race Theory
- Election of (Lay) officers to various boards. (Note below.)

Notable speakers were:

- Päivi Räsänen and Bishop Juhana Pohjola of Finland
- The rap artist Flame.

The Floor Committee hearings on the first day were a beehive! This delegate, as asked by a pastor in his circuit, carried a concern to Committee #5 - Theology and Church Relations. Citing the Workbook, Overtures 5-34 and 5-48, pgs 306 and 317.

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Convention Workbook: Reports and Overtures — 2023

Whether the subject is the created order of male and female, or of office - pastor and layman, the concern is the blurring of distinctions. This trend is driven by the culture. The result is women doing what is expected of men, and laymen doing what is strictly for pastors to do. The problem is worsened by unclear language and misdirected curriculum.

Thus, whether the problem of unclear categories is addressed on the Convention floor, or by responsible committees of the Synod, it should remain an ongoing issue, and be a prompt to make distinctions clear at all times in language, titles, curriculum and role assignments.

A good roundup of the Convention is linked below. I observed that the consensus was strong wherever doctrinal issues were noted, and that the delegates discerned well about efforts by a tiny minority to drag down the process by parliamentary annoyance, and by mischievous amendments designed to nullify the resolutions under consideration.

The Synod was given clear directions on how to proceed, and for this, I am thankful.

MW

Roundup:

<https://issuesetc.org/2023/08/04/2161-a-roundup-for-the-68th-regular-convention-of-the-lutheran-church-missouri-synod-mark-stern-8-4-23/>

Issues foreseen:

<https://issuesetc.org/2023/07/31/2123-the-68th-convention-of-the-lutheran-church-missouri-synod-mark-stern-tom-halvorson-7-31-23/>

LCMS reports

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023>

Speakers

A Conversation with Flame

LCMS report-with video

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/2023-lcms-convention-a-conversation-with-flame/>

Afternoon Session — Wednesday, August 2

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPOkziebVZ0> 3:15: - 3:42:

Pohjola and Räsänen

LCMS report-with video

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/the-gospel-is-at-stake-pohjola-and-rasanen-address-lcms-convention/>

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/2023-lcms-convention-a-conversation-with-bishop-juhana-pohjola-and-dr-paivi-rasanen/>

IssuesEtc.org

<https://issuesetc.org/2023/07/31/2121-an-update-on-a-freedom-of-speech-and-religion-case-involving-lutheran-leaders-in-finland-dr-paivi-rasanen-bishop-juhana-pohjala-7-30-23/>

Afternoon Session - Tuesday, August 1

Persecuted for Your Faith—Päivi M. Räsänen and Rev. Dr. Juhana Pohjola

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MZq6z-yQ_M 1:37: ff

Morning Session — Wednesday, August 2

Convention Essay—Rev. Dr. Juhana Pohjola The Redemption of the World

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqeR8y3ieNw> 34:00: ff

Resolutions

1 - National Witness

Morning Session — Monday, July 31, 2023

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NY0szqTXoY> 2:36: and following

Today's Business

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 1: Pg 83ff 1-07 was not amended

Today's Business Issue 3: Pg 368ff 7 resolutions that were amended

LCMS report

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/lcms-convention-adopts-eight-national-witness-resolutions/>

Also - Rev. Samuel Gomez (member of Floor Committee #1) appears in the choir, singing at Matins.
Wednesday, Aug. 2, Morning Session

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqeR8y3ieNw> Starts with J.S.Bach on the mandolin!

5 - Theology and Church Relations

LCMS report

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/convention-affirms-closed-communion-and-biblical-sexuality/>

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/2023-lcms-convention-focus-on-church-and-culture/>

Communion

LCMS report

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/convention-affirms-in-person-communion/>

Res. 5-08A To Affirm In-Person Communion

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business, Issue 2B: Pg. 306–7

Morning Session — Tuesday, August 1

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yb9Oe5p3bKs> 3:52: ff

Res. 5-09, To Review Guidance on Admission to the Lord's Supper

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business, Issue 1: Pg. 122–24 Adopted.

Res. 5-15, To Uphold Proper Elements and Reverential Administration of the Lord's Supper

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business, Issue 1: Pg. 127–28 Adopted.

Afternoon Session — Wednesday, August 2

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPOkziebVZ0> 49:15 ff

6 - Pastoral Ministry and Seminaries

Res. 6-02A To Encourage Proper Pastoral Formation through our Synod's Seminaries

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 4: Pg. 413–14

Afternoon Session — Tuesday, August 1

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MZq6z-yQ_M 3:06: ff

Res. 6-03A To Affirm and Strengthen the Synod's Commitment to Well-Formed Clergy for the Sake of the Gospel

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 4: Pg. 414–16

Afternoon Session — Wednesday, August 2

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPOkziebVZ0> 3:44: ff

7 - University Education

Res. 7-03 To Call Concordia University Texas Leadership to Repentance

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 1: Pg. 139

Morning Session — Tuesday, August 1

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yb9Oe5p3bKs> starting at 44:33; finishing at 1:46:03

President Christian of CU Tx speaking: 1:29:47

Original resolution passed 71.67%

LCMS Reporter article

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/delegates-express-desire-for-reconciliation-with-ctx-pass-resolution-7-03/>

Tom Halvorson's report

<https://issuesetc.org/2023/08/02/2142-votes-today-at-the-68th-regular-convention-of-the-lutheran-church-missouri-synod-concordia-university-texas-and-the-concordia-university-system-tom-halvorson-8-2-23/>

Article by Tom Halvorson

<https://steadfastlutherans.org/2023/08/open-arms-in-missouri/>

Ecclesiastical Visits, Workbook Reports **R63, R64**

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Convention Workbook: Reports and Overtures — 2023 Pg. 168 ff

7-04B To Revise Bylaws to Revisit and Renew Relationship of Colleges and Universities with the Synod

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 4: Pg. 417ff

Convention Minutes, Aug. 1, 2023

Morning Session - Wednesday, August 2

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqeR8y3ieNw> 57:57 - 1:49:

7-05A To Bring Accountability to Concordia Boards of Regents and to Improve Doctrinal Fidelity and Amenability to Ecclesiastical Supervision

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 2B: Pg. 335ff

Convention Minutes, Aug. 2, 2023

Morning Session - Wednesday, August 2

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqeR8y3ieNw> 1:52: - 2:31:

9 - Structure and Administration

Res. 9-08A To Strengthen Nonvoting Advisory Delegate Participation at Conventions

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 3: Pg. 380–81

Afternoon Session — Monday, July 31

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wNCK1fkP40> 4:15:50

Res. 9-09A, To Appoint a Task Force to Prepare the 2026 Convention to Consider Implementing a Four-Year Convention Cycle (was not adopted)

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 3: Pg. 381 Convention Minutes, Aug. 3, 2023

11 - Church and Culture

Res. 11-01A To Encourage Appropriate Use of Social Media

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 3: Pg. 383–84

Convention Minutes, Aug. 2, 2023

Res. 11-02A To Reject All Forms of Racism and Affirm Our Witness to All People

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 3, Monday, 7/31/2023 Pg. 3:384–85

Convention Minutes, Aug. 2, 2023

Res. 11-03A To Love and Disciple Peoples of All Ethnicities, Languages, and Skin Colors

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications#todays-business>

Today's Business Issue 3: Pg. 385–86

Convention Minutes, Aug. 2, 2023

Morning Session - Wednesday, August 2

<https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/livestream>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqeR8y3ieNw> 2:40:39 ff

LCMS report

<https://reporter.lcms.org/2023/delegates-adopt-multiple-resolutions-on-church-and-culture/>

A Last Note - the Need for Well-Informed Laymen

The Lutheran Church over the centuries has been strong, because many laymen knew their Bibles and their Confessions. These days, we might identify a savvy layman if he knows his Lutheran Service Book well. Who is our next generation of laymen, ready to serve with discernment on mission boards, boards of directors and boards of regents? Who has potential, and what training might he receive? This question came up among delegates at the Convention, and will be further discussed in correspondence from me.

And furthermore, how shall a layman learn how the Synod works? Who will encourage him to study the proposed actions of upcoming conventions, and attend, and vote/advise wisely? (Note: By recent action, the Convention left the cycle at 3 years, thus not diluting the opportunity for this training by 33%!) Do all layman know that they can attend and observe a convention, even if not sent as delegates?

Thanks be to God for great mercies.

Thanks to all delegates and supporting personnel, for the success that is the 2023 Synod Convention!

Mark Wanamaker, Lay Delegate With helpful pointers by Ken Schurb.
8/13/2023



This is seen in a few dry places in California – the California Tree Poppy, aka, the Fried Egg.