

**MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MONTANA DISTRICT OF THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD**

The Mission of the Montana District is to provide mutual assistance to the congregations of the district, their leaders and pastors, to train God's royal priesthood to worship God, to live the priestly life in the service of the Gospel, and to bring the unbelieving as a gift to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

**BY LAWS  
OF THE MONTANA DISTRICT  
LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD**

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**1 DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

**1.1 Name and Membership**

**1.1.1** The name of the District shall be that given in the Articles of Incorporation. Membership is defined by the Constitution of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

**1.2 Purpose**

**1.2.1** Committed to a common confession and mission, congregations of the Montana District of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod join to support one another and to work together in carrying out their commonly adopted objectives. The District is organized to work in support of and on behalf of congregations to assist them in carrying out their ministries as they seek to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, the members of His body, and the world which stands in need of the Word and the impact of His redeeming love. The Montana District shall administer its assigned area of responsibility as provided or authorized by the Constitution and applicable bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and/or as assigned by its convention.

**1.3 Conventions, Elections, and Conferences**

**1.3.1 Convention**

- a. The District shall meet in regular convention in each year immediately preceding the year of a general convention of the Synod.
- b. The District President shall determine the convention dates and services, designate the time for sessions, the order of business, and appoint preachers, chaplains, essayists, and convention committees.
- c. Host congregations shall have their invitations in the hands of the District President before the convention previous to the year for which the invitation is issued. If no invitation has been received at the time of the convention, the Board of Directors shall designate the place of the next convention and make the necessary arrangements.
- d. Convention costs for delegates' lodging, meals, travel expenses, and other incidental expenses shall be paid by a registration fee plus an assessment paid by all congregations of the District, the amount of the assessment to be determined by the Board of Directors on the basis of communicant membership. Surplus monies shall be deposited in a Convention Expense Fund Account.

**1.3.2 Nominations and Elections**

- a. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall consist of three Ministers of religion--ordained, one Minister of religion—commissioned, and three laymen.
- b. The committee shall be elected by the District Convention triennially and shall serve for the succeeding regular convention.
- c. The committee shall, before each convention, solicit nominations from members of the District and, prepare slates of nominations for all elected offices for which nomination is not made by primary election. Nominations shall always be listed in alphabetical order, without any distinctive marks.
- d. The committee's slates of nominations for offices shall be presented to the convention separately after the election of the District President and Vice-Presidents. Additional nominations may be made from the floor, but only for the respective office under consideration at the time.
- e. The committee shall objectively state qualifications of the respective nominees.
- f. All elections shall be conducted by means of printed ballots.
- g. The elections of the Circuit Visitors shall be in accordance with the regulations of the Synodical Handbook and (n) below.
- h. All elections shall be decided by a majority of all votes cast.
- i. The following order of elections shall be observed:
  1. The District President
  2. The First Vice-President
  3. The Second Vice-President
  4. The Secretary
  5. The Circuit Visitors' Ratification
  6. The Minister of religion--ordained Member of the Board of Directors
  7. The Minister of Religion—Commissioned Member of the Board of Directors
  8. The Four Lay Members of the Board of Directors
  9. The Nominations and Elections Committee
  10. The Delegate to the Committee for Convention Nominations of Synod
  11. The Alternate Delegate to the Committee for Convention Nominations of Synod
- j. The nomination and election of the District President.
  1. The election shall take place on the first full day of convention.
  2. Nominations shall be effected as follows:
    - a. The District Secretary shall send a letter to every congregation in the Montana District six months prior to the convention requesting a response with the names of two Ministers of religion--ordained it has chosen to nominate for president.
    - b. The names of the nominees are to be submitted to the Montana District Secretary four months prior to the convention.

- c. Upon receipt of the names, the Montana District Secretary is to contact all nominees by letter asking them to respond within thirty days as to their willingness to allow their name to stand for nomination.
  - 3. The Montana District Secretary shall list the five names receiving the most nominations in alphabetical order, to be submitted for publication in the Convention Workbook.
  - 4. Election shall take place by a majority of votes cast.
    - a. If one candidate does not receive a majority of votes cast on the first ballot, the nominee receiving the least number of votes shall be eliminated.
    - b. Voting shall follow the same procedure until one candidate receives a majority of votes cast.
- k. The nomination and election of the First Vice President.
  - 1. The election shall take place on the first full day of convention.
  - 2. Nominations shall be effected following the above procedure (j.2).
  - 3. The Montana District Secretary shall list the five names receiving the most nominations in alphabetical order, to be submitted for publication in the Convention Workbook.
  - 4. Election shall take place by a majority of votes cast following the above procedure (j.4).
- l. The Election of the District Second Vice-President.
  - 1. The election shall take place on the first full day of convention.
  - 2. Nominations shall be effected by a primary election, in which each voting delegate shall be entitled to one nomination. The three names receiving the highest number of votes shall be the nominees for the second vice president.
  - 3. Election shall take place by a majority of votes cast following the above procedure (j.4).
- m. The Election of the Secretary
 

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall propose the names of Ordained Ministers for the office of Secretary, and the election shall take place following the above procedure (j.4).
- n. Election of the Circuit Visitors (See Synodical Handbook)
 

The election of the Circuit Visitors shall take place at a Circuit Forum not less than four months prior to the District Convention. The slate of Circuit Visitors shall be ratified at the District Convention which shall constitute election.
- o. Election of Board of Directors
 

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall propose names for each director to be elected, and the election shall take place following the above procedure (j.4) for ordained and commissioned minister members, and by majority vote for lay members.

- p. Election of the Nominations and Elections Committee.

The Elections committee shall propose names for each position to be elected, and the election shall proceed according to the above procedure (j.4).

- q. Election of Delegate & Alternate Delegate to the Committee on Convention Nominations of the Synod

The election of Delegate and Alternate Delegate to the Committee for Convention Nominations shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Synodical Handbook.

- r. Election of Advisory Delegates to the Convention of Synod

The election of advisory delegates to the convention of Synod shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Synodical Handbook.

### **1.3.3 Conferences**

- a. The official conferences and their meeting dates shall be the following:

1. The District Conference of ordained ministers, comprising all ordained ministers of the District, shall meet annually. The Conferences of Ordained and Commissioned ministers may meet jointly.
2. The Quad and Dual Circuit Conferences shall meet annually.
3. The Conferences of Commissioned ministers, comprising all rostered Commissioned ministers of the Montana District, shall meet annually. The Conferences of Ordained and Commissioned ministers may meet jointly.

- b. In addition to the official conferences, the Ordained Ministers are encouraged to organize smaller conferences and meet for the purpose of discussing doctrinal, professional, and practical matters.

- c. Minutes of the official conferences.

1. The regulations of the Synodical Handbook shall apply.
2. The District Archives shall be the repository for all official conference minutes.

## **2 DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

### **2.1 Officers, Board of Directors, and Appointments**

#### **2.1.1 Officers**

The elected officers of the District shall be a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, and the Circuit Visitors.

#### **2.1.2 Board of Directors**

The members of the Board of Directors shall be elected by the convention. The Board of Directors shall include the following voting members by virtue of their election: President, First Vice-President, Secretary, one minister of religion--ordained, one minister of religion—commissioned and four laymen. The Second Vice-President shall be a non-voting member of the Board. The Board shall have such powers and duties as are accorded to it by the Constitution, Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, resolutions, and policies of the Synod, as well as those of the district.

### **2.1.3 Appointments**

2.1.3.1 The Board of Directors may appoint committees to assist it in carrying out the work of the District. The Board may combine or eliminate committees as it finds necessary.

2.1.3.2 The Board of Directors shall determine the size and personnel of the committees, as well as appoint their Chairmen.

2.1.3.3 District Committees may include:

1. Campus
2. Education
3. Evangelism
4. Human Care
5. Indian
6. Missions
7. Stewardship
8. Youth

2.1.3.4 Other Board of Directors Appointments:

1. Treasurer
2. Finance Committee (from within the board)
3. By-laws Committee (from within the board)
4. Congregational Constitution Committee (from within the board)
5. Archivist

2.1.3.5 No appointments to district committees or new programs shall be initiated by the outgoing President or Board of Directors in the interim before the newly elected officers assume office, except at the express direction of the District Convention.

2.1.3.6 It is advisable that the Board of Directors should seek input from the Circuit Visitors on appointment to the committees of the District.

2.1.3.7 An orientation for committee chairmen shall be held as soon as possible following their appointment.

### **2.1.4 Terms of Service**

2.1.4.1 Terms of Office

- a. The term of office for all officers and members of the board and committees of the District, whether elected or appointed, shall be three years.
- b. All officers of the District (President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and Circuit Visitors) shall be eligible to serve an unlimited number of terms. Other members of the Board of Directors

shall be eligible to serve not more than three successive terms, beginning with the term to which such individuals are first elected. Members of appointed committees and the Treasurer shall be eligible to serve an unlimited number of terms.

- c. The President, the Vice-Presidents, the Secretary, and the other members of the Board of Directors shall assume office thirty days after their election.
- d. All appointees of the Board of Directors shall begin their service immediately upon appointment. The general rule shall apply that incumbents shall serve until their successors take office.

#### 2.1.4.2 Vacancies

Unless otherwise specified in these by-laws, or in the by-laws of the Synod, vacancies will be filled by the Board of Directors. Appointment to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired term.

#### 2.1.4.3 Prohibition of Conflict of Interest (See Synodical Handbook)

The Board of Directors shall implement the synodical conflict of interest policy.

#### 2.1.4.4 Accountability

- a. All Officers, the Board, and the Nominations and Elections Committee shall be accountable to the delegate convention of the District.
- b. Committees of the District (excluding the Nominations and Elections Committee, see above), are accountable to the Board of Directors.

#### 2.1.4.5 Holding More than One Office (See Synodical Handbook)

## **2.2 Duties of those who serve the District**

### **2.2.1. The President of the District**

#### 2.2.1.1 General Rights and Duties of the District President

The District President, by virtue of his office, represents the Synod. His rights and duties will therefore be similar in nature and identical insofar as they apply as outlined for the President of the Synod. (See Synodical Handbook) He shall carry out his duties in accordance with the Constitution, bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.

#### 2.2.1.2 Rights and Duties Specific to the District

- a. The President shall serve as chairman of the Board of Directors. He shall serve as executive of the Board of Directors with regard to administrative functions of the District.
- b. The President shall provide for periodic consultations on doctrine and practice with the Circuit Visitors, individually or collectively.
- c. The President shall normally consult with the Vice-Presidents whenever important and difficult district, synodical, and inter-synodical questions and problems arise.
- d. The President shall establish the duties and responsibilities of the Vice Presidents, who shall be responsible to the President.

- e. The President shall have the right to authorize the Vice-Presidents to perform the duties of his office and shall hold them responsible for their performance. Accountability, however, shall always remain with the President.
- f. The President shall, with the Secretary, legally represent the District.
- g. The President may appoint ad hoc committees to serve the District.
- h. The President shall approve the manuscript of the convention proceedings before publication.

#### 2.2.1.3 If the President is Unable to Serve

- a. The duties and responsibilities of the President shall be assumed by the First Vice-President whenever the Board of Directors determines that the President is temporarily unable to serve because of prolonged illness, or disability. The First Vice-President shall remain as the acting President for the remainder of the term or until the Board of Directors determines that such illness, or disability has ceased.
- b. When the office of President is vacated due to his acceptance of a call or in the event of his death, the Vice-Presidents in the order designated at the time of their election shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the President on a part-time basis. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for determining the details of this transition.

#### 2.2.1.4 Transition of Office Due to Elections

- a. Before his successor assumes office, the outgoing District President shall use the intervening time (thirty days) to settle the affairs of his administration and assist the newly elected District President, as requested, in becoming acquainted with the responsibilities of the office.
- b. By the end of the thirty days, the outgoing District President shall have arranged for the orderly transfer of:
  1. Keys to the District Office
  2. District owned vehicle
  3. District credit cards
  4. Files or records affecting the office
  5. Office equipment owned by the District
  6. District or Synodical manuals pertaining to or used by the office of the District President.
- c. If the District President is not re-elected, he shall continue to receive his full salary and benefits for a period not to exceed ninety days from the day the newly elected President takes office. If he finds other employment, accepts a call, or retires before the end of ninety days, his salary and benefits from the District shall end by the first of the month following his assumption of such employment, call, or retirement.
- d. If the District President dies while in office, full salary shall be paid for ninety days to the surviving spouse or estate.

### 2.2.2 District Vice-Presidents

#### 2.2.2.1 Relation to the President



- a. The Vice-Presidents shall be elected advisors of the President. Upon the President's request, or as provided by the District, they shall represent him or assist him in discharging his responsibilities.
- b. The First Vice-President shall serve as a voting member of the Board of Directors. The Second Vice-President shall serve as a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.

#### 2.2.2.2 Vacancies

A vacancy in the office of First Vice-President shall be filled by the Second Vice-President. A vacancy in the office of Second Vice-President shall be filled by the individual member of the District receiving the highest number of nominations for Second Vice-President at the previous convention.

### 2.2.3 Circuit Visitors

2.2.3.1 The Provisions of the Synodical Handbook Shall Apply.

### 2.2.4 Secretary of the District

#### 2.2.4.1 Duties

The Secretary shall:

- a. With the President, legally represent the District.
- b. Serve as Secretary of the Board of Directors.
- c. Serve as consultant to the local committee for the District Convention.
- d. Provide credential forms for each delegate to the District Convention.
- e. Produce the minutes of the Convention.
- f. Perform duties with respect to nominations and elections as required under bylaw 1.3.2.
- g. Perform all duties incidental to the office of secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the President, the District in convention, the Board of Directors, or the Bylaws of the Synod.

### 2.2.5 The Treasurer of the District

#### 2.2.5.1 Appointed to Office

At its first meeting following its election, the Board of Directors shall appoint a Treasurer who shall be a layman (male or female), and who shall serve a three year term beginning with his appointment. The Treasurer shall serve at the direction of the Board of Directors.

#### 2.2.5.2 Duties

The Treasurer shall:

- a. Be responsible for all funds and securities of the District; He shall receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to the District from any source, and deposit all such monies in the name

of the District in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the Board of Directors.

- b. Disburse the monies of the District and keep accurate account of them under the instruction of the Board of Directors
- c. If required by the Board of Directors of the District, give a bond for the faithful discharge of the duties of the office.
- d. Ensure that an annual audit of district finances is completed and its results are communicated to the proper Synodical offices. The selection of the auditing firm is to be determined by the Board of Directors.
- e. Publish quarterly and annual financial statements of the District.
- f. Perform all duties incidental to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the President, the District in convention, or the Board of Directors.

## **2.2.6 The Board of Directors of the District**

### 2.2.6.1 Membership

The Board of Directors shall be constituted as follows: The District President, the First Vice-President, the Secretary, one minister of religion--ordained, one minister of religion—commissioned, and four laymen. The Second Vice-President shall be a non-voting member of the Board. The District President shall serve as the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

### 2.2.6.2 General Duties

- a. The Board of Directors shall have all the powers and duties which have been accorded to it by the laws of the State of Montana, the Articles of Incorporation of the District, the Constitution and By-laws of the Synod and District, and the resolutions of the delegate conventions of the District. The Board of Directors shall be vested with the general management and supervision of the District's business and legal affairs.
- b. The Board of Directors shall be accountable to the delegate convention of the District for the discharge of its duties.

### 2.2.6.3 Meetings

- a. The Board of Directors shall meet not fewer than four times a year at such times and places as designated by the President.
- b. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or any four directors. Meetings held by the use of electronic media will be held in conformity with Synodical Board of Directors policy. Notice of any special meeting shall be given in writing, and shall include time, place and agenda of the business to be transacted.
- c. A quorum shall consist of five members.

### 2.2.6.4 Duties in Planning

- a. The Board of Directors shall establish long-range and short-range plans of District work which shall include general objectives for the committees.
- b. The Board of Directors shall require the committees, on an annual basis, to submit to the Board specific objectives, goals, and action plans together with a proposed budget for carrying out their work.
- c. The Board of Directors shall review the plans and budget requests submitted to it by the committees, and shall determine whether they are in harmony with the resolutions, policies, and directives of the Synod and the District.

#### 2.2.6.5 Relationship between the Board of Directors and Committees appointed by the Board

- a. The Board of Directors appoints the committees which are, therefore, directly accountable to the Board.
- b. The Board of Directors shall communicate with the committees through the chairmen of the various committees.
- c. The Board shall require committee chairmen to submit reports of the actions and status of the plans of their committees to the President of the District for each Board of Directors meeting. The President of the District or the Board of Directors may request the chairmen of the committees to attend the Board meeting. The Chairmen may also request attendance.
- d. The Board of Directors shall approve the budget for the committees and shall, following each regular meeting of the Board, inform the committee chairmen of the availability of funds.
- e. The Board of Directors shall determine the policies and procedures according to which the Committees and their chairmen shall function. These duties shall be set forth in the Standard Operating Procedures Manual.
- f. The Board shall require each committee to submit reports for each delegate convention of the District for inclusion in the Convention Workbook.

#### 2.2.6.6 Duties with Respect to District Personnel

- a. The Board of Directors shall determine the job descriptions, salaries, and other compensations of the workers employed by the District.
- b. The Board of Directors may provide secretarial help to assist the President, the Board of Directors, and Committees.
- c. The Board of Directors shall act as the calling body for any special work of the District. It may contract for other workers as opportunities or necessities arise.

#### 2.2.6.7 Fiscal Duties of the Board of Directors

- a. The Finance Committee, as a sub-committee of the Board, may assist the Board with fiscal duties. The Finance Committee shall be the laymen of the Board. They shall call on the Treasurer of the District for assistance in their duties.
- b. The Board of Directors shall annually prepare and publish a comprehensive budget for the work of the District.

- c. The Board of Directors shall plan for spending budgets which shall not exceed the expected income of the District. The Board shall not borrow funds for operating expenditures.
- d. The Board of Directors shall determine the salaries and other compensations of workers called by the District.
- e. The Board shall determine the level and duration of subsidies to congregations or missions of the District.
- f. Approval from the Board of Directors shall be required for all commitments which exceed the budgetary allocations of the various committees.
- g. The Board of Directors may borrow funds for site acquisitions or construction projects.

#### 2.2.6.8 Property Duties

- a. The Board of Directors shall have charge of the District's real and personal property.
- b. The Board of Directors shall approve plans for construction or remodeling of any buildings on District property.

#### 2.2.6.9 Miscellaneous Duties

- a. At its first meeting of the triennium, the Board shall appoint directors to be responsible to review constitutions and bylaws that congregations have submitted for review.
- b. At its first meeting of the triennium, the Board shall appoint directors to be responsible to review the bylaws of the district for congruence with that of the constitution and bylaws of the Synod.
- c. The Board shall annually report to the congregations of the District on the work and the needs of the District.
- d. Official minutes of the Board shall be made available upon request.
- e. The Board shall submit to the convention of the District a comprehensive report of its work and the financial status of the District, together with appropriate recommendations. The members of the Board of Directors shall attend each convention of the District.

### 2.2.7 District Reconcilers (See Synodical Handbook)

## 3 AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

### 3.1 Amendments to the by-laws may be made, provided that they are:

- a. Not contrary to the constitution and by-laws of the Synod
- b. Submitted to and approved by the Commission on Constitutional Matters in advance of the District convention at which they are to be considered.
- c. Submitted to the by-laws committee for review and recommendation prior to the convention
- d. Presented in writing to a convention of the District

- e. Specified as by-law amendments and considered by a convention floor committee.
- f. Adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates voting