

1 **To Encourage Both LCMS Seminaries to Continue Training Men for Faithful**
2 **Service and To Petition the Synod to Dramatically Increase Funds Sent to**
3 **Undesignated Seminary Operations.**

4 **Resolution 4-02**

5 WHEREAS, Both of our LCMS Seminaries continue to teach and prepare
6 theological pastors who understand, believe, and teach the Lutheran Confession
7 faithfully; and

8 WHEREAS, Our seminaries have increasingly been forced to secure their own
9 funding for operations, necessitating the formation of separate development offices
10 and staffⁱ; and

11 WHEREAS, One of the reasons for the formation of a Synod was the common
12 and truthful belief that congregations could do together what none could do alone,
13 including providing seminaries for the training of pastors in the Synod ⁱⁱ; and

14 WHEREAS, The LCMS model of residential seminary education has served the
15 Synod well since its founding and has become a model for seminaries around the
16 world, with partner churches calling for aid and counsel in providing similar
17 educational opportunities and standards for their students ⁱⁱⁱ; and

18 WHEREAS, Congregations of the Synod and global missions will always need
19 well-educated pastors and experienced and gifted faculties; and

20 WHEREAS, The cost of maintaining academic standards, recruiting and teaching
21 future pastors, and operating residential seminaries continues to increase; and

22 WHEREAS, Many other church bodies in the United States are abandoning
23 residential models and moving to online teaching and remote learning while
24 requiring less overall education and training in the sacred texts and doctrine of the
25 Christian Church to the detriment of pastoral formation; and

26 WHEREAS, Many in our Synod are also tempted to close a seminary and find
27 cheaper and more expedient ways to solve the short-term clergy shortage that we
28 face; and

29 WHEREAS, Such short-term thinking can provide some relief for the immediate
30 crisis, but often has unintended consequences and creates greater struggles for the
31 future; and

32 WHEREAS, Jesus has told us that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few,
33 to pray to Him to send out laborers into His harvest field; and

34 WHEREAS, The Lord, in His mercy, has faithfully and generously provided
35 these seminaries for the preaching and teaching of His Word, and they are a great
36 blessing to confessional Lutheranism in the United States and throughout the
37 world; therefore be it

38 *RESOLVED*, That letters of encouragement be sent to each seminary from the
39 Montana District Board of Directors thanking them for their faithfulness to our
40 Lutheran Confession and the formation of pastors, while also encouraging them to
41 continue this work; and be it further

42 *RESOLVED*, That congregations of the Montana District be encouraged to
43 consider generous contributions to the Joint Seminary Fund^{iv}, a fund that provides
44 roughly one million dollars per fiscal year to each seminary^v, or directly to one or
45 both of the seminaries; and be it further

46 *RESOLVED*, That the Montana District lead this effort by example, setting a goal
47 of contributing 5% of unrestricted giving from District congregations to the Joint
48 Seminary Fund beginning in fiscal year 2023; and be it further

49 *RESOLVED*, That the Montana District petition the Synod in convention to return
50 to the earlier practice of our Synod when seminaries were mostly funded by
51 unrestricted monies given to the Synod at large by districts, member congregations,
52 and individuals. Specifically, that the Synod would adjust budget priorities as
53 necessary so as to make our seminaries a priority by providing for 50% of each
54 seminary's budget beginning in 2024, with a stated goal of increasing that
55 percentage at each convention until both seminaries are fully funded by the Synod
56 budget; and be it finally

57 *RESOLVED*, That this resolution be forwarded to The Lutheran Church–Missouri
58 Synod for adoption at its 2023 convention.

59 RE: 2022 Convention Workbook Overture 4-02

60 **Signatures**

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Rev. Howard D. Schreibeis, Chairman, Committee 4

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Rev. Russell L. Dewell, Secretary,
Committee 4

ⁱCurrent support for our seminaries from the Synodical budget amounts to 1% of the seminaries’ budgets.

ⁱⁱThe fifth reason listed under “Reasons for forming a Synodical Organization” of the first Synodical Constitution reads, “5. To make possible the promotion of common church projects. (Seminary, agenda, hymnal, Book of Concord, schoolbooks, Bible distribution, mission projects within and outside the Church.)”

ⁱⁱⁱ “Today, the single most frequent and fervent request received by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod from partner and non-partner Lutheran church bodies around the world is to share our theological treasures.”

<https://www.lcms.org/makeagift/gsi>

^{iv} <https://www.lcms.org/seminary-education/seminary-topics/lcms-joint-seminary-fund>

^v <https://reporter.lcms.org/2020/reporter-supplement-pastoral-education-the-truth-of-christ-is-that-important/>