



Pacific Northwest **DISTRICT**

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Minutes of the
53rd Biennial Convention of the Pacific Northwest District of the WELS
at Evergreen Lutheran High School in Tacoma, WA
June 7-8, 2022

I Will Hope In Him!

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Convention attendees began gathering at 7:45 at Evergreen for the District Convention.

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| 8:30 – 9:30 | Opening Worship with Holy Communion
Preacher: Dr. Ken Cherney, Wis. Luth. Sem., Sermon Text: Job 13:1-16. Dr. Cherney shared that although we may suffer, we will hope in Him. I know that my Redeemer lives.
Worship Leader: Pastor John Steinbrenner |
| 9:30 – 9:50 | Break/Refreshments |
| 9:50 – 10:05 | Welcome by District President, each person introduced themselves. Housekeeping announcements shared by the District President and District Secretary. |
| 10:05 – 10:35 | District President's Report, Pastor John Steinbrenner. Report includes a well-written and meaningful devotion, all official acts of the PNW including called workers into the district, all called workers out of the district, church and school openings and closings, resignations, retirements, and one suspension. The report also included WELS notes regarding vacancies, recruitment, studies on the divine call as well as the role of man and woman, CMO, child abuse protection policies, Synod code, Circuit pastors, Sem Satellite Courses, and special thanks. There were no questions. |
| 10:35 – 10:45 | Nominating Committee Chairman, Pastor Luke Tembreull: Elections. Luke explained that we have 19 elections to complete. Luke explained that he would accept nominations for District President via texting and gave his cell number. John Steinbrenner was nominated, Craig Wasser refused |

nomination. Bart Brauer accepted nomination, Dan Kramer accepted nomination and Kevin Schultz refused nomination.

- 10:45 – 11:10 Synodical Council Report, PNW Representative, Mr. Brent Masters. Lay Representative and Secretary for the Administration Committee. Serves as councilman at Cross of Christ in Boise, ID. Brent explained who makes up the SC and the work of the SC. Brent highlighted the finances of the WELS, including CMO, the Financial Stabilization Fund, PPP loans, inflation and wages. Pastor Wetzel asked if there are any highlights from the other two committees of the SC (Ministry and Finance Committee). Brent responded with some information about the pension discussions that have been taking place.
- 11:25 Luke T. checked if everyone was able to vote via email ballot. Last call to cast your vote. Luke closed the ballot. **John Steinbrenner won the election and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and seconded and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Rev. John Steinbrenner re-elected to be PNW District President. Dan Lange accepted nomination for 1st Vice President. Bart Brauer, Geoff Cortright and Fred Schleg accepted nomination.**
- 11:30-11:55 Jim Holm gave a presentation about WELS Investment Funds and WELS Foundation. Jim explained that WELS Investment Funds is currently managing approximately \$300 million for WELS and 245 congregations and WELS-affiliated ministries. WELS Foundation has served members and ministries since 1965 by providing tax-wise planned giving opportunities, including Gifts of appreciated assets, Endowment funds and “Give it twice” trusts. A Charitable remainder trust video was shown. No questions.
- 11:55 Luke T announced last call for voting for 1st V.P, **Dan Lange received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and seconded and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Rev. Dan Lange was elected as 1st Vice President.** Luke called for nominations for 2nd Vice President. Geoff Cortright agreed to be nominated. Fred Schleg, Bart Brauer, and Cale Mead accepted nomination. A Grace In Action video was shown.
- 12:00 – 1:00 Lunch Break -- A delicious lunch of pulled pork sandwiches was served.
- 1:05 Luke T announced last call for voting for 2nd V.P, **Geoff Cortright received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and seconded and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Rev. Geoff Cortright was elected as 2nd Vice President.** Luke asked for nominations for District Secretary/Treasurer. Dan Kramer

declined nomination. Ryan Schmeling accepted to be nominated, Bart Brauer declined nomination. Nomination suspended so the presenter would be allowed to begin.

1:10– 2:05 PM Job – “I Will Hope in Him” – Part 1, The Prologue, Prof. Cherney. Break out groups of 5 discussed the first two chapters of Job. One discussion point was “Christians don’t feel that way.”

Luke T announced the ballot for District Secretary/Treasurer. Ryan Schmeling, Aaron West and James Wilcox agreed to be nominated. Ballot sent out.

2:15 – 3:00 Congregational Services Video w/District Coordinator Reports
Pastor John Hein video was shown– program introduction
Evangelism (video 2:04-5:12) followed by Pastor Cale Mead
Discipleship video (5:12-9:04) followed by Pastor Andy Schwartz, who emphasized the quantity and quality for good, Christian materials, especially for young people and women. Two years from now there will be a Youth Rally in Colorado—encouragement to get our teens there.
Special Ministries video (9:04-12:25) followed by Pastor Brad Snyder, emphasizing Conquerors through Christ.
Worship video (12:25-15:49) followed by Pastor Kurt Wetzel verbal report. Kurt directed the delegates to his written report, including discussion questions for Circuits regarding some portions of the RTTD talking about new mission starts being distinctly Lutheran.
Commission on Lutheran Schools video (15:49-17:06) followed by Josh Roth, stand-in for Chris Hintz, who has Covid. Josh directed attention to written report. 10 teachers from our district will attend the teacher conference in Milwaukee at the end of June.
Video Conclusion (17:06-19:37)
Ministry of Christian Giving, Pastor Chris Ewings, encouraged our members to excel in the grace of giving. Chris shared a devotional thought from 2 Corinthians. Statistics shared regarding continued increase in giving despite COVID-19. 4.3 increase in CMO reported. Chris noted the Equipping Christian Witnesses program through MLC. Chris noted the plethora of materials available. Please reference A.03f. No questions.

3:00 – 3:15 Break

3:15 **Ryan Schmeling received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and seconded and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Mr. Ryan Schmeling was elected as District Secretary/Treasurer.** Luke explained that there were no other candidates to serve as the Synodical Council layman position. **Brent Masters is confirmed by motion to continue to serve**

as Synodical Council Rep for another term. Luke then introduced two ballots sent out at the same time: District Mission Board position (pastor)—vote for either Matt Proeber or Jason Strong; District Mission Board position (layman)—Dave Malnes (Incumbent), Mark Redlawsk-or Albert Tripp -

- 3:20 – 3:35 Evergreen Lutheran HS Report, Mr. Kyle Raymond, Principal, gave a report and highlighted the value of Christian education in the life of one specific young man who graduated from Evergreen a year ago.
- 3:35 – 3:30 Ann Poetter gave a verbal report for WLC. Highlighted the article in recent Forward In Christ article featuring a student who learned the truth at WLC. The WLC video was shown.
- 3:45 – 4:35 Job – “I Will Hope in Him” – Part 2, The Dialogue, Prof. Cherney
- 4:35 Circuits meet to elect Circuit Pastors – then into a Break
Circuit Pastor Election results:
Alaska Circuit: Jason Strong
Geoduck Circuit: Fred Schleg
Idaho Circuit: Dan Kramer
Oregon Circuit: Thad Bitter
Rainier Circuit: James Wilcox
Sonshine Circuit: Tim Wilkens
- 4:50 Housekeeping: Offering gathered was \$198. Suggested places to direct the offering: Evergreen Lutheran H.S. Moved and seconded to direct this gift to Evergreen. All in favor, offering to be given to Evergreen Lutheran H.S.
- Closing Devotion – Matt Proeber, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14,
Hope When Grieving
- Floor Committees to be informative but brief, no whereas – resolves needed
Kyle R. announced 6 rooms for the Floor Committees to meet
- 4:50 Floor Committees Met to Discuss “Report to the Twelve Districts” –
committees met in designated rooms with their chairmen; meetings may continue after supper, after fellowship, or Wed. morning if needed
- 6:00 A delicious dinner of tube steak/weinered meat was served.
- 7:30 Evening Fellowship, including cornhole tournament with lots of rules that few could understand.

Wednesday, June 8, 2022

- 8:30 – 8:45 Opening Devotion – Ryan Schmeling, Romans 8:18-25,
Patient Hope for Future Glory
- 8:45 – 9:00 Nominating Committee update: **Board of Appeals Chairman ballots: first, pastor position: Bart Brauer, Jason Strong (incumbent), and Nathan Waganknecht. Teacher position ballot: Mr. Josh Roth (Incumbent), Mr. Jason Gibson, Mr. Joshua Enstad, Mr. Jacob Biebert. Layman position ballot: Mr. Jonathan Hood (Grace, Yakima WA), Mr. Volodymyr Kustlyvy (Savior of the Nations, Vancouver BC), Mr. Derrick Most (St. Matthew, Spokane WA), Mr. Gene Whitlach (Cross of Christ, Boise ID)**
- 9:00 – 9:40 Board for Ministerial Education report—noting the pastoral shortage—over 10% for the first time in recorded history. Aware of the teacher shortage—140 unfilled request for teachers. WELS Connection segments coming in August about these things.
- MLC report—focused on preparing workers in God’s kingdom. Note the written reports on our district webpage as well. A MLC video was shown introducing new strategic plan, “Pursuing Excellence Under the Cross.”
- Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary update by Dr. Cherney. Site plan—architect—campus upgrade. Pursuing accreditation; ATS, coming out of the process able to do what we do even better. Professor Cherney answered questions about the PSI program and non-biblical languages at MLC.
- Geoff Cortright gave the BME Report.
- Christian Aid and Relief video shown where Dan Sims explained what help has been provided throughout the world.
- 9:40 – 10:25 Job – “I Will Hope in Him” – Part 3, Job and his God, Prof. Cherney
- 10:25 – 10:40 Break
- Nominating Committee update: **Board of Appeals Chairman position: Bart Brauer received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Rev. Bart Brauer was elected as Board of Appeals Chairman.** Board of Appeals teacher position: Josh Roth received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it

unanimous. It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. **Mr. Josh Roth was elected as Board of Appeals teacher position.** Board of Appeals layman position: Jonathan Hood received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. **Mr. Jonathan Hood was elected as Board of Appeals Layman position.** Ballot for Board of Appeals pastor at large position: Rev. Dave Birsching, Rev. Jason Strong and Rev. Nathan Waganknecht. Ballot for Board of Appeals teacher at large position: Mr. Jason Gibson, Mr. Joshua Enstad, and Mr. Jacob Biebert. Ballot for Board of Appeals layman at large position: Mr. Volodymyr Kustlyvvy (Savior of the Nations, Vancouver BC), Mr. Derrick Most (St. Matthew, Spokane WA), and Mr. Gene Whitlach (Cross of Christ, Boise ID).

10:40 – 11:30 RTTD Floor Cmt. #1 Chrmn Report. Bart Brauer read Cmt. #1 report. See District Convention Webpage. Bart called on Prof. Cherney to give a verbal update on Brazil and Portuguese-speaking world. No questions. Then Bart introduced a memorial to the COP from Cmt. #1. See webpage. Discussion: Chris Ewings and Geoff Cortright spoke in favor of the memorial. 2nd V.P. of WELS, Rev. Joel Voss thanked the committee for addressing this to the COP, assured the chairman “We hear you.” It will be discussed on the COP level. DP Steinbrenner called the question. **It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed and Cmt #1 Memorial passed.**

11:30 – 12:20 WELS 2nd Vice President, Pastor Joel Voss gave his report, noting the safety of the PNW compared to Ukraine. Rev. Voss gave highlights of World and Home Missions, vacancies and the PSI program, as well as various other updates Synod-wide. Thanks were offered for numerous individuals ending their service as District Presidents, SC reps and others. Question asked how to communicate to those who don’t have a pastor that we are going to open up 100 new missions in the next 10 years.

RTTD Floor Cmt. #2 Chrmn Report. Chris Ewings read Cmt. #2 report. See District Convention Webpage. Highlighted were the Ministry of Christian Giving, Communication Services and Congregational Services. No questions.

RTTD Floor Cmt. #3 Chrmn Report. David Birsching read Cmt. #3 report on the SC and several other areas of what the WELS does. See District Convention Webpage. No Questions.

Geoff Cortright shared the Christian Life Resources written report and the Christian Family Solutions report.

RTTD Floor Cmt. #4 Chrmn Report. Justin Gran read Cmt. #4 report on Financial Results and Ministry Financial Plan. See District Convention Webpage. No Questions.

Geoff Cortright shared the Verlyn Hahn voiced WELS Shepherd Plan “video” (mostly just audio).

RTTD Floor Cmt. #5 Chrmn Report. Nate Waganknecht read Cmt. #5 report on World, Home, and Joint Missions. Nate presented a resolution from Cmt. #5. See District Conventions Website. Discussion as to examples of creative solutions means. **It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed and Cmt #5 Resolution passed.**

Board of Appeals pastor at large position: Jason Strong received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Rev. Jason Strong was elected as Board of Appeals pastor at large.

Rev. Jason Strong was elected as District Mission Board Pastor At Large.

Mr. David Malnes was elected to the District Mission Board, Layman At Large.

Board of Appeals teacher at large position: Jason Gibson received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Mr. Jason Gibson was elected as Board of Appeals teacher at large. Board of Appeals layman at large position, Volodymyr Kustlyvy received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. **Mr. Volodymyr Kustlyvy was elected as Board of Appeals Layman at large.**

RTTD Floor Cmt. #6 Chrmn Report. James Wilcox read Cmt. #6 report on Ministerial Education and our Synod Schools. See District Convention Webpage. No Questions.

Encouragement by District Secretary to send in travel subsidy requests, names and email addresses of congregational treasurers, and an announcement that Gary Kraklow wanted to be here but sent a gift of money to buy every delegate a Mountain Dew.

12:20 – 1:20	<p>Lunch Break, where a delicious lunch of brisket, burn ends, and BBQ ribs was enjoyed by all.</p> <p>Ballot for Board of Appeals teacher at large position: Mr. Joshua Enstad, Mr. Jacob Biebert. Ballot for Special Ministries Representative: Rev. Brad Snyder, Rev. Mark Swanson, and Rev. Aaron West. Ballot for Lutheran Schools Representative: Mr. Chris Hintz (Incumbent), Mr. Elijah Kroll, and Mr. Justin Eternick.</p>
1:25 – 1:55	<p>World Missions Report, Paul Janke. What an interesting tour through WELS World Missions! Thank you, Pastor Janke! Have a Sprite! No questions.</p> <p>Lutheran Schools Representative: Mr. Chris Hintz received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Mr. Chris Hintz was reelected as the Lutheran Schools Representative. Board of Appeals teacher at large position: Mr. Joshua Enstad received the most votes and Luke called for the motion to make it unanimous. It was moved and called and all in agreement said “aye.” Motion passed. Mr. Joshua Enstad was elected as Board of Appeals teacher at large position.</p> <p>Rev. Aaron West was elected Special Ministries Representative. Rev. Luke Tembreull was elected Chairman of the Nominating Committee. Rev. Bryan Schwarz was elected to the Nominating Committee—Cascades Pastor Mr. Elijah Kroll was elected to the Nominating Committee—Alaska Teacher.</p>
2:00 – 2:20	<p>District Mission Board and Home Missions Report, Kevin Schultz. Kevin gave an informative report regarding all the happenings in Home Missions. Special thanks expressed to Pastor Craig Wasser for his service as District Mission Board Chairman.</p>
2:20 – 2:50	<p>Mission Counselor Matt Vogt talked about the initiative to plant 100 new churches in 10 years. Matt showed a video about an example of a new believer. Matt talked about recruitment of candidates for pastors. Discussions are taking place about training at MLC and WLS for church-planters. Matt highlighted plans for new mission plants in the PNW. No questions.</p>
2:55 – 3:10	<p>Break</p>

- 2:45 – 3:30 Job – “I Will Hope in Him” – Part 4, The Epilogue, Prof. Cherney
- 3:50 – 4:05 Other General Reports:
- 4:05 – 4:15 Closing Convention Business, Announcements, Reminders, Thanks
 District Secretary announced **There were a total of 58 delegates to the 2022 PNW District Convention (47 pastors and male teachers, 11 lay delegates), 20 excused, 33* un-excused. Announcement made of delegates to attend the 2023 WELS Synod Convention**:** Layman Mr. Sterling Bath, Divine Peace, Renton, WA; Layman Mr. Huu Trung Le, Peace In Jesus, Boise, ID; Layman Mr. Juul Quick, St. Paul, Tacoma, WA; Layman Mr. Robert Carl Warthen, Shepherd of the Hills, Anchorage, AK; Layman Mr. Mark A White, Trinity, Eugene, OR; Pastor David H Birshing, St. Paul, Tacoma, WA; Pastor Geoff Cortright, Saviour of the Nations, Vancouver, British Columbia, Pastor Pao Moua, Faith, Hmong, Anchorage, AK; Teacher Mr. Joel Plocher, Des Moines, WA.
- Thanks to all who emailed District Secretary the name and email contact of your treasurer—if you have not, email is in the convention letter at the top of our webpage. DP asked Isaac C. for final changes to “ministry acts” from DP Report and moves acceptance. DP entertained a motion to adjourn and get ready for closing, moved, seconded, passed.
- 4:15 – 4:45 Closing Devotion with Installation of Officers – Greg Hein, Psalm 33:16-22, Hope in the Lord’s Unfailing Love

*this number was corrected post-convention by District Secretary
 ** the list of names that follows was corrected post-convention by District Secretary