

MANUAL FOR PASTORAL CONFERENCES

OF

THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH--MISSOURI SYNOD

(2019 Edition--Proposed)

MANUAL FOR THE PASTORAL CONFERENCES OF THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT, THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-- MISSOURI SYNOD

1. PURPOSE OF CONFERENCES

The Synodical Handbook (1992/2016) states the purpose of Conferences in 5.634.8.1 thus:

~~Official conferences shall be conducted for the spiritual and professional growth of their members. Matters pertaining to Christian doctrine and practice, to professional problems, to the proper conduct in office, to private study, to the welfare of the respective congregations and schools, to the work of the Synod, including the District, or to any other professional matter should at all times receive due and sympathetic attention. The members of the conferences are to aim to cultivate positive relationships, to be mutually helpful in every way possible, and to encourage, instruct, and admonish one another in a spirit of sincerity and Christian love. Professional conferences have no synodical administrative functions.~~

Official conferences shall be conducted for the spiritual and professional growth of their members.

- (a) Conferences, whether official or unofficial, provide a means for ordained and commissioned ministers to relate together on a regular basis.
- (b) Matters pertaining to Christian doctrine and practice, to professional problems, to the proper conduct in office, to private study, to the welfare of the respective congregations and schools, to the work of the Synod, including the district, or to any other professional matter should at all times receive due and sympathetic attention.
- (c) The minutes and essays or a reasonably comprehensive summary of the essays accepted by the ordained and commissioned minister conferences in plenary and sectional meetings shall be mailed to the office of the district president for review and for the district's record within one month following such conference.
- (d) Professional conferences have no administrative functions in the Synod.

2. TYPES OF CONFERENCES

The Synodical Handbook requires the District to have official conferences. It also encourages smaller conferences.

In our District, we have the following pastoral conferences:

- A. General Pastoral: which involves all pastors of the District. This is an official conference.

B. Regional Pastoral: The District is divided into four regions; namely:

The East (circuits ~~1, 2, 10, 11, 18, 19 and 20~~) 11-14)

The North (circuits ~~3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, and 14~~) 1-5)

The West (circuits ~~7, 8, 9, 15, 16, and 17~~) 6-10)

The South (circuits ~~21, 22, 23, 24, and 25 and 26~~) 15-19)

Each region conducts an annual conference. These are official conferences.

C. Circuit: It is strongly encouraged that pastors, of each circuit or companion circuits, meet regularly. The Handbook encourages such conferences in ~~5.69~~ 5.2 3.

~~The circuit counselor shall regularly convene the pastors of his circuit for circuit conferences. The conferences may consider matters of doctrine, exegesis, and practical theology, and may be used for promotion of the basic activities of the church. Circuit conferences are not official conferences.~~

~~(j) [The Circuit Visitor] shall regularly convene the pastors of his circuit for circuit conferences.~~

D. Other Conferences (Handbook, ~~5.67~~ 4.9):

~~a. — The official pastoral, teacher, (director of Christian education, director of Christian outreach) and deaconess conferences shall be encouraged to meet also jointly for the purpose of discussing doctrinal, professional, and practical matters. Such a joint meeting will not be regarded as an official conference.~~

~~b. — Ordained and commissioned ministers are also encouraged to organize smaller conferences in addition to their official conferences.~~

~~c. — Intersynodical conferences for the study of theology are desirable and are encouraged on a regular basis.~~

Other meetings also may exist to consider matters of doctrine, exegesis, and practical theology, and may be used for promotion of the basic activities of the church. Such meetings, including circuit conferences, shall not be regarded as official conferences.

(a) Pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, deaconesses, certified lay ministers, and parish assistants are encouraged to meet also jointly for the purpose of discussing doctrinal, professional, and practical matters.

(b) Ordained and commissioned ministers are also encouraged to organize smaller meetings in addition to their official conferences.

(c) Intersynodical conferences for the study of theology are desirable and are encouraged on a regular basis. They also are not official conferences.

E. Special Conferences: The Presidium may call special conferences when deemed necessary.

3. ATTENDANCE

The Synod ~~ical~~ Handbook has the following to say about attendance in ~~5.65~~ 4.8.2:

~~Attendance at the official conferences shall be obligatory for ordained and commissioned ministers serving in congregations and parishes. Those whose offices in the Synod, District, or other entity imposes professional or service requirements on which full and regular Conference attendance makes undue demands shall, nevertheless, in consultation with their supervisory boards, arrange for their partial or occasional attendance and participation in their own official conferences in accordance with policies established by their supervisory boards.~~

Official conferences for all ordained and commissioned ministers on the respective rosters of the Synod shall meet, if possible, in plenary sessions at least once each year.

(a) The members of official conferences are to aim to cultivate positive relationships, to be mutually helpful in every way possible,

and to encourage, instruct, and admonish one another in a spirit of sincerity and Christian love.

(b) Such conferences may meet more frequently in major sections (not more than four sections) whose geographical boundaries shall be established by the district in convention.

(c) Such major sectional meetings shall be regarded as sessions of the official conference.

(d) All ordained and commissioned ministers on the district rosters are expected to attend meetings of their official conference or present a valid excuse.

(1) Attendance at the official conferences shall be obligatory for ordained and commissioned ministers serving in congregations and parishes.

(2) Those whose offices in the Synod, district, or other agency impose professional or service requirements on which full and regular conference attendance makes undue demands shall, nevertheless, in consultation with their supervisory boards, arrange for their own partial or occasional attendance and participation in their own official conferences in accordance with policies established by their supervisory boards.

Absenteeism

- ~~1. The Excuse Committee of official conferences shall notify each counselor of the men in his circuit who have been absent from a conference without excuse in order that the counselor may encourage them.~~ The Registrar shall forward a list of conference attendees/absentees to circuit visitors for their review and in order that they may encourage those who have been absent without excuse.
2. The circuit ~~counselor~~ visitor shall refer the names of the men who continue to be absent from conferences to the regional Vice-President, so that he may encourage them. Failing in his efforts, the Vice-President shall notify the District President.

4. SCHEDULE

A. GENERAL PASTORAL CONFERENCE

There shall be one General Pastoral Conference each year, ~~which shall meet the first full week in May,~~ which shall meet in the spring, on dates that do not conflict with the observances of Lent or the major festivals of Eastertide, in particular the Ascension. Conference dates will be set by the Executive Committee.

B. REGIONAL CONFERENCES

There shall be one ~~regional~~ pastoral conference ~~in each region~~ each year ~~(in each region)~~. The four conferences shall meet in the fall (October suggested) so as not to conflict ~~with each other~~ with the General Pastoral Conference in the spring.

C. CIRCUIT CONFERENCES

It is suggested that circuit conferences be held monthly.

D. DISTRICT LEADERS

Circuit ~~counselors~~visitors shall meet three times each year with the District President and such other District or Synodical officers as the President deems necessary. These meetings shall be held in September, January, and May.

E. PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS' CONFERENCES (HANDBOOK, 5.67b)

Ordained and commissioned ministers are also encouraged to organize smaller conferences in addition to their official conferences.

5. RELATIONSHIPS

A. PASTORAL CONFERENCES AND THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

1. The District President, or his representative, shall receive ample time on each program of the official pastoral conferences in order to present a message, or to make a report, or to do both.
2. So that the pastors might be adequately informed about the work of various Executive Secretaries of the Districts, of boards, commissions, committees, agencies, and institutions, the District President is also asked by these regulations to make himself responsible that these reports be made.
3. A special committee of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, program chairman, and the first-year program persons of all official conferences shall meet at least once a year in early November to review the conference Manual and coordinate planning of each of the conferences.
4. The program committees of the official conferences shall maintain ongoing memos regarding programming, development, and speakers with all conference chairmen and the District President. The conference chairmen and

the District President will thereby be in a position to share their counsel and concerns.

B. PASTORAL CONFERENCES AND REVIEW COMMITTEES

The secretary of each official conference shall see to it that, within a month after the conference, the minutes, attendance records, essays, if available, and/or outlines of essays, presented to his conference, be submitted to the District President ~~for acceptance at the General Conference and to the General Conference Secretary in order that he may keep an electronic record.~~

C. PASTORAL CONFERENCES AND INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Synod~~ical~~ representatives, representatives of charitable institutions and representatives of educational agencies must request time in advance of the General Conference by applying to the chairman of that Conference. ~~As a rule, such time is granted.~~

D. PASTORAL CONFERENCES AND CONGREGATIONS

Pastoral conferences may present petitions, provide answers to casuistry questions, and give counsel to congregations by expressing the consensus of the pastors.

E. PASTORAL CONFERENCES AND THE NID OFFICE

The NID office shall make available to the chairman of each conference a complete listing, according to circuits, of the pastors in his conference and mailing service. This listing shall include in each case the name of the congregation, the pastor, his address, and telephone number. This is to enable the chairman to make his appointments and to facilitate the work of the Excuse Committee.

6. FINANCES

- A. Conference dues are to be collected by the NID office and distributed to the four Conferences thus: 1/6 to each of the regional conferences, 1/3 to the General Pastoral Conference.
- B. Conferences shall be obligated to budget expenses in such a way that they will cover all expenses with their own funds.
- C. Any unused balance shall be held over to the next year and shall be added to the funds received the next year. Special contributions may be made by resolution of the conference should treasury balance permit.

- D. The General Pastoral Conference shall decide at its annual meeting the amount of the conference dues.
- E. Any of the regional conferences shall have the right to request from the General Pastoral Conference an increase or decrease in the conference dues. The regional conferences shall also have the right to request a change in the ratio in which the funds are distributed to the conferences.
- F. The NID shall mail a statement regarding conference dues to each congregation once a year. Where a pastor serves a dual parish, the amount paid by each congregation shall be one-half of the regular dues. Where a congregation is served by more than one pastor, the amount fixed for dues shall be multiplied by the number of pastors serving that parish.
- G. Emeriti, Vicars and Concordia, ~~River Forest~~ University Chicago professors shall be exempt from dues.
- H. Congregations having emeriti pastors in their membership shall be encouraged to pay all conference expenses of emeriti pastors.
- I. Essayists, lecturers, workshop leaders, guest speakers and chaplains outside of the conference or District shall be given honoraria. They shall also be reimbursed for actual travel, lodging and meal costs.

Suggested figures are as follows:

<u>General Conference</u>	<u>Regional Conference</u>
About 1 hr. \$200	\$100
About 2 hrs. \$400	\$200
About 3 hrs. \$600	\$300

Preachers and chaplains may be remunerated at the discretion of the executive committee of the conference.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDES

- A. ALL OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS SHALL BE NID PASTORS ON THE ACTIVE ROSTER!
- B. ELECTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES
 - 1. Elected Officers: The elected officers of the conference shall be: Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, Registrar, and Treasurer.

2. Executive Committee: The elected officers mentioned in 7-B-1 together with the Chairman of the Program Committee shall constitute the Executive Committee.
 3. Program Committee: The committees for regional conferences shall have three members. The committee for the general conference shall have four members, so as to have one member from each of the four regions.
 4. Nominations Committee: The committees for regional conferences shall have three members. The committee for the general conference shall have four members, so as to have one member from each of the four regions.
- C. APPOINTED COMMITTEES RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE: ~~The appointed committee shall be:~~
1. ~~Resolutions Committee~~: The committees for regional conferences shall have three members. The committee for the general conference shall have four members, so as to have one member from each of the four regions. ~~Members of the resolutions committees for the regional conferences and the general conference shall be appointed by the respective conference chairmen.~~
 2. ~~Excuse Committee~~: ~~The committees for regional conferences shall have three members. The committee for the general conference shall have four members, so as to have one member from each of the four regions.~~
 3. ~~Casuistry Committee~~: ~~The committees for regional conferences shall have three members. The committee for the general conference shall have four members, so as to have one member from each of the four regions.~~
- D. ELECTIONS
1. Time of Elections: elections shall, ~~where possible~~, take place on the first day of the conference.
 2. Election Procedure: The elections shall be conducted by secret ballot. They shall be conducted by the Nominations Committee.
 3. ~~Every office, except for Program Committee, is a one-year term.~~ The elected officers will hold one year terms and may be elected up to three times; ~~Nominations Committee and Program Committee members will be elected for only one~~ ~~is a~~ three-year term. Members of this committee of the General Conference at the time of this revision shall fulfill their terms. Elections shall be held in the following years and every three years thereafter for the appropriate regions: ~~2000~~2020 (west and south); ~~2001~~2021 (east); ~~2002~~2022 (north).

4. Any officer may be re-elected to the same office except members of the Program and Nominations Committees. No officer may serve more than three consecutive~~elect~~ed terms.
5. Staggered Elections for the Program Committee~~and Nominations Committee~~: For regional conferences, one member shall be elected each year. For the general conference, see 7-D-3.

E. APPOINTMENTS

1. Time of Appointments: If possible, all appointments shall be made by the chairman or his representative from the executive committee prior to the conference.
2. Special Committees: The chairman of the conference shall have the privilege to appoint special committees in order to expedite the work of the conference.

F. VACANCIES

1. Vacancies in Elected Offices: If a vacancy occurs in any of the offices listed under 7-B, the chairman of the conference shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term.
2. Vacancies on the Nominations or Program Committees: If a vacancy occurs on one of these committees of the General Conference, the chairman of that conference shall appoint a successor from the same region to fill the unexpired term.
3. If a vacancy occurs in the office of chairman, the vice-chairman shall become chairman and may appoint a successor as vice-chairman to fill the unexpired term.
4. If a vacancy occurs at the same time in both the offices of chairman and vice-chairman, the secretary of the conference shall request the President of the District to appoint a chairman and vice-chairman to fill the unexpired terms.
5. Those appointed to fill a vacant position remain eligible to serve the maximum number of elected terms following the completion of their appointed term.

8. DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

A. CHAIRMAN

1. The chairman of the conference is the chief executive and administrative officer.
2. He shall conduct all meetings according to the current edition of Robert's *Rules of Order*.
- ~~3. He is responsible for accommodations.~~3. He is responsible for determining the location of the conference and is responsible to work with the program committee to find suitable accommodations for it.
4. Attendance at Program Committee meetings: The chairman of the conference shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Program Committee.
5. The chairman of the General Pastoral Conference shall convene the meeting stipulated in 5-A-3.
6. The chairman shall publicize the availability of conference scholarships.
7. The chairman shall grant scholarships based on need. The chairman may consult with the applicant's circuit counselor.

B. VICE-CHAIRMAN

1. The vice-chairman shall assist the chairman.
2. He shall conduct meetings in the absence of the chairman.
3. He shall receive proposed resolutions submitted prior to the conference and give them to the Chairman to present to the conference.

C. SECRETARY

1. Record of Proceedings: The secretary of the conference shall keep a record of all meetings.
2. The secretary of the conference shall take care of all necessary correspondence.
3. The secretary shall maintain a listing of all exhibitors at the conference, which he will receive from the registrar.

4. The secretary will keep a record of the proceedings of the conference, including papers presented and resolutions adopted, for his year of service, which will be maintained in electronic format by succeeding secretaries.
5. The secretary will, in accordance with Handbook 4. 8. 1 (c), mail to the office of the district president “the minutes and essays or a reasonably comprehensive summary of the essays accepted by the ordained...minister conferences in plenary and sectional meetings” within “one month following such conference.”

D. REGISTRAR

1. The registrar shall ~~mail~~communicate to all pastors complete information about the approaching conference no later than two months before the conference.
2. He shall keep a record of registrations.
3. He shall ~~forward all checks~~ensure that all funds are forwarded to the treasurer.
4. He shall record excuses and ~~give them to the Excuse Committee~~ forward them to circuit visitors for their review along with the rest of the attendance data from their circuits.
5. He shall assign housing and provide the accommodations with room assignments.
6. He shall prepare registration materials in consultation with the chairman.

E. TREASURER

1. He shall have charge of the conference treasury and make such payments as have been authorized by the conference or the Executive Committee.
2. He is to make an annual financial report to the conference.
3. He will maintain conference accounts at the District office.

F. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Interim Work: The Executive Committee shall take care of any business that may arise between conferences.

2. Financial Needs: It shall determine when it is necessary for the conference to request an increase or decrease in conference dues. (See 6-E)
3. Minutes: The Executive Committee shall approve and/or correct conference minutes.
4. Conflict in dates for conference meetings: It shall select suitable dates for the conference meetings if there is a conflict with the set schedule.
(See 4. Schedule)

G. PROGRAM COMMITTEE

1. It shall choose the theme and content of the conference. It shall determine the type of essays and/or presentations, also selecting the individuals who will present the same. It shall be responsible for sufficient time on the program for District presentations, as well as, other business. (See 5. Relationships)
2. Preachers and Chaplains: It shall be responsible for worship site, host congregation, preachers, liturgists, and chaplains.
3. Communication: The Program Committee shall function in a timely manner in accordance with 5-A-4.
4. Organization of Program Committee: It shall organize itself, making its most senior member its chairman; he shall set the dates for meetings of the committee.
5. It will advise the chairman regarding a suitable location for the conference.

H. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

It shall present a slate of officers. It is encouraged that two names be presented for each office (See 7-B). Additional nominations may be made from the floor. After acceptance by the conference, it shall prepare the ballot, count the votes and report the results.

I. ~~APPOINTED COMMITTEES~~ RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

1. ~~Resolutions Committee~~: It shall be the duty of the Resolutions Committee to prepare and present all resolutions that become necessary with each conference in consultation with the chairman. Resolutions to be considered by the conference shall be signed and submitted to the Resolutions Committee ~~by the end of the first day of the conference~~ **two weeks before the conference**. The Resolutions Committee shall have the option of rewriting a petition or suggesting that the petition be presented in another forum, rather than that pastoral conference. (Resolutions from the regional pastoral conferences to

the General Pastoral Conference will be brought before the General Pastoral Conference for action.)

- ~~2. Excuse Committee:~~
- ~~a. It shall receive the names of brethren who are absent.~~
 - ~~b. It shall list these as excused and no excuse offered.~~
 - ~~c. It shall follow procedure as listed under 3. Attendance.~~
- ~~4. If there are questions of casuistry, they shall be given to the chairman, who will then appoint a committee to deal with the question and report to the conference.~~

9. CHANGES TO THE MANUAL FOR PASTORAL CONFERENCES

- A. EDITORIAL CHANGES: Minor editorial changes to update the language of this manual in order to bring it into compliance with Synod and District Bylaws may be made by the Executive Committee.
- B. SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES: Any other changes must be approved by a 2/3 majority vote at a General Pastoral Conference.