



September 15, 2017

Pastors and Chairpersons of English District congregations:

Greetings to you in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

The English District will meet in Convention next summer **[June 19-21, 2018 at Concordia University—Ann Arbor, MI]**. Synod Bylaw 4.2.1 states the purpose of this meeting of representatives from District congregations: *“Conventions of the districts shall afford opportunities for worship, nurture, inspiration, fellowship, and the communication of vital information. They are the principal legislative assemblies, which amend the district’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, consider and take action on reports and overtures, and handle appropriate appeals.”*

Your congregation and its pastors and members play several important roles in the District Convention process. This letter is meant to inform you about those roles and prepare you to fulfill them.

CIRCUIT FORUMS & ELECTION OF CIRCUIT VISITORS

Within the next five months, your Circuit Visitor will be convening a Circuit Forum, a gathering of pastoral and lay representatives from each congregation of a Visitation Circuit. Synod Bylaw 5.3.1 outlines the various purposes of Circuit Forums. At this point in the triennium, the Circuit Forum convenes to fulfill two responsibilities related to the upcoming District Convention:

- (1) To elect a Circuit Visitor (*Synod Bylaw 5.3.3*).
- (2) To submit overtures to the District Convention (*Synod Bylaw 5.3.5*).

Your congregation has the right to designate one pastor and one lay representative for the Circuit Forum. Unless your congregation has another official way to do this, the Voters Assembly is to designate these individuals. The process it uses to do so is left to its discretion. Attached is a form to record whom your congregation designates to represent it at the Circuit Forum. Complete and submit it to your Circuit Visitor. It would be helpful to have that done at least two weeks before the Circuit Forum convenes.

Synod Bylaw 5.2.2(b) establishes the nomination process used to elect a Circuit Visitor: *“Prior to the day of the circuit forum, nominations for candidates for the office of circuit visitor may be submitted by a voting congregation of the circuit and suggested by the district president, in consultation with the praesidium of the district.”* This right can be exercised by your congregation. A nomination form is attached that can be completed and sent to your Circuit Visitor.

If your congregation chooses to submit overtures for consideration by the Circuit Forum, those should be sent to your Circuit Visitor, so that he can distribute them to the representatives from the other congregations of the Circuit. Similar to the designation of representatives, it would be helpful to have any overtures submitted at least two weeks before the Circuit Forum convenes.

The deadline for convening a Circuit Forum is **February 19, 2018**.

SELECTION & REGISTRATION OF CONVENTION DELEGATES

Your congregation has the right to send one pastoral delegate and one lay delegate to the District Convention. Delegates are to be elected by your congregation's Voters Assembly. An alternate lay delegate should also be elected. Please note that recent changes to the Synod Bylaws make Assistant Pastors **eligible** to serve as a congregation's pastoral delegate, if the congregation chooses to elect them. Commissioned ministers remain **ineligible** to serve as a congregation's pastoral or lay delegate.

A form is attached to register the delegates whom your congregation elects, but it is also available on the District website: www.englishdistrict.org/news-and-events/2018-convention. This form can be completed and returned to the District office or presented to the District Secretary at the District Convention. However, to assist the District staff with convention planning, including accurate housing and meal needs, please mail the form to the District office by **February 19, 2018**. A separate form for convention lodging and meals will be sent to registered delegates on March 1.

NOMINATIONS FOR DISTRICT PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

Congregations may nominate candidates for the office of District President and Vice-President. Nominations shall be made by your congregation's Voters Assembly. Your congregation will receive nominating ballots for these offices in December.

The five ordained ministers of the Synod who receive the highest number of nominating votes and consent to serve shall form the slate of candidates for District President; the three ordained ministers of the District residing within the boundaries of each region who receive the most nominating votes and consent to serve shall form the slate of candidates for Vice-President. Nominating ballots must be received by the District Secretary by **February 19, 2018**.

NOMINATIONS FOR OTHER DISTRICT OFFICES

The Committee on Nominations develops a slate of candidates for the District Offices other than President and Vice-President. To facilitate the Committee's work, nominations for these positions can be submitted by ordained ministers and commissioned ministers of the District, lay members of District congregations, or District congregations.

A sample of the nomination form is attached. This form will be available via the District website: www.englishdistrict.org/news-and-events/2018-convention. The work of the Committee on Nominations is greatly helped when it receives nominations from across the District. Please consider nominating individuals, especially those from your congregation or Circuit, who may have abilities for service. Nomination forms for these offices must be received at the District office by **February 19, 2018**.

NOMINATIONS FOR LCMS COMMITTEE FOR CONVENTION NOMINATIONS

As part of the 2019 LCMS Convention preparations, our District is required to elect a layperson to serve on the Synod's Committee for Convention Nominations, as well as an alternate layperson. The individual selected would be involved in the process of evaluating nominees for various Synod offices to be elected at the 2019 LCMS Convention. Such work includes meeting January 10–12, 2019, in St. Louis, MO, as well as other possible meeting dates.

A nomination form is attached. Please consider laypersons from across the District who could serve in this capacity. Nomination forms for this position must be received at the District office by **February 19, 2018**.

SUBMITTING OVERTURES TO THE CONVENTION

Congregations, Circuit Forums, and plenary or regional District Church Worker Conferences may adopt overtures for consideration by the District Convention. The process for Circuit Forums to do so was mentioned earlier in this letter. A form to use for properly crafting overtures is available at the District website: www.englishdistrict.org/news-and-events/2018-convention. Overtures must be received by the District President by **February 19, 2018**.

I look forward to working with you to complete this triennium's Convention cycle. Should you have any questions, please ask them, either by email (revzimmerman@gmail.com) or by telephone (717-636-1545). District staff may also be able to answer your questions (248-476-0039).

Christ's peace and blessings be with you and your congregation!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Luke T. Zimmerman" followed by a stylized flourish.

Rev. Luke T. Zimmerman
Secretary, English District—LCMS