

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# Final Meeting of Triennium Addresses Convention Issues



## BOARD REPORT

John List  
Communications  
Director

The Florida-Georgia Board of Directors met at the Lutheran Ministries Center in Orlando on April 28 — the final session this Triennium and the last session before the District Convention. Before turning to pre-Convention matters, the Board considered various business items.

Woodlands Lutheran Ministries was the first agenda item. Board members heard an update on the closing of the camp in Montverde and considered future plans for the property. (See box on this page for more information.)

With the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Convention set for 2007, the District Board needed to address the situation

of Florida-Georgia circuits needing exceptional status to qualify as voting entities at the national gathering. The District Board passed a resolution asking LCMS President Gerald Kieschnick to grant that status for the Northeast Georgia, Atlanta South, Tallahassee, Heartland, Miami North and Miami South Circuits.

District President Gerhard Michael Jr. reported that Steve Cechetti has left his position as Florida-Georgia's gift and estate planning counselor to serve with Hospice of the Comforter in Orlando. President Michael and Richard Neubauer, Florida-Georgia Executive Director for Administration and LCEF Vice President, are meeting with the

LCMS Foundation on securing a replacement for Cechetti.

District Treasurer Jim Engersol shared results of the fraud risk assessment he conducted during the first quarter of this year. Those few areas of concern identified during the process have been satisfactorily addressed.

In his report, Engersol noted that for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2006, congregational receipts exceeded budget figures by more than \$50,000. Receipts are a "little under budget" for the period ending March 31.

District Michael thanked all members for their service during the past three years. Three members — Lynn Andersen of

Lakeland, FL; Neal Engwall of St. Petersburg, FL; and Ray Roths of Clearwater, FL — have served three consecutive terms and are therefore not eligible for re-election. First Vice President James Guelzow of Messiah-Tampa, FL, has also served three consecutive terms and cannot be re-elected to that position.

The Board reviewed various overtures submitted for consideration at the convention during their meeting, addressing District mission and ministry matters as well as Synodical issues. Many Board members attended the evening sessions with floor committees working to craft those and other overtures into resolutions for the convention. □

## Future of Woodlands Begins to Take Shape

As has been the case during their past several sessions, members of the Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors devoted significant meeting time to discussions and presentations on Woodlands Lutheran Camp at its April 28 meeting.

A special committee had been appointed by District President Gerhard Michael to manage the closing of Woodlands. Representing the District staff on this committee are Richard Neubauer, Executive Director for Finance and LCEF Vice President, and David Weidner, Executive Director for Congregational Services.

At the April meeting, committee representatives

reported that the official Woodlands closing date of April 30 was "on target."

"Care has been taken that residents' needs have been seen to in relocating," Weidner stated. That assistance included what Neubauer termed "compassionate help to assist residents with relocating" that to date has totaled approximately \$633,000 to retirees living at Woodlands. In addition, approximately \$100,000 in severance payments have been awarded to camp employees.

Meetings are being held with leaders of Woodlands Lutheran Church in an attempt to address the concerns of the congregation as they deal with

the closing of the camp. District President Michael reported that the next meeting was scheduled with Woodlands Church representatives for late May "to continue our dialog with them."

Turning to the future of the Woodlands property, District Board members heard a detailed presentation from the Purchaser regarding their proposed plans to build a residential neighborhood on the site. Representatives emphasized that the plans were developed "with a sensitivity toward the

history and natural beauty of the property." The goal is to maintain this natural beauty and the "integrity" of the site.

In an earlier meeting the Board approved signing a Letter of Intent from the Purchaser.

After a lengthy presentation and discussion at its April meeting, members of the Board, cognizant of the contingencies in such transactions, unanimously approved a resolution to enter into a formal contract with Bowen Family Homes for sale of the property. Bowen Family Homes has begun its approval

and permitting process with the filing of a preliminary plan with Lake County.

In his report to the Board, President Michael indicated that he had nearly completed the appointment of a "Futures Committee." Its task will be to address expansion of the District's mission and ministry from a broad-based perspective, while continuing the legacy of the Woodlands. It will provide guidance to help the District exercise wise stewardship of the resources coming from the Woodlands. □

## News Briefs

### Indebtedness Survey

The LCMS is conducting an in-depth study on the indebtedness of LCMS church workers and its impact on their lives.

Results of this national study will be used in developing potential solutions to the issue: of financial concerns among rostered church workers.

The telephone survey is being conducted throughout May and June. Church workers will be randomly selected from the Synod's 20,000+ ministers, teachers and other lay workers.

### Appointments

David L. Strand has been named executive director of the LCMS Board for Communication Services. Vicki Biggs and Joe Isenhower Jr. are the new manager of Public Affairs/Media Relations and managing editor-Reporter, respectively.

Strand oversees the department charged with informing, reporting and interpreting the Synod's purpose, program and positions. He has been on the LCMS staff since 1980.

Biggs is responsible for managing LCMS public relations. Isenhower oversees all production for Reporter.

### Laborers for Christ

Laborers For Christ — the LCMS' church-construction group — is seeking as many as 100 new people to help congregations throughout the country tackle building projects.

LFC, which primarily uses retired workers and on-site volunteers, plans to staff 25 projects this year.

Started in 1980, Laborers For Christ is a ministry of the LCMS Lutheran Church Extension Fund. To date, LFC crews have completed more than 700 churches and church additions, schools, and other church-related building projects.

For more information about Laborers For Christ, or to request an application or arrange to visit an LFC project in your area, contact the LFC office in St. Louis at (800) 854-4004, Ext. 6446, or laborers@lcef.org. □



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