



Date of Meeting: September 12-13, 2025

Location: CNH District Office, Livermore CA

— **FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSION - 9/12/2025** —

IN ATTENDANCE

Rev. **William Abbott**—6th Vice-President (Nevada)

Mr. **Donald Busse**—Treasurer

Ms. **Marsha Egbert**—Regional Lay Director (Nevada)

Rev. **Jared Eggebraaten**—Secretary

Rev. **Mitchell Gowen**—1st Vice-President (Hawaii)

Rev. **Michael Lange**—President

Ms. **Denise Lo**—Operations Executive (District Office) *present for her financial summary*

Ms. **Lisa Mancini**—Regional Lay Director (Pacific)

Mrs. **Deanna Sako**—Regional Lay Director (Hawaii)

Rev. **Eric Van Scharrel**—4th Vice-President (Southern)

Rev. **John Standley**—3rd Vice-President (Northern) *present via remote video*

Rev. **Dan Truesdell**—5th Vice-President (Hawaii)

Mr. **Bill Swift**—Regional Lay Director (Northern)

Rev. **Rob Weller**—2nd Vice-President (Pacific)

Dr. **Christy Wood**—Commissioned Minister

ABSENT

Mr. **Gabriel Molina**—Regional Lay Director (Southern)

1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS PHOTO

A board photo was taken prior to the start of the meeting, with the group sporting a new batch of CNH polos.



Left to Right: Gowen, Mancini, Egbert, Swift, Truesdell, Busse, Sako, Abbott, Lange, Weller, Van Scharrel, Wood, Eggebraaten

2. BUSINESS AND FINANCE MATTERS

Chairman Gowen had Denise Lo (Operations Executive) orient the Board to the Statement of Activities and Balance Sheet to familiarize them with how to read the documents and understand terminology. Highlights and points of discussion were made concerning:

- Statement of Activities
 - Differences between MMS (Mission Ministry Support) and DMS (Distributed Mission Support) were discussed.
- Balance Statement as of July 31, 2025
 - There were some questions from the Board regarding whether some of the numbers reflected fair market value. Clarification was made: CNH operates with historical accounting, not fair market accounting.

3. CALL TO ORDER & OPENING DEVOTION

Board Chair, Rev. Mitchell Gowen officially called the meeting to order at 4:52 PM (PST) and began the session with devotional thoughts and Responsive Prayer from *Lutheran Worship*, p. 273.

4. OVERVIEW OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MANUAL AND BYLAWS

Chairman Gowen spoke on the structure and function of CNH BOD/President/Congregations/Policies. Other points of information from the chairman:

- All Board members received the book *The CEO and the Board* by Kurt Senske (CPH: 2023)—they were encouraged to read it and be familiar with policy-based governance in general.
- Chairman Gowen would like to create a book or manual for the BOD chairman that can be passed on to future board chairmen and members.
- BOD assignments, including being a liaison to District Committees were reviewed.
- Coming soon will be a required-actions calendar as an appendix to the board manual—essentially a checklist for each BOD’s meeting, with suggested and/or required tasks for each quarterly meeting.

5. SESSION CLOSE

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM with a blessing. President Mike Lange and Kristi hosted dinner for the Board and district staff at their home.

— SATURDAY SESSION - 9/13/2025 —

6. CALL TO ORDER & OPENING DEVOTION

Chairman Gowen called the meeting to order at 8:02 AM (PST). Rev. Rob Weller led a devotion on 1 Cor 1:18ff. with an emphasis on Holy Cross Day.

7. THOSE IN ATTENDANCE * = voting member

District Officers

<i>District President</i>	Rev. Michael Lange	
<i>Chairman</i>	Rev. Mitchell Gowen*	<i>1st Vice-President</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	Rev. Jared Eggebraaten	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mr. Donald Busse	

Regional Vice-Presidents

<i>Nevada</i>	Rev. William Abbott*	<i>6th Vice-President</i>
<i>South</i>	Rev. Eric Van Scharrel*	<i>4th Vice-President</i>
<i>North</i>	Rev. John Standley*	<i>3rd Vice-President via remote video</i>
<i>Hawaii</i>	Rev. Dan Truesdell*	<i>5th Vice-President</i>
<i>Pacific</i>	Rev. Rob Weller*	<i>2nd Vice-President</i>

Regional Directors

<i>Nevada</i>	Ms. Marsha Egbert*
<i>Pacific</i>	Ms. Lisa Mancini*
<i>Hawaii</i>	Mrs. Deanna Sako*
<i>North</i>	Mr. Bill Swift*
<i>South</i>	<i>absent</i> Mr. Gabriel Molina*

Commissioned Minister Director

<i>CNH</i>	Dr. Christy Wood*
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MONITORING

8. COMMITTEE REPORT: Mission Agency – Mitchell Gowen

Chairman Gowen emphasized that 100% of the District’s budget is mission-related; everything the Board does is for the sake of God’s mission. The chairman gave the following highlights:

- Some CNH mission grants will no longer be offered after January 1, 2025. This “sunsetting” of legacy grants will lead to a new system of termed and tiered grants to begin in 2026; Paul Ferguson has been working hard on making this

happen. Refer to the website for more information and for application information: <https://www.cnh-lcms.org/mission-grants>.

- We need to guard against drifting from mission to purely institutional maintenance at both district and congregational levels.
- There is a desire to create a “corpus fund” (a dedicated financial reserve established for long-term sustainability) to help cover conference expenses, so that every pastor—including emeriti—may attend CNH conferences without undo financial burdens.
- General discussion was held on the overarching need for faithful and creative ways to support, encourage, and fund congregations in mission, with the conclusion that these valid topics will need to be discussed outside of the BOD’s meeting.

9. COMMITTEE REPORT: Finance Committee – Treasurer Don Busse

Treasurer Don Busse gave a summary and highlights of his full Treasurer’s Report, which can be found on p. 15ff. of the Administrative Report, appended to these minutes. Highlights and some report details from Busse were as follows:

- Year To Date (January 1 — July 31, 2025)
 - **Revenues** were under budget by ~\$27,000.
 - **Expenses** were under budget by ~\$59,000.
 - Accumulated **Reserved Funds** draw was \$32,000 below budget.
 - Congregational **Remittances** were \$51,000 under budget.
- Total **Investment Portfolio** is approximately \$6.2 million (21% equities and 79% fixed investments). Combined investments show a gain in market value of \$80,000 YTD.
 - Non-Donor Restricted Funds are up 3.4%
 - Donor Restricted Funds are up 4.2%
- There are two **Underwater Endowment Funds**, of which the accumulated reduction in market value was \$11,271 on September 3, 2025.
- **Langum Family Trust**: original value was \$99,000 and is now \$97,000. The Committee moved funds and may liquidate the entire trust to reinvest; however, no decision has been made yet.
- Cost of Living Adjustment (**COLA**) – the Committee recommends a 2.7% increase.
- A review of the **2026 Preliminary Budget** indicates a decrease of approximately \$68,000 in revenue, which may result in a greater drawdown of Accumulated Reserve Funds (**ARF**) compared to 2025.

- The primary purpose of the ARF is to support the budget so that we do not draw down savings. It is also used to offset unforeseen expenses..

10. MANAGEMENT REPORT: Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer Don Busse

Treasurer Don Busse continued with a summary and highlights of the Finance Report prepared by Denise Lo, which can be found on p. 16ff. of the Administrative Report, appended to these minutes. Highlights and some report details were as follows:

- **A 2.70% proposed salary increase is recommended.** The increase is derived by looking at cost of living statistics (June to June) that come from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, as well as regional inflation calculators for the West region. This recommended increase is intended for District Staff and as a guide to all congregations of the District.
- **The 2024 Internal Annual Audit** has not yet been completed. However, this BOD meeting (Sept. 2025) will approve the auditor(s) for the Triennium. The *actual* audit should be approved at the December 2025 BOD meeting.
- **Financial Report: Statement of Activities** looks at the actual vs. budget and reports a current snapshot.

<u>Financial Reports: As of July 31, 2025</u>	
Total Operation Income:	\$1,076,993
ARF (MMS + DMS)	\$167,376
Total Revenue and Support	<u>\$1,244,369</u>
Total Operation Expenses:	<u>\$1,244,369</u>

- Further details on revenue and expenses can be found on the “Highlight – YTD Review” portion of the Finance Report, beginning at the bottom of p. 16 of the appended Administrative Report.

- **Reserved Funds (ARF) Update** – These details can also be found on p. 17 of the appended Administrative Report.

<u>Reserved Funds (ARF) Update</u>	
MMS: Beg Bal: 01/01/25	1,740,587
CY Released	-126,763
Building & Equipment	
Okld Church Roof Repair	-
CA Rm Air Con Install	61,830
	- 6,500
Sub total	<u>-68,330</u>
ARF Ending Bal: 07/31/25	<u>1,545,494</u>
DMS: Beg Bal: 01/01/25	1,608,355
CY Released	-40,613
ARF Ending Bal: 07/31/2025	<u>1,567,742</u>
ARF Eng balance: 07/31/2025	<u>3,113,236</u>

▪ **Disaster Funds Summary**

As of July 31, 2025							
	Income			Disbursement			Reserved Balance
	2017-2024	2025	Total	2017-2024	2025	Total	
2017-Wildfire/Tubbs	305,813		305,813	161,263		161,263	144,550
2018-Mendocino/Carr	66,289		66,289	21,800		21,800	44,489
2018-Camp Fire	254,674		254,674	96,759	41,235	137,994	116,681
2023-Mauli Fire	366,467	500	366,967	155,729		155,729	211,237
N. California Fire	139,028	34,217	173,245	30,684	50,267	80,951	92,294
Total	1,132,271	34,717	1,166,988	466,236	91,502	557,737	609,251

Payments from May 1 to July 31 as following:

Texas District – Flood	\$10,000
Camp Fire-Our Savior of Paradise	\$41,235
	<u>\$51,235</u>

▪ **2026 Budget-Preliminary Highlights for Informational Purposes:**

Summary

	MMS	DMS	Total
Revenue/Support	1,430,035	517,800	1,947,835
ARF	308,333	119,246	427,579
Total	1,738,368	637,046	2,375,414
Expense	1,738,368	637,046	2,375,414

Highlights:

Preliminary Budget – 2026

The primary changes are in staff and independent contractor salaries, employee benefits, and overhead costs due to inflation. In addition, the congregation remittance has been adjusted based on receipts from 2023–2025.

Highlights of the 2026 Budget

- **Salary Change:** 2.7% Cost of Living Adjustment, or as outlined in the CNH Salary Guidelines
- **Benefit Change:** 1% increase for Concordia Retirement Plans and 3% increase for Health Insurance
- **Staffing:** Fill the full-time bookkeeping position
 - **Combined Total Increase: \$118,797**
- **Congregation Remittance:** Adjusted according to receipts from 2023–2025
 - **Reduced by \$35,000 compared to 2025**
 - 2026 Budget Total: \$1,390,000
 - 2025 Budget Total: \$1,425,000

The Board took a 10-minute break.

The Board reconvened at 9:35 AM.

11. MANAGEMENT REPORT: District President’s Report – Rev. Michael Lange

President Lange’s full Administrative Report is appended to these minutes; unless otherwise noted, page number references will refer to this document as “AR p.#”.

Highlights are as follows:

- President Lange began by having the Board read out loud together **the Mission and Vision Statements** of the CNH Strategic Ministry Plan (AR p. 5). This is important because it informs everything that he will discuss in his report—namely, that we exist as a district for these purposes.

<p style="text-align: center;">Mission Statement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We strengthen God’s people to serve and bear witness to Christ.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vision Statement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A community of healthy and committed Christians who are focused, well-connected, and re-sourced to make disciples and reach the unreached.</p>

- President Lange is now beginning his reports with a devotional thought, as well as **some personal joys, challenges, and prayer requests**. He recognizes the professional relationships that he has with CNH leadership, but also values seeing one another as people with souls and needs.
- **Our Work together as Synod** was highlighted (AR p. 1), with the acknowledgement that preparations for LCMS conventions take up a fair amount of time and effort, as do his responsibilities to the Synod President/Council of Presidents. Lange currently serves as Interim Chairman of Placement for Seminaries and serves on the Transitional Interim Ministry Committee as an advisory member. Lange will appear on the ballot in the November 2025 election for Concordia Seminary, Board of Regents.
- The Reporter article, “**LCMS takes legal action in Hong Kong**,” September 11, 2025 was disseminated because we (CNH) sit on the Pacific Rim and need to be aware of what is going on so that we can think and speak intelligently about this issue—and keep it all in prayer.
- A brief overview of the **Partners with the CNH** District was discussed (AR p. 2). There was some discussion defining exactly what constitutes a “Recognized Service Organization” (RSO) of the Synod/District.
- Mention of **Permanent/Mandated Committees** within CNH was made with some comment: Mission Agency, Human Care, Stewardship, Constitutional Matters, Hispanic Council, Disabilities, Disaster Relief (AR pp. 2-3).

- There are currently 19 **Specific Ministry Pastors** (SMP) serving in the CNH (AR pp. 3-4). The diversity of age, experience, and full/part-time status was shared.
 - It is increasingly difficult to place pastors coming out of our Seminaries in CNH congregations. We have about three-fifths less seminary graduates than ten years ago. Implication: residential education is important and appropriate; however, there seems to be a growing need to raise pastors in their place/context.
- There are 11 other men who are actively pursuing the Pastoral Office through **non-residential routes**, namely Cross Cultural Ministry (CMC), Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT), and 3 residential seminary students (2 at CTSFW and 1 at CSL).
- The President's **upcoming schedule** is as follows (AR pp. 4-5):
 - September 26, 2025: Pastor, Administrator/Director Joint Meeting
 - October 13 – 14, 2025: Pastors' Conference – San Rafael
 - October 27 – 29, 2025: MAP West Coast
 - November 23 - 25, 2025: CNH & PSD Lutheran Educator Conference
 - December 6, 2025: Board of Directors Meeting
 - January 14-15, 2026: New Pastors and Wives Welcome
 - January 19-21, 2026: TIM Retreat at CNH District Office
 - January 30—February 1, 2026: Pastors' Wives Retreat
 - February 3-5, 2026: CNH Administrators Retreat
 - February 5-6, 2026: CNHECE Directors Retreat
 - February 12-14, 2026: Best Practices in Ministry
 - February 12-14, February 2026: Lutheran Elementary School Tournament (LEST) Northwest & OC
 - March 5-6, 2026: Circuit Visitors' Meeting
 - March 6-7, 2026: Board of Directors Meeting (Visit from Synod Reps.)
 - March 27, 2026: CNH District Spring Educator In-Service
 - April 24-26, 2026: CNH LWML Convention
 - June 6, 2026: Board of Directors Meeting
 - July 18-23, 2026: LCMS Convention, Phoenix, AZ
 - September 17-18: Circuit Visitors' Meeting
 - September 18-19: Board of Directors Meeting
- The list of **President's Activities** for Quarter 3: June 7 – Sept. 10, 2025, was presented and briefly commented on—it was a busy Summer (AR p. 6).
- The topic of **Missio Dei West Foundation** was raised; President Lange gave a summary with input from Rev. Van Scharrel (who sits on the Missio Dei board): Missio Dei board members need to be active members of their CNH, LCMS congregation and have held higher level leadership positions (elder, president, etc.) and are in good standing with their congregations (i.e. attending physically).

Their purpose as a foundation is to steward the resources of congregations that have closed and use them for mission within the CNH District. Missio Dei exists to fund the resources of the CNH District.

- **Strategic Mission Leadership** report by Rev. Paul Feruson (AR, p. 8ff.).
- **Education & Congregational Services** report by Joel Wahlers (AR, p. 11ff.).
- **LCEF District Vice President** report by Matt Molinari (AR, p. 13ff.).
- **Director of Transitional Interim Ministry** report by Rev. Allen Steinbeck (AR, p. 14).
- **Changes within the District** (calls, transfers, vacancies, deaths, etc.) (AR, pp. 19-21).

BOARD ACTIONS

12. ACCEPTING OF CONSTITUTIONS AND BY-LAWS

- **MOTION** to accept the constitutions and by-laws as approved by the District Committee on Constitutional Matters (DCCM) for the following constitutions,
 - Grace/Cloverdale
 - Redeemer/Fresno
 - Trinity/Gardnerville
 - Grace/Grass Valley
 - Holy Cross/Los Gatos
 - Grace/Modesto
 - Bethlehem/Monterey
 - Redeemer/Chico

was made by Rob Weller. Motion seconded by Bill Abbott. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

- There was some discussion of how the DCCM may articulate to congregations in the future the constitutional and practical requirements and implications of dissolution clauses in their constitution and bylaws.

13. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

- **MOTION** to re-approve the current internal auditor for the next Triennium was made by Christy Wood. Motion seconded by Bill Swift. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

14. APPOINT HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

- No action necessary at this time.

15. SET COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA)

- **MOTION** to accept the Board of Finance’s Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) recommendation of a 2.7% increase was made by Bill Abbott. Motion seconded by Marsha Egbert. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

16. REVIEW POLICY MANUAL SEGMENTS

- Chairman Gowen asked the BOD to read the Policy Manual and direct any questions and comments to him, so that it can be edited, clarified, and improved.
- **MOTION** to create a task force to study employer benefits (e.g. health and retirement) for District Staff. Motion made by Bill Swift, seconded by Marsha Egbert. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

The Board took a lunch break at 11:30 AM.

The Board reconvened at 11:55 AM.

17. REVIEW OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION – Gowen and Lange

18. BOD MANUAL ON THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROPERTY

- Discussion took place regarding the swim school on the other side of the District Office; the District Office is technically four condominiums. The swim school has indicated interest in buying the rest of the building space.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

19. UPDATES ON TASK FORCES

- **District By-Laws Evaluation**
 - Rev. Standley confirmed that everything has been accepted by Synod’s Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM). The by-laws of the two permanent committees that were approved at the last CNH convention still need to be formally accepted at the next CNH convention.
- **Board Policy Task Force on Shared Equity for District Staff**
 - Chairman Gowen would like the finance committee to state where the funds would come from for what may need to be a quick move on an administrative District staff person buying a house. Some of the policy

language needs to change from “administrative staff” to “called administrative staff.” Bottom line, BOD needs to know where the money comes from and what amounts are available.

- **Board of Policy Task Force on Military Reserve Duty**
 - Dan Truesdell was asked to work with Jason Bredeson to develop a clear policy for the CNH Policy Manual—this will direct the District President on how to specifically care for those who are deployed.
- **Task Force on Ministry Center Future**
 - On hold until District hears from the swim school.
- **MOTION** to create a Task Force to review District Communications in the area of alignment between By-laws and Strategic Ministry Plan made by Deanna Sako, seconded by Rob Weller. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

20. BETWEEN MEETING ACTIONS/UPDATES

- **CNH Electoral Circuits for Synod Convention were approved**
 - Lange: We went from 13 electoral circuits to 11 (total 22 votes – 11 pastoral, 11 lay – at Synod Convention. We asked for exceptions for Hawaii and San Francisco, which were approved. For the first time CNH combined 3 circuits to make one electoral circuit.
- **Consent Agenda** (minutes of June meeting, changes within the district, future meeting dates)
 - BOD meeting will be March 6-7, 2026, beginning at 2:00 PM on the 6th; President Matthew Harrison & Third Vice President Scott Murray will be present to make their General Visitation.
 - The March meeting will be the last time that the Board can submit an overture to Synod.
- **MOTION** to accept the consent agenda as stipulated above made by Deanna Sako, seconded by Eric Van Scharrel. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

21. BOARD SELF-EVALUATION – review calendar action items and schedule

- Homework for the BOD: Read the book *The CEO and the Board* by Senske.

22. INSTRUCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR DECEMBER ZOOM MEETING

- The meeting will start at 8:00 AM (PST). BOD members are asked to have Zoom preloaded and be in a distraction-free area with a good internet connection.

- If you are going to miss face-to-face meetings, let Chairman Gowen and President Lange know as soon as possible so that the technical needs can be addressed.

With the agenda completed, the Board adjourned with prayer at 1:00 PM.

These minutes are prepared on behalf of the CNH Board of Directors
by Jared Eggebraaten, Secretary

Jared Eggebraaten

9/29/2025

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S.D.G.



CNH DISTRICT

CALIFORNIA NEVADA HAWAII

LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD

Addendum

September 12-13, 2025

Contents

- Meeting Agenda – Future Meeting Dates
- Administrative Report – Changes in District
- Summary of Action Taken



California-Nevada-Hawaii District Board of Directors
September 12 - 13, 2025 Agenda & Schedule **BETA 2**

Friday

4:00pm	Opening Devotion
4:10pm	Overview and Orientation
4:30pm	Denise Lo - Financials
4:50pm	Overview of the BOD Manual and Bylaws
6:00pm	Dinner at Mike and Kristi's

Saturday

8:00a.m Opening devotion -

8:10a.m. Business

A. Monitoring

a. Committee Reports

1. Mission Agency - Mitchell Gowen
2. Finance Committee - Don Busse

b. Management Reports

1. Finance Report - Don Busse (including 2026 Budget first look)
2. District President (see Administration Report of President Lange)

B. Board Actions (New or Ongoing Business Items)

1. Approval of Constitutions & Bylaws

- a. Grace/Cloverdale
- b. Redeemer/Fresno
- c. Trinity/Gardnerville
- d. Grace/Grass Valley
- e. Holy Cross/Los Gatos
- f. Grace/Modesto
- g. Bethlehem/Monterey
- h. Redeemer/Chico

2. Appointment of auditor - Finance Committee

3. Appoint Human Resources management - Finance Committee

4. Set COLA (will be set in June starting in 2026) - Finance Committee

5. Review of Policy Manual Segments - Gowen

6. Review of Strategic Direction - Gowen/Lange

7. BOD Manual on the responsibility for property (create Task Force)

C. UnFinished Business

Updates on Task Forces:

- a. District By Laws Evaluation (Standley/Eggebraaten)
- b. Board Policy Task Force on Shared Equity for District Staff
- c. Board Policy Task Force on Military Reserve Duty
- d. Task Force on Ministry Center Future

D. Between Meeting Actions/Updates

- a. CNH Electoral Circuits for Synod Convention was approved

E. Consent Agenda (minutes of June meeting, changes within the district, future meeting dates)

F. Board Self-evaluation - review calendar action items and schedule

G. Instructions and expectations for December Zoom Meeting

1:00 p.m. (PDT) Closing prayer -

Future meeting dates (subject to change):

2025	2026	2027
	March 7	March 6
	June 6	June 3 or 10
	September 11-12	September 10 - 11
December 6, 2025 (via Zoom)	December 5 (via Zoom)	December 4 (via Zoom)

Board of Directors Report – Lange and Staff v.2 Sept. 12-13, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters on the Board,

In the letter I wrote for our Pastor's Birthday letter this year, I shared the following. (I've been returning to Psalm 62 often this summer for my own devotional thoughts.)

The Rock (Jesus) is present, offering you opportunity to wait (rest) in stillness (silence). *Hear the word.* Respond in prayer.

For God alone my soul waits (rests) in silence (stillness). From Him comes my salvation. (v.1)
Help me to stop, and to expectantly wait. Show to my heart redemptive love.

He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken. (v.2)
Keep me anchored and protected. When I tremble, assure me and hold me tight.

How long will all of you attack a man, to batter him, like a leaning wall, a tottering fence? They only plan to thrust him down from his high position. They take pleasure in falsehood. They bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse. (v. 3-4)

O Lord, the challenges come from friend and foe. Guard my heart from doubting you or your calling to me, your servant. I seem to bend and shudder. By your might, I will stand.

Stuart Townend ends his Psalm 62 hymn paraphrase with these words. They lift my heart to celebrate even in the midst of seemingly crushing weights.

*Though life is but a fleeting breath, A sigh too brief to measure,
My King has crushed the curse of death, and I am His forever.*

Bless you!

Rev. President Mike Lange: beloved child of God, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, friend, ecclesiastical supervisor, pastor, and neighbor

Kristi and I submit the following prayer requests that have to do with our personal lives.

- Thank God with us and pray for a healthy pregnancy for daughter, Paige, in Seattle. They expect their third child in January (will be our 7th grandchild).
- Ask for God's healing power as Kristi has minor surgery for her personal comfort and care in mid-September.
- Guidance and endurance for the care of my "other mother" Dianne (a woman with no family for whom Kristi and I are Power of Attorney and adapted family).
- Thanksgiving for the opportunity to see all our children and grandchildren this summer who live in multiple locations and to spend quality unhurried time with all of them.

Our Work Together as Synod

- 1.** July of 2026 will be our 69th Synodical Convention in Phoenix, AZ, under the theme "Christ is Risen Indeed!" The following link gives important information about timelines for preparation for the convention, including election of delegates in our circuits; nominations for President and

Vice President of Synod; and the reception of overtures for the convention.
<https://www.lcms.org/convention/timeline>

2. I encourage you to watch upcoming information coming out of the LCMS Reporter that will be forthcoming regarding Hong Kong International School (HKIS), and our Synod's interaction. (Information to be shared with CV's and BOD.)

Our Work Together as the CNH District

1. Review of Partners with the CNH District

- a. **LINC Bay Area** - The call for the "City Director" Aaron Putnam is held by the CNH District. **LINC Bay Area's** primary focus is to work with local missionary leaders. They work with local Christian leaders in our own LCMS congregations and with other Christians in the Bay Area to provide clarity, leadership training, and coaching. We are in an ongoing partnership with LINC financially and relationally. (Budget impact \$40,000 yearly)
- b. **Mission Training Center** is more than a partner of CNH. The Mission Training Center is a lay-education training center sponsored by the CNH, PSD, and NOW District (West Coast Districts). We also enjoy high participation in the SED District of the LCMS. <https://www.missiontrainingcenter.com> (Budget impact - \$20,000 yearly)
- c. **LSS of Northern CA** – is presently an RSO of the LCMS. We maintain a relationship with LSS of NorCal. (Budget impact: \$10,000 yearly) – Their RSO status is presently under review.
- d. **Mt. Cross Lutheran Camp:** Remains co-owned by the ELCA – 2/3 and LCMS 1/3. There are two LCMS members on the board who represent LCMS interests. There is room to appoint 2 more. (Mileage for Board members to attend on-site meetings – negligible budget impact)

2. CNH Mandated Committees –

MISSION - Mission Agency - connected with Staff (Paul Ferguson's work)

This mandated committee and its staff handle all CNH Mission work and congregational mission outreach and provided a full report in our Convention Manual.

HUMAN CARE MINISTRIES – headed by Phil Zabell

This committee

- Provides liaison for the Synod's Office of National Missions as relates to its human care and domestic mercy efforts.
- Provides Circuit level assistance in the field of social welfare, especially in coordinating Circuit support for District-wide social welfare projects.
- Is responsible for giving guidance to the District in the area of social ministry.
- In consultation with the Congregation(s) or Circuit(s) involved, coordinate the work of specialized Human Care Ministries (although each may have its own guiding committee).

A report has been submitted for our District Convention workbook

STEWARDSHIP – has not been an active committee for 15 years. Stewardship work has been done by the Mission Executive Office or facilitated through LCEF and consecrated stewards. Some of the bequest work has been done by the LCMS Foundation office and Brian Hyde.

This Committee shall:

- Provide liaison for the Synod's Office of National Missions (Synod Bylaws 3.8.2.3) as regards to stewardship work.
- Assist and advise the local congregations in the development and promotion of an adequate stewardship program.
- Promote special gifts and bequests of all kinds for all phases of the church's work, provided such activities agree with the Articles of Incorporation of the District.
- Understand its tasks and function as being congruent with the Objectives of the Synod as set forth in Constitution Article III and mission and ministry emphases of the Synod (Bylaw 3.8.2.4), as well as resolutions of the District, as regard its area of work.
- It is my plan to give attention to the functioning of this committee within the first year of this triennium.

CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS - As of this meeting Rev. Rick Rice has concluded his service to the District in this area. Rev. Don Schneider is the interim chair. (We are in search for a permanent chair.)

HISPANIC COUNCIL – This committee was mandated in the early 2000's. Although our Hispanic ministries gather irregularly together, there is no longer a committee structure. Our present thought is that this should be reordered into an "All Nation's Group" that promotes gathering together, but also encourages the specific meeting of Hispanic, Chinese and All Asian, (Hmong, East African, and Black Ministries)

DISABILITIES COMMITTEE -- established in the 2022 Convention as a standing committee –

- a. Committee chair is Dianne Flynn.
 - i. Activities include Disabilities Sunday – encouraged again this year on September 28.
 - ii. Disability Awareness and Education
 - iii. Disability Consultation

DISASTER RELIEF COMMITTEE – Oversees and gives continuity to the entire area of Disaster Relief efforts in the CNH District. Newly formed at the 2025 Convention and working with the DDRC – this committee is functioning with members from the task force presently. A meeting to officially appoint and organize will be held this fall.

DISTRICT DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR (DDRC) – Phil Zabell - this point person is connected with Synod's Disaster relief work.

3. Our CNH District is gifted to have multiple SMP Pastors and vicars who are serving or are studying to serve. Please see the total list below.

SMP Pastors Serving

- Stephen Asche, Bethany, Bakersfield – small church pastor
- Otis Byrd II, Shepherd of the Hills, San Francisco – additional staff pastor

- Michael Dube, Shepherd of the Valley, Galt – small church pastor
- Jake Eisinger - St. Mark Elko - sole pastor
- Jim Fennacy, Redeemer, Fresno – additional staff pastor
- Andrew Gomez, Memorial Lutheran Chapel for the Deaf, Fremont – specific linguistic setting.
- Scott Jacobsen, Our Saviour's, Caruthers / St. Paul, Selma – small church pastor
- Daniel Junkin, St. James, Newman – small church pastor
- Jeff Morey, Trinity, Stockton – small church pastor
- Uchel Naito, Good Shepherd, Honolulu – specific cultural setting
- Jim Pevy, Peace, Sacramento – small church pastor
- William Pierce, St. Matthew, Koloa, HI - small church pastor
- John Puscheck, Clear Promise, Lompoc - small church pastor
- Scott Scheer, Mt. Olive, Lindsay – small church pastor
- Herman Sealey, St. Andrews, Antioch - small church pastor
- Marvin St. Pierre, St. John, Bakersfield - additional staff pastor
- Steve Tomac, Faith, Yerington - small church pastor
- Richard Toms, Trinity, Georgetown - small church pastor
- Jeffrey Tuft, Calvary, Oroville / Grace, Gridley – small church pastor

In addition we have several others who are in process for this route, (CMC): the Cross Cultural Ministry Route; or the EIIT route into ministry

SMP

- Anthony Tin - Canaan, San Francisco
- Mike Hudson - Hawthorne - tentative date unknown
- David Singer - Emmanuel Clovis
- Dustin Madden - Susanville Winter 2026?
- Cory Paine (Fall 2024). Willits, CA.

EIIT

- Silas Perez – Good Shepherd Hayward

CMC – (Irvine) - vicars

- Zac Stringham - (Exeter)
- Dave Levy – (Trinity San Rafael)
- Peter Berg –(Prince of Peace, Fremont)
- Solomon Darasy – (St. Paul Tracy)
- Paul Casem – (Messia, Citrus Heights)

Residential Seminary Students:

- Josiah Junkin – CTSFW - in gap year 2025-2026
- Peter Williams – CTSFW
- Peder Saethre – STL: done (not yet assigned)

Pray that the Lord would bring more workers into the Harvest field!

Upcoming Schedule

- **September 26, 2025** - Pastor, Administrator/Director Joint Meeting
- **October 13 – 14, 2025:** Pastors' Conference – San Rafael
- **October 27 – 29, 2025:** MAP West Coast
- **November 23 - 25, 2025:** CNH & PSD Lutheran Educator Conference

- **December 6, 2025:** Board of Directors meeting
- **January 14-15, 2026:** New Pastors and Wives Welcome
- **January 19 – 21, 2026:** TIM Retreat at CNH District office
- **January 30 – February 1, 2026:** Pastors’ Wives Retreat
- **February 3-5, 2026:** CNH Administrators Retreat
- **February 5-6, 2026:** CNH ECE Directors Retreat
- **February 12 – 14, 2026:** Best Practices in Ministry
- **February 12 – 14, 2026:** Lutheran Elementary School Tournament (LEST) Northwest & OC
- **March 5 – 6, 2026:** Circuit Visitors’ Meeting
- **March 6 – 7, 2026:** Board of Directors Meeting (Visit from Synod reps)
- **March 27, 2026:** CNH District Spring Educator In-Service
- **April 24 – 26, 2026:** CNH LWML Convention
- **June 6, 2026:** Board of Directors Meeting
- **July 18 – 23, 2026:** LCMS Convention, Phoenix, AZ
- **September 17 – 18:** Circuit Visitors’ Meeting
- **September 18 – 19:** Board of Directors Meeting

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT CNH Reports

Michael Lange – President’s Office Activities per CNH Strategic Plan

Our staff continues to work forward under the guidelines of the CNH Strategic Ministry Plan. The Overlay of content adopted in Resolution 1.6 will be discussed in this meeting. All staff reports are presented individually attributed to each staff person and written reflective of the overarching goals.

CNH STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN

Mission Statement

We strengthen God’s people to serve and bear witness to Christ.

Vision Statement

A community of healthy and committed Christians who are focused, well-connected, and re-sourced to make disciples and reach the unreached.

Values

CHRIST’S MISSION

Focusing on intentionally seeking and saving the lost by proclaiming the Gospel and multiplying disciples. (Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 19:10)

UNITY

We are better when we focus and align ourselves to fulfill common goals. (John 17:20, Psalm 133:1)

COLLABORATION

Partners working together, using the unique collection of skills and talents in our diverse community of believers. (1 Corinthians 12)

INTEGRITY

We act according to Christian principles and strive for reliable follow-through. (Psalm 26:1-3, James 5:12)

TRANSPARENCY

We communicate with clarity and honesty all that we do within our community of believers. (Matthew 5:37, 2 Corinthians 8:21)

Executive Visits (B) – We are refashioning a recording of our Executive visitation to congregations during this triennium stretching from May 15, 2025 through the next District convention in 2028. You will see president and staff reporting reflective of this quarter which will be included under a google drive link for your viewing in upcoming meetings. The first quarter of visits is listed in each report.

President's Report – *Strategic Path*

List of President's Activities and reporting Quarter 3: June 07 – September 10, 2025

- On-site visits with Congregations and Pastors
 - Waikoloa – (visit with pastor)
 - Christ, Hilo – (congregational celebration)
 - St. Matthew's, Kauai – (visit with pastor)
 - Our Redeemer, Honolulu – call committee meeting and hospital visit with emeritus
 - Ungil Chais Palauan – visit with pastor
 - Peace, Arroyo Grande – Preached and met with leaders
 - Preached and visited with leaders at Burney, CA
 - Preached and visited with leaders and Pastor at Colusa, CA
 - Preached at St. John's, Fallon, NV (visited with pastor and church leaders)
 - Preached at Trinity, Palo Alto, visiting with leaders and pastor
 - Visited St, Luke's, Santa Rosa (Elders and Board)
 - Preached and visited with leaders at Calvary, Oroville, CA
 - Preached and visited with leaders LCHS, San Francisco, CA
 - Preached and visited with leaders at Grace, Gridley, CA
 - Lunch visit with James Clelan, SOTS, Carson City, NV
- Officiated for Installations

- Our Redeemer, Atascadero – Cerdenola
- St. Mark's, Elko - Eisinger
- Messiah, Ewa Beach – installation of UmaShankar
- Personnel Visitation and counseling - worker
 - Care (15)
 - Counsel and Direction (23)
- Donor Visits (2)
- Counseled with two new potential Seminary students (CMC, EIIT)
- Congregational Leadership direction and counsel (Spoke at Iverson Memorial)
- Attended and spoke at Retirement Celebration for Former CNH BOD member (Young)
- Counseled with Missionary to Taiwan, Steve Oliver, (transferred to CNH)
- Attended the PSD convention as guest
- Attended the NOW convention as guest
- Attended the National Youth Gathering for Interaction with Youth and Leaders
- Recorded Video Greetings for Trinity, Gardnerville 125th anniversary
- Preached and participated in Bethlehem, Monterey's 100th anniversary
- Visited School, Principal & Pastor at Emmanuel, Maui
- Attended and spoke at Pastor's 50th anniversary celebration
- Hosted CNH Staff Gathering at our home
- Attended Whaley Memorial
- Attended COP in St. Louis
- Dual (Multi) Parish Update
 - Benicia Lutheran and Trinity Lutheran of Fairfield have entered formally into a dual parish agreement, (October 2024), have called from the field; waiting for a response
 - Willows and Corning are jointly served by Sylvan Finger – 7 years
 - Zion, Winnemucca and Christ Battle, Mountain are served by Jason Iwen (40 years)
 - Willets/Lucerne – evaluating ongoing viability – Cory Paine is SMP vicar at Willets under supervision of Jim Beyer

- Zion Unity – completed documents and finalized April 2, 2023, now recorded with Synod as multi-site parish (Zion Lodi, Immanuel Jackson, & Foothill Lutheran Valley Springs) and now former AALC congregation in Valley Spring – *Jason Weber is their pastor*
 - Oroville/Gridley – finalized in January 2024 – served by SMP Jeff Tuft
 - Shepherd of the Valley in San Jose working with First Immanuel (Isaiah Mudge is vicar) – this may or may not develop into a dual ministry
 - Redeeming Grace: merger completed. Muluneh Taye installed as their planting pastor for new ministry
 - Good Shepherd and Grace, both in Hayward, will finalize merge soon.
 - Peace, Mill Valley, is working to close by the end of the year and will become a LINC Bay Area sponsored ministry site.
 - Hope in San Leandro has dissolved and ended their ministry. They have asked Good Shepherd in Hayward to manage their future work on their campus.
 - Faith in Sonoma and Good Shepherd in Healdsburg were examining shared use of Good Shepherd's pastor – this relationship came to an end this summer.
 - First, Yuba City shares pastoral support with Bethlehem, Colusa.
 - Our Savior, Caruthers, shares pastoral support with Selma, CA.
 - St. John's, Bakersfield shares support with Peace, Taft, CA.
- Worked with 3 congregations during this period providing call lists and call information.
 - Planned and led semi-monthly staff meetings (5 times this period)
 - Conducted individual face-to-face meetings with entire executive staff individually (5) series of meetings
 - Attended and gave attention to COP pastoral placement duties (appointed chairman of this Board for Interim placement)
 - Participated in monthly Intentional Interim Committee – Synodical assignment
 - Counseled with Missio Dei West regarding new members.
 - Engaged and supported CNH Nominating Committee for successful nominations process

Strategic Mission Leadership – *Rev. L. Paul Ferguson*

Reporting Period: June 1, 2025 – August 31, 2025

Submitted by: Rev. Paul Ferguson Jr., Mission Executive

Strategic Focus Areas

- Connection and Collaboration
 - Leadership Development & Growing Ministries
 - Worker Wellness
-

1. Connection and Collaboration

- **Circuit Engagements:** Continued one-on-one visits with pastors and leaders across CNH, focusing on shared identity, equitable participation, and mission alignment.
 - **Congregational Consultations:**
 - Follow-up visits with **Christ the Life (San Jose)**, **Holy Cross (Los Gatos)**, and **St. John (Napa)** to guide mission planning and leadership transitions.
 - Supported **Bethany Vacaville** in processing next steps after board discussions on staffing and mission clarity. Ongoing visits schedule through 2025 to help refine mission and vision.
 - Visits with **Redeeming Grace**, **Lutheran Church of Our Savior**, **Lutheran Church of Prayer**, **Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit**, **Trinity (San Jose)** re: future mission and ministry planning.
 - Devotional Leader at CNH pre-NYG gathering in Santa Cruz
 - **Podcast Growth:** *The Mission Table* podcast released multiple new episodes, featuring CNH ministry leaders and partners (e.g., LINC, Mercy Holistic Ministries). The audience continues to expand, becoming a vital storytelling platform for the District.
 - **National and Synodical Engagements:** Represented CNH at the **LCMS Black Ministry Caucus (June)** and supported CNH youth and leaders at the **National Youth Gathering (July)**, strengthening cross-district partnerships.
 - **InTouch Newsletter Refinement:** Continued updates to streamline content submission and design, incorporating feedback from the spring rollout. The goal is for *InTouch* to become the **flagship communication tool** for district-wide events, resources, and mission stories. In addition to improving readability and consistency, we are actively rolling out **regional promotion strategies** by engaging Circuit Visitors (CVs) and Regional Vice Presidents (RVPs) to help highlight events, trainings, and mission opportunities in their areas. This dual approach—district-wide visibility with regional amplification—is positioning *InTouch* as the primary vehicle for strengthening communication and collaboration across the CNH District.
-

2. Leadership Development & Growing Ministries

- **Mission Framing & Vision Planning:**
 - Will conclude Auxano's three-part training series in September. Applied learnings with **Holy Cross (Los Gatos)** and **St. Paul's (Tracy)**, producing actionable mission frameworks and multiple other congregations asking for mission and vision support.
 - Initiated early-stage consultations with **Trinity Watsonville** and **St. Luke Santa Rosa**, and **St. Paul Auburn** regarding future staffing and partnerships.
- **Strategic Partnerships:**
 - Ongoing collaboration with **Pastors Jaime & Martin Ureña** on Hispanic/Latino mission development in CNH.
 - Continued partnership with **FiveTwo** in Elk Grove, exploring local mission incubation. Potentially hosting FiveTwo Summit in 2026.

- **Leadership Mentoring:**
 - Supported **CMC students** and **vicars** preparing for placement, including coaching and connection opportunities.
 - **Circuit Visitor Engagement:** Planning the **Fall 2025 CV Gathering** with a focus on collaboration, best practices in pastoral support, and a rollout of the initial phase of Resolution 1-4 (partnership with CVs, RVPs, and congregations).
-

3. Worker Wellness

- **Worker Wellness Survey:** District-wide survey responses were collected and analyzed. Early trends highlight both thriving leaders and areas requiring increased support, especially around stress management and vocational clarity.
 - **Tiered Care Strategy:** Continued collaboration with **Ashlee Zoch (Executive Coach)** and **Jennifer Ferguson (LPCC)** to refine a tiered approach to care—balancing crisis response, coaching, and preventative resources.
 - **ICF Coaching Certification:** Nearing completion of coursework, with certification anticipated by early 2026. This will expand coaching resources for pastors and leaders.
 - **Prayer Gatherings:** Monthly CNH prayer gatherings remain consistent, providing encouragement and spiritual connection for rostered and lay leaders.
 - **Stewardship Hub Development:** Work underway to build a **CNH District Stewardship Resource Hub**, curating LCMS resources for congregations.
-

Looking Ahead

- Host **Fall Circuit Visitor Gathering** (September) with emphasis on collaboration, Resolution 1.4 implementation, and grant cycle clarity.
 - Launch **CNH Worker Wellness Resource Hub** with survey insights and accessible tools for leaders.
 - Continue expansion of *The Mission Table* podcast as a District communication tool.
 - Explore Hispanic/Latino ministry strategy with potential pilot sites in Northern California.
 - Support congregations in implementing completed **mission framing outcomes** and aligning with District mission strategy.
-

Conclusion

This summer season has been marked by **strengthened collaboration, clearer mission frameworks, and intentional care for workers**. As CNH enters the fall, our focus sharpens on equipping leaders, sustaining wellness, and cultivating new mission opportunities—all rooted in Christ's call to share the Gospel across our diverse District.

Education & Congregational Services – Joel Wahlers

The 2025-26 school year is well underway for all of our CNH District schools. Currently, we have 67 schools in the CNH District (46 preschools, 20 elementary schools, and 1 high school) serving 6500 students. These schools are blessed with almost 1000 faculty and staff servants - daily sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our Lutheran schools are some of the strongest mission outposts in the CNH District. May God bless their work as they start another school year!

The following are some of my activities related to schools and youth based on our five main District goals.

CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION

- This summer is a time to plan for the next school year. Below are some of the new things planned for next year with help from our School Ministry Team:
 - We are planning to have fewer Zoom meetings and are planning more in-person opportunities.
 - We are planning an Administrators Conference or Retreat next year similar to what we do with the EC Directors. We are also planning to have a gathering of some kind for administrators prior to our Spring In-service.
 - Regarding the Fall Conference, we are going to still recommend schools attend LEC this year, but St. John's Bakersfield is offering an alternative (less time, less cost) for those schools who do not plan on traveling to Phoenix this year.
 - We are also setting up a District Curriculum Committee to help give guidance to schools on curriculum material rotation and curriculum writing. This continues to be a top issue during accreditation visits.
- NYG was a success. We had over 300 youth and adults from the CNH District attend, and almost everyone joined us for our District Event on the Steamboat.
- Our combined PSD/CNH Lutheran Educator Conference (LEC) Planning is underway for this November. Our next meeting is August 19.
- I am working as a member of the CAPSO Board and the Executive Committee. CAPSO is has developed a Strategic Plan. A major emphasis right now is addressing some key federal and state legislation that will affect private schools. CAPSO recently hosted a webinar on the new federal choice law that was passed – ECCA. If California opts in (and that is still an "if"), we as a District may want to look at forming an SGO to be able to provide scholarships to Lutheran school students.
- I attended our GOSPEL Conference in St. Louis on July 30 – August 1. Kurt Senske and the Toms from LCEF were presenters. It was a great conference, and we had an event to celebrate retirees, including Rachel Klitzing.
- We have reinstated our Western Ed Execs group, now called WAVES (Western Association of Visionary Executives for Schools). This group includes the two execs from PSD, Paul Albers from Rocky Mountain, Jim Scriven from NOW, and myself. We plan to meet this coming January.
- Our DCE Advisory Team met recently to plan for the year. We now have a [2025-26 Youth Calendar](#) and sent out a survey to youth leaders in the District to find how we can best serve the youth and youth leaders in the CNH District

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- The Foundations of Lutheran Teaching fall cohort is now full with 23 participants. We have two or three from the CNH District enrolled.

- I am still working with St. Andrews in Stockton, Mt. Olive Folsom, and Bethany in Vacaville on governance help and training.
- I will be starting my training this fall with Govern for Impact on being certified as a Policy Governance Consultant. The webinar sessions begin September 13.
- We have one new elementary principal, Brenda Plath, at St. Peter in Lodi. She will also be joining our School Ministry Team.
- We still have one school administrator opening – at Prince of Peace Fremont. While they are searching, Peter Berg will be serving in that role.
- I am planning the September 26 CNH Joint Leadership Meeting & Workshop. Brian Underwood will be presenting on the topic of “trust” and how this is essential for ministry teams.
- I shared four possible candidates for the Loan Forgiveness Committee – Megan Mathison, Dave Sleighter, Heidi Blank, and Danika Neal.

GROWING MINISTRIES

- Zion in San Luis Obispo preschool is up and running, though only a few students at this point. Sierra Day has resigned as their interim Director and has handed the Director duties to another person at the school. She shared a number of concerns about the church that led her to make that decision.
- I attended the Grand Opening of the new building additions at Sierra Lutheran High School. They have now doubled the size of their school and added much space as well as value to their program.

WORKER WELLNESS

- I have been working with Jennifer Ferguson and Ashlee Zoch on setting up and promotion of the upcoming webinar workshops on their Care and Coaching Initiative. I put together promotion materials and sent them out to pastors, administrators, circuit visitors, vice presidents, and BOD members. I only have one small frustration with this process so far.
- Our District Church Worker Care Team is in place and available (Steve Christopher, Kari Perna, Lenny Szeto, and Brian Cummins). How we use this group in the future is still up in the air.
- I received information from Concordia Plans on their new District Wellness Program and the new coordinators they have hired. They were here at the District Office on August 20. We have put together a Wellness Task Force to work on a District Wellness Goal.

RESOURCES

- I have updated educational and youth information on our District website.
- I continue to provide updates to school administrators on actual and pending legislation that will be affecting our school.
- CAPSO sponsored a webinar on the new federal school choice legislation, ECCA (Education Choice for Children Act). If California or Hawaii or Nevada opts in to this new law, we as a District may want to look at how we might set up an SGO (Scholarship Granting Organization) to help collect and provide funds to students in our Lutheran schools.

LCEF District Vice President – Matt Molinari

Summary: Our loan interest rates continue to cause some challenges with our borrowers. We are taking time to be proactive and find relief when necessary. I was asked by our national office to participate in an innovations team called RISE (Reimagine, Innovate, Service, Engage) which is essentially a “think tank” for creative services and programs. We have established a “Together in Faith Agreement” which means anytime a congregation borrows money they will be asked to do one or more of the following agreed upon actions: open an all-access account, publish the LCEF logo on their website, share a social media post about LCEF, etc...

Real-Estate Solutions:

- Trinity, Watsonville
- Emmanuel, Maui
- Our Savior’s, Pacifica
- Waikoloa

Ministry Solutions:

- Calvary, San Lorenzo has engaged Kris Kunkel to facilitate the clarity process as they build out a strategic plan. The process will look at ministry, facilities and finances over the course of 18 months

Current Loan Activity: (current cost of funds = 4.00 % » annually adjustable “partner rate” = 6.625%
// Current rates can be viewed here: <https://lcef.org/loan-rates/>)

- Lutheran Church of Prayer, Bakersfield (Refinance to provide cash flow relief)
- Redeemer Redwood City (Refinance to provide cash flow relief)
- Trinity, Gardnerville (Ministry Improvement Loan for Roof Project)
- Holy Cross, Rocklin (Beginning stages of exploring new sanctuary construction project)
- Trinity, Watsonville (Wagner Loan to bridge their ministry to completion of RES project)
- Redeeming Grace, Santa Clara (Refinance parsonage loan under the new name)
- St. Paul, Mountain View (Parsonage Construction on Site)
- Waikoloa, Hawaii (Construction Bridge Loan)
- Emmanuel, Maui (Construction Loan)

District Partnership:

- Produced the first 10 episodes of Mission Table Podcast w/Paul and Silas (available on: Vimeo, Spotify and Apple Podcasts) <https://www.cnh-lcms.org/blog/tags/mission-table-podcast>
- Refine InTouch email workflow and website content
- Mission agency website updates and marketing material

Sponsorship:

- Pastors Conference in San Rafael (Oct)

- Messiah Santa Cruz Oktoberfest
- Pastor Party San Lorenzo
- Sierra Lutheran High School Golf Tournament
- Mercy Holistic Ministry Fundraiser Banquet
- CV Dinner

Please feel free to reach out anytime with questions. matt.molinari@lcef.org or Cell: 916-580-5592

Director of Transitional Interim Ministry – *Allen Steinbeck*

1. Greetings, Dear CNH Board of Directors! Congregations often ask: “How might we be served during a pastoral vacancy?” By way of reminder, we always set before them several options and distinguish between them clearly.
 - a. Pulpit Supply – exactly that; Sunday morning duties, which sometimes also include teaching Bible Class.
 - b. Vacancy Pastor – sometimes by President Lange referred to as a “shopkeeper” – one who serves Sunday duties, along with some sick/shut-in visits, and perhaps a Confirmation or New Member Class, depending upon the congregation’s needs and the Vacancy Pastor’s availability.
 - c. Transitional Interim Pastor – one who is trained (and many times, credentialed) to serve a congregation during the time between settled pastors. These are men (normally called and installed) to fulfil regular pastoral duties and also to do intentional, proactive work in the congregation. Here are a few of the ways a Transitional Interim Pastor may assist a congregation:
 - i. Reviewing and clarifying its heritage
 - ii. Recognizing its present strengths and weaknesses and potential for ministry
 - iii. Developing and empowering leadership
 - iv. Reaffirming its ties to the larger Church—especially the CNH District and Synod
 - v. Committing itself to possible new directions and new pastoral leadership
2. Currently, eight CNH congregations are being served by Transitional Interim pastors. At least a couple more are in the works. We are thankful for TIM pastors, their faithful service, and—properly understood—the congregations who take advantage of them.
3. As I shared once before, I’ve been blessed to be a part of some foundational work in the PSD as they develop and test the idea of a TIM pastor doing part-time consultancy work among congregations, sometimes focusing only on one aspect of congregational health/development (some examples: Visioning; working through Institutional Grief; Conflict Resolution). Some exciting things to consider in our changing landscape.
4. LuTMA (Lutheran Transitional Ministry Association) held its Annual Conference in Baltimore in June. The topic focused on “Sacred Spaces” – challenging congregations to thoughtfully consider how they might utilize the space they already have to better open up to and serve their surrounding communities.
5. Please continue to pray for laborers unto the Lord’s harvest. In a conversation the other day, it was noted that as fewer darken our doors, our mission opportunities continue to expand. What a privilege to be Gospel-partners in this effort!

Blessings as you serve the Lord on this Board and at home.

Allen

Treasurer's Report for September 13, 2025 by Donald Busse

The Finance Committee met on September 4 to review the financial and investment reports. Operations for the seven months ended July 31, 2025, show Revenues were under the budget approximately \$27,000 and Expenses were under budget approximately \$59,000. The draw from the accumulated reserved funds was \$32,000 below budget. Congregational Remittances were \$51,000 under budget. Details of the differences by category are included in the Finance Report.

The committee was advised of certain capital expenditures and disbursements from the disaster funds that will be discussed in the Finance report.

The Investment Portfolio amounted to approximately \$6.2 million on September 3, 2025. Combined investments show a gain in market value of \$80,000 for the period from December 31, 2024. The funds are \$373,000 higher than their original value. The \$373,000 is an unrealized gain accumulated over time. Just like our own investments we do not realize any actual gain or loss until the investment is sold. Non-Donor Restricted Funds have had a gain in market value of approximately \$44,000 since the beginning of the year. Interest distributed was \$113,000 for total earnings of \$157,000. This represents a 3.4 % change in these investments. Donor Restricted Funds saw an approximate market value gain of \$36,000, and interest and dividends of \$46,000 for a total gain of \$81,000 over the same period, a change of 4.2%. 43% of the Donor Restricted Funds are in equities versus 10% for the Non-Donor Restricted Funds. The total portfolio is 21% equities and 79% fixed investments.

The investment policy is to have no more than 65% invested in equities.

The investment portfolio reviews are done at a specific point in time. Changes to the market values of the portfolio may occur after the review that may be positive or negative. The markets are volatile and change daily as recent events have shown.

Underwater Endowment Funds - There are two underwater donor restricted endowment funds.

The market values of these accounts have fallen below the original contributed amounts. While an endowment is underwater, disbursements from the accounts are not made until the account has recovered. During this period, any income earned from these funds is held and not disbursed.

Funds:

- District Mission Endowment
- Peter Endowment

The accumulated reduction in market value incurred in these accounts was \$11,271 on September 3, 2025. Interest reserved in these accounts is approximately \$24,000. The regulations regarding underwater funds will be reviewed to see if accumulated interest can be used to prop up the principal to bring the funds above the water level.

Langum Family Trust – In December 2024, the District received an unrestricted gift of certain stocks and mutual funds from the Langum Family Trust. Upon the date of receipt, the value of these investments was approximately \$99,000. As of September 3, 2025, the value was approximately \$97,000, a difference of approximately \$2,000. The committee decided to move some investments to S&P or other index funds.

Cost of Living Adjustment – 2026 – Each year the District provides a cost-of-living percentage to the congregations for use in determining salary and other cost adjustments for the coming year. The Committee reviewed the 2026 calculation for the coming year which results in a 2.7% increase versus the 2025 adjustment of 3%. The committee recommends the 2026 adjustment to the Board for approval.

Preliminary 2026 Budget – The preliminary budget report was reviewed in detail. The budget shows a decrease of approximately \$68,000 in revenue with an approximate \$5,000 increase in expenses

resulting in a proposed increase in the drawdown of accumulated reserve funds of approximately \$73,000 over the 2025 budget. A more detailed look at the budget is included in the Finance report.

The next Finance Committee meeting will be on Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 2:00 pm.

Business and Finance Matters by Denise Lo, Operations Executive

Board Action Required: 2026 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)

- **We propose a 2.70% salary increase for the 2026 Salary Guidelines.**

This recommendation is based on Consumer Price Index and various reports provided by US Bureau of Labor Statistics as below:

	COLA - 2026		REFERENCE	PROVIDER
1	12 Month Period (from Jun to Jun) Inflation Calculator	2.67%	Not seasonally Adjusted	US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS.gov)
2	San Francisco/Oakland/Hayward	1.50%	CUURS49BSA0	US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS.gov)
3	U.S. City Average	2.70%	CUUR0000SA0	US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS.gov)
4	West Region - July 2023	2.70%	CUUR0400SA0	US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS.gov)
	Average of four Proposal to the BOARD	2.39% 2.70%		

Internal Audits update:

Due to scheduling conflicts, the 2025 audits are still in progress but should be completed soon.

Board’s action required: LCMS Internal Audits from 2026-2028.

I recommend that we approve the current internal auditors to continue serving in the coming triennium. They have proven to be reliable and knowledgeable in nonprofit accounting, and their experience has been a valuable asset to the District.

Financial Reports: As of July 31, 2025

Total Operation Income:	\$1,076,993
ARF (MMS + DMS)	\$167,376
Total Revenue and Support	<u>\$1,244,369</u>
Total Operation Expenses:	<u>\$1,244,369</u>

Highlight – YTD Review Revenue

- Congregation Remittance is \$752,355 compared to the budget of \$803,771, which is \$51,416 (6.4%) below budget. This shortfall is due to some congregations reducing District support in favor of other ministries and the closing of several churches.

- Unrestricted Donation \$13,559 compared the budget \$5,000. This includes unexpected gift \$9,738 from the Jed Hessler Trust.
- Interest Earned \$107,574 compared \$81,725, which \$25,849 (32%) above projection because LCEF continues offer high interest rates term notes.
- Program Income \$65,873 compared the budgeted \$95,783, which \$29,910 (31%) below budget. Please note that the Congregation Health Services line item included \$15,000 July and \$30,000 for 2025, which may needed since the program position remains vacant.
- Other Income \$19,660 compared the budgeted \$4,702, which \$14,958 over budget. this amount, \$17,099 came from the closing funds Trinity Walnut Creek.

Expenses

- Ecclesiastical Supervision \$375,918 compared \$345,997, which \$29,920 (8.7%) over budget. This includes \$15,084 for overwater expenses not included the 2025 budget.
- Equipping Missional Leaders \$162,125 compared \$198,503, which \$36,378 (18%) low budget. This variance due the Congregation Health vacancy (budgeted \$16,742) activity Missional Training (budgeted \$23,500).
- Mission Grants are \$149,211 compared \$184,236, which \$35,025 below budget. this amount, \$29,167 relates the Mission Agency New Opportunity, with only \$2,500 spent July 2025.
- District Operations are \$141,507 compared \$165,892, which \$24,385 under budget. The 2024 audits are still progress, the \$15,000 budgeted for audit expenses has not yet been paid.

Reserved Funds (ARF) date

MMS: Beg Bal: 01/01/25		1,740,587
CY Released		-126,763
Building & Equipment		
Okld Church Roof Repair	-	
	61,830	
CA Rm Air Con Install	- 6,500	
Sub total		-68,330
ARF Ending Bal: 07/31/25		<u>1,545,494</u>
DMS: Beg Bal: 01/01/25		1,608,355
CY Released		-40,613
ARF Ending Bal: 07/31/2025		<u>1,567,742</u>
ARF Eng balance: 07/31/2025		<u><u>3,113,236</u></u>

CNH Disaster Funds Summary

As of July 31, 2025							
	Income			Disbursement			Reserved Balance
	2017-2024	2025	Total	2017-2024	2025	Total	
2017-Wildfire/Tubbs	305,813		305,813	161,263		161,263	144,550
2018-Mendocino/Carr	66,289		66,289	21,800		21,800	44,489
2018-Camp Fire	254,674		254,674	96,759	41,235	137,994	116,681
2023-Maui Fire	366,467	500	366,967	155,729		155,729	211,237
N. California Fire	139,028	34,217	173,245	30,684	50,267	80,951	92,294
Total	1,132,271	34,717	1,166,988	466,236	91,502	557,737	609,251

Payments from May 1 to July 31 as following:

Texas District – Flood	\$10,000
Camp Fire-Our Savior of Paradise	\$41,235
	\$51,235

2026 Budget-Preliminary – Just for Information

Summary

	MMS	DMS	Total
Revenue/Support	1,430,035	517,800	1,947,835
ARF	308,333	119,246	427,579
Total	1,738,368	637,046	2,375,414
Expense	1,738,368	637,046	2,375,414

Highlights:

Preliminary Budget – 2026

The primary changes are in staff and independent contractor salaries, employee benefits, and overhead costs due to inflation. In addition, the congregation remittance has been adjusted based on receipts from 2023–2025.

Highlights of the 2026 Budget

- **Salary Change:** 2.7% Cost of Living Adjustment, or as outlined in the CNH Salary Guidelines
- **Benefit Change:** 1% increase for Concordia Retirement Plans and 3% increase for Health Insurance
- **Staffing:** Fill the full-time bookkeeping position
 - **Combined Total Increase: \$118,797**
- **Congregation Remittance:** Adjusted according to receipts from 2023–2025
 - **Reduced by \$35,000 compared to 2025**
 - 2026 Budget Total: \$1,390,000

- 2025 Budget Total: \$1,425,000

Recommendation:

I recommend that the Board form a task force to review the employee benefit packages. Benefit costs, particularly retirement and health insurance, continue to rise each year and represent one of the largest line items in the District budget. A focused review will help ensure that these costs remain sustainable, while also maintaining fair and supportive benefits for our employees.

**Changes within the District
September 2025**

Calls Accepted

- **Rev. Peter Dorn**, emeritus, to Zion, Piedmont, CA, as TIM pastor
- **Rev. Andrew Simpson**, Our Savior, Sparks, NV, to Our Savior, Bad Axe, MI, as pastor
- **Rev. Muluneh Taye**, Addis Kidan, San Francisco, CA, to Redeeming Grace, Santa Clara, CA, as associate pastor

Calls Extended

- **Rev. Eric Bednash**, St. James, Baltimore, MD, to St. John's, Petaluma, CA, as pastor
- **Rev. Jason Bredeson**, Trinity, Sacramento, CA, to Immanuel, Everett, WA, as pastor
- **Rev. Christopher Howell**, Beautiful Savior, SeaTac, WA, to Benicia Lutheran, Benicia, CA / Trinity Lutheran, Fairfield, CA, as pastor

Calls Declined

- **Rev. Eric Bednash**, St. James, Baltimore, MD, to St. John's, Petaluma, CA, as pastor
- **Rev. Steven Bohler**, Our Savior's, Crookston, MN, to Zion, Terra Bella, CA, as pastor
- **Rev. Jason Bredeson**, Trinity, Sacramento, CA, to Immanuel, Everett, WA, as pastor
- **Rev. Andrew Simpson**, Our Savior, Sparks, NV, to Zion, Hemlock, MI, as pastor

Changes in Status

- **Rev. William Abbott**, River of Life, Dayton, NV, to pastor emeritus
- **Rev. Paul Aldrich**, Zion, Piedmont, CA, to pastor emeritus
- **Rev. Michael Bell**, candidate status to pastor emeritus
- **Rev. Joshua Brown**, St. Luke, Reno, NV, to candidate status
- **Rev. Matthew Duerr**, Zion, Lodi, CA, to pastor emeritus
- **Rev. James Glaspie**, candidate status to pastor emeritus
- **Rev. Jonathan Lange**, candidate status to pastor emeritus
- **Rev. Philip Scharnitzke**, candidate status to pastor emeritus
- **Rev. Mark Zier**, Christ, Hilo, HI, to pastor emeritus
- **Craig Blackburn**, commissioned minister, Prince of Peace, Fremont, CA, reinstated
- **Marlys Cartwright**, commissioned minister candidate status to emeritus
- **Janelle Newton**, commissioned minister candidate status to emeritus
- **Cynthia Rothas**, commissioned minister candidate status to emeritus
- **Pamela Silva**, deaconess, Holy Cross, Rocklin, CA to emeritus
- **Christine Solheim**, commissioned minister candidate status to emeritus

Transfer

- **Rev. Richard Barklage**, from Northwest District to CNH District
- **Rev. Peter Dorn**, from Pacific Southwest District to CNH District
- **Rev. John Krueger**, from Northwest District to CNH District
- **Rev. Maynard Schulz**, from CNH District to Texas District
- **Rev. Andrew Simpson**, from CNH District to Michigan District
- **Rev. Timothy Steele II**, from CNH District to Nebraska District
- **Rev. Mark Whittaker**, from CNH District to Michigan District
- **Rev. William Wrede**, from CNH District to Eastern District
- **Grace Bradshaw**, teacher, from CNH District to Rocky Mountain District
- **Morgan Clifford**, teacher, from CNH District to Northwest District
- **Zachary Karges**, teacher, from CNH District to Indiana District
- **David Rueter**, DCE, from CNH District to Rocky Mountain District

Resignation from the Roster

- **Rev. Duncan Sprague**, Boise, ID, candidate status

Removed from the Roster

- **Rev. Timothy Lai**, Fillmore, CA, candidate status
- **Nathanial Schober**, candidate status

Placements

- **Jacob Eisinger**, SMP, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, to St. Mark, Elko, NV, as pastor – specific ministry

Vicarages

- **Peter Berg**, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, to Prince of Peace, Fremont, CA, as vicar (CMC)
- **Paul Casem**, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, to Messiah, Citrus Heights, CA, as vicar (CMC)
- **Soloman Dasary**, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, to St. Paul's, Tracy, CA, as vicar (CMC)
- **Silas Perez**, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, to Good Shepherd, Hayward, CA, as vicar (EIIT)

Deceased

- **Rev. Jonathan Coyne**, Menlo Park, CA
- **Rev. William Plath**, Lodi, CA
- **Rev. John Whaley**, Rio Vista, CA
- **Rev. Thomas Windsor**, Honolulu, HI

Pastoral Vacancies

Calling Congregations

- Benicia, Benicia, CA / Trinity, Fairfield, CA
- Resurrection, Brentwood, CA
- Our Redeemer, Honolulu, HI
- First, Lucerne, CA

- St. Paul, Merced, CA
- Mt. Olive, Milpitas, CA
- St. Paul, Mountain View, CA
- St. John's, Napa (associate)
- Zion, North Highlands
- St. John, Petaluma, CA
- St. Matthew, Rocklin, CA
- First Immanuel, San Jose, CA
- Trinity, San Jose, CA
- St. Luke, Santa Rosa, CA
- Faith, Sonoma, CA
- Our Savior, Sparks, NV
- Zion, Terra Bella, CA
- Good Shepherd, Turlock, CA
- Bethany, Vacaville

Vacancy Congregations (not actively calling)

- Holy Cross, Atwater, CA
- Faith, Burney, CA
- Our Savior, Chester, CA
- St. John, Clearlake, CA
- Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, Delano, CA
- First, Dinuba, CA
- Trinity, Exeter, CA
- St. Luke, Portola, CA
- Canaan, San Francisco
- Trinity, San Rafael, CA
- Grace, Santa Maria, CA
- Mt. Olive, Sebastopol, CA
- Mount Calvary, Soquel, CA
- St. Paul, Susanville, CA
- Peace, Taft, CA
- St. John, Willits, CA

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- **December 6, 2025:** Board of Directors meeting
- **January 14-15, 2026:** New Pastors and Wives Welcome
- **January 19 – 21, 2026:** TIM Retreat at CNH District office
- **January 30 – February 1, 2026:** Pastors’ Wives Retreat
- **February 3-5, 2026:** CNH Administrators Retreat
- **February 5-6, 2026:** CNH ECE Directors Retreat
- **February 12 – 14, 2026:** Best Practices in Ministry
- **February 12 – 14, 2026:** Lutheran Elementary School Tournament (LEST) Northwest & OC
- **March 5 – 6, 2026:** Circuit Visitors’ Meeting
- **March 6 – 7, 2026:** Board of Directors Meeting (Visit from Synod reps)
- **March 27, 2026:** CNH District Spring Educator In-Service
- **April 24 – 26, 2026:** CNH LWML Convention
- **June 6, 2026:** Board of Directors Meeting
- **July 18 – 23, 2026:** LCMS Convention, Phoenix, AZ
- **September 17 – 18:** Circuit Visitors’ Meeting
- **September 18 – 19:** Board of Directors Meeting

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT CNH Reports

Michael Lange – President’s Office Activities per CNH Strategic Plan

Our staff continues to work forward under the guidelines of the CNH Strategic Ministry Plan. The Overlay of content adopted in Resolution 1.6 will be discussed in this meeting. All staff reports are presented individually attributed to each staff person and written reflective of the overarching goals.

CNH STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN

Mission Statement

We strengthen God’s people to serve and bear witness to Christ.

Vision Statement

A community of healthy and committed Christians who are focused, well-connected, and re-sourced to make disciples and reach the unreached.

Values

CHRIST’S MISSION

Focusing on intentionally seeking and saving the lost by proclaiming the Gospel and multiplying disciples. (Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 19:10)

UNITY

We are better when we focus and align ourselves to fulfill common goals. (John 17:20, Psalm 133:1)

COLLABORATION

Action Taken

CNH District Board Meeting September 12-13

12. ACCEPTING OF CONSTITUTIONS AND BY-LAWS

- **MOTION** to accept the constitutions and by-laws as approved by the District Committee on Constitutional Matters (DCCM) for the following constitutions,
 - Grace/Cloverdale
 - Redeemer/Fresno
 - Trinity/Gardnerville
 - Grace/Grass Valley
 - Holy Cross/Los Gatos
 - Grace/Modesto
 - Bethlehem/Monterey
 - Redeemer/Chico

was made by Rob Weller. Motion seconded by Bill Abbott. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

13. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

- **MOTION** to re-approve the current internal auditor for the next Triennium was made by Christy Wood. Motion seconded by Bill Swift. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

15. SET COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA)

- **MOTION** to accept the Board of Finance's Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) recommendation of a 2.7% increase was made by Bill Abbott. Motion seconded by Marsha Egbert. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

16. REVIEW POLICY MANUAL SEGMENTS

- **MOTION** to create a task force to study employer benefits (e.g. health and retirement) for District Staff. Motion made by Bill Swift, seconded by Marsha Egbert. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

19. UPDATES ON TASK FORCES

- **MOTION** to create a Task Force to review District Communications in the area of alignment between By-laws and Strategic Ministry Plan made by Deanna Sako, seconded by Rob Weller. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.

20. BETWEEN MEETING ACTIONS/UPDATES

Consent Agenda

- **MOTION** to accept the consent agenda as stipulated above made by Deanna Sako, seconded by Eric Van Scharrel. The vote was unanimous; the **motion passed**.