

SUMMARY OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE’S REPORT & PRELIMINARY CIRCUIT DISCUSSIONS
Northwoods Conference

Introductory notes: The chart idea was taken from the work of Ryan Landwehr, and his chart is pretty close to what he submitted. As for the other circuits, the graphs are Pastor Vertein’s summary of their discussions. Paul Meitner reviewed and corrected the graph for the Lake Superior Circuit.

The men involved in each of the circuit meetings are listed at the end of this document.

Key: Yes = general conceptual approval, at times with questions or requests for additional detail

No = Reject / Not in favor

Maybe=Qualified support with questions, suggestions, or request for additional rationale

Division of Labor: 1-3 Peshtigo Circuit
4-6 Lake Superior Circuit
7-9 Rhinelander Circuit

The summaries and questions are those presented by Pastor Scherbarth. The endorsements and recommendations are reprinted for easy reference. Page references are from the *Preliminary Report and Recommendations*. For the full preliminary report with its endorsements, recommendations, and rationales, see the *Preliminary Report and Recommendations* of the Ad Hoc Committee. Copies are available.

INTRODUCTION

This section apparently wasn’t covered by any of the circuits, other than by addressing the recommendations that result from this understanding of the mission and purpose of the Synod.

The Mission and Purpose of the Synod

Summary: The preliminary report concurs with the Synod convention of 2005 and 2007 conclusion that the purpose of the Synod is for congregations to do together what the individual congregation could not do on its own. The report goes on to say that the Synod *“has not been established to duplicate all the tasks given to individual congregations, only on a larger scale.”* In connection with this goal, the report identified four general objectives for the Synod. They are: 1. To assist and counsel the pastors and teachers and congregations identified as members of the Synod; 2. To establish and maintain the theological seminaries, colleges, and other institutions of learning for the training of pastors and teachers; 3. To establish and maintain home and world missions; 4. To provide for the printing, publishing, purchasing, selling and disseminating of literature that maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice and by furnishing appropriate literature to the congregations for their work.

Reaction 1: Does the District in convention agree with and support the identified purpose of the Synod and the four general objectives as the report states them? Agree/Disagree

Section 1: Expansion of Mission Efforts, p. 8-10

Summary: The ad hoc committee studied the home and world mission efforts of the Synod and applauded the efforts of the two mission boards to consolidate and combine their work as much as possible. The committee went on to recommend that the home missions develop a *“national strategy”* for new church openings throughout the country and that they make the new church openings their main focus.

Reaction 2: Does the District in convention agree with and support the recommendation that home missions focus their attention and efforts primarily on new church openings, shifting their attention and budget away from lesser ministry projects? Agree/Disagree

Ad Hoc Committee’s Endorsements

1.1 We endorse the direction taken by the Board for Home Missions to grant greater decision-making authority to its executive committee. This change is similar to the change that was approved for World Missions at the 2007 convention.

1.2 We endorse the plan of the Board for Home Missions and the Board for World Missions to discontinue the called position of the Associate Administrator of the Board for Home Missions, to recast this position as one which directs and manages the support functions for both boards, including the combined support staffs of Home and World Missions. We view this as an efficient and effective means to streamline and coordinate the work of the Home Missions and World Missions, as well as the Joint Mission Council.

- 1.3 We endorse the changes to the World Missions administrative structure approved by the 2007 Convention. The transfer of decision making from the field committees to an executive committee has put the authority into the hands of an impartial group able to make informed decisions. This appears to be working well.
- 1.4 We endorse the selection of China by the Board for World Missions as the highest priority for the near future.
- 1.5 We endorse the approach taken by the Board for World Missions to make manpower decisions for strategic, rather than solely for financial, reasons.
- 1.6 We endorse the goal of the Board for World Missions to develop self-sustaining indigenous church bodies whenever and wherever possible.

SECTIONS 1-3 – Reactions by the Peshtigo Circuit

SECTION 1. EXPANSION OF MISSION EFFORTS		
Ad Hoc Committee Endorsements, p. 8-9	Reaction	Further Comments
1.1 Home missions streamlining of planning	Yes	Some unsure of why the change is being made, but figure it is the general “streamlining” approach to administration.
1.2 Combined administrator for missions (Discontinue Associate Administrator)	Yes	Assuming that the World Missions and Home Missions are still separate entities.
1.3 Streamlined world missions structure	Yes	Not many comments.
1.4 China as world mission priority	Maybe.	Not convinced that China is really an “open door.”
1.5 BWM manpower decisions for strategic reasons.	Yes	As long as called workers not left dangling without financial support.
1.6 BWM goal of establishing indigenous churches	Yes	Standard approach for awhile; good and solid.

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, p. 9-10

- 1.7 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions publish a National Strategy for Missions that includes specific emphasis on new openings in key geographic areas.
- 1.8 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions continue to seek new ministries in new locations with a special emphasis on new church openings. New openings should remain the primary focus of the Board for Home Missions and receive first priority in its budgeting process.
- 1.9 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions designate the majority of its funding for new mission congregations in the growing areas of the country, and that the National Strategy for Missions address the demographic realities facing our Midwestern church body as more people migrate to the south and west.
- 1.10 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions give higher priority to the Level 2 requests that put feet on the ground (manpower) for gospel ministry, and that it give lower priority to the Level 2 requests that are smaller amounts of money for projects that support congregational programs but provide no new manpower. This recommendation recognizes the soundness of the plan to put Level 2 resources into a location with good potential.

SECTION 1. EXPANSION OF MISSION EFFORTS		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 9-10	Reaction	Further Comments
1.7 National strategy for Home Missions	Yes	Both new openings, and “this is what we want to do” reporting a good thing; only questions on “what makes an area ‘key?’”
1.8 Special emphasis on church openings	Yes	“Dramatic change,” although not sure why this hasn’t been stated before.
1.9 Emphasis on south and west (majority funding in growing areas)	Yes, leaning towards Maybe.	Not sure about looking south or west, ignoring Midwest.
1.10 Emphasis on manpower rather than programs	Yes	No real comments.

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, p. 9-10 (cont.)

- 1.11 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions seek ways to ensure that the locations for new mission starts are driven by the National Strategy for Missions which prioritizes areas or opportunities and allows the Board for Home Missions to be proactive rather than simply reactive to the plans submitted.
- 1.12 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions use the mission counselors not merely to encourage and enable current missionaries, but as the point men for identifying new sites that match the proactive national outreach strategy, conducting demographic studies, and working with the local district mission boards to submit proposals to the Board for Home Missions.
- 1.13 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions continue Level 2+ work and seek out Level 3 openings as the strategy, opportunity, and funding dictate. (The commission maintains that the 2007 convention resolution to expand our mission efforts effectively lifted the moratorium on Level 3 mission starts.)

definitions of the various categories used by the Board for Home Missions: Level 2: Funding provided for a wide range of mission or outreach efforts and programs, up to and including manpower Level 2+: Funding provided for establishing a new mission start, up to and including manpower and facilities Level 3: Up front funding provided for manpower (including multiple manpower), land, and facilities

- 1.14 We recommend that cross-cultural efforts continue to be part of our outreach strategy, but since such efforts often require long term funding commitments that may impair other outreach strategies, we suggest that the Board for Home Missions continue to evaluate the proper percentage of its budget for cross-cultural ministry. (Currently the cross-cultural component of the Board for Home Missions budget represents 30% of the total.)

SECTION 1. EXPANSION OF MISSION EFFORTS (cont.)		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 9-10	Reaction	Further Comments
1.11 Proactive approach to identifying locations (locations driven by a National Strategy)	Yes, leaning towards Maybe.	Not sure what proactive and reactive are meant: will this mean risking more in land speculation (or gaining more in wise land speculation), etc.?
1.12 Mission counselor used in identifying locations	Maybe.	In theory, agree; but practically can't imagine that present amount of mission counselors have the time or energy (from what we understand, some individual mission counselors are expected to cover two districts).
1.13 Continue Mission Establishment and Enhancement (Seek out opportunities of level 2+ and level 3 missions.)	Yes	Again, a DRAMATIC CHANGE as to how things have been done over the last decade; if the "build it and they will come" strategy does not work, stuck. But generally support the recommendation.
1.14 Cross-cultural efforts to be continually monitored		

Section 2: Synodical Budget and Finances, p. 11-15

Summary: The Ad Hoc Committee endorsed the efforts of the administration of the Synod to recognize that the Congregational Mission Offerings (CMO) are the primary and foundational method of support for the Synod's various ministries. The committee also approved the efforts of the synodical administration to consolidate and reduce the number of funding appeals from synodical entities. The committee supported the "budget process" direction of the administration to bring all expenses of the Synod under the operating budget, to consolidate all capital debt into a single synodical debt with one interest rate and one schedule of amortization over 10 years, and to provide more information in the printed *Report to the Twelve Districts* and *The Book of Reports and Memorials* rather than post significant amounts of information only on the Synod's website. Noting the staffing levels in the Synod office building have been increasing, the committee recommended that staffing levels should be reduced. Toward this end the committee recommended that the Synod president be given the final say in filling vacant positions or adding staff even when funding is available in existing budgets.

Reaction 3: Does the District in convention agree with and support the following budget and finance recommendations:

- a. The number of funding appeals from synodical entities should be strongly reduced. Agree/Disagree
- b. More detailed information should be provided in the printed *Report to the Twelve Districts* and *The Book of Reports and Memorials* rather than on the Synod website. Agree/Disagree
- c. The Synod president should be given final authority when it comes to filling vacancies or adding staff to the Synod administration. Agree/Disagree

Ad Hoc Committee’s Endorsements: Fragmentation of financial resources, p. 12

- 2.1 We endorse the action taken by the Conference of Presidents and the Synodical Council reaffirming that the Congregational Mission Offerings are the primary and foundational method of support for the synod’s various ministries and that the Ministry of Christian Giving will continue to stress this. At the same time, we recognize the value and importance of Individual Mission Offerings.
- 2.2 We endorse the position of the Conference of Presidents, which asserts that, when special needs arise that must be addressed and placed before the eyes of our people, the Conference of Presidents and the Ministry of Christian Giving will work to ensure that all appeals for support will be gospel-based and will clearly and faithfully utilize biblical stewardship principles.
- 2.3 We endorse the position of the Conference of Presidents, expressing its desire and intent to limit the use of special offerings.
- 2.4 We endorse the incorporation of special funds into the budget planning process.

SECTION 2. SYNODICAL BUDGET AND FINANCES		
Fragmentation of financial resources		
Ad Hoc Committee Endorsements, p. 12	Reaction	Further Comments
2.1 CMO is primary and foundation support	YES	Amen and alleluia.
2.2 Insure gospel-based funding appeals	YES	Amen and alleluia.
2.3 COP desire to limit special funding appeals	Yes	Wise notion.
2.4 Incorporate special funds in budget process	Yes	Makes sense.

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations: Fragmentation of financial resources, p. 12-13

- 2.5 We recommend that all funding appeals from synodical entities be coordinated with or by the Ministry of Christian Giving.
- 2.6 We recommend that the Ministry of Christian Giving explore ways of working more closely with para-synodical agencies and others who are also making appeals to foster closer cooperation and better communication to enable all groups and ministries to work together in greater harmony for the good of the entire work of God’s people in the synod.
- 2.7 We recommend that the synod president, with input from the fiscal office and the areas of ministry, develop a gift policy governing the creation of new special funds. This policy will ensure that special gifts are in keeping with the adopted ministry program and direction of the synod approved by the synod in convention and will serve to limit the creation of new special funds.

SECTION 2. SYNODICAL BUDGET AND FINANCES		
Fragmentation of financial resources		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 12-13	Reaction	Further Comments
2.5 Coordination of funding appeals	Yes	Some discussion.
2.6 Cooperation with para-synodicals	Yes	Some discussion.
2.7 Adopt a gift policy	Yes	Some discussion.

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations: Fragmentation of financial resources, p. 12-13 (cont.)

- 2.8 We recommend that the gift policy includes a provision for spending down and eliminating special funds so that they do not exist in perpetuity.
- 2.9 We recommend that the number of special funds should be reduced from over 3,000 to 500 or fewer within four years.
- 2.10 We recommend that, in cases where donor intent cannot be determined for current special funds, the balance in the funds be assigned to debt reduction.
- 2.11 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents specifically address the issue of congregations which contribute little or nothing to the joint work of the synod through Congregational Mission Offering and develop ways to encourage more active participation in the support of the synod through the Congregational Mission Offering.
- 2.12 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents analyze the current function and level of staffing in the Ministry of Christian Giving.

SECTION 2. SYNODICAL BUDGET AND FINANCES		
Fragmentation of financial resources (cont.)		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 12-13	Reaction	Further Comments
2.8 Spend down special funds	Yes	Some discussion.
2.9 Reduce special funds to 500	Yes	Some discussion.
2.10 Use special funds for debt	Yes	Some discussion.
2.11 COP address non-supporting congregations	Yes	Some discussion.
2.12 COP to analyze staffing	Yes	Some discussion.

Ad Hoc Committee’s Endorsements, Synodical Budget and Finances: Budget Process, p. 13-15

- 2.13 We endorse the changes that have been made in the fiscal office procedures and reporting. We believe that this has helped to regain the confidence of members of the synod in our financial systems and reporting.
- 2.14 We endorse the new “program budgeting process” in which areas of ministry will provide detailed descriptions of their ministry in distinct programs; these programs will be outlined in terms of a description of the work to be done and how it relates to the synod’s mission, the total cost of the program, the staffing required, and the anticipated source of funding.
- 2.15 We endorse the president’s plan to use the information provided in the program budget process to construct a proposed budget, since it will provide the necessary means to review areas of ministry budget proposals and to make budgetary recommendations to the Synodical Council on the basis of convention priorities.
- 2.16 We endorse the change in the budget planning and reporting process that will include the planned use of special funds in the building and reporting of the budget, providing a complete picture of all ministry and enabling the convention to adopt a comprehensive rather than partial budget.
- 2.17 We endorse the current practice of the Synodical Council of having support forecasts (revenue projections) performed separately and independently from those who directly oversee the actual ministries funded by the budget.
- 2.18 We endorse the action of the Synodical Council that has consolidated all capital debt of the synod into a single synodical debt with one interest rate and a schedule to amortize the entire debt over 10 years. (Please note that this repayment schedule will be shortened in keeping with gifts received in the Year of Jubilee offering.)

SECTION 2. SYNODICAL BUDGET AND FINANCES		
Budget Process		
Ad Hoc Committee Endorsements, p. 13-15	Reaction	Further Comments
2.13 Changes in financial reporting	Yes	
2.14 Program budget process	Yes	
2.15 Budget process to reflect priorities	Yes	
2.16 Process to include planned use of special funds	Yes	
2.17 Independent support forecasts	Yes	
2.18 Consolidation of all capital debt	Yes	

Ad Hoc Committee’s Endorsements, Synodical Budget and Finances: Budget Process, p. 13-15 (cont.)

- 2.19 We endorse the decision of the Conference of Presidents authorizing a synod-wide effort to reduce or eliminate the synod’s capital debt (Year of Jubilee).
- 2.20 We endorse the stated commitment of the Synodical Council to carry out the directives and priorities of the synod convention.
- 2.21 We endorse the efforts to provide timely, accurate, and relevant financial information to the synod’s constituency.
- 2.22 We endorse the plans to provide more information in the printed Report to the Twelve Districts and Book of Reports and Memorials rather than posting significant amounts of detailed information only on the synod’s Web site.
- 2.23 We endorse the action of the Synodical Council establishing a standing “Compensation Review Committee.”
- 2.24 We endorse the efforts already being made to enable the Conference of Presidents and the Synodical Council to work more closely with each other in a number of areas, including the budget process. Communication between the two leadership groups has been emphasized; a joint meeting is scheduled to take place in November.

SECTION 2. SYNODICAL BUDGET AND FINANCES		
Budget Process (cont.)		
Ad Hoc Committee Endorsements, p. 13-15	Reaction	Further Comments
2.19 Year of Jubilee debt offering	Yes	
2.20 SC commitment to convention decisions	Yes	Odd that need this, but glad to hear it.
2.21 Timely, accurate, & relevant financial info	Yes	Good and understandable reports now.
2.22 Printed financial information	Yes	Good to have everything in hand in one place for most delegates.
2.23 Compensation review committee	Yes	
2.24 Closer work betw. COP & SC	Yes	

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Synodical Budget and Finances: Budget Process, p. 15

- 2.25 We recommend that continuing efforts be made by the leaders of the synod to articulate and communicate the synod’s overall ministry.
- 2.26 We recommend that areas of ministry create budgets that reflect their part of the entire synod’s work, but, at the same time, that they give attention to the larger ministry efforts of the synod in their own budget preparation.
- 2.27 We recommend that all areas of ministry and WELS subsidiaries conduct a study of staffing levels in each budgeting cycle. The goal of this study should be to reduce staffing wherever possible without inherently interfering with the implementation of synodical directives. Staff positions should be included in the budget only if clearly justified.
- 2.28 The commission affirms the role of the president in reviewing proposals to fill vacancies or to add new administrative positions. (Currently, the president has been acting in an advisory capacity only.) The commission recommends that the role of the president be made more than advisory in this process. The explicit approval of the president would be necessary to fill vacant positions or to add staff even when funding is available in existing budgets (See also recommendation 6.8.)

SECTION 2. SYNODICAL BUDGET AND FINANCES		
Budget Process		
Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations, p. 15	Reaction	Further Comments
2.25 Articulate and communicate overall ministry	Yes	Talking good; listening good. Better.
2.26 AOM’s propose budgets with wider view	Yes	Good to think of others while making plans.
2.27 Continuing staffing study	Yes	Schools apparently have already done so.
2.28 Presidential approval of filling positions	Maybe	Reservations regarding the amount of power this puts on the president; are there provisions for appeal? Is there a better place to put this?

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Synodical Budget and Finances: Budget Process, p. 15 (cont.)

- 2.29 We recommend that consideration be given to adopting a “sunset” provision that limits the tenure of called administrators unless continuation is specifically approved.
- 2.30 The Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents, under the direction of the president, continue to explore ways to improve their work together in the budget process.
- 2.31 We recommend that the entire Conference of Presidents participate in this process and that its participation not be limited to the Conference of Presidents representatives on the Synodical Council.
- 2.32 We recommend that the district presidents continue to be advocates for the synod’s work within the districts, urging pastors and their congregations to contribute to the work of the synod.

SECTION 2. SYNODICAL BUDGET AND FINANCES		
Budget Process (cont.)		
Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations, p. 15	Reaction	Further Comments
2.29 Limit terms for administrators	Yes	Tuesday, September 9, 2008 - Study of Ad Hoc Committee Report
2.30 Improve SC/COP cooperation on budget	Yes	
2.31 Same as 2.30	Yes	
2.32 DP.s continue to be advocates for synod work	Yes	

Section 3: Strengthening Congregations and their Members, p. 16-24

Summary: In this section of the report, the committee noted the alarming challenges facing the congregations of the Synod. These challenges include a declining number of people in worship and Bible class; a declining membership in the congregations; a declining enrollment drop in the elementary schools, and the closing of elementary schools and sometimes even churches. Noting *"a spiritually strong Synod requires spiritually strong congregations,"* the report proposes action on the part of the Synod to assist the congregations in changing the directions noted. The report recognizes that the problem must be addressed through the power of proclaiming the Gospel alone. Toward this end, the report recommends the forming of a *"cooperative team approach to Congregational health."* This *"team"* should be made up of the district president, the circuit pastor, mission counselors, Christian giving counselors, and parish services ministries all working together to support a system for *"congregational spiritual strengthening."*

To accomplish this goal of forming a team that is closer to the congregation to provide it with assistance in improving the spiritual health of the congregation, the committee recommends that the larger districts go through a consolidation. They recommend that the three largest districts of the Synod in combination with the two adjacent districts of Michigan and Minnesota, reorganize to form eight districts where before there were five. This combination will have the effect of reducing the size of the largest districts, and that in turn will allow district presidents and their spiritual team to be closer to the individual congregations. The report also recommends that the circuit pastor system be strengthened by giving the district president the power to nominate individuals within each circuit to hold these offices. The circuit pastor as an arm of the district president would be more in contact with his member parishes and in this way be able to establish a relationship in which he could hold congregations and pastors *"accountable"* (see page 20, paragraphs 3 and 4) for their work.

The committee recommends a complete reorganizing of the Parish Services division of the synodical administration. The Youth Discipleship and Parish Schools would be combined in a new committee called the Commission of Education and Youth. The goal of this reorganization is to strengthen the control of the Synod administration and the Conference of Presidents over the work of Parish Services and Parish Assistance. The budget for this segment of the synod administration would be named the *"District and Congregational Ministry"*, identifying the target for the work of these divisions of the Synod.

Once this reorganization is complete, the district presidents will have the tools necessary to promote "spiritual health in the congregations" in a "proactive rather than reactive " way. The committee hopes the result of these changes will eventually lead to greater spiritual maturity in the congregations.

Reaction 4: Which of the following two statements more accurately reflects the thinking of the District in convention?

- a. Since the strength of the Synod as a federation is strongly affected by the spiritual health of the individual congregations, the Synod administration has the right to hold the congregations accountable for their “*spiritual health*” (as measured by numerical growth or decline) and to work to improve that “spiritual health of the individual congregation”. Assuming this “right”, the district president, the circuit pastor, the mission counselors, the Ministry for Christian giving, and parish services have the authority to play an active role in the Gospel proclamation of the individual congregation. Agree/Disagree

- b. Noting the congregations formed themselves into a federation to carry out work they could not do on their own, the administration of the Synod has no assumed role to play in the active daily ministry of an individual congregation as it carries out its work, beyond the oversight of “doctrine and practice in line with that doctrine.” Results of the gospel work of an individual congregation must remain in hands of God who alone gives the growth. While the Synod can prepare “tools and assets” which might aid the work of a congregation, it remains the right of the congregation alone to decide which of those “tools and assets” would aid them in their work, and to invite the synod to assist them with the area of the work they choose. Agree/Disagree

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Strengthening Congregations & Members, p. 16-22

- 3.1 We recommend that three new additional districts be formed from portions of the five largest districts (Northern Wisconsin, Western Wisconsin, Southeastern Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan).
- 3.2 We recommend that we improve and strengthen the circuit pastor system
 - 3.2.1 We recommend that the size of circuits be reduced to 6-8 congregations where possible.
 - 3.2.2 We recommend that circuit pastors are to be elected (called) from a slate of qualified candidates provided by the district president.
 - 3.2.3 We recommend that circuit pastors be given intensive training on their role and responsibilities.

SECTION 3: STRENGTHENING CONGREGATIONS & MEMBERS		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 16-22	Reaction	Further Comments
3.1 Three new districts (page 17 of the report)	No	Does not seem to be a feasible solution; not opposed to the idea, but the how needs be checked out thoroughly. Other solutions to the problems this recommendation addresses would be districts making better use of the resources they already have. Much discussion could be had.
3.2 Circuit Pastor	Yes	Generally a good thing. Much of these things should already be the case. But as above, in 3.1, some of the apparent difficulties have occurred on account of not quite making good use of the people and procedures we already have in place, like the circuit pastor, regular circuit meetings, etc.
3.2.1 Reduce size of circuits (6-8 cong.)	Yes or maybe	Stress the “WHERE POSSIBLE”
3.2.2 Elect Circuit Pastors from DP provided list	No	Presently chosen by pastors of the circuit; better to keep it local.
3.2.3 Training of Circuit Pastors	Yes	Good idea. Although hoping “intensive” does not include running obstacle courses, etc.

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Strengthening Congregations & Members, p. 19-22 (cont.)

- 3.2.4 We recommend that circuit pastors shall be in close personal contact with their congregations and called workers on a regular basis (personal visit at least annually).
- 3.2.5 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents re-articulate the duties and responsibilities of the circuit pastor and include these responsibilities in an updated circuit pastor manual.
- 3.2.6 We recommend that it be clearly understood that, when circuits elect circuit pastors, they are calling him to provide pastoral guidance and direction when appropriate.
- 3.3 We recommend that we redeploy and reconfigure the functions of Parish Services
 - 3.3.1 We recommend that the areas (and appropriate grass roots commissions) of Evangelism, Worship, Special Ministries, Adult Discipleship, and Parish Assistance be retained.
 - 3.3.2 We recommend that accountability for all functions of the Board for Parish Services be assigned to the Conference of Presidents through the Vice President for Mission and Ministry.
 - 3.3.3 We recommend that administrators of the ministries which are currently a part of Parish Services be called by the Conference of Presidents.
 - 3.3.4 We recommend that the budget for what is now Parish Services be included in a new budget area called “District and Congregational Ministry,” which will group all types of synodical funding into a category which provides for district and congregational activities, ministries, and services.
 - 3.3.5 We recommend that the functions of Youth Discipleship and Parish Schools be combined into a single new Commission for Education and Youth; and we further recommend that there be one administrator with associate administrators as needed.
 - 3.3.6 We recommend that the oversight of Campus Ministry (along with existing staffing) be assigned to Special Ministries.
 - 3.3.7 We recommend that the Vice President of Mission and Ministry serve in a coordinating and oversight role for all of these ministries, which often work closely with each other in developing and delivering congregational services.
 - 3.3.8 We recommend that the support and clerical staffs of these ministries be reconfigured as necessary to create new efficiencies and shared duties where possible.

SECTION 3: STRENGTHENING CONGREGATIONS & MEMBERS (cont.)		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 19-22	Reaction	Further Comments
3.2.4 Annual contact by CPs with congregations	Yes	This should be the case already.
3.2.5 Update Circuit Pastor duties	Yes	
3.2.6 Congregations to recognize Circuit Pastor role	Yes	Restating the obvious is not a bad thing. In fact it is a big part of our job.
3.3 Redeploy Parish Services.	Yes	This seems to be the “biggy” for discussion.
3.3.1 Areas be retained.	Yes	Big question: HOW?
3.3.2 Accountability to the COP through VP of Mission and Ministry	Yes	Question: To whom accountable now?
3.3.3 Council Of Presidents to call administrators	Yes	Seems to be called by those to whom accountable: good thing.
3.3.4 New budget category	Maybe	Want clarification on this.
3.3.5 Combine Youth Discipleship & Parish Schools	No	
3.3.6 Move Campus Ministries to special ministries	No	As 3.3.5, those in it say “not a good idea.” Concerns among our circuit were also regarding practical things like funding; know that campus ministries is turning into a micro world mission field.
3.3.7 VPMM to coordinate parish service areas	Yes	Seems to be preparing for 3.3.8 & 3.3.9 below.
3.3.8 Support staff configured in best pos. way	Yes	If do above, this next step.

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Strengthening Congregations & Members, p. 22 (cont.)

3.3.9 We recommend that the Board for Parish Services and the position of Board for Parish Services administrator be eliminated.

3.3.10 We recommend that the publishing needs of the synod continue to be directed to the Publication Coordinating Commission and Northwestern Publishing House. (Northwestern Publishing House has published material for Worship, Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, and Evangelism.)

SECTION 3: STRENGTHENING CONGREGATIONS & MEMBERS (cont.)		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 22	Reaction	Further Comments
3.3.9 Eliminate board and administrator.	Yes	Makes sense if the two above are done.
3.3.10 NPH continue publishing	Yes	

Section 4: Pursuing Excellence among our Clergy, p. 25-28

Summary: The Ad Hoc Committee concluded that there is a lack of consistent emphasis and acknowledgement on excellence in academics. The committee felt that this *“leads to a tacit acceptance of mediocrity.”*

A second and related concern is that our education system for pastors and teachers fails to incorporate a strong emphasis on developing *“lifelong learners.”* They go so far as to assert that there is an *“aversion to accountability, an absence of a program for continuing education for pastors, and the lack of a system to ensure the implementation of such a program.”*

To meet the problems in these two areas, the committee has proposed two approaches. Within our education system, the committee proposes a new emphasis on academic excellence. This emphasis would be heightened by incentives in the form of scholarships given to students who achieve high academic results. These scholarships would be available from the first year of college through the final years of seminary. The committee suggests that the Synod might even encourage some especially academically gifted seminary graduates to pursue advanced degrees under Synod supervision and with monetary support from the Synod.

The committee also proposes that the Synod create a *“flexible program of continuing education”* complete with *“minimum requirements”* for all pastors. This required continuing education would be overseen by a special committee of the Synod, reported on the circuit pastors, and tracked at the Seminary. All pastors would be *“required”* to be part of this program and *“accountable”* to the established hierarchy for their participation and progress.

Reaction 5: Does the District convention agree with and support the following thinking and proposals of the Ad Hoc Committee?

- a. Identifying an existing *“lack of commitment to academic excellence”* in our pastoral education system, the Synod would remedy this problem with a reward system of scholarships designed to promote academic competition among the student body, and eventually resulting in a student body of higher academic ability. Agree or disagree?

- b. The committee proposal for creating lifelong learners and enforcing that learning path is to require pastors to follow such a path and account for that path to circuit pastors and committees established to make sure all participate. Agree or disagree?

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Pursuing Excellence, p. 25-28

4.1.1 We recommend that a number of full tuition scholarships to Martin Luther College be provided to academically gifted students from our prep schools and area Lutheran high schools.

4.2.1 We recommend that we foster excellence by encouraging an environment where a significant percentage of each class at Martin Luther College is vying for scholarships tied to academic merit, reminding students that grades matter.

- 4.2.2 We recommend that we also provide scholarships to students who are not highly gifted in academics but who possess skills and aptitude in other areas such as music, the arts, leadership, or evangelism.
- 4.3.1 We recommend that study fellowships be established based on gifts for ministry, not academics.
- 4.3.2 Begin directed study programs for all students and explore ways to increase the use of directed study programs with in-class components.
- 4.4.1 We recommend that some seminary graduates be encouraged to aspire to higher learning and broad educational experience for the good of the parish ministry and that seminary faculty guidance be provided for those who wish to consider postgraduate studies.
- 4.5.1 We recommend that a flexible program of continuing education with standards and minimum requirements be required of all pastors.

SECTIONS 4-6 – Reactions by the Lake Superior Circuit

SECTION 4: PURSUING EXCELLENCE		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 25-28	Reaction	Further Comments
4.1.1 Provide full tuition scholarships at MLC	Yes	We recommend that the same considerations for college students mentioned in 4.2.2 be considered for the high school students referenced in 4.1.1. Since we recognize that there is a broad range of gifts useful for the public ministry, we recommend that not just academic merit be a basis for recruitment thus avoiding the fostering of a type of academic elitism in the ministry. We further recommend that the duty of ministerial recruitment be added to one of the members of the faculty of every ALHS. This position would be responsible for identifying and encouraging young people for the preaching and teaching ministry of the WELS
4.2.1 Increase MLC merit scholarships	Yes	
4.2.2 Increase ministry-gifted scholarships	Yes	
4.3.1 Establish study fellowships at WLS	Yes	We recommend that before any implementation of these ideas a feasibility study be done with the faculty of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.
4.3.2 Begin directed study at WLS	Yes	
4.4.1 Encourage post-seminary degrees with guidance	Yes, with reservation	We are conscious of the type of theological pitfalls that have affected other church bodies with post-seminary degrees. We ask that some sort of guidance be given to all in our ranks who pursue these advanced degrees at institution outside our fellowship.
4.5.1 Require continuing education	No	This recommendation seems too Law-oriented in its wording and perhaps is outside the scope of the Synod to implement. We wholeheartedly endorse the Synod's encouragement for continued study, but believe that it is a responsibility of the individual congregation to encourage & support continued spiritual & professional growth of their pastor. We would encourage the local congregation to work with their pastor to take time on a regular basis for continued study – be that Summer Quarter, pursuit of an advanced degree, attendance at a symposium, etc.

Section 5: Synod-wide Theological Study, p. 29-32

Summary: The committee concluded that the Synod continues to face doctrinal challenges in our modern world and it recommends that we unite in our circuits and districts to give attention to four areas of discussion and study over two years.

The four discussion and study topics recommended are: 1. Trusting the Means of Grace; 2. Vocation in church and ministry; 3. election and predestination; 4. and the sacramental life.

To prepare for these unified studies and discussions, the committee suggests that the Conference of Presidents appoint a committee to identify key issues for doctrinal and practical study and assign “*eminently qualified presenters from our fellowship*” to prepare presentations. The presenters should be directed to use a “*fresh approach*” to their presentation, utilizing a list of “*propositional statements*” to give structure to the discussion.

Reaction 6: Does the District in convention approve of this unified study plan and procedure as outlined by the committee? Agree/Disagree

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Synod-Wide Theological Study, p. 29-30

- 5.1 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents initiate a synod-wide review of key doctrines and practical issues pertinent to challenges facing WELS today in an effort to foster and preserve unity in doctrine and practice.
- 5.2 We recommend that guidance be given for studies at circuits, delegate conferences, pastor and teacher conferences, and district and synod conventions, focusing on key issues and deriving maximum benefit from study materials.
- 5.3 We recommend that assistance be provided to local program committees at all levels (congregation, circuit, conference, district, synod) in compiling edifying and focused agendas with the best potential for increasing awareness and understanding among pastors, teachers and lay people.
- 5.4 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents encourage and promote the opportunity for personal, congregational, pastoral, and synodical soul-searching and introspective reflection, with a view toward repentance where necessary, and creating opportunities to address timely issues in doctrine and practice.

STUDY APPROACH

- 5.5 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents appoint a committee to identify key issues for doctrinal and practical study (suggestions are offered below).
- 5.6 We recommend that we assign topics for study and preparation to eminently qualified presenters from our fellowship recognized for their knowledge of the subject, doctrinal insight, and evangelical approach.
- 5.7 We recommend that we encourage a fresh approach to examining each study topic—an approach characterized by both its depth and its breadth. The study approach should be firmly grounded in a solid method of exegesis of Holy Scripture. The approach to study should incorporate insights from church fathers, Lutheran confessional documents, Lutheran dogmaticians; it should incorporate insights from the history and the experience of the Christian church through the ages. This approach is intended to stimulate a fresh, vigorous study of the issues, and to discourage a mere repetition of often-used terms and statements.
- 5.8 We recommend that for each suggested study, a comprehensive list of propositional statements will be offered to the presenter(s) as a foundation for the study. The propositional statements will provide a framework for the study materials and help the persons preparing the study materials to focus on key issues.
- 5.9 We recommend that appropriate materials be developed for use at the synod convention, district conventions, pastors’ and teachers’ conferences, circuit study groups, and congregational Bible studies.
- 5.10 We recommend that materials, as well as suggestions for presenters, will be made available to the various groups identified above, starting with the 2009 Synod Convention and extending to conferences, conventions, circuits and congregations for study in the latter half of 2009 through the first half of 2011.

SECTION 5: SYNOD-WIDE THEOLOGICAL STUDY

Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 29-30	Reaction	Further Comments
5.1 Synod-wide review of key doctrines	Yes	We endorse the synod’s encouragement for theological study on all levels of the synod and we concur with the topics recommended by the Ad Hoc committee. There is a stewardship concern, however. Instead of spending a large amount of synod dollars to create and distribute materials, We recommend that the local pastor be entrusted with the implementation of the study on the congregational level. Furthermore, We recommend that the studies done on a circuit and conference level be gathered electronically and made available for distribution after review by the Conference of Presidents.
5.2 provide study guides	Yes	
5.3 assist local program committees	Yes	
5.4 Encouragement to reflection and repentance	Yes	
5.5 Committee to propose doctrinal studies	Yes	
5.6 Presenters to be eminently qualified	Yes	
5.7 Fresh approach to study topics	Yes	
5.8 Propositional statements	Yes	
5.9 Develop materials	Yes	
5.10 Deadline of 2010	Yes	

Section 6: Structure and Organization, p. 33-37

Summary: The committee studied the structure and organization of the Synod administration and addressed three areas of concern: the lines of authority and interaction between the Conference of Presidents and the Synodical Council; the President’s Advisory Council and its role; and the current manpower and staffing levels in the administration.

Noting the administration has encouraged the Synod to consider placing the power to call to fill Synod positions in the hands of the Conference of Presidents, the Committee stated that such an approach would not necessarily create clearer lines of accountability than currently exist. Therefore the committee opposes any changes to the system at this time.

The committee favors clarifying the duties of the Ministry Operations Team. They suggest the name be changed to the President’s Advisory Council and that their role be *“solely advisory, not decision-making or policy setting.”*

In regard to Synod administration staffing, the committee felt that current levels (excluding home and world missions) are too high and that these levels should be reduced. They also recommended that the position of Second Vice-President of the Synod be eliminated due to lack of identified duties.

Reaction 7: Does the District in convention agree with the thinking and direction of the Ad Hoc Committee in regard to the three areas listed above? Agree/Disagree

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Structure and Organization, p. 33-36

THE SYNODICAL COUNCIL (SC) & THE CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS (COP)

- 6.1 We recommend that, in order to continue improving communication and coordination, at least one joint meeting of the Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents be held annually. Additional cooperative efforts should be explored.
- 6.2 We recommend that, since he is the chairman of both groups, the president is tasked with fostering and enabling the timely exchange of crucial information and communication between these two leadership groups.
- 6.3 We recommend that all levels of the synodical structure function in keeping with the lines of accountability and responsibility outlined in the constitution.
- 6.4 Since the calling authority of the boards does not in itself interfere with or totally determine the lines of accountability described in the constitution and bylaws, we recommend that no change be made in this area and that calling responsibility remain with the elected boards, unless otherwise specified by the constitution and bylaws.

STRUCTURE OF THE SYNODICAL COUNCIL

According to the synod’s Constitution and Bylaws, the Synodical Council is comprised of:

Voting members: President (1), One lay representative from each district (12), Pastor-at-large (1), Teacher-at-large (1), Area of ministry chairmen (4), Conference of Presidents representatives (3)

Non-voting advisory members: First Vice President (1), Second Vice President (1), Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer (1), Director of Communications (1), Director of Christian Giving (1), Area of ministry administrators (4)

6.5 We recommend that the size and composition of the Synodical Council be studied.

6.6 We endorse the efforts to clarify and articulate the role now served by the President’s Advisory Council.

President’s Advisory Council

Comprised of: the president as chairman, the vice president, the administrators of the four areas of ministry, the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Technology Officer, the Director of Christian Giving, the Director of Communications, and a representative of Northwestern Publishing House.

“The President’s Advisory Council... it serves as a sounding board and source of valuable input and advice to the president as he prepares the agenda and recommendations to the Synodical Council. It also continues to be a forum for communication and coordination among the various ministries and departments of the synod’s administration. Its function is solely advisory, not decision-making or policy-setting.”

6.7 We endorse the continued functioning of the President’s Advisory Council as it is now constituted.

MANPOWER & STAFFING

6.8 We recommend that existing positions on the synodical level (not including Home and World Missionaries) be filled by calling or hiring only with the expressed approval of the synod president.

6.9 We recommend that synodical staffing (not including Home Missionaries, World Missionaries, and ministerial education faculty positions) be reduced by 10% in the next six years in ways that will not materially affect necessary ministries or services.

6.10 We recommend that the position of Second Vice President be eliminated and that the constitution be amended to reflect this change.

SECTION 6: STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 33-36	Reaction	Further Comments
6.1 Annual joint meeting of the SC and COP	Yes	We agree with the rationale and recommendations of 6.1-6.9.
6.2 Ongoing communication between SC and COP	Yes	
6.3 Recognize current accountability	Yes	
6.4 No change in calling	Yes	
6.5 Study size of the SC	Yes	
6.6 Clarified role for President's Advisory Council	Yes	
6.7 Function of the PAC (formerly MOT)	Yes	
6.8 President to approve calling	Yes	
6.9 Reduce synodical staffing by 10%	Yes	
6.10 Eliminate 2nd VP	No	We recommend that the office of second vice-president be retained so that he may fulfill any need that arise to function on behalf of the first-vice president and so that when the Synodical praesidium needs to meet, there is another voice in that group to lend counsel. We also value the voice of a parish pastor in parish ministry in the discussion and decisions at the Synodical level.

Section 7: Synod and District Conventions, p. 38-39

Summary: While noting that the Synod in Convention is the ultimate authority for the federated congregations, the Committee recognized “inefficiencies” in this approach. These “inefficiencies” include: 1. “*delegates to the convention ... assimilate a large amount of data in a short period of time*”; 2. with delegates serving in only one convention, there is little continuity of emphasis from one convention to the next; 3. the Synod in convention meets one month into the new biennium for which the budget is being proposed, leaving little budget flexibility to introduce any changes required; 4. and the Synodical Council is required to adopt a budget proposal five months prior to the convention itself.

In the case of district conventions, the only problem cited by the Committee was the fact that many conventions occur simultaneously, leaving little opportunity for synod representatives to be available to attend the district conventions.

To ease these “*inefficiencies*”, the Committee made several recommendations. They suggest that delegates to Synod convention be chosen jointly by congregations in circuits and be allowed to serve up to three consecutive conventions. They recommend that the Synod publish all “*necessary and vital information*” in the BORAM and in the Report to the Twelve Districts rather than posting much of this information on the synod website. Finally they suggest that Synod convention time can be shortened and scheduled at a time more appropriate to the adoption of the budget for the coming biennium.

Reaction 8: Does the District agree with the recommendation that delegates to the Synod convention should be elected to serve as delegates up to a maximum of three successive conventions? Agree/Disagree

Reaction 9: Does the District agree that every effort should be made to include all relevant and pertinent details in the BORAM and in the Report to the Twelve Districts, even though this incurs higher printing costs? Agree/Disagree

Reaction 10: Regarding District conventions, what do delegates to the district conventions wish to see as their role in the polity of the Synod? Should district conventions be given clear opportunities to react to Synod proposals by voting their preferences, so the delegates to the Synod convention can know the thinking of the “grass roots” of the Synod across the entire Synod? Agree/Disagree

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Synod and District Conventions, p. 38-39

- 7.1 We recommend that a study be conducted on the way delegates to the convention are chosen. We strongly suggest that lay delegates be chosen jointly by congregations in a circuit rather than according to a rotation of congregations as currently done.
- 7.2 To improve consistency and continuity from one convention to the next, we recommend that consideration be given to a plan that will allow delegates to attend consecutive conventions. If recommendation 7.1 is adopted, circuits would be able to elect the same delegate for three successive conventions, providing continuity. An alternative would be to have all delegates elected or appointed for three conventions with 1/3 of them new each convention year.

SECTIONS 7-9 – Reactions by the Rhinelander Circuit

SECTION 7: CONVENTIONS		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 38-39	Reaction	Further Comments
7.1 Change in delegate selection	No	Loss of grass roots
7.2 Delegates to attend more than one convention	No	

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, Synod and District Conventions, p. 38-39 (cont.)

- 7.3 We recommend that the administration explore ways to allow information to flow to delegates in a more timely fashion. Newer publishing technology and electronic distribution should be used to shorten the time between the adoption of a proposed budget by the Synodical Council and the publication and dissemination of the proposed budget to the delegates.
- 7.4 We recommend that all necessary and vital information be included in the printed Book of Reports and Memorials and in the printed Report to the Twelve Districts. Supplemental information can be provided electronically on the WELS web site, but only when it is truly supplemental (rather than vital) or when timing issues prevent its inclusion in the printed reports. Efforts to keep the cost of the publications lower should not sacrifice the furnishing of vital information.
- 7.5 We recommend that convention planners consider whether the synod convention can be shortened and/or scheduled at a more appropriate time.
- 7.6 We recommend that the president and the Conference of Presidents develop and implement a comprehensive review process for the Book of Reports and Memorials materials at the circuit, conference and district levels.
- 7.7 We recommend that the synod administration, with the assistance of the Director of Communications, improve the system for reporting results of conventions to the constituency of the synod.
- 7.8 We recommend that the administration investigate the possibility of having synodical personnel report to district conventions via two-way video communications.

SECTION 7: CONVENTIONS (cont.)		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendations, p. 38-39	Reaction	Further Comments
7.3 Improve information to delegates	Yes	
7.4 Include all vital information in Boram	Yes	
7.5 Shorten conventions	No	There will always be issues with timing. Time and length are good as they are.
7.6 Comprehensive review of info in BoRaM	Yes	We endorse the Conference of Presidents to develop a comprehensive process of preparing delegates.
7.7 Improve convention reporting	Yes	They’re doing a good job. Keep it up!
7.8 Reports to district conventions via video		Losing face-to-face undesirable

Section 8: Synodical Communications, p. 40-41

Summary: The Committee in general approved of the various efforts the Synod administration is making to change and improve communication between the administration and the congregations. However, the Committee strongly recommended that the Synod website “*undergo a major re-working*” as part of an effort to “*unify and coordinate all WELS communication vehicles.*”

Reaction 11: Does the District in convention agree with the recommendation to re-work the Synod website so that the Synod “*sends the right kind of message about our Synod and its mission*” to the world?
 Agree/Disagree

Ad Hoc Committee’s Endorsement, Synodical Communications, p. 40

- 8.1 The commission endorses the efforts already begun by the WELS Director of Communications and the administration and urges these efforts be continued and pursued. These include:
 - a) The production and distribution of a single, regular, and timely electronic newsletter (Together) to communicate important synodical news to our constituents

- b) The effort to unify and coordinate the various WELS communications in order to have a single, recognizable consistent look and feel across all areas of ministry and assigning responsibility for WELS Connection to Communications Services
- c) The shift in the emphasis of WELS Connection away from unusual ministry ideas to clear portrayals of the synodical ministry efforts being conducted as a result of our walking together as a synod
- d) The adoption and implementation of a communications strategy and policies in which Communications Services has the responsibility to coordinate the manner, vehicle, format, and timing of synodical news and information, including vesting the Communications Services office to establish and implement policies governing the use of the synod's technology (Web site, electronic communications) to disseminate information
- e) Identifying and implementing ways to improve the timeliness and content of preconvention information (Book of Reports and Memorials, Report to the Twelve Districts)
- f) Including all vital information in the Report to the Twelve Districts and Book of Reports and Memorials, even when such inclusion requires additional space

SECTION 8: SYNOICAL COMMUNICATIONS		
Ad Hoc Committee's Endorsement, p. 40	Reaction	Further Comments
8.1a Together electronic newsletter	Yes	We definitely endorse it. Communication Director has been doing a great job.
8.1b Unify and coordinate publications	Yes	
8.1c WELS Connection stress on synodical work	Yes	
8.1d Communications strategy overseeing efforts	Yes	
8.1e Improve timeliness of BORAM and RTD	Yes	
8.1f All vital information included in BoRaM and RTD	Yes	

Ad Hoc Committee's Recommendation, Synodical Communications, p. 40-41

8.2 We recommend that the synod's Web site undergo a major re-working as a part of the overall plan to unify and coordinate all WELS communications vehicles.

SECTION 8: SYNOICAL COMMUNICATIONS		
Ad Hoc Com. Recommendation, p. 40-41	Reaction	Further Comments
8.2 Revise/update/upgrade website	Yes	Try to improve synod website as best as possible

Section 9: The Cost of Ministerial Education

Summary: The Committee cited three areas of concern regarding the cost of education. The cost of education has been increasing at a rapid pace. Many students graduating from Martin Luther College carry a "significant debt load." Prep school enrollment has been in a steady decline since 2001, some of which is probably due to the increase in costs and decrease in financial aid.

The Committee proposed several remedies. They recommended that costs for the prep school should be kept in line with local area Lutheran high school. They recommended that the cost of Martin Luther College should be brought in line with the costs of local public universities. This reduction of cost was their first option. The second option they proposed was a "reimbursement program" based on years of service in the ministry. Graduates who accepted a call would receive gradual paybacks in the range of \$12,000 to \$15,000 over a period of the first ten years in the ministry.

Reaction 12: Does the District in convention agree that a concerted effort to lower costs for prep school and college to match area Lutheran high schools and local public universities is an acceptable and wise approach to the address the cost of ministerial education? Agree/Disagree

Reaction 13: Does the District in convention agree that establishing a tuition reimbursement program spread over the first ten years of ministry is an acceptable way of dealing with the cost of ministerial education?
 Agree/Disagree

Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations, The Cost of Ministerial Education, p. 43

9.1 We recommend that we adopt the principle that tuition and fees at our two synod preparatory schools shall be comparable with that of area Lutheran high schools in the same region, thus preventing cost from becoming a primary factor for ministry-minded students weighing enrollment in a prep school. We further recommend that we work toward this change over the next six years.

9.2 In view of the significant synodical investment in the prep schools, we recommend that the prep schools’ curriculum shall continue to reflect the single purpose of the schools, namely to prepare young men and women for matriculation at Martin Luther College. The entire culture of the preparatory schools shall continue to be built around encouragement of students for the public ministry of the Word.

9.3 We recommend that one or both of the following options be explored and implemented by the Board for Ministerial Education:

Option 1: Tuition and fees at Martin Luther College shall be comparable and competitive with nominal in-state tuition and fees for the primary regions served by the college, namely the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

Option 2: A reimbursement program, based upon years of service in the ministry, shall be implemented. The reimbursement will be approximately equivalent to the average debt load carried by graduates of Martin Luther College (\$12,000 - \$15,000). The reimbursement will be disbursed incrementally, over the first ten years after graduation.

SECTION 9: COST OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION		
Ad Hoc Committee’s Endorsements, p. 43	Reaction	Further Comments
9.1 Tuition at prep schools equivalent of ALHS	Yes	
9.2 Prep curriculum remain ministry focused	Yes	
9.3 option 1 Reduce tuition	Yes	We encourage the synod to make every effort to carry out both options. If option #1 is done well, option #2 might not be necessary.
9.3 option 2 Rebate	Yes	

Participants in the Circuit Level Discussions

Peshtigo Circuit: James Wuebben, Fred Mueller, Reginald Pope, John Tesch, Charles Learman, Paul Cole, Matthew Arnold, David Zahn, Greg Stahlecker, Ryan Landwehr. (Note that after breaking for Lord’s Supper and a light lunch, some men had to leave; others stayed to continue discussions)

Lake Superior Circuit: Andrew Martens, Paul Doletzky, Paul Meitner, Phil Paustian, James Backus, Glenn Schwanke, Ron Leppala

Rhineland Circuit: Nathan Wilke, Larry Riehl, Don Helwig, Michael Spaude, Neil Varnum, Joel Otto, Eric Vertein; in abstentia – Peter Micheel, teacher, Trinity Minocqua, sent a print-out of his thoughts.

Produced by Vertein’s Late Night Productions
 because he can’t help but get lost in details.