

- (a) Depending on each circuit's adopted objectives, the circuit may provide for additional representation from each congregation.
 - (b) The circuit counselor and any other officers shall have the primary responsibility of preparing the agenda for the circuit forum.
 - (c) The circuit counselor shall ordinarily serve as chairman of the circuit forum.
- 5.3.3 The circuit forum will meet at least once triennially to elect circuit delegates to the national convention. It shall elect the pastoral and lay delegates and their alternates to the national convention of the Synod according to the regulations of the Synod. The lay delegate shall, upon election, serve through the triennium following the next convention as an advisory member of the circuit forum.
- 5.3.4 The circuit forum shall be qualified to submit overtures to national and district conventions.

5.4 Circuit Convocations

- 5.4.1 The circuit convocation is a larger gathering of members from circuit congregations during a year in which there is no national or district convention.
- 5.4.2 The purpose of a circuit convocation is to provide a setting in which congregational members may know of and celebrate the ministry pursued by each congregation, may review and discuss the work of the circuit forum, and may receive information on various phases of the work pursued through districts and the Synod.
- (a) Its emphasis should be on inspiration, education, and motivation.
 - (b) The circuit counselor shall serve as chairman of the circuit convocation and other circuit gatherings.
 - (c) The circuit counselor and any other officers shall have the primary responsibility of preparing the agenda for the circuit convocation.

6. AUXILIARY AND RECOGNIZED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

6.1 Auxiliaries

- 6.1.1 An auxiliary exists as an arm of the Synod and has as its primary function aiding the Synod, specifically in programs that extend the ministry and mission of the Synod. Auxiliary status is presently limited to the International Lutheran Laymen's League and International Lutheran Women's Missionary League.
- 6.1.2 An organization desiring to be recognized as an auxiliary of the Synod shall apply for that status to a convention of the Synod through the Board of Directors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

- 6.1.2.1 An organization desiring to be recognized as an auxiliary of the Synod shall satisfy the following requirements:
- (a) Be national in scope and voluntary in membership and participation.
 - (b) Identify itself with the Synod but not be a part of the Synod's constitutional structure.
 - (c) Operate with freedom and self-determination as a ministry and be independent of the Synod in its organization and administration, in the establishment and evaluation of its own objectives, activities, and programs, and in financial matters, while complying with the responsibilities outlined in this bylaw.
 - (d) Coordinate plans and programs with those of the Synod through regular sharing and contact with representatives of those boards to which the Synod has assigned specific responsibilities (boards of the Synod will share with the auxiliaries in a similar manner).
 - (e) Be classified by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501 (c) (3) corporation.
 - (f) Have membership made up of persons who are baptized members of congregations that are members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and all partner churches.
- 6.1.2.2 Auxiliaries shall continue to meet the above requirements for continued recognition.
- 6.1.3 An auxiliary assumes the following responsibilities:
- (a) It reports annually, through its president, to the President of the Synod and, upon his request, to conventions of the Synod.
 - (b) It provides the Synod, through its president, with an annual program report for sharing with the appropriate boards.
 - (c) It keeps the Synod advised of any new program under consideration.
 - (e) It submits all material of a biblical or theological nature to the Synod for doctrinal review.
 - (f) It is responsible for its own debts and liabilities and so indicates in all of its agreements of a financial nature, statements of ownership, financial offers, and other legal documents, agreements, and promotional materials, and all other communications of a financial nature in accordance with criteria determined by the Board of Directors of the Synod, so that it is clear that being an auxiliary is not regarded as an endorsement by the Synod of its organization and administration, or as a guarantee on the part of the Synod for the fiscal solvency of, or any financial responsibility for, the organization or for services expressly offered or implied.
 - (g) It honors and upholds the doctrine and practice of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as set forth in the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

- 6.1.4 Being a recognized auxiliary of the Synod offers the following privileges:
- (a) Eligibility of ordained and commissioned ministers of the Synod serving such organizations to remain on the membership rosters of the Synod as “active members,” if otherwise eligible.
 - (b) Eligibility for obtaining church extension loans from the Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod (LCEF), unless the policies of LCEF preclude such organization as an eligible borrower.
 - (c) Eligibility to be an “employer” under the Concordia Plans of the Synod unless the policies of such a plan preclude such organization as an eligible employer.
 - (d) Recognition of the auxiliary in the *Handbook* of the Synod and listing of the organization in *The Lutheran Annual* as an auxiliary of the Synod, provided that such listing shall be prefaced by a statement that recognition is not a guarantee on the part of the Synod for the fiscal solvency of the auxiliary, or any financial responsibility for such organization or for services expressly or impliedly offered.
 - (e) The opportunity to report to conventions of the Synod.
 - (f) The opportunity to raise funds within the Synod to support the auxiliary’s programs.

6.2 Recognized Service Organizations

- 6.2.1 The granting of recognized service organization status by the Synod signifies that a service organization, while independent of the Synod, fosters the mission and ministry of the church, engages in program activity that is in harmony with the programs of the boards of the Synod, and respects and does not act contrary to the doctrine and practice of the Synod.
- (a) Under the governance and policies of its own board, a recognized service organization operates with freedom and self-determination as a ministry organization independent of the Synod or districts or congregations of the Synod in the establishment and evaluation of its own objectives, activities, and programs, in organization and administration, and in financial matters.
 - (b) The Board of Directors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shall adopt common policies for granting recognized service organization status.
 - (c) Each operating board of the Synod may also adopt policies and criteria to assure that its unique needs are met and shall report these to the Board of Directors.
- 6.2.2 Recognized service organization status may be granted to a service organization (other than an auxiliary) that extends the mission and ministry of the Synod but is not part of the Synod as defined by its Constitution and Bylaws.

- (a) Requests for recognized service organization status shall be made to the board of the Synod to which the organization desires to relate.
 - (b) Within the area of its responsibility, each board of the Synod may determine those organizations to which recognized service organization status will be granted.
- 6.2.3 Each board of the Synod shall adopt policies requiring each recognized service organization to give its assurance in its governing documents that recognition as a service organization is not an endorsement by the Synod or a guarantee of financial responsibility for the debts and obligations of the organization or for services provided or offered.

7. AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

- 7.1 Amendments to the Bylaws may be made using one of two procedures, provided they are not contrary to the Constitution of the Synod.
 - 7.1.1 Amendments may be made by conventions of the Synod.
 - (a) They shall be presented in writing to a convention of the Synod.
 - (b) They shall be specified as bylaw amendments and considered by a convention floor committee.
 - (c) They shall be examined by the Commission on Constitutional Matters prior to presentation to the convention to determine that they are not in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod.
 - (d) They shall be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting.
 - 7.1.2 In exceptional circumstances and upon the express direction of a convention of the Synod, amendments may be made by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors.
 - (a) Such amendments to the Bylaws shall be necessary to implement resolutions adopted by a convention of the Synod.
 - (b) Such amendments shall be drafted by the Secretary of the Synod and shall be reviewed by the Commission on Constitutional Matters.