

Leadership Task Force Report Summary and Recommendations

Introductory Summary

We recommend that the Church of the Lutheran Brethren place equal emphasis on Missions in North America and the International Mission Fields. We recommend that the synod provide training to each of our churches that lends support in establishing an outreach program that reflects the make-up of the communities that they serve.

We further recommend that this training needs to include a clear biblical understanding of leadership, as well as a clear statement of our beliefs and practices. This need is urgent as we reach out to our communities in a culture that does not understand Christianity or the biblical basis for our faith. Our approach to a North American Mission focus should be similar to the early church's outreach to unchurched people groups domestically and abroad. **(New Mission and Vision Statements have been approved by the Synodical Council for adoption at the 2007 Annual Convention)**

Recommendation: The adoption of the following recommendations to be implemented by office of president and the ministry departments.

Recommendation # 1—*Congregational Outreach Plans*

In support of the North America emphasis, we recommend that the synodical leadership encourage each of our churches to generate intentional "Outreach Plans." These plans should reflect how churches can best reach out to their respective communities, given their unique circumstances and demographics. The synod should provide training and support to the churches, for the accomplishment of this outreach. Over time this will result in our local churches reflecting the unique community they serve. **(LOSC comment: This topic is also being considered by the Outreach Task Force.)**

Recommendation #2—*Biblical Understanding of Leadership*

We recommend that the synod develop training for our churches that clarifies and reinforces our biblical understanding of leadership as well as a clear understanding of our beliefs and practices. We further recommend that this be provided in a medium (i.e. DVD) that can be distributed to our churches for use in their leadership development and discipleship training programs.

(The leadership task force provided a "biblical understanding of leadership" in appendix 3 of its full report)

Recommendation #3—*Identify Ourselves*

We recommend that the Lutheran Brethren prayerfully consider a name change. Not to be novel, but to remove an obstacle to fruitfulness in our generation. While the word "Brethren" has served to identify aspects of our heritage, it is confusing to many outside of our denomination. "Brethren" is an old English word that is gender specific and a hindrance to outreach. We sense God calling us to intentional mission to North America in this generation. It is therefore time to identify ourselves in a manner that is both honest and welcoming. **(LOSC comment: Other task forces are also commenting on this issue.)**

The following recommendations represent a summary by LOSC of the Leadership Task Forces “high priority” recommendations. They are presented in an abstracted fashion for efficiency. Readers are encouraged to review the complete report for support information.

Recommendation #4—*Ministry Approach*

We recommend in our ministry approach that we include a biblical understanding of the role of leadership particularly as it pertains to the role of elders. **(LOSC comment: This recommendation has also gone forward to the Synodical Council as part of LOSC’s recommendations regarding pastoral matters.)**

We recommend that the CLB ministry approach embrace discipling through relationships built on mentoring, on-the-job-training (OJT), encouragement, and instruction.

We recommend, as part of our ministry approach, that we affirm our strong beliefs in justification by grace through faith alone and the resulting change in our hearts and lives through the work of the Holy Spirit and a heart response that changes who we are and how we live.

Recommendation #5—*Leadership and Spiritual Gifts*

We recommend the synod provide training to bring about understanding of Spiritual Gifts. Leaders within the church should come to understand their own gifts as well as acquiring the ability to help others within the church determine theirs. This is consistent with the Reformation teaching of the priesthood of all believers and would presuppose the involvement of a greater percentage of lay people.

Recommendation #6—*Training and Outreach*

We recommend that congregations receive training to develop a ministry team in the area of engaging unchurched people.

Recommendation #7—*Assimilation*

We recommend the synod provide training to aid congregations in engaging and retaining new people.