

## **Int'l LLL Proposal for Biennial Conventions Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

*Q: I have heard some talk about possible changes to the international convention in the future. What is being proposed?*

A: There is a resolution on the ballot this summer in Greensboro to adopt biennial international conventions beginning with the 2010 international convention in Omaha, Nebraska. Beginning in 2011, regional conferences would be held in place of the international convention in off years.

*Q: Why is a move to biennial international conventions being proposed?*

A: The participation in our international conventions has dwindled to just over 1,000 people the past several years. As the mainstay of LLL leadership continues to age and younger generations are not inclined to join organizations for long-term leadership roles, the Int'l LLL Board of Governors has discussed new ways to reach more grassroots supporters and be better stewards of ministry resources.

*Q: Is cost the deciding factor in proposing a move to biennial international conventions?*

A: While cost is indeed an important factor in this proposal, the main reason is to bring our meetings closer to the grassroots, making them more accessible to the younger working class, attempting to reach more people with the excitement of Lutheran Hour Ministries, offering greater exposure to the ministries, and providing outstanding training and motivation to all.

*Q: How much money would the ministry save by going to biennial international conventions?*

A: We estimate a savings of around \$200,000 per year by switching to a biennial international convention format. We would be cutting down the number of days necessary for hotels and meals for our paid delegates and staff, as well as holding most of these events in smaller conference centers where the cost will be lower. While the cost savings for the ministry is important, it is also critical that we cut down the cost of attending our convention for people paying their own way. Surveys from the last couple international conventions show that attendees are having more and more struggles coming up with the necessary money to go. For example, an individual attending the 2008 convention in Kentucky spent about \$600 just on the hotel and meals. Depending on how far the person had to travel to get to Lexington, that number as much as doubled in some cases once transportation costs were factored. We believe holding a shorter conference closer to home will allow more people to attend.

*Q: Where would these regional conferences be held?*

A: As of now, our thought is to hold approximately 15 regional conferences scattered throughout the United States and Canada. Participants could choose to attend the regional conference most convenient for them without regard to established league regional boundaries. There was much discussion at the January Board of Governors meeting as to whether regional conferences should be based around geographical considerations or possibly LCMS districts instead of established LLL regional boundaries. This is a topic that will be revisited if we received approval on the regional conference concept so that the new format makes the most sense for the

most people. One issue that will need to be investigated further is how these regional conferences will affect our voting process.

*Q: We already hold a regional conference and it is usually not well attended. Why would these regional conferences be any different?*

A: Regional conventions currently being held often serve the purpose of being a business meeting with reports of league and district activities for officers and those people who are most involved in the Int'l LLL. This proposal would bring a condensed version of the international convention directly to the grassroots to hopefully get more pastors and laypeople from congregations in the immediate area to attend. By offering relevant and timely workshop topics, Bible studies, worship services, and possibly a servant event that appeals to Lutherans who currently have no connection to the Int'l LLL, we believe we can significantly increase the number of people attending these events. Plus, the LHM staff will be able to help with public relations efforts to local congregations and local media.

*Q: How long would these regional conferences be?*

A: As an illustration, the regional conference would cover a day and a half, starting Saturday morning and ending around noon on Sunday. This would allow working families to be able to attend without having to arrange for days away from their job. The timing would also allow district and zone officers to hold their business meeting on Friday night before the conference begins. Limiting the regional conference to a day and a half, or two days for district and zone officers, would keep hotel and meal costs, as well as transportation distance in many cases, to a minimum.

*Q: What would the regional conferences include?*

A: The regional conferences would create excitement for our ministry, train and equip our grassroots volunteers, and reach out to new supporters. They would include spiritual rejuvenation through an opening and/or closing chapel service, Bible studies, and prayer chapel for individual meditation and prayers; a motivational keynote speaker of regional prominence to provide personal stories, education, and/or entertainment; training and seminars to educate attendees about the ministry and how to more effectively reach the unchurched; video-based ministry updates; and a service project to get members of the local community more involved.

*Q: Who will run these regional conferences?*

A: Volunteers from each district within the region will work with three or four LHM staff members to make sure these events run smoothly. LHM staff will be involved in working with regional leaders to establish conference format and content; convention logistics such as hotel coordination, meals, and room set-up; arranging for speakers from the main stage and in workshops; and publicity efforts. Volunteers will be called upon to handle most of the on-site management of the conference.

*Q: Why will these regional events accomplish more than simply continuing to hold the international convention every year?*

A: The international convention has served the important role of energizing the laity and allowing the ministry to stay in contact with our most involved supporters. But we also recognize that times are changing and we must find ways to reach new people. We believe regional conferences, with an

expanded publicity effort in areas where these conferences will be held, will help us connect with more people and get them involved with Lutheran Hour Ministries as prayer partners, volunteers, or financial supporters.

*Q: How would election of officers be handled if our international convention were only held every other year?*

A: If the measure to move to biennial conventions passes at this summer's international convention, the Int'l LLL Board of Governors will prepare actions needed for adoption at the 2010 international convention to facilitate changes in corporate policies dealing with matters such as the election of officers and convention timing.

*Q: Hearing Pastor Klaus is something I look forward to at the international convention. Will he be able to attend every regional conference?*

A: Pastor Klaus has a very full speaking schedule that is usually booked a couple years in advance. While we would try to schedule him for as many of these regional conferences as possible, it is doubtful that he would be able to attend them all. However, if he were not available, we would try to schedule our Int'l LLL Pastoral Advisor, the Rev. Keith Grimm, or one of the district pastoral advisors from the region.

*Q: Will all regional conferences be held at the same time of the year?*

A: LHM staff will work with the districts within each region to determine the best time for hosting their conference, taking into consideration such things as facility costs, weather factors, and travel arrangements.