

Minutes of Western Iowa Synod Lutheran Men in Mission

May 17th 2026

St. Mark Lutheran Church Storm Lake, Iowa

Those in attendance: Brian Underwood, Reuben De La O, Scott Essing and Mark Juhl.

Scott opened the meeting with prayer and then instead of devotions we did a round of Faith Talk Cards with prompts each individual to discuss an aspect of their faith story. We learn just a little more about each other.

The minutes were reviewed and some discussion followed about our last meeting with Bishop Dalen. We retouched on a couple of his suggestions which were the uses of the Small Catechism and involving children in participating in church activities with things they could do like lighting candles.

The financial was reported by Scott and we presently have \$2013.29 in our account.

Reuben then presented what he and his wife worked up for a Facebook page. It looked good to us and he will get it going. I indicated that I check my email almost daily and Scott and Brian stated they would also try harder to help with checking on what's on Facebook and of course Reuben will as well. He also mentioned that he had set up an email address for our Western Iowa Synod men. (LMMWestIowa@gmail.com)

We then discussed our meeting with the Living Faith Church Council and I am to contact them again to get suggestions as to how we can improve our presentation. I also mentioned that I had 5 congregations that have expressed an interest in our doing a presentation. However in my conversations with them there seemed to be a preference that we do our presentation in a setting other than the church council; such as a Bible Study class. (Faith-Odebolt, Emanuel-Dayton, Bethel-Graettinger, St. Paul-Missouri Valley, and Bethlehem-Cherokee.)

This lead into a discussion regarding our display at the synod assembly, which is where the new contacts came from. We had a drawing to a Spark Story Bible which was won by Jon Mogensen. I also sold a copy of the two books by Rev. Erickson, "Parents Arise – Grandparents Arise and also sold a packet of Faith Talk Cards. We also discussed the need for a new banner for the display and I will contact the national LMM regarding that. I also presented a copy of I broacher that I had worked up which I felt would be good to have at the display and we could use to give out at our presentations. I asked for input especially in the area of suggested family activities for the broacher and I read an email from Dan Antoine regarding family camp and we decided to include both Ingham Okoboji and Lutheran Lakeside's family camps.

Brian, Scott and I have done the speakers training that Rev. Erickson offered and we discussed how we might move forward with that. We have drawn heavily on his resources as it ties into

fostering faith formation in the home, but we are unsure as to where or how Rev. Erickson wants us to proceed. Scott will contact him for clarification.

I then mentioned the need to coordinate with the women to help achieve our goal of fostering family formation in the home. We decided to offer an invitation to the women to also come to our meetings. As the conversation evolved we also decided to extend an invitation to those outside of the ELCA to attend if they are interested as the need to pass on the faith is not just a problem in the ELCA but most other denominations also. We are however an ELCA men's group and thus final decision making would remain with that core group.

New business included the election of a vice president. Reuben was unanimously elected.

I then shared the quarterly Ambassadors Gram from the national LMM and stated that although it wasn't on the Spring Ambassadors Gram I had attended the One Year to Live retreat with my son-in-law (Nick) and said it was a great experience. I was also asked about the Book on Tuesday and the Bible Study on Thursday. I haven't ever zoomed in on the Book Study but was confident that Kevin would do a great job leading it but I have frequently did the Bible Study which usually had 12-18 guys in attendance. I also shared a fund raising letter from the national office and we decided to contribute 10% of any funds that we receive to the national LMM.

Reuben mentioned that he felt we should meet more often so things can be decided and move faster so we decided to go from quarterly meetings to bi-monthly. We scheduled our next meeting for July 12th at St. Mark in Storm Lake.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Mark Juhl
Western Iowa Synod – Lutheran Men in Mission Secretary