

# Pastor Sailer's Page

Faith Lutheran Church  
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## “WOW!” Not “Woe”!

*This past Monday, yours truly was elected President of The South Dakota District of the LCMS. It was a “wow” moment...mostly.*

“**W**ow”-- an expression of wonder or amazement. “Woe” – deep sorrow or grief, dismay. I’m not sure how you felt when you learned that I had been elected President of our District, but I felt a big “wow” welling up in me. I was pretty amazed that this happened. It is an honor. It’s a very big job – not a promotion, by the way – just a very big responsibility in our District and Synod.

Here’s what I wrote, on Tuesday night, in an email to those whose email address I have:

*As many of you know, our South Dakota District Convention of The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod is being held this week (Monday through Wednesday). 108 congregations make up the District, and about 125 delegates are representing those congregations at the Convention.*

*As many of you also know, I was one of the candidates for the position of District President, since our current president, Rev. Dale Sattgast, is retiring.*

*The vote was taken on Monday evening, and I was elected President, on the first ballot.*

*What does this mean for me?...for Faith Lutheran Church? I feel this is the Lord's calling for me, at this time in my life. I am the Lord's servant. I want to do His will. And so I accept the results of this election.*

*The District President is a full-time position over a three-year term. I will no longer be senior pastor at Faith! I will have to ask for a peaceful release from my call as your senior pastor, pending my installation on June 14.*

*At the same time, I must tell you that I love my congregation so much! I think that the election went the way it did, in part, because Faith is such a good congregation. Folks around Sioux Falls and throughout the District admire our ministry. They see us reaching out with the Gospel in Word and deed. They notice the financial commitment we make in supporting Lutheran education and the District and*

*Synodical missions. We are leaders. We are servants.*

*Those are just some of the reasons I am confident Faith Lutheran Church will be just fine going forward. Besides that, and even more important, Christ is risen and our sins are forgiven. Eternal life is assured, thanks to Jesus. All of that being true, won't everything else will be OK?*

*Then there's this: "Fear not, I have called you by name; you are mine" (Isaiah 43:1b).*

*And this: "Peace be with you" (John 20:19). Peace, wholeness, restoration -- all are ours!*

*Yes, because of our good and gracious God, everything will be OK.*

*I'm grateful that I will remain your senior pastor for two more months (it used to be that the newly-elected District President took office immediately!). And so it is that on June 15, I will begin my service as the District President.*

Again I say, “Wow!” And some of you are also saying “wow,” as you celebrate a bit with me in view of the honor I’ve been given.

But let me tell you, I do have my “woe” moments about this, too, and so do some of you, since such a new beginning for me means the sudden ending of a precious relationship with you: pastor (“shepherd”) and flock. “Pastor” is a precious title to me. Being “Pastor” is engaging in a “noble task” (see I Timothy 3:1), because we pastors get to share the news of the Lamb of God, who is also our Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. And we are privileged to walk with you in the “wow” and “woe” moments of your lives, drawing us even closer together.

Your leaders here at Faith, wisely, have already begun making some plans to assist the congregation in moving forward. I want to share a bit of this road map with you this weekend in the Christian Education time, 9:15 a.m., Sunday, in the CLC. Please come to listen and learn and share some ideas. And please pray that God will keep us all in His care, resulting in a thankful “wow” in the end, as we see Him at work among us.