

## **One People—Forgiven!**

Monday, Day 3

Today delegates were ready to begin making decisions on the various resolutions dealing with Synod Structure and Governance. For those who had never experienced the dynamics of a National Convention, today was a test of patience as many delegates faced unfamiliar parliamentary procedures, new technology, and technical issues. Yet in the midst of all the struggles, small and great, God's grace was very evident. Delegates witnessed moments of demonstrated personal reconciliation between fellow brothers who had said words that had offended. We heard powerful stories in the Bible Study times with Ted Kober and others, that made every person aware of the power of forgiveness and the need to practice this forgiveness with one another. We recognized missionaries who had spent many years on the mission field.

It felt like we did very little on the convention floor as we moved with painstaking slowness through complex and difficult decisions. Yet several decisions had monumental significance to the future of our Synod.

First, the assembly voted to retain a 3-year cycle of meeting together rather than the proposed move to a 4-year cycle which could have saved the Synod a lot of money. Motions were made that changed the way we vote for President and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of Synod. The most significant decision that the delegates made was a fundamental restructuring of all the various Boards and Commissions of the Synod, some 22 or so of them, into 2—a National Mission Board and an International Mission Board. We will still carry out the important work and ministry of these various Boards and Commissions, but now in a different way.

One surprise awaited delegates at the end of the day when President Kieschnick announced that papers had just been signed that morning with the Vietnamese government allowing for the first time ever, the first official Christian presence in Vietnam, a Lutheran school connected to the Northwest District. Praise be to God who continues to lead his Church to reach the lost!