



Report of the Memorials Committee

Consideration of Synodical Memorials

One responsibility of the Churchwide Assembly is to consider proposed responses to synodical assemblies. To assist the Churchwide Assembly in this task, a Memorials Committee reviews these memorials and proposes recommendations for assembly action.

According to the Rules of Organization and Procedure (*2013 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section I), the Memorials Committee may recommend that the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

- vote separately on the proposed responses to certain synodical memorials, allowing the co-chairs to determine the order in which the recommendations are considered; and
- vote on the recommended responses to the remaining synodical memorials as a group (*en bloc*). Please note: Some memorials are included in this *en bloc* action because the subject matter will come to the floor of the assembly for discussion elsewhere on the agenda.

Recommendation of the Memorials Committee

To approve *en bloc*, with the exception of those memorials considered separately, the following responses to 2012 and 2013 synodical memorials printed in the Report of the Memorials Committee (*2013 Pre-Assembly Report*, Section VII, pages as listed):

Category A1: Gender Identity Discrimination.	17
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For Separate Consideration

The Memorials Committee recommends that the Churchwide Assembly consider separately the following responses to 2012 and 2013 synodical memorials:

Category A3: Community Violence.	35
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If a voting member desires the assembly to discuss a recommendation listed in the *en bloc* resolution, she or he may request that it be removed for separate consideration. The assembly then will consider separately the proposed response of the Memorials Committee. To call for such separate consideration, the voting member must provide notice electronically or on a paper form to the secretary of this church or to the secretary's deputy no later than 9:30 p.m.,

Monday, August 12, 2013, using the form, “Notice Related to Recommendations of Memorials Committee.” A copy of this form is provided at the end of this report and includes detailed instructions for submitting such a request. Part Seven of the Rules of Organization and Procedure describes the process for electronic submission of this notice. Paper copies of this form are available from the secretary’s deputy.

A voting member who desires to offer a substitute to a recommendation of the Memorials Committee also must submit electronically or on a paper form the “Notice Related to Recommendations of Memorials Committee.” The text of the proposed substitute also must be submitted electronically or on a paper form to the secretary or the secretary’s deputy. A copy of the Motion Form is provided at the end of this report. Additional copies of the Motion Form may be requested from the secretary’s deputy. Substitute recommendations must be submitted to the secretary of this church or the secretary’s deputy no later than 9:30 p.m., Monday, August 12, 2013, as established in the Rules of Organization and Procedure for this assembly.

The process for consideration of memorials outlined in this report is intended to assist the assembly in responding to a large number of memorials and will facilitate the scheduling of discussion. It also will make it possible to reproduce substitute motions for distribution to assembly members prior to debate.

Pr. Stephen R. Herr, *co-chair*

Ms. Susan W. McArver, *co-chair*

Synodical Memorials: A Word of Explanation

According to the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, the Churchwide Assembly shall “receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies” (ELCA 12.21.c.). To assist the assembly in carrying out this task, “A Memorials Committee, appointed by the Church Council, shall review memorials from synod assemblies and make appropriate recommendations for assembly action” (ELCA 12.51.21.).

A *memorial* is understood to mean an action of a Synod Assembly *specifically addressed to the Churchwide Assembly*, requesting that a particular action be taken by that body. (Note: *Resolutions* adopted by a Synod Assembly address the ELCA Church Council or a churchwide unit through referral by the Synod Council.)

Meeting in late June 2013, the Memorials Committee reviewed the 89 memorials received from 2012 and 2013 synod assemblies. The committee grouped those memorials that address the same topic or related concerns in order to facilitate the assembly’s consideration. In each part of this Report of the Memorials Committee you will find three components:

1. Memorials Adopted by 2012 and 2013 Synod Assemblies

Memorials are listed by region and synod number, according to their constitutional designation. The year in which each memorial was adopted is listed in brackets. Where more than one synod approved the same or a similar memorial, the synods taking such action are listed together.

The memorials are reproduced here in the form in which they were submitted to the secretary of this church. The *preamble* (the “WHEREAS” clauses) provides information to assist readers to understand the context of the synodical discussion of the memorial. Attention should be focused, however, on the *resolutions* (the “RESOLVED” clauses), which make the actual request for action by the Churchwide Assembly.

2. Background Information Provided by the Memorials Committee

The Memorials Committee received information and advice from churchwide staff on the subjects addressed in the various synodical memorials. In reporting its recommendations, the committee provides this background information, which voting members may find helpful in making decisions related to the memorials. The Memorials Committee may provide rationale for its recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly where appropriate.

3. Recommendation of the Memorials Committee for Action by the Churchwide Assembly

In each section, the committee’s recommendation for assembly action is printed in **boldface** type. In certain instances, the proposed action may be to affirm or to decline to approve the action proposed by the synod. In other instances, the committee may recommend referral to the Church Council or to a churchwide unit. In yet other instances, the recommendation may be to convey to the synod the material provided to the assembly as “Background Information” as the assembly’s response to the memorial.

A synodical memorial may address an issue that already is scheduled to be discussed by the assembly at an identified point on its agenda. Rather than suggesting that the Churchwide Assembly discuss an issue twice, the committee recommends that the assembly’s separate action on that issue also serve as the assembly’s response to the synodical memorial on that topic.

The Memorials Committee will recommend that some memorials be considered *en bloc*. Action will be taken upon all of the memorials contained in the *en bloc* section by a single vote, without floor debate.

By 9:30 p.m., Monday, August 12, 2013, voting members who wish to remove from the *en bloc* action the Memorial Committee’s response to a synodical memorial must notify the secretary of this church or the secretary’s deputy. Likewise, persons intending to offer an amendment or substitution for the committee’s response must notify the secretary by submitting a Motion Form with the text of the proposed amendment.

The Order of Business will indicate the times when the recommendations of the Memorials Committee are scheduled to be brought to the floor of the assembly.

NOTE: Synod assemblies also may adopt resolutions on churchwide issues that are *not* considered memorials since they do not address broad policy matters or the Churchwide Assembly directly. For example, a Synod Assembly may adopt a *resolution* addressed to a particular churchwide unit; the appropriate route for this action is through the Synod Council to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for appropriate referral to churchwide units. Those *resolutions* addressed to the Church Council will be considered by the Church Council at subsequent meetings. The reader, therefore, may not find in this report all synod assembly actions related to churchwide issues, since many are addressed through other channels.

2012 and 2013 Synodical Memorials

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Section A Economic and Social Justice Concerns

Category A1: Gender Identity Discrimination

1. Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the ELCA's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make this assembly's position and the ELCA's position known to their members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

2. Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that "While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues" (p. 19). This church:

1. "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services." (p. 19)
2. "has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection." (p. 19)
3. "will advocate for public policies that support and protect families." (p. 24)
4. "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse." (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy "in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;" therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the ELCA's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make the actions of the 1997 and 2013 Churchwide Assemblies known to their Members of Congress in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate.

3. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, to urge the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make this assembly's position and the ELCA's position known to their members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

4. Southwest California Synod (2B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that "While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues" (p. 19). This church:

- 1) "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, an public services" (p. 19);
- 2) "has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection" (p. 19);
- 3) "will advocate for public policies that support and protect families" (p. 24); and
- 4) "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse;" and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy "in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;" therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, to urge the ELCA's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge members of this church to make this assembly's position and the ELCA's position known to their Members of Congress in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate.

5. Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 34 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that "While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues" (p. 19). This church:

1. "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services." (p. 19)
2. "has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection." (p. 19)
3. "will advocate for public policies that support and protect families." (p. 24)

4. “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse.” (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Eastern North Dakota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Members of Congress, consistent with their bound consciences, to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Eastern North Dakota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage the ELCA’s presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders, consistent with their bound consciences, to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Eastern North Dakota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage lay leaders to make the actions of the 1997 and 2013 Churchwide Assemblies known to their Members of Congress in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate.

6. Northwestern Minnesota Synod (3D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged primarily on the quality of their work or their qualifications for employment; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that “While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues” (p. 19). This church:

- 1) “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services.” (p. 19)
- 2) “has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)
- 3) “will advocate for public policies that support and protect families.” (p. 24)
- 4) “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse.” (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, in assembly, urge its bishop to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, to urge the ELCA’s presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make this assembly’s position and the ELCA’s position known to their Members of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

7. Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that “While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues” (p. 19). This church:

1. “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services.” (p. 19)
2. “has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)
3. “will advocate for public policies that support and protect families.” (p. 24)
4. “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse.” (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon the U.S. Congress to pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the ELCA’s presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge ELCA members to make this synod’s position and the ELCA’s position known to their Members of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

8. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that this church:

1. “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services.” (p. 19)
2. “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse.” (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the ELCA’s presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make the ELCA’s position and this action known to their Members of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

9. Saint Paul Area Synod (3H) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that “While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues” (p. 19). This church:

1. “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services.” (p. 19)
2. “has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)
3. “will advocate for public policies that support and protect families.” (p. 24)
4. “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse.” (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the ELCA’s presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make the ELCA’s position and this action known to their Members of Congress in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate.

10. Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod (4D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, not all states have legislation to prevent discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that “While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues” (p. 19). This church:

1. “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services.” (p. 19)
2. “has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)
3. “will advocate for public policies that support and protect families.” (p. 24)
4. “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse.” (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by a 79.8 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment

discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the ELCA's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make this assembly's position and the ELCA's position known to their Members of Congress in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate.

11. Southwestern Texas Synod (4E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that "While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues" (p. 19). This church:

- 1) "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services." (p. 19)
- 2) "has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection." (p. 19)
- 3) "will advocate for public policies that support and protect families." (p. 24)
- 4) "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse." (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy "in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;" therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, to urge the ELCA's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make the actions of the 1997, 2009, and 2013 Churchwide Assemblies known to their Members of Congress in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate.

12. Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that "While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues," including:

- 1) Support for "legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services,"
- 2) Calling upon "congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection,"

- 3) Advocating for “public policies that support and protect families,” and
- 4) Attending to the need for “equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity” in that “[s]uch individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse;” and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the ELCA’s presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make this assembly’s position and the ELCA’s position known to their Members of Congress in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate.

13. South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that “While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues” (p. 19). This church:

- 1) “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services.” (p. 19)
- 2) “has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)
- 3) “will advocate for public policies that support and protect families.” (p. 24)
- 4) “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse.” (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, to urge the ELCA’s presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make the actions of the 1997, 2009, and 2013 Churchwide Assemblies known to their Members of Congress in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate.

14. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) promises in its baptismal liturgy “. . . to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace” (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* [USA: Augsburg Fortress, 2006], p. 228); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that

1. “the ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God.” (p. 19)
2. “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights” for all and has also “called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)
3. “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law” for all (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly resolved to “commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, individuals and congregations have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church’s congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding the growing trend in state and federal laws towards marriage equality and how all the expressions of the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families as we seek to grow into this new reality; and
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church’s congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the members of this church to support the Uniting American Families Act (UAFSA) by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFSA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, call upon members of this synod to speak publically to support legislation at the state and local levels of government that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

15. New Jersey Synod (7A) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* states that “While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues” (p. 19). This church:

- 1) “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services.” (p. 19)
- 2) “has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)
- 3) “will advocate for public policies that support and protect families.” (p. 24)
- 4) “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse.” (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy “in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, to urge the ELCA's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make this assembly's position and the ELCA's position known to their Members of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

16. Metropolitan New York Synod (7C) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make this assembly's position and the ELCA's position known to their Members of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge synods to not do business with companies known to discriminate.

17. Upstate New York Synod (7D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy "in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;" therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions.

18. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, it is currently legal in 29 states to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation and in 34 states on the basis of gender identity; and

WHEREAS, employees should be judged on the quality of their work and nothing more; and

WHEREAS, legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for a broad religious exemption, has been introduced in every Congress since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 1397/S. 812) is an example of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, the social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states:

"While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues. . . . This church supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services" (p. 19); and further states:

The ELCA "will advocate for public policies that support and protect families" (p. 24); and further states:

"This church also will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity. Such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse" (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, the 1997 Churchwide Assembly responded [CA97.06.29] to a memorial by approximately an 80 percent majority, expressing support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and affirming advocacy "in support of laws barring discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation;" therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, to urge the ELCA's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge lay leaders to make this assembly's position and the ELCA's position known to their Members of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

19. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states:

This church "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection. The ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God" (p. 19); and further states:

"This church also will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity" (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, (as of April 30, 2013) marriage has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia and within the territory of 12 synods of the ELCA, which together minister to more than 650,000 Lutherans (or about 15 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, seven additional states (Illinois, Minnesota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Oregon, and New Jersey) are widely expected to consider legislation recognizing marriage for same-gender couples between 2013 and 2015, encompassing 12 additional synods that minister to more than 1.1 million Lutherans (or about 25 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States is currently considering whether to declare two laws unconstitutional: the federal Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8, both of which restrict the individual and family protections afforded by marriage; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage conversation among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding the growing trend in state and federal laws toward marriage equality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage conversation in all expressions of the ELCA about response to the needs of the neighbor, including the sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support same-gender couples and their families as we seek to grow into this new reality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage conversation among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

20. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment

discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, to urge this church's presiding bishop, synodical bishops, clergy, and other church leaders to speak publicly in support of legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge the laity to make this assembly's position and the ELCA's position known to their Members of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

Background

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has been on record as being generally opposed to the forces of discrimination in society and in support of specific legislation to prevent discrimination in the workplace, according to certain classes protected by law. The Employment Non-Discrimination Act is an attempt in recent sessions of Congress to include sexual orientation and gender identity as part of federal workplace non-discrimination law and to make enforcement processes similar to previous federal civil rights and workplace discrimination law. As noted in these synodical memorials, not all states have state laws in place to prevent discrimination in the workplace, nor for hiring and firing decisions based on these categories. In fact, as of 2007 data, it is legal in 31 states to fire or refuse to hire because of a person's sexual orientation and legal in 39 states to do so based solely on an individual's gender identity.

As noted in the memorials, the ELCA has addressed the issue of employment non-discrimination in its recent social statement, *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009). The first social statement of the ELCA, *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective* (1991), outlines affirmations and commitments to guide the church's participation in society. In addition to advocating for justice and mercy in situations of brokenness, the church commits itself to removing obstacles of discrimination and indifference. More specifically, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (1993) further develops the role of this church and commits it to "support legislation, ordinances, and resolutions that guarantee to all persons equally . . . opportunity for employment with fair compensation and possibilities for job training and education, apprenticeship, promotion, and union membership [as well as the] opportunity for business ownership [and] access to . . . insurance services" (pg. 7). *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999) states, "We commit ourselves as a church to hire without discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, disabilities, sexual orientation, or genetic factors" (pg. 10). Further, "We call for other employers to engage in similar practices" (pg. 10).

Based on these social statements, the ELCA Church Council and various Churchwide Assemblies have affirmed this church's position and commitment in opposition to discrimination in housing, employment, and services due to sexual orientation. These examples include the Church Council action "Harassment, Assault, and Discrimination Due to Sexual Orientation" (1993), and a Churchwide Assembly action (1997) in support of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act as noted by these 2013 memorials.

The ELCA advocacy ministries and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program continue to support legislation and corporate practices in opposition to discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Specifically, this includes support for the 2007 Employment Non-Discrimination Act in the 110th Congress, and the development, use, and periodic updating of a position paper on Nondiscrimination in Business Activities by CSR.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Eastern North Dakota, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Eastern Washington-Idaho, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Southwestern Texas, Saint Paul Area, Sierra Pacific, Northwest Washington, Greater Milwaukee, Southwest California, Minneapolis Area, Metropolitan New York, Northwestern Minnesota, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Southwestern Minnesota, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., and Indiana-Kentucky synods regarding their concern for the important issue of employment non-discrimination and their common cause in memorializing the 2013 Churchwide Assembly;

To acknowledge the continued lack of state and federal anti-discrimination workplace laws addressing the categories of sexual identity and gender identity and the recent and recurring proposals

concerning the employment non-discrimination legislation, including a proposal to provide a religious exemption;

To recommit this church to principles of non-discrimination in employment and to call for other employers to engage in similar practices;

To affirm the work by the ELCA advocacy ministries and Corporate Social Responsibility Team in supporting employment non-discrimination legislation and request that they continue to support legislation that opposes workplace discrimination;

To request that the presiding bishop of this church communicate to members of Congress the support of the ELCA for legislation that prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity while providing for religious exemptions; and

To encourage all ELCA synods, congregations, and members to add their voices in support of legislation that prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Category A2: Uniting American Families

1. Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod, in assembly, memorializes the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Northwest Washington Synod, meeting in assembly, memorializes the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod, meeting in assembly, memorializes the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

2. Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (1D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) (*in essence being federal legislation to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful*

permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform); and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commend

Bishop Thomas M. Aitken, Northeastern Minnesota Synod,
Bishop James A. Arends, La Crosse Area Synod,
Bishop David H. Brauer-Rieke, Oregon Synod,
Bishop Bruce H. Burnside, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin,
Bishop Jessica R. Crist, Montana Synod,
Bishop H. Julian Gordy, Southeastern Synod,
Bishop Richard H. Graham, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod,
Bishop Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, Delaware-Maryland Synod,
Bishop Mark W. Holmerud, Sierra Pacific Synod,
Bishop Felipe Lozada-Montañez, Caribbean Synod,
Bishop Dean W. Nelson, Southwest California Synod,
Bishop Margaret Payne, New England Synod,
Bishop Robert A. Rimbo, Metropolitan New York Synod,
Bishop Michael Rinehart, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod,
Bishop Stephen S. Talmage, Grand Canyon Synod, and
Bishop Martin D. Wells, Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod

for their courageous witness and their stand for justice in adding their names to the *Faith Coalition for UAFA*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

3. Oregon Synod (1E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform;

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) has been introduced in the federal legislature to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of United States citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Thomas M. Aitken, Northeastern Minnesota Synod,
Bishop James A. Arends, La Crosse Area Synod,
Bishop David H. Brauer-Rieke, Oregon Synod,

Bishop Bruce H. Burnside, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin,
Bishop Jessica R. Crist, Montana Synod,
Bishop H. Julian Gordy, Southeastern Synod ,
Bishop Richard H. Graham, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod,
Bishop Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, Delaware-Maryland Synod,
Bishop Mark W. Holmerud, Sierra Pacific Synod,
Bishop Felipe Lozada-Montañez, Caribbean Synod,
Bishop Dean W. Nelson, Southwest California Synod,
Bishop Margaret Payne, New England Synod,
Bishop Robert A. Rimbo, Metropolitan New York Synod,
Bishop Michael Rinehart, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod,
Bishop Stephen S. Talmage, Grand Canyon Synod, and
Bishop Martin D. Wells, Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod

offered their support to the UAFA by adding their names to the *Faith Coalition for UAFA*; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Oregon Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Oregon Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Oregon Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage rostered and other leaders of congregations in this church, if consistent with their bound conscience, to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

4. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Sierra Pacific Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commend

Bishop Thomas M. Aitken, Northeastern Minnesota Synod,
Bishop James A. Arends, La Crosse Area Synod,
Bishop David H. Brauer-Rieke, Oregon Synod,
Bishop Bruce H. Burnside, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin,
Bishop Jessica R. Crist, Montana Synod,
Bishop H. Julian Gordy, Southeastern Synod,
Bishop Richard H. Graham, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod,
Bishop Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, Delaware-Maryland Synod,
Bishop Mark W. Holmerud, Sierra Pacific Synod,
Bishop Felipe Lozada-Montañez, Caribbean Synod,
Bishop Dean W. Nelson, Southwest California Synod,
Bishop Margaret Payne, New England Synod,
Bishop Robert A. Rimbo, Metropolitan New York Synod,
Bishop Michael Rinehart, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod,
Bishop Stephen S. Talmage, Grand Canyon Synod, and
Bishop Martin D. Wells, Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod

for their courageous witness and their stand for justice in adding their names to the *Faith Coalition for UAFA*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by communicating with their

elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

5. Southwest California Synod (2B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) has been introduced in the federal legislature to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Southwest California Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further;

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commend

Bishop Thomas M. Aitken, Northeastern Minnesota Synod,
Bishop James A. Arends, La Crosse Area Synod,
Bishop David H. Brauer-Rieke, Oregon Synod,
Bishop Bruce H. Burnside, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin,
Bishop Jessica R. Crist, Montana Synod,
Bishop H. Julian Gordy, Southeastern Synod ,
Bishop Richard H. Graham, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod,
Bishop Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, Delaware-Maryland Synod,
Bishop Mark W. Holmerud, Sierra Pacific Synod,
Bishop Felipe Lozada-Montañez, Caribbean Synod,
Bishop Dean W. Nelson, Southwest California Synod,
Bishop Margaret Payne, New England Synod,
Bishop Robert A. Rimbo, Metropolitan New York Synod,
Bishop Michael Rinehart, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod,
Bishop Stephen S. Talmage, Grand Canyon Synod, and
Bishop Martin D. Wells, Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod

for their courageous witness and their stand for justice in adding their names to the *Faith Coalition for UAFA*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by

communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

6. Northwestern Minnesota Synod (3D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; therefore, be it

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) has been introduced in the U.S. Congress to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; and

WHEREAS, many synod bishops and other leaders have supported the *Faith Coalition for UAFA*; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. Congress; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church, if it is consistent with their bound consciences, to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

7. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States who are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) has been introduced in the U.S. Congress to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFAs by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFAs.

8. Saint Paul Area Synod (3H) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFAs or its equivalent, the Saint Paul Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFAs in the U.S. legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church, consistent with their bound conscience, to support the UAFAs by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFAs.

9. Central States Synod (4B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod of the ELCA, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFAs or its equivalent, the Central States Synod of the ELCA, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFAs in the U.S. legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod of the ELCA, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFAs by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFAs.

10. Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod (4D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status, unlike twenty-five other countries which do allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are a number of bi-national, same-gender families in the United States raising children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship, and depriving them of equal justice and equal protection; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) has been introduced in the U.S. Congress to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting committed same-gender partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as opposite-gender spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFAs or its equivalent, the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFAs in the U.S. Congress; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commend Bishop Thomas M. Aitken [Northeastern Minnesota Synod], Bishop James A. Arends [La Crosse Area Synod], Bishop David H. Brauer-Rieke [Oregon Synod], Bishop Bruce H. Burnside [South-Central Synod of Wisconsin], Bishop Jessica R. Crist [Montana Synod], Bishop H. Julian Gordy [Southeastern Synod], Bishop Richard H. Graham [Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod], Bishop Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane [Delaware-Maryland Synod], Bishop Mark W. Holmerud [Sierra Pacific Synod], Bishop Felipe Lozada-Montañez [Caribbean Synod], Bishop Dean W. Nelson [Southwest California Synod], Bishop Robert A. Rimbo [Metropolitan New York Synod], Bishop Michael Rinehart [Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod], Bishop Stephen S. Talmage [Grand Canyon Synod], and Bishop Martin D. Wells [Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod], for their courageous witness and their stand for justice in adding their names to the *Faith Coalition for UAFAs*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFAs by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFAs.

11. Southwestern Texas Synod (4E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status while 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States and 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) has been introduced in the federal legislature to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Southwestern Texas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further;

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

12. South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) has been introduced in the federal legislature to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further;

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commend

Bishop Thomas M. Aitken, Northeastern Minnesota Synod,

Bishop James A. Arends, La Crosse Area Synod,

Bishop David H. Brauer-Rieke, Oregon Synod,

Bishop Bruce H. Burnside, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin,

Bishop Jessica R. Crist, Montana Synod,

Bishop H. Julian Gordy, Southeastern Synod ,

Bishop Richard H. Graham, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod,

Bishop Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, Delaware-Maryland Synod,

Bishop Mark W. Holmerud, Sierra Pacific Synod,

Bishop Felipe Lozada-Montañez, Caribbean Synod,

Bishop Dean W. Nelson, Southwest California Synod,

Bishop Margaret Payne, New England Synod,
Bishop Robert A. Rimbo, Metropolitan New York Synod,
Bishop Michael Rinehart, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod,
Bishop Stephen S. Talmage, Grand Canyon Synod, and
Bishop Martin D. Wells, Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod

for their courageous witness and their stand for justice in adding their names to the *Faith Coalition for UAFA*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

13. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) promises in its baptismal liturgy “. . . to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace” (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* [USA: Augsburg Fortress, 2006], p. 228); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that

1. “the ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God.” (p. 19)
2. “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights” for all and has also “called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)
3. “will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law” for all (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly resolved to “commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, individuals and congregations have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church’s congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding the growing trend in state and federal laws towards marriage equality and how all the expressions of the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families as we seek to grow into this new reality; and
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church’s congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the members of this church to support the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, call upon members of this synod to speak publically to support legislation at the state and local levels of government that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

14. New Jersey Synod (7A) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) has been introduced in the federal legislature to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFAs or its equivalent, the New Jersey Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFAs in the U.S. legislature; and be it further;

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFAs by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFAs.

15. Metropolitan New York Synod (7C) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFAs or its equivalent, the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFAs in the U.S. legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorializes the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to commend

Bishop Thomas M. Aitken, Northeastern Minnesota Synod,
Bishop James A. Arends, La Crosse Area Synod,
Bishop David H. Brauer-Rieke, Oregon Synod,
Bishop Bruce H. Burnside, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin,
Bishop Jessica R. Crist, Montana Synod,
Bishop H. Julian Gordy, Southeastern Synod,
Bishop Richard H. Graham, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod,
Bishop Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, Delaware-Maryland Synod,
Bishop Mark W. Holmerud, Sierra Pacific Synod,
Bishop Felipe Lozada-Montañez, Caribbean Synod,
Bishop Dean W. Nelson, Southwest California Synod,
Former Bishop Margaret Payne, New England Synod,
Bishop Robert A. Rimbo, Metropolitan New York Synod,
Bishop Michael Rinehart, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod,
Bishop Stephen S. Talmage, Grand Canyon Synod, and
Bishop Martin D. Wells, Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod

for their courageous witness and their stand for justice in adding their names to the *Faith Coalition for UAFAs*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

16. Upstate New York Synod (7D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) has been introduced in the federal legislature to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Upstate New York Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further;

RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

17. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) has been introduced in the federal legislature to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and

of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFAs or its equivalent, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFAs in the U.S. legislature; and be it further;

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFAs by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFAs.

18. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 35 percent of male bi-national couples and 39 percent of female bi-national couples are raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) has been introduced in the U.S. Congress to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFAs or its equivalent, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of UAFAs in the U.S. Congress; and be it further;

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFAs by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFAs.

19. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if a bill for comprehensive immigration reform is passed before the start of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly and if the bill does not include UAFA or its equivalent, the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the reintroduction of the UAFA in the U.S. legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commend

Bishop Thomas M. Aitken, Northeastern Minnesota Synod,
Bishop James A. Arends, La Crosse Area Synod,
Bishop David H. Brauer-Rieke, Oregon Synod,
Bishop Jessica R. Crist, Montana Synod,
Bishop H. Julian Gordy, Southeastern Synod,
Bishop Richard H. Graham, Metropolitan D.C., Synod,
Bishop Wolfgang D. Herz-Lane, Delaware-Maryland Synod,
Bishop Mark W. Holmerud, Sierra Pacific Synod,
Bishop Felipe Lozada-Montañez, Caribbean Synod,
Bishop Dean W. Nelson, Southwest California Synod,
Bishop Margaret Payne, New England Synod,
Bishop Robert A. Rimbo, Metropolitan New York Synod,
Bishop Michael Rinehart, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod
Bishop Stephen Talmage, Grand Canyon Synod, and
Bishop Martin D. Wells, Easter Washington-Idaho Synod

For their courageous witness and their stand for justice in adding their names to the February 2013 *Faith Coalition for UAFA* letter; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the clergy and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA in writing, preaching, praying, and teaching; by financially supporting organizations working for immigration reform; by participation in public discussions and rallies in support of immigration reform and the UAFA; and by communicating with their elected representatives encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

20. Florida-Bahamas Synod (9E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, under current U.S. immigration law, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident is permitted to sponsor his or her spouse, child, or parent for permanent resident status but U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, 25 other countries allow their citizens to sponsor their same-gender partners in the immigration process; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 36,000 bi-national, same-gender families in the United States raising more than 17,000 children; and

WHEREAS, due to the inability of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor their same-gender partners, they can be forced to live abroad, thus uprooting their children, disrupting their careers, and breaking ties with their families, communities, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, current immigration law does not provide for equal justice and equal protection for gay and lesbian citizens and legal permanent residents, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long-standing commitment to call for comprehensive federal immigration reform;

WHEREAS, a bill called the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) has been introduced in the federal legislature to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in immigration by permitting permanent partners of U.S. citizens and of lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and of lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon U.S. President Barack Obama and elected officials in Congress to support and to press for passage of the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) or its equivalent as a component of comprehensive immigration reform; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod, meeting in assembly commend in writing the more than 20 signing synodical bishops of the ELCA and their synods for their courageous witness and their stand for justice in adding their names to the *Faith Coalition for UAFA*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Florida-Bahamas Synod, meeting in assembly, encourage the rostered leaders and other leaders of congregations in this church to support the UAFA by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFA.

Background

The ELCA has a long-standing commitment to comprehensive immigration reform, including an ELCA social message on “Immigration” (1998), augmented in 2009, when the Church Council adopted a social policy resolution, “Toward Compassionate, Just, and Wise Immigration Reform.”

Family unity has been a key component of advocacy in this church for immigration reform. “Toward Compassionate, Just, and Wise Immigration Reform” (2009) social policy resolution states:

This church urges the United States government to prioritize family reunification. Many refugee and immigrant families, including “mixed families” (families composed of United States citizens, often children, and/or legal permanent residents), are separated with no viable means of timely reunification. This church calls for Congress and the executive branch of government to address statutory and administrative factors and the lack of humanitarian waivers that contribute to barriers and backlogs separating families and the systematic marginalization of human beings. The ELCA also advocates for the welcome and care of unaccompanied children who have lost or are separated from their families. It again calls for “flexible and humane ways for undocumented [individuals] who have been in this country for a specified amount of time to be able to adjust their legal status.” They should be permitted to come out of the shadows and have immediate family members join them on a path to earned legalization.

Given the 2009 Churchwide Assembly decisions recognizing people in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, these memorials appear consistent with those commitments.

The ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states:

. . . this church is united on many critical issues. It opposes all forms of verbal or physical harassment and assault based on sexual orientation. It supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services. It has called upon congregations and members to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.

These memorials also recognize and respect the “bound conscience” understanding of the 2009 ELCA social statement on human sexuality which acknowledges that this church is not of one mind on these issues.

We believe that the memorials are consistent with these commitments and should be supported.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Eastern Washington-Idaho, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Southwestern Texas, Saint Paul Area, Oregon, Florida-Bahamas, Sierra Pacific, Northwest Washington, Southwest California, Minneapolis Area, Central States, Metropolitan New York, Northwestern Minnesota, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., and Indiana-Kentucky synods related to the Uniting American Families Act;

To affirm the Uniting American Families Act or its equivalent in the Congress of the United States;

To request the presiding bishop of this church to communicate to the president and members of Congress the action of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; and

To encourage rostered leaders and members of congregations in this church, if consistent with their individual bound consciences, to support the Uniting American Families Act, or its equivalent, to their elected representatives and encourage them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U. S. immigration law that includes the principles of the Uniting American Families Act.

Category A3: Community Violence

1. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod affirm the moral imperative to reduce the violence, death, and injury caused by guns in society, and urge the synod, its congregations, Office of Public Policy, and other affiliated institutions to use any and all means at their disposal to advocate for the creation and implementation of effective public policy solutions, such as those endorsed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct the development and implementation of socially responsible screens for selectively divesting from the manufacture of firearms and ammunition in accordance with this church's continued commitment to reducing violence in all communities.

2. Southwest California Synod (2B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), stated in a video message on January 17, 2013, that a culture of violence in this country is holding its people captive, with children fearful of being shot in school, many women and children victims of domestic violence, people being entertained by visions of violence, a failure to adequately address mental illness, and being persecuted for one's faith, so that "we have work to do;" and

WHEREAS, according to Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence, approximately 300 people per day in the United States are injured or killed with firearms, this country accounts for 80 percent of all firearm deaths among high-income, populous countries, an estimated 40 percent of guns in this country are purchased without a background check, and preventable gun violence drains this country of \$100 billion every year in medical, criminal justice, and security costs; and

WHEREAS, such factors as collapse of families, economic injustices, unemployment, racism, sexism, bullying, homophobia, psychological problems, and substance abuse, contribute to community violence; and

WHEREAS, as stated in the ELCA message on "Community Violence" adopted April 18, 1994, by the Church Council, "According to Lutheran theology, society is to be ruled by the civil use of the Law. . . . As citizens in a democracy, we have the responsibility to join with others to hold government accountable for protecting society and ensuring justice for all, and to seek changes in policies and practices toward these ends;" and

WHEREAS, ELCA congregations, members, pastors, bishops, and shared ministries have abilities and influence and, with God's help and the leading of the Holy Spirit, can try to curtail violence; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the congregations of the Southwest California Synod be encouraged to embark on a campaign of education and advocacy using the ELCA social messages on "Community Violence" (1994) and "The Body of Christ and Mental Illness" (2011) and the ELCA social statements *For Peace in God's World* (1995), *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999), *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (1993), and *Death Penalty* (1991), so they may learn about the many facets of violence; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod encourage its congregations to present anti-bullying programs to the children and youth in their schools and youth programs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Assembly encourage members of its congregations to support anti-bullying programs in the public schools in their communities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod encourage its members to write letters or to contact their elected officials to support responsible control of deadly weapons, background checks for all gun sales, greater action toward issues of mental health and domestic violence, and proactive promotion of a culture of peace, rather than a culture of fear and violence; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to support similar efforts across this church.

3. Pacifica Synod (2C) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) stated in his video message of January 17, 2013, that a culture of violence in the United States is holding its people captive, with children fearful of being shot in school, many women and children ending up as victims of domestic violence, people being entertained by visions of violence, a failure of the healthcare system to address mental illness in a substantive fashion, being persecuted for ones faith, and overall creation dying because of current lifestyles, so that "we have work to do;" and

WHEREAS, such factors as discrimination, intimidation, unemployment, homelessness, mental illness, and substance abuse contribute to a culture of violence in U.S. communities; and

WHEREAS, as stated in the ELCA message on “Community Violence” adopted April 18, 1994, by the Church Council, “According to Lutheran theology, society is to be ruled by the civil use of the Law. . . . As citizens in a democracy, we have the responsibility to join with others to hold government accountable for protecting society and ensuring justice for all, and to seek changes in policies and practices toward these ends;” and

WHEREAS, ELCA congregations, members, pastors, bishops, and the Church Council have a social conscience with abilities and influence and, with God’s help and the leading of the Holy Spirit, can work together to attempt to curtail this culture of violence; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Pacifica Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to:

- 1 encourage the congregations of the ELCA to embark on a campaign of education using the ELCA message on “Community Violence,” and the social statements on peace, economic justice, racism, and the death penalty, so that they can learn about and discern the many facets of violence;
- 2 develop and/or present educational programs to children, youth, and adults in ELCA schools and churches that promote positive living, non-violence, conflict-resolution, and peace among all people;
- 3 encourage synods, congregations, conferences, and members to write letters and/or to contact in other ways our elected leaders, requesting (a) that background checks are conducted for all gun sales, regardless of point of origin, (b) that improved mental illness and domestic violence services are provided, and (c) that a culture of non-violence, peace, and concern for the common welfare of all who live within our society be promoted; and
- 4 review and, if necessary, update the ELCA message on “Community Violence” adopted April 18, 1994.

4. New Jersey Synod (7A) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, acts of gun violence have destroyed far too many of God’s children, God’s resolve for peace in the human community is unshakable. Deliberate acts to harm or kill innocent people violate God’s intention for the human community. God’s commandment is “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13). In proclaiming God’s law, we declare that all people are accountable before God and the community to honor and respect the life God has given; and

WHEREAS, as early as the 16th century, Martin Luther could see the evil growing as firearm potential was being developed. “All human strength vanishes when confronted with firearms. A man is dead before he sees what is coming. If Adam had seen such devices as his descendants have constructed to fight one another, he would have died of grief;” and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court has held that the Second Amendment [to the U.S. Constitution] guarantees an individual right to “keep and bear arms” and has also made it clear that this right is “not unlimited;” and

WHEREAS, guns are used every day in the United States to destroy lives and harm communities, on average, 32 Americans are murdered with guns, and 140 are treated for a gun assault in an emergency room. Every day, on average, 51 people kill themselves with a firearm, and 45 people are shot or killed in an accident with a gun; and

WHEREAS, the United States has significantly higher numbers of guns owned by private citizens than any other country in the world; 88 out of every 100 persons in the United States owns a gun. The U.S. firearm homicide rate is 20 times higher than the combined rates of 22 countries that are U.S. peers in wealth and population; and

WHEREAS, the cost to society of gun violence cannot be measured in dollars alone; growing fear, mistrust, and anxiety are large parts of our culture. In dollars and cents, preventable gun violence drains our country of \$100 billion every year in medical, criminal justice, and security costs; and

WHEREAS, nearly 80 percent of ex-offenders who commit a crime with a gun have obtained their guns through private transfers; and

WHEREAS, at least 40 percent of gun sales in the United States occurs without a Brady criminal background check; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives reports that 85.9 percent of traced guns used in crime in New York City come from outside the state. In 2007, guns came from Virginia (358), Pennsylvania (305), North Carolina (290), Alabama and Georgia (243 each), and South Carolina (213). Illegal guns originate from these states because of the weak gun laws, but also because of a virtually undetectable mode of available transportation in Interstate 95; and

WHEREAS, a body has to absorb the energy of a bullet to stop it, the more energy in a bullet, the more energy has to be absorbed by tissue, and thereby the more destructive of the body is caused; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct this church’s advocacy efforts for passage of legislation to close gaps in the background check systems, and to mandate background checks at gun show sales and private transfers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct this church’s advocacy efforts for passage of legislation prohibiting large capacity ammunition magazines and high energy ammunition; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct this church’s advocacy efforts for passage of legislation by implementing a common sense, comprehensive approach to help

law enforcement prevent gun trafficking, strengthen record keeping of gun transfers, and requiring the reporting of lost or stolen guns to law enforcement to ensure better accountability of all guns; and be it further

RESOLVED, that local efforts to prevent and reduce gun violence should be supported and promoted by ELCA congregations including efforts to reduce violence in their communities by addressing violence's root causes.

5. New England Synod (7B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to call the rostered leaders and congregations of the ELCA to “rededicate ourselves anew to pray and to work for peace in God’s world;” and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to call upon the rostered leaders and congregations of the ELCA to proclaim, affirm, and enact the Gospel of reconciliation and forgiveness not only as saving comfort to troubled souls but as a challenge to the hatreds in our culture and as an alternative to and breaking of vicious cycles of violence and harm; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to call upon the rostered leaders and congregations of the ELCA to commit to engagement with one another around questions of violence and vengeance, reconciliation and peace.

6. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide assembly to develop an investment screen for civilian firearms to be used by those responsible in the ELCA to invest church funds and by Portico Benefit Services as it develops criteria for the ELCA Retirement Social Purpose Funds.

Background

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has been addressing the issue of violence in society—including gun violence—in multiple ways for many years. The 1993 Churchwide Assembly adopted an action [CA93.06.10] on community violence and gun control that invited “a process of deliberation throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American on the subject of guns, community violence, and alternatives to violence.” Thereafter, “Community Violence” was adopted as a social message by the Church Council in April 1994. This social message calls on this church to confront a culture that is violent in many ways by being a community of worship, a community of education and service, a community of advocacy, and a community of ongoing deliberation. This message also emphasizes the need for comprehensively addressing violence while also advocating in favor of gun control and efforts to stem the proliferation of guns on the streets. It also urges all members of this church to consider how they might become more involved in countering the reality and fear of violence in their communities.

Since the adoption of the social message “Community Violence,” the ELCA has devoted resources toward countering aspects of violence in the culture. For example, directed by the 1999 Churchwide Assembly, the ELCA participated in a decade of work with other denominations and organizations as part of the [U.N.’s Decade of Non-Violence](#) 2001–2010. This work was coordinated by an inter-unit task force through the former Church in Society program unit and included hosting several events and creating a number of resources for children, youth, and adults. Issues of violence also have been addressed in the [Journal of Lutheran Ethics](#).

Another poorly understood and underappreciated aspect of community violence has been addressed by this church. In 1999, the Church Council approved a social message on “Suicide Prevention.” This message seeks to raise awareness about and provide tools for preventing suicide.

More recently, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson addressed the societal problem of gun violence in a video in January 2013. At its meeting in March 2013, the Conference of Bishops, in a [Pastoral Letter on Violence](#), renewed the call to ELCA congregations and members to engage the topic of violence “by listening: listening to God, to Scripture, and to each other.” The pastoral letter calls this church to renewed work of lament, moral formation, discernment, and advocacy.

As an important topic of social concern on which members of this church have a variety of views, further discussions need to occur and possible actions to address issues of violence in society need to be considered. In this regard, the work of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force informs further consideration. Accordingly, the Church Council is invited to determine appropriate next steps to invite conversation, review, further discourse, and possible actions on the important social concern of violence in our society.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Sierra Pacific and New Jersey synods concerning gun violence and the memorials of the Pacifica, Southwest California, New England and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods concerning confronting the culture of violence;

To reaffirm this church's commitment to addressing issues of violence through worship, education, service, advocacy, ongoing moral deliberation and the work called for in the 1993 Churchwide Assembly resolution, the 1994 social message on Community Violence and the 2013 Conference of Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Violence;

To educate members of this church that more people die from suicide than from homicide in the United States and to lift up the ELCA social messages on suicide prevention, community violence, mental health, and to call upon congregations and synods to engage their members on ways to prevent suicide;

To refer the matter of evaluating the feasibility and advisability of developing additional investment screens and related recommendations to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit with the request that it ask the Corporate Social Responsibility Team to provide a report with possible recommendations to the Church Council at its November 2013 meeting; and

To refer requests for education and resource development on issues of violence in society to the ELCA Church Council for appropriate action in keeping with the recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force.

Category A4: Same-Gender Couples and Their Families

1. Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding the growing trend in state and federal laws toward marriage equality and how all the expressions of the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families as this church seeks to grow into this new reality;
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and
3. to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

2. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

- o to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding changes in state and federal laws relative to marriage and how to respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families;
- o to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops, regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families;
- o to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

3. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to urge state and federal legislative and executive branches to recognize the freedom to marry for all persons, extending equal protection under the law to all while protecting the religious freedom of all pastors and faith communities to marry or not to marry; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

- o to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops, regarding changes in state and federal laws relative to marriage and how to respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families;
- o to direct the Church Council and the churchwide organization leaders to make provision for voting members to engage further in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

4. Eastern North Dakota Synod (3B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), meeting in Assembly (2009), resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that the ELCA "recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God" (p. 19); and

WHEREAS, legal protection has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, thirty-eight states have defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman; and

WHEREAS, seven states (Illinois, Minnesota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Oregon, and New Jersey) are expected to consider legislation recognizing legal protection for same-gender couples between 2013 and 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States is currently considering the constitutionality of the federal Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Eastern North Dakota Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding changes in state and federal laws related to marriage and how all the expressions of the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be helpful to support people in their bound consciences as they seek to minister to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals, couples, and their families; and
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that members of this church can, consistent with their bound consciences, serve, support, and care for same-gender couples and their families; and
3. to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in conversations regarding suggested actions in numbers 1 and 2 above at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as the church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

5. Southwestern Minnesota Synod (3F) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that:

1. "the ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God" (p. 19)
2. "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to **advocate for their legal protection**" (p. 19, emphasis added)
3. "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law" for all (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, marriage has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia and within the territory of 12 synods of the ELCA, which together minister to more than 650,000 Lutherans (or about 15 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, seven additional states (Illinois, Minnesota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Oregon, and New Jersey) are widely expected to consider legislation recognizing marriage for same-gender couples between 2013 and 2015, encompassing 12 additional synods that minister to more than 1.1 million Lutherans (or about 25 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States is currently considering whether to declare two laws unconstitutional: the federal Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8, both of which restrict the individual and family protections afforded by marriage; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Southwestern Minnesota Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding changes in state and federal laws relative to marriage and how to respond to the needs of the neighbor. Discussions could include sharing of resources that would be helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families as we seek to grow into this reality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Southwestern Minnesota Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Southwestern Minnesota Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

6. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that the ELCA "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to **advocate for their legal protection.**" (p. 19, emphasis added)

WHEREAS, marriage has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia and within the territory of 12 synods of the ELCA, which together minister to more than 650,000 Lutherans; and

WHEREAS, between 2013 and 2015 seven additional states, encompassing 12 additional synods that minister to more than 1.1 million Lutherans, are expected to consider legislation recognizing marriage for same-gender couples; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Minneapolis Area Synod, in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to facilitate conversations in every expression of this church regarding changes in state and federal laws relative to marriage and how to respond to the needs of the neighbor;
2. to facilitate conversations in every expression of this church regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families;
3. to direct the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as the church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

7. Saint Paul Area Synod (3H) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that

1. "the ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God." (p. 19)
2. "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection." (p. 19)
3. "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law" for all (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, marriage has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia and within the territory of 12 synods of the ELCA, which together minister to more than 650,000 Lutherans (or about 15 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, seven additional states (Illinois, Minnesota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Oregon, and New Jersey) are widely expected to consider legislation recognizing marriage for same-gender couples between 2013 and 2015, encompassing 12 additional synods that minister to more than 1.1 million Lutherans (or about 25 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States is currently considering whether to declare two laws unconstitutional: the federal Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8, both of which restrict the individual and family protections afforded by marriage; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Saint Paul Area Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding changes in state and federal laws relative to marriage and how to respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families;
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and
3. to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

8. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that

1. "the ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God." (p. 19)
2. "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to **advocate for their legal protection.**" (p. 19, *emphasis added*)
3. "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law" for all (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, marriage has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia and within the territory of 12 synods of the ELCA, which together minister to more than 650,000 Lutherans (about 15 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, seven additional states (Illinois, Minnesota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Oregon, and New Jersey) are widely expected to consider legislation recognizing marriage for same-gender couples between 2013 and 2015, encompassing 12 additional synods that minister to more than 1.1 million Lutherans (about 25 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, the 2012 assembly the Metropolitan Chicago Synod resolved to call upon its congregations and members to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection, and has urged the Illinois legislature and governor to extend the protections and dignity of marriage to all people and to protect the freedom of religion for all faith communities and religious organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States is currently considering whether to declare two laws unconstitutional: the federal Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8, both of which restrict the individual and family protections afforded by marriage; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops, beginning immediately, regarding the growing trend in state and federal laws toward marriage equality and how all the expressions of the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support people of all sexual orientations and gender identities (understand these terms to include individuals who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender), individuals and couples, and their families as this church seeks to grow into this new reality;

2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops, beginning immediately, regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families.

9. South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5K) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that

- "the ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God." (p. 19)
- "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to **advocate for their legal protection.**" (p. 19, emphasis added)
- "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law" for all (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, marriage has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia and within the territory of 12 synods of the ELCA, which together minister to more than 650,000 Lutherans (or about 15 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, seven additional states (Illinois, Minnesota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Oregon, and New Jersey) are widely expected to consider legislation recognizing marriage for same-gender couples between 2013 and 2015, encompassing 12 additional synods that minister to more than 1.1 million Lutherans (or about 25 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States is currently considering whether to declare two laws unconstitutional: the federal Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8, both of which restrict the individual and family protections afforded by marriage; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that South-Central Synod of Wisconsin memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

- A. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops about how the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, in ways that would be most helpful (for example sharing of resources) for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning individuals and couples and their families as we seek to grow into this new reality.
- B. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families;
- C. to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

10. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) promises in its baptismal liturgy "... to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace" (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* [USA: Augsburg Fortress, 2006], p. 228); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that

1. "the ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God." (p. 19)
2. "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection." (p. 19)
3. "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law" for all (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents are not permitted to sponsor their same-gender partners for permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and

WHEREAS, individuals and congregations have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding the growing trend in state and federal laws towards marriage equality and how all the expressions of the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families as we seek to grow into this new reality; and
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the members of this church to support the Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) by communicating with their elected representatives, encouraging them to co-sponsor and to support a just, comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration law that includes the principles of UAFAs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon Congress to take up and pass legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, meeting in assembly, call upon members of this synod to speak publically to support legislation at the state and local levels of government that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

11. Metropolitan New York Synod (7C) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding (a) the growing trend in state and federal laws toward marriage equality, and (b) how all the expressions of the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families;
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and
3. to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

12. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states that

1. "the ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God." (p. 19)
2. "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to **advocate for their legal protection.**" (p. 19, emphasis added)
3. "will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law" for all (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, marriage has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia and within the territory of 12 synods of the ELCA, which together minister to more than 650,000 Lutherans (or about 15 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, seven additional states (Illinois, Minnesota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Oregon, and New Jersey) are widely expected to consider legislation recognizing marriage for same-gender couples between 2013 and 2015, encompassing 12 additional synods that minister to more than 1.1 million Lutherans (or about 25 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States is currently considering whether to declare two laws unconstitutional: the federal Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8, both of which restrict the individual and family protections afforded by marriage; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops about how the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, in ways that would be most helpful (for example sharing of resources) for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning individuals and couples and their families as we seek to grow into this new reality.
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families;
3. to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

13. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) resolved to "commit itself to finding ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (2009) states:

This church "supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights" for all and has also "called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection. The ELCA recognizes that it has a pastoral responsibility to all children of God" (p. 19); and further states:

"This church also will attend to the need for equal protection, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities under the law, and just treatment for those with varied sexual orientation and gender identity" (p. 33); and

WHEREAS, (as of April 30, 2013) marriage has been recognized for same-gender couples in nine states and the District of Columbia and within the territory of 12 synods of the ELCA, which together minister to more than 650,000 Lutherans (or about 15 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, seven additional states (Illinois, Minnesota, Delaware, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Oregon, and New Jersey) are widely expected to consider legislation recognizing marriage for same-gender couples between 2013 and 2015, encompassing 12 additional synods that minister to more than 1.1 million Lutherans (or about 25 percent of the total membership of this church); and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States is currently considering whether to declare two laws unconstitutional: the federal Defense of Marriage Act and California's Proposition 8, both of which restrict the individual and family protections afforded by marriage; and

WHEREAS, individuals, congregations, and pastors have requested advice and resources to assist in their mission to support same-gender couples and their families; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage conversation among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding the growing trend in state and federal laws toward marriage equality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage conversation in all expressions of the ELCA about response to the needs of the neighbor, including the sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support same-gender couples and their families as we seek to grow into this new reality; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage conversation among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

14. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

1. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding the growing trend in state and federal laws toward marriage equality and how all the expressions of the ELCA can respond to the needs of the neighbor, including discussion and sharing of resources that would be most helpful for those wishing to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples and their families as this church seeks to grow into this new reality; and
2. to invite and encourage conversations among this church's congregations, rostered leaders, and the Conference of Bishops regarding ways that this church can advocate for equal protection under the law for same-gender couples and their families; and
3. to invite and encourage the Church Council and the churchwide organization to make provision(s) for voting members to engage in these conversations at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, as this church continues to discern its ministry in the emerging context.

Background

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly adopted a social statement on human sexuality that recognized the ELCA's "pastoral responsibility to all children of God," including specifically "to those who are same-gender in their orientation and to those who are seeking counsel about their sexual self-understanding" (*Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, p. 19). Moreover, the statement reaffirmed the ELCA's commitment to support "same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection," including "legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services."

In this statement the ELCA "draws on the foundational Lutheran understanding that the baptized are called to discern God's love in service to the neighbor. In our Christian freedom, we therefore seek responsible actions that serve others and do so with humility and deep respect for the conscience-bound beliefs of others" (p. 19).

The social statement also notes that "consensus does not exist concerning how to regard same-gender committed relationships, even after many years of thoughtful, respectful, and faithful study and conversation" (p. 19). Four different "conscience-bound" beliefs regarding same-gender sexual behavior were identified. Nonetheless, despite these different convictions the ELCA "draws on the foundational Lutheran understanding that the baptized are called to discern God's love in service to the neighbor. In our Christian freedom, we therefore seek responsible actions that serve others and do so with humility and deep respect for the conscience-bound beliefs of others" (pp. 19–20).

The actions requested by the group of synodical memorials concerning "conversations about ministering to same-gender couples and families" are built on commitments made by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly in adopting the social statement on human sexuality. However, the first resolved clause of the memorial from the Sierra Pacific Synod that requests legislative advocacy for same-gender couples and their families, specifically "the freedom to marry for all persons, extending equal protection under the law to all," requires additional deliberative work before bringing a recommendation to the Churchwide Assembly, since there is no unambiguous endorsement of same-gender marriage in the ELCA's existing social teaching or policy statements.

The memorials express a desire to consider how to best address these social concerns. The ELCA Church Council, at its April 2013 meeting, adopted the recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force (established at the request of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly). One recommendation called for a change in the *process* for addressing social concerns. It recommended that the Church Council initiate a formal exploration by a designated group that will recommend appropriate next steps. ("With Hearts and Hands and Voices," the report and recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force, is included in Section VI: Other Assembly-Related Documents of the *Pre-Assembly Report* and e-binder.)

In recognition of the ELCA's pastoral responsibility to same-gender couples, its commitment to legal protections, and its affirmation of familial relationships, the action below is recommended. This action follows the Church Council action on addressing social concerns by referring the request to the Church Council.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with the gratitude the memorials of the Eastern North Dakota, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Saint Paul Area, Sierra Pacific, Northwest Washington, Metropolitan Chicago, Minneapolis Area, Metropolitan New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Indiana-Kentucky, Southwestern Minnesota, Southwestern Pennsylvania and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods regarding Conversations about Ministering to Same-Gender Couples and Families;

To affirm the commitment made in the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* for “pastoral responsibility to all children of God,” recognizing “familial relationship as central to nurturing and sustaining trust and security in human relationships and to advocate for public policies that support and protect families” (pp. 19, 24);

To invite and encourage conversations and resource sharing among this church’s congregations, rostered and lay leaders and the Conference of Bishops on changing family configurations and their impact on society and the ministry of this church; and

To request the Church Council, in keeping with the recommendations of the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force, to authorize a group to explore this concern and to bring a report and possible recommendations to the fall 2014 meetings of the Conference of Bishops and Church Council regarding appropriate next steps in carrying out these commitments to pastoral care for same-gender couples and their families.

Category A5: Social Statement on Criminal Justice

1. Pacifica Synod (2C) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, “since 2002, the United States has had the highest incarceration rate in the world” (*Population Reference Bureau, www.prb.org/Articles/2012/us-incarceration.aspx*); and

WHEREAS, while over the past 30 years the incarceration rate has skyrocketed, the actual crime rate has remained relatively constant; and

WHEREAS the criminal justice system of this nation is in need of review, analyses, and reformation; and

WHEREAS the church is a place of comfort and healing for those who are victims of crime; and

WHEREAS, faithful Christians are called upon by scripture “to do good; seek justice, correct oppression” (Isaiah 1:17) and “to do justice” (Micah 6:8); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at its 2007 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA07.02.09] to prepare “a social statement addressing issues of criminal justice;” and

WHEREAS, hearings on the draft version of the social statement on criminal justice have been held throughout the church body, including the 2012 Pacifica Assembly; and

WHEREAS, after review by the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council, the proposed statement will be considered for adoption by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the 26th annual Pacifica Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement on criminal justice.

2. North/West Lower Michigan Synod (6B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the proposed social statement on criminal justice and its predecessor documents have been made available for study by the church; and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Churchwide Assembly will determine whether to adopt this social statement; and

WHEREAS, some of our congregations have been involved in various aspects of care for prisoners, victims of crime, and those who have re-entered the community following incarceration; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the North/West Lower Michigan Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to adopt the proposed social statement on criminal justice, *The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries*; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod be encouraged to explore ministries that reach out to those affected by crime, both perpetrators and victims; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod be encouraged to seek opportunities to work with one another in these caring ministries.

Background

The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries is the text of the recommended proposed social statement on criminal justice for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Initiated by memorials from the Rocky Mountain, South Dakota, and La Crosse Area synods, the 2007 Churchwide Assembly directed [CA07.02.09] the development of “a social statement on criminal justice” as “an important social issue that affects those incarcerated, their families, and the broader society.” If approved by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, it will be the 12th social statement of the ELCA. The text of the proposed statement and additional information regarding its development are available in Section V: Recommendations of the Church Council of the e-binder and *Pre-Assembly Report*.

Social statements of the ELCA must be adopted by a two thirds vote at a churchwide assembly. The memorials adopted by the synods of Pacifica and North/West Lower Michigan recommend that the proposed social statement be adopted by voting members of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Pacifica and North/West Lower Michigan synods recommending adoption of the proposed social statement *The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries*; and

To acknowledge the action of the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as the response of the Churchwide Assembly to the memorials from these synods.

Category A6: Immigration Reform

1. New Jersey Synod (7A) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches: “The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 19:34); and

WHEREAS, Moses, Joseph, Ruth, Amos, the Holy Family, St. Paul, and likely most of the first disciples lived some portion of their life as immigrants and refugees; and

WHEREAS, there are 31 million foreign-born residents in the United States, 63 percent of whom are living in this country with proper legal documentation, and 37 percent without such documentation; and

WHEREAS, the government of the United States offers only 5,000 visas per year for low-skilled workers, and lawful permanent residents in this country face waits of more than five years for their spouses to get visas; and

WHEREAS, in recent years lawful permanent residents have been subject to verbal and physical abuse, wrongfully targeted in community and workplace raids by immigration officials, been detained and separated from family, and in some cases wrongfully deported; and

WHEREAS, the message on “Immigration” of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America calls this church to “examine anew” its attitudes toward immigrant people and “to advocate for immigration, refugee, and asylum laws that are fair and generous;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to

- Call on rostered leaders, in their preaching and teaching, to promote an understanding of immigration issues that addresses welcome, promotes concern for the vulnerable, and calls believers to foster the highest possible level of moral discourse in church and society;
- Call on congregations to engage in prayerful, reasoned discussion and education on issues related to immigration, availing themselves of resources prepared by the ELCA and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service;
- Advocate for the adoption of comprehensive immigration reform legislation consistent with principles articulated in the ELCA message on “Immigration.” This legislation should provide a reasonable path to citizenship for undocumented individuals currently living and working in the United States, and set fair immigration quotas that are not discriminatory;
- Call on rostered leaders and congregations of the ELCA to communicate with the President of the United States, Senators, and Members of Congress, to develop and pass such comprehensive immigration reform legislation in the current session; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to communicate to the President of the United States, Senators, and Members of Congress this call for comprehensive immigration reform legislation in the current session.

2. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, immigration modernization has finally become a national priority with the introduction of Senate bill (S. 744) and the promise that the House of Representatives will be proposing a solution as well; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) and many other organizations active in immigration and refugee resettlement have long advocated for the modernization of our immigration system; and

WHEREAS, Scripture says, “When the immigrant resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress him. The immigrant who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love him as yourself, for you were foreigners” (Leviticus 19:33–34). “Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to foreigners, for by so doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Hebrew 13:1–2); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly affirm the five principles of LIRS for comprehensive immigration reform:

- Provide for an earned pathway to lawful permanent residency and eventual citizenship for undocumented immigrants and their families.
- Ensure humane and just enforcement of immigration laws by reducing use of immigration detention and expanding community support programs.
- Protect families from separation and ensure an adequate supply of visas for families seeking to reunite.
- Provide adequate resources and protections to ensure the successful integration of refugees, asylees, survivors of torture and trafficking, unaccompanied minors, and other vulnerable migrants.
- Ensure the protection of U.S. citizen and migrant workers (*www.lirs.org*); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly direct Bishop Samuel R. Zeiser to convey this resolution to Pennsylvania’s two U.S. Senators and those members of the House of Representatives who serve districts in the territory of the synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to take similar steps to direct Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson to convey this assembly’s action to all members of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregation councils and individual disciples of Christ throughout the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod be encouraged to contact (telephone, write a letter, or email) their two U.S. Senators, as well as their appropriate members of the House of Representatives to ask them to vote for effective, meaningful, and necessary immigration reform based upon the five principles set forth by LIRS.

3. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, immigration modernization is being considered with the introduction in the U.S. Senate of the bipartisan Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act (S. 744), and there is the expectation that the House of Representatives will be proposing a solution as well; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) and many other organizations active in immigration and refugee resettlement have long advocated for the modernization of our immigration system; and

WHEREAS, Scripture says, “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 19:33–34). “Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Hebrew 13:1–2); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod affirm the five principles of LIRS for comprehensive immigration reform:

- Provide for an earned pathway to lawful permanent residency and eventual citizenship for undocumented immigrants and their families.
- Ensure humane and just enforcement of immigration laws by reducing use of immigration detention and expanding community support programs.
- Protect families from separation and ensure an adequate supply of visas for families seeking to reunite.
- Provide adequate resources and protections to ensure the successful integration of refugees, asylees, survivors of torture and trafficking, unaccompanied minors, and other vulnerable migrants.
- Ensure the protection of U.S. citizen and migrant workers (*www.lirs.org*); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly request Synod Council to convey this memorial to Pennsylvania's two U.S. Senators and those members of the House of Representatives who serve districts in the territory of the Synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to take similar steps and to direct Church Council to convey the assembly's action to all members of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in assembly encourage congregation councils and individual disciples of Christ throughout the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod to contact (telephone, write a letter, or email) Pennsylvania's two U.S. Senators, as well as their member of the House of Representatives to ask them to vote for effective, meaningful, and necessary immigration reform based upon the five principles set forth by LIRS.

4. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, immigration reform has re-emerged as a national priority with the introduction of Senate Bill (S. 744) and the expectation that the U.S. House of Representatives will be proposing a similar bill; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) along with many other organizations active in immigration and refugee resettlement have long advocated for the reform of our immigration system; and

WHEREAS, it is written in Holy Scripture: "When the immigrant resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress him. The immigrant who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love him as yourself, for you were foreigners..." (Leviticus 19:33-34), and again: "Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to foreigners, for by so doing some have entertained angels without knowing it." (Hebrews 13:1-2); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to affirm the five principles of LIRS for comprehensive immigration reform:

- Provide for an earned pathway to lawful permanent residency and eventual citizenship for undocumented immigrants and their families;
- Ensure humane and just enforcement of immigration laws by reducing the use of immigration detention and expanding community support programs;
- Protect families from separation and ensure an adequate supply of visas for families seeking to reunite;
- Provide adequate resources and protections to ensure the successful integration of refugees, asylees, survivors of torture and trafficking, and unaccompanied minors, and other vulnerable immigrants;
- Ensure the protection of U. S. citizens and migrant workers (www.lirs.org); and further be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to direct the presiding bishop to convey the assembly's action to all members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives; and further be it

RESOLVED, that the congregations and individual members of the ELCA be encouraged to contact their U.S. Senators and appropriate Representatives, asking them to support effective, meaningful immigration reform based upon the five principles set forth by LIRS.

5. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to declare Sunday, June 22, 2014, as Refugee Sunday in which congregations offer thanks and praise to God for the 75 years of welcoming migrants and refugees through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS); and to direct the presiding bishop to:

- invite congregations to tell the stories of their acts of welcome to refugees and migrants—signs of witness, mercy, and life together;
- utilize ELCA communications mechanisms to share these stories and inspire action throughout 2014; and
- encourage congregations and organizations to engage with and support the LIRS mission of welcoming the stranger through gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

Background

For many years, the ELCA has sought to address the issues related to immigration and speak from its own roots as an immigrant church. The ELCA, through the churchwide organization, synods, and congregations, has partnered with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) both in the work of welcoming refugees and migrants and through education and advocacy. LIRS has taken a leadership role in creating forums in which the members and leaders of the

ELCA learn about the policy positions of the ELCA and discuss the necessity of comprehensive immigration reform, the importance of family unity, and the humane enforcement of U.S. immigration laws.

In support of the specific advocacy focus of LIRS on the improvement of laws and regulations related to immigration, some ELCA bishops have mobilized and formed a leadership group known as the ELCA Bishops' Immigration Ready Bench. The ELCA Bishops' Immigration Ready Bench has been deeply engaged in advocacy for reform of our broken immigration system grounded in the church's agreed positions and focused on the following key principles framed by LIRS:

- Provide an earned pathway to lawful permanent residency and eventual citizenship for undocumented immigrants and their families.
- Ensure the humane and just enforcement of U.S. immigration laws, specifically by reducing the use of immigration detention and expanding the use of community support programs for immigrants who do not need to be detained.
- Protect families from separation and ensure an adequate supply of visas for families seeking to reunite.
- Provide adequate resources and protections to ensure the successful integration of refugees, asylees, survivors of torture and trafficking, unaccompanied minors, and other vulnerable migrants.
- Ensure the protection of U.S. citizen and migrant workers.

Bishops have met with and written to elected officials, spoken out at public events and through social media, met with other faith leaders and business leaders, written op-eds and letters to the editor, and taken part in media interviews.

On August 19, 2009, voting members of the Churchwide Assembly voted [CA09.03.11] overwhelmingly to urge reform in the nation's current immigration policy. By a vote of 873 to 82, voting members agreed to urge comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration policies and to call for suspension of immigration raids until such reform is enacted. In November 2009, the Church Council adopted a social policy resolution titled "Toward Compassionate, Just, and Wise Immigration Reform," which was disseminated widely throughout the church and among policymakers in Washington, D.C. The 2011 Churchwide Assembly approved resolutions designed to advocate for comprehensive federal immigration reform and support of the DREAM Act—legislation that would provide a path for citizenship for undocumented immigrant youth—in partnership with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. Some of the more recent formal actions are summarized under [Human Dignity and Human Rights: Immigration](#) on the ELCA website.

In November 2011, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson sent a letter to Congress and U.S. President Barack Obama in support of comprehensive immigration reform. The letter was also sent to all rostered leaders, some of whom were able to use the letter in their own ministry work with migrants. In November 2011, 58 synodical bishops of the ELCA signed a letter to Congress and the President opposing harsh state immigration laws and encouraging a fair and humane overhaul of the immigration system.

The following provides a timeline of related activities of the Congregational and Synodical Mission (CSM) unit, in partnership with LIRS and other ELCA partners, in support of fair and humane immigration reform.

The ELCA Washington Office staff, along with LIRS, hosted the bishops of the Immigration Ready Bench in Washington, D.C., for an advocacy day with members of Congress and staff at the White House in November 2011. The bishops encouraged members of Congress to take the following actions:

- Support comprehensive immigration reform;
- Oppose harmful proposals that would increase spending on immigration detention and prolong indefinite detention for certain migrants; and
- Support legislation to extend vital assistance for refugee seniors and persons with disabilities.

The bishops also encouraged President Obama to do the following:

- Continue to engage with Congress and the American public on the topic of immigration reform;
- Ensure that the implementation of new strict state immigration laws do not contradict the Administration's immigration priorities;
- Include immigration detainees in the deportation policy review process and expand the categories of immigrants eligible to benefit; and
- Implement a stateside waiver process for undocumented immigrants with pending family-based petitions. This would allow immigrants to begin this process in the United States, rather than having to return to their home countries where they may face uncertainty and family separation.

In July 2012, the ELCA publicly expressed its support for the "Evangelical Statement of Principles for Immigration Reform," made by a group of ecumenical Christian leaders including Mr. Stephan Bauman, president and chief executive

officer of World Relief, and Pastor Leith Anderson, president of the National Association of Evangelicals. The statement echoed some of the ELCA's own principles, such as respecting the God-given dignity of every person, upholding family unity, and establishing a pathway to legal status and citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

In August 2012, LIRS convened a second Lutheran Immigration Leadership Summit in Minneapolis, Minn. Participants included the ELCA's Immigration Ready Bench, representatives from ELCA churchwide ministries, and local advocates. The gathering included site visits to an immigration court, a detention facility, and LIRS's new local Community-Based Support partners that provide legal and social services to migrants released from detention. LIRS staff briefed the participants on national and state immigration issues and opportunities to engage in advocacy with LIRS. Participants also dialogued about how to best advocate within their communities and ministries.

Ms. Kathryn M. Lohre, ELCA director for ecumenical and inter-religious relations and president of the National Council of Churches, was invited to the White House in March 2013 to meet with President Obama and religious leaders to discuss the role that faith communities can play in moving immigration reform forward. In a follow-up letter to President Obama, Lohre said she told the President that communities of faith continue to pray for him and his leadership on this issue and also "for and with all those children of God whose lives hang in the balance until the broken system is repaired and restored. For us as Christians, we lift up first and foremost the need to protect the unity of families—as a cornerstone of Biblical life, and as an American value."

In April 2013, Presiding Bishop Hanson and Ms. Linda Hartke, president and chief executive officer of LIRS, convened a briefing and strategy conference call with synodical bishops from the Immigration Ready Bench and from key states that are the home to the most influential Members of Congress of immigration reform. The call has resulted in strong and coordinated action.

April 14–16, 2013, during the very week that comprehensive immigration reform legislation was introduced in the U.S. Senate (S. 744 The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act), LIRS, with the help of the ELCA Washington Office, sponsored a Lutheran Immigration Leadership Summit that brought together 40 Lutheran leaders from across the country to Capitol Hill to support the new legislation. The summit included briefings and strategy sessions, as well as meetings with more than 100 Members of Congress and staff of the White House. Participants in the summit included bishops serving on the ELCA Bishops' Immigration Ready Bench, lay leaders, pastors, and advocates in the ELCA as well as leaders in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

ELCA leaders have continued to speak out in support of comprehensive immigration reform and the principles for welcoming refugees and immigrants supported by LIRS and the ELCA. On March 15, the Rev. Gerald L. Mansholt, bishop of the Central States Synod, went to Washington at the invitation of LIRS to brief congressional staffers regarding the importance of family unity in our immigration system. On June 16, the Rev. Thomas M. Aitken, bishop of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, wrote an opinion piece for the Duluth News Tribune calling for immigration reform that helps keep families together. ELCA Vice President Carlos E. Peña wrote an opinion piece called "We Need Immigration Reform" that the Galveston County (Texas) Daily News published on June 18.

As of this report, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act (S. 744) is being debated on the Senate floor. A strong bill that in most cases aligns with the key principles of the ELCA and LIRS was reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The greatest concern now is the possible adoption of any unfriendly amendments that will weaken this vital reform effort.

The Senate hoped to take final action on the bill before the July 4th recess. It remains unclear how the House of Representatives will take up consideration of reform. Some Representatives are trying to advance small pieces of reform that focus on enhanced border security with any increase in access to visas disproportionately tied to security measures and without providing a roadmap to citizenship. A bipartisan group of House Members is still trying to reach agreement on a comprehensive approach, and the Speaker of the House has signaled his desire to take action on a reform package before the August recess.

It remains unclear what the status of reform will be in August 2013 when the Churchwide Assembly convenes and what action will have the greatest impact at that time.

Many of the ELCA's nearly 10,000 congregations provide critical services to migrant populations, spread the word of welcome, and advocate for fair and humane immigration reform. In addition, this church's commitment to address social concerns through advocacy efforts is clearly laid out in the Addressing Social Concerns Review Task Force's report, "With Hearts, Hands and Voices." Each and every day, individual members of the ELCA are joining in action for comprehensive immigration reform—following the Senate debate, joining the LIRS blog for updates, using the LIRS

action center to contact their Members of Congress, visiting Members on Capitol Hill and in home districts and states, and writing op-ed pieces and letters to the editor.

It has not been the general practice of this church to establish Sundays on the churchwide calendar.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Northeastern Pennsylvania, Lower Susquehanna, New Jersey, Southwestern Pennsylvania and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synods regarding comprehensive immigration reform;

To reaffirm, without designating a specific day of commemoration, the work of ELCA leaders and of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service in working for immigration reform legislation, including the five principles referenced in the memorials identified by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service:

- **Provide an earned pathway to lawful permanent residency and eventual citizenship for undocumented immigrants and their families**
- **Ensure the humane and just enforcement of U.S. immigration laws, specifically by reducing the use of immigration detention and expanding the use of community support programs for immigrants who do not need to be detained**
- **Protect families from separation and ensure an adequate supply of visas for families seeking to reunite**
- **Provide adequate resources and protections to ensure the successful integration of refugees, asylees, survivors of torture and trafficking, unaccompanied minors, and other vulnerable migrants**
- **Ensure the protection of U.S. citizen and migrant workers;**

To request that the presiding bishop of this church continue to communicate to members of Congress the ELCA's position on immigration reform;

To expand communication efforts about this church's ongoing work advocating for immigration reform and to invite and facilitate conversations and resource sharing among members, congregations, and the communities of which they are part; and

To encourage all ELCA synods, congregations, and members to advocate for legislation that welcomes the stranger to our country and to our communities.

Category A7: Immigration Detention

1. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (8B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, Jesus teaches that when we visit someone in prison, we are visiting our Lord; and

WHEREAS, the social statement on criminal justice, to be presented to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly, encourages this church to accompany and welcome all people, especially during painful times; and

WHEREAS, an average of 34,000 people are held in immigration detention in local county jails, federal facilities and private prisons, often hundreds of miles from family and friends, frequently moved, and often unknown to local residents or in isolated locations; and

WHEREAS, alternatives to detention are used for some asylum seekers, victims of torture, and both legal and unauthorized immigrants who are simply waiting for a judge to rule on their immigration status, and there are more who could be released to community support programs; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is prepared to inform, prepare and equip members of congregations to visit people held in immigration detention, and to provide guidance for congregations and affiliated agencies to develop community support programs; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to request all the synods in the ELCA to inform their congregations about the location of county jails, private for-profit prisons, or other detention facilities which hold immigration detainees for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and to encourage synods, congregations, and affiliated agencies to develop and/or participate in visitation programs and to develop community support programs for those who are granted alternatives to detention.

Background

[See Category A6 background for a complete summary of immigration issues.]

Many ELCA synods and congregations are already engaged in ministry with immigrants who are being held in detention facilities in their communities. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has helped to support ELCA congregations in developing visitation ministries with startup grants and with excellent educational resources, including an online resource: *Bring the Sky: The LIRS Detention Visitation Guide* (<http://lirs.org/act/visitation/>). LIRS has also taken groups of ELCA bishops and other ELCA leaders to visit detention centers and provides community-based support in some areas for those released from detention.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorial of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod lifting up the needs of immigration detainees for ministry and accompaniment;

To encourage all synods in the ELCA to inform their congregations about the locations of county jails, private for-profit prisons, and other detention facilities in their communities that hold immigration detainees for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, as that information is publicly available;

To encourage all synods to provide congregations with links to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service resources on ministry to detainees;

To support and encourage synods, congregations and affiliated agencies to develop and/or participate in visitation programs for those in detention and to develop community support programs for those who are granted alternatives to detention; and

To encourage congregations and members to study the recommended social statement, *The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries*, as it relates to the detention issue.

Section B

Environmental Concerns

Category B1: Hydraulic Fracturing

1. New England Synod (7B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to support a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing until such time as it can be shown that the process is developed to the point of adhering to the standards of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.

2. Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E) [2012 Memorial]

WHEREAS, God created heaven and earth and everything therein and proclaimed it good (Genesis 1:1ff); and God has entrusted humankind with the care of the earth (Genesis 2:15); and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has adopted social policy statements, *Caring for Creation* (1993) and *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999), that call for economic and environmental justice, to protect the health and integrity of creation both for its own sake and for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations, and for economic justice, to consider how our actions affect the ability of all people to provide for their material needs and the needs of their families and communities; and

WHEREAS, 34 states in the United States of America contain large subterranean supplies of natural gas in underground rock formations thousands of feet beneath the earth's surface, requiring a process known as horizontal slickwater hydraulic fracturing to extract the gas;^{1 2} and

¹Jackson, R.B., B. Rainey Pearson, S.G. Osborn, N.R. Warner, A. Vengosh, 2011 Research and policy recommendations for hydraulic fracturing and shale-gas extraction. Center on Global Change, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

²Slickwater horizontal hydraulic fracturing is to be distinguished from conventional gas drilling.

WHEREAS, the issue of horizontal slickwater hydraulic fracturing is recognized as highly controversial, with numerous complexities shaped by regional, state, and local circumstances surrounding the industry and its impact on individuals and communities; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA and its predecessor church bodies have a longstanding and honorable history of engaging in politically charged issues,³ routinely proclaiming a public theology that takes seriously Jesus' call to care for "the least of these" (Matthew 25:31–46) and his model of engaging publicly with those who control the power and wealth of a society (Matthew 21:12–13); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA recognizes that there is a wide range of stances on the issue of hydraulic fracturing,⁴ and that this issue has the potential to be divisive within the body of Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to consider establishing a task force charged with the following:

- Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the justice issues surrounding the natural gas industry, including but not limited to ecological protection, public health endangerment, impacts on local communities such as housing, school districts, forced pooling, crime, violence against women, exploitation of rural and impoverished families
- Develop and/or acquire resources to address the complexities of horizontal slickwater hydraulic fracturing for the use of its congregations and affiliated organizations
- Develop or make available materials to provide guidance to congregations and ELCA landowners as they consider decisions pertaining to the use, development, and possible exploitation of their lands for the natural gas industry
- Report back to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly its findings, and make a recommendation as to this church's public stance on horizontal slickwater hydraulic fracturing; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to consider encouraging the members of the ELCA to inform and educate themselves about the issues pertaining to hydraulic fracturing by engaging in 1) grassroots conversation, 2) the sharing of pertinent stories, and 3) workshops and study groups to discern the theological, moral, and ethical facets of this entire enterprise; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to consider encouraging its synods, conferences, congregations, and members to contact national and state legislators and prompt them to support legislation and policies that:

- Mandate the initiation and timely completion of long-range, comprehensive studies about the cumulative effects of air and water pollution, water resource depletion, public health endangerment, and other possible impacts from the drilling and fracturing processes
- Mandate full and immediate public disclosure and consequent minimizing of chemicals used in the process
- Eliminate the signing of non-disclosure agreements by physicians and medical staff, patients, civil suit plaintiffs, workers, and any other individuals whose health has been affected by natural gas drilling
- Monitor and reduce any harmful impacts found around existing hydraulic fracturing sites to the fullest extent possible
- Protect the rights of local municipalities to maintain their decision-making processes regarding hydraulic fracturing
- Develop sustainable energy solutions and increased energy conservation and efficiency in order to reduce the need for fossil fuels; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to consider encouraging its rostered leaders to work with their communities to establish responsive leadership to help facilitate discussion and resolve conflicts which may arise as components of hydraulic fracturing, host community conversations to address issues associated with the process of horizontal slickwater hydraulic fracturing, and identify and articulate a theological stance to these issues through their preaching, teaching, and personal interaction.

³Witness Martin Luther, the signers of the Augsburg Confession, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *et al.*

⁴The range of stances include those who fully support the industry and believe in its promise of economic benefits and energy independence, those who support strict regulation of the industry, those who are confused by the complexity of the issue, those who are calling for a moratorium on any future drilling until long-range peer-reviewed studies have been conducted, those who are demanding a ban on all drilling, those who are benefitting financially from the industry, and those who are suffering from the effects of hydraulic fracturing.

Background

Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, is a means of extracting oil and natural gas from deep rock formations using a high pressure stream of water, sand, and chemicals to break apart underground rock formations so that natural gas or oil can flow to the surface. The technique has been commonly used for decades; however, new technologies are allowing drilling into deeper rock formations and horizontal drilling from a single wellhead over many acres. Use of these new drilling techniques has led to rapidly expanded drilling for oil and natural gas in a number of states, including Pennsylvania, Wyoming, Arkansas, Texas, Ohio, and North Dakota. In each of these states, communities are confronting different issues related to the fracking boom, and each is responding in unique ways to the challenges it poses.

Across the country, the spread of fracking has greatly increased domestic supplies of natural gas and has brought jobs and economic development to rural communities that have suffered job and population losses in recent decades. However, in some communities, such as in Pennsylvania and New York, fracking has also raised concerns of water contamination from fracking fluids and air pollution from smog-forming chemicals released along with natural gas. In other communities, such as those in Texas, the millions of gallons of water needed to frack a single well raises concerns about strain on local water resources. Other communities, from Pennsylvania to North Dakota, are concerned about the social cost to local economies and communities, where fracking has led to housing shortages and elevated housing costs, strains on infrastructure such as roads and wastewater treatment systems, overtaxed public safety systems dealing with increases in criminal activity and conflicts between neighbors over when and where drilling is appropriate. In a few areas of the country, scientists have linked increased seismic activity to fracking activities.

As outlined above, water is a recurring concern in some of the areas where fracking is occurring. There are reports of contaminated drinking water wells in nearby communities, concerns about accidental spills of chemical-laced water and concerns over the amount of water used. The drilling industry asserts that fracking is not the root cause of contaminated ground water and notes that it is taking steps to cut water use through recycling and is working to prevent accidental spills. However, some community activists point to evidence that fracking is contaminating both underground and surface water and urge that steps be taken to slow, or even halt, the growth of fracking until more is known about its impacts. They are concerned about the chemicals used in fracking fluids, which are often not disclosed, and about how those chemicals may affect their health. Many drilling companies, on the other hand, claim that the chemical make-up of fracking fluids are trade secrets and it would hurt their competitive advantage if the formulas were made public, although some are voluntarily disclosing the chemicals they use.

States and affected communities have responded in disparate ways to the challenges posed by hydraulic fracturing. In New York state, communities have enacted moratoriums or even outright bans on fracking. In Pennsylvania, the state has put restrictions on the disposal of wastewater. In Alabama, seismic concerns led to a ban on fracking in some areas; and in eastern Ohio similar concerns led to a moratorium on the underground injection of fracking wastewater.

The social statements *Caring for Creation* (1993), *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999), and *Genetics, Faith, and Responsibility* (2011) provide this church with a lens to evaluate and advocate on issues related to fracking. These statements call us to seek environmental justice, to protect the health and integrity of creation both for its own sake and for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. They also call us to support economic justice, to consider how our actions affect the ability of all people to provide for their material needs and the needs of their families and communities. From these social statements, ELCA advocacy ministries have supported the adoption of best practices by drilling companies engaged in hydraulic fracturing, have pushed for responsible tax policies applying to fracking activities in Pennsylvania, and have advocated for disclosure of chemical hazards, better regulation of toxic air pollutants, and further study of the environmental impacts of fracking. In addition, ELCA advocacy ministries, both at the state and federal levels, are active supporters of programs and policies to further the development and expansion of clean, renewable sources of energy in order to lessen and eventually end our dependence on more polluting forms of energy.

The ELCA federal advocacy office has supported funding for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to carry out a multi-year, multi-state study of the impacts of fracking on groundwater. This study may help to resolve some of the uncertainty about the causes of water contamination and could lead to tighter controls on the practice. Many of the states where fracking is occurring are now requiring disclosure of the chemicals used in the practice, but the laws vary from state to state. A federal approach to disclosure would provide citizens with more consistent information about chemical exposures as well as a level of certainty to drilling companies, who now have to contend with different regulations in different parts of the country. In the past year, the ELCA federal advocacy office has also supported regulations issued under the Clean Air Act to require that drillers and well operators capture more of the air emissions from fracking.

The issues surrounding hydraulic fracturing are complex and diverge significantly from place to place. Rural landowners, including some ELCA congregations and ministries, have benefitted financially from leasing to drilling companies, but other parts of these communities may be suffering from environmental or social impacts related to drilling. The moratorium on hydraulic fracturing suggested by the New England synod in its memorial is a solution that some communities might embrace, while others would not. For that reason, it would be difficult for the ELCA, as a national church, to endorse a single approach to this complex issue.

Given the complexity of these issues, including a number of environmental and economic factors, and the variety of important and valid perspectives held by ELCA members and communities on this issue, a dialog, as suggested by the Upper Susquehanna Synod's memorial, could be constructive and helpful for this church body. Convening such conversations could both underscore the challenges in finding a single policy solution for such a complex issue and lead to new understanding and new approaches as we live out our shared commitments to addressing hunger and poverty, supporting rural communities, and caring for God's creation.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Upper Susquehanna and New England synods regarding hydraulic fracturing;

To thank the Upper Susquehanna and New England synods for raising an important issue and for their continued partnership as advocates for a cleaner energy future for our communities and for God's creation;

To recognize the complexity of issues surrounding hydraulic fracturing and the divergent views of this practice that exist within the ELCA;

To support and lift up the ongoing and evolving work of ELCA advocacy ministries of the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to monitor and engage issues related to hydraulic fracturing; and

To encourage all ELCA synods, congregations and members to inform and educate themselves through the lens of the social statements *Caring for Creation* (1993), *Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999), and *Genetics, Faith, and Responsibility* (2011) about the issues pertaining to hydraulic fracturing by engaging in 1) grassroots conversation, 2) the sharing of pertinent stories, and 3) workshops and study groups to discern the theological, moral and ethical facets of this practice.

Category B2: Fossil Fuels

1. Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to request that the Corporate Social Responsibility Team of the churchwide organization, in consultation with Portico Benefit Services, investigate and make recommendations to the Church Council concerning 1) expanding the existing environmental screens to name the fossil fuel extraction and production industry as one which damages the environment and 2) recommending reinvestment in the alternative energy industry; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Church Council act upon such recommendations by May 1, 2014, and report its actions to the 2014 Synod Assemblies.

2. Oregon Synod (1E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, God has created us and all that exists, given and preserves our bodies and all the necessities for life [*Luther's Small Catechism*, "The Creed," The First Article: Creation]; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* (1993) affirms that "we are called to care for the earth as God cares for the earth;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement *Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All* (1999) recognizes that "the growth of economic activity during the twentieth century, and the industrialization and consumerism that fueled it, radically changed the relationship between humans and the earth. Too often the earth has been treated as a waste receptacle and a limitless storehouse of raw materials to be used up for the sake of economic growth, rather than as a finite, fragile ecological system upon which human and all other life depends;" and

WHEREAS, climate research is clear that there has been a rapid rise in the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, with current levels (400 parts per million) probably the highest in the past 2,000,000 years. This increase has occurred most rapidly in the past 200 years during the worldwide Industrial Revolution; and

WHEREAS, climate research is clear that burning fossil fuels is the major source of rising levels of carbon dioxide, negatively impacting our climate. Therefore the use of fossil fuels must be dramatically reduced; and

WHEREAS, with *Caring for Creation*, this church realized the urgency was already “widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide” from the burning of fossil fuels, and that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children’s children;” and

WHEREAS, in *Caring for Creation*, the ELCA declares that it will seek to incorporate the principles of sufficiency and sustainability in its life. Therefore, “we will, in our budgeting and investment of church funds, demonstrate our care for creation;” and

WHEREAS, in 1990, the Church Council transmitted [CC90.04.38] investment screens on “Energy and Environment” for social purpose funds of the ELCA Board of Pensions, which recommend limiting investments made in corporations that are the most egregious in terms of damage to human health or the natural environment and investing in corporations which are taking positive steps toward a sustainable environment, and, in 2007, approved [CC07.11.95b] the updated “Environmental Social Criteria Screen;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Oregon Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to request that, by May 1, 2014, all ELCA congregations and independent, cooperative, and related Lutheran organizations and investment corporations:

- a) Publish a list of the values of all fossil fuel stock and bond holdings and instruct asset managers employed by those entities to do the same; and
- b) Cease any new investments in fossil fuel companies and instruct asset managers employed by those entities to do the same; and
- c) Ensure that, within five years, directly held or commingled assets in fossil fuels are removed from portfolios related to the ELCA; and
- d) With the exception of congregations, release quarterly updates, available to the public, detailing progress toward divestment.

3. New England Synod (7B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to:

- a) Request that all ELCA entities publish a list of the values of all fossil fuel stock and bond holdings and request that asset managers employed by those entities to do the same; and
- b) Request that all ELCA entities stop new investments in fossil fuel companies and request that asset managers employed by those entities to do the same; and
- c) Request that, within five years, directly held or commingled assets in fossil fuels are removed from portfolios related to the ELCA; and
- d) Request that quarterly updates be released and made available to the public, detailing progress toward divestment.

Background

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing all of God’s creation. Leading scientists from around the world have confirmed that global average temperatures are growing warmer due to increasing levels of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases in the Earth’s atmosphere, and that human use of fossil fuels is the main source of the increase in these gases.⁵ Every time we burn gasoline by driving a car, use electricity from coal- or gas-fired power plants, and heat our homes with oil or natural gas, we release carbon dioxide and other “greenhouse” gases (GHGs) into the air. As levels of carbon dioxide and other GHGs increase, more and more of the sun’s heat is trapped by our atmosphere and less escapes back into space. The increase in trapped heat changes the climate, causing altered weather patterns. These changes in weather are already measurable. They range from multi-year droughts to extreme storms and flooding and rising sea levels. Scientists predict that these problems will only grow worse over time and note that even if we act to dramatically decrease GHG emissions, some of these changes will be permanent. Many of our companion Lutheran churches and other Lutheran organizations, such as Lutheran World Relief and The Lutheran World Federation,

⁵http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_and_data.shtml

report that climate change is already profoundly affecting their work, and that the effects of climate change are falling hardest on those brothers and sisters who are least able to withstand and adapt to changes: those living in poverty around the globe.

In 1993, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Churchwide Assembly adopted the social statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice*. In *Caring for Creation* this church acknowledged the potential threat of global warming at a time when many scientists were just beginning to recognize that the earth's climate was changing and that humans were playing a role in that change. "Even more widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide, are ... dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide." It recognizes the relationship between a degraded environment and the spread of hunger, disease, and conflict around the globe. The social statement focuses on the need for concrete action in the face of this environmental crisis. It commits the resources of this church to education, action, and advocacy in order to address the threats to God's creation. "We celebrate the vision of hope and justice for creation, and dedicate ourselves anew. We will act out of the conviction that, as the Holy Spirit renews our minds and hearts, we also must reform our habits and social structures."

Practical activities undertaken by congregations, the churchwide organization, and others

Since the *Caring for Creation* social statement was adopted, individual ELCA Lutherans and institutions throughout the ELCA have responded to this call to action by reducing their energy use and with it their dependence on fossil fuels. In the fall of 2012, The Lutheran Center in Chicago was certified as an Energy Star building by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Energy Star is a program that recognizes significant energy saving measures. To qualify, an applicant must show energy savings over a set period of time and must receive a score of 75 or higher. The Lutheran Center achieved a score of 92, which means that the building uses 35 percent less energy and generates 35 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than similar buildings across the nation. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the ELCA is only the second U.S. denomination to receive Energy Star certification for its principal office.

In September 2012, the White House honored the first 28 congregations to achieve Energy Star certification for their church buildings. Of the congregations honored, four were part of the ELCA: Elim Lutheran Church in Duluth, Minn., First English Lutheran in Columbus, Ohio, First Lutheran Church in Bothell, Wash., and Reformation Lutheran Church in Media, Pa.

In 2011, Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC), a grassroots movement promoting care for creation in the ELCA, launched a two-year pilot Energy Stewards Project designed to assist ELCA congregations in lowering their energy use and lessening their energy costs, thereby freeing up money for ministry. The program offers a step-by-step process with other congregations, a training program with regular conference calls and webinars, and an online platform to track history and changes in energy use for the minimal fee of \$10.00 per month. The project has received support to offset the costs not covered by the modest fee for participants from the ELCA, from the Lutheran Community Foundation, and the Tithing Foundation.

There were 11 congregations enrolled in the first class of the Energy Steward Project. Now in their second year in the program, most have realized substantial reductions in their energy use, and several now qualify for Energy Star certification. LRC is now enrolling a second class of participants in the program; each congregation will commit to participating for two years, with significant support from LRC trainers in reducing their energy use.

In addition to these practical demonstrations of the collective commitment to reducing use of fossil fuels, ELCA advocacy ministries have worked over the past two decades to encourage the following:

- national legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- limiting federal tax incentives and other subsidies given to oil, gas, and coal companies;
- funding investment in clean, renewable energy technologies; and
- passing legislation to increase the efficiency of cars, industrial facilities, and residential and commercial buildings.

In addition, ELCA public policy offices have worked to support energy efficiency legislation in a number of states and helped to pass state-level renewable electricity standards. The ELCA corporate social responsibility work continues to call for measuring greenhouse gases, setting reduction goals, reporting on such goals, developing low fossil fuel alternatives, and asking for corporate support of legislation to address climate change.

The ELCA, through its advocacy ministries, is also participating in global efforts with partners, including The Lutheran World Federation and the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance, to reduce fossil fuel subsidies and to advocate for a binding international agreement to address global climate change.

In 2003, the ELCA Church Council passed a protocol for the Corporate Social Responsibility program to develop a series of issue papers to provide practical guidance for investors based on the social statements. Building on the social statement, *Caring for Creation*, two issue papers were developed: one on general environmental topics and one on climate change. These papers were approved by the ELCA Church Council and give guidance for proxy voting, corporate dialogues, and potential filing of shareholder resolutions. The issue paper concerning climate change was reviewed and updated in 2007 and again in 2012. The series of climate change issues covered in this paper include asking corporations for data on greenhouse gas emissions. This is based on the assumption that measuring emissions will lead to a reduction in emissions. Further guidelines asked for greenhouse gas reductions, disclosure of policies concerning political expenditures, and research into low fossil fuel alternatives. These issue papers have been shared with Portico Benefit Services as well as other Lutheran entities to inform and guide their decision-making processes as shareholders. Current information on issue papers can be found on the ELCA website at www.elca.org/corporate.

In 2007, the ELCA Church Council reviewed the existing economic social criteria screen protocol and specifically looked at the environmental screen which was originally written in 1993 to assure it was current. The 2007 screen language reads: *“The ELCA recommends limiting investments made in corporations which are the most egregious in terms of damage to human health or the natural environment. The ELCA recommends investments in corporations which are taking positive steps toward a sustainable environment.”*

ELCA separately incorporated ministries

In evaluating these memorials, it is important to remember that ELCA congregations, colleges, universities, affiliated social ministry organizations and separately incorporated ministries, such as Portico or Augsburg Fortress Publishers, are separate corporations. They have their own governing documents and boards of directors that are legally responsible for their investment and other financial decisions. This means that while the ELCA Churchwide Assembly can make requests and recommendations on these topics, as these two memorials propose, the assembly cannot direct or require divestment or other investment practices or reporting by these partners in ministry. To attempt to go beyond such requests and recommendations would be inconsistent with the oversight and fiduciary responsibilities entrusted to our ELCA-affiliated institutions and agencies.

Portico’s relationship and activities

The ELCA Retirement Trust document states that the purpose of the trust is to provide benefits to participants and beneficiaries. These assets are not “owned” by the ELCA; instead they are comprised of funds that have been paid into these plans by congregations and ministries of the church, along with contributions of plan members themselves. They are held in trust for participants for their use in retirement.

Historically, for those who wish to have congruence between their investments and the social policies of the church, the ELCA Retirement Plan has provided options to invest in accordance with the ELCA’s Social Statements. ELCA continuing resolution 17.20.B11 reads:

“The Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board of Pensions [Portico] shall receive advice and counsel from the churchwide organization and within the context of fiduciary responsibility for ELCA assets, make appropriate recommendations to the board.”

Portico’s fiduciary role is important, and ELCA social statements must be considered “within the context of fiduciary responsibility.” Its status as a church plan means that it is not governed by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), and the ERISA fiduciary duties of prudence and diversification do not apply. Instead, Portico is governed by general trust law, which includes exclusive purpose and duty of prudence principles.⁶ The Minnesota Prudent Investor Act likewise provides for the prudent investor rule to be expanded, restricted, eliminated, or otherwise altered by the

⁶In Section 227 of the Restatement of Trusts 3rd, it says that social or political issues or causes “may properly influence the investment decisions of the trustee to the extent permitted by the terms of the trust or by consent of the beneficiaries.”

provisions of a trust.⁷ It goes on to state one of the circumstances that a trustee may consider in making investment decisions is “an asset’s special relationship or special value, if any, to the purposes of the trust or to one or more of the beneficiaries if consistent with the trustee’s duty of impartiality.”⁸

The ELCA Retirement Plan offers choices between investment fund options. Members may affirmatively elect social purpose investment objectives and policies by choosing Portico’s social purpose fund options, if social purpose investing has special value to that particular member. However, Portico’s fiduciary duties still require prudence—socially responsible investments should be expected to provide an investment return similar to an alternative investment having similar objectives and risks. This standard is applied at the fund level. For example, Portico’s social purpose funds would be compared to Calvert’s social purpose funds or other similar funds.

Over the past 10 years, Portico has filed more than 20 shareholder resolutions related to environmental issues, including the following:

- Seven resolutions asking companies for climate change reporting and/or to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Fourteen resolutions calling for sustainability reporting that addresses environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues (While sustainability resolutions have always had an environmental component, in more recent years they have begun to specifically request GHG reduction targets and goals.); and
- Three hydraulic fracturing resolutions calling for increased transparency and disclosure of associated risks. These resolutions, filed with fossil fuel companies, also request the use of best practices to prevent or minimize GHG emissions from hydraulic fracturing operations.

Portico intends to continue filing these types of resolutions in future years.

When voting on shareholder resolutions, Portico’s policy is to support those resolutions that are consistent with the issue papers of the ELCA and are not expected to diminish the shareholder value of the company that is the subject of the resolution. Shareholder value impact is considered because Portico has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure its proxy voting decisions are made solely in the best interests of plan members. In many cases, a company that follows sustainable environmental practices has the potential to enhance shareholder value. To that end, Portico is able to support many shareholder resolutions related to the environment, including the following:

- Climate change/GHG emission reduction proposals. Portico’s general approach is to vote for these types of resolutions, but analyze more closely any that may go beyond the scope of traditional climate change/GHG proposals.
- Sustainability reporting proposals (includes hydraulic fracturing proposals). Portico’s general approach is to vote for these types of resolutions but analyze more closely any that may go beyond the scope of traditional sustainability reporting.

Eight of the 20 investment funds in the ELCA Retirement Plan are managed by Portico according to social purpose guidelines. The eight Social Purpose Funds invest by screening investments in accordance with ELCA social policies. The social criteria investment screen related to the environment first screens out companies that are “the most egregious in terms of damage to human health or the natural environment.” The second focus of the screen encourages investment in companies which are taking positive steps toward a sustainable environment. In order to screen companies out, Portico Benefit Services works with MSCI ESG Research, our social criteria consultant, to identify an annual list of companies that will be excluded from future investment. MSCI ESG Research employs 90 researchers and analysts who cover over 5000 companies and bond issuers around the world. In compiling the 2013 social criteria list, over 80 companies were excluded from investment because they violated the environmental screens. Twenty-one of the 80+ companies also appear on the Carbon Tracker 200 list⁹, which is a list of companies that have fossil fuel reserves, not necessarily ones that have done current harm to the environment.

⁷MN 501B.151 1b

⁸MN 501B.151.2c8

⁹<http://www.carbontracker.org/>

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Oregon, Northwest Washington and New England synods regarding climate change and fossil fuels;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to:

1. confess that both our witness to God's goodness in creation and our acceptance of caregiving responsibility have often been weak and uncertain;
2. support and encourage synods, congregations, members, the churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions of this church that are working to reduce their use of fossil fuels and improve their stewardship of energy resources;
3. support and encourage synods, congregations, members, the churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions of this church to adopt and advocate for policies that reduce energy use, and with it our dependence on fossil fuels, as an expression of this church's commitment to address climate change and to care for God's creation;
4. support and encourage synods, congregations, members, the churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions of this church to re-examine lifestyles and environmental footprints as they relate to the climate crisis and to improve their stewardship of energy resources and promote care for God's creation;

To refer the matter of evaluating the feasibility and advisability of developing revised or additional investment screens and related recommendations to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit with the request that it ask the Corporate Social Responsibility Team to provide a report with possible recommendations to the November 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council; and

To forward any possible revisions of these policies to the separately incorporated ministries, agencies and institutions of this church for implementation as appropriate.

Section C Israel and Palestine

Category C1: Israel and Palestine

1. Northwest Washington Synod (1B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod affirm *Peace Not Walls* as the means by which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) implements its strategy for engagement in the Holy Land conflict, and affirm its support for sisters and brothers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land as they remain faithful to the Gospel amid the oppression of Israeli military occupation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod encourage its members to listen to the cries of Palestinian sisters and brothers through study of the *Kairos Palestine* document, to visit the region and speak directly with Israelis and Palestinians, and to seek resources like those provided by *Peace Not Walls* that share current, reliable information about the situation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to commit to socially responsible economic practices by 1) developing social-criteria investment screens that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 2) urging members with money invested through Portico Benefit Services to make individual choices about how their retirement funds are invested and to avoid support of companies that benefit from the occupation; 3) urging individuals to invest in Palestinian economic endeavors and to avoid products and services provided by companies, such as Ahava, Sodastream and Hewlett Packard, that benefit from or support Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Synod ask its newly elected bishop and the members of congregations of the Northwest Washington Synod to contact their representatives in Congress, urging them—as requested in last October's letter from 15 Christian leaders—to hold hearings examining whether Israel's use of U.S. financial aid violates the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act and Arms Export Control Act.

2. Oregon Synod (1E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is “called and sent to bear witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world” [ELCA Constitution 4.01.] and participates with others in God’s mission to “serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs . . . advocating dignity and justice for all people [and] working for peace and reconciliation among the nations . . .” [4.02.c.]; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA expressed its commitment to work for peace and reconciliation with dignity and justice for all people in the Holy Land through at least 10 separate actions by the Churchwide Assembly and Church Council from the years 1989 through 2004; and

WHEREAS, in April 2005, the Church Council affirmed [CC05.04.12] the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine” as an authoritative expression of this church’s commitment to promote peace, reconciliation, dignity, and justice through its ministry of accompaniment with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL); and

WHEREAS, the 2005 Churchwide Assembly urged [CA05.06.23] “members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and church-related agencies and institutions . . . to participate in the churchwide campaign for peace—*Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land*—by engaging in awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy activities; and

WHEREAS, the *Peace Not Walls* campaign was reaffirmed by actions of the 2007, 2009, and 2011 Churchwide Assemblies [CA07.06.30, CA09.06.36, and CA11.04.27, respectively]; and

WHEREAS, the *Peace Not Walls* campaign, now in its eighth year of implementing the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine,” continues to be a key source of trustworthy guidance for this church’s ministries of advocacy, accompaniment, and awareness-raising in partnership with the ELCJHL; and

WHEREAS, the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine” is a faithful expression of this church’s witness to God’s creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world; and

WHEREAS, the *Peace Not Walls* campaign is a means of implementing the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine;” and

WHEREAS, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson has exercised leadership in support of the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine,” including his endorsement, with 14 other Christian leaders, of a letter to the U.S. Congress (October 5, 2012) requesting hearings on military aid to Israel to ensure compliance with U.S. and international human rights law; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Oregon Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call upon the ELCA, in all of its expressions: to recommit itself to the “Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine” through awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy activities, including pilgrimage visits, sustained financial support, and other forms of economic stewardship; to recommit itself to the *Peace Not Walls* campaign as a valuable and effective vehicle for implementing the strategy; and to commend Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson for his leadership in support of the ELCA campaign, *Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land*.

3. Sierra Pacific Synod (2A) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod in assembly encourage its members and congregations to:

- o Read, study, and reflect on the *Kairos Palestine* document with fellow church members, paying particular attention to its implications for their ministry;
- o Visit the region of Palestine and Israel as they are able, so as to learn more about the situation on the ground, and non-violent responses to it;
- o Advocate with the U.S. government, the most influential outside party in the negotiations, for a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and
- o Support their denominational partners in Palestine, who support the Palestinian economy, and to avoid products that are produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sierra Pacific Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to encourage members, congregations, and synods to commit to the same four actions listed above.

4. Southwest California Synod (2B) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the prolonged Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the ongoing illegal Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are obstacles to peace and cause a great deal of suffering for Israelis and Palestinians; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) rejoices that Palestinian brother in Christ, Bishop Munib A. Younan, is president of the Lutheran World Federation and gives thanks for its special relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, which is marked by mutual love and concern for lasting peace with justice; and

WHEREAS, the *Peace Not Walls* campaign of the ELCA is focused on accompaniment, awareness-raising, and advocacy as three aspects of engagement in response to the situation in Israel-Palestine; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA11.04.27] to encourage consideration of making positive economic investments in Palestinian goods and services and to commend the “ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens” to ELCA members, congregations, synods, and agencies; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God’s World* (1995), reminds this church that bringing about peace with justice is the work of the church, and, in support for just political structures, acknowledges “that the responsible use of sanctions may on occasion be the most effective and least harmful measure to lead states to stop oppressing their people;” and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2012, 15 U.S. Christian leaders, including Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, signed a letter urging Congress to “undertake careful scrutiny to ensure that our aid is not supporting actions by the government of Israel that undermine prospects for peace;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod and its congregations support the work of *Peace Not Walls* and its sisters and brothers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) through advocacy work that asks members of Congress and the current Administration to do everything in their power to bring about peace with justice for the people of Israel and Palestine; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod encourage members of its congregations to listen to the cries of their Palestinian sisters and brothers through study of the *Kairos Palestine* document, to visit the region and speak directly with Israelis and Palestinians, and to seek resources like those provided by *Peace Not Walls* that have up-to-date, reliable information about the situation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwest California Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to commit to socially responsible economic practices, by developing and implementing for the ELCA and its agencies, organizations and institutions, social-criteria investment screens that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

5. Rocky Mountain Synod (2E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the prolonged Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem remain obstacles to peace and cause a great deal of suffering for Israelis and Palestinians; and

WHEREAS, the *Peace Not Walls* campaign of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) focuses on accompaniment, awareness-raising, and advocacy as three aspects of engagement in response to the Israel-Palestine situation; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA11.04.27] to encourage consideration of making positive economic investments in Palestinian goods and services and to commend the “ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens” to ELCA members, congregations, synods, and agencies; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God’s World* (1995), reminds this church that seeking peace with justice is its proper work and recognizes that in pursuing just political structures “the responsible use of [economic] sanctions may on occasion be the most effective and least harmful measure to lead states to stop [oppressive behavior];” and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2012, 15 U.S. Christian leaders, including Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, signed a letter urging Congress to “undertake careful scrutiny to ensure that our aid is not supporting actions by the government of Israel that undermine prospects for peace;” and

WHEREAS, the ELCA gives thanks for its special relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), which is marked by mutual love and concern for lasting peace with justice, and rejoices that our Palestinian brother in Christ, Bishop Munib A. Younan, is president of the Lutheran World Federation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly affirm *Peace Not Walls* as the means by which the ELCA implements its strategy for engagement in the Holy Land conflict, and affirm our support for sisters and brothers in the ELCJHL as they remain faithful to the Gospel amid the oppression of Israeli military occupation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly encourage members of Rocky Mountain Synod congregations to listen to the cries of our Palestinian sisters and brothers through study of the *Kairos Palestine* document, to visit the region and speak directly with Israelis and Palestinians, to seek resources like those provided by *Peace Not Walls* that share current, reliable information about the situation, and to work with other Christian, Jewish, and Muslim groups in the United States and Israel working for justice; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly ask Bishop James W. Gonia and other members of Rocky Mountain Synod congregations to contact their representatives in Congress, urging them—as requested in the October 5, 2012, letter from 15 Christian leaders—to hold hearings examining whether Israel’s use of U.S. financial aid violates the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act and Arms Export Control Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to request that the corporate social responsibility review team of the churchwide organization, in consultation with Portico Benefit Services, evaluate the feasibility and advisability of developing investment screens and recommendations regarding

positive social investment to implement the policies described in the *Peace Not Walls* campaign, and to further request that the team make appropriate recommendations on these issues to the Church Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly urge members of the ELCA to consider investing their retirement and other funds in a manner consistent with the *Peace Not Walls* campaign.

6. Saint Paul Area Synod (3H) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the prolonged conflict between the Israeli and Palestinian people, due to Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the difficulty facing Palestinians whose homeland has been disrupted remain obstacles to peace and cause a great deal of suffering for Israelis and Palestinians; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) gives thanks for its special relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), which is marked by mutual love and concern for lasting peace with justice, and rejoices that its Palestinian brother in Christ, Bishop Munib A. Younan, is president of the Lutheran World Federation; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA's *Peace Not Walls* campaign focuses on accompaniment, awareness-raising, and advocacy as three aspects of engagement in response to the Israel-Palestine situation; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA11.04.27] to encourage consideration of making positive economic investments in Palestinian goods and services and to commend the "ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens" to ELCA members, congregations, synods, and agencies; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God's World* (1995), reminds this church that seeking peace with justice is its proper work and recognizes that in pursuing just political structures "the responsible use of [economic] sanctions may on occasion be the most effective and least harmful measure to lead states to stop [oppressive behavior];" and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2012, 15 U.S. Christian leaders, including Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, signed a letter urging Congress to "undertake careful scrutiny to ensure that our aid is not supporting actions by the government of Israel that undermine prospects for peace;" therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod affirm *Peace Not Walls* as the means by which the ELCA implements its strategy for engagement in the Holy Land conflict and affirm our support for sisters and brothers in Israel and Palestine as they seek to remain faithful to their Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faith traditions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly encourage members of Saint Paul Area Synod congregations to listen to the cries of their Palestinian sisters and brothers through study of the *Kairos Palestine* document, to visit the region and speak directly with Israelis and Palestinians, and to seek resources like those provided by *Peace Not Walls* that share current, reliable information about the situation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commit to socially responsible economic practices by developing social-criteria investment screens in the ELCA that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly ask Bishop Peter Rogness and other members of Saint Paul Area Synod congregations to contact their representatives in Congress, urging them to examine whether Israel's use of U.S. financial aid violates the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act and Arms Export Control Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly ask Bishop Peter Rogness to communicate with congressional representatives and U.S. President Barack Obama to urge that all possible efforts be used to find a just and caring solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, recognizing that President Obama and representatives of the U.S. Department of State have been working toward that end.

7. Southwestern Texas Synod (4E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is led by the promise of Jesus Christ who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has committed itself to non-violent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the *Peace Not Walls* campaign's efforts toward strengthening accompaniment, awareness-building, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA can best serve the cause of non-violent peacemaking by undertaking and advocating for positive approaches rather than punitive actions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Texas Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly

- (1) to encourage this church's members, congregations, synods, and agencies to call on the President of the United States and their representatives in Congress to commit to a goal of facilitating a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within this Presidential term, and
- (2) to call for a specific series of steps that the United States will undertake to support that goal, including:

- a) a clear plan to facilitate a return to the negotiating table for the Israelis and Palestinians, including an immediate freeze on all Israeli settlement building,
- b) a U.S.-backed proposal for a final-status agreement that will end the occupation, create a two-state solution, end unacceptable levels of violence on all sides, and provide security for Israel and Palestine, and
- c) offer positive incentives to the governments of both Israel and Palestine to act to address and ameliorate all human rights abuses and violations of international law.

8. Metropolitan Chicago Synod (5A) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the prolonged Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the ongoing illegal Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are obstacles to peace, add fuel to violence that threatens people's security, and create much suffering for Israelis and Palestinians; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) gives thanks for its special relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, which is marked by mutual love and concern for lasting peace with justice, and rejoices that Palestinian brother in Christ, Bishop Munib A. Younan, is president of the Lutheran World Federation; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, under the leadership of the Working Group on the Middle East, has for nearly two decades adopted resolutions at past assemblies encouraging its members to learn about, advocate for, and support Lutheran institutions in the Holy Land as well as to view what is happening in the Holy Land through a lens of both justice and security; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA11.04.27] to encourage consideration of making positive economic investments in Palestinian goods and services and to commend the "ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens" to ELCA members, congregations, synods, and agencies; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God's World* (1995), reminds this church that seeking peace with justice is its proper work and recognizes that in pursuing just political structures "the responsible use of [economic] sanctions may on occasion be the most effective and least harmful measure to lead states to stop [oppressive behavior];" and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2012, 15 U.S. Christian leaders, including Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, signed a letter urging Congress to "undertake careful scrutiny to ensure that our aid is not supporting actions by the government of Israel that undermine prospects for peace;" and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, at its assembly on June 1, affirmed *Peace Not Walls* as the means by which the ELCA implements its strategy for engagement in the Holy Land, and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, at its assembly on June 1, affirmed its support for sisters and brothers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land as they remain faithful to the Gospel amid the oppression of Israeli military occupation; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, at its assembly on June 1, urged each congregation of the synod, to draw on the resources of the synod's Working Group on the Middle East and the ELCA's *Peace Not Walls* campaign, 1) to organize educational settings to study and listen to the cries of Palestinian sisters and brothers as declared in the *Kairos Palestine* document; 2) to encourage viewing and discussing documentary films dealing with the situation such as the academy award nominated films *Five Broken Cameras* and *The Gatekeepers*; and 3) to seek and share those resources that provide reliable and current information about creating a shared future in which all the people of Israel/Palestine experience security, justice, freedom, dignity, peace and reconciliation; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, at its assembly on June 1, affirmed the request to Congress contained in the October 5, 2012, letter signed by 15 Christian leaders be endorsed and that the Illinois delegation in Congress be notified of this action; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to commit to socially responsible economic practices by encouraging individuals to invest in Palestinian economic endeavors and to avoid products and services by companies that benefit from or support Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory.

9. Southeastern Iowa Synod (5D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the prolonged Israeli occupation of and Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem remain obstacles to peace and cause a great deal of suffering for Israelis and Palestinians; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) gives thanks for its special relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, which is marked by mutual love and concern for lasting peace with justice, and rejoices that Palestinian brother in Christ, Bishop Munib A. Younan, is president of the Lutheran World Federation; and

WHEREAS, the *Peace Not Walls* campaign of the ELCA is focuses on accompaniment, awareness-raising, and advocacy as three aspects of engagement in response to the situation in Israel-Palestine; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA11.04.27] to encourage consideration of making positive economic investments in Palestinian goods and services and to commend the "ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens" to ELCA members, congregations, synods, and agencies; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God's World* (1995), reminds this church that seeking peace with justice is its proper work and recognizes that in pursuing just political structures “the responsible use of [economic] sanctions may on occasion be the most effective and least harmful measure to lead states to stop [oppressive behavior];” and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2012, 15 U.S. Christian leaders, including Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, signed a letter urging Congress to “undertake careful scrutiny to ensure that our aid is not supporting actions by the government of Israel that undermine prospects for peace;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly affirm the *Peace Not Walls* campaign as the means by which the ELCA implements its strategy for engagement in the Holy Land conflict and affirm its support for sisters and brothers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) as they remain faithful to the Gospel amid Israeli occupation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly encourage members of congregations of the Southeastern Iowa Synod to listen to their Palestinian sisters and brothers through study of the *Kairos Palestine* document, to visit the region and speak directly with Israelis and Palestinians, and to seek resources such as those provided by the *Peace Not Walls* campaign that share current, reliable information about the situation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly ask the bishop and members of congregations of the Southeastern Iowa Synod to contact their representatives in Congress, urging them, as requested in the October 5, 2012, letter from 15 Christian leaders, to undertake careful scrutiny by holding hearings examining whether Israel’s use of U.S. financial aid violates the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act and Arms Export Control Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the ELCA to explore and implement social economic investment screens that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and companies that profit from actions that are in conflict with the *Peace Not Walls* campaign and the ELCA’s social statement, *For Peace in God's World* (1995), as related to the Israeli occupation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to request that the churchwide organization provide information to ELCA members regarding companies that profit from actions that are in conflict with the *Peace Not Walls* campaign and the ELCA’s social statement, *For Peace in God's World* (1995), as related to the Israeli occupation so members and congregations can make informed selective purchasing decisions.

10. Greater Milwaukee Synod (5J) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the prolonged Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the ongoing illegal Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are obstacles to peace, add fuel to violence that threatens people’s security, and create much suffering for Israelis and Palestinians; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) rejoices that Palestinian brother in Christ, Bishop Munib A. Younan, is president of the Lutheran World Federation and gives thanks for its special relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, which is marked by mutual love and concern for lasting peace and justice; and

WHEREAS, the *Peace Not Walls* campaign of the ELCA is focused on accompaniment, awareness-raising, and advocacy as three aspects of engagement in response to the situation in Israel-Palestine; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Churchwide Assembly voted [CA11.04.27] to encourage consideration of making positive economic investments in Palestinian goods and services and to commend the “ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens” to ELCA members, congregations, synods, and agencies; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God's World* (1995), reminds this church that seeking peace with justice is its proper work and recognizes that in pursuing just political structures “the responsible use of [economic] sanctions may on occasion be the most effective and least harmful measure to lead states to stop [oppressive behavior];” and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2012, 15 U.S. Christian leaders, including Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, signed a letter urging Congress to “undertake careful scrutiny to ensure that our aid is not supporting actions by the government of Israel that undermine prospects for peace;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod support the work of *Peace Not Walls* and its sisters and brothers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) through advocacy work that asks members of Congress and the current Administration to do everything in their power to bring about peace with justice for the people of Israel and Palestine; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod encourage members of this church to listen to the cries of their Palestinian sisters and brothers through study of the *Kairos Palestine* document, to visit the region and speak directly with Israelis and Palestinians, and to seek resources like those provided by *Peace Not Walls* that have up-to-date, reliable information about the situation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to commit to socially responsible economic practices by 1) developing and implementing ELCA social-criteria investment screens that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 2) urging members with money invested through Portico Benefit Services to make individual choices about how their retirement funds are invested, so as to avoid supporting companies that benefit from the occupation, and 3) encouraging individuals to invest in Palestinian economic endeavors and to boycott products and services provided by companies that benefit from and support Israel's occupation of Palestine; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod declare this year one of *Accompaniment With the People of the Holy Land*, 1) promoting the observation of the 24th day of each month as a worldwide day of prayer and solidarity with the ELCJHL and 2) forming a synod-wide committee to coordinate education, consciousness raising, and action to promote *Accompaniment With the People of the Holy Land*.

11. Southeast Michigan Synod (6A) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Southeast Michigan Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to call for the ELCA to explore and implement social economic investment screens that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and companies that profit from the Israeli Occupation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2013 Southeast Michigan Synod Assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to request that the churchwide organization provide information to ELCA members regarding companies that profit from the Israeli Occupation so members and congregations can make informed selective purchasing decisions.

12. Indiana-Kentucky Synod (6C) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is led by the promise of Jesus Christ who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has committed itself to non-violent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the *Peace Not Walls* campaign's efforts toward strengthening accompaniment, awareness-building, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA can best serve the cause of non-violent peacemaking by undertaking and advocating for positive approaches rather than punitive actions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Indiana-Kentucky Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

- (1) to encourage this church's members, congregations, synods, and agencies to call on the President of the United States and their representatives in Congress to commit to a goal of facilitating a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within this presidential term, and
- (2) to call for a specific series of steps that the United States will undertake to support that goal, including:
 - a) a clear plan to facilitate a return to the negotiating table for the Israelis and Palestinians, including an immediate freeze on all Israeli settlement building,
 - b) a U.S.-backed proposal for a final-status agreement that will end the occupation, create a two-state solution, end unacceptable levels of violence on all sides, and provide security for Israel and Palestine, and
 - c) offer positive incentives to the governments of both Israel and Palestine to act to address and ameliorate all human rights abuses and violations of international law.

13. New England Synod (7B) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to affirm *Peace Not Walls* as the means by which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) implements its strategy for engagement in the Holy Land conflict, and affirm this church's support for sisters and brothers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land as they remain faithful to the Gospel amid the oppression of Israeli military occupation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA affirm the right of Israel to exist in security, alongside a secure Palestinian state, and seek outreach and dialogue with American Jewish and American Islamic groups that share the same vision; and be it further

RESOLVED that the ELCA encourage its members to listen to the cries of its Palestinian sisters and brothers through study of the *Kairos Palestine* document, to visit the region and speak directly with Israelis and Palestinians, and to seek resources like those provided by *Peace Not Walls* that share current, reliable information about the situation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod further memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commit to socially responsible economic practices by 1) developing social-criteria investment screens that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and recommending their adoption by Portico Benefit Services, 2) urging members with money invested in Portico to make individual choices about how their retirement funds are invested, to avoid support of companies that benefit from the occupation, and 3) urging individuals to invest in Palestinian economic endeavors and to avoid products and services provided by companies that benefit from or support Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory.

14. Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (7E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is led by the promise of Jesus Christ who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has committed itself to non-violent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the *Peace Not Walls* campaign's efforts toward strengthening accompaniment, awareness-building, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA can best serve the cause of non-violent peacemaking by undertaking and advocating for positive approaches rather than punitive actions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

- (1) to encourage this church's members, congregations, synods, and agencies to call on the President of the United States and their representatives in Congress to commit to a goal of facilitating a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within this presidential term, and
- (2) to call for a specific series of steps that the United States will undertake to support that goal, including:
 - a) a clear plan to facilitate a return to the negotiating table for the Israelis and Palestinians, including an immediate freeze on all Israeli settlement building,
 - b) a U.S.-backed proposal for a final-status agreement that will end the occupation, create a two-state solution, end unacceptable levels of violence on all sides, and provide security for Israel and Palestine, and
 - c) offer positive incentives to the governments of both Israel and Palestine to act to address and ameliorate all human rights abuses and violations of international law.

15. Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is led by the promise of Jesus Christ who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has committed itself to non-violent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the *Peace Not Walls* campaign's efforts toward strengthening accompaniment, awareness-building, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA can best serve the cause of non-violent peacemaking by undertaking and advocating for positive approaches rather than punitive actions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

- (1) to encourage this church's members, congregations, synods, and agencies to call on the President of the United States and their representatives in Congress to commit to a goal of facilitating a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within this Presidential term; and
- (2) to call for a specific series of steps that the United States will undertake to support that goal, including:
 - a) a clear plan to facilitate a return to the negotiating table for the Israelis and Palestinians, including an immediate freeze on all Israeli settlement building,
 - b) a U.S.-backed proposal for a final-status agreement that will end the occupation, create a two-state solution, end unacceptable levels of violence on all sides, and provide security for Israel and Palestine, and
 - c) offer positive incentives to the governments of both Israel and Palestine to act to address and ameliorate all human rights abuses and violations of international law.

16. Upper Susquehanna Synod (8E) [2013 Memorial]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is led by the promise of Jesus Christ who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9); and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has committed itself to non-violent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the *Peace Not Walls* campaign's efforts toward strengthening accompaniment, awareness-building, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA can best serve the cause of non-violent peacemaking by undertaking and advocating for positive approaches rather than punitive actions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Upper Susquehanna Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly:

- (1) to encourage this church's members, congregations, synods, and agencies to call on the President of the United States and their representatives in Congress to commit to a goal of facilitating a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within this Presidential term; and
- (2) to call for a specific series of steps that the United States will undertake to support that goal, including:
 - a) a clear plan to facilitate a return to the negotiating table for the Israelis and Palestinians, including an immediate freeze on all Israeli settlement building,
 - b) a U.S.-backed proposal for a final-status agreement that will end the occupation, create a two-state solution, end unacceptable levels of violence on all sides, and provide security for Israel and Palestine, and
 - c) offer positive incentives to the governments of both Israel and Palestine to act to address and ameliorate all human rights abuses and violations of international law.

17. Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod (8G) [2013 Memorial]

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod in assembly memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to commit to socially responsible economic practices by:

1. directing the Church Council to develop and implement social-criteria investment screens that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and recommending their adoption by Portico Benefit Services;
2. urging members with money invested with Portico to make individual choices about how their retirement funds are invested so as to avoid supporting companies that benefit from the occupation; and
3. encouraging individuals to invest in Palestinian economic endeavors.

Background

A "Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine" was adopted by the ELCA Church Council in April 2005 (CC05.04.12). The churchwide strategy calls for accompaniment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and ecumenical and other partners. The ninth ELCA Churchwide Assembly, in August 2005, urged "members, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and church-related agencies and institutions . . . to participate in the churchwide campaign for peace—*Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land*—by engaging in awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy activities. . . ." (CA05.06.23)

The tenth ELCA Churchwide Assembly in 2007 (CA07.06.30):

4. [called] upon the ELCA, in all of its expressions, to recommit itself to the Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine through awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy activities, including pilgrimage visits, sustained financial support, and other forms of economic stewardship; and
5. [called] upon the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to underscore the call for economic initiatives by this church and its members in the "Peace, Not Walls" campaign. Such initiatives, in consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, could include:
 - purchasing of products from Palestinian providers and
 - exploration of the feasibility of refusing to buy products produced in Israeli settlements. Also to be explored is the entire investment activity by this church. Examination of investments would exclude the option of divestiture.

Inherent in this strategy is a focus on peacemaking through positive incentives rather than punitive actions. This can be noted in the memorial of the Southwestern Texas Synod, which advocates "positive approaches rather than punitive actions," and calls for specific steps to reach this goal, using "positive incentives to the governments of both Israel and Palestine to act to address and ameliorate all human rights abuses and violations of international law." In addition, the ELCA has made a clear distinction between constructive investment and divestment. Divestment singles out one side for censure, has limited effectiveness, takes a long time to have any effect, and is highly problematic from legal and fiduciary perspectives.

The strategy also calls for accompaniment of "Palestinians and Israelis in nonviolent efforts to end the occupation." It calls for "peace with justice in Israel and Palestine" as well as "for a viable, contiguous, independent Palestinian state and a secure Israel." The strategy encourages solidarity with both Israelis and Palestinians who share the strategy's goals. Throughout its history, the ELCA has expressed solidarity with various peoples, but never with a nation state or

government; hence, in this strategy, it does not express solidarity with either the State of Israel or the Palestinian Authority. Throughout its history, the ELCA has not aligned itself with specific national political movements and has raised serious questions about the legitimacy of some, especially those which foment hatred, exclusivity, and ethnic cleansing. The ELCA has not commented on the value of any political self-expression but has committed itself to confronting religious extremism in all its forms. The strategy is now in its eighth year of implementation through the *Peace Not Walls* (PNW) campaign.

While there has been little overall political progress toward solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and thus much disappointment, the strategy has been the basis for realizing a number of notable accomplishments since the 2011 Churchwide Assembly which can provide the basis for more activities in the coming months. In the area of awareness-building, PNW has distributed more than 5,000 map cards, which outline the loss of Palestinian lands since 1948; has established webpages with a variety of resources, such as a blog, handouts, videos, presentations, and worship materials; and has encouraged individuals and congregations to participate in the Ecumenical Prayer Vigil for Peace in the Middle East initiated by the ACT Palestine Forum in December 2012. The 2008 video, “Peace Not Walls: Making a Difference in the Holy Land,” has continued to be distributed widely to synods and congregations.

In the area of accompaniment, regular visits have been made to the region to be with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) as well as to assist their leaders, members, and youth in visits to various locations and meetings in the United States. Thirty ELCA members have been selected for service with the ELCJHL as part of the Young Adults in Global Mission program. Twenty ELCA members have served with the World Council of Churches’ Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel. To enhance our companions’ economic well-being, the Peace Not Walls webpages facilitate the purchase of Palestinian products from Lutheran and other Christian ministries.

With respect to advocacy, the ELCA continues to be active in extensive ecumenical and interfaith work through organizations such as Churches for Middle East Peace, the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East (NILI), and a Christian-Jewish dialogue group coordinated by the National Council of Churches and the American Jewish Committee (which was temporarily suspended due to Christian-Jewish tensions over the October 5 letter). Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson is widely recognized for his leadership on Middle East issues through his involvement in NILI and in these other forums.

In addition, several specific advocacy activities undertaken in recent months have been a continuation of the call for a cessation of all Israeli settlement activities and withdrawal from settlements on Palestinian territory to the 1967 boundaries; a recommendation to study and reflect upon *A moment of truth: A word of faith and hope from the heart of Palestinian suffering*, the *Kairos Palestine* document, as an authentic expression of Palestinian Christians; and the communication in October 2012 of a letter to Members of Congress requesting that hearings be held to review Israel’s compliance with U.S. law in its utilization of U.S. military assistance. Concerning the 2007 action above which, among other things, called for exploration of the feasibility of refusing to buy products produced in Israeli settlements, staff have explored this question, determined that it is indeed possible to refuse to buy products produced in Israeli settlements, and will continue to make available relevant information on the “Peace Not Walls” and “Corporate Social Responsibility” webpages. At the synodical and local levels, a national database of ELCA members active in promoting Middle East peace is helping to raise awareness and is leading ecumenical and interreligious advocacy efforts.

The ELCA strategy stresses the importance of working with those who seek nonviolent means to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as with those who share the goals of peace with justice and a commitment to peace as outlined in the strategy. The campaign has undertaken a number of efforts to create greater awareness of the dire situation of the neighbor or “other” in the conflict. Furthermore, this church has encouraged those in conflict to seek peaceful means that respect the dignity of all people and the integrity of all parties. To these ends, dialogue between Lutherans and Jews as well as Lutherans and Muslims are encouraged in order to engender awareness, mutual respect, and relationships of integrity. In addition, this church has addressed how Christian faith and love are central to relationships with the Jewish and Muslim communities.

As noted earlier, the strategy has both called for mutual understanding between Israelis and Palestinians and lauded efforts that seek to promote such understanding. Some examples of those efforts lifted up in various media include the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land (a collaborative effort of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian leaders in the area) and the Parents Circle—Families Forum, which brings together the bereaved relatives of both Israelis and Palestinians killed in the conflict to move toward reconciliation rather than hatred or revenge.

18. Minneapolis Area Synod (3G) [2013]

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is led by the promise of Jesus Christ who said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God;” and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has committed itself to non-violent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the *Peace Not Walls* campaign’s efforts toward strengthening accompaniment, awareness-building, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA can best serve the cause of non-violent peacemaking by undertaking and advocating for positive approaches rather than punitive actions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to encourage this church’s members, congregations, synods, and agencies to call on the President of the United States and their representatives in Congress to commit to a goal of facilitating a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within this Presidential term; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Churchwide Assembly direct the presiding bishop of this church to call for a specific series of steps that the United States will undertake to support that goal, including:

- (a) a clear plan to facilitate a return to the negotiating table for the Israelis and Palestinians, including an immediate freeze on all Israeli settlement building; and
- (b) a U.S.-backed proposal for a final-status agreement that will end the occupation, create a two-state solution, end unacceptable levels of violence on all sides, and provide for Israel’s security; and
- (c) offer positive incentives to the governments of both Israel and Palestine to act to address and ameliorate all human rights abuses and violations of international law.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorials of the Southwestern Texas, Saint Paul Area, Rocky Mountain, Southeast Michigan, Oregon, Sierra Pacific, Northwest Washington, Greater Milwaukee, Southwest California, Southeastern Iowa, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Indiana/Kentucky, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., and Minneapolis Area synods related to Peacemaking with Justice in Israel and Palestine;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church to:

1. Continue its awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy on behalf of a peaceful resolution of the conflict between Israel and Palestine;
2. Learn more about the experiences of both Israelis and Palestinians and their mutual fears, aspirations, and hopes;
3. Work to convey the concerns and perspectives of Palestinians and Israelis that dispel stereotypes and caricatures and promote better understanding;
4. Lift up the voices within both communities, especially those of victims of violence, that seek peace with justice through nonviolent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;
5. Continue to help alleviate the humanitarian needs of all of those affected by the conflict;
6. Support U.S. funding that promotes peace and cooperation for all parties to the conflict; and
7. Continue to pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

To encourage this church's members, congregations, synods, and agencies to call on the President of the United States and their representatives in Congress to commit to a goal of facilitating a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and

To refer the matter of evaluating the feasibility and advisability of developing additional investment screens and related recommendations to the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit with the request that it ask the Corporate Social Responsibility Team, in cooperation with the *Peace Not Walls* staff team, to provide a report with recommendations to the April 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

Section D Theology and Practice

Category D1: Communion Practices

1. Northern Illinois Synod (5B) [2012 Memorial]

WHEREAS, *The Use of the Means of Grace* (1997), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA) guiding document on the "Practice of Word and Sacrament," clearly states that "The Holy Communion is given to the baptized" (Principle 37, pp. 41-42); and

WHEREAS, since the publication of that document the ELCA has entered into full-communion partnerships with church bodies that do not share that same understanding; and

WHEREAS, the implementing resolutions of our full-communion agreements encourage us to extend sacramental hospitality to one another's members; and

WHEREAS, some congregations of the ELCA currently have Communion policy statements which would effectively bar members of church bodies with which we are in full communion from participation in the Sacrament; and

WHEREAS, some ELCA congregations welcome everyone present to partake of the Eucharist without stipulating the need for Baptism; and

WHEREAS, clarification concerning Lutheran Sacramental theology and practice would be helpful in the life of this church at this time; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod memorialize the 2013 Churchwide Assembly to institute a process necessary to review and possibly revise the ELCA's guiding documents concerning admission to the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Background

The current guiding recommendations for the practice of Holy Communion are found in *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament* which was adopted by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly. Principle 37 of that document states,

The Holy Communion is given to the baptized

Principle

Admission to the Sacrament is by invitation of the Lord, presented through the Church to those who are baptized.

Application 37G. When an unbaptized person comes to the table seeking Christ's presence and is inadvertently communed, neither that person nor the ministers of Communion need be ashamed. Rather, Christ's gift of love and mercy to all is praised. That person is invited to learn the faith of the Church, be baptized, and thereafter faithfully receive Holy Communion.

In regards to the ELCA's ecumenical relationships, the document also says this in Application A of Principle 49...

In the exercise of this [Eucharistic] hospitality, it is wise for our congregations to be sensitive to the Eucharistic practices of the churches from which visitors may come. (UMG, p. 52)

This guiding principle remains the recommended practice of this church. However, there is diversity in practice regarding who is welcome to the table among the worshipping communities of this church. Below are two examples of welcome statements in worship folders:

"We believe and teach the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and we invite all who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to commune with us."

"At meal-tables around the world, strangers become friends, and friends become family. In Holy Communion, we are invited to the Table of the Lord. No conditions, no coercion, just words of welcome and promise: "this is my body, given for you." We are glad to have you worship with us! All visitors are welcome to share in the Lord's Supper.

These statements represent the varying practice of Eucharistic hospitality in this church. It is important to recognize the desire to welcome people to the Lord's Supper. This has been attributed as a response to the growing number of unbaptized people present at worship. The current religious context in which the church finds itself is increasingly diverse, and local worshipping communities are met with numerous challenges to the practice of mission and ministry.

At the same time, this church recognizes that the celebration of Holy Communion occurs in the assembly of the baptized people of God. The importance of the clear connections between baptism and communion also needs to be recognized.

Staff in the churchwide worship team receive a number of inquiries on whether Holy Communion should be presented to only the baptized. Some are in favor of this, some are not in favor, and a good number simply ask, "What should we do?"

In the fall of 2012, the worship team gathered the professors of worship from the ELCA seminaries for a conversation about this issue. A similar conversation took place at a meeting of the Lutheran Caucus at the North American Academy of Liturgy in January 2013. In both of these conversations it was clear that more needs to be said than what exists in current ELCA documents. Regardless of the decision, it remains evident that this church would do well to have more resources on the relationship between Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

Ultimately, decisions about communion practices are local decisions, and there is a need for a resource or resources to help congregations faithfully discern their communion practices.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To receive with gratitude the memorial of the Northern Illinois Synod requesting a process to review the ELCA's guiding documents on communion practices;

To invite members, congregations, synods and the churchwide organization into conversation and study regarding the *Use of the Means of Grace*;

To request the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, in consultation with the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Conference of Bishops, to establish a process to review current documents concerning administration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion; and

To request the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit to bring a report and possible recommendations to the April 2014 meeting of the ELCA Church Council.

Memorials Considered as Resolutions

Appendix A

The Office of the Secretary has determined that eight Synod Assembly memorials are resolutions that more properly should have been forwarded to Synod Councils. These resolutions were transmitted to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its Executive Committee.

The Church Council voted in November 1988 “that future communications from synods will be dealt with according to ELCA constitutional and bylaw provisions. . . .” This affirms that

- Synod Assemblies address the Churchwide Assembly;
- Synod Councils address the Church Council; and
- Synod Councils address churchwide units through the Church Council’s Executive Committee, including forwarding resolutions adopted by the Synod Assembly.

The content of a Synod Assembly’s action determines whether it is a memorial or a resolution. Generally, memorials are reserved for broad policy matters that are the primary work of the assembly. Resolutions concern implementation of policies that already have been established or specific requests that concern either work already assigned or work that is related to the responsibilities of churchwide units. For example, if a previous assembly has taken action to establish a policy, the work is underway. Advice about the work goes to those units carrying out this responsibility.

The Office of the Secretary has provided the following information for all synods prior to each Synod Assembly:

Memorials

Synod Assemblies pass memorials to the Churchwide Assembly. This is in keeping with bylaw 12.21.c. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, which declares, “The Churchwide Assembly shall . . . receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies.” Memorials should be reserved for broader policy issues that belong in the Churchwide Assembly. A memorial addresses only the Churchwide Assembly, not the Church Council or churchwide units. Memorials adopted by a synod assembly are submitted to the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for transmittal to the Churchwide Assembly with a recommendation for action prepared by the Memorials Committee of the Churchwide Assembly. One of the final “Resolved” clauses should make clear that the action is a memorial, and should contain the concern to be discussed, such as:

RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Assembly memorialize the [YEAR] Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to . . . [describe the proposed course or action for consideration.]

Resolutions

Synod councils may pass resolutions to the Church Council. Resolutions follow a more direct route than memorials, which must go to the Churchwide Assembly. “The Church Council shall act on resolutions from synod councils,” according to bylaw 14.21.11. Synod councils also may seek to address churchwide units through resolutions. These must be submitted to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for appropriate referral, according to bylaw 14.41.11.b., which specifies that the council’s Executive Committee shall “transmit resolutions from synods to the appropriate unit or units of the churchwide organization.”

Synods also may forward resolutions emerging from the Synod Assembly for attention by the Church Council or referral to churchwide units by the Church Council’s Executive Committee. This is the appropriate method for addressing specific churchwide units about a given concern.

In the final “Resolved” clause of a resolution to be referred to a churchwide unit, the Synod Assembly’s action should include the following:

RESOLVED, that the _____ Synod Assembly direct the _____ Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

In response to the eight Synod Assembly actions listed below, the Executive Committee recommended specific actions for consideration by the ELCA Church Council at its June 27, 2012, July 27, 2012, and July 11, 2013, meetings. A report of the recommendations and referrals is included in the Report of the Church Council, Section XI of the *Pre-Assembly Report*, as information to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. The Synod Assembly actions are:

- Seminarian Debt Incurred Through Inadequate Health Insurance [Montana Synod (1F) [2013]
- Witnessing against Capital Punishment [Sierra Pacific Synod (2A), 2012]
- A Call to Peaceful Resolution of the Conflict with Iran [Southern Ohio Synod (6F), 2012]
- To Commission an Adult Catechism [Metropolitan New York Synod (7C), 2013]
- Health Care for Seminarians [Allegheny Synod (8C), 2013]
- A Churchwide Policy of Parental Leave for Rostered Persons [Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D), 2013]
- Seminarian Debt Incurred Through Inadequate Health Insurance [Delaware-Maryland Synod (8F), 2013]
- Seminarian Debt Incurred Through Inadequate Health Insurance [West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (8H), 2013]

Notice Related to Recommendations of Memorials Committee Appendix B

If a voting member desires the assembly to discuss a synodical memorial or the Memorials Committee's response that is proposed for *en bloc* consideration, she or he may request that it be removed from the proposed *en bloc* resolution, provided the member's request is supported by ten other voting members. Such request shall be made in accordance with the following paragraph. The assembly then will consider and vote separately on the proposed response of the Memorials Committee. After removals, the *en bloc* resolution shall be voted upon without amendments or debate.

►**Separate Consideration:** To call for such separate consideration, a voting member must submit notification electronically or on a paper form to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline on the form titled **Notice Related to Recommendations of the Memorials Committee**. Paper forms are available from the secretary's deputy.

The deadline to submit a request for separate consideration of a recommended response to synodical memorials or to offer a substitute response to synodical memorials is Monday, August 12, 2013, at 9:30 p.m.

Motion Form Appendix C

With respect to any recommendation made by the Memorials Committee in this report, a voting member of the assembly may offer a substitute motion to the committee's recommendation only if such member has given notice electronically or on a paper form by the established deadline. For such notice, a voting member who desires to offer a substitute to the recommendation of the Memorials Committee must complete the form, **Notice Related to Recommendations of the Memorials Committee**, and submit it to the secretary of this church or the secretary's deputy prior to the established deadline. In addition, the text of the proposed substitute should be submitted on a **Motion Form** electronically or on a paper form to the secretary or the secretary's deputy. Paper forms are available from the secretary's deputy.

Consultation with at least one of the co-chairs of the Memorials Committee is required when a substitute will be moved and is recommended when any other amendment will be proposed to the response recommended by the Memorials Committee.

The deadline to submit a request for separate consideration of a recommended response to synodical memorials or to offer a substitute response to synodical memorials is Monday, August 12, 2013, at 9:30 p.m.